

COMPANY "I", 16TH INFANTRY
APO 1 U.S. ARMY

25 July 1945

C O M P A N Y H I S T O R Y

1 August 1942

to

14 July 1945

On 1 August 1942, Company "I", 16th Infantry left Indian-town Gap, Pennsylvania, by train for the New York Port of Embarkation. Upon arrival in New York the Company boarded the Queen Mary and sailed the next day for an unknown destination.

On 8 August the Company disembarked at Glasgow, Scotland and a movement was made by train to Tidworth Barracks, England.

Strenuous conditioning exercises and night problems were conducted during the next six weeks. During the following three months the Company participated in amphibious landing exercises and three full scale amphibious problems were conducted. The Company sailed from Scotland on the 26th of October for an unknown destination and after more than a week at sea approached the beach near Awzew, in North Africa.

On 8 November 1942, at 0430 hours the men of Company "I" made the first of their three D-Day landings. Disembarkation from the warship "Warwick Castle" into assault boats was accomplished and the landing was made on the beach unopposed. They then moved immediately to their intermediate objective. That evening orders were received from the Battalion Commander to move Company "I" to Fleurus and be prepared to become the advance guard for the Battalion in the movement on Oran. These movements were completed at 2200, 8 November.

On the morning of 9 November the Company was sent to occupy defensive positions on the high ground north-east of Assi-Ben-Okba. That evening, Company "I", part of the column marching on Oran, engaged the enemy in a brief fire fight near Arcole, two men being killed and 1 Officer and three enlisted men wounded. These were the first men of this organization to become casualties in the fight to drive the enemy out of North Africa. The Company then marched through Arcole towards Oran but on the 10th of November Oran surrendered to the American Forces before the Third Battalion was committed.

On 12 November the Company moved to a new bivouac area near Fleurus, Algeria and spent the following month there. Time was divided between conditioning exercises and guard duty in Oran. From the 16th of December 1942 until the 11th of January 1943 the company bivouaced near Neuve, Oran, Algeria performing approximately the same duties as in the previous area.

On 11 January the Company moved 25 miles by truck to Nentague de Lions, Algeria where it remained until 20 January. On this date it travelled 30 miles by truck to St Barge de Tlate, Algeria, boarding trains the following day for a 300 mile trip to Guelma. On the 23rd of January they then moved to a bivouac area six miles away. On the 24th the Company entrucked for Maktar and journeyed 240 miles to an area 11 kilometers south of Maktar.

On the 28th an advance of 500 yards was made and word was received of a possible counter-attack by a battalion of Italians. Late in the afternoon the enemy was sighted by "I" Company, along the base of a hill south of our lines, but there were no further developments.

The company remained in defensive positions in this area until the 19th of February. During this period enemy air reconnaissance was very active. Several patrols were sent out which found that the enemy positions were heavily guarded and outposted with automatic weapons.

Moving on 19 February to an area south of Tabessa, "I" Company and "L" Company prepared to make a flank attack on the high ground held by the enemy north of Oel Gardjoun. The attack was launched and with rifles, bayonets, and grenades 200 Germans were routed from these positions. A 105-MM Howitzer and anti-aircraft guns taken by the enemy earlier in the day were recaptured during this engagement.

On the 23rd the company was ordered to move to rear bivouac area near Tabessa. Orders for the attack were received and "I" and "L" companies were the assault companies. They reached their objective, without resistance, after a fifteen mile march. In the course of this march the Company had to climb a 3,000 ft. mountain. The company was then put into the Regimental reserve and normal duties were carried on until 4 March.

Defensive positions were taken up on the 4th of March in the vicinity of El Merit and the Company remained there until the 13th of March. Then a movement was made by truck, 60 miles, to Bou Chebka. On 16 March the Company entrucked for the front lines, arriving near Gafsa, 60 miles distant, the following day. Defensive positions were taken up in the area of El Guettar. During this time four attacks were made against the Company's positions by the 10th German Panzer Division, all being repulsed. These positions were held until the 13th of April at which time the company left El Guettar and arrived at its new bivouac area in the vicinity of Morsott that same night.

The period from 14 - 17 April was spent in a rest where the men participated in recreation and rehabilitation. Here the men had opportunity to bathe and get their clothing and equipment in proper shape. Motion pictures were shown each evening. Replacements were received in the company.

On the 18th of April, the company moved 130 miles by truck to its new bivouac area, seven miles south of La Calle. The following day a move of 125 miles was made to another assembly area.

On the 24th of April, Company "I" on the right flank of the battalion attacked Hill 394. Company "I" assaulted the hill frontally drawing the attention of the defenders, and was subjected to machine gun and small arms fire. Meanwhile, Co "L" was attacking from the left. The final assault was made with fixed bayonets and by 0500 Hill 394 was taken. The company remained in defensive in this area until 26th. The forward move-

ment started again on the 27th and Co "I" occupied Hill 523 without resistance, and then seized Hill 531. They remained in these positions until April 30th when relieved by a unit of the 26th Infantry. The company then took up new positions on the eastern slope of Hill 528, on the left flank of the battalion, and a short while later moved into positions on Hill 428. While in these positions the Company's action was limited to extensive patrolling of its front and flanks. The enemy threw several artillery barrages on their positions and sniping by the enemy was prevalent.

