



## Lineage of the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery

Constituted on 5 July 1918 into the National Army of the United States as the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery and  
Assigned to the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division

Demobilized 7 February 1919

Reconstituted 23 March 1923 in the Regular Army and assigned to the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division on 1 July  
1930.

Activated 1 July 1940 at Camp Jackson SC

Reorganized and Redesignated as the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion 1 October 1940

Inactivated 25 October 1945 at Camp Leonard Wood MO

Activated 17 August 1950 at Camp Jackson SC as part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Training)

Relieved 1 August 1957 from assignment to the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Concurrently reorganized and  
Redesignated as the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, a parent Regiment under the Combat Arms Regimental System.

Redesignated as the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment on 1 September 1971.

Battle Streamers and Awards



## Battalions of the Regiment and Heritage

The US Army Field Artillery adopted the Combat Arms Regimental System in 1957. Since that time there have been 4 Battalions of the Regiment that have been active, all of them derive their heritage from the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion of World War 2 fame:

**-1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery-**Initially activated in 1959 as a 155 Towed Battalion in the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry DIVARTY at Earnst Ludwick Kaserne in Darmstadt. In 1960 the Battalion was converted to an Honest John Missile Battalion and moved to Baumholder. The Battalion was reflagged as 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 18<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery in 1961.

**-2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. (175MM SP, later 155MM SP)** Activated in 1966 at Hindenburg Kaserne in Ansbach (1-75 FA was reflagged as 2-28 FA). The unit moved the same year to Bleidorn Kaserne where it remained until it was reflagged as the 3-17 FA in 1989.

**-4<sup>th</sup> Missile Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (Lacrosse Missile)** Initially activated in 1960 at Fort Sill as the Army's third Lacrosse Battalion. It was later transferred from Fort Sill to Germany where it was posted to Bleidorn Kaserne where it was part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Group. The Battalion was deactivated in 1963.

**5<sup>th</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (USAR, Ohio) (203 MM SP)** The Battalion was active in the 70s and 80s and was inactivated in September 1993 and personnel and equipment was transferred to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 92<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery to support conversion of that unit to 3x8.

## World War 1 (1918-1919)



10<sup>th</sup> Division patch

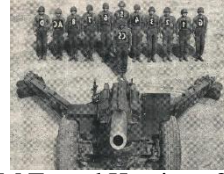


French 75

The 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery was first activated at Camp Funston Kansas (a Camp on the Fort Riley Reservation) in 1918 as a National Guard unit and part of the United States mobilization for World War I. The Battalion was organized as a 75MM (French 75) Battalion and assigned to the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Artillery. The Battalion received its muster of new recruits and began training for its eventual deployment to France. This deployment did not occur as the War ended on November 11, 1918. The Battalion was subsequently demobilized on 7 February 1919 at Camp Funston. Although the Battalion did not deploy to Europe and fight in WWI, they did have a casualty. PVT Bruce McCluskey from Nebraska contracted the flu and died of pneumonia on 24 January 1919 and is buried at the Fort Riley cemetery.



8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Patch



155MM Towed Howitzer Section

## Between the Wars (1920-1940)

During the period 1919-1940, the Army underwent a series of reorganizations which were mostly on paper. Although not on active duty, the Battalion was reconstituted into the Regular Army as the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion. In another paper reorganization, the Battalion was assigned to the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Motorized).

## World War 2 (1941-1945)

With war breaking out in Europe, the United States Army began to mobilize with Regular Army units as a priority. The 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery was again activated on 1 July 1940 as a 155MM Tractor Drawn Battalion at Camp Jackson SC as part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Motorized) Artillery.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Artillery was organized with 4 Battalions, 3 105MM Towed Battalions and one 155MM Towed Battalion which was the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. The predominant mission for the 28<sup>th</sup> FA was General Support of the Division with particular emphasis on Counter Fire.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery of WW2 was organized with a Headquarters Battery that included 2 piper cubs for air spotting and counterfire. 3 firing batteries with 4 guns each and a Service Battery whose principle component was Ammunition trucks and Maintenance.

During the period from activation to December 1941, the Battalion was involved in many exercises as the US Army prepared itself for war. The Battalion, along with the Division, deployed to the field for and began serious training for the war. Among these were the Carolina and Tennessee Maneuvers.

