

INCOMING

**THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE 3RD BATTALION
15TH FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT TOWED
FT MCCLELLAN AND ANNISTON AL**

**Blast from
the Past
Thank You**

VOL. 14

NUMBER 2

1 MAY 2025

3rd BATTALION



121st US ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

HHB & SVC BTRY
FT. MCCLELLAN

“B” BTRY
TALLADEGA

“A” BTRY
CULLMAN

“C” BTRY
GADSDEN

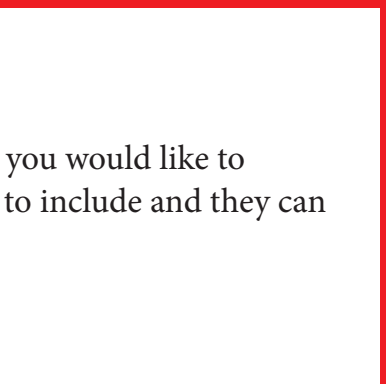
Commanders Corner

Here we are well into the 2nd Quarter of 2025 and as usual we have many projects going at the same time all leading to the big event our 4th Annual Reunion on 13 December 2025. We will be in Gadsden at The Venue @ the Coosa Landing. If all goes well with this venue this year, I intend to make this our permanent Reunion location as it is the most accessible for all Battalion members.

The Reunion Program and Invitations will have some subtle changes made as we further refine the overall appearance but still paying respect to our past. The only change being made to the Incoming at this time is correcting the Red coloring. As you read the original Cannoneer/Incoming's from the past you will note that they all had an official disclaimer so after consulting Staff we have also added an updated disclaimer to the current Incoming in keeping with our current status and tradition.

You will also read about the howitzer that revolutionized the accuracy of the Field Artillery the French Model 1897 or as it would be referred to the French 75. This piece is part of our overall heritage as it is on our Colors along with the 2nd ID patch. Another addition is the Battalion's Significant Events Timeline which I pulled from memory so if you notice something missing left me know and I will definitely add it in.

I would like to Thank SSG Denver Woods Jr who graciously donated his personal photos from the early years of Bravo Battery that are in this edition and the following edition of the Incoming. Also SFC Wendell Gibson for sharing his journey in the Battalion from Part 1 the Beginning with Part 2 March Order coming in the next issue. Would also like to Thank SSG Jimmy Catlett HHB from his archives the BN Newsletter #4 from Camp Shelby AT-80.



If you have articles, photos or a story that you would like to contribute we would be more than happy to include and they can be sent via Postal to the following:

John Hoehne Sr
9773 Blue Spring Rd
Mercersburg PA 17236
By email johnhoehnesr@gmail.com

Text 210-249-1818 and due credit will be given.

So on to the next Reunion and keep your powder dry

Allons
LTC John Hoehne Sr
FA Last Commander

The INCOMING is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-91, 3d Bn 15th FAR USAR (Inactivated) FT McClellan/Anniston, AL 36205. Published at least quarterly, the views and opinions expressed are exclusively those of the members of this organization as edited by the Last Commander and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Department of the Army. Provided via post and digital to every 3rd Battalion Red Leg. This publication reflects the Last Commander and every 3rd Battalion Red Leg official position period.

The CSM's Corner

A big shout out to all the 3/15th Artillery Red Legs, and to all the families, I know everyone is glad to see the cold weather leave out, but with the warmer weather it also brings out the snakes, so be cautious when working in the yard or garden, also check under your outdoor furniture cushions, as they like sliding under them.

Just a quick question, how many of you can remember spending the Fourth of July at Stewart, as I remember, it was unbearable hot, we all gathered under the huge water oaks, or known as the Staging Area, the heat had beat everyone down, but we shared hot dogs, and melted ice cream, and tea that hot day, and as the closing rays of the sun faded, we received march order, and back to the Firing Points we went. You can believe that wasn't the only hot day we spent there, and at Camp Shelby, but I do believe Stewart was hotter, and the monsoon seasons were worse than Camp Shelby.

In closing I would like to remind everyone, the Battalion Reunion will be a great one this year, sure looking forward to seeing everyone this year, I know the Battalion Commander has already put a ton of work into this reunion already, and he will be doing a ton more, I would also like to remind everyone that your donations to the 3/15th Regiment Fund, helps finance these Reunions, so please donate to the fund in order to keep the Reunions alive, it takes everyone of us to keep the Battalion alive, so THANK YOU TO EACH AND EVERYONE FOR YOUR Continued Support.

Donald Peak (CSM) USAR Ret.
3/15th Field Artillery
Sent from my iPhone

Previous Edition of the Cannoneer

9 April 1978

THE CANNONEER

VOL 1 No 7

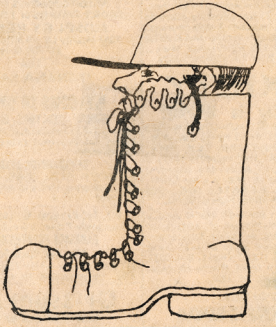
3d BN, 15th FIELD ARTILLERY

9 April 1978

FIRST ANNIVERSARY EDITION

RECRUITING, RETENTION, REINLISTMENT.... THE LIFE BLOOD OF THE RESERVES

SHORT-TIMER?



