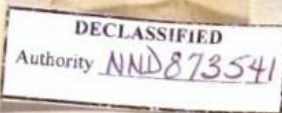


THE 12TH INFANTRY HISTORY AS RECORDED AT FORT LEWIS, FALL, 1965*

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Since its founding in 1776, our nation has become the world's strongest power. In this surge to power, she assured freedom for both her people and the people of other nations. She has met many crises in her defense of Freedom, and fled from none. She engaged in many battles, both internal and external, and always emerged a stronger and wiser nation.

The history of the Twelfth Infantry parallels the history of our mighty nation. The War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Indian Campaigns, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, and its present watchful wait to answer freedom's call--all of these are chapters in both the growth of America and the Twelfth Infantry.

The Revolutionary War was over and this nation's newly won independence was cherished by all Americans. Suddenly, war with the leading European powers, England and France, loomed on the horizon. England and France were plundering our merchant ships. The need for increasing the existing Army's strength was urgent. Therefore, on 3 July 1798, exactly twenty-two years and one day after the 13 colonies had adopted the Declaration of Independence, the Twelfth Infantry Regiment was formed. Fortunately, Jay's Treaty helped to avert war with England, and President Adams was able to negotiate a peaceful settlement with France. The need for a large peacetime army diminished. Therefore, on 15 June 1800, the Twelfth Infantry Regiment was disbanded.

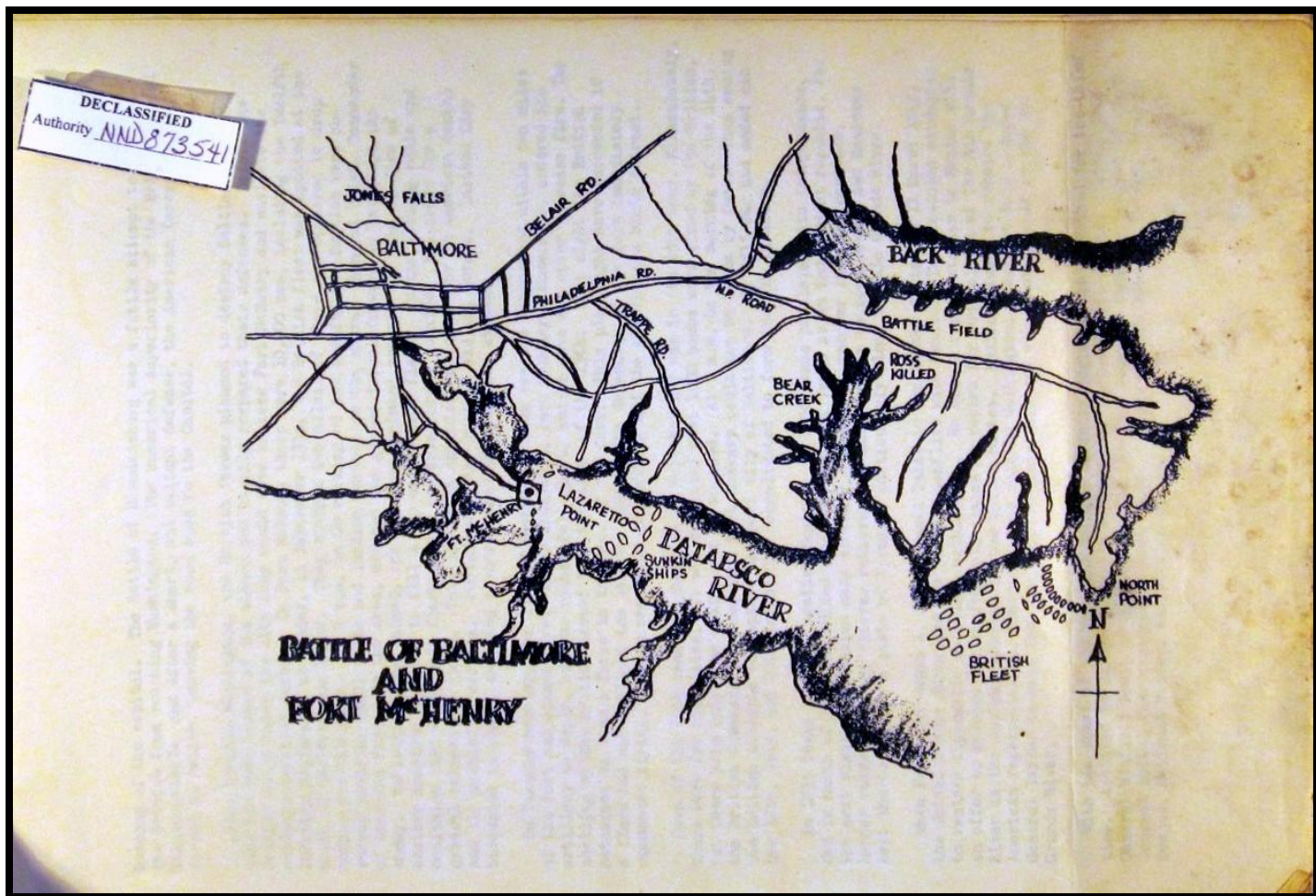
The crisis, however, was not over. The early 1800's found England and France at war. To prevent America from trading with Europe, both England and France began seizing American ships. Initially, feelings ran high against both England and France, but the unhealed scars of the Revolutionary War, the sale of arms by England to the Indians, and the forceful conscription of our merchant marine into English service, quickly focused a growing resentment against England.

In 1812 Congress declared war on England. Once more the United States found it necessary to increase its military strength. Under the Act of 26 June 1812, the Twelfth Infantry Regiment was again activated. During the War of 1812, the Twelfth was to receive its birth of fire. The Regiment was composed of ten companies, each consisting of 3 officers and 103 men. With its field officers staff section and its non-commissioned officers staff section, the total authorized strength of the Regiment was 1,073. It is doubtful, however, whether the Regiment ever reached its full strength.

