

HEADQUARTERS 16TH INFANTRY
Office of the Regimental Commander

A.P.O. #1, U. S. Army
April 21, 1943.

SUBJECT: Reports of Action against the enemy.

TO : Commanding General, 1st U. S. Infantry Division.

In compliance with instructions, the attached report together with the Journal of CT 16, is submitted;

OUSSELTIA CAMPAIGN

JANUARY 17, 1943: Regimental Headquarters & Headquarters Company and the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry left St. Louis, Algeria and bivouaced night in Affersville, Algeria. Remainder of Regiment was to follow later.

JANUARY 18, 1943: Convoy traveled by motor from Affersville to Bouria, Algeria.

JANUARY 19, 1943: Convoy traveled by motor from Bouria to St. Armand, Algeria.

JANUARY 20, 1943: Regimental Headquarters & Headquarters Company and the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry arrived at the new bivouac area in the vicinity of Guelma, Algeria, North Africa, under command of Colonel d'Alary Fechet. The remainder of the regiment under the command of Lt Colonel Thomas Wells, Executive Officer, left St. Louis, Algeria to join forward group within a few days.

JANUARY 21, 1943: Orders were received from the Commanding General II Corps to move Headquarters & Headquarters Company and the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry to concealed bivouac East of Maktar, Tunisia where we would be joined by one British Battalion, one Battalion of the 26th Infantry and one Battalion of Artillery and would then take over a sector of the front. Due to a delay in the arrival of trucks, Headquarters & Headquarters Company, left Guelma at 0210A, 22 February, leaving the 1st Battalion to await the arrival of trucks from Corps, and arrived at destination at 1430A, 22 February 1943, where they were joined by the 33rd Field Artillery Battalion and the 2nd Battalion of the 26th Infantry. The 1st Battalion 16th Infantry, 7th Field Artillery Battalion, Company A, 1st Engineers joined us at Maktar at 1330A 23 January 1943.

JANUARY 24, 1943: Tactical plans originally scheduled were changed and the 16th Infantry (less 2 Battalions and the Special Units of the Regiment) with the 2nd Battalion 26th Infantry, 33rd Field Artillery Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Battalion, Company A, 1st Medical Battalion, and 1st Platoon Company A, 1st Engineers attached, were attached "Combat Command "B" under command of General Robinette. Regimental CP, Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 1st Platoon Company A, 1st Engineers, and 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry moved from present bivouac area to area 4½ miles West of Ousseltia; 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry placed in reserve for the attack of the 2nd

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Battalion, 26th Infantry. The 2nd Battalion 26th Infantry, 7th Field Artillery Battalion, and 33rd Field Artillery Battalion were relieved from attached to CT 16 and reverted to the the direct control of Commanding General, Combat Command B.

JANUARY 25, 1943: At 0500 hours Regimental CP, Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 1st Platoon Company A, 1st Engineers Battalion, Company A, 1st Medical Battalion moved from present bivouac to vicinity of Siliana to await arrival of 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry from bivouac area at Guelma, arriving there at 0845. First elements of the 2nd Battalion arrived at approximately 0920 hours. Following them in column, Service Company, Cannon Company, Antitank Company and the Regimental Medical Detachment arrived at 1700 hours. Orders were received from Commanding General, II Corps that our 2nd Battalion would come under command of the 36th British Brigade. CT 16 less 2nd Battalion with 2nd Battalion 26th Infantry attached would occupy positions in the Pichon-Ousseltia area, and organize defensive position in area W of Ousseltia, now occupied by the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry with the mission of insuring the protection of the pass on the Ousseltia-Kairouan road and defense of the Pichon area. We were under temporary command of General Juin, French Forces, later reverted to command of Commanding General, 1st U. S. Infantry Division. At 1739 hours the 2nd Battalion moved out for Robba to report to the 36th British Brigade.

JANUARY 26th, 1943: CT less two battalions, moved from area near Siliana to the former bivouac area East of Maktar to meet the 3rd Battalion, 16th Infantry where the CT less one battalion went into concealed bivouac. Commanding Officer, CT 16 received orders to report to Commanding General, Combat Command B for instructions. CT 16, less one battalion, with one battalion 26th Infantry attached, had been placed under command of Commanding General, Combat Command B and again were given the previously assigned sector in the Ousseltia Valley. On the night of January 26th, the 3rd Battalion was moved to positions in the Ousseltia valley.