CONSIDER A

**Second
Career**

RECRUITERS



**DRIVE HOME A
BARGAIN**

**want
cash?**

You're good for more

IN THE RESERVES

RECRUITING, RETENTION, REINLISTMENT.... THE THREE R's

The battalion has launched an aggressive recruiting Program. LTC Holladay has established this program as the number of priority in view of the battalion's need to fill critical MOS's prior to the unit's departure to camp Shelby for summer camp. He asks everyone's participation in this recruiting drive. Just think, if ever one recruited just one person before May drill for the battalion; we would reach our assigned goal in one month. But recruiting still be mains only one of the three aspects of the recruiting program. Those who are recruited must be retained. Those who are retained hopefully will reenlist. It seems that, Reading, Riting, and Rithmatic are out. Recruiting, Retention, and Reinlisting are in. We have in the Battalion a very effective recruiting and retention program. We now must vigorously implement it. Any questions regarding our program should be directed to one of the following Recruiting and Retention experts:

A SSG Cofer B SSG Limbaugh C LSG Owens

HHE MAJ. Funderburk SVC LSG Wright
SGT Forman
SFC Stepleton

In Addition each unit now has a Retention SOP. Anyone who desires to know more about the program is invited to read his unit's SOP.

Sgt Ollis Forman is the Battalion Career Counselor. He invites anyone to

call him about the Recruiting and Retention Program. His telephone numbers follow: Days 238-6970
Nights 338-3212

FROM OPERATIONS

OFF TO FT SILL

LTC Holladay, MAJ Funderburk, CPT Johnson, CPT Rogers, LT Owens, SGM Reynolds, MSG Presley, LT Chalcker, CW2 Denson, CPT Moore, LSG Sparks, LT Conti, LT Robertson are to attend the Field Artillery Staff Refresher Course to be held 16-21 April 1978. We wish them a safe and enjoyable trip. All personnel above will be issued 1 each steelpot and 1 each flak Jacket for their personal protection to be used when they visit Lawton impact areas.

TRAINING NOTES

Training thru June will consist mainly of SOJT and MOS Classes. AT is scheduled 8-22 July 1978, at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. All assigned should insure that their emergency Data Cards are up to date.

CPT Johnson says: All units must make certain that preparation of equipment for loading are completed prior toll June 1978 as this date will be used for organization and preparation for AT.

MEET THE SMAG

SGM Adrian O. Reynolds is a native of Vincent, Alabama. He graduated from Vincent High School and later attended Gadsden State Junior College.

Con't page 3

He is married to the former Flore Baker. They have two daughters one s and one grandson. The Reynolds resid Oxford Alabama.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO THE BN.

HMB

SP5 Cobb, Sp4 Devos, SP4 Carter;
Sgt Johnson, Sp5 Hills

SVC

Pvt Clark, Sp4 Lyles, Pvt Avvott,
SP4 Ford, SP4 Foster

A-BTRY

PFC Woods, Pvt Woodard, Sgt Trussel,
PFC Wynn

B BTRY

Spr Richardson, Sp4 Greene,
Sp4 Stevens, Sp4 Barclay, Pfc
Brothers, Sp4 Turner, Sp4 Lawson,
Sp4 McGowan, Sp5 Smith, Sp5 Boyce,
Pfc Jones, Pvt Nilson, Pvt George
Pvt Welch, Pvt Jemison, Pvt Curtis
Pvt Tanner

C-BTRY

2LT, Forbes, Sp5 Barrax

PROMOTIONS

B BTRY SSG Robert Waite
Sp5 Jim Borden

DEPARTURES

SFC Burleson has transferred to the
Aviation Section of the 121st. ARCOM
in Pell City, Alabama, where he will
serve as the full time technician.
We all wish him the best of luck.

CPT Edwards who served as our Commo
officer has left the battalion due
to pressing family needs. We will miss
his expertise and valuable assistance he
rendered to the battalion

CHAPLIN'S CORNER



"Remember me?—your old top-kick during the war! Bet I'm the last guy you expected to see up here... right?"

Since Chaplain Smith departed, the battalion is temporarily without the benefit of an assigned Chaplain; however, Chapel Services on Post are conducted each Sunday for all members who desire to worship. Check with your unit first sergeant for the appropriate time and place. All members wishing to attend these Post Chapel Services are encouraged to attend and will be excused.

THE CANNONEER is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR-360-91, 3rd Bn, 15th FA FT. McClellan, Alabama 36205. (205) 238-4648. Published bimonthly. Mineographed. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Dept of the Army.

Sports and Recreation

The following Fort McClellan recreational facilities are authorized for use by active reserve component personnel and their dependents and guests upon presentation of DA FORM 2A(Res) Red ID Card.

a. HILLTOP RECREATION CENTER

Note: The Hilltop Recreation Center and Annex are normally limited to use by those 18 yrs of age and older. Minors may attend events open to the general public.

b. Sports Branch Facilities:

1. Golf Course
2. Gymns
3. Outdoor Pools
4. Bowling Alley
5. Tennis Course
6. Softball fields

c. Arts and Crafts Branch Facilities

1. Multi-Crafts Shops
2. Auto Craft Shops

d. Outdoor Recreation Facilities

1. Skating Rink
2. Skeet Range
3. Miniature golf Course
4. Archery Range
5. Go-Kart Track

e. Music and Theatre Facilities

Important Note: this does not include the Army and Air Force Exchange System Motion Picture theater.....

f. Abrams Library and Dependent Youth Activities Facilitiesg. Outdoor Recreation Equipment

Rental Center:
Boats/Campers/Bikes, ect

NOTE: Open to USAR Personnel on a first come, first served basis, no reservations.