The first campaigns of the war were in the West and the Twelfth Infantry did not participate. During the second phase of the war, the Niagara operations, the Twelfth engaged in its first battle. The battle took place at Black Rock, New York on 28 November 1812. The Twelfth fought as part of the attacking force against a well-trained English Army; however, the battle was not decisive.

The Northern campaigns marked the third phase of the war. On three separate occasions the Twelfth was part of an invading force into Canada. The first invasion made its way up the Saint Lawrence River under the command of General Wilkinson. On 11 November 1813, after a bloody two hour battle at Chrystler's Field, the campaign was ended indecisively for the winter. On 30 March 1814, the Twelfth again crossed the Canadian border, attacking the British at La Colle Mill. The attack failed and the troops withdrew to Plattsburg. In June the Twelfth again took part in an expedition into lower Canada. The battle of Odelltown was fought on 3 July 1814 with little success, thus ending the Northern Campaigns.

The Chesapeake Bay Region was the site of the fourth phase of the war. The Twelfth figured prominently at the battles of Blandensburg, Maryland on 23 August 1814, and at Fort Mchenry on 13 September 1814. The Chesapeake area campaign was a well-planned, coordinated, army and naval attack by the British. It was climaxed by the capture and



BATTLE OF BALTIMORE SEPTEMBER 13, 1814

burning of the capitol. The Battle of Blandensburg was a futile attempt to prevent the British from reaching Washington. The numerical superiority of the British proved insurmountable, and after a short, but valiant defense, the American forces were forced to retire, leaving the road open to the Capitol.

After burning Washington, the British forces planned to destroy Baltimore. The city had been warned of the attack and hastily prepared their defenses. Before the British could enter the city they would have to take Fort McHenry and navigate the obstacle-infested harbor. On Fort McHenry there were 10,000 men, including the Twelfth Infantry Regiment. On Sunday, 11 September 1814, the British fleet was spotted at the mouth of the Patapsco River. They stopped two miles off shore and appeared to drop anchor for the night. At 2 a.m. on the morning of the twelfth the British were observed lowering small boats and landing marines on the shore. General Smith, Commander of American forces in the area, ordered the ground forces forward to intercept the enemy. As battle lines formed, one American Regiment crossed the line of fire of another American Regiment to fill a gap on the left flank. In the ensuing panic and confusion, the whole left flank of the American forces buckled. The order for a general retreat was given. This 55 minute skirmish accounted for 35 American deaths and 115 wounded or missing. Fortunately, the British did not pursue. Instead they bivouaced in place, awaiting a coordinated land and sea attack.

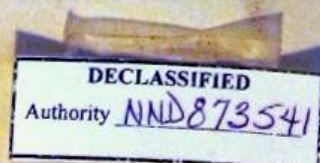
On Tuesday morning, the 13th of September, five vessels approached within two miles of the fort and opened fire. Major Armistead, Fort McHenry's Commander, ordered his artillery to reply, but the rounds fell short, and he gave the order to cease fire. The shelling by the British lasted into the night of the 13th. That night the British attempted to land a force in the rear of the fort. This plan might have succeeded if a flare had not outlined the landing party. The defenders of the fort immediately commenced firing, sinking one barge and driving off the others in a hasty retreat.

Dawn of the 14th came and shelling of Fort McHenry was in its 25th hour. Miraculously, there were few casualties. It was estimated that 1800 bombs were fired by the British, but there were only four deaths and 24 wounded. At 7 a.m. on the morning of the 14th, the British Commander decided that Fort McHenry could not be taken by force--thus ending the British attempts to capture the port city of Baltimore. By 1815 war had ended and the 12th, 14th, and 20th Infantries consolidated to form the 4th Infantry.

In 1835 Texas revolted against Mexico. In 1836 Texas proclaimed its independence, and in March of 1837 the United States recognized Texas as an independent republic. For the next eight years Mexico made sporadic attempts to recover its lost province. Border raids marked by extreme ruthlessness and ferocity by both Texans and Mexicans kept the country in a state of turmoil, particularly along the Rio Grande River.

When President James K. Polk annexed Texas to the United States on 11 March 1845, the United States inherited the Texans' conflict with Mexico. The President attempted to restore diplomatic relations with Mexico. He sent a representative to Mexico with an offer to release Mexico from old claims in return for recognition of the Rio Grande River as the Southern boundary of the United States. Mexico refused to receive the American representative. When the news reached Washington, President Polk ordered General Taylor to move into the disputed territory and establish himself on the Rio Grande River.

With the start of the war, the Twelfth Infantry Regiment was organized for the third time. Assigned to General Pierce's Brigade, the Regiment left in June 1847 to join General Winfield Scott in Mexico. During the five weeks it took the Brigade to reach General Scott, four engagements were fought. These were at National Bridge, Paso de Ovejas, National Bridge, and at Plan del Rio.



With their arrival the march on Mexico City began. The American forces were delayed at Contreras, because they encountered stiff Mexican opposition. Opposition was overcome, however, as the Twelfth Infantry spearhead a frontal attack on the fortified positions. Companies "B", "C", "H", and "K" pursued the fleeing Mexicans only to encounter a much larger force under the leadership of General Santa Ana. Although greatly outnumbered, these four companies kept the Mexican Army at bay until reinforced by General Scott. This proved to be the turning point of the war and on 23 August 1847, Mexico accepted an armistice.

Fighting, however, resumed on 7 September and General Scott again set out for Mexico City. This time the Twelfth Infantry, which had borne the brunt of the fighting so far, was so depleted that it could not continue the march. They were not forgotten and General Scott asked for the Twelfth to rejoin his force outside the Mexican capitol so that they could be present when the city surrendered. Under the treaty ending the Mexican War, Mexico not only recognized the Rio Grande River as the boundary of Texas, it also ceded what is now the entire Southwestern United States. In return the United States agreed to pay Mexico \$15,000,000 and assumed all unpaid claims against Mexico. Once peace had been established, the regiment was deactivated on 8 June 1848.

