

# Arkansas Military History Journal

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**Desert Shield / Desert Storm  
30th Anniversary**

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## Message from the Editor

Most of us are still trying to maneuver COVID-19 more than a year since we were introduced to the virus. Sometimes it seems as if it's difficult to look back beyond our current situation at important events is our history. Yet, it is hard to believe that 2021 is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Desert Storm. For many of us who are old enough to remember, the last three decades since the Gulf War have went by quickly. In this issue, we commemorate the Arkansas National Guard involvement in Desert Storm. This is our second look at the Gulf War since the *Journal* was revived in 2015, as the Summer 2016 issue of the *Arkansas Military History Journal* covered several aspects of the War. However, in this issue a different view is taken. Three after action reports are here including the Executive Summary written to MG James Ryan, the Adjutant General of the Arkansas National Guard during the War. In addition, a short remembrance from BG (Ret) Keith Klemmer is included. Klemmer was a Captain during Desert Storm. Finally, the Featured Artifact article by LTC Matthew Anderson makes its return to the pages of the *Journal*. LTC Anderson provides a detailed history of the U.S. Caliber .45 ACP, Model of 1911 and 1911A1.

Let's hope we get through the virus soon, and please remember to thank all our veterans for their service to the United States.

**Dr. Raymond Screws**

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4 October 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR: MG RYAN

SUBJECT: Executive Summary, Desert Shield/Storm AAR's.

## 1. SCOPE

The following observations were extracted and consolidated from after action reports submitted by units who participated in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. These observations are consistent throughout a majority of the AAR's and do not reflect all positive and negative occurrences. Copies of AAR's are enclosed for more detailed information on each participating unit.

## 2. STRENGTHS

The AR ARNG MOBEX Program and detailed mobilization planning contributed significantly to our units' ability to mobilize and deploy.

Support, organization, and attitude of installation personnel at Fts. Sill and Hood expedited transition of RC units to Federal status.

Cooperation experienced by the 142d FA from III Corps Artillery was invaluable. III Corps Artillery aggressively attempted to fill major end item shortages and supported every training request identified by the 142d FA to enable it to deploy at the required readiness level.

VII Corps Artillery did a good job of filling regional specific requirements, such as the Global Positioning System for the 142d.

Training on LTACFIRE by 142d FA was completed in 30 days. This task normally takes AC units 13 weeks to complete. This would have been impossible without the assistance of III Corps Artillery and the Litton Corporation.

In most cases, working relationships between RC and AC units improved over time and as confidence between commands increased.

Initial reception of the 142d FA by British armored commanders indicated they did not have preconceived ideas or attitudes about RC units.

As could be expected, our units persevered in the face of every obstacle, rose to the occasion, made do with what they had, and met the challenge.

### 3. WEAKNESSES

All units cited examples in which individual MOB packets were not accepted by the Mob station, resulting in duplication of POM processing.

The 148th EVAC encountered major training problems at Ft. Polk. They were assigned to the Devil Troop Brigade for common soldier skills assessment and to Bawes-Jones Army Medical Hospital for validation of medical skills. Medical personnel were assigned or cross levelled outside of their specialty. Transportation was not available to the unit while their equipment was being painted for deployment, which only served to compound the problem.

The 1122d Trans Co's mobilization station change from Fort Chaffee to Fort Sill changed the entire movement data.

Mob stations often altered processing requirements as identified in FORMDEPS. Changes in deployability criteria also created problems and confusion. The DA non-reportable LIN policy and soldier deployability criteria are prime examples.

With the exception of the 142d FA, instances occurred in which Readiness Groups deviated from the advisory role and force fed or dictated personnel requirements, individual opinions, and beliefs. Often the unit commander was bypassed and the chain of command was violated by dissemination of information and/or assignments of tasks to be accomplished.

Equipment arrival and off loading in SWA was disorganized. Equipment was not shipped in unit sets which caused delays in consolidation at the POD. In one instance, a unit had to board a ship to find its equipment after being told it had been off loaded.

Some units were fragmented (25 RAOC, 204 MED DET, and 1122 TRANS) and/or assigned missions which the unit could not be expected to accomplish (25th RAOC) due to incompatibility with training, personnel, or equipment.

Shortages of communications equipment, especially COMSEC gear and FM radios, hampered our units ability to operate in the theater. A lack of deployable data processing assets also posed a problem, although many of our units were provided laptops before employment.

Lack of ADP equipment, especially TACCS, caused many problems and delays. Most active components data systems (SIDPERS-AC, SPBS, etc) are designed to run on TACCS. On arrival at Mob stations, several Arkansas units were issued TACCS and had to input their unit data base, a time consuming process which distracted from training time and other post-mobilization tasks.


In-country logistics support was poor to nonexistent, especially classes II and IX.



Most units experienced coordination problems during link-up with their in-theater headquarters. Examples included frequent mission and location changes and a lack of definitive mission guidance.

The large number of soldiers requiring Class 3 dental treatment impacted on unit training at the mob stations.

Differences in AC, ARNG, and USAR promotion policies proved to be a real challenge to unit commanders. Resolutions of these issues took valuable time and personnel resources away from mission accomplishment.

  
BILLY F. GAULT  
COL, GS, AR ARNG  
Plans, Operations, & Training Officer

**217TH MAINTENANCE BATTALION  
LESSONS LEARNED DESERT SHIELD/STORM**

**ISSUE:**

**STATE AND MOBILIZATION STATION SUPPORT DURING MOBILIZATION:**

AS THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME FOR THE UNITS TO RESPOND TO A MILITARY CALL-UP IN MANY YEARS, THERE WERE SEVERAL AREAS IN WHICH HELP WAS REQUIRED. SUPPORT WAS PROVIDED BY STATE HEADQUARTERS AND TROOP COMMAND, HOWEVER, THIS SUPPORT WAS NOT COMPLETELY SUFFICIENT IN FILLING EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES AUTHORIZED BY MTOE's. UPON ARRIVAL AT THE MOBILIZATION STATION, MANY CRITICAL ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT HAD TO BE PROCURED FROM BOTH THE ACTIVE MILITARY AND RESERVE UNIT FROM OTHER STATES. THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY STATE HEADQUARTERS LEGAL DEPARTMENT IN THE AREAS OF WILLS AND POWERS OF ATTORNEY WAS VERY HELPFUL TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNIT. THERE WERE AREAS IN PERSONNEL THAT WERE NOT HANDLED PROPERLY. SOME SOLDIERS WERE TOLD THAT THEY COULD RETIRE IF THEY HAD THE REQUIRED TWENTY (20) YEARS OF SERVICE. THIS WAS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE. PERSONNEL SCREENINGS WERE NOT CONDUCTED PRIOR TO DEPLOYMENT TO MOB-STATION. THIS LACK OF SCREENING RESULTED IN PERSONNEL UNABLE TO MEET FITNESS CRITERIA, BEING SENT UNNECESSARILY TO THE MOB-STATION. MEDICAL SCREENING MUST BE ON-GOING TO ENSURE THAT PERSONNEL ARE PHYSICALLY READY. PERSONNEL PROCESSING COMPLETED AT HOME STATION WAS REPEATED AT THE MOBILIZATION STATION.