Regulations governing use of facilities, to include payment of fees (if any) apply equally to all persons authorized to use

All dependents and guests will be allowed to use the facilities only when accompanied by the sponsor (USAR MEMBER).

Reference: Ft McClellan Policy
Memorandum Number 78-6

DRILL DATES

May 20-21 1978 7:20 AM

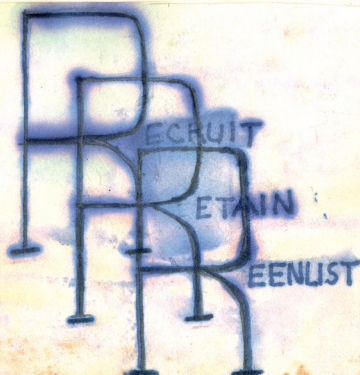
June 10-11 1978

July 8-22 AT 1978

July 29-30 1978

STORK NEWS

Amanda Rea is the name Cpt and Mrs Ray White have given their second daughter born April 2, 1978 Hqts Battery and the battalion send best wishes to this family.



Building the Bench

SFC Gibson here, Platoon Sergeant (The BN Ammo Section, Service Battery) Ft McClellan, AL 1978. I was born and raised in Anniston, AL and graduated from Cobb Avenue High School 1972.

These memories are for SGT Michael McCallum (Red Leg) who recently passed away; celebrating the time we shared with Mike. “Rest In Peace,” our Brother until we ALL meet again.

Thank you LTC Hoehne and CSM Peak for giving me this opportunity to share some of my most memorable moments while serving as the BN Ammo Platoon Sergeant, in the WWII 3200 Area with HHB and SVC Batterys, during 1978 at Ft McClellan.

At this time, the Ammo Section was trying to establish its own identification as a “Band-Of-Brothers.” These soldiers were absolutely the best I have ever served with, and I was very proud to have been a part in their story. They held me up and supported me to become the NCOIC for the Ammo Section.

I was recruited by the U.S. Navy 1972 with Basic Training in Orlando, FL. I served on board AS-16 USS Howard W. Gilmore (Diesel Burner) home-ported in Key West, FL and transferred to CVA-42 USS Franklin D. Roosevelt, Aircraft Carrier home-ported in Mayport, FL. Promoted to MM3 Machinist Mate E-4, serving on board 1974-1975.

I was released from active-duty May 1975. I was then assigned to the Navy's IRR Program, Memphis, TN. I returned back home to Anniston, AL and was employed at Ft McClellan under the Vietnam Veteran Program. I came in contact with SGT Curtis Griffin and SGT Gerald Wallace (SVC/HHB). I was released from the Navy Reserves and assigned to the 3rd BN 15th FA Army Reserves. I traded dungarees for (OG's/BDU's) and the Cracker Jack Uniform for the Class A Uniform; traded M14 rifle for a M16 rifle and went from Mess Decks to Chow Hall Dining Facility. I was literally a fish-out-of-water.

When I enlisted into the Battalion July 1976, COL Holladay was the BN Commander, formations were in front of the HHB Building parking lot with approximately 25-30 soldiers. That was the head count for the entire Battalion. HHB, SVC Battery at Ft. McClellan, A-Battery in Cullman, B-Battery in Talladega, and C-Battery in Gadsden, AL.

In the Spring 1978-1980 we began a recruitment campaign in Anniston, Oxford, Hobson City, and Jacksonville held at the City Parks and Community Centers, SGT Brock working for HHB and me representing SVC BTY.

We requested off-post dispatches from the Motor Pool (one Jeep and one 5-ton truck). The uniform of the day was Class B. We would stage in area parks. Still today I am absolutely surprised and grateful for the response that we received, as we passed out information about the benefits, pay etc., serving the country, meeting and socializing with comrades. I knew this recruiting drive was definitely the push that we needed to increase our manpower for 3rd Battalion.

We would meet, pickup, and transfer, the potential recruits and bring them to the BN for lunch at the chow hall; which brought back memories of the time they spent on active duty and their sense of commitment and responsibility.

When I look back at the time I was a Buck SGT (E-5), I could visualize and feel that the 3rd Battalion was going to be something special for all of the “Red Legs” and their families HOOAH!! Thanks to LTC Hoehne for allowing me to have this input, I’m hopeful that other NCO’s will share their leadership/ experiences while serving in the 3rd Battalion.

Part II coming soon “March Order.”

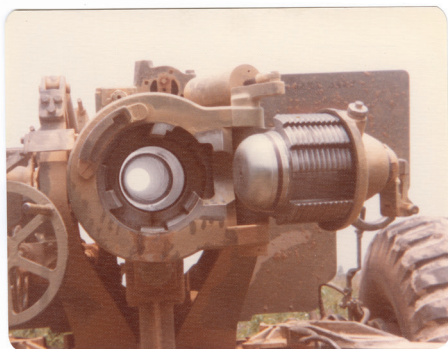
(If it had not been for this direct approach meeting fellow Veterans and possible new Recruits the Battalion would probably have met strength goals early on.)

