

A Note of Explanation

On June 26, 2005 I received the following email from Fred Holbrook:

"I have 'A LEGACY OF HONOR 6THBATTALION, 27TH ARTILLERY', By SP4 Paul R. Frederick, 15 June 1967, Phuoc Vinh, Republic Of Vietnam given to me by my brother [Jerry Mike] who was in 'A' Battery - spending most of his time as ammo runner truck driver."

In response to my email Fred wrote in part:

"The publication is 58 typed pages ... written by SP4 Paul R. Frederick dated 15 June 1967, while on duty at Headquarters 6/27 ARTY, Phuoc Vinh, Vietnam. It is a history beginning in WWI and ends in 1967... Thought that the booklet might fill in the History page on your website. My brother Jerry Mike was with the battery from 1966-1967."

After having emailed fifty-eight pages to me with a few of the usual expected snafus, Fred wrote on August 1, 2005:

"I am glad to have saved the document, Legacy Of Honor. I have looked for the 6/27th ARTY on the Internet for years. My brother was assigned to Ft. Carson, Colorado to finish out his two years active duty time. He was in a company that was training and drilling to go and serve in Viet. Nam and they did not need an experienced person and were indifferent to his memories of Lessons Learned.

He left the battery with a swagger stick and a bong."

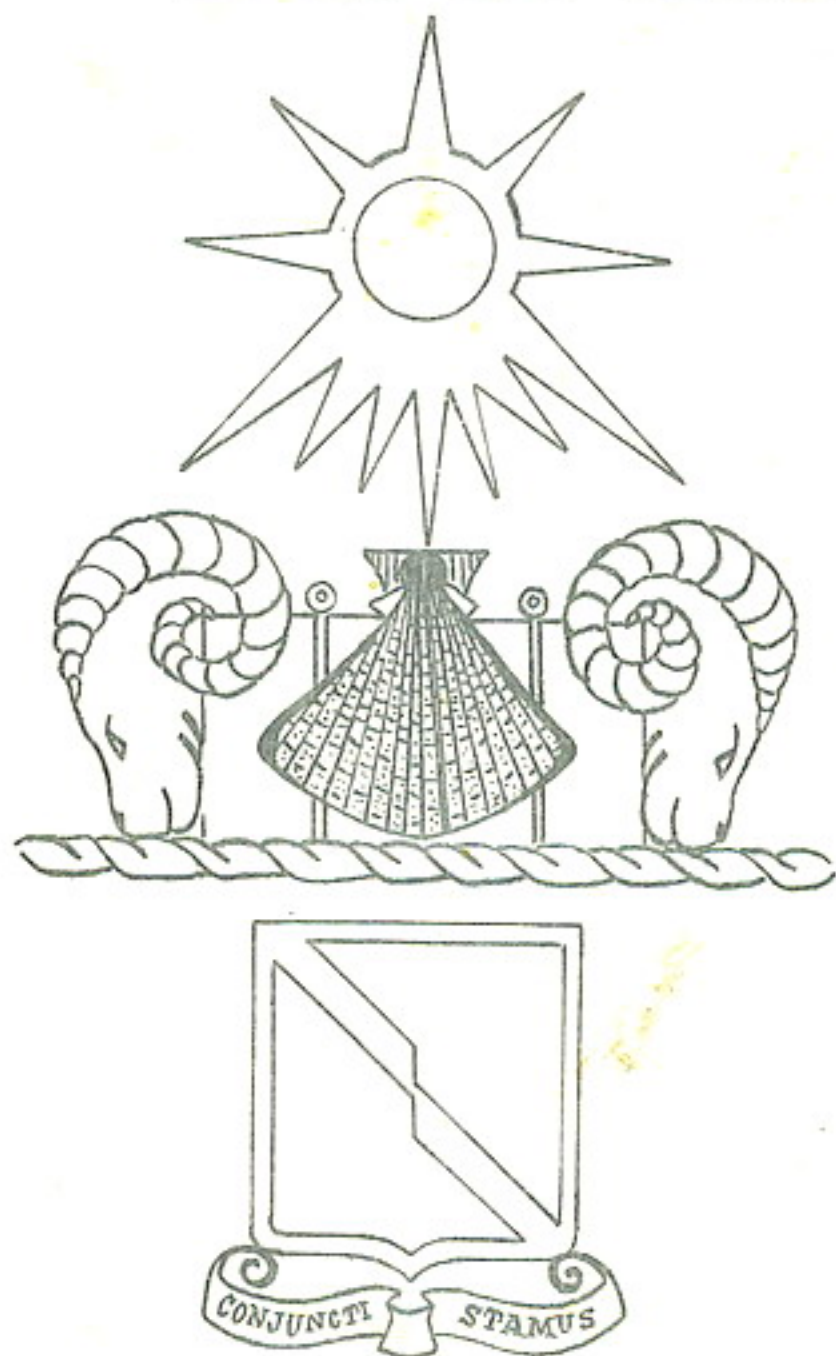
Note: The originals of each page of the history were tattooed with that classic Quan Loi orange dirt and printed on yellow paper or at least paper that yellowed from the 30 plus years. The PDF pages have been cleaned up and the paper "whitened as much as possible up in the event that you want to print copies of this history. Anyone desiring copies of the original orange tinted pages should download the original jpeg pages