JANUARY 27, 1943: At 1015 hours the Headquarters Commandant and Special Units Commanders went on a reconnaissance for positions in the Ousseltia Valley. At 2130 hours the Special units moved out for position West of Ousseltia. The Cannon Company was detached to command of Commanding Officer, 7th Field Artillery Battalion, which had been detached from CT 16.

JANUARY 28, 1943: CP established at 86656 on arrival, after further reconnaissance, CP moved forward to 47-724660. Message received from Commanding General Combat Command B, that Combat Command B under orders with 26th Infantry (less one Battalion, attached to CT 16) to move to Sebeitla, remainder of force come under command of Commanding Officer, CT 16. At 1600 hours, the 7th Field Artillery Battalion reverted to command of Commanding Officer, CT 16, along with Company C, 601, Tank Destroyer Battalion, Cannon Company, which returned with 7th Field Artillery Battalion, sent on reconnaissance mission in vicinity of El Glib. Company B attacks near El Glib to secure flanks of high ground there. CP moved at 1745 hours to 7267 at Byzantine ruins. At 2100 hours, Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion, 26th Infantry visits CP and requests support of 3rd Battalion, 16th Infantry as his position expect heavy attack at dawn 29th. At 2230 hours CP moved to old 26th Infantry CP at 54-754476.

JANUARY 29, 1943: CT in defensive positions. No activity except light patrolling. In contact.

JANUARY 30, 1943: No change. CT reverts to control of Commanding General, 1st U. S. Infantry Division who took over Ousseltia-Pichon area at 1200-hours.

FEBRUARY 1, 1943: No change. CT still in defensive positions. In contact.

FEBRUARY 2, 1943: No change. Ct in defensive positions. In contact.

FEBRUARY 3, 1943: No change. 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry, still with 36th British Brigade, and in contact with enemy. Casualties fairly heavy.

FEBRUARY 4, 1943: No change. Light patrolling. In contact.

FEBRUARY 5, 1943: No change. In contact.

FEBRUARY 6, 1943: No change. In contact.

FEBRUARY 7, 1943: No change. Large amount of enemy ammunition in valley destroyed by our engineers. In contact.

FEBRUARY 8, 1943: Orders issued by Commanding Officer at orders of Commanding General, 1st U. S. Infantry Division to 2nd Battalion 16th Infantry to return to control of CT 16 on night of 9-10.

FEBRUARY 9, 1943: No change. Cannon Company fires small mission and there is light patrolling. 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry has not moved.

FEBRUARY 10, 1943: Orders to 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry from G-3, 1st U. S. Infantry Division, thru Commanding Officer CT 16, issued for Battalion to move to bivouac vicinity of 05047. Movement made to a bivouac area some distance to rear of our area.

FEBRUARY 11, 1943: No change. Light patrolling.

FEBRUARY 12, 1943: 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry relieves 2nd Battalion, 26th Infantry which is relieved from attached to Commanding Officer CT 16. Engineer Regiment engaged in patrol activity. Casualties very light.

FEBRUARY 13, 1943: No change. In contact.

FEBRUARY 14, 1943: Orders received for 1st Battalion to move to 7158 for defensive positions. Regiment in contact, patrolling light.

FEBRUARY 15, 1943: No change. Road vicinity Regimental CP bombed and strafed. No casualties.

FEBRUARY 16, 1943: Orders received relieving, Company A, 1st Engineer Battalion, from present position and mission of protecting 5th Field Artillery Battalion. Company A, 1st Engineer Battalion to lay Antitank and anti personnel mines. in gap between 1st and 3rd Battalions.

FEBRUARY 17, 1943: One platoon 75mm of cannon company attached to 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry. Remainder of company stays in present location.

FEBRUARY 18, 1943: No change. CP moved to 569469. Light patrolling. In contact. This date ended the Ousseltia Phase of operations.

KASSERINE CAMPAIGN

FEBRUARY 19, 1943: CT moves from Ousseltia Valley, having turned sector over to French Forces for defense. CT moved to new location at 6253, Sheet 13, to open Kasserine Phase, beginning movement at 1850 hours, 19 February 1943 and arriving in bivouac area at 0530 hours 20 February 1943.

FEBRUARY 20, 1943: CT in bivouac in Kasserine sector. Preparation made and orders issued for movement into lines.

