

H E A D Q U A R T E R S  
499TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
APO 446, U. S. Army

15 February 1945

SUBJECT: UNIT HISTORY.

TO : Commanding General, 14th Armd Div, APO 446, U. S. Army.

In compliance with Memorandum, Hq, 14th Armd Div, dtd 4 Jan 45,  
the attached history is submitted:

For the Commanding Officer:

*Clifford E. Huckleberry*  
CLIFFORD E. HUCKLEBERRY  
1st Lt, FA  
Adjutant

- 4-Incls.  
1-Unit History  
1-Unit Journal  
1-Compiled S-3 Report  
1-Bundle of FO's & Overlays

614-61.2



### UNIT HISTORY

The year of 1945 opened with the CP of the battalion located in Langensoultzbach. The battalion was still working with the 45th Inf Div Arty and reinforcing the fires of the 158th FA Bn.

New Years Eve was supposed to be quiet, at least the order that came down said, "No Celebrations". We were using a tavern for Fire Direction Center, and early in the evening a movie (the only one we have seen since leaving Marseille) was enjoyed by everyone. As the evening wore along someone started to play the piano and everyone joined in on all the old songs that were guaranteed to make one homesick, ending up with Auld Lang Syne. About midnight we had a request for a TOT, after that we waited a bit, checked the communication system, and finally began to relax a little. About 0245 it happened, the request came in to fire Normal barrages, then emergency barrages, then back to normal barrages, later put a platoon on each and kept them firing harrassing missions for the rest of the night. By 1030 we had fired about one thousand rounds and were well aware of the fact that there were lots of Krauts nearby who were in a definitely offensive mood.

Before the first day of the New Year had passed the battalion CP had moved to a large villa (Villa Mellon), situated in the hills above the town of Niederbronn les Bains. The situation was to use a time worn phrase that is a masterpiece of understatement, at this time "Vauge". This CP under different circumstances would have been greatly enjoyed; but, as it was the radio communications were bad, our observers were in valleys surrounded by high wooded hills, relay stations were necessary although they would not work, and in addition we were having trouble with wire. After a couple of days of this we decided to move the CP into the town of Niederbronn les Bains where closer wire communication lines with the batteries and the 275th Inf Regimental CP were possible.

It was impossible to keep wire communication from the 275th Inf Regt CP at Niederbronn les Bains to the forward elements at Phillipsbourg, as Jerry's continually laced the road with mortars, and artillery fire. At this time Lt. Palecek, "C" Btry Asst Ex was out with the cannon company of the 275th Inf Regt, and more than once he saved our "necks". His strident voice was relaying fire missions from our Forward Observers back to the FDC.

On the second of January, our observers Lt. Houston, "A" Btry RO, Lt. Thomas, "C" Btry RO, and their crews practically held the town of Phillipsbourg from the enemy. One concentration #413 in town was fired upon by the battalion from 1135 for an hour and fifty minutes at which time we had expended 576 rounds keeping the enemy out of town. During this period the half tracks of these two RO's were saved by their drivers; who, under the direct fire of two 88mm guns, at least one 57mm that the krauts had captured, two cross firing machine guns, and mortar rounds that were falling at the rate of 3 to 6 per minute, left their sheltered places and drove the vehicles, with cold motors, 1200 yards down the road to a sheltered ravine. Both half tracks, filled with holes and shell fragments as witness to the Jerry accuracy, were later recovered. Pvt Hester, "A" Btry RO peep driver was seriously wounded at this time attempting to evacuate his vehicle which received direct hits from 88mm guns and later burned.



Unit History - Cont'd

Pfc Turner of the "C" Btry RO crew, stopped a counter-attack on Phillipsbourg. A Mark IV tank came first, Turner knocked that out with a bazooka, then a second tank which was turning out to pass the first Mark IV was also disabled by firing bazooka rounds loaded by an Infantry S/Sgt, into the tank. The Mrk IV's were quickly discouraged in their attack to say the least. As the infantry came around the tanks, Turner had a 50 cal. MG set up in the middle of the street without cover for himself or his weapon. When he opened up on the approaching infantry he was greeted with returning fire from Burp guns and rifles but managed to pile up a lot of the Krauts, without being hit, and then the frontal attack ceased.

Several times it was necessary to lay down smoke screens to enable our observers to move from heavily shelled OP's to others where their observations were not so highly contested by small arms fire.

Communications at this time were bad, only one RO radio out of four was now available as it was necessary to save the batteries. Every time FDC failed to establish communications with the observers it was with apprehension that their luck had run out, but, when they came back on the air with a fire mission it could only be assumed that a new OP had been established.

Pressure on Phillipsbourg never slackened, there were Krauts everywhere, lots of them were captured, including Frauleins in uniform. The heavy action continued in Phillipsbourg for over a week before any effort was made to completely mop up the town. Then many of the snipers were rounded up also the occupants of the various town cellars, and again more krauts were lost to the german cause.

