

# **The California National Guard and the Korean War: 980<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, 1950-1954**

Extracted from, *The Guns of Korea: The US Army Field Artillery Battalions in the Korean War*  
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## 980th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

(105mm How, TrkDr, 40th Inf Div, CA NG)



Motto: Audentes deus iuvat (God helps the bold)

**5 August 1946:** Constituted as the 980th Field Artillery Battalion, allotted to the California National Guard and assigned to the 40th Infantry Division.

**22 April 1947:** Organized and federally recognized with Headquarters at Arcadia, California.

**1 September 1950:** Ordered into active federal service at Arcadia, California.

**2 September 1952:** The 980th Field Artillery Battalion (NGUS) organized and federally recognized with Headquarters at Arcadia, California.

**30 June 1954:** Released from active federal service, reverting to California state control; concurrently, federal recognition withdrawn from the 980th Field Artillery Battalion (NGUS).

**1 July 1954:** Reorganized and redesignated as the 215th Armored Field Artillery Battalion.



Truck-drawn, 105mm howitzer of the type used by the 980th Field Artillery Battalion in Korea.

## 980th FA Korean War Timeline

**25 June 1950:** Southern California; 980th Field Artillery Battalion (105mm howitzer, truck drawn), 40th Infantry Division, organic light field artillery element, California National Guard. Peace-time weekly drills and summer field training.

**10 August 1950:** All units, 40th Division alerted for induction into federal Service. The 980th FA enlisted toward TO&E<sup>1</sup> strength and prepared for overland move to Camp Cooke, California.

**1 September 1950:** Camp Cooke, California; 980th FA ordered into active federal service and assigned to Sixth Army.

**October-November 1950:** Camp Cooke, California; 980th FA receives fillers and begins intensive individual and unit training cycles.

**24 February 1951:** All units, 40th Division alerted for overseas shipment to Japan.

**29-31 March 1951:** San Francisco Port of Embarkation, California; 40th Division departs for Japan.

**11 April 1951:** Port of Yokohama, Japan; 40th Division arrives and is assigned to the XVI Corps, to bolster the defense of the Japanese islands and complete unit training cycles. The 980th FA moves to Camp McNair, central Honshu, Japan.

**22 December 1951:** Camp McNair, central Honshu, Japan; All units, 40th Division alerted for movement to Korea to relieve the 24th Division by an exchange of equipment in place.<sup>2</sup> The 980th FA leaves howitzers and organizational equipment in Japan, except for five mess trucks and trailers, and moves with only individual weapons and equipment.

*Second Korean winter 1951-1952*

**22 January 1952:** Line Missouri<sup>3</sup> (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area), North Korea; 980th FA, 40th Division relieves 52d FA (105mm how), 24th Division. The 52d FA ordered to Tent City (24th Division rear) in preparation for shipment to Camp McNair, Japan. Those 52d FA redlegs with not enough points to leave Korea are transferred to 40th Division artillery units. The 40th Division is attached to the IX Corps.

**2 February 1952:** Line Missouri (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area), North Korea; 980th FA(-) direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division. Battery A, 980th FA reinforcing fires of the 555th FA (105mm how).

**9 February 1952:** Line Missouri (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area), North Korea; Battery A, 980th FA relieved by Battery C, 555th FA and returns to its parent unit.

**10-15 February 1952:** Operation Clam-up; Eighth Army curtails daylight movement and artillery firing in an attempt to lure enemy troops forward. Forward Observers keep close watch on enemy construction and movement. All suspected targets taken under fire on 16 February with Time-on-Target fires. (Author's Note: From my position on the MLR,<sup>4</sup> all I saw was CCF troops come out in the open and have six days of unhindered new construction and rebuilding of their defensive fortifications.)

**30 March 1952:** Line Missouri (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area), North Korea; 40th Division relieved by elements of both Capital and 6th ROK divisions. The 980th FA remains on-line, general support for both ROK divisions.<sup>5</sup>

**1 April 1952:** Line Missouri (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area)), North Korea; 40th Division relieves the 2d ROK Division, 980th FA direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division.

*Korea summer fall 1952*

**May-June 1952:** Line Missouri (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area), North Korea; 980th FA continues direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division.

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<sup>1</sup>Table of Organization and Equipment

<sup>2</sup>The units involved took only individual weapons and equipment, leaving organizational equipment in place. The 52d FA returned to Japan to acquire relatively new howitzers, well-maintained vehicles and organizational equipment generally at TO&E levels while the 980th FA was left with war-weary howitzers, worn-out vehicles and missing organizational equipment.