August, 2005

John Wavra

Webmaster, www.quanloi.org

A LEGACY OF HONOR

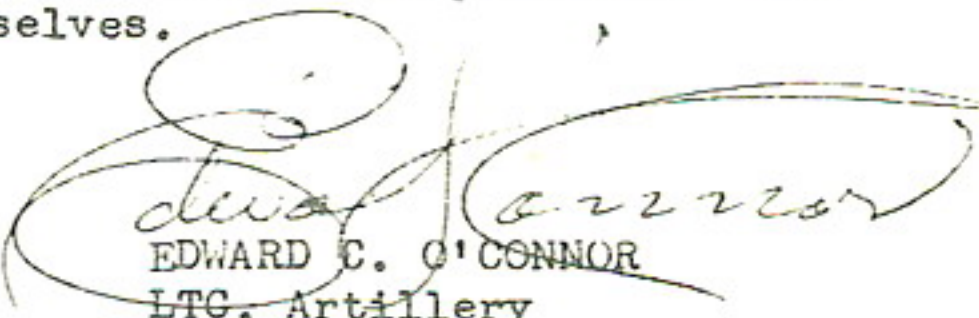


6th BATTALION, 27th ARTILLERY

FORWARD

This volume is dedicated to those men who have served in the 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery and its parent units. The heritage of this organization is long and valorous, spanning more than thirty years of stateside duty, seven World War II campaigns and the present conflict in Vietnam. It is a history of which every participant should be justly proud. We should remember, however, that the outstanding accomplishments of the "United We Stand" Battalion would not have been achieved without the valor, diligence and dedicated labor of every man. It is you, the individual soldier who has created, truly, a "Legacy of Honor". I salute you all.

A special note of thanks should be given here to SP4 Paul R. Frederick, whose diligent research and scholarship enabled this volume to be the comprehensive work that it is. He handled this project alone from start to finish, spending long hours in research and composition. The results speak for themselves.



EDWARD C. O'CONNOR
LTC, Artillery
Commanding

PART ONE

PROGRESS AND HONOR 1918-1965

The year 1918 saw the United States deeply embroiled in a World War. The European balance of power, which for most of the 19th century had kept that continent tolerably free of large conflicts, finally collapsed in 1914, resulting in World War I. Eventually almost every nation on the European Continent had become involved. The United States, secure behind its protective wall of ocean, at first adopted a course of isolationism, preferring to let the European powers fight it out amongst themselves. The nation soon found, however, that its ties with the Allied powers were stronger than originally assumed. Public sentiment was clearly on the side of England and France. When the Germans perpetrated a series of warlike incidents against American shipping, the citizenry became incensed. Ever deepening economic ties with the allies brought America still closer to entry into the war. Finally, when it became apparent that our support had become necessary for the Allied cause to win, President Wilson brought the United States into the war so that "the world would be made safe for democracy."

