

THE HISTORY OF
CANNON COMPANY
16TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION.

Cannon Company, 16th Infantry, was activated 28 June 1942, while stationed at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, Penn. Upon activation there were no quarters or barracks available, so the company was quartered in the Camp Recreation Hall. One platoon on the stage, the remainder of the Company on the dance floor.

Only rifles and small arms were issued to the personnel. No artillery pieces were available for issue. No training devices were available other than a limited amount of Training Manuals. This training proved unsatisfactory due to changes and modifications made on the equipment.

In the early part of August 1942, Company sailed for England. Upon arrival in Scotland, the Company was transported to Tidworth Barracks, England; for two weeks the Company conducted training with manuals, small arms and some dismounted road marches. Six half-tracks with 75mm Howitzers mounted, and two 105 mm Howitzers, M-7, were issued to the Company in late August. These vehicles remained in the Company two days. During this two day period, they were cleaned and prepared for Overseas Shipment. The next time the men of Cannon Company saw the guns, they had been unloaded from a Supply Ship and were lined up on the Beach in North Africa, near Arzew, Algeria, on 8 November 1942.

In September and October 1942, the Company participated in amphibious landings in Northern Ireland and in Scotland. These training problems were not complete in many details. The Company landed as Infantry - making believe they had proper equipment for supporting CT 16. All of the personnel knew it was a "dry run" and without the proper equipment, no interest was shown in the maneuvers.

Upon completion of these amphibious training problems, the Company returned to Tidworth Barracks. The Company continued training from manuals and improvised training aids.

19 October 1942, Cannon Company loaded on Army Transports preparing for the invasion of North Africa. The invasion convoy assembled in vicinity of the Canary Islands. From there the convoy went through the Straits of Gibraltar, landing at Arzew on 8 November 1942.

8 November 1942

Invasion of North Africa

At 0430 hours, a Reconnaissance Party, consisting of the Company Commanding, Capt Bryce F Denno and three (3) Enlisted men landed on the Beaches of N. A., two (2) miles Southeast of Arzew, Algeria. A CP was finally established three (3) miles Southeast of Arzew, Algeria. Lt. Groves, with the remainder of the Company, less the Motor Vehicle Detachment, landed at 0930 hours and moved immediately to the CP. Two (2) 75mm Howitzers, Self-propelled, joined the Company at 1130 hours. One (1) hour later the Cannon Company was moving up to engage the enemy for the first time, with only two (2) guns. The Commanding Officer CT 16, ordered the Cannon Company to support the 1st Bn, CT 16, who were engaged with the enemy just east of La Macta, battling for the high ground. At 1700 hours, S/Sgt Lucas joined the Company with one (1) 75mm How, SP, making a total of three (3) guns for the Company in its first day of fighting. No casualties were suffered in this days operation.

9 November 1942

Lt. Winters joined the Company in La Macta at 0800 hours with another Howitzer, bring the total to four (4) guns for the Company. At 0830 hours, the enemy launched an attack on La Macta from the East and South, to drive the First Bn troops from the high ground. Lt Winters remained in position in the vicinity of La Macta with two Howitzers, engaging the enemy while the Company Commander and Lt. Groves took one platoon supported by rifleman from "C" Company, flanked the enemy from the west. This action forced the enemy to withdraw, leaving two men to fall into our hands as Prisoners of War.

In the early afternoon, Capt. T. F. O'Brien, 7th FI A. Bn Ln. O was looking for forward OP's, when he was ambushed by enemy infantry. Capt. O'Brien had been pinned down for some time when S/Sgt E. J. Harrell happened to come along with his gun. He drove the enemy off, rescuing Capt. O'Brien. Enemy action ceased around 1600 hours at which time the Company Commander returned to the Company CP. At 1600 hours two (2) 75mm Howitzers, SP, and two (2) 105 Howitzers, M-7, joined the Company, bring the total to six (6) 75 mm Howitzers and two (2) 105 Howitzers. Once more Captain Denno had his Company all together. At 1900 hours, the Company, less one (1) 75 mm Howitzer, was moved to Le Grande, Algeria. The Howitzer that remained behind was ordered to support the 2nd Bn in its drive on Oran. One Pfc was wounded; no other casualties this day.