**SOLUTION:**

THE SOLUTION TO MANY OF THESE PROBLEMS WOULD BE TO NOTIFY EACH STATE THAT WILL HAVE UNIT MOBILIZED IN A CALL-UP OF THIS NATURE. THIS WOULD ENABLE THE STATE TO EAR MARK EQUIPMENT WITHIN THE STATE TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THESE UNITS ON MOBILIZATION. PLANS FOR ALL 200K TYPE UNITS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED SO THAT THESE UNITS CAN OBTAIN A 100% EQUIPMENT FILL LEVEL ONCE MOBILIZED.

MOBILIZATION STATION AND NATIONAL GUARD UNITS SHOULD HAVE A PERSONNEL SYSTEM THAT IS COMPATIBLE. RECORDS THEN COULD BE TRANSFERRED FROM HOME STATION TO MOBILIZATION STATION. THIS WOULD ELIMINATE THE DUPLICATION OF RECORD KEEPING AND ONLY ONE UPDATE WOULD BE CONDUCTED WHEN A UNIT IS MOBILIZED.

THE RESERVE AND NATIONAL GUARD SHOULD BE ADEQUATELY FUNDED TO PROVIDE MEDICAL SCREENINGS SUCH AS THE TYPE RECEIVED AT THE MOB-STATIONS.

**ISSUE: EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES**

THE MISSION OF THE BATTALION S-4 SECTION WAS TO PROVIDE COORDINATION OF SERVICES, REQUISITIONS OF ITEMS FOR UNITS AND DISTRIBUTION OF SAID ITEMS, AND ACT AS LIAISON BETWEEN SUBORDINATE COMPANIES SUPPLY PERSONNEL AND SSA/s. PROBLEMS

THAT AROSE IN THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THIS MISSION WERE MANY. SUBORDINATE UNITS ARRIVED WITHOUT VITAL SUPPORT EQUIPMENT, (TENTS, TENT HEATERS, LIGHT SETS, AND M-16 MAGAZINES). MOBILIZATION STATION AND CONTROLLING UNITS IN COUNTRY WERE NOT COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER ON WHAT LIFE SUPPORT ITEMS WERE NEEDED. MANY UNITS ARRIVE IN COUNTRY WITHOUT THE ITEMS. THIS DELAYED THEIR DEPLOYMENT TO THEIR AREA OF OPERATION. THIS PLACED AN IMMENSE WORK LOAD ON THE BATTALION S-4 SECTION TRYING TO PROCURE ENOUGH OF THESE ITEMS FOR EACH UNIT AS THEY CAME IN. THE LOCAL PURCHASE PROGRAM HAD TO BE USED MORE THAN IT WAS DESIGNED FOR AND THE RETASKING OF UNITS BEING EITHER ADDED OR TAKEN AWAY FROM THE BATTALION ONLY ADDED TO THE PROBLEM AS FAR AS FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLIES WAS CONCERNED.

**SOLUTION:**

COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AT THE START OF THE MOBILIZATION PROCESS TO ENSURE THAT THE THEATER COMMANDER AND THE FORCOM COMMANDER UNDERSTANDS THE NEEDS OF UNITS BEING DEPLOYED ONCE IN-COUNTRY. THE MOBILIZATION STATION COMMANDERS AND STATE ADJUTANTS GENERAL SHOULD BE INFORMED OF ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS WHERE EQUIPMENT IS CONCERNED.

**ISSUE: CAPSTONE ALIGNMENT AND UNIT CALL-UP:**

THERE WAS A TOTAL DISREGARD FOR THE DOCTRINE OF CAPSTONE ALIGNMENT. ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE WAS INADEQUATE DUE TO THIS FACT. ALIGNMENT PLANNING PROVIDED THROUGH CAPSTONE CONFERENCES AND VISITS PROVED TO BE INVALUABLE. IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO USE SOPs OR OTHER DOCUMENTS PROVIDED BY CAPSTONE HIGHER HEADQUARTERS. ONCE ASSIGNED TO A NEW HEADQUARTERS, ALL SOP'S AND REPORT FORMS HAD TO BE CHANGED. THERE WAS A TOTAL LACK OF PLANNING BY THEATER ON NEED AND USE OF SUPPORT UNITS IN COUNTRY AND ON THE TIME FRAME IN WHICH

THESE UNITS SHOULD BE BROUGHT IN COUNTRY FOR USE IN OPERATION DESERT SHIELD. THIS HAS CAUSED MANY TASK ORGANIZATION CHANGES. IN TURN, MANY MAINTENANCE UNITS ARRIVED IN COUNTRY WEEKS PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE BATTALION HEADQUARTERS. ALSO, THEY WERE TOLD THEY WOULD BE UNDER ONE UNIT, ONLY TO FIND OUT THAT THIS HAD CHANGED. THIS CAUSED MANY PROBLEMS SUCH AS APO CHANGES WHICH EFFECTED MAIL SERVICES. ANY PRIOR COORDINATION WITH YOUR HIGHER HEADQUARTERS PRIOR TO LEAVING THE STATES WAS LOST.

**SOLUTION:**

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT MISSION REQUIREMENTS CHANGE, BUT THIS SHOULD NOT CHANGE CAPSTONE ALIGNMENTS. THIS BATTALION HAS CHANGED ITS DOWN TRACE EACH YEAR FOR THE LAST FOUR YEARS AND STILL DID NOT ARRIVE IN COUNTRY WITH ONE UNIT ASSIGNED UNDER CAPSTONE. FOR THE CAPSTONE SYSTEM TO WORK IT MUST BE FOLLOWED. IF IT IS NOT FOLLOWED, THEN THIS IS A TOTAL WASTE OF TAXPAYER MONEY. CAPSTONE ALIGNMENTS, IF FOLLOWED, WOULD

BETTER PREPARE UNITS FOR THEIR MISSION. SINCE THE HEADQUARTERS AND SUBORDINATE UNITS WOULD HAVE A WORKING RELATIONSHIP THAT IS ON GOING, MISSION STATEMENTS COULD BE DEVELOPED AND TRAINING SCHEDULES WOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARD THE COMPLETION OF THE WARTIME MISSION. FOLLOW THE CAPSTONE PROGRAM. THIS WOULD KEEP HEADQUARTERS UNITS AND SUBORDINATE UNITS IN CONTACT WITH ONE ANOTHER DURING THE MOBILIZATION PROCESS.

