

27 June 1945

SUBJECT: History of Company

TO : CO, 1st Battalion, 275th Infantry

There are only a few of the original members of Company "D" left anymore. Those few wonder around always remarking about the "old boys" or the "old gang". They all admit that "D" Company is still a great outfit and the new boys all plenty good, but still they remember their old buddies as superior soldiers - for sentimental reasons more than actual fact. The new men are really veterans now and have been through a great deal with the company. They are all working together now in occupation at the present time in Usingen, Germany and occasionally some one brings up the old outfit, when it was founded, where it started and what kind of training the men received. The few old men left can tell you at once giving dates, facts, and figures such as:

Company "D" was founded on 16 May 1943 at Camp Adair, Oregon. The Cadre was drawn from the 91st Division then at Camp White, Oregon. The company only had 12 men in it's original cadre. For several weeks after the forming of the organization these cadremen were the only enlisted men in the company and they grudgingly pulled Kitchen Police, cut grass with their bayonets and did a lot of policing up.

Then the recruits started coming in and the cadre took over their proper job of training men to be soldiers. At first this consisted mainly of close order drill and extended marches. The Division was activated on 15 June 1943. From this time on new men kept pouring in to Camp Adair and by the first of September "D" Company was T/O strength and a regular training cycle began. By the middle of December 1943 the company had a full strength, fully trained outfit ready for any assignment.

The latter part of this first training cycle had been greatly aided by a large number of cadremen direct from infantry outfits from Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. They were a rugged group of men and they knew what the infantry soldier needed. They came from such well know organizations as the 37th, 53rd, 4th and 138th Infantry Divisions.

From the middle of December 1943 until the middle of February 1944, Company "D" spent perfecting their men in the duties of combat men and hardening them for combat. About the middle of February 1945 Company "D" along with the entire Division helped supply men to put the 91st Division up to strength prior to their shipment overseas. This took almost every private and private first class from the company and so it began again the job of building up and training a new group of men.

The men who came into the company from February on were from Aviation Cadet training schools, A.S.T.P., Artillery and most every other branch of the service. There also was a group of newly inducted men who had received their basic training in the 70th Div.

ision P.R.T.C. It might be told that at this time the infantry gained the full recognition it deserved as a fighting unit and an essential unit in successful combat. From this time on the infantry has been supplied with enough men to keep them up to or at least near T/O strength.

About the 1st of June 1944 Company "D" reached T/O strength and a streamlined training program was put into effect. All the men had been through close order drill and range firing, etc. Now the training consisted of running combat problems in the field. This was to teach the men how they would work as a combat team and how they would function with other units.

On 15 June 1944 the 70th Division celebrated its first anniversary with open house and a parade of the entire Division in the morning and a variety show and carnival in the afternoon. In the evening there was a dance in the field house and General Dahlquist led the grand march. In the afternoon Company "D" had on display their Mortars and Heavy Machine Guns with crews on hand to explain to civilians how they were operated. "D" Company also furnished Jeeps to ride the civilians around the camp.

From June until the latter part of July 1944 combat training continued - combat problems were run and each man was trained on the M1 rifle, carbine and pistol as well as the machine gun and mortar. Everyone was given ample opportunity to fire live ammunition and thus every man in the company qualified with his weapon. On 23 July 1944 Company "D" moved with the Division from Camp Adair to Ft Leonard Wood, Missouri.

In Ft Leonard Wood training continued and new men came into the company regularly as trained men were shipped out to POE's as replacements for organizations in combat. "D" company had quite a large turn over in men from July until the first of November 1944 at which time the Division received definite orders to go overseas. From the 1st of November to the 17th of November preparations were made for our overseas shipment. Equipment was packed and all men were given a complete issue of equipment.

Company "D" left Ft Leonard Wood 17 November 1944 and arrived at the P.O.E., Camp Myles Standish, Mass. on 20 November 1944. First checks were made on equipment and each man was given any shots he needed. There were lectures on life aboard ship and on the new gas mask and repellents issued at P.O.E.

The Company boarded the USS West Point, formerly the SS America on 6 December 1944 and the ship moved out of the Boston Harbor at 1630 the same day. The ship carried no escort but the crossing was a pleasant and uneventful one. The ship pulled into Marseille, France on 15 December 1944 at 1100. We lived in pup tents at CP # 2 for seven days. During that time almost every man got into the famous city of Marseille to see the sights and celebrate breaking the confinement of life aboard ship.

On 22 December 1944 "D" Company with the 275th Regiment started the long ride toward the front. Most of the men rode 40 & 8's and the rest went in convoy by Jeep and Truck. Weyersheim was reached on 27 December and there Company "D" experienced their first activity against the enemy in the form of patrols in Jeeps along the highways. The same sort of patrols were run out of Hordt on 28 December and on the 29th of December "D" company went into holding positions near Arnheim on the Rhine.


On 31 December 1945 "D" Company with the 1st Battalion started their move which took them to Reichofen, Neiderbronn and on the morning of the 2nd of January 1945 into Philippsbourg, France. We did not hold the high ground surrounding the town and during the night of the 2nd the enemy infiltrated through our lines and on the morning of the 3rd of January 1945 they attacked our small group of approximately 100 men which included the Battalion CP personal and Company "D" headquarters men and several half-tracks of the 14th armored Division. Fierce fighting raged for 3 days - our men would drive the enemy to the edge of the town by nightfall and then during the night the enemy would move in reinforcements and attack again the next morning. It wasn't until the afternoon of 6 January 1945 that the enemy were finally driven from the town. During that engagement, "D" Company's first contact with the enemy, our losses were very severe and it was quite a blow to the men to come face to face with such reality for the first time. However, all the men held up wonderfully and never let up in the performance of their duties.

Company "D" moved out of Philippsbourg on 7 January 1945 and went into holding positions in the Vosges Mountains. Then followed a series of holding positions at Zinsweiler, Barental and Nouseweiler. The last positions were used as a jumping off place for the attack and capture of Lexingen, Alstingen and after bitter fighting and quite a few losses the taking of the high ground overlooking Saarbrucken, Germany. This was our first fighting on German soil. The latter was accomplished on 22 February 1945 and from then until 20 March the positions were held against many counter-attacks and a great deal of trouble from patrols.

On 20 March 1945 Saarbrucken collapsed and thus began "D" Company's work as occupation - there were a series of small towns occupied including Bann, Ober Hilbersheim and many others until finally Frankfurt a/m and the suburb of Fechenheim guarding factories enforcing road blocks on checking points and guarding D.P's

On 25 May 1945 "D" Company moved to the present position in Usingen, Germany approximately 25 miles north west of Frankfurt a/m. The main duties are continuing with the guard of vital points and undergoing a certain degree of training. Of course all high point men of 85 points or over are going home now and we all sorry to see them go but glad to see them get such a break. Also letters and notices are coming in informing us that a great many of the men we thought lost in combat are safe and sound and many are back in the United States or are awaiting shipment there.

No one knows where we will go from here or what our job will be but it is agreed that the history of "D" Company will all ways be remembered by all it's men and any job that is given to the company will be well done.


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