

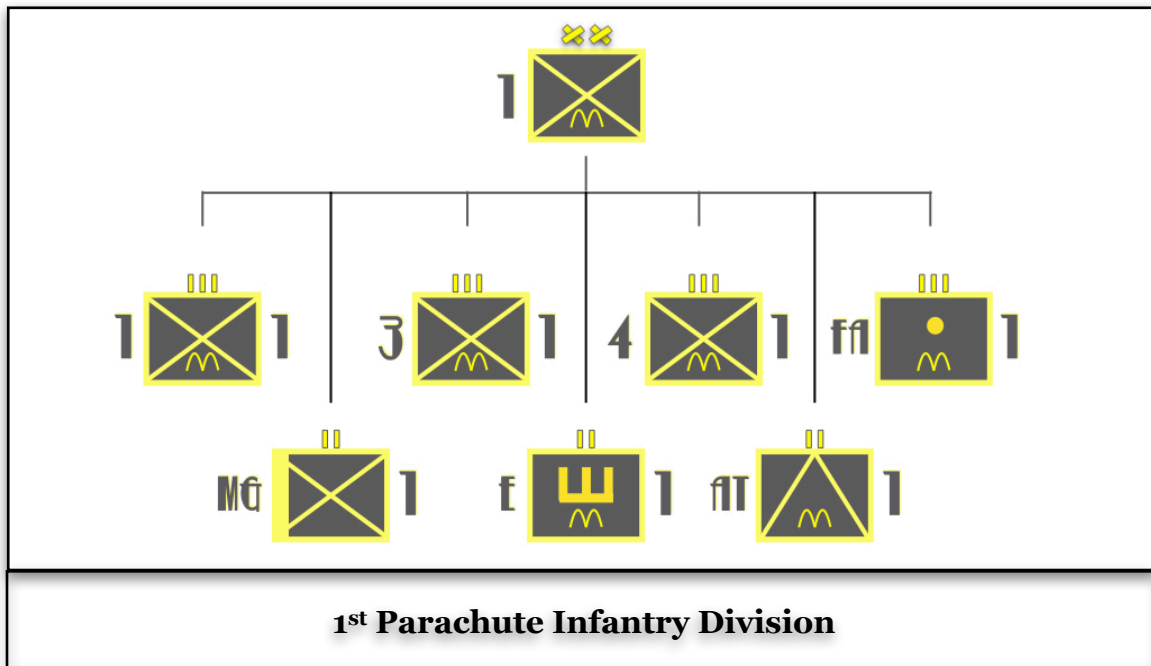
The 1st Parachute Infantry Division

As its name implies, the 1st Parachute Infantry Division was designed to conduct airborne operations of the type that took place in the Netherlands (1940) and Crete (1941). To this end, all elements of the division are light enough to be delivered by means of parachute, glider, or transport aircraft.

The fighting elements of the 1st Parachute Infantry Division consist of four regiments and three independent battalions. Three of the four regiments are infantry regiments. The fourth is a field artillery regiment. The first of the three independent battalions is a machine gun battalion. The second is a combat engineer battalion, the third an anti-tank battalion.

The structure of the component units of the 1st Parachute Infantry Division is triangular. That is, most regiments are made up of three line battalions and most battalions have three line companies. One great exception to this rule is the field artillery regiment, which has two battalions. (The 1st Battalion is armed 75mm mountain guns. The 3rd Battalion employs 105mm recoilless rifles.)

The field artillery regiment is fully motorized, as is the anti-tank battalion. The rest of the units, however, are largely muscle powered. Thus, if they need to make a significant overland movement, they need to borrow vehicles from some outside source.



The 3rd Parachute Infantry Regiment

Like the other two infantry regiments of the 1st Parachute Infantry Division, the 3rd Parachute Infantry Regiment consists of fourteen numbered companies. Twelve of these are divided among the three component infantry battalions of the regiment. The 13th (Mortar) Company is armed with nine 120mm mortars. The 14th (Anti-Tank) Company employs 75mm anti-tank guns.

The first three companies of each battalion are rifle companies, each of which is armed with twenty MG42 general purpose machine guns and two (short-ranged) 81mm mortars. (Two of the MG42 machine guns are equipped with tripods and long-range sights. All others are bipod-mounted light machine guns.) The fourth (heavy) company of each battalion provides a home for heaviest weapons of the battalion: eight tripod-mounted MG42 machine guns, four (long-ranged) 81mm mortars, and two 75mm recoilless rifles.

The component companies of each battalion are numbered within a single sequence. Thus, for example, the 5th, 6th, 7th Companies are the rifle companies of the 2nd Battalion and the 8th Company is the heavy company of that unit.

The 3rd Parachute Infantry Regiment has an authorized strength of 3,206 officers and men.