During the 1850's the verbal war over slavery increased in intensity. There seemed to be no peaceful solution and the nation ran an inexorable course towards the Civil War. The election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency in 1860 turned the verbal war into a real one. On 12 April 1861, Confederate cannons began a 34 hour bombardment of Fort Sumpter, South Carolina. This commenced what was to be the largest and longest major conflict of the Nineteenth Century.

Volunteers flocked to the recruiting offices. The Army reorganized, and on 4 May 1861, by personal decree of President Lincoln, the colors of the Twelfth Infantry were called once more into action. The Regiment was organized at Fort Hamilton in New York harbor. On 5 March 1862 it moved to Washington, D.C. and was attached to Brigadier General Sykes' Brigade as a part of the Army of the Potomac. The Army of the Potomac then moved to Hampton Roads to start its march up the Virginia Peninsula. The first campaign on the Peninsula was at Yorktown, and lasted from 5 April to 4 May with General McClellan in command.

The Army disembarked at Fort Monroe and marched up the Peninsula without incident. It finally halted at the Warwick River, near Yorktown, and the Union Army prepared to lay siege to the town. The Twelfth was positioned directly in front of Yorktown. For one month the men of the Regiment drilled, built roads and trenches, and guarded strategic posts. One night, without a shot being fired, the Confederate forces swiftly and silently evacuated the city.

Union Forces then marched towards Richmond, Virginia and arrived at Gaines' Mill on 26 June 1862. Once again the Twelfth was located in the exact center of the Union force. It was at Gaines' Mill that General Lee attempted to annihilate the Army of the Potomac. His plan of attack was to pierce the Union center and defeat the severed Armies in two separate battles. Despite repeated attempts by General Lee to penetrate the center portion of the line, the Twelfth stood firm. Of the 470 men of the Twelfth who entered the battle, 212 were casualties. Because of the Twelfth Infantry's valiant effort, the Army of the Potomac was saved. This gallant action is commemorated on the regimental shield by the two Moline Crosses which represent the iron fastenings of the millstones at Gaines' Mill. On 30 June the Twelfth led a charge at Malvern Hill which caused General Lee to retreat and abandon his attempt to destroy the Army of the Potomac.

The next campaign saw the Twelfth engage the Confederate forces at the Battle of Cedar Mountain. One of the members of Company "A", Corporal John Younger was awarded

the Medal of Honor for bravery during this battle. Mistakenly, the Regiment's own batteries were subjecting the Twelfth to fire. Corporal Younger was sent back to warn the batteries and though badly wounded, he rushed in between the guns to deliver his message. A short time later, the Twelfth became actively engaged in the Second Battle of Bull Run. Again the Twelfth's mission was to hold the center of the line. Many attacks were lodged against the center, but all were repulsed. Eventually both flanks retreated, and in order to avoid encirclement, the Twelfth had to withdraw.

With the fall of 1862 approaching, Lee and Davis decided to take the offensive and invade the North. Politically they thought a successful invasion would make the Northern population demand a peace settlement; provoke the secession of Maryland; and evoke recognition, or the possibility of forceful intervention by the French or British. Militarily, Lee hoped to destroy the Army of the Potomac, open the route to such cities as Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia, and to cut Federal communications with the states in the West. General McClellan, Commander of the Union forces, learned of Lee's plans, and decided his best defense would be a strong offense. He therefore rushed to meet Lee at Antietam, Maryland.

The battle lines were drawn and the Twelfth Infantry Regiment was again in the center of the line. The battle raged for two days and finally Lee withdrew. Tactically, Antietam was a draw. Strategically, it was a Northern victory—since Lee was forced to postpone his invasion of the North and once more assume the defensive.

Lee retreated to Virginia while the Twelfth was sent to Shepherdstown Ford, Maryland, and remained there from 19 September until 29 October. General Burnside was placed in command of the Army of the Potomac and he decided to follow Lee into Virginia. The campaign with Burnside in Virginia opened with the skirmishes at Snicker's Gap. In the movement towards Fredericksburg the Twelfth Infantry marched at the head of General Hooker's Division. The second day of battle found the Twelfth directly in line with the enemy's fire, prone upon their faces and lying side by side with the dead from the battle of the day before. Unable to eat or take a drink of water without drawing fatal fire from the enemy, and unable to return this fire, the Twelfth and a brigade of recruits held the Confederate Army in its earthworks for twelve hours, on Sunday, 14 December, until relieved by the First Minnesota Infantry after dark.

On the following night Burnside decided to withdraw. The withdrawal was to be covered by Buchanan's Brigade of which the Twelfth was a part. The battalions of the Twelfth occupied the outskirts of town and were the last to withdraw. Burnside then attempted to turn Lee's flank. The result was the famous "mud march" in which the Twelfth participated. Bogged in mud, the turning movement failed. At Fredericksburg on 29 June 1863, the Twelfth held the Germania plank road and with the defeat of the Union armies withdrew to the North.

Lee then decided on a Northern campaign, this time having as his objective the State of Pennsylvania. Keeping his right flank at Fredericksburg, Lee extended his left until it reached Pennsylvania. General Hooker requested permission to attack Lee's right flank at Fredericksburg. When refused this permission, General Hooker resigned, Meade replaced Hooker and it was Meade who led the Union Army in the epic struggle at Gettysburg. The Union Army occupied Cemetery Hill, Round Top Hill, and Little Round Top, while a few hundred yards away, the Confederate forces occupied Seminary Ridge.

The battle of Gettysburg began on 1 July 1863. On the first day the Confederates made numerous attempts to take Round Top Hill. Two of these attempts very nearly succeeded. The Twelfth assumed command of Round Top on the second day and after

numerous attacks, the Confederates realized that any further attacks on Round Top would be futile. The battle raged into the third day and Lee decided to stake all upon a final charge. General Pickett was designated to take Cemetery Hill. The famed Pickett's charge failed and Lee retreated to Williamsburg. The Regiment pursued Lee into Virginia on 24 July. Upon reaching Virginia, the second battalion was suddenly sent to New York to quell draft riots. They stayed in New York from 16 August to 14 September, rejoining the Regiment at Culpeper, Virginia, on 22 September.