#### ISSUE: REPORT FORMATS

REPORTS SUCH AS CDM's SITREP, PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY, AND MAINTENANCE REPORTS SHOULD BE STANDARDIZED. MANY OF THESE REPORTS ARE NOW PROVIDED BY THE USE OF TACC COMPUTERS, BUT DUE TO MANY UNITS NOT SUPPLIED WITH THESE ITEMS, THE REPORTS HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO MEET THE NEED. THERE IS A MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN HEADQUARTERS ON FORMATS FOR CDMs. THE GTA 3-6-3 CARD WAS DEVELOPED FOR REPORTING CDM's AND NBC REPORTS, BUT TO THIS DATE THE GTA CARD HAS NOT BEEN USED. THESE MADE-UP REPORTING SYSTEMS WENT AGAINST THE STANDARD REPORTING SYSTEMS TAUGHT IN ARMY SCHOOLS.

#### SOLUTION:

AGAIN THIS REFERS BACK TO THE CAPSTONE PROGRAM. IT ALSO REFLECTS ON THE NEED FOR STANDARD FORMATS THROUGHOUT THE ARMY SYSTEM. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT ALL REPORTS ARE NOT THE SAME FOR ALL UNITS, BUT REPORTS THAT ARE/SHOULD BE STANDARDIZED. ALTHOUGH MANY OF THE REPORTS HAVE BEEN STANDARDIZED, COMMANDERS MUST ADHERE TO THESE FORMATS. THE ARMY SYSTEM IS ESSENTIALLY A DRILLING PROCESS. WE BREAK OUR WEAPONS DOWN THE SAME WAY, WE PUT OUR PROTECTIVE MASKS ON THE SAME WAY, AND SO ON. REPORTING FORMATS SHOULD BE THE DEVELOPED UNDER THE SAME CONCEPT.

#### ISSUE: COMMUNICATION

THE ENTIRE ARMY NEEDS TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE WAY THAT IT COMMUNICATES. THERE IS A BREAK DOWN IN THE SYSTEM THAT HAS NOT BEEN FIXED FOR MANY YEARS. THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH RADIOS TO FULFILL THE NEEDS OF EACH UNIT. MAINTENANCE CONTACT TEAMS IN THIS BATTALION HAVE NO MEANS OF CONTACTING THEIR UNIT ONCE DISPATCHED. MSE EQUIPMENT PROVIDED TO THIS HEADQUARTERS COULD NOT BE USED. WE LACKED COMMUNICATION FROM THE VERY FIRST DAY IN COUNTRY. NOT ONLY DID WE HAVE PROBLEMS COMMUNICATING BUT, THE MAN HOURS LOST IN TRANSPORTING REPORTS BACK AND FORTH WAS A WASTE OF MAN POWER. MORE EFFECTIVE MEANS SUCH AS A FAX SHOULD BE USED TO PASS THESE REPORTS. ALTHOUGH THESE SYSTEMS ARE BEING USED, THEY ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO ALL UNITS. THIS PROBLEM COULD BE SOLVED THROUGH BETTER PLANNING OF MTOE's.

**SOLUTION:**

MORE OF THE DEFENSE BUDGET SHOULD BE SPENT ON COMMUNICATIONS. COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT MUST BE DEVELOPED THAT WILL OPERATE OVER A GREAT DISTANCE. SOME PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THIS AREA, BUT THERE ARE STILL UNITS THAT DO NOT HAVE THE MEANS TO SUPPORT THEIR COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS. NOT EVERYONE NEEDS A RADIO, BUT ENOUGH RADIOS MUST BE AVAILABLE SO THAT COMMAND AND CONTROL CAN BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES.

**ISSUE: DATA PROCESSING:**

DATA-PROCESSING SYSTEMS WERE NOT ALLOWED TO BE TAKEN OUT OF THE STATE INVENTORY. A COMPUTER WAS LOCALLY PURCHASED ONCE AT MOB-STATION. WITHOUT THIS ASSET THE BATTALION WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MEET REPORT REQUIREMENTS AND SUSPENSE DATES. THIS WAS FOUND TO BE TRUE OF MANY UNITS THAT ARRIVED IN COUNTRY WITHOUT THE MEANS TO USE DATA PROCESSING SYSTEMS FOR BRIEFING AND REPORTS.

**SOLUTION:**

AGAIN THIS IS A PROBLEM BETWEEN STATE CONTROLLED EQUIPMENT AND THE NEEDS OF THE UNIT ONCE IT IS MOBILIZED. DATA PROCESSING EQUIPMENT IS PURCHASED FOR NATIONAL GUARD UNITS BY THE USE OF NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU FUNDS. ONCE THESE UNITS ARE MOBILIZED AND COME UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE REGULAR ARMY, IT LOSSES THESE ASSETS. IF THE DATA PROCESSING SYSTEMS ARE LEFT AT THE ARMORIES THEN WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR? THE UNIT IS NO LONGER THERE AND THE SYSTEM SET, NOT USED. THERE MUST BE SOME WAY FOR THESE ASSETS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE REGULAR ARMY ON MOBILIZATION. THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF THESE ITEMS WOULD STILL BE MAINTAINED BY THE USING UNIT.

**ISSUE: THE ONE ARMY CONCEPT**

THERE HAS BEEN A DISREGARD OF "THE ONE ARMY CONCEPT" AS EVIDENCE IN THE LACK OF RESPECT RECEIVED BY NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVE UNITS. MANY TIMES THESE UNITS WERE MORE TECHNICALLY QUALIFIED AND POSSESSED A HIGHER QUALITY OF SOLDIER THAN THEIR ACTIVE DUTY COUNTERPARTS. THERE WAS AN ABSENCE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPECT AND COURTESY.

**SOLUTION:**

THERE IS NO IMMEDIATE WAY TO CORRECT THIS PROBLEM. THE RESERVE AND NATIONAL GUARD HAVE NEVER BEEN TREATED AS A REAL PART OF THE MILITARY. THIS IS HUMAN NATURE AND NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY, YOU CANNOT CHANGE IT. WHEN A RESERVE OR GUARD UNIT GOES TO SUMMER CAMP, THEY ARE GIVEN THE WORST THAT THE FORT HAS TO OFFER. THEY MUST HAVE COPIES OF THEIR ORDERS JUST TO GET INTO MOST PX FACILITIES OR COMMISSARIES. THIS IMPROPER REINFORCEMENT OF PERSONNEL DIFFERENCES ONLY ENHANCES THE PROBLEM BETWEEN THE REGULAR ARMY AND THE RESERVE FORCES. WE WISH WE HAD A SOLUTION FOR THIS PROBLEM BUT WE DO NOT.