FEBRUARY 21, 1943: 1st Platoon Company A, 1st Engineers Battalion relieved from attached to CT 16 and reverts to control of Commanding General, 1st U. S. Infantry Division. The 2nd Battalion is moved forward into the lines and the remainder of the CT is alerted for movement. However, no movement is made. At 2200 hours 1st and 3rd Battalion with attachments from Special Units are moved forward but are not committed.

FEBRUARY 22, 1943: Regimental CP moved forward to 6967, sheet 13. Orders received from Commanding General, Combat Command B that CT 16 will have mission of protecting 7th and 33rd Field Artillery Battalions. At 1045 hours K and M Companies 16th Infantry come in contact with enemy. 1st Battalion is sent on mission to protect flanks. Commanding Officer issues plan to make local attacks in coordination with Combat Command B. At 1443 orders issued for 2nd and 3rd Battalions to make their local attacks as planned at 1500 hours, preceded by small artillery barrage. Battalions jump off on time. Company C, 1st Ranger Battalion attached to CT at 1618 hours. Local attacks made by battalions were successful in that dominating ground was taken and some field artillery guns captured by enemy were retaken. The Commanding General, II Corps and the Commanding General, 1st U.S. Infantry Division, each sent the following message to the Commanding Officer CT 16; "Many thanks for the splendid work of your CT today.

FEBRUARY 23, 1943: Orders received from Commanding General, 1st U. S. Infantry Division that very active patrolling must keep up as it is believed that enemy is making a general withdrawal. Orders passed to Battalions which are out of contact following attacks of yesterday. 39th Infantry takes over sector occupied by 3rd Battalion, 16th Infantry. 3rd Battalion moves to new defensive position.

FEBRUARY 24, 1943: Extensive plans made to move forward thru pass. Plans made in detail and although no resistance is expected, every detail is planned to take care of it. CP moved to 8477 after meeting of all unit commanders.

FEBRUARY 25, 1943: At 0700 all battalions move forward as planned. At 0820 hours the 1st Battalion had reached the base of the hill which is its first objective without resistance. At 1000 hours the 1st Battalion had passed its first objective and reached its 2nd one. The 3rd Battalion moved forward without resistance and took objective on schedule. Kasserine pass was cleared of enemy, but found to be mined and booby trapped extremely. All units moved forward without resistance to Thelpte and Feriana. There, lines were stopped, and defensive positions organized.

FEBRUARY 26, 1943: Defensive positions organized and a period of reorganization. Not in contact with enemy. At 1155 hours new CP opened at 390742, 1/50,000. 1st Reconnaissance Troops attached to CT to reinforce motorized reconnaissance for a short period.

FEBRUARY 27, 1943: Orders received that CT 16 would come under control of Commanding General, 9th Infantry Division at midnight 27th February. The 9th Division is taking over the 1st U. S. Infantry Division sector. At 1942 hrs entire Company A, 1st Engineer Battalion attached to CT to clear mines and booby traps to front. No part of the regiment in contact.

FEBRUARY 28, 1943: Still in defensive position. Active patrolling continued, but regiment not in contact.

MARCH 1, 1943: Extensive patrolling continued. All available reconnaissance personnel and organizations out to gain contact. The S-2 was wounded by booby trap at Feriana.

MARCH 2, 1943: Regiment still in defensive position. Extensive mine fields laid and all positions well dug in. Still not in contact.

MARCH 3, 1943: Orders received that 49th Infantry of the 9th Division will relieve CT 16 in present positions. CT will pull back for rest and reorganization. Liaison of 47th Infantry arrives to reconnoiter area.

MARCH 4, 1943: CT pulls back to El Meridj for rest period and CT attachment ceases. This date ended the Kasserine Phase. Total casualties for period 18 KIA 7 POW 114 WIA & 41 MIA.

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MARCH 5, 1943: Regiment in rest camp. Period of rehabilitation and reorganization.

MARCH 6, 1943: Rest Camp.

MARCH 7, 1943: Rest Camp.

MARCH 8, 1943: Rest Camp.

MARCH 9, 1943: The Commanding General, 1st U. S. Infantry Division makes presentation of Purple Hearts to several officers and enlisted men of the command wounded and talks to all officers and 1st Sergeants.

MARCH 10, 1943: Rest Camp.

MARCH 11, 1943: Rest Camp.

GAFSA CAMPAIGN

MARCH 12, 1943: Secret orders received from Division for next operation (Gafsa Phase).

MARCH 13, 1943: CT attachments effective and CT moves to new bivouac area at 6962, Sheet 13, There, extensive plans were laid for the next move, which developed to be the occupation of Gafsa. Obviously, for security reasons, the mission of the CT was not announced.

