

1-16 Squadron History

The 16th Cavalry was organized in July 1916 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The Regiment was charged with providing personnel for units serving overseas in France during World War I. After a post-war drawdown the Regiment was inactivated in 1921.

Twenty-one years later, in June 1942, the 16th Cavalry was reactivated at Camp Forrest, Tennessee, as a mechanized unit. To increase flexibility in the assignment of mechanized units, the Regiment was broken up into Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 16th Cavalry Group, and the 16th and 19th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons. All three units were assigned to defend the coastal areas of Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. In November 1944, these units sailed overseas aboard the queen Elizabeth. After training in the United Kingdom, they landed in France in February 1945, marched across the French countryside, and crossed the border into Germany at the village of Pearl.

As part of the 316th Provisional Cavalry Brigade, the 16th and 19th Cavalry joined the Third Army's drive to end enemy resistance in the Palatinate. Entering combat near Waldrach in March, the units engaged in reconnaissance missions for the XII and XX Corps across the Rhine near Wiesbaden and up the autobahn to Kassel. After the fighting ceased, the Group and the two Squadrons performed occupation duty in the Cologne area. Several months later, the Squadrons returned to the United States where they were inactivated.

In May 1946, new troops were added to the Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 16th Cavalry Group, which became the 16th Constabulary Squadron. The Squadron was then inactivated in West Germany in 1950. In 1951, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 16th Constabulary Squadron, became Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Armored Cavalry Group, and was inactivated at Camp Cooke, California. It was redesignated as the 16th Armored Group. The 16th Cavalry was designated as a parent regiment under the combat arms regimental system, and its former troops were withdrawn from the 16th Armored Group to become elements of the regiment.

In 1963, the 16th Cavalry was redesignated as the 16th Armor. D Company, 16th Armor was the only active duty unit of the 16th Armor. The company served as one of the subordinate units of the 173rd Separate Airborne Brigade during hostilities in Vietnam from 1963-69. D/16th Armor provided the anti-tank protection for the 173rd BDE. This was the only airborne tank unit at the time as well as the only separate tank company in the history of the army. The company was equipped with "Scorpions" which were air droppable armored personnel carriers that were equipped with high velocity 90mm guns. From 1963 through 1969 D/16th armor served in every campaign which the 173rd Airborne BDE fought in. During its service in Vietnam D/16th Armor is credited with 16 campaign streamers as well as earning the Meritorious Commendation Medal for its valorous service. In 1969, 16th Armor reverted to the designation of 16th Cavalry and was inactivated.

Reactivated in Vietnam on 20 March 1970, using the assets of D Troop (Air), 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry (1st Infantry Division), the 16th Cavalry operated as a separate air cavalry troop of the 1st Aviation Brigade. Departing Vietnam on 26 February 1973, the unit was again inactivated.

On 25 March, 1987, the 16th Cavalry was withdrawn from the Combat Arms Regimental System, reorganized under the U.S. Army Regimental System, and transferred to the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command as a parent regiment for training units at Fort Knox where the 6th squadron was posted.

In April 1993, the Regiment was reactivated as the training and training support unit for all leader training conducted at the U.S. Army Armor School, Fort Knox. Currently its three squadrons continue to train the leaders of the mounted force to fight and win on the modern battlefield.