**ISSUE: MAPS**

MAPS WERE UNAVAILABLE AT THE MOB STATION. ALL REQUESTS FOR MAPS WERE CANCELLED. ONCE IN COUNTRY, SOME MAPS BECAME AVAILABLE, BUT MOST WERE NOT AVAILABLE OF THE AREA IN WHICH BATTALION WAS LOCATED.

**SOLUTION:**

UNITS WHILE AT HOME STATION SHOULD REQUEST AND RECIEVE MAP OF ALL AREAS CONCERNING THERE POSSIBLE CAPSTONE MISSION.

**SUMMATION:**

REVIEW OF ALL THE AREAS OF CONCERN SUPPORTS THE PRESENCE OF ONE MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO ALL PROBLEMS, THIS BEING COMMUNICATION, OR THE LACK THERE OF.

EACH LEVEL OF COMMAND MUST MAKE A COMMITTED EFFORT TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ALL LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT. PROPER COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE FOUNDED IN A THREE-FOLD PROCESS: TALKING, LISTENING AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, HEARING.

BY FOLLOWING THIS PROCESS, PROBLEM AREAS CAN BE ADDRESSED AND A TRUE EFFORT CAN BE MADE TO RESOLVE DEFICIENCIES IN ALL AREAS.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 142D FIELD ARTILLERY BRIGADE  
OCCUPIED IRAQ  
APO NY 09635

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, VII Corps Artillery

SUBJECT: Short Story for the Secretary of Defense

Purpose: To provide a story of our soldiers during OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/STORM/SABER for use by SecDef.

142D FIELD ARTILLERY BRIGADE

At 1415 hours on 15 November 1990 the phone rang at the Headquarters, 142d Field Artillery Brigade National Guard Armory, a voice on the other end of the line said, "I have a Roaring Bull Message are you prepared to copy?..." The message was taken and with that call the 142d FA Bde was alerted. As in 1917, 1942, and 1952 guardsman from northwest Arkansas were once again ordered to "Answer the call" (the brigade motto) from the American people. Now as then the story of the 142d FA Bde is the success of not one person but rather the collective success of citizen soldiers rallied together to get the nation's bidding done.

Headquartered in the northwest corner of the state, in Fayetteville, AR the 142d Field Artillery Brigade (National Guard) has two subordinate 8" self propelled battalions which are stationed as follows: 1-142d FA at Harrison and 2-142d FA at Ft Smith with firing batteries in the surrounding communities. Farmers, cattlemen, firemen, cooks, secretaries, doctors, students, and lawyers make up the units. The guard is truly a cross section of the community. With strong patriotic ties and a feeling of family, the 142d FA Bde is proud of its heritage of service in all the major conflicts of the twentieth century.

There are over 1400 stories of personnel quality and individual success within the 142d FA Bde. All personnel demonstrated a high degree of patriotism, dedication, and professionalism through all phases of Operation Desert Shield/Storm/Saber. The deployable personnel rate was 98% and the "Whining Rate" was 0% at the mobilization station. The personnel of the Brigade overcame significant logistics problems to be an integral element of the VII Corps operation.

Only as an example of personnel success, an average soldier in the 142d FA Bde is a twenty six year old Light TACFIRE operator. He is most likely married, attending college or employed, and may have prior service. He has strong ties to family, church, and country. He/she is proud to serve. He juggles work, parenting, church and national guard drills into his busy schedule. He/she is bright and motivated.

In the short hectic period of time between alert and mobilization, he kissed his spouse, hugged his child, put his personal affairs in

order, and took administrative leave from college or work. He reported to the armory, to answer the call, with his bags packed and headed off to Fort Sill, OK our mobilization station.

At the mobilization station he was hit with one of the more difficult tasks of his young life. With no time for formal Army school instruction, he had to learn the ins and out of LTACFIRE. He had to learn how to use the system, maintain the system, integrate the system into the Army's Heavy TACFIRE all while concurrently attending daily administrative processing activities and receiving overseas deployment certification training. The demands on his time were enormous. The pressure to learn the new system was heavy. To meet the challenge, he volunteered to attend training that lasted until 2200 hours nightly. Buckling down, he worked long and hard to master LTACFIRE. In less than 30 days of almost non stop training it was time to ship over seas. He was not sure that he knew all there was to LTACFIRE but he was willing to answer the call.

Once he finally reached the overseas port, there was much to do in a short period of time. He had to install his LTACFIRE equipment, and establish communication links with Corps Artillery and Division Artillery. He grew confident of his skills the more he operated, he was ready to answer the call for combat.

On 24 Feb OPERATION DESERT SABER began. He answered the call. The 142d FA Bde provided reinforcing fires for the 1st Infantry Division while conducting the breach operation in the Iraqi forward defenses and obstacle belts. Then, linked up with the 1st United Kingdom Armored Division to attack eastward culminating in a maneuver against the Republican Guards.

The operational rate of the LTACFIRE system throughout Desert Storm and Saber was 100%, which in large part can be attributed to the operators. Their mastering of this system, using both military and civilian acquired skills, provided the digital link with active component forces and permitted the 142d FA Bde to become a more valuable asset to VII Corps combat power as demonstrated in combat. His success is that of the 142d FA Bde. Actually, it is the success of all the Cannoneers, Missileers, and other MOSs that came forward to answer the call.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

JAMES R PENNINGTON  
LTC, FA  
S3





# FIVE DAYS

BG (Ret) Keith A. Klemmer



**GC-45 155mm towed howitzer. Along the main highway between Kuwait City and Iraq. Around 05 Mar 1991.**

Thumbing through my journal, I see it was February 23, 1991. Five days later, it would all be over. Except the waiting. My team composed of Sergeant First Class (SFC) Rhamy, Specialist (SPC) Hester, and SPC Ketner were in our Liaison tent periodically checking with the 142nd Field Artillery Brigade Tactical Operations Center (TOC). It was late February in the desert, just northwest of Hafar Al Batan, some 60 miles south of the “Neutral Zone.” The Neutral Zone was a 2000 square-mile area, separating Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, carved out by the British in 1922, to accommodate the Bedouin tribes who wandered the region with no concept of arbitrarily drawn borders. We would end up passing through this so-called Neutral Zone in what would become the largest armored battle since World War II.