During the winter of 1863-64, General Ulysses S. Grant assumed command of the Union Forces. Grant's plan of battle against Lee was that of relentless pursuit. He had defeated the Confederate forces in the West with this policy, and attempted to defeat Lee in the same manner. Lee immediately retreated to the Wilderness, the same forest in which Lee had previously bottled Hooker. Grant pursued. The Twelfth fought in the Wilderness on 5 May and again at the Battle of Spottsylvania on 8 May. Neither battle yielded decisive results because of the terrain on which they were fought. These battles ended the participation of the Twelfth Regiment in the Civil War.

The next era of our nation's history in which the Twelfth participated was the winning of the West. From 1868 until 1898 the Twelfth engaged in five major Indian campaigns. These campaigns are represented on the regimental crest by a wigwam, and each of the five poles represent a campaign.

During this period the companies within the Twelfth were often separated by hundreds of miles. In April 1869 the Twelfth occupied 11 different posts spanning 700 miles in Arizona, Nevada and California. In 1873 shortly after the Modoc Indians massacred General E. R. S. Canby and his Peace Commission, Companies "E" and "G" of the Regiment were dispatched to California to apprehend the Modoc Indians. After three months of severe fighting, the Modocs were apprehended and their chief, Captain Jack was hanged. Companies "E" and "G" then formed the guard which took the remainder of the tribe East.

The Nez Perce Indian outbreak occurred in the summer of 1877. Companies "B", "C", "G", "F", and "I" were ordered from their respective posts to the scene of hostilities. These same companies pursued the Nez Perce from Northern Idaho, across Yellow Stone, as far east as the Missouri, where the 5th Infantry Regiment blocked and captured the fleeing Indians.

The summer of 1878 found the Twelfth subduing the Bannock Indian tribe in Northern Idaho. In August 1881, Arizona was threatened by the Apache uprisings. The services of the Twelfth were again required. As scattered Companies assembled in the Arizona Territory and the Apaches were quieted before the end of the year.

From 1882 to 1887, the Twelfth was stationed in New York State. In 1885, "E" Company was given the honor of being Guard of Honor for the funeral of Ulysses S. Grant. In 1887 "A" Company was selected to guard the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.

In the latter part of 1887 the Twelfth again ventured Westward. In 1890 Companies "B" and "C" patrolled the Brule Indian Reservation in the Dakotas, while Companies "A", "G" and "H" took an active part in the campaign to capture the mighty Sitting Bull. In 1891 Company "E" traveled to Saint Louis to attend the funeral of General Sherman, and in 1892, "E" Company traveled to Chicago to partake in the dedication ceremonies of the World's Fair.

As the Nineteenth Century drew to a close, American relations with Spain reached a new low. The brutal methods used by the Spanish General Weyler in Cuba; the

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publication of a letter from the Spanish Minister characterizing the President as a weakling; and finally the sinking of the Maine in Havana, led the United States to declare war on Spain on 22 April 1898.

Three days prior to the Declaration of War the Twelfth Infantry moved to Chickamauga Park, Georgia in order to prepare for their movement to Cuba. As members of the Third Brigade, the Twelfth sailed under the command of General Chaffee and landed in Southern Cuba on 20 June 1898. Their mission was to capture Santiago. Slight resistance was encountered at Guascama on 25 July, but was easily repulsed as the Spaniards continued to withdraw toward Santiago.

Santiago was defended by two forts. One, San Juan Hill, was directly in front of the city and the other, El Caney, was approximately four and one-half miles northeast of San Juan Hill. The forces were to be split into two groups, each attacking a fort. It was envisioned that El Caney would fall in a matter of hours after which the friendly troops would reinforce those attacking the fortress at San Juan.

The Twelfth was part of the force which attacked El Caney. General Chaffee was in command. At 0600 hours, 1 July the artillery began its bombardment. At 0800 hours the infantry was ordered to advance. As they approached the hill on which El Caney was located, a murderous volley of fire compelled the infantry to seek cover in the grass--thus stalling the attack. There they remained until 1500 when a second attempt was made to storm the hill. The Twelfth spearheaded this charge and although they suffered heavy casualties, El Caney was taken. This action is represented on the regimental crest by the line of parapets extending across the shield. Although having eaten nothing since early morning, General Chaffee's Brigade was ordered forward to render assistance to the force attacking San Juan Hill. The movement on line is best described by a participating officer: "In spite of the confusing conditions, the formations were effected without hesitation. Although under stinging fire, companies rushed through the jungle, across knee-deep streams and over river bottoms thickly set with barb-wire entanglements."

The battle raged for two days with the Twelfth becoming so depleted, they were unable to participate in the final charge. So understrength was the Regiment at this time, they were assigned the mission of guarding the road between El Caney and Santiago while the remainder of the American forces marched on Santiago. On 14 July the city surrendered to American forces and the Regiment went forward to participate in the ceremonies.

With the end of the war American attention was directed to the Philippine Islands. Collapse of the Spanish power and the approaching cession of the islands to the United States brought a rapid deterioration of Filipino-American relations. The Filipinos were determined to be independent, and fighting broke out around Manila.

On 12 March 1899, the Twelfth Infantry Regiment left New York for the Philippine Islands. The Regiment moved via the Suez Canal and the Indian Ocean and arrived at Manila on 14 April 1899. The campaign actively against insurgents near the city of Manila and on the Island of Luzon. An officer of the Twelfth describes the action against the guerrillas: "The enemy could not shoot with the result that an enveloping movement of both flanks and a combined frontal attack were possible. The movement was a brilliant success. Enemy resistance was broken instantly and a large part of the force was captured or disabled."

The Regiment returned to the United States in 1902. The First Battalion was sent to the Islands of Luzon and Samara in 1904 to quell a threatened guerrilla uprising.