10 November 1942

The 2nd Bn was held up in the vicinity of Ferme Cantne by heavy enemy fire. About 0200 hours, a coordinated attack was planned by the 2nd Bn, and Cannon Company laid down preliminary fires from 0345 to 0400. From 0400 to 1130 Cannon Company continued to support the 2nd Bn, knocking out enemy strong points in the vicinity of Ferme St. Jean Baptiste. At 1130 the Company took direct firing positions on high ground overlooking Oran, continuing to support the advance of the 2nd Bn. The capture of Oran terminated the action against the enemy. Casualties for this day; One (1) S/Sgt killed - One (1) Sgt and One (1) Pvt wounded.

On 11 November 1942, the Company bivouaced in the vicinity of Le Grande. Company remained in this area until early February 1943. Here, the training became more complete and in detail. The Company was fully equipped and started a very thorough training program. The French Artillery Range at Arzew was utilized for training of the Company. The training consisted of direct and indirect firing, care and preservation of equipment, drivers training and selection and occupation of position. Normal Garrison Duties were carried on through January and into the early part of February 1943.

The Company was alerted to move on New Year's Day 1943, after the assassination of a French General in Algiers. A Political uprising was averted and the Company remained in Le Grande.

Company NCO's were sent out to French Garrisons to train French Regular Army Officers and NCO's in the use of American equipment. This training period lasted over a period of two weeks.

In early February 1943, Company started to move by motor convoy to Tunis. A distance of 1200 miles was covered in twelve days. The Company arrived in the vicinity of Kasserine Pass in late February, moving into the Regimental assembly area, preparing for further action against the enemy.

On 4 March 1943, the Company was in position supporting CT 16 in the defense of Kasserine Pass. The Company moved to a rest area near El Meridj on 7 March, remaining in the rest area through 12 March 1943.

The Company assembled near Feriana on the 13th of March for the attack on Gafsa. Reconnaissance parties were out on the 14th and 15th of March and on the 16th of March the Company moved out under cover of darkness for the attack on Gafsa.

Gafsa was captured 17 March 1943. On the 18th and 19th and 20th of March the Company was in mobile reserve, supporting CT 16 in defense of Gafsa.

Cannon Company was attached to CT 18 on 21 March, defending south of El Guettar. From 21 March through 25 March the Company was subjected to heavy counter-battery fire, Tank and Infantry attacks and attacks by enemy planes. Eight men were wounded, none killed. Enemy losses; 1 Mark IV Tank, 1 Cargo Vehicle destroyed, six cargo vehicles damaged and one enemy Artillery Battery silenced.

The Company was in mobile reserve in defense of El Guettar on 26-27 March; moved to support CT 16 on 28 March. CT 16, coordinated with the 6th Armored Infantry attacked enemy positions from 29 March to 7 April, in the vicinity of El Guettar. Company supported this attack. On 8 April the Company moved back to El Guettar, defending the town from the South.

9 April to 13 April the Company was in bivouac near El Guettar. While in this area, the Company was reorganized, policed the vehicles and rested. The Company moved to a rest area 14 April, in the vicinity of Morsott, Algeria. This rest period was of short duration. On the 18th and 19th of April the Company assembled in vicinity of LaCalle, Algeria, in preparation for another attack. The Company was in mobile reserve from the 20th to the 22nd of April, North of Beja, Tunisia.

The Company moved up to occupy positions South of Dj Oum Sioud before daylight 23 April 1943. From there the Company supported the 2nd Bn of CT 16 in its assault on Hill 415. Continuous support was furnished CT 16 from 23 April through 2nd May 1943. During this period the Company occupied positions near Dj Oum Sioud, Hill 415, Dj Boux Achour, Dr es Safsaf and Hill 418. On 3 May 1943, the Company withdrew to positions near Dj Mdalla where CT 16 was held in Division Reserve until 7 May 1945.

While in this area, the war in Tunis ended. The Track and Halftrack Vehicles were shipped to St. Cloud, Algeria, where the Company was to bivouac. A quartering party was sent to St. Cloud ahead of the main body. On the way to St. Cloud, the Company enjoyed a two day pass in Algeria, after which they were loaded on their wheeled vehicles and continued the trip to St. Cloud, Algeria.

On 21 June 1943 Cannon Company was in bivouac in the vicinity of Staoueli, Algeria. Usual camp duties were performed, some training with a lot of time spent on maintenance of vehicles and guns. From this area the Company prepared equipment for loading aboard transports and on 25 June 1943, all equipment was loaded aboard LST No. 346. LST No. 346 sailed for Tunis, Tunisia on 26 June 1943. On 29 June LST No. 346 anchored in the Bay of Tunis and on 30 June, Company disembarked, moving into bivouac area near Tunis.