From the Archives of SSG Denver Woods Jr —— Bravo Battery AT-80 Camp Shelby MS











Reunion News and Updates

There are no changes regarding this years reunion but there is one change that takes effect this year regarding RSVPs

Beginning this year, if you do not RSVP at all, then you will no longer receive invitations in the future. Besides the cost of printed invitations and postage, the RSVPs (attending or not) also affect catering, venue seating and other costs. Removing those who do not respond allows a savings which enables us to allocate resources to better serve you. We are not offended if you decide not to attend the reunions; we understand you can have other priorities. Just let us know.

There are at least three ways you can RSVP: mail the stamped self addressed RSVP, text me at 210-249-1818, or email me at johnhoehnesr@gmail.com

4th Annual Reunion 2025

Date: 13 December 2025

Location: The Venue at Coosa Landing in Gadsden AL

Time: 1100 - 1600

Cost: \$30 per person

Meal: Buffet

Fried Chicken, Chopped Steak w/onions, Smoked BBQ Pork Butt, Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy, Whole Green Beans w/Bacon, Sweet Whole Kernel Corn, Sweet Hawaiian Rolls w/Butter Sweet and Unsweet Tea, Dessert Artillery Cake

Dress Code: Business Casual Only

Saint Barbara Medal is Authorized

Invitations will be mailed by 1 September

3rd Battalion 15th FAR Significant Events

1. June 1976 3rd Battalion Activated at Ft McClellan AL
2. 1977 Issued Equipment Viet Nam era M114A1 Howitzer and rolling stock
3. August 1977 First Round Fired FP-2 Pelham Range/ FT McClellan AL
4. 1978 3392nd USAR School FDC Training
5. 1978 CAPSTONE to 118th FA BDE GA NG
6. AT-78 at Camp Shelby MS
7. AT-79 at Ft Sill via Commercial Flight and Military Convoy all Rolling Stock
8. AT-80 at Camp Shelby MS
9. AT-81 at Ft Stewart GA
10. AT-82 Ft Stewart GA ARTEP w/Nuclear Certification
11. Nuclear Mission Accreditation SVC Battery every ARTEP
12. 1983 CPX with 118th FA BDE @ Ft Stewart GA
13. AT-83 FT McClellan AL 1983
14. 1983 Service Battery attains 100% Strength the first Battery in the Battalion to do so.
15. AT-84 ARTEP w/Nuclear Certification
16. AT-85 FT Stewart GA ARTEP 100% Gunnery
17. AT-86 FT Stewart GA
18. 1986 the M198 Howitzer Issued throughout the year
19. AT-87 FT Stewart GA ARTEP w/Nuclear Certification 100% Gunnery
20. Battalion HQ's and Service Battery moved from Ft McClellan AL to Bill Nichols Reserve Center Anniston AL

- 
21. AT-88 Ft Stewart GA
 22. AT-89 Ft Stewart GA
 23. AT-90 Ft Stewart GA ARTEP w/Nuclear Certification 100% Gunnery
 24. AT-91 FT Stewart GA
 25. 1992 Battalion Nuclear Certification Requirement Ended
 26. AT-92 Ft Stewart GA Standard External Evaluation (SEE) 100% Gunnery 96% Overall Evaluation
 27. 1992 Battalion put on notice for JRTC Rotation 1993 or 1994
 28. AT-93 Ft McClellan AL School House of the Soldier
 29. 1993 Battalion holds School House of the Soldier raising MOSQ with 3392nd USAR School
 30. 1993 Began coordination for drawing SINCGARS
 31. 1993 Coordination with 101st ABN to conduct Air Mobile Training AT-94 at Ft Campbell KY
 32. 1993 BN alerted to possible Inactivation.....BN adopted two-plans one for AT-94 at Ft Campbell and the other for Inactivation
 33. 1994 Battalion Inactivated moving men and equipment through out the 121st ARCOM, Alabama National Guard and Active Duty between March and the end of August
 34. 3rd Battalion fired 73600 total rounds over 17 total years
 35. Maintained a stellar safety record over 17 years with no loss of life or serious accidents
 36. 1976-1994 Major Equipment Shortages a continuing issue for the Battalion
 37. 3rd Battalion Inactivated 10 September 1994 @ Bill Nichols Reserve Center

The French 75 Gun: The Secret Cannon Used for Over Half a Century

The versatile and mobile French 75mm cannon was a revolutionary design that saw widespread use during both world wars.

This article appears in: February 2008

By Christopher Miskimon

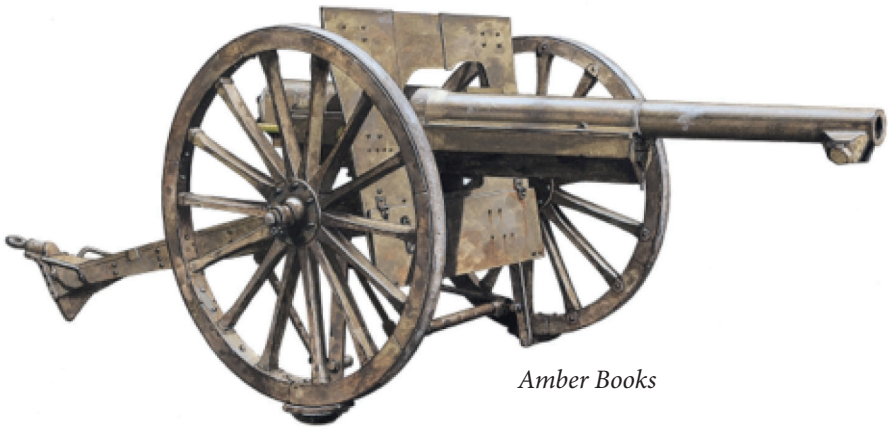
A regiment of Bavarian infantry advanced quietly in the dark, rising from its own trenches and moving toward the French lines across the desolate no-man's-land in between. If the German troops could surprise their enemies and gain a foothold, they could break the wretched stalemate that paralyzed the Western Front during World War I. As they inched ever closer to the French position, many of the German infantrymen felt increasingly anxious, hoping they would not be discovered by the enemy while exposed and vulnerable in the open field. Such hopes were dashed when roving French searchlights pinpointed the German regiment. Nearby sat the means of their undoing—a battery of four cannons, each a Model 1897 French “75 gun” positioned a mile away but with a clear line of sight. With a direct view of the battlefield, the French battery could pour fire right into the massed German formation.

