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# *Persian Gulf*

When Iraq launched its unprovoked invasion of Kuwait on August 7, 1990, the 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, along with the rest of the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), stood ready to be called into action once again. On November 8, 1990, President George Bush announced that additional United States forces, including the Big Red One would be deployed to Saudi Arabia. The 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Harry M. Emerson III, quickly rail-loaded its' guns and equipment and once again prepared to go to war with pride and enthusiasm.

At Christmas time, soldiers of the battalion said good-bye to families at Marshall Army Airfield and moved by bus to Forbes Airfield in Topeka. Most of the battalion boarded a Northwest Airlines 747, which stopped Gatwick, England and continued to King Fahd International Airport, Saudi Arabia. We resided at Al Khobar Housing Complex, outside of Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, until the equipment arrived.

The howitzers and other battalion equipment arrived in the Port of Damman in early January, and the battalion immediately moved 350 miles northeast to occupy Tactical Assembly Area Roosevelt. Our battalion was the first combat power of the Division to be fully deployed. While in Roosevelt, the battalion conducted rehearsals, planning, and maintenance, in preparation for its upcoming offensive operations. At 0300 hours on January 17, 1991, the United States entered into war with Iraq as all branches of the armed forces and several allied nations conducted a massive air raid on strategic targets throughout Iraq.

The battalion fired its first combat fire mission on February 9, 1991 at a town seven miles to the north which had a suspected Iraqi command post. Delta Battery fired two laser guided Copperhead rounds, and in the next few days, each battery had the opportunity to fire these special rounds. The 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery became the first artillery unit in the Division to be credited with destroying an Iraqi tank. On February 14, 1991, our battalion moved west with the remainder of the Division to occupy a defensive sector. During this time, the batteries fired in several artillery raids, which served to limit enemy resupply capabilities, to destroy command and control, and to degrade enemy moral. One of these raids was the largest artillery raid ever conducted by the 1st Infantry Division Artillery.

On G-Day, February 24, 1991, our unit moved north in Direct Support of 1st Brigade as part of the divisions' deliberate attack in zone. At the start of the attack, our battalion fired 836 rounds in a Seventh Corps Artillery prep. Our battalion passed

through the berm, a nine-foot barrier marking the border between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, at 0930 hours on G-Day. That night, our unit suffered its first casualties of the war, when three soldiers from Delta Battery were wounded by unexploded ordnance.

As the division continued to advance, we fired numerous missions to wear down enemy resistance. The 1st Brigade was up against elements of the Tawkalna Republican Guard, 52d Armored Division, 17th Armored Division, and the 12th Armored Division. When the cease-fire was called on February 29, the 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery had fired a total of 2,677 rounds.

On March 13, 1991, the battalion moved to an area just south of the town of Safwan. Our purpose there was to help enforce the "Line of Demarcation" which had been established between Iraq and Kuwait. Our mission was to prevent Iraqi soldiers from coming south to pick up equipment and take it back to use on Iraqi citizens who were rebelling against Saddam Hussein.

In early April, the battalion assembled and in the tradition set by members of the unit during World War I, aligned all personnel and vehicles in the shape of a "Big Red One" patch for a photograph. For "Operation Desert Shield" our unit earned a streamer embroidered DEFENSE OF SAUDI ARABIA, and for "Operation Desert Storm", the streamer is marked LIBERATION AND DEFENSE OF KUWAIT.