MARCH 14, 1943: Regiment still in bivouac area with planning for next move continuing.

MARCH 15, 1943: Planning and reconnaissance of Gafsa movement continues. No

changes in locations.

MARCH 16, 1943: Meeting of all unit commanders at Division which Commanding Officer CT 16 attends for final instructions. Final plans laid.

MARCH 17, 1943: New CP established at 9793, Sheet 17. Battalions and attached units with Special Units attached as ordinarily attached move out of present bivouac and move to positions near Gafsa from which attack will be made on the city. Battalions moved forward at dawn, with visibility less 100 yards, to forward phase line where they must stop until 1000 hours. OP's reported enemy crowding roads South East from city, moving out. Bombing missions and artillery missions just prior to 1000 which was H hour, failed to stop the enemy. CP moved forward to 9989. Battalions moved forward at 1000 hours with no opposition. Area North of Gafsa heavily mined, wired and booby trapped. Engineers immediately move up with lines and remove mines. Battalions continued to move forward and entered town, with no opposition at 1300 hours. Three hours after the enter into town, the Chaplain fulfilled a promise to the men by holding mass in the church in Gafsa, on this St. Patricks Day. Immediately after the occupation, a defensive position was taken about 1/2 mile South East of the town to prepare for any counter attack.

MARCH 18, 1943: Information received that 1st Rangers had occupied town of El Guettar, to front, at 0930. Defensive positions improved. CP moved to Gafsa proper.

MARCH 19, 1943: All units vicinity Gafsa. Defensive positions. Not in contact.

MARCH 20, 1943: Battalions move to new defensive positions about 2 miles forward from Gafsa. Regimental CP moved to 073899. Not in contact.

MARCH 21, 1943: 3rd Battalion and Cannon Company placed in Division reserve but stayed in present position until further orders. 2nd and 3rd Battalions alerted and moved to new positions on Gafsa El Guettar road.

MARCH 22, 1943: No change. CT not in contact. End of Gafsa Phase. Total casualties for Gafsa Phase: 1 EM KIA, 3 EM WIA.

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EL GUETTAR CAMPAIGN

MARCH 23, 1943: CT alerted because of counter attack by enemy below El Guettar. 1st Battalions and Special Units moved to vicinity of El Guettar to join units of CT 16 there.

MARCH 24, 1943: CP moved to 3072. Battalions in contact with enemy South East of El Guettar. All units alerted for possible attack of 10th Panzer Division.

MARCH 25, 1943: Units in contact by patrol only.

MARCH 26, 1943: Not in contact with enemy. Patrols short distance to front report no enemy.

MARCH 27, 1943: 1st and 3rd Battalions moved forward until in contact with enemy. Some casualties suffered.

MARCH 28, 1943: Forward CP established by command group. Regiment in full contact and receiving quite a bit of artillery and mortar fire.

MARCH 29, 1943: No change. In contact by patrol.

MARCH 30, 1943: Several Italian prisoners taken. Several casualties suffered as regiment attempts to dislodge well emplaced enemy gun positions. Regimental Commander, "Col Fechet", and the S-2, "Captain Brosokas", wounded in action and evacuated. Lieutenant Colonel Wells, Executive Officer, takes command of the CT.

MARCH 31, 1943: Regiment attacks. 3rd Battalion is leading Battalion. All objectives taken on schedule. Some casualties suffered. Approximately 270 Italian prisoners taken by our troops and 9th Division Troops on our right, who attacked in coordination with us. 34th Division holding position on our left. CT now approximately 40 miles from British 8th Army, attacking toward them.

APRIL 1, 1943: Regiment in contact, securing present positions. Six German prisoners taken. Regimental CP bombed. 1 EM killed.

APRIL 2, 1943: Regiment attacks and takes all objectives. Terrain very difficult as country is mountainous.

APRIL 3, 1943: Due to relief of flanking elements, gap is left in flank and enemy infiltration our positions. However, patrols quickly drive them out with some enemy casualties.

APRIL 4, 1943: Advance very slow, enemy well dug in. Some positions in concrete. Casualties fairly heavy. No large change in lines.