December 7, 1941 found the Battalion at Camp Jackson SC and it was immediately ordered to guard the coast of South Carolina and Georgia from the perceived threat of invasion by Germany. In the succeeding months, the Battalion was sent to Fort Sill OK to act as cadre for the ever increasing numbers of new Field Artillerymen needing to be trained for the war.

As America shifted to the offense, the Nation's first moves were to North Africa. Many of the units that would fight in North Africa were sent to the Desert Training Center in the high desert of California and Nevada. While at the training center, they were under the command of MG George S Patton. The Battalion along with the 8<sup>th</sup> ID was sent to California to train in desert warfare, however it was later decided that the 8<sup>th</sup> ID would not be needed in North Africa and was subsequently sent to Camp Forrest Tennessee to await further orders.

The Battalion was located at Camp Forrest, Tennessee from August to November of 1943 where it continued training and conducting live fire exercises at the nearby Spenser Artillery Range. The Battalion prepared for its eventual deployment and passed its pre deployment Army Training Test with flying colors.



LTC (later 4 star General) F. "Ches" Chesarek  
28<sup>th</sup> FA Battalion Commander



Section Training at Spenser Range

It was in April of 1943 that the Battalion received a Battalion Commander that would lead the unit throughout the entire war. LTC Ferdinand J "Ches" Chesarek took command of the Battalion while it was at the Desert Training Center. Chesarek would go on after the war to become a 4 Star General and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Commander of Army Material Command.

### Overseas Movement

In November of 1943, the Battalion received movement order to Camp Kilmer NJ and to prepare for overseas movement. New guns were signed for, test fired, registered and loaded on the train that would take them to their Port of Embarkation along with the rest of the 8<sup>th</sup> ID. On arrival at Camp Kilmer, the soldiers of the 28<sup>th</sup> went through the process that millions of other soldiers in World War 2 were subjected to. Shots, physicals, briefings, Wills, powers of attorney and hundreds of other tasks were accomplished while the unit awaited the transport that would take them into harm's way in Europe.



HMS Durban Castle



Cramped conditions on Durban Castle

From 1-5 December of 1943, the Battalion, along with the rest of the 8<sup>th</sup> ID, loaded their equipment and personnel on the HMS Durban Castle, a British liner that had been pressed into wartime service. The 28<sup>th</sup>'s howitzers, equipment and vehicles were embarked on the liberty ship SS Lawton Evans.

Once loaded, the Battalion set sail from New York harbor on 8 December as part of Convoy AT 126. The trip to the British Isles took 10 days and was absolutely miserable on the gunners of the 28<sup>th</sup> Artillery. Seasickness, overcrowding, terrible English food (for those well enough to eat) and eight U-Boat scares characterized the journey.

### Scotland and more training. (December 43-July 44)



Battalion Area at Castle Aughentaine



Training in the Irish mud

The Durban Castle and Lawton Evans docked at Belfast Ireland on 15 December 1943. The soldiers were happy to once again see dry land even if it was the miserable Irish weather. Once unloaded, the Battalion moved inland and set up camp in hastily constructed Nissen huts which were located on the grounds of an Irish estate called Castle Aughentaine.

Only days after arrival, the Battalion went back into training mode and moved to the Irish country side to train. The training environment in Ireland was miserable, however it was a shape of things to come, as they trained in the mud of the Irish Moors. The Battalion wrecker got a workout pulling any number of guns and vehicles out with every move attempted.

It was in Ireland that the Battalion received its famous call sign that would carry it through the war and beyond. Each of the Battalions of the Division were given a letter of the alphabet from which to choose a call sign. The 8<sup>th</sup> Division Artillery and its subordinate Battalions were given the letter "G". 8<sup>th</sup> DIVARTY's was Grindstone and the 28<sup>th</sup> FA was "GUNSHOT". The call sign morphed itself into the Battalions official motto. Soldiers would salute the officers and shout, "GUNSHOT SIR!" and the reply from the officer would be "ON THE WAY!"

### **Displacement to the Valley of the Shadow of Death (July 1944-April 45)**

The Battalion and the Division continued to train on the Irish countryside, as the date for the invasion of Europe approached, this training expanded and intensified. The Battalion received a prepare to move order on the same day as the Normandy landings, June 6, 1944, but the 8<sup>th</sup> ID was not ordered to execute the move to Belfast Harbor until 26 June.