Around 9:00 a.m. that morning, one of the TOC soldiers ran to our Liaison tent. The soldier informed me that Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) James R. Pennington, the S3 of the 142nd Field Artillery Brigade, had summoned me to the TOC. The TOC was an expandable van once authorized for use in field artillery and like-type formations; however, it eventually lost program support. The 142nd had smartly retained their vans, as the Army would eventually adopt the concept again. As I waited



outside, LTC Pennington stepped out with a map in hand. The map was a 1:250,000 scale depiction of the northern Saudi Arabian desert. The only difference between the map he was holding and a paper towel is that the paper towel had more color variation.

Nonetheless, LTC Pennington had carefully drawn crosshairs on the map, all of them 30-90 kilometers from our location and up near the Neutral Zone. Then he proceeded to tell me my mission, “Well Klem, we have three potential support missions for the ground phase starting tomorrow. Either



19 Jan 91 at “Cement City” near Dammam, Saudi Arabia. As part of the 142<sup>nd</sup> advanced party, I stayed here after our arrival at King Fahd airport on 16 Jan 91 until we moved to Khobar Towers on 22 Jan 91.

with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne, the French, or the British. I have three liaison teams. I am going to assign each of you to a potential mission. Which one would you like?” He meant, “Of the three support missions, which organization would you like to serve as our Liaison for the ground phase?” In the span of about two minutes, I weighed my option. Thinking to myself, “I’m in an armored unit, why would I want to go with an airborne unit? And the French? Nothing against the French, but the coolness factor wasn’t there for this 26-year-old Captain. The British? Hmmm. The United Kingdom. Now that sounds like a story waiting to happen.”

I looked at LTC Pennington and said, “The British.” LTC Pennington replied, “Good, because I already sent the Brigade Liaison to the 82<sup>nd</sup>, we’ll most likely be supporting them anyway.” He laid out the map and pointed to one of the

crosshairs 90km away. This is where the 32<sup>nd</sup> Heavy Regiment, UK, was located. We would be their reinforcing unit if assigned. “You need to leave within the hour.” I returned to the Liaison tent and informed the team. A wave of anticipation and angst flowed from one person to the next. There were way too many unknowns and I didn’t have time to make them feel good about it. We quickly loaded our four-seat HMMWV with all of our gear, a 1:250,000 map, a compass, and grid coordinate 90 kilometers northeast of our location.

A quick note at this point – we had no Global Positioning System or iPhone with Google Maps (or Waze, if you prefer). Just a grid and a compass, and a distance. And we went on our way, cutting diagonally across lines of M1 Tanks and M2 Bradleys, all headed north. It was “G” day. We drove for three hours through the desert to that crosshair on the map and stopped. Even in our worst day, we wouldn’t have been off more than a kilometer at that distance. Even if it were five kilometers, a person can see a vehicle dust cloud at least 9 or 10 kilometers in the desert. But nothing. Not wanting to miss the linkup, we headed north, eventually catching the tail of the convoy and chasing down Colonel P.H. Marwood, the 32<sup>nd</sup> Heavy Regiment Commanding Officer, in his British Warrior armored fighting vehicle at the front of the convoy. The 32<sup>nd</sup> was part of the UK 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Division.

The convoy came to a stop, behind dozens of artillery firing batteries, stretching east to west as far as the eye could see. I later learned there were 60 firing batteries of all types in the US and UK inventory: Multiple Launcher Rocket Systems, M109 155mm self-propelled howitzers, M198 155mm towed howitzers, and the M110 8 inch self-propelled howitzer systems, all facing north towards Iraq. The time was 2:00 pm. Colonel Marwood met me at the back of my vehicle and said, “Captain Klemmer, I’ve been expecting you. Care for a spot of tea?” He led me to the back of his Warrior track, poured a glass of hot tea into his canteen cup, along with sugar and cream, then handed it to me. He

then said, here in 30 minutes, we are going to watch the largest artillery preparatory fires since World War II. We sat near the Warrior tracks, sipped tea, and talked about the next phase of the battle. I learned during that initial conversation that the 142<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Brigade would be reinforcing his battalion along with the entire 1<sup>st</sup> UK Armoured Division. It wasn't what LTC Pennington anticipated.

At 2:30 p.m., the artillery preparatory fires began and lasted for at least 30 minutes. It was an unbelievable site to see. Once complete, COL Marwood looked at me and said, "Well, let's go!" And thus begin a five day non-stop armor movement-to-contact unlike any seen in nearly 50 years. Just 39 hours after we crossed the line of departure we were at our limit of advance, Phase Line Smash. The UK 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Division had destroyed three Iraqi divisions along with 264 tanks, 213 guns captured or destroyed, and more than 7,000 prisoners of war captured. To drive through the belt defense of the Iraqi Army and see our path of destruction is something I'll never forget. On February 26, 1991, the UK 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Division, along with the 32<sup>nd</sup> Heavy Regiment, received orders to proceed to the highway connecting Kuwait City to Basra in southern Iraq. For the next two days, that battle would rage, along the famed highway of death, before cessation of hostilities at 8:00 a.m. on February 28, 1991. And then my team and I went back to the 142<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Brigade with a thousand stories.

**What exactly happened in those five days? That would fill a book.**



With then LTC, now MG (ret), Wofford, commander of the 2-142<sup>nd</sup>, the unit I was assigned to. Date, approximately 02 Mar 91 just south of Safwan, Iraq.

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# Featured Artifact: U.S. Caliber .45 ACP, Model of 1911 and 1911A1

By LTC Matthew W. Anderson

When we think of a military pistol, often the iconic M1911 comes first to mind. That is because the simple, rugged and dependable M1911 served our U.S. Military for 75 years from 1911 to 1986, being carried into combat in two world wars and throughout the Cold War including Korean and Vietnam. Even though it was designed 111 years ago, no major improvements have been made to it and no other designs have been able to displace it from its iconic status.

The beginnings of the M1911 is really a convergence of several historical events and technological advances. From 1899 to 1902, the United States was engaged in the Philippine-American War. Officers and Soldiers armed with the Colt Model 1889/1895 revolver in .38 Long Colt found that it often took firing all rounds in the cylinder into a single charging Moro tribesman wielding a long bladed kris knife in attempts to stop them. Numerous reports were made back to the Ordnance Department about the lack of stopping power and negative effect on morale. The initial solution was to take old stocks of Model 1873 Colt revolvers in .45 Long Colt and re-barrel them with 5.5 inch barrels and ship them overseas. While slower to load they often stopped the charging attacker with one well aimed shot. A permanent solution was needed.