The US Army was unprepared to enter into actual conflict. It was woefully short of men and equipment, and was for the most part untested in battle. The draft was initiated to bring the manpower level up to the required standard. Purchases of munitions and war goods increased manyfold. Old units were re-equipped and enlarged, and many new units were formed. One of these units was an organization known as Battery F, 27th Field Artillery. It was organized at Camp McCellan, Alabama on August 2, 1918 as an element of the 9th Division.¹ It was from this organization that the 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery is descended.

America's entry into the war turned the tide of battle in favor of the Allies. Their enthusiasm and fighting skill soon put the Germans to the rout. Hostilities ceased, and the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. Battery F had remained at Camp McCellan throughout the entire war period.

With the end of the conflict the Army was reduced to a fraction of its former size. Once again the Americans began to feel secure behind their protective oceans. They had just fought and won "the war to end all wars;" the League of Nations now stood watch over the world situation to settle all potential conflicts at the conference table rather than on the battlefield. A large Army was felt to be unnecessary; consequently many units were drastic-

¹HQ, 6th Bn, 27th Arty ltr, AKCHO-CA-27-R, Subj: History of the 27th Artillery, dtd 22 Oct 63, p. 1.

ally reduced in size or disbanded completely. Battery F did not escape this axe; it was disbanded and demobilized on the 8th of February 1919, at Camp McCellan.²

Throughout the 1920's and 1930's the size of the Army remained at a low level. The spirit of isolationism had again reappeared and effectively stifled the few proponents of preparedness. America's interests were turned inward during this period. Even during the 1930's, when the rise of Hitler and Mussolini signaled the beginning of a new period of tenseness in international relations, the government concentrated its efforts towards solving internal problems rather than strengthening its armed forces.

During this period Battery F went through several changes in status that mirrored the changing attitudes towards the military. On March 25, 1923 it was taken off demobilized status and again reconstituted in the Regular Army. However, it was designated as an inactive unit which meant that the change was mostly for records purposes and had little meaning in terms of men and equipment. Fourteen years later, on October 1, 1937, it was relieved from assignment to the 9th Division and inactivated.³

Events in Europe deteriorated rapidly in the late 1930's. Hitler's invasion of Poland in August, 1939 precipitated the second World War of the century. By the end of 1940 Hitler controlled all of continental Europe, with only the British Isles escaping his grasp. The hard pressed English then called for American assistance. The lend-lease program and other economic measures were the result, with actual American entry into the war coming after the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

The Second World War again caught the US Army unprepared. Once again millions of men were drafted into the armed services. The war industries began producing prodigious amounts of war materiel. A vast military training program was begun, for increased technology required advanced skills of the Army's soldiers. Enlarge, refurbish, mobilize. The Army worked overtime preparing itself for future battles.

Battery F, 27th Field Artillery found itself in the midst of these feverish preparations. It was recalled to active duty on July 15, 1940 and was absorbed by Battery C, 27th Field Artillery Battalion, which was then assigned to the 1st Armored Division, then at Ft Knox, Kentucky.⁴ The years 1940-1942 saw the 27th Artillery busily engaged in training its men at Ft Knox, Ft Dix and in Louisiana and North Carolina. In the Spring of 1942 the battalion received its guns, 105mm self-propelled howitzers. Shortly thereafter it was shipped to Ireland with other elements of the 1st Armored Division.⁵ Further training took place in Ireland that summer.

The first major offensive begun by the Allies in the European theater was a series of amphibious landings on the North African coast. These

²Ibid, p. 1.

³Ibid, p. 1.

⁴Ibid, p. 1.

⁵Ibid, p. 1.

provided Battery C with its first taste of combat. The events that followed thereafter wrote one of the finest chapters in the history of the 27th Artillery.

