



THE STORY OF BERLIN BRIGADE



BY

K. M. JOHNSON



G-3 DIVISION

HEADQUARTERS U.S. COMMANDER BERLIN AND US ARMY BERLIN

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Kaye Martin Johnson

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The Story of Berlin Brigade

FORMATION AND LINEAGE

The Berlin Brigade was formed at the height of the Berlin Wall crisis. It was created from units already in Berlin by General Orders from the Commander in Chief, United States Army, Europe. General Bruce Clarke ordered that from 1 December 1961 the core of the United States military presence in Berlin, the living symbol of America's protection for the people of free Berlin, would be known as the United States Army Berlin Brigade.

Between 4 July 1945 and 1 December 1961 the security force in Berlin had been known by several different names. During the first eight months of the occupation, three famous American divisions in succession occupied the former capital of the German nation; The 2d Armored Division, the 82d Airborne Division and the 78th "Lightning" Infantry Division. From 1946 through the era of the Berlin Blockade and Airlift, the troop command was known as Berlin Military Post. During the ensuing decade it was known variously as Berlin Command and the U.S. Army Garrison, Berlin. During the past 14 years, however, the name "Berlin Brigade" has stuck. It symbolizes the pride and traditions of some 100,000 men and women of the United States Army who have served their country east of the river Elbe, the defenders of freedom.

More than two years before the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed, the United States had defied the Russian blockade and, together with Great Britain and France, had pledged itself to uphold the freedom and security of West Berlin. During the thirty years since 1945, the Berlin Brigade has never fired a shot in anger. That is a measure of its success. Probably no force of its size in history has contributed more to peace and freedom in the world. Every man and woman privileged to serve with the American forces in Berlin should know how we got here and why we stayed here. This is the story of the Berlin Brigade.

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PROBLEMS AND MISSIONS

During the winter of 1945-46 U.S. forces were faced with the practical problems of keeping two million Berliners in the Western Sectors alive in a shattered city. Under the U.S. Military Government, the Brigade went to work. Results were quickly apparent. Restoration of basic services was the first requirement, and the re-lighting of only 1,000 gas-fueled street lamps throughout Berlin, on 2 March 1946, was an event of sufficient importance to convince untold numbers of the city's inhabitants that perhaps there was some light for the future too.

The spirit of the Berlin Brigade was perhaps lighted by that first symbolic step back on the road to self-sufficiency and self-esteem for the Berliners. However small, it offered hope for a new beginning.

The problems of rotation and demobilization plagued the Brigade during 1946. Rotation without replacements had so decimated the 78th Infantry Division that by November 1946 it was re-organized and designated the 3d Battalion of the 16th Infantry and became part of the garrison.

The composition of the Berlin security force proved adequate to the tasks it was called upon to perform during 1946-47. The concept of the force and its missions changed during 1948-49, however, when the level of international tensions was first characterized as a "cold war." By the spring of 1950 Berlin Brigade's primary missions had been defined approximately as at present: To deter aggression, counter wide-spread civil disturbance and defend the city.

BETWEEN CRISES

Throughout the 1950's and 60's Berlin remained a crisis center. Then, as now, the daily activities of the Berlin Brigade were closely linked to larger policy issues.

The rights of the United States and its Allies to occupy Berlin stemmed from victory in World War II and the unconditional surrender of Germany's Nazi government. These rights were stated in wartime and post-war agreements which the Soviet Union had not successfully repudiated. From the beginning, the United States took the position that the right to be in Berlin was inseparable from the right to get to Berlin, the right of access. This became especially important on the autobahn, where,

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unlike the rail lines and the air corridors, no formal post-war agreements with the Soviets confirmed access rights. On the autobahn the men of the Berlin Brigade, in single vehicles and convoys, were frequently subjected to Soviet and East German harassment. The object was to force upon the Allies new and ever more complex restrictions on the exercise of their access rights. The only way to maintain Allied rights and to assure that the Soviets did not erode them was to use them steadily and oppose all efforts by the Soviets to introduce changes to which the Allies had not agreed. Exercising Allied rights on the surface access routes became one of the Brigade's most important missions. As a result, Brigade soldiers were often the first to bear the brunt of new Soviet tactics and policies.

INTENSIFYING CRISIS

November 1958 marked the beginning of a new and more prolonged period of crisis in Berlin and on the access routes. In what was known as the "Khrushchev Ultimatum," the Soviet Union posed a serious threat to the future status of the city. The United States rejected the ultimatum, and the six-month deadline passed without incident. A conference of Western and Soviet foreign ministers, convened the following summer (June 1959) in Geneva, failed to reconcile the long-standing differences. The Allies demanded free, U.N.-supervised elections in all Germany as a preliminary to reunification. At this 1959 meeting of the four foreign ministers, the first since the Berlin Conference of 1954, the Soviets made what they knew to be unacceptable demands. In effect they said that, in the foreseeable future, there was no possibility of agreement to reunify Germany on terms acceptable to the United States and the Western Alliance.

With hopes of reunification waning and international tensions over Berlin running high, East Berliners and East Germans began, as the West Berliners put it, "voting with their feet." During the 30-month period from November 1958 through July 1961, West Berlin became the escape-hatch for a steadily increasing stream of East German refugees. In July 1961 as many as 3,000 escaped in a single day. The daily average for July and early August was about 1,800 per day. In terms of manpower, East Germany was bleeding to death. The Communist leadership solved the problem with brutal simplicity.

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THE BERLIN WALL

Before dawn on 13 August 1961 the East Germans sealed all but seven of the crossing points between the Soviet Sector and West Berlin. Twenty-eight miles of barbed-wire and barriers went up across the city, and construction of the Berlin Wall began.

At that time the combat-arms units of Berlin Brigade consisted of two pentomic battlegroups (1,362 officers and men each) -- the 2d and 3d Battle Groups of the 6th Infantry -- and Company F, 40th Armor. Three days after the sealing of the sector-sector boundaries, President John F. Kennedy ordered the reinforcement of the Brigade in a way that would convince the Soviet Union that the United States had no intention of backing down from its commitment to free Berlin. On Saturday the 19th of August Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson and General Lucius D. Clay (the former Military Governor and, among Berliners, probably the most revered living American) flew into Berlin. The next day the 1st Battle Group, 18th Infantry (reinforced), some 1,500 officers and men, moved over the autobahn from Helmstedt to Berlin. In full battle gear, they paraded through the center of the city and were reviewed by the Vice President and General Clay. During the three and one-half years that followed, a different infantry unit -- after September 1963 they were infantry battalions as presently organized -- was rotated into Berlin at 90-day intervals. In keeping with the political and psychological purpose of demonstrating American intentions, they exercised Allied access rights by moving over the autobahn.

THE AMERICANS ARE STILL HERE

Taken together, the events of the Berlin Wall crisis were the most serious in the city's post-war history. Confrontations with the Russians at the autobahn and rail checkpoints and in East Berlin during the years between 1958 and 1965 were frequent; detentions were sometimes prolonged. Whether it was Soviet APC's trying to enter West Berlin, or Soviet jet fighters constantly buzzing the city, intentionally creating sonic booms, the Berlin Brigade showed the flag, reassuring the people of West Berlin that they would not be forced to live under East German rule. What that meant in human terms was illustrated by an incident which occurred at the height of the Wall crisis. An American reporter asked a calm Berliner if he wasn't worried that the Allies might be forced out of the city. By that time crisis was almost "normal" for Berlin. The Berliner shrugged. Yes he was worried. But.... "Your families are still here."

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EASING TENSIONS - THE ERA OF NEGOTIATION

The Berlin Wall crisis didn't exactly end, it wound down. By the end of 1962 the crisis as such had eased, but East-West tensions remained high. Soviet harassment on the access routes, severe during the period 1962-64, also eased gradually. By the spring of 1967 the severe harassments of Allied military traffic had virtually ended. For the most part, the access procedures now observed had been firmly established. Severe East German harassment of West German transit traffic continued through January 1971.

In September of that year the four powers signed the first Berlin agreement since June 1949. The Quadripartite Agreement of 3 September 1971 came into force on 4 June 1972. It confirmed long-disputed Allied access rights, greatly improved the conditions of civil access, and -- compared with the 1965-69 timeframe -- resulted in a significant reduction of East-West tensions over Berlin. By setting the seal of international agreement on the Berlin situation as it had evolved since 1949, the Quadripartite Agreement marked the end of an era.

VIETNAM ERA

The gradual easing of the situation in Berlin after 1965 was paralleled by the buildup of U.S. ground-combat operations in Vietnam. By 1968 the Army's requirements for highly skilled and trained personnel in southeast Asia led to shorter tours in Berlin. During the period 1969-70 the Brigade drew on the experience of its combat veterans to provide a specialized type of training to orient men slated for reassignment to Vietnam. Eventually the requirements of the war necessitated the first serious curtailments in the Brigade's field training program since the Blockade era. Hard on the heels of the end of ground-combat in Vietnam, the onset of the energy crisis (Nov 73) posed further long-term problems.

By the end of 1972 the Brigade's authorized strength had been fully restored. With tensions in the Divided City at the lowest level in two decades, attention focused on training. In many ways 1973-74 marked a turning point in the history of the Brigade. In the absence of crisis, many of the Brigade's traditional missions were less demanding. The resulting opportunity for new initiatives paralleled developments in the Army as a whole.

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BRIGADE OF THE SEVENTIES

Seen in historical perspective, Berlin Brigade, no less than the Army as a whole, responded to the challenges of creating the Army of the seventies. The problems confronting the Army in the seventies were America's problems; the Nation was entering a new era of social consciousness. Among other new goals were efforts to contain drug and alcohol abuse and to achieve a new understanding for the problems of minority groups.

The Brigade achieved considerable short-range success in countering the debilitating affects of drug and alcohol abuse. Preventive medicine through counseling centers and re-education of the entire community, coupled with a meaningful and challenging training program, offered the best prospect for long-term success.

Most important in the area of awakening social consciousness was a new sensitivity to the problems of racial and ethnic minorities. Though the Brigade was not free of racial incidents, it recorded some distinguished successes. Race-relations personnel of the Brigade were selected to attend the first course at the Defense Race Relations Institute. There followed during 1972-74 a graduated series of race-relations seminars for military personnel of all ranks and the command's career civil servants. A milestone in the Brigade's program came in November 1973 when a 3-day exposition, Ethnic Expo 73, enabled the entire community to see and experience the cultural heritage of America's minority groups.

Most significant and far-reaching of the events shaping the Army of the seventies was the decision to create an all-volunteer Army. Historically related to that decision were new training concepts which, taken collectively, constituted the broadest, most imaginative and ambitious program in the Army's 200-year history.

In 1972 the Army announced the concept of "decentralized" training, which fixed the initiative for planning and executing unit training at the battalion level. To provide additional variety and scope for initiative the idea of "adventure training" came into play the same year.

Adventure training was not a substitute for standard training requirements. Berlin Brigade units continued to train in company class rooms and areas, sports facilities and in the wooded areas of the city. They also participated

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in inter-Allied field training with the British and the French. Army training tests, tank and artillery qualifications were conducted at USAREUR's Major Training Areas in West Germany.

Adventure training, however, was an opportunity that rewarded leadership initiatives. In this area, the "firsts" of the Berlin Brigade showed the Army in Europe what could be accomplished. During 1973-74 Berlin Brigade achievements in adventure training included mountain training in France, Scotland and in Italy, where men of the 2d Battalion, 6th Infantry climbed the Matterhorn; skiing in southern Germany; crossing the English Channel in kayaks; and scaling the heights behind the Normandy beaches, where the World War II landing on the coast of France (6 Jun 44) was re-enacted by elements of the 3d Battalion, 6th Infantry.

Brigade units also scored firsts in combining normal training activities with normal mission activities. Showing the flag, of course, remained a vital part of the mission. Rarely has it been shown more dramatically than in January 1975 when the 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry, accompanied by the United States Commander of Berlin, the Brigade Commander and members of the General Staff, conducted a marathon run along the entire 100-mile circumference of West Berlin.

Berlin's urban environment is such that, in mission training, high priority is given to combat-in-cities. To facilitate this type of training, a new combat-in-cities range, with concrete structures closely simulating actual conditions was completed in the spring of 1975. In addition, several times each year units of the Brigade use the West German Army's training village at Hammelburg near Schweinfurt. Finally, since 1972 the Brigade Staff has periodically reviewed both training experience and recent historical models as potentially significant for Army-wide combat-in-cities doctrine.

Now as in the past it is an exciting time and a rewarding experience to serve with the Berlin Brigade.

THEN AND NOW

Deeply imbedded in the traditions of the Berlin Brigade are the harsh realities of the environment in which it serves. Running through what once were store fronts, through woods and along waterways, the Wall itself is an inescapable reminder of the Brigade's mission. It is not along the Wall, however, but along the city's great boulevards, especially the Kurfuerstendamm, that the reason for the mission becomes clear:

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two million people, undaunted by the Wall, daily express their belief in freedom, progress and human dignity.

In May 1975, speaking before Berlin's House of Representatives, the Secretary of State recalled these basic American values, of which free Berlin had become a living symbol, adding: "This is why this city means so much to us. For thirty years you have symbolized our challenges; for thirty years also you have recalled us to our duty. You have been an inspiration to all free men."

The pride and tradition of the Berlin Brigade are inseparable from the challenges of service in a unique situation. Nor is "unique" an exaggeration. The situation of West Berlin since World War II has no close parallel in human history. From uniqueness has evolved a distinct and complex set of problems. A careless action can create an international incident; a hasty or ill-considered action can create a precedent which opens the door to still other, unforeseen difficulties. The facts of geography are adverse, and Berlin remains vulnerable to every wind of change.

Confronted at every point of the compass, it is the enduring distinction of the Berlin Brigade to live with the dangers and rise to the challenges.

HISTORY OF THE 6TH UNITED STATES INFANTRY

The Sixth United States Infantry was born during a stormy period of American History, nourished on the ideals set forth in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and reached maturity on the battlefields of innumerable campaigns in nine separate wars. It also has the distinction of having been commanded by Colonel Zachary Taylor, who later became the Twelfth President of the United States of America.

The present Sixth United States Infantry traces its lineage back to 11 January 1812, when the Congress authorized a strengthening of the regular Army in preparation for the threatening conflict with England that became known as the War of 1812.

The unit was first known as the 11th Infantry Regiment and served as such on the Canadian border throughout the War of 1812. At the end of the War, the 11th Infantry was consolidated with four other infantry regiments to form the Sixth United States Infantry Regiment. The new regimental number "6" was based on the fact that the commanding officer, Colonel Henry Atkinson, was the sixth ranking colonel among all the regimental commanders of the United States Army.

As a result of the westward expansion of America, the Sixth Regiment was assigned to the western frontier of the nation in 1819 and built Fort Atkinson at Council Bluffs on the Missouri River. Fort Atkinson became the first U.S. fort west of the Missouri River.

In 1827, the Regiment moved from Fort Atkinson to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, where the city of St. Louis is now located. Two years later, four companies of the Regiment were assigned escort duty along the Santa Fe Trail protecting traders and travellers. In 1837, the units of the Regiment left Jefferson Barracks for Florida via Louisiana.

History of the 6th Infantry

As part of a force commanded by Colonel Zachary Taylor, the Regiment entered the Seminole Indian War in eastern Florida in 1837. The Regiment remained in Florida until restoration of peace and then returned to Jefferson Barracks in 1842. In 1843, Erevet Brigadier General Zachary Taylor became Colonel of the Sixth United States Infantry.

Following the admission of Texas into the Union in 1845, when war with Mexico appeared to be imminent, various units of the Regiment were reassigned to Louisiana and Texas. Attached to General Winfield Scott's Army, they participated in the grueling march from Vera Cruz to Mexico City. Upon the defeat of Santa Anna's Mexican forces the Sixth U.S. Infantry remained in garrison in the city until 1848, when they resumed their duties on the western outposts.

For the next ten years, elements of the Regiment were scattered over the western frontier and saw duty in what are now the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Missouri, and the Dakotas against the various Indian tribes.

In January 1858, the Regiment made a grand march across the continent from Fort Leavenworth to the Pacific Ocean. On arrival in California, the Sixth was kept busy for the next several years scouting, marching, and operating by companies and detachments against the Indians in California and Arizona.

At the outset of the Civil War in 1861, the Regiment was directed to hurry eastward and join the federal forces. According to one biographer of the time - "Several of the Regiment's best and bravest officers, honest in a mistaken construction of the Constitution and true to their conviction as to their duty, had tendered their resignation and given themselves to the Confederate cause.

By the end of January 1862, the entire Regiment was in Washington and was committed to the field on 10 March 1862 as part of Syke's Brigade of Regulars. The Sixth Infantry went into action at historic Yorktown. The campaign was continued to Williamsburg, Cumberland Landing, White House, and Cold Harbor to Gaines' Mill. After only two short days of bivouac, the Sixth engaged Confederate forces at Hanover Court in a two day battle.

The Regiment was employed on picket duty on the Chickahominy Creek from late May to late June 1862. It was then sent to reinforce the troops engaged in the decisive battle at Mechanicsville. All Union forces

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were withdrawn from the battle and with the Sixth as the rear guard crossed the Chickahominy. The army continued to withdraw and the Sixth fought rear guard actions at Malvern Hill and Harrison's Landing. For the three months of battle that ended at Harrison's Landing, the Regiment was awarded the hard earned battle streamer "Peninsula."

With the Sixth U.S. Infantry as part of his command General Pope formed his army along the Warrenton Turnpike on the banks of Bull Run on 29 July. The next day, for the second time in the war, a great battle was fought on this ground and the Sixth, who fought in the middle of it, earned its battle streamer, "Manassas."

The Regiment moved with the Army of the Potomac to Maryland and in mid-September fought with that army at Antietam Creek in an action that earned them their streamer, "Antietam."

The Sixth continued to campaign in Northern Virginia and saw action in the broad area from the Shenandoah to the Potomac. In November it found itself on the banks of the Rappahannock overlooking the city of Fredericksburg. Here, the Regiment again engaged in a major battle and won another battle streamer, "Fredericksburg." The men of the Sixth U.S. Infantry, by their loyalty and courage from the Peninsula to Fredericksburg and by their devotion and bravery at Manassas and Antietam, earned for the Regiment another streamer, "Virginia 1862."

By the first of May 1863, the Regiment had moved with the Army of the Potomac to Chancellorsville and participated in the battle that saw the last major victory in the history of the Confederate Army. Here, the Sixth won its streamer "Chancellorsville."

On 1 July the Sixth was with the army near the town of Gettysburg. The Regiment played a prominent part in this, the decisive battle of the war. In this action the Sixth, as always, fought with distinction and honor to win its final streamer of the war, "Gettysburg."

For six years after the Civil War, the Regiment served at various stations in Georgia and South Carolina and moved to Fort Hays, Kansas in October 1871. For the next several years, the Regiment saw duty on the Frontier in Kansas, Colorado, the Dakotas, Iowa, Wyoming, Idaho, and Utah. In 1890, the Regiment moved to Fort Thomas, Kentucky, where it remained until called to action again in the Spanish-American

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War when it went to Cuba and took part in the battle for Santiago. The Regiment then sailed to the Philippines to help quell the Philippine Insurrection and took part in the battles of Negros 1899 and Panay 1900. It remained in the Islands until May 1902.

In France in World War I, the Regiment trained under the 26th Division in the Toul-Boucq area before joining the 5th Division for battle in the Arnould Sector in June 1918. Battle honors won include Alsace-Lorraine, St. Mihiel, and the Meuse-Argonne offensive.

Between World Wars I and II, the Regiment trained with the 5th and 6th Divisions before joining the 1st Armored Division for action in World War II. Fighting as armored infantry, the Regiment played an important role in the North African invasion and campaign. It fought its way through Algeria, French Morocco, and Tunisia before participating in the Italian Campaign.

In late 1943, the Regiment was committed in the Naples-Foggia area and was given the mission of assaulting the Axis strong-hold at Mount Porchia. In thirteen days of bitter fighting, the Regiment accomplished its mission and earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism. The citation awarding the Distinguished Unit Streamer to the Regiment reads:

"The 6th Armored Infantry Regiment, with Company A, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion, attached, is cited for extraordinary heroism and outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy at Mt. Porchia, Italy, from 31 December 1943 to 12 January 1944. This Regiment was assigned the mission of seizing and holding Mt. Porchia, a key outlying stronghold before Cassino. The position's obvious tactical value made a stubborn enemy defense a foregone conclusion. Preliminary reconnaissance was meager, since the enemy was particularly sensitive to any activity in the area; however, at 2000 hours on 4 January, the regiment attacked. Enemy resistance exceeded expectations, and from H-hour until 0600 hours on 8 January, two powerful forces exchanged murderous blows. By sheer determination, refusing to stop at anything less than complete possession of the objective, the 6th Armored Infantry Regiment, with Company A, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion, attached drove back the enemy and held the bitterly won ground. This action adds further laurels to a distinguished infantry regiment and reflects great credit on the United States Army."

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The Regiment was employed in the Anzio beachhead in 1944 and operated throughout the Rome-Arno Campaign. Later, the Sixth Infantry was broken up in a reorganization, but elements of the Regiment earned two more battle streamers in Northern Italy before the end of the war.

On 1 May 1946, the Regiment became a part of the United States Constabulary forces, designated as the 11th, 12th, and 14th Constabulary Squadrons. After service with the United States Constabulary, the Regiment again was reactivated with its original name - the Sixth U.S. Infantry - in Berlin on 16 October 1950.

The 2d and 3d Battalions, Sixth Infantry, which continue to serve along with the newly designated 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry in Berlin, were organized as battalions in September 1963, while the 4th Battalion was redesignated in September 1972 under the United States Army's present system of lineage and honors.

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDITS OF THE 6TH UNITED STATES INFANTRY

War of 1812

Canada
Chippewa
Lundy's Lane

Mexican War

Vera Cruz
Cerro Gordo
Churubusco
Molino del Rey
Chapultepec

Civil War

Peninsula
Manassas
Antietam
Fredericksburg
Chancellorsville
Gettysburg
Virginia 1862

Indian Wars

Seminoles
Black Hawk
Little Big Horn
Cheyennes
Utes
South Dakota 1823
Kansas 1829
Nebraska 1855
Kansas 1857
Nevada 1860
North Dakota 1872
North Dakota 1873
Montana 1879

War with Spain

Santiago

History of the 6th Infantry

Philippine Insurrection

Jolo
Negros 1899
Panay 1900

Mexican Expedition

Mexico 1916-1917

World War I

St. Mihiel
Meuse-Argonne
Alsace 1918
Lorraine 1918

World War II

Algeria-French Morocco
(with Arrowhead)
Tunisia
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
North Apennines
Po Valley

Vietnam (1st BN ONLY)

Counter Offensive, Phase III
Counter Offensive, Phase IV
Counter Offensive, Phase V
Counter Offensive, Phase VI
Counter Offensive, Phase VII
Summer-Fall 1969
Tet 69 Counter Offensive
Tet Counter Offensive
Winter-Spring 1970
Sactuary Counter Offensive

DECORATIONS

- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered MT. PORCHIA (6th Armored Infantry cited)
- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered ORAN, ALGERIA
- Valorous United Award, Streamer embroidered LO GIANG (1st Battalion, 6th Infantry)
- RVN Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, with Palm for service, (1st Battalion, 6th Infantry cited)

6TH INFANTRY COAT OF ARMS

HERALDIC EXPLANATION

- Shield: Argent, a scaling ladder vert, in fess an alligator statant proper, on a chief wavy gules a cross of the field.
- Crest: On a wreath of the colors a lion's face gules
- Motto: Unity is Strength
- Symbolism: The alligator symbolizes service in several Indian campaigns, notably in the Second Seminole War, when the regiment bore the brunt of the fighting at the battle of Lake Okeechobee on 25 December 1837. Service in the Mexican War with General Scott, especially at Churubusco and at the assault on the citadel of Chapultepec, is commemorated with a scaling ladder (in green, the Mexican color), by means of which the walls of Chapultepec were stormed. The chief, symbolic of the crossing of the Meuse near Dun during World War I, is the arms of the ancient Lords of Dun -- a silver cross on a red field. The wavy partition line represents the river. The shield is white, the color of infantry facings when the regiment was organized.

The crest represents service in the Canadian campaigns of 1813 and 1814 during the War of 1812.

DISTINCTIVE INSIGNIA

The distinctive insignia is the shield and motto of the coat of arms.