Colt M1889/M1895 revolver .38 Long Colt



Colt M1873 Single Action Army, Artillery Model .45 Long Colt

During this same time, a young John Moses Browning had designed and patented several long guns that Winchester obtained the rights to and successfully sold. By 1900, John Browning concluded his business with Winchester and continued working with Fabrique Nationale de Herstal (FN). The first automatic pistol he designed and patented was developed and sold by FN as the Browning M1900. The FN Browning M1900 was in .32 Caliber and was the first to feature a slide that would later be refined into the semi-automatic pistols we see today. During this same time of transition, John Browning would begin to work with Colt providing them with a patented design for a short-recoil, self-loading, semi-automatic in .38 Caliber that Colt would produce and sell as the Colt M1900. The short-recoil system also played an important role in the future M1911.



From 1900 on John Browning continued to refine his designs and both Colt and FN produced successful semi-auto pistols designated the M1903, M1905, M1908 and M1910. Military and police around the world took notice of these revolutionary firearms.

Meanwhile, the Ordnance Department under General William Crozier needed to find a more permanent solution to replace the underpowered .38 Long Colt and M1889/M1895 revolver. Two promising new technologies, smokeless powder and the automatic pistol could provide the solution. In 1904, the Thompson-LeGarde tests were conducted by the US military to test a variety of cartridges and calibers to determine stopping power. This was far from scientific; they used up to 16 cattle and several cadavers in the tests. The cadavers were suspended and measured the swing following impact and the entry and exit wounds to determine effectiveness. Officials concluded "...that a bullet, which will have the shock effect and stopping effect at short ranges necessary for a military pistol or revolver, should have a caliber not less than .45." From these tests, Colt began developing the .45 Cal ACP that included the new smokeless powder.

Beginning in 1906 trials were conducted for a variety of pistols that were submitted for evaluation. John Browning initially submitted the Colt M1907 but it had several problems. Then the Colt M1909 was submitted and did well, but was determined to be complicated. Finally, John Browning submitted the Colt M1910. In 1910, another trial was conducted with the three pistols that made it through to the final test. The DWM Luger chambered in .45 Caliber, a Savage Pistol and the Colt M1910 faced off. The Colt M1910 showed its dependability by firing 6,000 rounds continuously only stopping long enough to dip it into a bucket of water to cool it off because it was becoming too hot to handle. The Colt M1910 was the clear winner.

With a few more refinements which included a grip safety and a lanyard ring, the Colt was adopted formally on 29 March 1911 by the US Army as the U.S. Caliber .45 ACP, Model of 1911. The US Navy soon followed in 1911 and Marines adopted it in 1913. At the time, no one could envision the important role the M1911 would play in America's future nor how long it would faithfully protect our Soldiers in harm's way.

The first Ordnance contract was submitted to Colt on 21 April 1911 for 31,344 pistols. The Ordnance Department followed up in November with a second contract of 7,000 pistols for the Navy. Colt immediately retooled for production and assembled the first 40 pistols by 28 December 1911. Additional contracts continued to come in. As part of the initial agreement, Colt authorized the Ordnance Department to also manufacture the M1911 at its Springfield Armory facility once the contract exceeded a total of 50,000 pistols, thereafter they were authorized to manufacture only one third of all future contracts. Colt provided 20 pistols to Springfield Army to develop drawings and tooling. In 1914, Springfield Armory began producing 40 pistols a day, increasing to 140 a day by 1915. All parts were interchangeable.

Its first use in combat conditions was during the Mexican Expedition in 1916 to capture Pancho Villa. It was during this expedition in which many of the US Military's emerging technologies were tested to include machine guns, motor transport, mechanized attacks, airplanes, communications, and small arms. Many lessons were learned, but the M1911 proved to be successful.



Photo: National Guard Soldiers on the Mexican border pose with their new M1911s (National Archives)

With America's entry into the Great War on 6 April 1917, Springfield Armory was forced to stop M1911 production and return to manufacture of M1903 Rifles. On 15 April 1917, Springfield ceased operations having produced 25,767 M1911s. All parts not yet assembled were turned over to Colt to be used in their production. To meet the anticipated requirements, Remington UMC was awarded a contract on 29 December 1917 to manufacture 150,000 M1911s. Remington UMC previously was manufacturing M1891 Mosin Nagant Rifles for Russia. Remington UMC acquired ten M1911s and began the process of retooling. On 21 March 1918 the contract increased to 500,000 M1911s. Production began in April with the first pistols assembled in August 1918. With the Armistice on 11 November 1918, the contract was reduced to 21,513. Remington UMC stopped production in May 1919 with a final production of 21,676 M1911 pistols. From 1911 to 1919, total production of the M1911 for US Military contracts was 650,538.



Photo: WWI Soldiers proudly displaying their newly issued M1911s (National Archives)



The M1911 proved to be a rugged, dependable sidearm in the muck and mire of trench warfare during the Great War. Soldiers used them to good effect in clearing enemy trenches and machine gun nests. Several Officers and NCOs earned the Medal of Honor while using their M1911 during the action cited. The most famous of these is Corporal Alvin C. York of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Division, who on 8 Oct 1918, during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, killed about 20 German Soldiers and captured 137 more. While using his rifle for longer-range shots, Sergeant York later described, "The Lieutenant with eight or ten Germans armed with rifles (fixed Bayonets) rushed toward us. One threw a little grenade about the size of a dollar and with a string that you pull ... when you want it to explode. It missed me by a few feet, wounding, however, one of his own men. I just let the Boche come down the hill and then poured into them with my pistol.... I shot the Lieutenant, and when he was killed, the machine-gun fire ceased."

There were 14 Soldiers from the Great War who earned the Medal of Honor while using an M1911. Here are a few others to explore:

- James C. Dozer
- Gary E. Foster
- Frank Gaffney
- Richmond H. Hilton
- Benjamin Kaufman
- John J. Kelly
- Frank Luke
- Thomas C. Neibaur
- Patrick Regan
- Dwite H. Schaffner
- Fred Smith
- William B. Turner
- Samuel Woodfill



Photo: French Soldiers observing an American Soldier firing his M1911 on the range in France, 1917  
(National Archives)

While the American Doughboy had high praise for the M1911, there were a few minor improvements proposed and adopted on 20 April 1923. These included shortening the length of the trigger, mill trigger finger clearances on either side of the grip behind the trigger, extending the grip safety comb to prevent biting the area of the hand between the thumb and index finger, and creating a hump on the main spring housing, which would slightly change the angle of the grip bringing the sights to a more natural level picture. These ergonomic changes were eventually designated officially as the M1911A1 on 20 May 1926. During the interwar years the military purchased a limited number of M1911A1s totaling 57,233 all but 500 were manufactured by Colt. Singer, the sewing machine company was given an educational contract to manufacture 500 in April 1940. Other manufacturers were needed if America entered the Second World War since Colt, with its experience would be needed to manufacture machine guns and Remington UMC would be needed to manufacture ammunition.