Battery C was designated as part of Task Force Green, commanded by Colonel Paul M. Robinett, which landed on the beach at Mersa Bou Zedjar at 0136 hours, November 8, 1942. This was approximately 30 miles west of Oran, in Algeria. The remainder of the 27th Artillery Battalion landed at a point 20 miles east of Oran, as part of Task Force Red, Combat Command B, 1st Armored Division, under the command of Brigadier General Lunsford H. Oliver.⁶

Approximately a month later the entire battalion found itself in Tunisia. It had aided in capturing a sector straddling the Medjeg-Tebourba road. Batteries B and C were ordered to support this line, which was in an exposed area near the town of Medjeg-el-bab, Tunisia. On the 6th of December, 1942 Battery C's area was strafed by 10 Messerschmitts for 10 minutes. Immediately thereafter a German force of some 30 tanks and truck-borne infantry was spotted heading for an area nearby known as "Hill 148," and for the town of Djebel-el-guessa. This enemy force tried to penetrate between the Americans and their line of withdrawal. Battery C, firing in support, found that its fires had drawn the enemy armored force onto its own position. The battery was forced to withdraw into a natural cul-de-sac or blind alley. All the battery guns fired direct fire into the superior force, but to no avail; for at 1120 hours the tanks overran the battery's position. They passed completely through the battery area, then returned and passed back through the battery's position again, raking it with fire.

Eventually all the battery's 105mm guns were destroyed by shelling from the tanks. Every gun continued in action until the piece was destroyed or the gun crew dispersed, injured or killed by machine gun fire. The last section seen in action discharged its gun simultaneously with fire from a tank. Each was destroyed by the other's direct hit.

At this point Battery B arrived on the scene. It fired directly at the tanks, causing their withdrawal. This enabled C Battery to reassemble its scattered remnants. During the fight all members of the battery remained at their position until killed, injured or their equipment destroyed. The battery lost all of its half-track mounted 105mm howitzers, but destroyed eight German Mark IV tanks. For this action Battery C was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation and the Battery Commander, Captain William H. Harrison, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.⁷

Withdrawal of American units from Tebourba began a few days later. The remnants of the 2d Hampshires, together with remnants of other units, moved south along the river bank and thence towards Tebourba Gap. The column of vehicles was subjected to heavy enemy artillery and machine gun fire. A few vehicles at the head of the column were hit and set on fire, causing the

⁶ Ibid, p. 1.

⁷ Ibid, p. 2.

column to stop. The bombardment then intensified and further forward movement became almost impossible. Eventually field guns, trucks, tractors and much ammunition were abandoned at the site, with the troops infiltrating across the countryside in small groups to Tebourba Gap. Fortunately, this surrounding hills had already been cleared and secured by Company C, US 6th Armored Infantry with strong supporting fire from Battery A, 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. This "sharp, short action" had occurred the previous morning.⁸

The 27th Artillery, which had lost 13 of its 18 105mm howitzers in December 1942, was in drastic need of replacement guns. In a short time four 105mm self-propelled howitzers, plus several towed, did in fact arrive. The Battalion was thus able to accompany the 1st Armored Division throughout the rest of the Tunisian campaign. It accompanied the Division to Morocco for a period of rest and recuperation in May, 1943.⁹

The North African campaign having been brought to a successful conclusion, the Battalion next saw action in Italy. The night of September 9, 1943 saw the men of the Battalion, along with troops from three different divisions, stage an amphibious landing on the beach at Salerno, Italy. Starting from a transport nine miles offshore, the men of the 27th landed on the southern section of the Salerno beach. They continued inland one-half mile under constant strafing from German FW-109 airplanes. In spite of the constant enemy fire they were able to hold their position. Two days later the 105mm howitzers were landed and were able to return enemy fire that night.¹⁰

The Germans staged a bitter counterattack against the Salerno beachhead on the night of September 13-14, 1943. It was noted later that the Americans would probably have been pushed back into the ocean had the 27th's guns not been there.¹¹ The fires of the 27th were "of critical importance" in stopping this counterattack. Following this battle the Battalion moved to the north through Eboli, supporting three different divisions, primarily the 45th, as they moved up the peninsula.¹²

The Battalion then participated in the Anzio Campaign, firing in support of the 2d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division. At one point the British forces, then near Campoleone station, were preparing a move to the north. The fires of the 27th Artillery enabled the British 1st Division to gain a line of departure. In another battle at Anzio, the 27th's preparation fires were vitally important in exterminating a strong enemy force caught in an Allied ladder barrage.¹³

⁸Ibid, pp. 2-3.