On May 3rd, Company "I" was relieved of its front line positions and moved into its new area on Hill 557. (Dj Ae Mdalla), being part of the Regimental reserve. By this time Rommel's much talked of Afrika Corps had been torn to shreds and the end of the African Campaign came officially on 9 May 1943. The men of Company "I" were now a well knit, battle hardened outfit, equal to anything the enemy could throw against it.

As the African campaign ended the Company was in an assembly area about 15 miles southwest of Mateur, Tunisia. They remained there, performing the usual camp duties until 13 May, at which time it moved by motor to a bivouac area near Ain M' Liln, arriving there on 14 May.

On the 18th the company arrived at a rest area at St Louis, Algeria. They remained there performing usual camp duties from 19 - 24 May. During this time passes were issued so the men could visit Oran.

From the 25th of May until the 11th of June, the company underwent a course of instruction at the 5th Army Invasion Training Center in the vicinity of St Lou, Algeria.

On the 11th of June they sailed for Algiers, arriving on the 13th. Upon disembarking they made a motor move to a bivouac area in the vicinity of Staoulli, Algeria. They remained here for two weeks performing usual camp duties, and training for future operations. During this time the company participated in landing operations similar to the one they were to make in the near future.

On the 27th of June the company sailed for Tunis, remaining in a concentration area until the 5th of July. On the 6th, they once more boarded landing craft and reached Sousse on the 7th of July.

The ships left for the Sicilian Invasion on the 9th of July and after a very rough trip, which made many sick, the ships stood off the Sicilian coast.

At 0530 on the morning of 10 July, "I" Company was beached from LCI 41. In order to disembark, guide lines and rubber boats had to be used. On shore the company was reorganized on the high ground about two miles east of Gela. They remained in this position until 1330 hours. The Company then started marching inland, First Platoon leading, followed by the Second, Co Hq, Weapons, and Third Platoon in that order, and marched to the crossroads southeast of Niscemi. Defensive positions were set up here.

On the 11th, an enemy tank came into the company area and was driven off. The Second Platoon's positions were attacked by enemy tanks and infantry. After a stiff fire fight, they were driven off. Enemy mortar and artillery fire fell into these positions all during the day.

On the 12th, the enemy attacked again with patrols. They were driven off, and although the company received no casualties, one officer attached to the company was missing. In the afternoon the company took up new defensive positions, formerly occupied by the 1st Bn. At 0800 hours the enemy once again attacked with tanks and infantry. Our artillery knocked out four tanks and the infantry dispersed in the fields to the right and left of the road. The Second Platoon was then ordered by the Company Commander to attack the disorganized enemy. This was done very successfully killing several of them and taking 23 prisoners.

On the 13th, the Company, as a leading element of the Battalion marched through Niscemi and took up defensive positions northeast of the town overlooking the valley. Enemy artillery fire was heavy during the day. They remained in this position during the 14th. The Company Commander sent out a motorized patrol, under Lt Booth. They managed to penetrate deeply into the enemy lines and returned with valuable information as to the enemy's positions.

Late on the night of the 15th the company moved to an area about six miles east of Mazzarino and bivouaced there for the night. On the 16th, they took up new defensive positions on high ground north of Mazzarino. That afternoon they marched to the high ground southeast of Barrafranca and here awaited to attack the town, 5 miles away.

The attack orders were changed and the company moved to a new position 5 miles south of Barrafranca. On the 18th they took up new positions southeast of Caltanissetta and on the 19th positions southeast of Enna. Action was limited to patrolling and artillery exchanges until the 27th of July.

At 0015, on the 27th, the Company left its assembly area and marched down a waddi to its jump off point in the riverbed east of the cross roads. At dawn the enemy was contacted and a fire fight took place. During the engagement many of the enemy were killed and 36 prisoners were taken. The company's casualties were 1 wounded and 13 prisoners. On the 28th they captured Hills 882 and 712 with light resistance and then moved in and occupied the town of Nicosia. Several prisoners were taken. While in town waiting for the remainder of the Battalion to arrive, the company was attacked by enemy machine gunners firing from the high ground north of the town. The Company's light machine guns retaliated and succeeded in quieting the enemy weapons. The 3rd Platoon, under Lt Mastyl, secured the northeast area of the town capturing 202 prisoners, including 12 officers. The enemy blasted the side of a hill blocking the road leading out of town to the north.

From the 29th of July through the 1st of August, the company was in reserve. Several combat and reconnaissance patrols were sent out during this time.

On the 2nd, the company moved to an assembly area on Hill 910 and on the 3rd, took up defensive positions on Hill 1045. Heavy concentrations of mortar and artillery fire was laid down by the enemy defending Irvina.

