



*"There is no unit in the American Army which has served with greater distinction both in peace and in war, than the 31st Infantry. Never stationed within our continental limits, as the advanced element in our Pacific Defense, the Regiment has always performed its assigned mission with marked gallantry and commendable precision. At Bataan, it achieved its greatest glory as its lines held firm time and time again against the assault of overwhelming superior forces. As it now faces a future of continued service in our country's cause, its regimental colors fly under a halo of tradition, of honor, duty and sacrifice, which will be an inspiration for American Armies for all time to come."*

General Douglas Mac Arthur  
4 August 1946

### **31<sup>ST</sup> INFANTRY REGIMENT – “THE AMERICAN FOREIGN LEGION”**

The 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry was organized in the Philippines in 1916 and first saw action in Siberia in 1918-19 guarding the Trans-Siberian railroad. Following this it stayed in the Philippines during the interwar years, except for a period in the 30's when it was sent to Shanghai, China to guard the International Settlement during the Japanese invasion.

When the Japanese invaded the Philippines, the 31<sup>st</sup> was the main unit defending Manila. Since Manila was considered indefensible it was declared an open city and the 31<sup>st</sup> moved to the Bataan Peninsula to fight until help arrived. The “Battling Bastards of Bataan” held out against a vastly superior force with no reinforcement or resupply from December 13, 1941 to April 9, 1943, and only surrendered when ordered to by their superior officers.

The 31<sup>st</sup> went into captivity in the infamous Bataan Death March where thousands of American and Philippine soldiers were marched 68 miles in the blazing sun with no water. Thousands died or were killed by their captives. Many were already sick from lack of food and medicine during the siege. They were to spend the next 42 months in brutal captivity.

In 1946 the unit was reactivated in Korea as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division and took part in the occupation of Korea and later Japan.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Division with the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry was part of the Inchon landings in Korea during the Korean War. In Korea it was involved in some of the most famous and bloody battles of the conflict. Most people remember the famous fighting retreat of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division from the Chosin Reservoir, but few know that the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry was also there and experienced horrible casualties as they fought their way out through thousands of Chinese troops. They fought continually up and down the Korean Peninsula. The most famous of many battles the 31<sup>st</sup> participated in was Pork Chop Hill which was memorialized in a movie starring Gregory Peck. During this period members of the unit won five Medals of Honor.

When the build up of forces in Viet Nam began, two battalions of the 31<sup>st</sup> were reactivated, the 4/31<sup>st</sup> and 6/31<sup>st</sup>. Originally, they were supposed to serve together in I Corp as part of the Americal Division, but when the Tet Offensive caused the area around Saigon to become more active, the 6<sup>th</sup> was attached to the 9<sup>th</sup> Division instead. Shortly after arriving in country 6/31<sup>st</sup> was sent into Saigon in reaction to the May (or Little Tet) offensive. This week saw the highest number of American casualties of any week during the Viet Nam conflict. Both battalions saw continuous combat in country, and the 6/31<sup>st</sup> was part of the force that was sent into Cambodia to close VC sanctuaries. While in Viet Nam two Medals of Honor were awarded to Polar Bears.

Currently, the 4/31<sup>st</sup> serves as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the famous 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and has participated in virtually every action this country has been involved with including peace keeping in Kosovo. When our country was attacked on 9/11, the Polar Bears were among the first units to go into Afghanistan. Since then they have served two extended tours in Iraq where they were involved in heavy combat. Over fifteen troopers have paid the ultimate price for our country including Corporal Anzack of Torrance. In the 2015-2016, 4-31 Infantry deployed for 9 months to Afghanistan. The battalion was deployed and spread over 13 separate Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) assisting, training, and supporting Afghan Army units.

# Battle Honors of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry

## World War I



Siberia 1918 & 1919

## World War II



Philippine Islands

## Korean War



UN defensive  
UN Offensive  
CCF Intervention  
UN Counteroffensive  
CCF Spring Offensive  
UN Summer-Fall Counteroffensive  
Second Korean Winter  
Summer-Fall 1952  
Third Korean Winter  
Summer 1953

## Vietnam War



Counteroffensive Phase II (4th Battalion)  
Counteroffensive Phase III (4th Battalion)  
Tet Counteroffensive (4th Battalion)  
Counteroffensive Phase IV (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Counteroffensive Phase V (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Counteroffensive Phase VI (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Tet 1969 Counteroffensive (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Summer-Fall 1969 (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Winter-Spring 1970 (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Sanctuary Counteroffensive (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Counteroffensive Phase VII (4th and 6th Battalions)  
Consolidation Phase I (4th Battalion)

## Afghanistan



Afghanistan 2001-2002 (HHC, A, and C Companies 4th Battalion)  
Afghanistan 2003 (HHC and A Company 4th Battalion)

## Iraq



Iraq 2003-2004 (B Company 4th Battalion)  
Iraq 2005-2006 (4th Battalion)  
Iraq 2006-2007 (4th Battalion)

## Global War on Terrorism



Qatar 2001-2002 (B Company 4th Battalion)  
Djibouti 2003-2004 (C Company 4th Battalion)