⁹Ibid, p. 3.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 3.

¹¹Ibid, p. 3.

¹²Ibid, p. 3.

¹³Ibid, p. 3.

The Battalion followed the advancing Allied forces as they continued their march into Northern Italy. In crossing the Arno line, the 27th supported Combat Command B, 1st Armored Division. This support continued through the crossing of the Gothic line. The Battalion was in general support of the Division for the crossing of the Po. It then became part of Task Force Howze, which left Castigliene on the 27th of April, 1945 for Bergamo. Upon arrival there, it then continued on to Erivio, a village on the Adda river about halfway between Bergamo and Como.¹⁴ The 27th did not see any more action after World War II, for the progress of the war elsewhere soon brought the European conflict to an end. While it had been engaged in the Italian campaign, a huge force under General Dwight D. Eisenhower had landed at Normandy, in France, and had succeeded in bringing the German forces into submission. After this Army and a similar force from Russia had occupied the German homeland, the war in Europe was over. The enemy had been completely vanquished.

The 27th Artillery had compiled a long and enviable record of achievements during World War II. By the end of the war it had spent more than 550 days in firing positions, had fired a total of 380,115 rounds of 105mm ammunition, and had more combat action than any other single unit in the 1st Armored Division.¹⁵

Any discussion of the record of this battalion's performance during World War II is not complete unless it includes a discussion of its most illustrious Battery Commander, Major William H. Harrison. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, and educated at Princeton University, the future hero accepted a commission in the Army Reserves in 1935. He went on active duty on March 31 1941 as Battery Operator, 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion at Ft Knox, Kentucky. He left the continental United States with his unit in May, 1942, and was promoted to Captain at the same time. Captain Harrison was appointed as Commander of Battery C, 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion during the Tunisian campaign mentioned earlier. He was captured by the Germans during the fight of December 6, 1942 and was a prisoner of war of the Italian government until the 31st of October 1943 when he escaped and returned to allied military control. Captain Harrison was then sent to the United States and became, first, a student at the Armor School at Ft Knox, Kentucky, then an instructor at the same school. He then attended the University of California at Berkeley until mid-1945 when once again he went overseas, this time to fight in the India-Burma theater. Following the end of the war he was assigned to Camp Atterbury, Indiana until he was released from active duty. After being promoted to Major in the Army Reserve in 1947, he was discharged on December 30, 1952. Major Harrison was awarded the Silver Star "for gallantry in action against the enemy near La Senia, Algeria."¹⁶

¹⁴Ibid, p. 4.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 4.

¹⁶GO No. 6, HQ, Combat Command B, 1st Armored Division, dtd 17 Nov 42.

He also won the Distinguished Service Cross "for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy."¹⁷ He also won the European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three Bronze Service Stars for participation in this campaign.¹⁸

Following the war many of the organizations sent to Europe remained on the Continent to serve as occupation forces in Germany. Postwar agreements had divided that war-ravaged nation into four sectors, each controlled by one of the four major Allied powers (England, France, Russia and the United States). The 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, after being redesignated the 27th Constabulary Squadron, became one of the many units occupying the American sector. This was begun on May 1, 1946 and remained in effect until December 30, 1948. At that time it was once again renamed the 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, reassigned to the 1st Armored Division, and placed on inactive status.¹⁹

The Truman administration, like most post-war administrations, was forced by public opinion to reduce the size of the armed forces. This drawdown was done in spite of the fact that the cold war had entered upon the world scene, presenting a strong Communist threat to the democratic nations of the world. Once again the American people had yielded to their strong wish to "get their boys back home," and had placed perhaps too much faith in the peace keeping abilities of the fledgling United Nations. At any rate, when the Korean War broke out in 1950, the US Army was faced once again with a massive remobilization and rebuilding program.