The Company occupied Hill 1034 on the 4th of August and dug in. Mortar and artillery fire, by the enemy was again intense wounding several men and killing two.

While in defensive positions on the 5th of August the enemy threw five attacks at the company each one was repulsed and heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy.

On the 6th the company occupied the town of Irvina, leaving on the 7th for a Regimental rest area. They remained in the rest area until the 13th, at which time they moved by truck to a Regimental reserve area about 5 miles southeast of Randazzo. They remained in this area until the 20th of August at which time they made a trip of 150 miles to a bivouac area near Licata, Sicily, where they remained until October.

The Sicilian Campaign had lasted 34 days, during which time the men of Company "I" showed that they could meet men of the "Super-race" at any time under any conditions, and defeat them.

The company sailed from Augusta, Sicily on the 23rd of October and arrived at Algiers two days later. They left Algiers on the 26th and after a trip of 3,814 miles, they arrived in Liverpool on the 5th of November. During the voyage the men participated in boat drills, lectures, inspections of weapons and quarters and calisthenics.

On the 6th of November the company came ashore, boarded trains, and rode to Dorchester, England, a 300 mile trip. From Dorchester they travelled by truck to Tilton Cheney, Dorset County and upon arrival there were billeted in huts.

The following seven months were spent in intensive training and preparation for the breaking of the much vaunted "Atlantic Wall".

On the 26th of February the company returned to Tilton Cheney, remaining there until the 7th of March. At this time the Company left for further amphibious training at an area near Portland, England. The return to Tilton Cheney was made on 13 March.

On the 1st of May the company participated in a full scale practice landing on the coast of Devon returning to Tilton Cheney, on the 8th.

The company, along with the entire Battalion, boarded the "Empire Anvil" for the second time on 1 June and for the next several days practiced emergency fire and life boat drills and debarkation station drills.

At 1755, 5 June the ship left port on the largest and most difficult military mission ever undertaken.

The men of Company "I" knew the great part they were expected to plan in this operation and they were ready for it with past experience against the enemy and the "guts" that were necessary to carry it through.

Company "I", 16th Infantry disembarked from H.M.S. "Empire Anvil", at 0315, 6 June 1944, into six L.C.A.'s. The L.C.A.'s proceeded to their assembly area, and headed for the beach. The boats proceeded toward the beach west of Bort-en-Beasin, and Captain Richmond, noticing the mistake, started the boats back toward the correct beach. On the way, the boats containing Lt Funcheon and the 4th section, and Lt. Cunningham and the 5th section, were swamped and started to sink. The men and officers were taken off by a patrol boat and returned to another ship. The time was now 0700 hours. Capt Richmond contacted Battalion Headquarters, telling them the situation and asked that "K" Company be given our mission.

At 0800 hours our boats approached the beach, and seeing men lined up against the sea wall and not moving, decided to land, regardless of high tide. Four boats approached the shore, the Company Headquarters boat in front, followed by the first section, and the 2nd and 3rd section boats on the flanks. The C.P. boat hit a mine, and received direct machine gun fire, catching fire, causing numerous casualties and several deaths. The 1st Section boat received machine gun fire, and hung up on a stake, but managed to withdraw. The second and third section boats both received direct artillery hits, or blew up on a mine, causing many casualties.

The men that reached the beach, immediately started to render 1st aid to the wounded and tried to set up a defensive line above the sea wall. The company officers present at this time were Capt Richmond, Lts Anderson, Godwin, and Kemp. A small defensive line above the sea wall was established, and rifle fire was brought to bear on all targets which could be seen. Capt Richmond organized as many men and officers as he could from the Battalion and other units, and managed to reach the first "I" Company objective at Le Od Bammsau. At this time he had men from L, K, and M Co's. At the same time men from Company "I" and other units under Lts. Godwin and Kemp tried to clear the Hill to their immediate front. Capt Edmonds organized a few men from "I" and Hq Co's., and tried to get through to Capt Richmond. They were held up by sniper and mortar fire. At this time the 1st and 4th Sections of I Company landed under Lts. Seder and Funcheon, the replacements under Lt Jackson landed a few minutes later. Accompanied by Lt Anderson they moved to the Battalion reorganization point which was at "I" Company's first objective. Upon arrival the objective was organized and a defensive position was set up. The company remained in this position over-night, several prisoners were taken, and some enemy transportation was captured.

During the night and early morning three platoons of tanks from the 745th Tank Battalion moved into the company area, and were placed by Capt Richmond and Lt Cutler. About 0800 hours nineteen men from the 1st Section, under T Sgt Woodham joined the company. S Sgt Westervelt took a patrol east along the main road to Cerbourg to draw fire and locate enemy positions. The enemy fire was drawn by them, and after returning to Le Gd Hammsau the Battalion moved east along the road to Port-enbesein. Lt Kemp took a combat patrol to Hupsain and captured two prisoners.

On the return to the Company they were shot and killed while trying to escape.