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They returned to the United States in 1906 when the threat subsided. The sea lion, brandishing a sword and outlined against a gold background on the upper half of the battalion crest, was taken from the Philippine Coat of Arms to commemorate these campaigns.

In 1914, what at the time was considered "The War to end all wars", threw Europe into a state of turmoil. After Germany continued to disregard America's neutrality, America declared war. The Twelfth assembled in San Francisco to prepare for movement overseas. Suddenly they were subjected to an influenza epidemic, and a large portion of the men were quarantined. The remainder of the Regiment was assigned a training mission. Later in the year a large number of personnel from the Twelfth were assigned as part of the American Expeditionary Force in Siberia. When these gaps were filled, and it appeared that the Twelfth would soon see action in Germany, hostilities ended. The Twelfth had been anxious to discharge a great duty. Circumstances denied them the opportunity and they were forced to learn the meaning of the expression, "They also serve who only stand and wait."

* On 15 August 1927 the Twelfth was transferred from the Eighth Infantry Division to the Fourth Division. From 1927 to 1933 the Twelfth resided in Washington, D. C. serving as the Honor Guard Unit for Presidential inaugurations and official functions of State. During this assignment the Twelfth became known as the "President's Own."

On 18 August 1933 the Twelfth was reassigned to the Eighth Division and trained at Fort Howard, Maryland. The rest of the 1930's passed quickly and uneventfully.

Meanwhile war in Europe became unavoidable. Hitler and Mussolini's Fascist ideas threatened the liberty of all peace loving countries of the world. The Twelfth Infantry Regiment was consolidated at Arlington Cantonment, on 3 September 1940. After much training, the Regiment sailed for Europe on 18 January 1944 aboard the USAT George Washington. On 29 January the Twelfth landed in Liverpool and moved to Southern England to commence with rehearsals for landing on the Continent.

* On the morning of 6 June 1944, the Twelfth landed on Utah Beach in Normandy. Although under heavy shelling, the Regiment moved rapidly inland, made a 45 degree right turn, and attacked the enemy. Under the brilliant and fiery leadership of Colonel Russell "Red" Reeder, who advanced with a line of scouts, enemy strongpoints were rapidly reduced. Conspicuous gallantry, intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty, and extraordinary heroism were the order of the day -- by night the Twelfth had advanced six and one-half miles and had their beachhead on the Continent. As each day passed the Twelfth met increasing enemy resistance. Vicious battles were fought at Bandinville, Neuville, Emondeville, Azeville, Chateau Deaudinville, Montebourg and St Floxel Road. It was at St Floxel Road that Colonel Reeder, the Regimental Commander, was badly wounded--a wound that would eventually cost him his leg. Colonel Reeder was replaced by Colonel James S. Lockett and the Regiment pushed on towards Cherbourg. The First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry was led by Colonel John Merrill during the action at Cherbourg. On 30 June 1944 Cherbourg fell, the first major port to be taken in France. After 24 days of continuous fighting the Regiment had suffered casualties of 118 officers and 1832 enlisted men.

The Twelfth now turned Southward towards Orglandes. The enemy had been improving his defenses for nearly a month, and the hedgerows that characterized this area bristled with machineguns and Mark IV tanks. Under heavy fire and through vicious hedgerows, the Twelfth pushed south and took the towns of La Moientrie, Neuville, Sainteny, Les Forges, Roffeville, La Roserie, and La Maugerie.

Now the Twelfth had their sights set on Paris. Suddenly the Germans launched a

strong counter-attack at Mortain. The period August 9-12 saw one of the fiercest and bloodiest contests in the history of the Twelfth. The S.S. Adolph Hitler Panzer Division, possibly Hitler's best and most fanatical unit was pitted against the Twelfth. A reputed twenty battalions of artillery, ideal observation, numerous tanks and an excellent network of sunken roads for their maneuvers gave the Germans many advantages. The Germans also knew that this was their last chance to split the Allied forces in France. All of these factors caused the Germans to fight with a fierce determination and a tenacity the Twelfth had not felt before.

Late on the third day of battle, the Twelfth received armored support. The morning of the 12th saw the Regiment attack with renewed vigor and courage, sending the enemy reeling in full retreat. After Mortain enemy resistance slackened and the Twelfth roared towards Paris. As dawn broke on 25 August 1944, soldiers of the Twelfth, accompanied by the Second French Armored Division, marched down the Boulevard d'Orleans. Paris was liberated; the biggest news the world had heard since D-Day.

The coming of autumn in Europe found the Twelfth Infantry slugging ahead. Each dawn saw the Twelfth slashing a path and drawing nearer to the soil of Germany. German retreat continued and on 13 September the Twelfth Infantry first set foot in Germany. Next loomed the Siegfried Line and the famous West Wall. Rugged terrain, thick forests, deep-cut streams, steep slopes and round topped hills heightened the hazards of progress. On the morning of 19 September a strong force of the S.S. Regiment "Deutschland", supported by Mark IV tanks and heavy artillery counterattacked along the Siegfried Line. The Twelfth held firm the entire day, repulsing each enemy attack. The evening the Twelfth breached the vaunted Siegfried Line.

October passed quickly for the Twelfth. It had deployed in the vicinity of Holzheim, Belgium, spending most of the month in comparative quiet and recuperation. The night of 6 November the Twelfth received the order to relieve the 28th Division. Due to the suddenness of the order, prior planning and reconnaissance were impossible. The entire march took place during a storm and in darkness. Plans were formulated enroute. Muddy, narrow roads caused vehicles to slide into ditches and the blackness of the night hampered their removal. At 0200 hours, on the morning of the seventh, the relief was accomplished. Concerning the relief, Major General Raymond O. Burton, Fourth Division Commander, said: "Seldom in military history does there appear a troop movement that equals this performance by the Twelfth Infantry. Only well-trained and well-disciplined men with excellent leadership could have accomplished this feat."