The 27th Artillery's history reflects this national sequence. Though inactivated in 1948, it was recalled into the Active Army with the rest of the 1st Armored Division in March, 1951. From that date until December, 1952 the Battalion was engaged in a training mission at Ft Hood, Texas. Between December, 1952 and July, 1953 the Battalion was relegated to caretaker status, with a limited number of personnel.²⁰

With the end of the conflict in Korea (July 1953) the cold war resumed. Now, however, the United States was aware that they had to maintain a constantly alert defense posture. The Soviet Union had by this time perfected their nuclear weaponry. The threat of a nuclear holocaust, one that would render the entire world unfit for habitation by man, became very real. The only way to deter this disaster, it seemed, was for the United States to maintain an armed force so strong that any attack by the enemy would become so costly for them as to be unthinkable. Thus the Army, in contrast to its actions in previous peacetime periods, remained at a high level of manpower and readiness throughout the 1950's and 1960's.

The 27th Artillery, true to form, played an active role in this national sequence. Following reorganization in July, 1953, the Battalion was restored

¹⁷GO No. 5, Allied Force Headquarters, APO 512, dtd 12 Jan 43.

¹⁸Ltr, DA AG to 6/27, AGAC-SS-S, Subj: Harrison, William H. 0324218 dtd 22 May 63, p. 1.

¹⁹History of the 27th Arty, 1963, p. 4.

²⁰Ibid, p. 4.

to its training mission with the 1st Armored Division. While engaged in this mission, the Battalion took part in a number of training exercises, specifically Exercise Longhorn (1952), Exercise Spearhead (1953), and Exercise Sagebrush (1955). After completing the last of these, the Battalion was transferred to Ft Polk, Louisiana where it was de-activated in February, 1957.²²

In 1957 the Army reorganized its elements into what was called the regimental system. Under this system the 27th Artillery Battalion became the 27th Artillery regiment. Subordinate elements were then constituted under the regimental banner. The first of these was the 2d Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery, which was reactivated and redesignated in October, 1957 and assigned to the 3d Armored Division in Friedberg, Germany. Though little information is available on it, the 1st Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery was activated during this same period and was stationed at Ft Benning, Georgia until 1963 when it was de-activated.²² The third organization in the 27th Artillery was the 6th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery. We will explore the history of this organization in detail.

The 6th Howitzer Battalion, 27th Artillery was activated on August 23, 1962 at Ft Chaffee, Arkansas.²³ The first man (an officer) was assigned on the 8th of October, and the first morning report was submitted on that date. The first Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Paul T. Long, was assigned and joined on the 26th of October. Following this officers and men were assigned and joined at a rapid rate. By January 29, 1963 the Battalion had 13 officers, one warrant officer and 105 enlisted men, with an additional seven officers and 37 men slated for arrival very shortly thereafter.²⁴ Each of the subordinate units that comprised the Battalion were activated in the following few months. The dates of activation for each battery were as follows:

Headquarters & Headquarters Battery	--	23 Aug 62
"A" Battery	-	6 Feb 63
Service Battery	-	6 Feb 63
"B" Battery	-	1 May 63
"C" Battery	-	4 Sep 63 ²⁵

Formal training in the Battalion was begun in accordance with a prescribed schedule. Each battery upon activation entered into an interim

²¹Ibid, p. 4.

²²Ibid, p. 4.

²³Ltr, CCMP to 6/27, Subj: Unit History, dtd 23 Aug 66, Incl 1 (lineage and Honors, 6th bn, 27th Arty).

²⁴Ltr AKCHO-CA-27-R, 6/27 to CG III Corps Arty, Subj: Battalion Activities, dtd 29 Jan 63, p. 1.