With America's entry into the Second World War following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, America again needed to mobilize the entire nation for production of war material to arm the millions of men drafted into the service. By October 1942, the shortage of M1911A1s was critical and Colt converted many of its remaining stocks of Commercial Models to the Military Model as a measure to fill some of the shortages.

In January 1942, Ithaca Gun Company bid on and won a contract to manufacture 60,000 M1911A1s at a rate of 13,000 a month. To further assist Ithaca's production, Springfield Armory transferred 6,200 surplus receivers that had been in storage since 1919. Ithaca production began in December of 1942 finally reaching full production in July 1943. In all, Ithaca manufactured 335,466 M1911A1s during the War.

Remington Rand was a typewriter company that began talks with the Ordnance Department, which resulted in a contract on 22 May 1942 for them to manufacture 125,000 M1911A1 pistols. Although they had no previous experience in the manufacture of firearms, they had determined leadership and excellent streamlined production processes, which aided them in establishing an efficient system once proper tooling was acquired. Remington Rand made it their goal to make the best pistol at the lowest cost in the greatest quantity. By November 1942, they produced the first 225 pistols. In February 1943, some issues were found in interchangeability of parts. Mr. James Rand made some changes in key leaders and the problem was quickly resolved. All existing parts were re-inspected before production resumed. By the fall of 1944, Remington Rand was producing a quality M1911A1 at 50,000 per month. In July 1945 no further contracts were needed and Remington Rand concluded its production having manufactured 877,751. Remington Rands are considered the best quality M1911A1s produced during the War. Remington Rand achieved their goal manufacturing a high quality, high quantity pistol that cost the government \$10 less per pistol than a Colt.

Union Switch and Signal Company was contracted on 5 May 1942 to produce M1911A1s initially for 200,000, the amount was reduced to 30,000 on 8 March 1942 due to change in requirements. Then on 9 July 1943, another contract for 25,000 was awarded. However, US&S had already

shifted many of its workers over to the production of M1 Carbines so production on the M1911A1s slowed. US&S delivered the last M1911A1s on 27 November 1943 with a total production of 55,000.

From 1942 to 1945 Colt manufactured 570,575 M1911A1s for the military. In all, 1,838,792 M1911A1s were manufactured by all companies during WWII. These were the last general contracts for the military. Going forward, the military would send existing stocks through arsenal rebuild programs to supply M1911A1s for continued service throughout the Cold War.

The M1911A1 again served our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines well in all theaters of operation during WWII. Cpl. Edward A. Bennett, 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division is one example, his citation is as follows:

He was advancing with Company B across open ground to assault Heckhuscheid, Germany, just after dark when vicious enemy machine-gun fire from a house on the outskirts of the town pinned down the group and caused several casualties. He began crawling to the edge of the field in an effort to flank the house, persisting in this maneuver even when the hostile machine gunners located him by the light of burning buildings and attempted to cut him down as he made for the protection of some trees. Reaching safety, he stealthily made his way by a circuitous route to the rear of the buildings occupied by the German gunners. With his trench knife he killed a sentry on guard there and then charged into the darkened house. In a furious hand-to-hand struggle he stormed about a single room which harbored seven Germans. Three he killed with rifle fire, another he clubbed to death with the butt of his gun, and the three others he dispatched with his .45-caliber pistol. The fearless initiative, stalwart combat ability, and outstanding gallantry of Cpl. Bennett eliminated the enemy fire which was decimating his company's ranks and made it possible for the Americans to sweep all resistance from the town.

There were approximately 21 Medal of Honor recipients during the Second World War who used an M1911A1 during their action cited. Listed below are some other citations to read:

- |                        |                         |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| • Thomas A. Baker Jr.  | • James L. "Red" Harris | • Dirk J. Vlug    |
| • George R. Benjamin   | • William J. Johnson    | • Henry F. Warner |
| • Willibald C. Bianchi | • Floyd K. Lindstrom    |                   |
| • Robert E. Bush       | • Harry L. Martin       |                   |
| • Clyde L. Choate      | • Robert D. Maxwell     |                   |
| • Darrell S. Cole      | • William J. O'Brien    |                   |
| • Robert G. Cole       | • Arlo L. Olson         |                   |
| • Charles W. Davis     | • James E. Robinson     |                   |
| • William G. Harrell   | • Carl V. Sheridan      |                   |



Photo: Soldiers on the firing line. The one handed firing stance was the standard at the time (National Archives)

In the Korean War there were 12 Medal of Honor recipients who used the M1911A1 in their cited actions. One such Soldier is Pfc. Jack Hanson, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division who deserves to be remembered. His citation follows:

Pfc. Hanson, a machine gunner with the 1st Platoon, Company F, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in action against an armed enemy of the United Nations. The company, in defensive positions

on two strategic hills separated by a wide saddle, was ruthlessly attacked at approximately 0300 hours, the brunt of which centered on the approach to the divide within range of Pfc. Hanson's machine gun. In the initial phase of the action, four riflemen were wounded and evacuated, and the numerically superior enemy, advancing under cover of darkness, infiltrated and posed an imminent threat to the security of the command post and weapons platoon. Upon orders to move to key terrain above and to the right of Pfc. Hanson's position, he voluntarily remained to provide protective fire for the withdrawal. Subsequent to the retiring elements' fighting a rearguard action to the new location, it was learned that Pfc. Hanson's assistant gunner and three riflemen had been wounded and had crawled to safety, and that he was maintaining a lone-man defense. After the 1st Platoon reorganized, counterattacked, and rescued its original positions at approximately 0530 hours, Pfc. Hanson's body was found lying in front of his emplacement, his machine-gun ammunition expended, his empty pistol in his right hand, and a machete with blood on the blade in his left hand, and approximately 22 enemy dead lay in the wake of his action. Pfc. Hanson's consummate valor, inspirational conduct, and willing self-sacrifice enabled the company to contain the enemy and regain the commanding ground, and reflect lasting glory on himself and the noble traditions of the military service.

