

Historical Pictorial Review

250th Coast Artillery
Corps area service command
Camp McQuaide 1941

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250th
Unit history

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FOREWORD: THE ARM

The Constitution gives to Congress the power to raise and support armies and designates the President as Commander-in-Chief. By the National Defense Act of June 3, 1916, as later amended by other laws, Congress constituted the Army of the United States in six components: The Regular Army, the National Guard of the United States, the National Guard while in the service of the United States, the Officers' Reserve Corps, the Organized Reserves, and the Enlisted Reserve Corps.

Under the President, the Secretary of War is the head of the War Department, the Government department charged with managing the Army. The Assistant Secretary of War has specific duties prescribed by law and assigned to him by the Secretary of War, and acts for the Secretary of War during his absence. The Chief of Staff is the highest ranking officer of the Army, and the adviser to the Secretary of War on military matters. The War Department not only has charge of the administration and training of the Army in preparation for possible war, but it also supervises or directs a number of activities not purely military. For example, it has the responsibility of operating the Panama Canal and it directs such public works as the improvement of rivers and harbors.

Each component of the Army consists of officers and enlisted men divided into combat arms, such as Infantry, Air Corps, and Field Artillery, and into services, such as the Medical Department, and the Quartermaster Corps. Each arm, service, and bureau has a "Chief" in Washington. The arms, services, and bureaus are as follows:

ARMS

Infantry, Cavalry, Field Artillery, Coast Artillery Corps, Air Corps, Corps of Engineers, Signal Corps.

SERVICES

Adjutant General's Department, Inspector General's Department, Judge Advocate General's Department, Quartermaster Corps, Corps of Chaplains, Finance Department, Medical Department, Ordnance Department, Chemical Warfare Service.

BUREAU

National Guard Bureau.

In general the arms do the actual fighting in battle, and the services assist the arms by supplying them

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with food, clothing, weapons, ammunition, and other supplies, and by furnishing transportation, medical care, and other assistance.

Some of the services, however, may come into contact with the enemy and then have to fight for their own protection. On the other hand, a few of the arms, particularly the Corps of Engineers and the Signal Corps, may not only engage in combat with the enemy but furnish certain special supplies to the other arms.

THE COAST ARTILLERY CORPS

With its fixed and mobile guns capable of firing many miles to sea, the Coast Artillery Corps protects important parts of our shores—mainly the entrances to our largest harbors and ports—from approach by hostile landing forces and from bombardment by hostile navies. In this task of coast defense the Coast Artillery acts in close cooperation with the United States Navy.

The Coast Artillery also has units with powerful antiaircraft guns whose purpose is to protect our most important centers of population and industry, and the main headquarters and installations of armies in the field, from the war planes of an enemy.

The Coast Artillery Regiments are of two main kinds—harbor defense, and antiaircraft. Sometimes two or more regiments are formed into a brigade under a single commander.

Harbor defense regiments are of several kinds. Some are organized to man the big fixed guns in our coastal fortifications. Some operate the railway guns, also of large calibres, which can be moved along the coast for any distance on the railroad lines of our country, and set up for firing out over the sea at any suitable point. Other regiments have guns that can be moved from place to place along our coasts towed by fast, heavy trucks. All of these different regiments include within themselves antiaircraft units for their own protection.

Mobile railway and tractor-drawn units of the Coast Artillery are used to defend our shores against landings attempted at points not protected by fixed defenses. The motor-drawn units are equipped with the 155-mm. gun, which is practically the same as the field artillery gun of the same calibre.

The 250th Coast Artillery Regiment is a tractor-drawn organization equipped with 155-mm. guns. These guns can hurl a 95-pound projectile some 10 miles.