Beginning on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June, the Battalion loaded its guns and vehicles onto the liberty ship SS Ackerman while the troops boarded the former liner turned troop ship HMS Exchequer. Both set sail on 28 June 1944 with the next stop being the Normandy beaches.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Artillery, while embarked on these two ships, arrived off Utah beach at 0400 on 4 July and was the first element of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry to arrive in France. The Battalion quickly off loaded to the Beach by Rhino Barge and subsequently moved to the Division Staging Areas near Monteburg, France. Even before the last elements of Service Battery had closed, the Battalion received its first mission which was to be reinforcing the fires of the 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Artillery who was already in contact with the defending Germans in the deadly hedgerows of Normandy. B Battery had the honor of firing the first rounds in anger, adding preparatory fires of the 90<sup>th</sup> ID onto Objective "D24"



Utah Beach July 1944



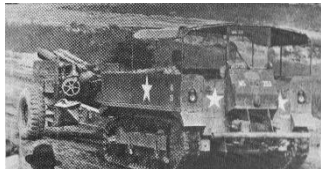
Gun Position in Normandy



HHB Mess truck  
destroyed by German Artillery

For the next 5 days the Battalion supported several different units in Normandy until the rest of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division could be brought ashore and reassembled. Among the units supported were the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 79<sup>th</sup> Infantry and 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division. The Battalion was returned to the control of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division on 8 July when the 8<sup>th</sup> ID replaced the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne in the line.

The 28<sup>th</sup> FA fought throughout the Normandy campaign from 1 July through the first days of August when the Battle for Normandy was declared complete. From Normandy, the Battalion moved ahead of the 8<sup>th</sup> ID for the Battle to Brittany to capture the critical port of Brest and the Corazon Peninsula. This was done while the rest of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army under General Patton moved rapidly across France towards the heart of Germany.



Bn on the move  
from France to Luxembourg



Three 28<sup>th</sup> Gunners  
pose for Life Magazine (1945)



BN FDC in Luxembourg

With Brest and the coast of France secured, the 8<sup>th</sup> Division conducted a 983 Kilometer road march across France to catch up with the rest of the allied armies, arriving into firing position in Luxembourg on 6 August. Luxembourg was a relatively quiet section of the front where the Battalion settled in until November when the Division was ordered into Germany proper to relieve the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division at the deadly Hurtgen Forest. "Hurtgen Hell" proved just as deadly to the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry as it had been for the 28<sup>th</sup> "Bloody Bucket" division with significant casualties in the infantry regiments. The 28<sup>th</sup> did its best to support the infantry by firing over 13,000 rounds during the month of November. Finally, the Division was able to dislodge the dug in Germans and broke out of the Hurtgen on 15 November.



Bn CP in the Hurtgen Forrest, Cold, dark and deadly

As the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was recovering from the bloody fighting in the Hurtgen when the German Army launched its largest counter attack of the war, north of the Division Sector in the Ardennes. As other units in the Corps were pulled off the line



to counter attack the Germans, the 8<sup>th</sup> ID was ordered to expand its sector to cover the movement to the counter attack. At one point the 28<sup>th</sup> Artillery was given a sector the same size as an Infantry Regiment.



The sign reads "Entering Duren, Compliments of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division"

By February 1945 , the German offensive had been stopped and the allies began to move on the offensive again with the mission of the 8<sup>th</sup> ID to attack into Germany and secure the town of Duran. During this assault, the Battalion spent many days constantly displacing, moving to a new positions, firing and moving again. Sometime as many as three to four moves in a 24 hour period. A majority of the targets were against German Artillery and Mortar batteries that had been spotted by the Battalion's Air Observers in their piper cubs.

After Duran was secured, the offense into Germany continued with the Battalion firing in support of the Division with the capture of Cologne and the Rhine to Ruhr Offensive. Even though the US Forces were deep into Germany itself, German resistance continued to be extremely fierce with the Battalion firing hundreds of rounds per day.



Some of the 13,000 German Prisoners  
The battalion had to guard



C Battery makes the  
final tactical move of the war

By the middle of April, the Ruhr campaign was concluded, and the mission of the Battalion changed from firing in support of the Division to a mission of prisoner control. At one point the Battalion was responsible for over 13,000 German prisoners. On 9 May Germany surrendered with the Battalion located near Gerries Germany under Command of the British 2<sup>nd</sup> Army.