²⁵Annual Historical Summary (AKCHO-CA-27-R), HQ, 6th Bn (8")(SP), 27th Arty, 1 Jan 63 - 31 Dec 63, p. 1.

training period until it reached 75% of its assigned strength. Upon reaching that level, a period of more formalized training was initiated. Each battery was brought to full strength before the next one began training. Thus the batteries attained operational readiness at different times.²⁶

Early activities were of course limited due to the shortage of personnel. The initial effort was directed towards the improvements of the buildings and grounds. The S-4 opened accounts with post and technical services, property books were prepared, equipment (including 8" towed howitzers) was drawn, training aids were ordered and work orders prepared and submitted. Six enlisted men with clerical MOS's were sent to clerk-typist school. Considerable early effort was directed towards obtaining publications.²⁷

Mid-August 1963 saw the battalion take part in its first training exercise. Code-named Operation Swift Strike III, the exercise was staged by the US Strike Command. The Battalion sent 8 officers and 60 enlisted men on these maneuvers. These personnel were attached to other subordinate units of the III Corps Artillery.²⁸

The year 1963 also saw the 6/27th celebrate its founding on the first anniversary of its activation. This celebration, called Organization Day, was scheduled for 23 August 1963. Due to the fact that many of the Battalion's personnel were absent on that date (due to their participation in Operation Swift Strike III), the Organization Day Celebration was postponed to the 27th and 28th of September. A Military Stakes Competition was held on these dates; this included contests in assembly of weapons, tire changing on one-quarter ton vehicles, erection of radio antennas, erection of command post tents and dismounted drill. Battery "B" was selected as the winner. A parade, open house and various games were also held.²⁹ It should be pointed out that the date for subsequent Organization Day Celebrations was changed in accordance with a request from the Office of the Chief of Military History, who requested that the date selected for this celebration reflect regimental, not battalion, significance.³⁰ Through correspondence with the other battalions in the regiment, August 2 (the anniversary of the organization of the parent unit - Battery F, 27th Field Artillery - on August 2, 1918) was selected

²⁶Battalion Activities, p. 1.

²⁷Ibid, p. 2.

²⁸Annual Historical Summary, 1963, p. 5.

²⁹Ibid, p. 5.

³⁰1st Ind, OCMH, Subj: Selection of Unit Day, dtd 9 Jul 64 to Ltr, 6/27 to OCMH, same subject, dtd 26 Jun 64.

as Organization Day.³¹

A series of inspections were held during 1963. A Command Maintenance Management Inspection was held on the 9th and 10th of October. The overall rating of the Battalion was satisfactory. A team from III Corps in Ft Hood, Texas conducted an Adjutant General Inspection November 18-23, 1963. The overall rating was excellent. In addition, the inspection team made the following important observations: that the Battalion was not capable of performing its mission because of a shortage of personnel and of certain items of equipment, that some training objectives were not met, and that an effective chain of command had been established.³²

The year 1964 saw the Battalion reorganized and redesignated. General Order Number 22, Headquarters, Ft Chaffee, Arkansas, dated 19 March 1964 designated the Battalion as the 6th Battalion (8")(SP), 27th Artillery, dropping the word "Howitzer" from the title. It was also reorganized in accordance with TO&E 6-445E. The Battalion was assigned to the III USA Corps and attached to Headquarters, III Corps Artillery with station at Ft Chaffee, Arkansas. Its priority status assignment was C-3.³³

The training program of the Battalion was greatly accelerated, beginning with the arrival on January 17-19, 1964 of approximately 155 men from basic training centers. The Battalion then put these men through an eight week cycle of AIT training; teaching fire direction, communications, cannoneers drill and survey. This training program was interrupted, however, by Operation Desert Strike.³⁴

Exercise Desert Strike was a mammoth training operation in the Mohave Desert. The Battalion was included on the troop list for this exercise as "a player unit with Joint Task Force Phoenix attached to III Corps Artillery." The assigned strength of the Battalion as that time was 23 officers, 3 warrant officers and 419 enlisted men. The period March 21, 1964 to May 3, 1964 was devoted to preparation and training for desert operations. Some essential items of equipment and certain individuals with critical skills were borrowed from other organizations and integrated into the Battalion for this exercise.