Now the Regiment had the tremendous task of clearing the enemy to the Eastern edge of the Huertgen Forest and capturing the towns of Vossenack and Schmidt. The Battle of the Huertgen Forest, also known as the "Forest of Deaths," was to last a full month and was characterized by some of the bloodiest fighting of the war. On 7 December 1944, after one month of fighting in which the Twelfth suffered 1493 battle casualties, the Huertgen Forest was cleared and the Regiment reached the Roer Plain.

With spirit high the Regiment made a motor move from Schevenhuetten, Germany to Junglinster, Luxembourg, supposedly for a long period of rest and rehabilitation. Unfortunately, it lasted only two days. The great German counter-offensive began on 16 December 1944. It was a daring and clever move, and executed with every means of deception at the enemy's command. Within 24 hours, the Germans had penetrated American lines in the North—the center of the bulge—to a distance of thirty miles and had overrun 60 miles of American front. German infantry divisions pushed through this gap allowing the Panzer Divisions to break loose and race for Liege and the Meuse River. The story of the Twelfth Infantry is best told by the following Distinguished Unit Citation: "The War Department, in the name of the President of the

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United States, as public evidence of the deserved honor and distinction, cited the Twelfth Infantry Regiment in its General Orders, as follows: The Twelfth Infantry Regiment is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy from 16 to 24 December 1944. With its weary ranks depleted following a month of bitter fighting in the Huertgen Forest, the Regiment moved on 9 December 1944 into a defensive position on a front extending ten miles along the Saar River east of the city of Luxembourg, there to rest and await replacements. At dawn on 16 December, the Germans launched a general offensive against the central position of the Western Front implementing the assault to the limit of their resources. The enemy quickly made substantial penetrations in areas north of the Twelfth Infantry position, and, as it later became apparent, intended to place the southern shoulder of his offensive squarely within its sector, as he drove to expand south to match his seeming success in the north. After intensive artillery preparation, which destroyed all wire communications, two regiments of the 213th Volksgrenadier Division were thrown across the Saar River on 16 December, with the remainder of this division and one additional regiment, reinforced, following on the 17th. At stake was dominating ground and the road net which would open to the enemy the city of Luxembourg. With crushing weight, the enemy swirled around the defenders, making infiltrations of battalion strength to depths of four kilometers. By nightfall of 16 December, substantial elements of six companies of the Twelfth had been surrounded or isolated. Yet, conscious of the imperative necessity of containing the initial German drive at all costs, the courageous units held firm. On successive days the regiment was subjected to intensive shelling and enemy attempts to storm villages and positions to which the determined defenders tenaciously clung. With great skill and fortitude the resolute American infantrymen disputed, villages, house by house, and ground, yard by yard, inflicting such fearful casualties on the enemy that by 22 December the strength of the 213th Volksgrenadier Division had been reduced by one half and its ability to operate offensively destroyed. At no point had the regimental main line of resistance been pierced. Faithful to its rich tradition and with utter devotion to the task at hand, the Twelfth Infantry met the critical urgency of the occasion and, undismayed by heavy odds, prevented the enemy from thrusting south, denied him vital military and political installations, seizure and exploitation of which would have had grave consequences, and held a position which enabled other units to batter the enemy flank when the heroic Twelfth was relieved on 24 December. The courage and fighting determination of each member of the regiment in the stand along the Saar River presents an inspiring example of the invincibility of free men at arms.

By virtue of this citation, personnel of the Regiment are authorized to wear on the right breast of the uniform the distinctive Distinguished Unit Citation badge."

The counter offensive halted, the Twelfth once more pushed into Germany. On 28 January 1945 the First Battalion spearheaded a surprise assault on Elcherath - the first town on German soil recaptured since the breakthrough on 16 December 1944. The First Battalion captured Ihren and Schweiler while the Second Battalion took Wintersheid and Bleialf. Snow covered the icy ground; temperatures were below freezing; roads were almost impassable; but still the Twelfth pushed on. Mullenborn and Roth fell to the First Battalion while the Third Battalion took Bewingen. With the crossing of the Dohn River and the capture of the town of Walsdorf by the First Battalion and Zilsdorf by the Third Battalion, the Regiment was finally halted. From 13 March to 20 March they showered, ate hot food and took a well earned rest.

On 21 March the regiment began its push into Southern Germany. The Rhine River was crossed at Worms on 30 March and towns began to fall in rapid succession. Rottingen, Rothenburg, and Aalen were captured by the Twelfth. The Danube, Lech and Amper Rivers were crossed by 30 April as the Regiment sped toward the foothills of the Bavarian Alps. Finally on 6 May 1945, the Regiment received the official report

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of the German surrender. The cost of victory could now be measured: From Utah Beach on 6 June 1944, to the German surrender, 1,431 officers and men of the Twelfth Infantry killed in action; 5,123 wounded; a total of 6,554 casualties.

* The campaigns fought were as follows:

Normandy	----	6 June 1944 - 24 July 1944
Northern France	----	25 July 1944 - 14 September 1944
Rhineland	----	15 September 1944 - 21 March 1945
Ardennes-Aisace	----	15 December 1944 - 25 January 1945
Central Europe	----	22 March 1945 - 11 May 1945

From mid-May until 10 June the Regiment occupied the area of Windsheim.

On 3 July the Twelfth sailed aboard the S.S. "Sea Bass" and arrived at Camp Shanks, New York 12 July 1945. Thirty day leaves were granted to all. As the Regiment reassembled at Camp Butner, North Carolina, V-J Day, 2 September 1945, officially brought the war to an end. The Twelfth had added another chapter to its glorious history.

On 27 February 1946 the Twelfth was deactivated, marking the end of a long, unbroken, and distinguished military service, dating back to May 1861. In July 1947 the Regiment was reactivated at Fort Ord, California as a training unit. As part of the Fourth Infantry Division, the Regiment moved to Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1950. After completion of its basic and advanced training, the Twelfth sailed for Europe on 6 June 1951. For five years the Regiment took its stand in bolstering the NATO forces against the threat of an expanding Iron Curtain.