Company remained in this area until 7 July 1943. On 7 July, Company boarded LST No. 346 in the Bay of Tunis, preparing to sail - Destination Unknown. At 0245, 10 July 1943 LST No. 346 arrived off the Coast of Sicily, near Gela. 11 July 1943, the Company landed at 0800 hours in vicinity of Gela, and was committed to action at 0900, stopping an attack by enemy Tanks, just in time to save the beachhead. For action on 11 July 1943, the Company the Presidential Unit Citation. The Citation reads as follows:

War Department
Washington, 25 DC
29 July 1944.

General Order No. 60

E X T R A C T

VII - Battle Honors.

Cannon Company, 16th Infantry, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action. On 11 July 1943, in the vicinity of Gela, Sicily, Cannon Company, 16th Infantry, was committed to break the powerful thrust of 30 or more enemy tanks advancing rapidly toward our newly established beachhead. With the entire invasion effort thus imperiled, this Company, lacking sufficient time for effective reconnaissance, fearlessly advanced against the attacking forces until the enemy was sighted, and deployed on a broad plain at a range of 1,500 to 2,000 about 5 miles east of Gela on the Gela-Niscemi Road. With heroic courage and perfect discipline, the Company engaged the numerically superior enemy spearhead during a 45 minute period, and destroyed many enemy tanks. Again on the following days, 12 and 13 July 1943, this Company repeated its magnificent feat, destroying 16 enemy tanks and severely damaging others. Despite losses of equipment and the battle weariness of Personnel from 3 days of incessant fighting, this Company continued its superb effort and achieved further successes. Functioning as a well trained team, under heavy enemy artillery and tank fire, it distinguished itself by conspicuous bravery and afforded a great tactical advantage to advancing Infantry Troops. The individual calmness, endurance, superior efficiency, and devotion to duty exhibited by the men of this Company were major contributions to the successful invasion of Sicily and exemplified the highest traditions of the Service.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

/s/ G.C. Marshall
Chief of Staff

On 12 July 1943, the Company repelled fierce enemy counter-attacks, destroying several tanks and other vehicles. Many times the Company was called on to fire direct fire; two guns were destroyed by enemy fire. At 2150 hours, the enemy counter-Battery fire destroyed another gun and six 1/4 ton vehicles. CT 16 started to move forward after securing the Beachhead near Gela, on 13 July 1943. Cannon Company supported the advance of the 1st Bn on the 13th, 14th and 15th of July 1943, moving forward to Caltagirone. Upon reaching Caltagirone the Company was attached to the 2nd Bn of CT 16, moving on 16 July 1943 in support of the 2nd Bn, to Mazzarino. The Company

continued to move in support of the Second Battalion on the 17th, 18th and 19th and 20th of July 1943. The Company bivouaced two miles North-west of Enna on 20th of July, reverted to Regimental control and remained in Bivouac until 2130, 22 July 1943.

At 2130, 22 July 1943, Company moved in convoy to a Bivouac area three miles from Leonforte. As enemy threat to the town of Enna developed during the night and Cannon Company moved to a position two miles north-west of Enna, taking up defensive positions. Company remained in defensive positions until 1530, 24 July 1943, at which time the Company moved to Regimental assembly area, 15 miles South of Enna.

A tactical motor march of 33 miles was made in the early morning of 25 July 1943. CT 16 went into Division Reserve assembling near Gangi, Sicily. On 26 July 1943, CT 16 moved forward and movement continued through to the 30th of July 1943, ending 4 miles East of Nicosia. Again the Regiment went into Division Reserve but it did not last long. They moved on 2 August to a position near Cerami. Company went into firing position 2 miles South-east of Cerami, prepared to support the Regiment in its attack on Troina. Troina was taken on 7 August and the Cannon Company moved up to a bivouac area 1 mile East of Troina at 1530, 7 August 1943.

Company remained in bivouac, 1 mile east of Troina until 14 August 1943. Time was spent training replacements, resting and performing maintenance of vehicles and guns. On 14 August the Company moved to a bivouac area three miles South-west of Randazzo, in the foothills of Mt. Etna. On 20 August 1943, the Company moved by convoy 156 miles to the vicinity of Licata.