Other Medal of Honor recipients in the Korean War were:

- Llyod L. Burke
- Henry A Commisky Sr.
- Don C. Faith Jr.
- Charles L. Gilliland
- Ernest R. Kouma
- Benito Martinez
- Robert M. McGovern
- Raymond G. Murphy
- Eugene A. Obregon
- Dan Schoonover
- Jerome A. Sudut

In Vietnam, the M1911A1 continued service with our military. Spec 5 Dwight H. Johnson, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division used the M1911A1 several times as well as several other weapons to fight off the North Vietnamese Army attack and earn the Medal of Honor. His citation is as follows:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Sp5c. Johnson, a tank driver with Company B, was a member of a reaction force moving to aid other elements of his platoon, which was in heavy contact with a battalion-size North Vietnamese force. Sp5c. Johnson's tank, upon reaching the point of contact, threw a track and became immobilized. Realizing that he could do no more as a driver, he climbed out of the vehicle, armed only with a .45 caliber pistol. Despite intense hostile fire, Sp5c. Johnson killed several enemy soldiers before he had expended his ammunition. Returning to his tank through a heavy volume of antitank-rocket, small-arms and automatic weapon fire, he obtained a submachine gun with which to continue his fight against the advancing enemy. Armed with this weapon, Sp5c. Johnson again braved deadly enemy fire to return to the center of the ambush site where he courageously eliminated more of the determined foe. Engaged in extremely close combat when the last of his ammunition was expended, he killed an enemy soldier with the stock end of his submachine gun. Now weaponless, Sp5c. Johnson ignored the enemy fire around him, climbed into his platoon sergeant's tank, extricated a wounded crewmember and carried him to an armored personnel carrier. He then returned to the same tank and assisted in firing the main gun until it jammed. In a magnificent display of courage, Sp5c. Johnson exited the tank and again armed only with a .45 caliber pistol, engaged several North Vietnamese troops in close proximity to the vehicle. Fighting his way through devastating fire and remounting his own immobilized tank, he remained fully exposed to the enemy as he bravely and skillfully engaged them with the tank's externally mounted .50 caliber machine gun, where he remained until the situation was brought under control. Sp5c. Johnson's profound concern for his fellow soldiers, at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

Other Medal of Honor recipients from the Vietnam War were:

- Harold A. Fritz
- Robert J. Hibbs
- Joe R. Hooper
- John J. McGinty III
- Richard A. Pittman
- James M. Sprayberry

The war in Vietnam found the enemy using extensive tunnel systems to move, communicate, stockpile supplies and ambush American patrols. Soldiers who went down into these tunnels to flush the enemy out, armed only with an M1911A1 became known as "Tunnel Rats." When encountered in these tunnels stopping the enemy with one shot was essential to survival.



Photo: 1967 a Tunnel Rat from the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division prepares to enter a Viet Cong tunnel armed only with an M1911A1 and a flashlight (National Archives)



In 1985, the Army officially selected the Beretta M9 as a replacement for the M1911A1, however, the M1911A1 continued to serve in Special Operations units. Delta Force snipers Master Sgt. Gary I. Gordon and SFC Randall D. Shughart both Medal of Honor recipients were armed with M1911A1's and used them during the action cited. Gordon's citation is as follows:

M/Sgt. Gary I. Gordon, United States Army, distinguished himself by action above and beyond the call of duty on 3 October 1993, while serving as a Sniper Team Leader, United States Army Special Operations Command with Task Force Ranger in Mogadishu, Somalia. M/Sgt. Gordon's sniper team provided precision fires from the lead helicopter during an assault, and at two helicopter crash sites, while subjected to intense automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenade fires. When M/Sgt. Gordon learned that ground forces were not immediately available to secure the crash site, he and another sniper unhesitatingly volunteered to be inserted to protect the four critically wounded personnel, despite being well aware of the growing number of enemy personnel closing in on the site. After his third request to be inserted, M/Sgt. Gordon received permission to perform his volunteer mission. When debris and enemy ground fires at the site caused him to abort the first attempt, M/Sgt. Gordon was inserted one hundred meters south of the crash site. Equipped with only his sniper rifle and pistol, M/Sgt. Gordon and his fellow sniper, while under intense small arms fire from the enemy, fought their way through a dense maze of shanties and shacks to reach the critically injured crew members. M/Sgt. Gordon immediately pulled the pilot and other crew members from the aircraft, establishing a perimeter which placed him and his fellow sniper in the most vulnerable position. M/Sgt. Gordon used his long range rifle and side arm to kill an undetermined number of attackers until he depleted his ammunition. M/Sgt. Gordon then went back to the wreckage, recovering some of the crew's weapons and ammunition. Despite the fact that he was critically low on ammunition he provided some of it to the dazed pilot and then radioed for help. M/Sgt. Gordon continued to travel the perimeter, protecting the downed crew. After his team member was fatally wounded, and his own rifle ammunition exhausted, M/Sgt. Gordon returned to the wreckage, recovering a rifle with the last five rounds of ammunition and gave it to the pilot with the words "Good Luck." Then, armed only with his pistol, MSgt. Gordon continued to fight until he was fatally wounded. His actions saved the pilot's life. M/Sgt. Gordon's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest standards of military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the United States Army.

The M1911A1 on display at the museum is Serial Number 1504182, which indicates the receiver was part of the third shipment of Remington Rand guns manufactured in the spring of 1944. On the right side of the receiver just forward on the serial number it is stamped "SA" which indicates that at one time it went through the post war Springfield Armory Arsenal rebuild program. Also on the right side af of the grip is a faint Ordnance Final Acceptance Stamp which is the crossed cannon and flaming bomb design showing that it has been accepted into US Property inventory. This was used from 1942 to 1945 on Colt, Remington Rand, and Ithaca pistols. On the left side of the receiver are the initials 'FJA' which are the initials of Colonel Frank J. Atwood, Army Inspector

of Ordnance who was responsible for the inspection of all M1911A1s accepted by the military from the Remington Rand and Ithaca plants throughout the entire production from 1942 to 1945.

The slide is a Colt manufactured spare part based on the Colt stampings on the left side to include the faint Colt rampant horse design between the first and second block stampings. Another indicator is the absence on the right side of the slide "M1911A1 U.S. ARMY." These spare slides were left blank to be used for a replacements on Army or Navy M1911A1s. It is likely this slide was added during the arsenal rebuild sometime after WWII. Another indicator of the arsenal rebuild is the grayish color of the parkerization. Factory parkerization during WWII was more of a darker grey-green color.



Photo: Right side M1911A1 with Remington Rand receiver with serial number and SA marking and Colt replacement slide (museum collection)



Photo: Left side of M1911A1 showing the FJA on receiver and the Colt markings on the slide (museum collection)



Photo: Typical parts breakdown showing the simplicity of the design

Even with the Sig Sauer M17 now replacing the Beretta M9, you may or may not be surprised to discover that there are still limited quantities of M1911A1s in the U.S. Army inventory. These are gradually being turned in and handed over to the Civilian Marksmanship Program in which competitors and Veterans can purchase a piece of history that has faithfully served our nation for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

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