The Battalion moved into Uppain and a line of defense was set up. Patrols were sent out constantly to contact the British on our left. Snipers were firing during the night and patrols were sent out. Lt. Godwin took a patrol to Port-en-Bessin and two prisoners were taken.

Many of the men of Company "I" distinguished themselves with individual acts of heroism on D-Day. When their boats were knocked out from under them, and their leaders became casualties, they refused to stop and moved forward liquidating the enemy from his strong points along the shore one by one.

After the initial assault on the beach, securing the beachhead, and capturing the village of Le Gale Hameau, a defense was set up and the Company was reorganized. Replacements were brought up, platoons reorganized, destroyed and lost equipment replaced, and the men were able to clean up for the first time since leaving England.

From the 7th of June until the 13th of July the Company was placed in various defensive positions. Most of the work during this period consisted of maintaining continual contact with the British on the left and continually harassing the enemy to the front with patrols. A patrol, consisting of about 30 enlisted men and five officers made a penetration of 1,000 yards west of the main defensive line. At this point the patrol was split in to two groups about 250 yards apart and continued moving South. This brought them to a point 700 yards Southeast of Vidouville, and so close to the enemy that the outposts could hear them talking, but due to the hedgerows, observation was difficult. Lt McCarthy directed mortar fire on these enemy concentrations causing heavy damage. In spite of some small arms fire from the enemy the patrol had no casualties.

The Company was relieved by a unit of the 5th Division on 13 July and went back for a short rest. They remained in Colombieres, France for the next six days. During this time the men had opportunity to clean up themselves and their equipment and get plenty of rest.

On the 20th of July the Company was ordered to an Assembly area in the vicinity of Les Landes. They remained in this area for six days after digging in. During this time the men were briefed on the coming operation.

On the morning of the 27th, the Company, moving on tanks, proceeded to an assembly area closer to the front lines about one mile from Marigny. The men then dug in. At 1700 hours orders were received to attack. The Company loaded on vehicles and moved out in battle formation. As they neared Marigny, they came under artillery fire which wounded three men. The rifle platoons dismounted and fought their way to a point one mile west of Marigny. The attack stopped for the night but continued early in the morning to a point three miles Northeast of Coutance.

By this time the enemy were on the run along the entire front and the Company constantly pursued the enemy. The attack continued on through the 29th and 30th, the Company moving South and Southwest from Coutance. Light resistance was met all along the line. Severe casualties were inflicted upon the enemy and many prisoners were captured.

On August 1st, while in a defensive position approximately 1,000 yards Northwest of St Dennis Le Gast, enemy aircraft flew over head at 1245 AM and dropped flares. Anti-aircraft guns opened up on them as they came in low over our positions. The German planes dropped four bombs in the area killing two men and wounding 17. When the planes had departed the wounded men were given first aid and evacuated to the Aid Station.

The next day a gruelling 18 mile march on foot was made and upon arrival at the assembly area the Company loaded on tanks and attacked. The Company's objective was high ground 1 and 1/2 miles to the south and six miles to the East of Avranches. It was quickly secured. No further contact was made with the enemy until the 6th of August, when, leading the Battalion, they passed through the town of Mayenise and took up defensive positions South of the town. Only sniper fire was encountered during this move.

On the 14th of August the Company moved out from the town of Pignonmers on trucks and tanks. The column moved in a North-Northeast direction passing through the town of Coutances and then on to La Fate Mace. Upon reaching this point the platoons were detrucked and moved by foot up the road toward the town of La Sauvage. "I" Company was again given the mission of spear-heading the Battalion attack. Three enemy tanks were reported on the left side of the road leading into the town. The Company contacted the enemy and a stiff fire fight took place. An enemy ammunition truck and two Mark V tanks were captured. Advancing to the town heavy fire from two Mark V tanks and machine guns was encountered. At approximately 2345 hours the Second Platoon led by Lt Kemp and Lt Jackson entered the town.

On the following day all main roads to and from the town had been mined and blocked by the Company. At 0530 hours an enemy car approached town but blew up on one of our mines. A few minutes later two enemy scout cars approached the town but were demolished by the M-10's securing the road block. At 0600 an enemy truck and two Germans broke through the 3rd Platoon road block and rode into town. They were halted only ten feet from the Company CP by a burst of a .50 Calibre machine gun manned by T/g Rozek. During the attack on La Sauvage 34 prisoners were taken by the Company.

From the 16th until the 24th of August the Company remained in a rest area. On the 25th a motor move of 160 miles was made to a bivouac area one mile east of Bondoufle.

On the morning of the 27th of August, the Company was loaded on medium and light tanks, and TD's. An advance of 26 miles was made without opposition. Patrols were sent out to the Marne River and were fired on by mortars and small arms from the North side of the River. The next morning the Company again loaded up on tanks and moved across the Marne advancing to their next objective, Monthgon. Only light resistance was met. From the 28th of August until the 2nd of September the Company continued its rapid advance, averaging about twenty miles a day and covering as many as thirty miles in one day. The enemy was disorganized and on the run. Town after town was captured, many prisoners taken and huge amounts of enemy equipment captured and destroyed.