The battery commander gave the order for each gun to fire 30 rounds, and the crews obeyed as fast as they could service their guns. No-man's-land became a hell of high explosives and shrapnel, quickly overwhelming the Germans' ability to continue their attack. A cheer went up from the French

lines as the attackers broke and retreated to the comparative safety of their trenches, but the 75s were not yet done. The four guns fired 80 more rounds into the fleeing Germans, completing the rout. The stalemate continued.

Making the Model 1897

The French Model 1897 75mm cannon was a quick-firing, accurate, and dependable artillery piece that became practically the quintessential Allied cannon in World War I. Initially produced under great secrecy, with details of its design jealously guarded by the French government, the *soixante-quinze* went on to have a long, worldwide history of service that lasted well into World War II. It was versatile enough to gain use as an antitank gun, although the tank did not even exist when the cannon was developed in the 1890s. Decades later, the French 75 was still firing shots in anger, continuing to serve in both artillery and antitank roles.



Amber Books

Development of the Model 1897 began as part of the ongoing artillery arms race in the late 1800s. Improvements in explosives and metallurgy made it possible to create more powerful cannons than ever before, but one problem plagued

designers—recoil. Field guns that were small and light enough for easy transport would literally fly off their wheels at each shot, requiring the gun to be set back into position and aimed again before the next round was fired. If the gun was heavy enough to soak up the recoil forces, it was no longer transportable by a reasonably sized horse team. Recoil-absorbing systems were created, but none of those in general use did the job well enough to solve the problem, and the cannons still jumped upon firing.

In 1892, General Charles Mathieu, the French artillery director, came into possession of a secret German report concerning a revolutionary new cannon that utilized a new “long-recoil” principle. The weapon had advanced to the trial stage but had failed during testing. Still, Mathieu’s curiosity was piqued. Summoning the director of the government arsenal at Bourges, Mathieu asked if such a design could be made to work. The director returned to his arsenal to discuss the design with other engineers and officers; they returned after three days of study, saying the weapon’s design was simply not feasible. Mathieu was disappointed but not yet ready to give up. He contacted the director of another arsenal in Pateaux, just outside Paris, the Chatillon-Commentry Gun Foundry. The director, Colonel Albert Deport, took the German gun’s particulars and studied them for three days. When he returned, he announced to Mathieu that such a gun could indeed be made.

Why the French 75 Gun Was Kept Such a Secret

Development began under the strictest secrecy. All correspondence was kept confidential, including the weekly reports Deport made to Mathieu. No contracts were signed, nor did Mathieu seek approval from his superiors. “Misdirected” money from a fund normally used to buy property around Paris paid for the program, to the eventual

cost of 300 million francs. Deport's specification called for a weapon of 75mm caliber, but the heart of the new weapon would be the recoil system. Beneath the gun's barrel lay a cradle that held two hydraulic cylinders. The top cylinder held hydraulic fluid, while the bottom held compressed gas. A port connected the two cylinders and a floating piston kept the gas and liquid apart. When the gun fired, the fluid was forced down through the port into the second cylinder, compressing the gas until the recoil energy was expended, at which point the gas pushed against the floating piston and forced the fluid back into the first cylinder. This "counterrecoil" pushed the gun back into firing position, ready for the next shot. The system worked so smoothly that the gun essentially stayed in place after firing without jumping, eliminating the need to re-aim it before firing again. This increased the rate of fire dramatically.

Although the French were attempting to design a whole new class of cannon, they did not hesitate to adopt features from other guns they thought might work. The cannon's breech assembly was of the Nordenfeldt type, a rotating block with a notch cut into one side. When rotated, the notch exposed the chamber so a round could be inserted, then the block was rotated back and closed. It was simple and reliable. The features of other guns were adapted as well. A decade earlier, another French officer had designed a 57mm gun with a number of new details. These included a separate sighting device not attached to the gun tube, which enabled the sight to be moved independently of the barrel. They also adopted the concept of the collimator, a fixed telescope used for aiming the gun in direct fire. Additionally, gun shields for crew protection and a seat for the gunner were adapted to the new cannon. The seat was only really useful if the gun's recoil was sufficiently managed by the new recoil system to keep the gun from jumping when fired. Otherwise, the gunner would be thrown off when the gun jumped.



American doughboys handle a Model 1897 75mm in battle. The gun on the left is in full recoil, with a shell casing suspended in the air to the left of the tube.