The Battalion left Ft Chaffee on May 3, 1964 on two passenger trains, arriving at Utting, Arizona 44 hours later. The advance party had preceded

³¹Ltr, CCMH to 6/27, Subj: Unit Day Certificate, dtd 16 Jul 65.

³²Report, HQ, III Corps & Ft Hood Office of the IG, Subj: Annual General Inspection, FY 1964, of the 6th Bn, 27th Arty, dtd 5 Dec 65, extracted in Annual Historical Summary (AKCHO-CA-27-R), HQ, 6th Bn, 27th Arty, 1 Jan 63 to 31 Dec 63, p. 7.

³³Annual Historical Supplement (AKBAASC-W-R), 1 Jan 64 to 31 Dec 64, HQ 6th Bn (8")(SP), 27th Arty, p. 3.

³⁴Ibid, p. 3.

them by seven days. The equipment train arrived on May 7th. Two M115 towed howitzers were assigned to each battery, with M8 tractors as prime movers. All of the M8 tractors eventually broke down in the desert sands, forcing the Battalion to utilize 5-ton trucks as prime movers. During the two-week exercise, the Battalion displaced 21 times, fired in support of the 2d Armored Division, and crossed the Colorado river on a floating bridge on 18 May. There were no casualties, one minor injury (a soldier was bitten by a rat) and three vehicle accidents during the exercise. The Battalion was attached to the 2d Armored Division. Battery B was detached from the 6/27th and attached to the 2d Howitzer Battalion (155mm)(T), 31st Artillery and Battery B, 2d Battalion, 31st Artillery was attached to the 6/27th. Altogether the Battalion logged over 125,000 vehicular miles during the exercise. The return train trip brought the Battalion home, complete, on June 9, 1964.³⁵

On July 14, 1964 the Battalion received orders to move from Ft Chaffee, Arkansas to Ft Bliss, Texas.³⁶ Strength at the time was 26 officers, 3 warrant officers and 519 enlisted men. All TO&E equipment and personnel departed Ft Chaffee for their new duty station on the 23d of July. The equipment was shipped by rail with the personnel traveling by air. Upon arrival at Ft Bliss, an area in the Logan Heights section of the fort was selected as the Battalion's new home.³⁷ The Battalion was attached to the 6th Artillery Group (Air Defense).³⁸ It was also attached to the 1st Air Defense Guided Missile Brigade (Training) for rations purposes.³⁹

As soon as the men and equipment had become settled in their new home, the Battalion worked at bringing itself up to an operational posture through normal training operations. The first battery Army Training Test was given to "A" Battery on December 8, 1964, to Battery "B" on December 10, 1964 and to Battery "C" on December 14, 1964.⁴⁰ These tests continued through January, 1965, all resulting in a determination of "Combat Ready." Following the conclusion of these tests the Battalion received the new M110 self-propelled howitzers. After considerable training with these new guns the Battalion was administered a battalion test March, 1965. Again the Battalion showed itself to be "Combat Ready." Continuous training was conducted thereafter, some involving TPI procedures. In June the 6/27th successfully completed an MTEX consisting of preparing and loading all equipment for overseas movement.⁴¹

³⁵Ibid, p. 5.

³⁶LO M-7-16, HQ, Ft Chaffee, Ark., dtd 14 Jul 64.

³⁷Annual Historical Supplement, 1964, p. 5.

³⁸GO No. 80, HQ, USAADCEN, Ft Bliss, Tex., dtd 19 Aug 64.

³⁹GO No. 70, HQ, USAADCEN, Ft Bliss, Tex., dtd 31 Jul 64.

⁴⁰Unit Historical Report, HQ, 6th Bn, 27th Arty, dtd 15 Jun 66, p. 1.

⁴¹Ibid, p. 1.