### **Coming Home to Train for Another War (April-October 1945)**

The war in the Pacific continued to rage on and the Battalion along with the 8<sup>th</sup> Division was identified for transfer to the Pacific theater after refit in the United States. This meant that they would receive priority movement orders back home. After turning in their worn out guns and equipment, the battalion moved to La Havre France where it boarded a troop ship and set sail to the United States on 6 July. The Battalion landed in Hampton Va, on 10 July and were transported to Fort Leonard Wood Mo arriving there

on 13 July to find 12 brand new 155MM Howitzers and replacement vehicles and equipment and personnel awaiting them.



28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery  
HQ Building at Fort Leonard Wood



Fort Leonard Wood Front Gate 1945

After three weeks of leave for the veterans of “Gunshot”, the Battalion began to receive more new replacements and to once again start training for war, this time it was the Pacific theatre and the invasion of the Japanese home islands. The Atomic Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August and by 2 September World War 2 was over.

The Battalion received orders to deactivate on 4 September and its soldiers began signing out of the Battalion. On 25 October 1945, at the main parade ground at Fort Leonard Wood, a small ceremony was held and the colors of the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery were cased. The last soldier to sign out of the Battalion that afternoon was its commander, LTC Chesarek.

During World War 2 the Battalion had an impressive record and enjoyed some notoriety among Field Artillery units in the European Theatre.

**Campaign Streamers:** Normandy, Northern France, Central Europe, Rhineland

**Foreign Awards:** French Croix de Guerre w/Palm, Luxembourg Croix de Gerre

**Battle Stars:** 8

**Total Casualties:** 3 KIA, 29 WIA

**Combat River Crossings:** 4. Ay in Normandy, Erft Canal, Rhoer in Germany, Rhine in Germany

**Total Rounds fired:** 98,313 (A Battery 29, 553, B Battery 30,656, C Battery 38, 404)

**Major Equipment lost to Enemy action:** 4 M-4 Artillery Tractors (2 to Artillery, 1 to a mine), 8 Jeeps (artillery and mines), 6 2.5 ton trucks (Artillery), 1 L-4 Airplane (Artillery), 3 Mess Halls (Artillery), 2 aiming circles (Artillery)

**Miles Traveled in Convoy:** 2,112 Miles

**Firing Positions Occupied:** 112

**Countries Fired into:** 3 (France, Luxembourg, Germany)

**Longest move in 24 hours:** 91 miles

**Most rounds fired in 24 hours:** 2,430

**Awards for Bravery:** 22 Silver Stars, 60 Bronze Stars, 21 Air Medals.

## Korean War and the 1950s

The colors of the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery remained cased from 1945 to 1950. In September of 1950 the colors were uncased again at Fort Jackson South Carolina where the Battalion and the 8<sup>th</sup> ID had been activated in 1940. This time there would be no guns



for the unit to man. The mission of the Division and the Battalion was one of basic training. The Battalion Commander of the 28<sup>th</sup> FA was even branched Infantry!!

Later in 1954, the 8<sup>th</sup> Division was converted to a regular infantry division and the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery was returned to its status as a 155MM Towed Battalion. In 1957 the Division was transferred to Germany under Operation Gyroscope and the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery moved with the Division. Also, in 1957, the US Army Field Artillery was transitioned into the Regimental System and the Battalion was reflagged as the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. In 1960, the Battalion turned in its guns and the cannoneers became rocketeers when it was converted to a Nuclear Capable Honest John Rocket Battalion.

## The Cold War 1960s and 70s



Lacrosse Missile



7<sup>th</sup> Army Patch

In one of history's countless flag changes in the Army, the Battalion was relieved from its long assignment with the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the colors were cased once again. But this did not last long for the colors of the 28<sup>th</sup> flew again. In 1961 a brand new 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion with a brand new name was established at Fort Sill, Oklahoma with the activation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Missile Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. This Battalion was one of the Army's first Lacrosse Missile units and was formed, trained at Fort Sill and then transferred to Germany where it became part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade at Bleidorn Kaserne in Ansbach Germany. This was ironic because the flag of the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery would return to Bleidorn later as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. The 4<sup>th</sup> Missile Battalion deactivated in 1963 and the colors were cased once again.



M-55 (203MM SP)



The Gate Guardian of Bleidorn  
"Old Ziggy"

In 1966, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 75<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (203 MM SP) which was stationed at Hindenburg Kaserne in Ansbach was reflagged as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. In the same year the Battalion was moved from Hindenburg Kaserne, up the hill to Bleidorn Kaserne. In the same year the 2-28 FA was converted to one of the first 175MM SP Gun Battalions in Europe.