Secrecy about the new 75 was maintained even after the cannon entered service with the French Army. The floating piston was of particular interest to those wanting to copy the gun's design because of the way it was sealed to prevent the fluid and gas from mixing. This was such an important detail that French artillery officers were forbidden to have any knowledge of it—in fact, they were not allowed to see the piston itself when it was disassembled from the gun. Various regulations were put into place to assure the secrecy of the 75's internal mechanism. Only certain maintenance functions could be performed at the battery level, and even these had to be carried out with an officer present. French technical journals obligingly refrained from writing about the new recoil system as well.

Fantastic Forays of Fire

In the end, all the efforts paid off. The Model 1897 set a whole new standard of artillery performance. In the hands of a highly trained gun crew, rates of fire as high as 30 rounds per minute were possible. This required great practice and precision in the reloading process, as the gun would scarcely have finished its recoil motion at a rate of one round per two seconds. Even so, a well-drilled Model 1897 crew could accomplish 10 to 20 rounds per minute without much trouble. The recoil system was so effective, it was said, that one could set a glass of water on the carriage's wheel and it would not spill during firing. The gun itself, including its carriage, weighed just over 2,650 pounds. The tube was eight feet, three inches long, which equated to 33 calibers (the length of the tube divided by the diameter). Range of fire was up to four miles.

The firing capability proved both useful and deadly on the Western Front during World War I, where the Allies' enemies had to fight their way through thick, hellish barrages of 75mm fire. At the war's beginning in 1914, some 4,000 75mm cannons were in the French inventory; thousands more would be produced during the conflict.

A Reputation in War

As the war progressed, the Germans came to have a healthy respect for the 75. Even civilians gave testament to its power. After seeing a battery of 75s in action near Milhausen, France, one French citizen recalled observing a German artillery battery set up on high ground near a cemetery, posting their horses and limbers on some low ground nearby. As the man watched, a French battery of four 75s opened fire on the Germans and “demolished the material and killed almost all the cannoneers, directed its fire on the

limbers posted in the bottom land and killed a great number of horses.”



An American gun crew fires the 75mm at Saint-Michel, France, in September 1918. Note the large pile of expended shells and ammunition packing tubes behind the gun, indicating its high rate of fire. A shell casing is still in the air above the cannon.

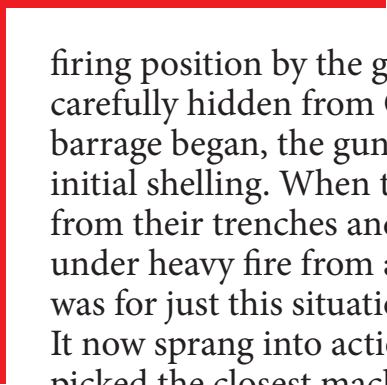
When the Americans entered the war in 1917, there were severe shortages of all sorts of military equipment, including artillery. American factories were still gearing up, and could not provide guns quickly enough for the weapons-starved divisions going overseas. Luckily, the French could produce enough 75s to equip both armies as well as provide ammunition and training facilities for the arriving Americans, who took an immediate liking to their new cannon. The French *soixante-quinze*, in typical American fashion, was pronounced “saucy can,” and the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force found it accurate and reliable. They adopted the French pattern of equipping their

batteries with four guns each instead of six, since the 75's rate of fire meant that a four-gun battery had the same firepower as a normal six-gun unit. By the time the first American 75s went into action on October 23, 1917, the AEF possessed some 270 Model 1897s, enough to equip at least 64 batteries.

The guns were quickly put to good use. In the St. Mihiel offensive, the American guns fired a barrage of one million rounds in just four hours. Half the 3,000 guns used were 75s, which fired two-thirds of all the ammunition expended in the offensive. By the war's end, American 75s had fired more than six million rounds in all, mostly in conventional barrages to support attacks or defend against enemy assaults.

The needs of the war gave rise to some interesting and unconventional uses of the 75 as well. One American battalion used its guns individually, taking advantage of the 75's high firing rate to dupe the Germans into thinking an entire battery was in action. It required an experienced gun crew, able to open the cannon's breech when it was extended in full recoil, then load a fresh round into the chamber before the barrel returned to firing position. This would put four rounds on the target in only six seconds, equal to all the guns of a battery firing at once. These roaming sections would move frequently, towing the 75 behind a truck rather than the usual team of horses. This gave the gunners the mobility to make one gun do the work of several different batteries firing from different locations.

One American unit, Battery F of the 149th Field Artillery Battalion, part of the 42nd Infantry Division, came up with the so-called Pirate Gun. This cannon was used to support an attack with direct fire right on the front lines. The night before the assault, the gun was towed by its horse team as close as possible to the trenches, then manhandled to



firing position by the gun crew and infantrymen. It was then carefully hidden from German view. When the preparatory barrage began, the gun stayed quiet, taking no part in the initial shelling. When the American infantrymen emerged from their trenches and advanced, they immediately came under heavy fire from a number of enemy machine guns. It was for just this situation that the 75 had been moved up. It now sprang into action. Firing over open sights, the crew picked the closest machine gun nest, only a few hundred yards away, and fired. The enemy machine gun was quickly knocked out of action and the gun crew moved on to the next one. Most of the nests were knocked out with just a single round, and soon all the German nests within a radius of 1,000 yards lay silent.

With the loss of their machine guns, the Germans retreated and the American attack succeeded. After nightfall the gun was again pushed forward, this time to fire on a farmhouse the enemy had occupied. This fortified position was holding up the advance, so the Pirate Gun was called up to destroy it. Waiting until dawn, the gun crew poured fire into the enemy-held building and leveled it. The 75 was credited with helping the attack succeed with far fewer casualties than usual.