The Company remained in bivouac in vicinity of Licata, Sicily until 21 October 1943. Training schedules were worked out and all replacements had an opportunity to fire the 105 mm and 75mm Howitzers. The entire Company had a one day pass in Palermo on the 28th of September 1943. The Company stood a Command Inspection by the Commanding General, II Corps on the 16th of September 1943. Training and the usual camp duties were carried out while in this area.

On 21 October 1943, the Company moved by Convoy to Augusta, Sicily and boarded the British Transport, Maloja - Destination Unknown. The trip aboard the Maloja ended at Mersey Docks in Liverpool, England, 6 November 1943. From there the Company moved to Beaminster, Dorset, England by rail and motor transportation.

The Company was quartered in Beaminster and started a light training schedule. On 19 November 1943, the Company was issued 6 105 mm Howitzers, M-3. By 29 November 1943, the Company was ready for a firing test on the new Howitzers. With the 7th FA Bn, the Company moved to Senny Bridge, Brecknockshire, England to an Artillery Range. The week at Senny Bridge was spent firing and training. Company returned to Beaminster on 6 December 1943. Company continued a stiff training schedule until 17 May 1944, preparing for the invasion of France. From the 8th of February to the 26th of February 1944, the Company trained at the Assault Training Center in Braunton Camp, Devon, England. The Company participated in several Assault Landing Problems. Each man was taught what equipment to wear and how to wear it, loading and securing vehicles on landing boats, including waterproofing. On 26 February 1944, Cannon Company returned to Beaminster. On 8 March, Cannon Company loaded on the USS Barnett for further Amphibious Training. A mock landing was made at Slapton Sands, near Strete, Devon, England. A similar problem was staged on 4 May 1944. Everyone appeared to

be ready for the invasion of France, soon to come.

On 17 May 1944, Cannon Company moved from Beaminster, England to transit area, Camp D-1, vicinity of Puddletown, Dorset, England. This was the final staging area before D-Day. On 1 June 1944, the Company boarded the USS Samuel Chase. The USS Samuel Chase sailed from the Weymouth Harbor at 1730 hours, 5 June 1944. After sailing the Company was told that tomorrow, 6 June 1944, was the day set for the Invasion of France.

6 JUNE 1944 - D-DAY - 1ST DIV LANDED IN FRANCE.

Landing on the beaches of France was quite costly in material for the Cannon Company. The guns were loaded into DUWKS for the run to shore, and due to heavy enemy fire and rough seas, only one gun hit pay dirt. Five were lost in the Channel. When the DUWKS were sunk, some were sunk by enemy fire, others by heavy seas. An accurate count of just how many fell victim to enemy fire is hard to obtain, because there was a lot of confusion and specific details are not available. On 7 June 1944, the Company was reorganized and acted as Infantry until 19 June 1944, their mission being that of flank guard in most cases. On 20 June 1944, three guns were issued to the Company, bringing to them a total of four guns. The Company took up their mission of supporting fires 2 days later. On 22 June 1944 two more guns were issued to the Company and once again, as in North Africa and in Sicily, the Cannon was ready to display its wares. An observation Post was established with "E" Company in the 2nd Bn on 20 June 1944 and the following day another was established with "G" Company. From 20 June 1944 to 12 July 1944 the Company recorded eighty-five Concentrations, expending 5453 rounds of 105 mm, M-3 ammunition. The Company fired on all targets of opportunity. The observer's feel that the only way to win a war is to kill off all of the opposition. During all this firing, the Company was in position near Cormalain, France. On 13 July 1944, CT 16 was relieved by CT 2, 5th Inf Div. The Company moved back to the vicinity of St. Jean De Day, assembling for the big drive that was soon to come. During the period 13 July 1944 to 27 July 1944, the personnel cleaned their clothes and equipment, trained some, took showers and saw a movie or two. Enemy Recon planes were very active, some air attacks developed but none of importance.

Early morning of 28 July 1944 found everyone alerted, ready for movement any time. Allied bombers and fighter bombers started the much planned softening up exercises which lasted until mid-day. In the early afternoon, everything started moving forward. A thin crust of enemy resistance slowed slowed our progress in the vicinity of Marigny; this resistance was soon overcome and CT 16 rolled to La Chappelle.

