

A Brief History Of The 4th Marines



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 4TH MARINES

by

Mr. James S. Santelli



Historical Division
Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps
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PREFACE

"A Brief History of the 4th Marines" is a concise narrative of the regiment since its initial activation over a half century ago. Official records of the Marine Corps and appropriate historical works were utilized in compiling this chronological. It is published for the information of those interested in the 4th Marines and in the events in which it has participated.



W. J. VAN RYZIN
Lieutenant General, U. S. Marine Corps
Chief of Staff

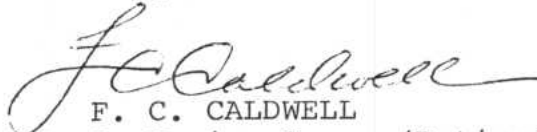
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FOREWORD

This historical reference pamphlet is the seventh of a series concerning the regiments and aircraft groups which comprise the regular Marine Corps. In time, it is planned to cover each of the major component units of present day divisions and aircraft wings in similar fashion. The narrative not only highlights the significant actions of the 4th Marines, but also furnishes a general history of Marine Corps activities in which it took part. In briefer form, it replaces and updates a comprehensive history of the regiment, Hold High the Torch, which was published by the Marine Corps in 1960 and is now out of print.

Final editing and preparation of the manuscript for publication was done by Henry I. Shaw, Jr., Chief Historian and Head, Histories Branch. Sergeant Michael L. Gardner typed the final draft. Maps were prepared by Sergeant Kenneth W. White. All illustrations are official Department of Defense (Marine Corps) photographs from the files of the Combat Pictorial Branch, G-3 Division of this Headquarters.



F. C. CALDWELL
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps (Retired)
Director of Marine Corps History
Historical Division
Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James S. Santelli has been a member of the staff of the Historical Division since June 1967. Presently, he is Head of the Unit Histories Section of the Historical Reference Branch. He received his B. A. with an emphasis in modern European history from the University of San Francisco in 1962. Two years later, he was granted a M. A. in diplomatic history from the same university.

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The Early Years

The 4th Marines is one of the more illustrious and colorful regiments in the Marine Corps. It has since its activation over a half century ago served throughout the world with distinction in both war and peace. The regiment was originally activated on 16 April 1914. Three years earlier, however, a unit with the numerical designation of 4th Regiment was activated for a very brief period. This regiment was provisional in nature. The intent behind its creation in April 1911 was that it be used primarily for expeditionary duty. It was later redesignated as the Provisional Battalion and then was deactivated on 12 July 1911.(1) The present 4th Marines, consequently does not trace its history and lineage back to this organization.

In the spring of 1914, relations between the United States and Mexico had deteriorated to an extremely low level. A very grave crisis developed early in April when a number of American sailors from the USS Dolphin were seized by Mexican authorities at Tampico. Although the bluejackets were soon released with apologies, the Mexicans refused to salute the American flag as demanded by Rear Admiral Henry T. Mayo, the senior U. S. naval officer present in the area. Tensions were heightened when 11 days later it was learned that a German vessel loaded with arms was about to land at Vera Cruz in violation of an earlier American embargo on such shipments. As a result, on 21 April, President Woodrow Wilson ordered United States naval forces to land and seize the customs house at Vera Cruz.(2) American military forces, in addition, were ordered to concentrate on the border and to embark for waters off Mexico.

One effect of this partial mobilization was the activation of the 4th Regiment of Marines at Puget Sound, Washington on 16 April 1914. The regiment was initially composed of the Field and Staff, the 25th, 26th, and 27th Marine Companies. Colonel Joseph H. Pendleton, who had prior expeditionary command experience in the Philippines and Nicaragua, was designated as the commanding officer. Two days after its activation, the 4th Regiment embarked on board the USS South Dakota and sailed for San Francisco. Upon the warship's arrival on the 21st, the same day of the landing at Vera Cruz, four companies from Mare Island joined the regiment. The 31st and 32d Companies embarked on board the South Dakota while the 34th and 35th Companies embarked on board the collier Jupiter. The regiment on the following day headed back out to sea, this time bound for Mexican waters.