In September 1956 the Twelfth returned to the United States and was assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington. In April 1957 the Twelfth underwent a radical change. The Fourth Infantry was reorganized under the Pentomic concept. The Twelfth Infantry Regiment became the 1st Battle Group, Twelfth Infantry. The Second Battle Group, Twelfth Infantry was assigned to the First Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kansas and the Third Battle Group, Twelfth Infantry was assigned to the Seventy-Ninth Infantry Division, a reserve unit in Pennsylvania. The traditions of the Twelfth Infantry Regiment were aptly carried on by the First Battle Group, Twelfth Infantry.

* In Operation Desert Rock the Twelfth Infantry became the first unit to train with newly developed tactical atomic weapons. In Exercise Rocky Shoals a task force from the Twelfth Infantry were the first US Army troops to be lifted by helicopter from the decks of a Navy Aircraft Carrier. The lift carried the Twelfth far behind the beach head onto an objective in the first major amphibious operation conducted since World War II. The Twelfth Infantry participated in Exercise Indian River and Exercise Dry Hills in Yakima, Washington, and in January 1960, after intensive training at Camp Denali, Alaska, successfully participated in Exercise Little Bear, the unit's first arctic maneuver.

The Twelfth Infantry continued in the forefront of the Fourth Infantry Division during Exercise "UKHORN" and in May 1962 in Exercise "MESA DRIVE" at Yakima, Washington. The following winter the Twelfth Infantry returned to Central Alaska and distinguished itself against Alaska's Twenty-Third Infantry during Exercise "TIMBERLINE". Later that year the Twelfth Infantry participated in Exercise "COULEE CROSS" against the Fifth Mechanized Division.

On 1 October 1963, the First Battle Group was reorganized under the ROAD concept. From the Battle Group, the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry was designated the "WILD WARRIOR" Battalion by its Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel John W. Callaghan.



To test the ROAD concept, the "RED WARRIORS" moved to Alaska to participate in their arctic maneuver exercise, "POLAR SEIGE". The exercise was conducted approximately 350 miles northeast of Anchorage, Alaska in the Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Greely, Healy Lake Area. Exercise POLAR SEIGE was a two-sided, semi-controlled, joint/combined field exercise employing the ROAD Brigade organization as the primary ground maneuver element.

The First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry was attached to the Second Brigade. The Brigade was supported by air mobile, aerial reconnaissance, tactical air and unconventional warfare operations. The exercise was conducted under conditions simulating general war, employing actual and simulated weapons. It also included the joint employment of air and ground forces. Emphasis was placed on training of the individual soldier and airman in cold weather operations.

Two major objectives of the exercise were:

- 1) To evaluate and determine the capability of the ROAD Brigade as modified and reinforced for northern operations to engage in the offensive and mobile defense while operating as an independent, self-sustaining, combined arms task force.
- 2) To determine the capability of the independent ROAD Brigade to establish and maintain command and control of forces, to include an evaluation of the brigade command post organization and adequacy of communications between the brigade command post, assigned forces and attached forces. The field exercise was conducted from 30 January 1964 to 10 February 1964.

Soon after its return from Alaska, the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry was committed to the field training exercise MARCH HARE, conducted from 2 - 7 March on the Fort Lewis Reservation. This exercise gave the battalion an opportunity to prepare actual defensive positions and served to emphasize the defensive capabilities of the unit.

The next field training exercise, COULEE CROSS, was conducted at the Yakima Firing Center during the period 28 September to 10 October. The First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry participated in this exercise as a member of the Second Brigade. COULEE CROSS included a field test of radiation exposure reporting for the Combat Developments Command, Army Training Tests for the Thirty-Fifth Engineer Battalion and the Sixty-Third Ordnance Battalion, a prolonged ground attack and two simultaneous river crossings. Among the valuable lessons learned during this exercise were the procedures and requirements of sustained operations, particularly in regard to logistical support, communications and medical evacuation. The exercise provided an excellent "Work Out" for the Division, Brigade and Battalion Standing Operating Procedures.

Under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel James Rader Young, who took command of the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry on 11 October 1964, the Twelfth Infantry continued to excel in both field and garrison operations.

During the period 14 - 19 December the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry was further distinguished by the domination of the Fourth Infantry Division Crew Served Weapons Competition. Teams from the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry captured first place in 4.2mm mortars, 81mm mortar and 3.5 rocket launcher; second place in the 106 recoilless rifle.

The Red Warriors next participated in the Fourth Infantry Division Field Exercise MARCH HARE II. It was a two-sided, semi-controlled field training exercise conducted

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on the Fort Lewis Reservation during the period 1 - 10 April 1965. During this exercise the battalion conducted a Night River Crossing which was accomplished with complete success. Some of the important objectives achieved were: to exercise air-ground operations, to emphasize electronic warfare operations, and to exercise intelligence collection and counterintelligence capability of the Division.

From 17 - 26 May, the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry participated in the Fourth Infantry Division Counterinsurgency exercise FRONTIER POST I for the Special Action Back-up Force (SABF) in the Olympic National Forest. The concept of the operation was that an area of Northern Freeland (Thailand), which in reality was the Olympic National Forest, was designated as H Province. The Second Brigade was given the mission of defending H Province. The exercise was designed to test the capability of this Battalion to conduct counterinsurgency and counter guerrilla operations against a hardy guerrilla force adapted to prolonged periods of physical hardships and well adjusted to conditions prevailing in the area in which he operates.

During this exercise the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry, "Red Warriors" were required to employ saturation patrols, population control measures, and the establishment of counterintelligence programs. In so doing they completely dominated and eventually eliminated all guerrilla activity in their area of responsibility.

In final analysis the First Battalion, Twelfth Infantry further enhanced its reputation as the number one Battalion in the Fourth Infantry Division.