On the morning of 29 July 1944, stiff enemy resistance was met at La Chappelle and the Company went into firing position immediately. About noon, enemy fire fell in the Company position, killing one man and wounding three others. Our gun position was on the slope of a hill but the enemy was shooting at us from all directions; more time for Reconnaissance would have resulted in a better position, but time was not available, opposition was met too quickly, and the enemy forces were trying to recover from our breakthrough. A hasty position was necessary with no time for Reconnaissance.

31 July 1944 found the Company in position in the vicinity of Coutanee, and the Company remained in this position until

0230, 31 July 1944. A Clear break through enemy lines had been accomplished with no enemy action in this vicinity, no firing from this position. When the Company bivouaced at 0600, 1 August 1944, it was only for a rest and for servicing of vehicles. At 1800, 1 August 1944, we were on the road again. Enemy aircraft being quite active. At 0030, 2 August 1944, those planes found our column, and came in with navigation lights on, bombing and strafing. One thing was in our favor; the targets were plentiful, and very little damage was done to our Company. One man was wounded; no vehicular casualties were suffered.

From 2 August 1944 to 6 August 1944, the Cannon Company jumped from one position to the next, finding nothing to fire at. As CT 16 passed near Mortain, enemy action seemed to be increasing, but nothing developed until CT 16 reached Mayenne, France. There, they threw just about every thing available in to oppose our advance.

Cannon Company crossed the Mayenne River, moved to the outskirts of Mayenne, and went into position in the bend of the river. Three 105 mm, M-4 Tanks from the 745 Tank Bn was attached to the Company 6 August 1944, to add additional firepower.

The Company remained in this position, firing on targets of opportunity until 12 August 1944. Enemy was very active in this sector. Our only exit was covered by enemy artillery and some shells dropped in the Company Area. One hit a tree near the Company CP wounding one Switchboard Operator. The firing of attached 105 mm Tanks has proven satisfactory. The firepower of Cannon now total ten 105 mm Howitzers.

13 August 1944, Company was again on the road. It was not generally known at the time, but CT 16 was to play a part in the closing of the Flaise Gap. Large quantities of enemy material was trapped and destroyed in this pocket.

In the late afternoon of 14 August 1944, the Company moved up a long hill into La Ferte-Mace, passed on through the town, moved about a mile and ran into enemy opposition. Company went into position and began firing immediately, using Charge one -. By dark, CT 16 had pushed the enemy out far enough for the Company to use Charge Three. Everyone began to feel a little more secure.

On the 15th, 16th and 17th of August 1944, the Company continued to support CT 16, as it moved up to join forces with the British. 18 August 1944, the British passed in front of our positions - our job had been completed. 19 August 1944, to 24 August 1944, the Company remained in this area, resting and doing maintenance work on guns and vehicles. The big question - What Next?

25 August 1944, the Company moved out at 0630, traveled 155 miles to the vicinity of Lardy, just south of Paris. We all hoped for a trip into Paris, but were doomed to disappointment. Company positions here was only an assembly area.

26 August 1944 through to 3 September 1944 found CT 16 chasing the enemy Northward - never stopping to put up much of a fight. About 1400, 3 September 1944, in vicinity of Maubieuga, France, in the old Maginot Line, CT 16 hit the enemy in great strength. Cannon Company, with attached tanks took around 400 prisoners, turned them over to PWE and headed for Mons, Belgium. The Company arrived in Mons about 2200 hours, Met Col. Horner in the middle of a treet on the Northern outskirts of town. He ordered the Company into hasty positions, but no firing was done from this position. Company remained in this position until 6 September 1944. CT 16 gathered up prisoners all this time, assisting in bringing total Prisoners for the Division to over Seventeen Thousand in the Mons Area.

On 7 September 1944, the Company moved to assembly area near Huy, Belgium and remained in this area until 8 September, moving to assembly area in Huy on 9 September.

On 10 September 1944, the Company moved out of Huy at 0700 hours, headed east to Herve. Some opposition was met in this vicinity and the Company fired on enemy vehicles and troop concentrations. Movement on 11 September 1944 was limited to a few miles. Enemy resistance is becoming stiffer as CT 16 approaches the German border just southwest of Aachen.

12 September 1944 is a big day - Cannon Company fired its first round into Germany. Company moved twice on this date, everyone was anxious to have Cannon Company shells exploding on German Soil. 13 September 1944, Company in position, 1500 yards from the border. Batteries for today's game - Cannon Company Pitching - Jerry Catching.