The Model 1897 in the Second World War

After the war, the Model 1897 soldiered on despite attempts to replace it with a newer design. In the U.S. Army, the postwar Westervelt Board recommended a new 75mm cannon that eventually would come to fruition as the M-1 pack howitzer. But in the spartan fiscal atmosphere of the 1920s and 1930s, the new weapon stayed in the experimental phase. Meanwhile, Model 1897s continued to serve because large numbers were still available or in storage.

During World War II, 75s once again fired shots in anger.



A rare artistic depiction of the 75mm cannon on the move. French forces used the quick-firing cannon in campaigns in China and Morocco in the early 1900s.

Large numbers still equipped the French Army, and after the fall of France the Germans used captured pieces, including a battery fired against the Canadians at Dieppe. In the U.S. Army, although newer artillery pieces had started to finally come into service, 75s still found use. A crash program to develop a stopgap antitank gun mated the 75 to a M-3 halftrack chassis until dedicated tank destroyers were fielded. The M-61 armor-piercing round created for the gun could penetrate up to three inches of armor at 1,000 yards, quite respectable for the early years of the war. The design was hurried into service in the days just before Pearl Harbor, with a number being shipped to the Philippines. There they served as both artillery and tank destroyers with good effect during their first combat service. Some were captured and later used by the Japanese before American troops recaptured the islands—and the 75s—later in the war.

The 75s next saw action during the fighting in North Africa in late 1942 and early 1943. The 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion used them in the fighting around El Guettar in March 1943, knocking out 30 German tanks while sustaining the loss of 21 M-3s in the effort. Overall, the M-3 was deemed unsuccessful, largely

because it was often used aggressively in direct support of attacking infantry, where its thin armor was a detriment. Quickly phased out of frontline service, some M-3s were transferred to the British Army, which used them as self-propelled artillery in the headquarters troops of tank squadrons for the remainder of the war.

In the Pacific, the Marine Corps used the 75s to better effect during various campaigns. The Marines used them in both the antitank role, where they proved quite effective against the thinly armored Japanese tanks, and in direct fire support roles, destroying enemy bunkers and fixed emplacements, although in this role the 75's thin armor and open top exposed it to attack. The M-3 was replaced late in the war by the M-7 105mm self-propelled gun.

After World War II, the French 75 was quickly retired from most European armies, although some soldiered on in the Third World. Over its long service, the Model 1897 saw action in both of the great conflagrations of the 20th century. At its introduction, the 75 represented a huge leap ahead in artillery technology, heralding in a new era of fast-firing, deadly cannons. By 1945, the weapon had been eclipsed by new designs, but the 75 remains perhaps the quintessential Allied artillery piece of World War I. (Read more about the artillery and weapons that shaped the 20th century inside the pages of Military Heritage magazine.)

Archives of SSG Jimmy Catlett HHB

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HQ 3RD BATTALION 15TH FIELD ARTILLERY 155MM TOWED

DAILY BULLETIN
NUMBER 4

OFFICIAL

28 May 1980

1. DAILY BULLETIN: Daily bulletin published under this heading are the official bulletin of this battalion, Camp Shelby, MS during the period 24 May - 7 Jun 80.

2. USAREC BRIEFING: USAREC/RCPAC will have representative presenting Briefing on different job opportunities available to USAR personnel at 1830 hrs in Bldg 2407 located behind Paxton Hall on 28,29 May 1980. The jobs consist of Recruiting, Retention, Full Time Manning Positions which are available through out the United States. These job opportunities are primarily E4 through E7. A few positions are available for Lieutenants and Captains. (CO 2534)

3. BN SPORTS PROGRAM: In case you haven't heard, Fld #1 was the scene of another night of big surprise in Bn Softball. HHB skunked their buddies in Svc 17 - 2. Coach Tony Stepleton was anxious to point out that this was attributable to SP4 George Cobb's 2 run homer and 3 run homer; also SP4 Gregory Oliver's in the park homer and PV2 John McQuay's 3 run homer. Also noteworthy was that this was SP5 Jimmy Catlett's 2nd winning game as pitcher. (HHB's secret weapon) (with an arm like that, he ought to be an ammo humpster or a prime mover. Then there was a short game 2. Charlie failed to show to play Bravo. Word was sent over that they had too much fun in the sun that day and that they were saving it all for the next day (or were they overwhelmed by Bravo's "shucking and jiving" warm up exercises prior to the games). Today's schedule has Bravo vs Svc at 1800 hrs. The final playoff game or games will be played Sunday night. Volleyball competition will be held Thursday night of the 2d week (5 Jun). (CPT LEAK 2478)

3. SDO/SDNCO:
NAME

SDO

SDNCO

28 May 80	2LT Long	SSG Digby/SSG Dunaway
29 May 80	2LT Pearson	SSG Fortenberry/SSG Heaton
30 May 80	2LT Roseman	SSG Gibson/SSG Glenn
31 May 80	2LT Thomas	TBA
1 Jun 80	2LT Wheeler	TBA

4. FUEL ALLOCATIONS: All units needing fuel may receive it daily from Svc Btry at the Battalion Motor Pool (Motor Pool #3) CPT LEAK 2478)