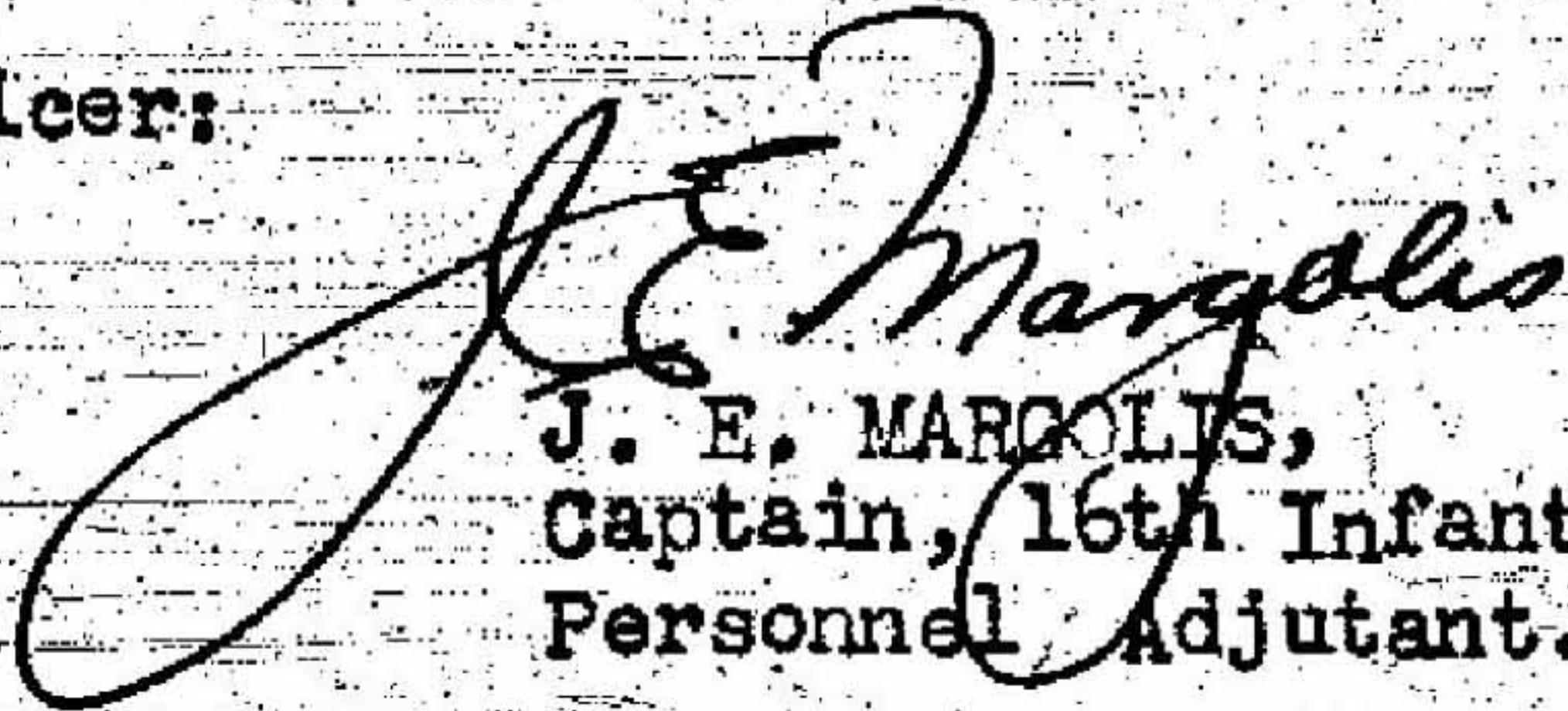
MARCH 5, 1943: Regiment received quite a bit of artillery fire, apparently a barrage by enemy to cover their withdrawal. Heavy casualties suffered, and some parts of line forced to withdraw to better protected positions. Regimental CP shelled with light casualties. No great change in lines.

APRIL 6, 1943: Much air activity to our front by air elements of the 8th Army. It is believed this and our extensive artillery fire will cause enemy to withdraw.

APRIL 7, 1943: Because contact is so light the regiment moves forward at dawn, easily overcoming all opposition. Area extensively mined and booby trapped, slowing up advance. Contact made with units on both flanks.

APRIL 8, 1943: Contact lost as elements of British 8th Army moves forward. Regiment pulled back to El Guettar where CT attachments cease. Total casualties for the El Guettar Phase: 40 KIA, 96 MIA, 331 WIA, our largest amount for any phase. End of El Guettar Phase.

For the Commanding Officer:


J. E. MARGOLIS,
Captain, 16th Infantry,
Personnel Adjutant.