Company moved up to positions near Weide, Belgium. Here we got our first look at the famous Dragon's Teeth. We have seen them in the News Reels many times, but now they were real. On 15 September 1944 at 0900 hours, the Company moved through the Dragon's Teeth and onto German Soil. The first position to be occupied by the Cannon Company on German Soil was near Hidtfeld, a small town just southwest of Aachen, the first of Germany's larger cities, to fall to American troops. In this position, the Company received counter-Battery Artillery from enemy guns, located near Aachen. The Company suffered no casualties.

On 16 September 1944, Company moved into positions in the eastern part of Brand, Enemy gun positions and infantry were taken under fire immediately upon occupation of this position. It was from this position that the Company supported CT 16 in its drive on Stolberg, Germany, a small town about the center of the Sigfried line. The enemy launched several Counter-attacks, trying to stop CT 16 in this drive. All such attempts were broken up by supporting artillery fire.

Company remained in position in Brand until 23 September 1944. Several times while in this position, enemy artillery fell in the Company Area, wounding one man but causing no damage to vehicles or guns. On 23 September 1944, enemy artillery scored a direct hit on one gun, killing one man and wounding two. The gun position was effectively covered by fire, making it necessary for the Company to move to a new location. The position selected was approximately two miles east of Brand where the Company stayed until 9 November 1944. During this period, the Company fired on various targets including enemy artillery positions, mortars, Infantry and vehicles. Supported CT 16 on many occasions when enemy troops counter-attacked. Many times the Company ammunition allowance was so short, it would have been impossible to furnish effective support if enemy troops had launched a large scale counter-attack, lasting over a period of several hours. 75 mm tanks were used as artillery, but they did not have the effect that artillery had, however, we had to put up a front. Company FDC computed data for tanks, daily attached to the Company for indirect fire. At night, the tanks would return to the line Companies for close support.

At 0600 hours, 9 November 1944, the Company was relieved by the Cannon Company from an Infantry Regiment of the 104th Infantry Division. While the Company was eating breakfast, and during relief of the Company, one enemy direct fire weapon was

firing into the gun position. Most of his fire was over, some landed in the gun position. No damage was done, but it was very harrassing. Upon relief, the Company moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Hammich, Germany, The guns were placed in position but did not fire until the entire line moved forward on 16 November 1944. Company fired preparation fires from H-10 to H-hour, then fored om tje rolling barrage when the Infantry started to move forward.

Captain T. F. O'Brien was killed by enemy Artillery fire on the 16th of November 1944. His death was almost instant, and he did not suffer very long, perhaps ten minutes. Capt. O'Brien was one of the best Artillerymen that has ever been with the 16th Infantry - either assigned or attached. He loved Artillery, was very efficient and capable. It doesn't seem right that he should be killed by the same type of weapon he loved so well. He left his mark on the members of Cannon Company. As long as there is one of them left, one will always here, "This is the way we did it when Capt. O'Brien was here."

1st Lt. Jack E. Golden took Command of the Company when Capt. O'Brien was killed. 1st Lt. Earl E. Mc Cain, 745th Tank Bn, attached to Cannon Company, assumed the duties of Executive Officer until 1st Lt. David C Ballard Jr could be recalled from the OP. Lt. Ballard took over duties of Executive Officer 18 November 1944, and Lt. Mc Cain was transferred to the Company.

From 16 November 1944 through 4 December 1944, CT 16 pressed forward against determined enemy resistance, Cannon Company always in close support. The ammunition situation had improved and the Company fired on every target of opportunity. During this period 1st Lt. Charles T. Carpenter and his radio operator suffered from concussion when one of our fight-bombers dropped a bomb short. 1st Lt. John B McKay was wounded and evacuated. Pfc Lucky, radio operatof for 1st Lt William Martin, was killed by enemy mortar fire.

On 5 December 1944, the Company moved, with CT 16, to a defensive position near Monchau. Very little firing from this position. CT 16 was relieved 12 December 1944 and moved to a rest area in Dison, Belgium. However, this rest period was short lived. 17 December 1944, the Company was alerted for movement, and moved out of Dison about 1800 hours. The German forces had an all out breakthrough in the Ardennes. At 0300, 18 December 1944, the Company went into position near Sourbrot, Belgium. No contact was made with the enemy here and on 19 December 1944, the Company moved wouth to Walk, Belgium. There, strong enemy forces were met, and the Company went into its usual role of supporting fires.