<sup>3</sup>Line Missouri (central front): IX Corps MLR for the rest of the Korean War

<sup>4</sup>Main Line of Resistance

<sup>5</sup>Divisional artillery battalions were to remain on-line when their parent units were relieved, in accordance with General James A. Van Fleet's desire to always have his "firepower advantage" in action.

**17 June 1952:** Line Missouri (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area), North Korea; Battery A, 980th fires 40th division's two-hundredth thousand round.

**28 June 1952:** Line Missouri (Kumwha-Chwapr-ri area), North Korea; 40th Division relieved by both the 2d and 24th ROK divisions. The 980th FA remains on-line, direct support 32d ROK Inf, 2d ROK Division.

**17 October 1952:** The 40th Division released from attachment to IX Corps and attached to the X Corps the next day.

**22 October 1952:** Line Minnesota<sup>6</sup> (Heartbreak Ridge area), North Korea, X Corps; 40th Division relieves 25th Division. The 980th FA moves from Kumwha-Kumsong area to the Heartbreak Ridge area, direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division.

**November 1952:** Line Minnesota (Heartbreak Ridge area), North Korea; 980th FA continues direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division.

*Third Korean winter 1952-1953*

**December 1952:** Line Minnesota (Heartbreak Ridge area), North Korea; 980th FA direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division.

**28 January 1953:** Line Minnesota (Heartbreak Ridge area), North Korea; 40th Division relieved by the 45th Division. The 40th Division artillery assigned general support for the 45th Division while 45th Division artillery supports the 12th ROK Division.

**3 February 1953:** Line Minnesota (Punchbowl area), North Korea, X Corps; 40th Division artillery relieves 45th Division artillery in support of 12th ROK Division. The 980th FA general support 12th ROK Division.

**March 1953:** Line Minnesota (Punchbowl area), North Korea; 980th FA continues general support 12th ROK Division

**27 April 1953:** Line Minnesota (Punchbowl area), North Korea; 40th Division relieves the 20th ROK Division. The 980th FA returns to 40th Division control, direct support 224th Inf, 24th Division.

*Korea summer 1953*

**May-June 1953:** Line Minnesota (Punchbowl area), North Korea; 980th FA direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division.

**10 July 1953:** Line Minnesota (Punchbowl area), North Korea; 40th Division relieved by the 20th ROK Division.

**11 July 1953:** Line Minnesota (Heartbreak Ridge area), North Korea; 40th Division relieves the 45th Division, 980th FA direct support 224th Inf, 40th Division.

*Cease fire 1953*

**27 July 1953:** Line Minnesota (Heartbreak Ridge area), North Korea; 980th FA stands down and prepares to move to post-armistice defense positions.

**8 May 1954:** The 980th FA returns with the 40th Division to the United States.

**30 June 1954:** The 980th FA released from active, reverting to California state control.

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<sup>6</sup>Line Minnesota (eastern front): X Corps MLR for the rest of the Korean War.

## 980th FA Campaign Participation and Unit Citations

### **SECOND KOREAN WINTER 1951-1952**

22 Jan - 30 Apr 52

### **KOREA SUMMER-FALL 1952**

1 May - 30 Nov 52

### **THIRD KOREAN WINTER 1952-1953**

1 Dec 52 - 30 Apr 53

### **KOREA SUMMER 1953**

1 May - 27 Jul 53



Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation: KOREA  
22 January 1952-15 January 1954, DA GO 50-54

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation: KOREA  
10 December 1951-31 July 1953, DA GO 30-54

**For All Gave Some... Some Gave All**

**DELAY, Cyril E:** 2d Lt

KIA, 2/17/1953; Marion County, IL

**PEARSON, Raymond T:** Pvt

KIA, 2/17/1953; Raymond, WA

**PRICE, Maylon D:** 1st Lt, A Btry

DOC,<sup>7</sup> 3/12/1952; Seattle, WA

**STOKES, Glenn Roy:** Pfc, B Btry

DOC, 2/17/1952; Los Angeles, CA

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<sup>7</sup>Died of other causes.

## **980th FA Bibliography**

Gale, Alfred. "Memoirs: Division Artillery HQ, 980(Army) Korea 1946-47 & 1951-52"  
[http://koreanwar-educator.org/memoirs/gale\\_alfred](http://koreanwar-educator.org/memoirs/gale_alfred)