5. FOUR MILE MARCH: All battalion personnel attending AT-80 will take 4 mile march 0500-0600 hrs 30 May under the individual battery control. Exceptions are (1) those who take test earlier or on 6 June in order to administer test, (2) unit medics, (3) unit cooks, and (4) unit member excused by Bn Commander for medical reasons. on advise of Bn Medical NCO). All Bn members who do not take test at AT will perform during June IDT. (S3 2478)

6. COOKS DAY OFF: All Bn cooks will have time off Thursday 29 May from 1400 hrs til 0600 hrs 30 May. Unit will eat "C" rations. (CW2 Denson 2602)

*The weather is hot, but we are
having a Nice Time, Tell everyone hello.
Later Cat*



DAILY BULLETIN
NUMBER 4

7. SAFETY: Each safety officer must have in his possession, during firing, a copy of the Camp Shelby Range Regulations. He should further be totally familiar with this regulation. Battery Commanders should, in accordance with Camp Shelby Range Regulation, instruct their troops on precautions concerning "DUD" rounds. (Asst S3 2478)

8. VEHICLE SPEED: Observe posted speed limits. Adjust your speed depending on conditions of rain, dust, or darkness. Maximum speed on dirt roads on range is 25MPH. (S1 2478)

9. TOURS: The Battalion Tour Program as outlined in the AT-80 Recreation questionnaire is ready to be finalized. If you want to participate in one or more of the following activities this weekend come by BN HQS, bldg 503, and sign up "again" as a confirmation on where you want to go. Some preliminary cost on chartered buses are as follows. (We are still trying to obtain free or lower cost transportation) (I am not sure if Bourbon Street is wide enough for a 5 ton).

TOUR A: Fridgy Night New Orleans	\$16.00
TOUR B: Sunday Morning Mobile Alabama	13.00
TOUR C: Saturday Afternoon Gulfport	4.00
TOUR D: Sunday morning Lake Pontchartrain	TBA
TOUR E: Sunday Evening Macks Fish Camp	TBA
TOUR TO ALABAMA: Return Home Station for weekend	TBA

All sign-ups must be completed by 0800 hrs Thursday 29 May 1980.

10. WEEKEND SPORTS PROGRAM: For those personnel staying in lower Mississippi for the weekend you may want to participate in individual and small groups sports activities (that is if you recuperate from Bourbon Street and/or dont get lost inside the battleship. Sign up for the following activities is also in bldg 503:

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Golf | 5. Volleyball | 9. Tactical Armadillo Hunting |
| 2. Tennis | 6. Frisbe | |
| 3. Boating | 7. Fishing | |
| 4. Fishing | 8. Treasure Hunting | |

All signups must be completed by 8800 hrs Friday. (CPT LEAK 2478)

11. SICK AND INJURED: PFC Clifford R. Dietz is recovering satisfactorily from stomach surgery and is expected to be moved from ICU into a ward Wednesday. He will be able to receive phone calls beginning 28 May 80 at 377-2873 and 374-9580. (1SG Sparks 2298)

12. Artilleryman of The Day: PV2 Timothy E. Parsons, HHR, was selected the Bn Artilleryman of the Day, 28 May 80. It was noted that Pvt Parsons was studying his Soldiers Manual while waiting for the competition. Others considered were SP4 James Bivins, Bravo; and SGT Winford Williams, Svc Btry. Alpha and Charlie elected not to enter the competition today. Some of the deciding factors were patch too low, sideburns too long, and weapon not clean. (CO 2534)

13. RACE SENDS: An experienced fisherman spends the time required to get his fishing gear and tackle ready for a day at the lake or stream, because he knows it will serve him well. A concerned and knowledgeable horseman knows that his horse must be cooled down slowly after a hard ride and combed and fed and watered and bedded down. Do you as an artilleryman prepare your equipment properly before the mission and then accomplish the necessary maintenance at the end of the day? You should! Your life depends on it.

James F. Brannon
JAMES F. BRANNON
1LT. PA. USAR

Chaplain's Corner with Chaplain Wes Hodgins

SPRING 2025

Easter has come 'late' on the calendar this year, and with it a plethora of bunnies and colorful eggs and lots of chocolate. This is the view of 'Easter' the commercial world brings to our culture; but it is nothing of what the Scripture Declares! Easter is a decidedly 'Christian' festival; but it's origins lie in the Jewish feast of Passover.

Exodus chapter 12 tells the story of the first Passover. Israel had been enslaved in Egypt for 430 years. Moses was called to lead God's Chosen-People out of the bondage to freedom within the 'Promised-land'. That 'bondage' pictured the 'slavery of sin' which has held Adam & all of his posterity since he ate from the 'forbidden-fruit' in Eden. (Gen. 2:17) Moses led the people to Mt. Sainai where God gave them His Law: 'rules to live by' which would draw them close to God. Central to the Passover Feast was the death of the lamb without blemish. It's blood put on the doorposts and lintel of the Jewish dwellings 'covered the people' when the death angel passed through the land. We should **never forget** that God is holy, Every sin will be judged! He does not 'dismiss' man's sin; He has paid for it in full with the blood of Jesus on the cross of Calvary that He may be just in forgiving all who will come to Him in faith. Jesus told the disciples just before the crucifixion: "**A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live also.**" This is the true story of the Easter-season: 'new-life in Jesus' with the hope of life eternal with God. This year, go 'light' on the chocolate and 'heavy' on praise to God for His great mercy showered upon men through Jesus, the 'spotless lamb'.

Chaplain Hodgins

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