On the 3rd of September the Company participated in an engagement with the enemy at Mons, Belgium in one of the most costly single defeats suffered by the enemy in France and Belgium. Five enemy divisions were caught between the First and Third Armoured Divisions. On the morning of the 3rd the Company loaded on tanks and moved out to attack. The vehicles proceeded to Mauburge where the Battalion was held up by fire from the enemy. The vehicles were pulled off the road and Captain Richmond took out a patrol of one rifle platoon, reinforced by one platoon of light tanks. The patrol contacted the enemy and after a brief but bitter skirmish, which killed several of the enemy and captured 50 prisoners, the road was cleared. The Company moved out again and the Belgium border was crossed at 1900 hours. The bridge in the next town was blown out so a temporary halt was called. The Recon unit found a bridge intact so the Company proceeded to their objective 2,000 yards north of Mons and then the men dug in. No casualties were suffered during this engagement.

During the 4th, 5th and 6th several strong patrols were sent out by the Company, with excellent results. On the 4th a Company "I" patrol proceeded 800 yards to the North, destroyed two enemy tanks, captured 65 prisoners, and freed 3 American, 2 Canadian, and 1 British airmen. On the 5th, patrols continued to harass the enemy and bringing in prisoners. In the afternoon Captain Richmond and Lt Function contacted a German Colonel and talked him in to surrendering himself and his troops. The total number of prisoners was 630, the biggest haul for one day's action. On the 6th and additional 70 prisoners were captured.

For the next four days the Company held defensive positions 200 yards Northeast of Huy, Belgium. Action was light during this time. However, patrols were very active, feeling out the enemy's positions leading into Germany.

On the 12th the Company loaded on tanks again and started moving at 0900 hours. They proceeded to the town of Eynatten. Just as the column entered town at 2100 hours friendly artillery opened up on the town. The men took refuge in the buildings but two men were killed and eight wounded before the shelling could be stopped. The CP was drawn back to the edge of town and the platoons were placed in position North of the town.

The Company moved forward the next day and at this time the German frontier and the outer defenses of the Siegfried line were reached. Company "I" was sent around the right flank through the woods and kept moving until 1520, at which time they were abreast of "L" Company. They were halted here by intense enemy mortar fire, and machine gun and small arms firing from the outer defenses of the Siegfried Line. The Company Commander lined up five light tanks and the bazookas of the company. They all opened fire at once and continue to fire for about five minutes, at which time the rifleman rushed forward, yelling and screaming and took the fortifications by storm. After the smoke of battle had cleared the enemy has lost three pillboxes and sixteen prisoners were taken. Very few casualties were sustained by the Company in this attack. The German town of Eilendorf was occupied the next day. Heavy enemy concentrations of mortar and artillery fire fell into the Company area, and there was a lot of sniping by the enemy.

On the 17th there was much rifle and machine gun fire going on in the streets. At 0900 hours one platoon was ordered to move in a fill in a gap in the second Battalion lines. This platoon was pinned down and at dark two platoons with a light machine gun section moved up to fill the gap. Although enemy artillery was still heavy no casualties were sustained during the day. On the 18th the Company was in position as follows: two platoons attached to the second Battalion, one platoon in the railroad station at Eilendorf and one platoon in the school house. The enemy sent three strong infantry counterattacks against these positions but they all held, each time the enemy was driven back with heavy casualties inflicted on them.

For the next 34 days the Company remained in positions 600 yards Northeast of Eilendorf. All during this time very heavy concentrations of mortar, and artillery fire were thrown in by the enemy. Enemy patrols were constantly probing the Company defenses for weak spots. On several days the positions were bombed and strafed by German aircraft.

Enemy action in the Company's sector increased on 14 October. Intense shelling and numerous attempts by the enemy to infiltrate the defenses of the second Platoon, made it necessary to post strong guards. In spite of these precautions, the enemy launched a counterattack about midday on the 15th of October.

The first evidence of this attack was observed by the 2nd Platoon outpost located in the woods 200 yards forward of the main line of defense, when two soldiers approached the pillbox housing the outpost. The platoon sergeant, with a burst from his tommy gun, killed one and wounded the second. This brought a crescendo of small arms fire from the woods. Although the men on the outpost took up the fight, they were forced to withdraw to the platoon defensive area. A thunderous barrage of supporting fire from mortars and artillery drove the enemy back and the pillbox was reoccupied by a patrol at 1700 hours the same day. Efforts to establish communications to the rear were to no avail since the wire had been cut at several points.

Everything remained quiet until the enemy brought tanks up within close range of the pillbox and fired at it point blank injuring one man seriously. As the fire increased in intensity the patrol was again forced to withdraw. Two and one half hours after this second attack by the enemy, the men again occupied the pillbox but the enemy infiltrated and threatened to isolate this position. This time the enemy continued to advance within 75 yards of the main positions and directed small arms and tank fire on the second platoon. Again supporting weapons were brought into play, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy.

This intense fire did not stop the enemy's attempts to retake positions held by our company. The following morning strong enemy forces counterattacked along the whole Company front and the units to the right and left. As before, the attempt was smashed by all types of fire plus close in support from the dive bombers.

No further attempt was made to retake the pillbox until 0900 17 October, at which time the Company Commander ordered the 2nd Platoon to attack and retake the lost ground. This attack was supported by 60mm and 4.2 mortar fire, and three medium tanks. This attack jumped off at 1130, preceded by fire from supporting weapons. As the tanks and infantrymen neared the pillbox direct fire was put through the embrasure. It was found to be unoccupied. The Platoon, which had been reinforced with 20 men, cleared up the woods around the fortification and dug in. While this was going on the enemy laid down another barrage, causing light casualties. With the tanks in position as anti-tank protection, the men continued digging as the rain poured down, turning the fresh earth into masses of mud. Once again the men of Company "I" had shown that they had what it takes to defeat the enemy. For this action at Crucifix Hill the Company received the following citation:

HEADQUARTERS 1st U.S. INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 1, U.S. ARMY

19 January 1945

GENERAL ORDERS)

NO. 18)

CITATION OF UNITS

Under the provisions of Section IV, War Department Circular 333, 22 December 1943, Companies G and I, 16th Infantry, are cited for outstanding performance of duty in action. The citation is as follows.

"During the period 15-17 October 1944, Companies G and I, 16th Infantry, lodged in captured fortifications along the outskirts of Eilendorf, Germany were charged with defending a ridge overlooking and commanding approaches to Aachen. Loss of the ridge would mean elimination of ability to exert pressure against Aachen by American Artillery and would constitute a blow to Allied strategy. Further, it would result in isolation and almost certain annihilation of friendly infantry regiment occupying and adjacent hill. Early in the morning of 15 October 1944, the enemy, taking full advantage of the rugged terrain, infiltrated the Company G sector and surrounded the mortar platoon positions. Coincidentally, three enemy infantry companies, augmented by tanks and supported by artillery and mortar concentrations, in an initial frontal assault on Company G and I positions, threatened to overrun and eliminate the comparatively small defending body. Disregarding its losses in human life, the enemy pushed to the top of the ridge and after bitter hand-to-hand fighting occupied some of the American dug-in-positions. German tanks penetrated the outer belt defenses and edged forward to clear a path of infantry and demolition squads. Employing grenades and bayonets and engaging in close combat, Company G and I personnel fought valiantly to regain lost emplacements and to repel German armor. The enemy waged a spirited battle in his attempt to capture this strategic terrain feature, but these two companies refused to yield ground in the face of overwhelming odds. Rather than surrender the ridge, Companies G and I called for American Artillery to saturate the sector with a sustained barrage. Then, grasping the offensive, Companies G and I moved forward, carried the battle to the enemy and drove the German forces from the ridge. Although defeated in the first attempt to recapture the ridge, the enemy granted defending companies little time to consolidate and prepare for the next attack. Quickly marshaling his still powerful infantry and armor the reinforced enemy struck with renewed effort only to receive another major setback. Three times the enemy made desperate attempts to retake the vital ridge and each time preceded his drive with intense artillery and mortar bombardment. But again despite cold, hunger, and fatigue and a numerically superior enemy, these gallant defenders held their ground, engaging in close fighting. The final assault was crushed decisively with heavy losses of men, weapons, and tanks, irreparably impairing the enemy's striking power and firmly securing the ridge.

For three days the strength, courage, and determination of two infantry companies stood between elements of the German Army and a serious break-through of the 1st Infantry Divisions foothold on German soil. In this 72 hour battle, the defenders faced at different times 3 battalions of enemy troops and approximately 25 tanks, sustaining 37 major casualties against an estimated 300 for the enemy. The magnificent heroism, combat proficiency, and brilliant achievements of Companies G and I, 16th Infantry, helped pave the way for the eventual capture of Aachen."

By command of Brigadier General Andrus:

VERDI B BARNES
Colonel, G.S.C.
CHIEF OF STAFF

OFFICIAL:/s/ Leonidas Gavalas

LEONIDAS GAVALAS
Lt. Col. A.G.D.
Adjutant General

From the 18th to the 22nd of October the Company remained in defensive positions and action was limited to patrolling. On the 22nd, the Company was relieved and moved back to Brandt, Germany where it remained until the 24th. Then it took up defensive positions 1,000 yards west of Eilendorf and on the 28th returned to Brandt for a well earned rest.

On November 1st the Company relieved "B" Company and took over their positions at Stolberg, Germany. These positions were held for nine days. During the 12th, 13th, and 14th the situation was very calm. On the 16th an enemy dive bomber dropped three bombs on the positions wounding two and killing one EM. On the 16th, 17th, and 18th the Company suffered heavy casualties from the intense mortar and artillery fire thrown in by the enemy. New positions 100 yards south of Hamich were taken on the 19th. From the 23rd through the 25th positions were held near Heistern, Hamich, and Schernhotte, Germany. On the 30th of November and the 1st and 2nd of December defensive positions were held at Frenz, and from the 5th of December until the 10th at Lammersdorf.

On the 11th of December the Battalion was relieved and moved to Dison, Belgium for a rest period. They remained in this area until the 16th of December at which time the enemy launched its ill-fated attack to break through the American defenses.

On the 17th the Company moved to Robertsville, Belgium and on the 19th they took up defensive positions in the area of Gueusaine, Germany. During the march to these positions the Company was strafed by enemy aircraft. At 1730 hours the enemy infiltrated in small numbers in the second platoon area. At 1830, they started a large scale infiltration of all the Company's positions and a fire fight ensued. 10 of the enemy were killed during this action and three were taken prisoner. Only one of our men was wounded.

The company remained in these positions for 11 days, with the situation remaining static except for patrols and artillery exchanges. On the 30th of December the Company took up new defensive positions at Weywertz, Germany and remained in these positions for 17 days. During this time there was no change in the tactical situation on the Company front and the action was light. There were heavy snowfalls during this period.

On the 14th of January the Company made preparations for the attack to be made on the following day. The alert was received at 0400 hours and the Company moved out a short time later. The weather was extremely cold and a deep snow was on the ground. The second platoon was the first to reach its objective, which was the next lateral road to the South. All platoons were met with enemy fire and heavy skirmishes took place before all objectives were secured. The company lost three killed, 18 wounded and several missing in this action. The Company then dug in.

Schoppen, Belgium was the next objective of "I" Company. The alert to move was received 0515 on the 19th of January, and the attack commenced at 0655, under the worst weather conditions the Company had ever fought through on the European front. The snow was waist deep and drifted up into much deeper banks. Clouds of snow made observation impossible. While exhaustive from a physical standpoint, the weather, in the final analysis aided in the capture of Schoppen. The enemy had figured that no attack would be made under such conditions and let his guard down. Five tanks were attached to the Company and the attack began. A heavy fire fight took place but the enemy was quickly liquidated and the town secured. The men then dug in to hold this ground.

The Company remained in Schoppen for five days, on the defense and on the 25th captured the town of Mirfeld, Belgium against light resistance. They remained in Mirfeld for 12 days during which time there was very little action.

On the 6th of February the Company moved from Mirfeld, Belgium and relieved Company "K", of the 13th Infantry and took over their positions along the Roer River, at Winden, Germany. These positions were held for 18 days during which time action was light. Several patrols were sent out against the enemy, situated on the other side of the Roer, but were unable to penetrate these positions. Artillery and mortar barrages were a daily occurrence. Several times during the night and early morning the enemy would sneak down to the river's edge and open up with small arms harassing fire on our positions trying to discover where we were dug in. On the 22nd, 23rd and 24th of February enemy planes were constantly overhead bombing and strafing the Company's positions.

On the 25th orders were received to move to an assembly area at Mederau. From Mederau the company moved tactically to an area west of Stockheim. An SP gun fired down the route of advance but there were no casualties. The company closed up for the night and dug in. The following morning the Company moved to attack a strong point in the woods. The woods were cleared to the edge without casualty but while digging in one man was killed and three wounded by enemy mortar fire.

On the morning of the 27th the company left the defensive position 2,000 yards North from Stockheim, at 0900 hours and marched, tactically, to the town of Soller, Germany. At 1150 hours the company loaded on tanks and TD's and moved out to attack the town of Vettwies, Germany. As the tanks were crossing the open field, they opened fire, the men dismounted just as the lead tank was hit, wounding two officers and several enlisted men. The men advanced across the field on the run and entered the town. Four civilians, who were manning an anti-tank gun were killed. The town was taken by 1400 hours and defensive positions were dug. The company moved to Luxheim on the 28th and then to Friesheim on the 4th of March.

On the 5th of March the Company marched tactically to Weilerswist and then jumped off to attack a castle, a canal, and a small village. The First Platoon, Weapons Platoon and CP group were counter-attacked by approximately 150 - 180 Germans. A terrific fire fight lasting three hours took place. At least ten Germans were killed and thirty taken prisoner. Our casualties were one killed and 10 wounded. The 60mm mortars fired 300 rounds after which the two platoons and the CP group withdrew and moved to join the remainder of the company. After eating a hot meal the town of Rosberg was attacked and secured without opposition.

At 0100 on the 7th of March the company cleaned out the towns of Waldorf and Alfter. Resistance was light but many prisoners were taken.

The next morning at 0400 the company moved out to attack the city of Bonn, Germany. Order of March: Third, Second, First, Weapons, CP. One platoon of TD's and one 105mm SP gun were attached to the company. They attacked up the road leading into Bonn, and were fired at by Anti-tank guns and machine guns, but there were no casualties. The men were fired on several times along the road but kept on moving into town. Resistance was spasmodic and confused. Approximately 200 prisoners were taken and many killed. Three enemy vehicles were knocked out. Heavy rocket fire was thrown into the company area by the enemy. On the following day the remainder of the town was cleared and 125 more prisoners were taken.