Company remained in position near Walk, Belgium from 19 December 1944 until 13 January 1945. A Total of 12,351 rounds of ammunition was fired from this position. With the exception of scheduled night fires, all fires were observed. Many vehicles were knocked out and heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy. CT 16 never moves rearward.

On 13 January 1945, the Company moved to position near Champagne, Belgium. CT 16 was getting into position to start offensive action against the enemy. CT 16 started moving forward until it was pinched out of the line on 27 January 1945. Cannon Company was always in close support with observers with every Battalion in line. Lt. Martin and Lt. McKay were evacuated 19 January, suffering from concussion. Many self-propelled guns were met in our drive. They would fire on a single person, that is how both Martin and McKay were injured.

27 January 1945, CT 16 went into Division Reserve and remained as such until alerted for movement to a new zone of action on 5 February 1945. This inactive period was spent in Faymonville, Belgium. Company was fairly comfortable during this period, regardless of the snow and cold weather.

5 February 1945, Cannon Company moved to Hurtgen, Germany to relieve the Cannon Company of CT 21, 8th US Infantry Division. The move from Faymonville, Belgium was made without mishap, even though the weather conditions were very bad. Company remained in this position until late evening 8 February. All movements had to be made at night because of enemy observation. Observers reported enemy 420 Rockets falling in the vicinity of OP's. This was the first time we ran into these rockets.

8 February 1945 found CT 16 jockeying for position, preparing for offensive action - this time, the crossing of the Roer River. Company moved into position 2,500 yards west of the Roer, near a small town by the name of Strass. The Company supported CT 16 from this position until 26 February 1945. At 1200 hours, 26 February, Company moved across the Roer, occupied a position in the outskirts of Kruzau, Germany, resuming supporting fires for CT 16. While in this position, the Company suffered one Casualty, Sgt Toth was wounded. One man from attached Assault Guns was killed, two men seriously wounded when enemy counter-battery fire landed squarely in the gun position.

Company continued supporting CT 16, as they pushed toward the Rhine. On 1 March 1945, CT 26 relieved CT 16 in its zone of action. Company remained assembled in Vetweiss, Germany, cleaning and repairing equipment until 4 March 1945. On 4 March the Company moved into position east of Friesheim, Germany, just short of the Erft River - our last water barrier west of the Rhine. CT 16 was once more moving forward against the enemy.

5th and 6th of March saw the Company moving forward toward the Rhine. Most of the moves were short, sometimes making it necessary to move several times in a 24 hour period. In the afternoon, 6 March, Company occupied a position near Hemmerich. As the guns were going into position, they were brought under fire by enemy 20 mm anti-craft guns emplaced a short distance from the right flank of the Company position. Capt Golden and Lt Ballard organized a Combat Patrol from the gun crews, took one Assault Gun and went out to silence the enemy fire. The enemy guns were silenced, several of the enemy were killed and thirty prisoners taken. Later in the night, enemy mortar fire fell in the gun position, but no damage was done.

7th, 8th and 9th of March, the Company moved in support of CT 16. On 8th of March, the Company fired on targets east of the Rhine. T/Sgt Kroleski, observer with Task Force Davidson was the first observer to fire east of the Rhine. During this three day period, CT 16, with CT 18 on its right, captured the city of Bonn. Most forward position of the Company in this mission was in the western outskirts of Bonn. Three men were wounded by enemy anti-aircraft fire, near the town of Alfter. Enemy AA Units had depressed their guns to defend the city against ground troops.

CT 16 having completed its mission in Bonn, established defensive lines along the west bank of the Rhine; the Company moved back to Roisdorf on 10 March. From Roisdorf, it was possible to support any sector along CT 16 line. On 14 March CT 16 was relieved by a CT from the 8th Inf Div. Company assembled in Roisdorf, cleaning and painting vehicles and generally resting. Remained in this position until early

morning, 18 March 1945.

Company crossed the Rhine on a pontoon bridge in the Ramegan Area at 0550 hours, 18 March 1945. CT 16 had the mission of assisting in enlarging the Ramegan Bridgehead. On 30 March, this mission had been completed, the enemy forces had been completely overrun and CT 16 was wondering what lay in store for them. During this period, stiff resistance prevailed. Many rockets and a lot of artillery was encountered. Enemy Infantry troops would surrender with very little persuasion - hence the heavy artillery support. Counter-Battery fire was quite heavy all through this period, but the Company suffered no casualties in either men or material. Carefully selected positions by Capt Golden, probably accounts for such low casualty record. All positions were thoroughly reconnoitered before moving the Company forward.