210 BDE Patch



M-107 175MM Gun



Front Gate at Bleidorn circa 1970

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery was assigned to the 210<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade which was located outside Nurenburg at Herzogenaurach Artillery Base. The Battalion was one of the “long shooters” of the Corps Artillery with the ability to reach out to over 40 Kilometer (25 miles) with its 175MM Projectiles. The Battalion also had the capability to “organically” switch gun tubes and become and 8inch (203MM) since both cannon tubes could be mounted on the same carriage.

The Battalion was organized with 5 subordinate batteries. Headquarters Battery which had the Battalion staff, Communications, Survey and Battalion FDC. 3 firing batteries with 4 guns each, and Service Battery which had the large ammunition section, fuel trucks, supply and Battalion Maintenance.

Like all other US field Artillery units in Germany, the Battalion would make between two and four trips to the US Army training area at Grafenwoehr which was about the only place in Germany where it could live fire the long range guns. Because of the range of the 175, the battalion was required to occupy positions on the far reaches of the installation. These “Graf” trips were about a month in duration. Also, the Battalion participated in many “maneuver rights” exercises on the German countryside with other units of the VII US Corps.

## The Cold War 1980s



M-109A1 at Bleidorn



2ACR Patch



155MM “Nuke” with propellant charge

In 1979 the organization of the Battalion changed once again when the 175MM gun was retired from the US inventory but the M-107 continued to soldier on with many other allied nations. The Battalion converted to the M-109A1, 155MM SP Howitzer while at the same time becoming nuclear capable. The mission for the Battalion was also changed and instead of being General Support to the VII Corps, it was placed in a Direct Support role to the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Cavalry.

Life in the Battalion was constantly hectic with three to four Graf rotations each year coupled with nuclear inspections and exercises on the German countryside. Other missions such as providing a guard force at the NATO-23 Nuclear Weapons storage depot continued to dominate the Battalion’s training schedule.

One of the things that made the 2<sup>nd</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery unique was that it was the only major unit on Bleidorn Kaserne. The Battalion shared the Kaserne with two smaller company sized units from the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, the 501<sup>st</sup> Military Police Company and the Division Band. The Battalion was also supported by a detachment from the 256 Maintenance Company which also lived on Bleidorn.



M-109A2



Battalion TACFIRE Shelter



HMMWV



Cargo HEMTT

The 1980s saw significant change for the Battalion in terms of organization and equipment. In early 1983 the Battalion received brand new M-109A2 Howitzers to replace the worn out A1's. In late 1984 the unit went through transition to the TACFIRE fire control system along with the other Battalions of the 210<sup>th</sup> Brigade. In 1986 and 87, new wheeled vehicles were received in the form of HMMWVs and HEMTT Ammo carriers as well as conversion to 3x8 where the unit received 4 more guns and transitioned to firing platoon operations.



Crest of the  
17<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment



New Sign at Bleidorn



C Battery 3/17 during Desert Storm

In 1989 in another of the Army's constant flag changes, the colors of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion were cased and the colors of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 17<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery were uncased at Bleidorn, Kaserne. Thus, this event ended a 20 year era of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery and Bleidorn Kaserne. The 3/17 FA deployed to Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield and fought during the war as a member of the 210<sup>th</sup> Brigade and Direct Support the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Cavalry.

Today, at Bleidorn Kaserne the sound of marching boots and M-109 fan towers does not echo through the installation. Shortly after the return of the 3/17FA from Desert Storm, the National Colors were lowered from the old flagpole in front of the Gym and the Battalion Commander, LTC Jeffery McCausland returned Bleidorn back to the original owners, the German government. Unlike other American Kasernes that were returned to the Germans at the end of the Cold War, Bleidorn was not abandoned and left to fall into disrepair. Not long after the US forces departed, the German National Police took possession of the Kaserne and used it as a training facility. The barracks buildings and the Mess Hall were renovated, the Gym, Battalion Maintenance, S-4 and many structures in the motor pool were torn down. The parade ground was converted to a parking lot.



M-110A2, 203MM SP Howitzer

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (USAR) (203MM SP) was deactivated in 1993 as the last active Battalion of the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment. It is our sincere hope that, in the near future, the Army will see fit to activate another Battalion of the 28<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment!