

Utah National Guard HISTORY HIGHLIGHT



March 2023

213th Armored Field Artillery Battalion

"Our boys went right up through them, shooting from the hip, I never saw anything like it." CPT James Hoyle, 1951

As the 2nd Battalion, 222d Field Artillery prepares to celebrate another reunion on March 18, 2023, it is fitting to highlight one of the unit's most remarkable moments in history.

Before its realignment and redesignation to the 2-222d FAB in 1967, the 213th Armored Field Artillery Battalion distinguished itself on multiple occasions throughout the Korean War. In preparation for the war, the 213th was federally activated on August 19, 1950, and following pre-deployment training at Fort Lewis, Colorado and Japan, they arrived in Korea on February 15, 1951. After a short "Corps Artillery Test" in theater, the 213th moved quickly into the combat zone.

After several months of sustained combat operations, the 213th was relocated to support an offensive operation in May, 1951. The offensive moved rapidly and the 24th Infantry Division pushed forward to attempt to trap the retreating enemy. The decision to move left the artillery units in the rear without protection. During the night on May 26, 1951, a large enemy force of more than 4,000 Chinese reversed direction to elude the trap and attempt to rejoin the main body of the enemy army. The enemy forces supposed path to safety brought them directly to the 213th.

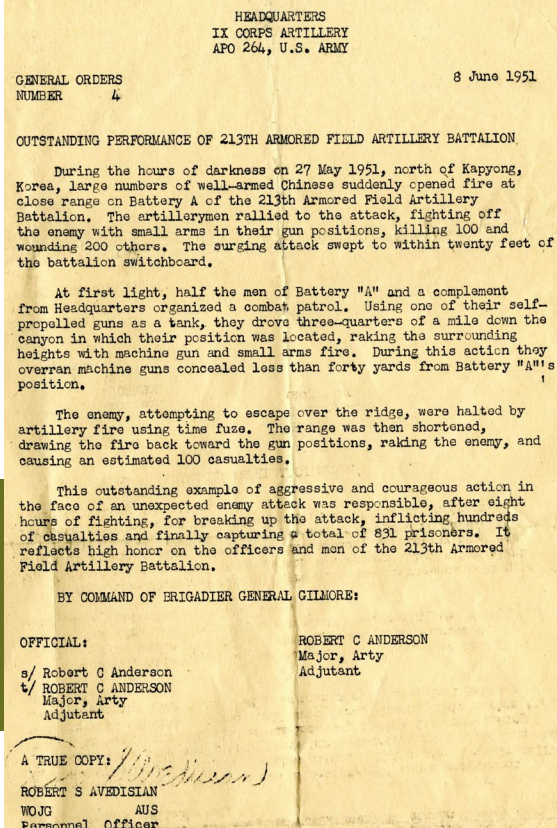
In the darkness of the early hours of May 27, 1951, the enemy opened fire on the Headquarters Battery and Battery A of the 213th. The two batteries responded quickly, setting up defensive fighting positions and holding off the Chinese so the rest of the artillery could continue to support the infantry engaged in the distant offensive. The fighting was incredibly fierce and often resulted in hand-to-hand fighting. Nevertheless, the artillery men held their ground, demonstrating extraordinary courage and tenacity in the face of overwhelming odds.

A 105mm Self Propelled Howitzer mounted on a M-7 chassis prepares to fire on an enemy position. This was the standard weapon system of the time for the 213th.



213th Honored

Below is the original letter from Brig. Gen. Gilmore, commander of the IX Corps Artillery honoring the members of the 213th Armored Field Artillery Battalion for their outstanding performance on May 27, 1951.



213th Armored Field Artillery Battalion

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During the night, it was estimated the artillerymen killed more than 100 and wounded 200 more, taking no significant friendly casualties. Lt Col Frank Dalley, commander of the 213th said “they got within 20 feet of the battalion switchboard.”

After dawn, the fighting subsided and the 213th’s “A” Battery and Headquarters Company organized a combat patrol to pursue the enemy. Using one of its self-propelled artillery guns as a tank, they advanced, “raking the walls of the canyon with machine gun fire” where the Chinese forces were deployed. The push destroyed numerous enemy machine-gun emplacements and inflicted heavy casualties. The Chinese attempted to climb out of the canyon they were cornered in, but a constant, devastating artillery barrage forced the enemy to turn back and surrender.

The actions of the 213th Armored FAB resulted in the capture of 831 prisoners and inflicted hundreds of casualties on the enemy.

Cpt. Ray Cox, who led the combat patrol was awarded the Silver Star and the 213th was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation for its service during the battle. Afterward, Utah Legislators proclaimed, “the accomplishment of the 213th Field Artillery is the supreme demonstration of love of country and outstanding service to the free people of the world.” The 213th continued to serve in the war until its federal release on October 29, 1954.

Sources:

Roberts, Richard. *Legacy, History of the Utah National Guard*. 2003.

UTNG 1951 History Report

Outstanding Performance of the 213th Letter

Members of the 213th Armored Field Artillery Battalion pose outside their armory in Cedar City, Utah prior to federal activation into the Korean War



Wounded Chinese prisoners walk down a road after surrendering to the 213th Armored Field Artillery Battalion near Kapyong, Korea. Many of the wounded had to be carried out of the combat area due to their injuries. Photograph taken by Joseph Perry.