**This was the brief history that was given to the men of the 12th Infantry
who arrived in December 1965 to train for deployment to Vietnam
at Fort Lewis Washington**

THE 12TH INFANTRY
A BRIEF HISTORY

One of the first and foremost of America's regiments, the 12th Infantry, began its career on 3 July 1798 when the nation was threatened by European powers who were plundering our Merchant Marine. It was not until the war of 1812 that the men of the 12th saw action against the enemy. After campaigning in New York, the 12th was ordered to Fort Mchenry, Maryland. There, after withstanding 25 hours of continuous bombardment, 500 men of the 12th repulsed the assaults of England's finest troops. It was this same bombardment that inspired Francis Scott Key to compose the lyrics of our National Anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner".

In 1846, when the nation was at war with Mexico, the 12th Infantry was again called to active duty. The Regiment landed at Vera Cruz and marched overland to join General Winfield Scott's Army at Puebla, about two-thirds of the way to Mexico City. After fighting its way across Mexico, the 12th was instrumental in the assault to Mexico City, most notably by its charge at Contreras, a heavily fortified town guarding Mexico City.

When the War between the states began in 1861, the 12th Infantry was assigned to the Army of the Potomac and fought in ten of the eleven battles waged by that Army. The Army landed at Fort Monroe, Virginia, during March 1862 and advanced to the outskirts of Richmond. The Confederate Forces under General Robert E. Lee launched a ferocious attack on 21 July 1862. The brunt of the assault was on Gaines Mill, the sector held by the 12th. The Regiment numbered 470 men and the concentrations massed against it were enormously greater. Lee's forces attacked repeatedly. The 12th, without breastworks, held every inch of ground for over 6 hours. This gallant action is commemorated on the regimental shield by two moline crosses which represent the iron fastening of the millstones at Gaines Mill. Other battles and campaigns in which they participated were the Second Battle of Manassas, Antietam Creek, Fredericksburg, Chancellersville, Gettysburg, the Virginia and Wilderness Campaigns, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor and Petersburg.

The role of the 12th Infantry in opening the American West is represented on the regimental crest by a wigwam, the five poles of which represent five major Indian campaigns. During this period, in campaigns of forty to fifty men, the regiment occupied outposts from the Mississippi to Pacific, from Fort Apache to Camp Hall, Idaho.

When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, the Regiment embarked for Cuba where the most memorable of their accomplishments was the storming and capture of El Caney, a fortress with thick walls 20 feet high. This action is represented on the regimental crest by the line of parapets extending across the shield. From Cuba the unit shipped to the Philippines where it engaged and held to quell the insurrection. The upper half of the shield honors these campaigns by an open field of solid gold on which rests a sea lion brandishing a sword, a device taken from the Philippine coat of arms.

The 12th Infantry was next in action on Utah Beach, 6 June 1944. For six successive days, the order for attack was carried out. From the beachhead the Regiment fought on through Cherbourg, St. Lo, and Mortain where it inflicted a decisive defeat to a Nazi counterattack. After the bitter hedgerow combat at Mortain, the 12th continued to lead the way across Europe -- Paris, the Siegfried Line, Hurtgen Forest, Ardennes and finally the sweep through Bavaria. In the Ardennes, the 12th's epic defense of Luxemburg will above all be remembered. For its gallant action in containing the Nazi counterattack in this area of the Bulge, the Regiment received the Distinguished Unit Citation. The War Department General Order awarding this Citation included the following sentence: "The courage and fighting determination of each member of the Regiment in the stand along the Sauer River presented an inspiring example of the invincibility of free men at arms". To this might be added the invincibility of free men Ducti Amore Patriae. "Led By Love of Country".

The 12th Infantry was inactivated 27 February 1946 but was reactivated to join the 4th Infantry Division on 15 July 1947. With the 4th Division the 12th traveled to Germany to take its place among the NATO ground forces deterring the aggressive ambitions of the USSR. In September of 1956, the 12th Infantry returned to the United States and was assigned to Fort Lewis where in April 1957 it underwent a pentomic re-organization, becoming the 1st Battle Group, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division. The 1st Battle Group, 12th Infantry continued to carry on traditions of the old 12th Infantry Regiment. It participated in almost every maneuver and exercise conducted by the 4th Division to include many firsts. In Operation Desert Rock the 12th Infantry became the first unit to train with the newly developed tactical atomic weapons. In Exercise Rocky Shoals a task force from the 12th Infantry was the first to have U.S. Army troops lifted by helicopter from the decks of a Navy Aircraft Carrier to an objective far behind the beachhead during the first major joint amphibious operation conducted since World War II. The 12th Infantry participated in Exercise Indian River and Exercise Dry Hills in Yakima, Washington, and in January 1960, after intensive training at Camp Denali, Alaska, successfully participated in Exercise "Little Bear", the unit's first Arctic maneuver.

The 12th Infantry continued in the forefront of the 4th Division during Exercise "Elkhorn" and in May 1962 in Exercise "Mesa Drive" at Yakima, Washington. The following winter the 12th Infantry returned to Central Alaska and distinguished itself against Alaska's 23rd Infantry, during Exercise "Timberline". Later that year the 12th Infantry participated in Exercise "Coulee Crest" in Yakima, Washington against the 5th Mechanized Division.

On 1 Oct 1963 the 1st Battle Group 12th Infantry, was reorganized under the Road Concept. From this Battle Group the First and Second Battalions of the 12th Infantry were formed.

Since this re-organization the 2d Battalion has participated in numerous exercises; "Polar Siege," a training field exercise conducted in Alaska, 30 Jan - 10 Feb 1964; "March Hare", conducted on the Fort Lewis Reservation, 2-7 March 1964; "Coulee Cross" a training field exercise conducted at Yakima Firing Center (East of the Cascade Mountains), 28 September - 10 October 1965; "March Hare II", a training field exercise, conducted on the Fort Lewis Reservation 1-10 Apr 1965; and "Frontier Post 1" a training field exercise, conducted in the Olympic National Forest (In the Olympic Mountains) 17-26 May 1965.

William Comeau, Alpha Association Historian, 2013