The company moved to Kardorf on the 10th of March and remained there six days for a rest.

On March 18th the company moved by truck to the town of Honnef, on the west bank of the Rhine River. After detrucking the troops marched across an engineer assault bridge to an assembly area in the town of Rheinkilbach. They remained there most of the day. At approximately 1700 hours the company loaded on tanks and TD's and moved approximately 6 miles toward the town of Ittenbach. They unloaded and walked 1,000 yards to the town, taking up defensive positions.

On the 20th of March the Company attacked the town of Grengelbitz reaching the end of the town by 0545 hours. German soldiers manning machine guns were overlooking our positions. A tank went forward and fired on the machine gun nests, eliminating them. A 5 man patrol was sent forward to the next town, but they were pinned down by machine gun fire from on top of the hill. Enemy tanks began firing on the Company's positions from the top of the hill. The first platoon mounted tanks and led the Company in an attack on the next town, over an open field. One of the tanks was hit killing one EM and wounding 3. The town was cleared by 1600 hours and the Company dug in. The Company was relieved by the 3rd Armored Division that night.

On the 21st of March the Company relieved Co MK", 18th Infantry in the town of Kurscheid. All positions were under heavy mortar, artillery, and rocket fire from the enemy. On the 22nd The first and second platoons attacked and cleared the woods down to the river, then dug in and held against an enemy counterattack.

The Company was alerted at 0200 hours on the 24th and went into attack at 0400 hours. The Company crossed the river and moved through Company "L"'s positions. They moved forward approximately 600 yards further when they encountered a road block consisting of a Mark V tank and three machine guns and two platoons of infantry. A fire fight took place for an hour and a half, until our tanks moved into the face of enemy fire and started firing. The company then continued its attack, capturing the town of Lichtenberg after which it dug in and reorganized. Enemy tanks and infantry were observed moving around about 400 yards to the front and they were dispersed to the woods by anti-tank and machine gun fire. Approximately 50 prisoners were taken during the action on this day.

The next day an attack was made on Schiebeck. The Company was pinned down by enemy machine guns and mortar fire, causing the Company to withdraw to former defensive positions. Casualties were nine wounded and 1 killed. A second attack was made by the Company at 1645, and after a stiff fire fight the German forces withdrew. A short while later the Company moved against the town of Bierth and took it against light resistance.

On the 26th of March the Company moved out to attack the town of Suchterscheid. Upon entering the outskirts of the town, the Company encountered enemy machine gun fire coming up both sides of the road. The leading tank moved up and knocked out the two machine guns enabling the Company to enter the town and clear out the enemy. The town was cleared by 0345 hours. Thirty prisoners were taken during this operation.

*Document
Reference
got both
guns*

Continuing its rapid advance "I" Company attacked and cleared the city of Hamm, Germany on the 28th of March, and on the 29th, against moderate resistance, captured the town of Rodenback. On the 30th the town of Dilbrecht was taken.

On 31 March the company made a motor march of 114 miles and took up defensive positions around the east side of Buren, Germany.

For the first six days in April the company took up defensive positions were taken up at Neuhaus, Germany.

On the 10th the company moved to Einbeck, on the 11th to Katlenberg, on the 12th to Schwiegershausen, on the 13th to Herzberg. In the attack on Herzberg, the company encountered enemy 20mm, machine gun, small arms, and assault gun fire. A fire fight took place, and after routing the enemy the town was secured and defensive positions dug.

The company attacked Hohegeih, Germany on the 14th of April. About 1000 yards from the objective, while moving through the woods, the enemy was contacted and a stiff fire fight took place. Two of our medium tanks were knocked out by an enemy assault gun. By 2000 the company had fought its way through the town and had it cleared. During the day 20 German soldiers were killed and 113 prisoners were taken.

On the 16th of April the company attacked and cleared the town of Sorge, on the 18th Konigshut was taken and on the 19th Elbingerode was captured. Moderate opposition was encountered in these attacks. Many prisoners were taken during these three days. For the next five days the company remained in Elbingerode in defensive positions.

From the 25th of April until the 5th day of May the company was in reserve. During most of this time the men were used as guards on prisoner of war detachments, and displaced persons detachments.

Action again commenced on the 6th of May. On this day the company attacked three towns against light resistance. All towns were secured.

On the 7th of May as the company was enroute to attack Arnolton, Czechoslovakia the order was received to cease all forward movement.

The company remained in Czechoslovakia until 8 June 1945, at which time they moved by truck to the city of Bamberg, Germany to take up duties with the Army of Occupation.

Through North Africa, Sicily, France, Belgium, Germany and Czechoslovakia, "I" Company fought against the best troops the German Army could muster and played a heroic and important part in crushing the German military machine and all the evils for which it stood.