

# Carlos O Haaland

## U.S. Army PFC Combat Infantryman



**Haaland, Carlos O.**  
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Carlos O. Haaland was born February 24, 1924 in Chicago, Illinois. He was the son of Carl and Christina Haaland who came to America from Norway. Carlos was drafted into the Army on 31 August 1943 at 19.

Carlos attended basic training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi with the 42nd Rainbow Division, 222nd Infantry, HQ Company. He was one of the original WWII "Rainbow men." After training, he was assigned as a replacement to the 85th Division, 338th Infantry, 2nd battalion, HQ Company. He was a member of the Custer Division and was deployed to Italy and the Gustav Line. The 338th fought it's way "up the boot" of Italy. His unit had a high casualty rate, and some of their men were captured and sent to the worst German POW camps, including stalag IIB. The 2nd battalion was among the first units to enter Rome. He and his regiment fought admirably in Rome-Arno, the North Apennines (Gothic Line), Mount Altuzzo, and Po Valley campaigns. They fought in often unbearable conditions. They battled in 260 days of combat. For their efforts, the 338th Infantry regiment was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation (one of only 5) in this division for their performance at Mount Altuzzo. It was here the 338th broke the back of German resistance, despite incurring heavy losses. They created an important breach of the Gothic Line giving the Fifth Army passage into the North Apennines.

The 338th endured the long and brutal "Lost Winter" of 1944-45 in the Northern Apennines. American Fifth Army Commander, Mark Clark, considered the Custermen the elite assault troops in the Italian campaign. During the war, Carlos was a rifleman, ammo bearer, truck driver and assigned to tank weapons. He also served in the 752, 760 Tank Battalion, 757 Tank Destroyer BN & the 522 Engineers. He received the

following awards:

- ◆ The Bronze Star
- ◆ Army Sharpshooter (rifle) M-1
- ◆ Presidential Unit Citation (Mr. Altuzzo)
- ◆ Army Expert (tank weapons)
- ◆ CIB Combat Infantryman's Badge
- ◆ WWII Victory Medal
- ◆ Good Conduct Medal
- ◆ Three Bronze Service Stars
- ◆ Three Overseas Service Bars
- ◆ European, African, Middle Eastern Campaign Medal

After two and one-half years of combat military service, PFC Haaland returned home from Naples, Italy on the USS Monterrey in December 1945. He was discharged on 04 January, 1946 at the Separation Center, Camp Grant, Illinois. Carlos returned home to marry Thelma (Patricia) Duncan; they had twin daughters. Carlos began his career as a life long Chicago ironworker, joining his father and younger brother.

Though many years had passed, Carlos' daughters remember his ability to sing every marching and military song he had learned in the infantry. Although, he did not talk about details of the war, Carlos had kept a photo album of his military service. When asked about the war, his only reply was, "War is Hell." Carlos marched to a higher calling on October 18, 1986. He rests at Mt. Olive in Chicago.

Submitted by Penny Haaland Jasper, daughter