The Third Armored has broken through the enemy lines again. This time, it look like the start of the finish. On 31 March, the First Infantry Division teamed with the Third Armored Division, driving one hundred ten (110) miles east to Buren, Germany. Company went into position in Buren to furnish supporting fires for CT 16. The only opposition in this area was easily convinced by Infantry Troops, so the Cannons remained silent until 7 April 1945. 6 April, CT 16 caught up with the Third Armored Division Armor in Brakel, Germany, forty miles east of our last position in Steinhausen. Went into position immediately and started firing on enemy troops.

Amelunxen is located in the foothills of the Harz Mountains. Progress from this point was slow with movements being restricted to short distances. Enemy resistance was spotty and many enemy troops were left in the forests along our only route of advance. Such was the case on Sunday morning, 15 April 1945 when two enemy soldiers ambushed Captain Jack E. Golden. Capt. Golden was on reconniassance, looking for a new gun position, when two enemy soldiers stepped from behind a house firing machine pistols - Capt. Golden died immediately. Of four people in the vehicle, Capt. Golden was the only one hit. The Cannon Company lost another fine leader.

Capt. Golden was a graduate of Texas A & M ; he and Capt O'Brien had been very close, all through Sicily and France. Both shared the same love for Field Artillery, and, in general, both were very much alike. The members of Cannon Company shall remember Capt. Golden for his complete understanding, and his devotion to all members of his command.

1st Lt. David C Ballard, Jr, assumed Command of the Company, and continued to support CT 16 through the Harz Mountains, until the end of this campaign on 20 April 1945. All enemy resistance ceased in the Harz Mountains Pocket on the 20th of April. The Company moved into Rubeland, Germany to assemble for the next move.

23 April 1945, the Company moved out of assembly area at 0845. This move ended in Bornstadt, 60 miles southeast of Rubeland. The Company remained in the assembly area in Bornstadt until 1345 hours, 27 April 1945. Some training and a lot of maintenance took place during these three days.

Having been switched from VII Corps to V Corps, CT 16 moved at 1345, 27 April 1945, for an assembly area, 140 miles southeast of Bornstadt. Company assembled in Asch, Czechoslovakia, starting at 2345 hours, 27 April 1945. Within two hours all of the Company was in the assembly area, waiting for our

first action - Under the Third US Army.

28 April 1945, Company moved into position southeast of Asch. Later in the day, Company moved to a position near Steingrun, Czechoslovakia. No enemy troops were encountered in this vicinity so CT 16 moved forward to Bad Brambach, Cannon Company occupied firing position in the vicinity of Barendorf, firing on enemy troops as requested by forward observers.

Company remained in position near Barendorf until 6 May 1945. CT 16 moved against the enemy forces at 0700 hours. Company moved three times on 6 May, and spent the night in Neudorf.

7 May 1945, the Company moved from Neudorf about 1000 hours. The attached Assault Guns were firing on enemy troops when the Company moved out of position. Company moved to Horka, Czechoslovakia, arriving in position about 1115 hours. Lt. Ballard went back to Neudorf to bring the Assault Guns to forward position. About 1120 hours Lt. McCain received a message by radio to cease all forward movement and establish local security. Everyone was sure the war was over, but the Company remained in firing position until ordered by CO, CT 16 to move the guns out of firing position and occupy the town of Wildstein, Czechoslovakia. These orders came from Commanding Officer, CT 16 about 1700 hours, 7 May 1945.

From D-Day, 6 June 1944, through 7 May 1945, Cannon Company fired 62,289 rounds of 105 mm ammunition. The attached Assault Guns fired 19,898 rounds and the Tanks and Tank Destroyers that fired through Company FDC, fired 6,956 rounds. A total of 89,143 rounds were fired through Company FDC.

The Company occupied the town of Wildstein from 7 May 1945 to 9 June 1945. As this history is being written, the Company is guarding a Prisoner of War Stockade in the City of Bamberg, Germany. All of the men that made the Company what it is, have been transferred to other units, awaiting shipment to the United States. The Company remains in Germany as Army of Occupation Troops.

David C. Ballard Jr

DAVID C I BALLARD JR
Captain, Infantry
Commanding