One platoon of "A" Co. of the 47th Tank Bn, did what they could to help the situation. Two of their tanks were knocked out by the same 88mm that tried for our half tracks. Pfc Turner took time out from his one man stand in an attempt to evacuate personnel from one of these tanks, which by this time was burning, but exploding ammunition killed the man before Turner was successful.

During this time we did our heaviest firing, Concentration 499 and 500 received almost 500 rounds each. Concentration 460 and 485 were so close to our infantry that a 50 yard error would have caused casualties on our own troops. We were firing day and night on all of these various concentrations.

Barenthal was almost as bad, but the commander there kept his situation more nearly in hand. It was at this time that Lt. Grainger, while working with the 2d Bn, 275th Inf Regt. was commended for his work as an observer; also for the quick and efficient manner in which our artillery fires were brought in on the enemy at any and all times night or day.

Soon our Btry Commanders, RO's and FO's and Asst Ex's were all committed either as Ln O's or as observers. One OP occupied near Barenthal by our observers one day, had 40 krauts there the next day. Lt. Heyburn did some high class sniping with 105mm along with other good shooting.

The days the Air OP's were able to fly, they picked up many targets,



Unit History - Cont'd

horse drawn artillery, infantry, and motor columns. With the help of heavier artillery we broke up lots of this movement towards Phillipsbourg.

Our ammunition trucks were on the road at all times, and when they reached the ammunition dump, other trucks were pulled to the side as we had a high priority.

Brig. Gen. Meyers, CG of the 45th Div Arty commended us for our support of the 275th Inf Regt. and Task Force Herren in the action around Phillipsbourg.

In the ten day period from New Years Eve till we moved from Niederbronn les Bains we fired approximately 14,120 rounds of ammunition on to the enemy to halt their attempts to break out of the mountains into the Alsace Plain.

On the 11th of the month the battalion was released from this mission, and even though our CP in the Kur Hotel at Niederbronn les Bains had hot water for the tub baths, and steam heat for the rooms we were more than ready to move. The battalion moved to Soultz sous Forets. to reinforce the fires of the 312 FA Bn of the 79th Inf Div. The following day the battalion was placed in direct support of CCB in their attack on the town of Hatten in restoring the MLR.

The first observed mission fired in support of the initial assault was on an anti-tank gun in the woods just northeast of Rittershoffen. The missions kept coming in, personnel and armor, but as our observers were pinned down most of the time the first day, by heavy enemy fire, observed missions were comparatively few. Lack of information on friendly unit locations, and the lack of time for reconnaissance to find the best observation points kept us from initially giving the best fire support possible. However in the next few days our observers were able to establish themselves in static OP's which gave us good observation of the areas north of Rittershoffen and Hatten.

Lt. Grainger was in Hatten, with one company of the 19th AIB; while Lt. Palecek and Lt. Houston, also with the 19th AIB were located in nearby towns. Their voices were soon to become familiar to all who were sweating out the missions on radio channel 63 (The fire direction channel).

During this action it was necessary to establish relay stations to insure communications with all the observers. In passing; the operators (Foote, Fertig, Ellis, Ellsworth, Hartenberger and Welsch) are to be commended for their diligence and skill in keeping their sets in operation at all hours for the many days these relay stations were necessary.

Eventually the Defensive Fire Plan for Hatten was distributed and some of the concentrations listed were to become as familiar to all personnel of the battalion as their own serial numbers. We will always remember Lt. Grainger's calls for 62, A, B, C, and 50N, as these concentrations were an indication that the krauts were trying to form for another counter-attack to push our men out of the town. Hatten by now was our primary target and a call from there had priority over all other fires. Lt. Grainger's "10" call sign caused an immediate silence on the net until his missions were fired.



Unit History - Cont'd

Other concentrations, "129" (The Orchard), "140" (The Pill Box), the bridge at Buhl, all got their share of HE shell. Our air OP's reported these areas had been so chewed up by artillery fire that hard-frozen, snow covered ground, initially the battle-field, soon looked like a large well plowed field.

Many times heavy artillery (8" How' and 240mm How') shoots were conducted by our observers. Pill boxes, and the Buhl Bridge generally were the targets for these guns. A large Maginot Fort (Fort Hatten) on hill 160 north of Hatten was one of the most difficult targets. The terrain was unfavorable, even the big bursts were easily lost. Finally thru the efforts of four observers, whose OP's were in a complete semi-circle, five hits with concrete piercing 240mm shell were placed on the fort. The observers noted that this fort was used to billet troops and that personnel were changed at 1030 each day. One battery was laid ready to greet them with high explosive as they came out, the following day. Soon after this Jeanned to cover his movements with smoke and to move, not just at double time, but on a dead run. Many of them learned their lesson too late.

The battalion was shooting with a vengeance by this time. Lt. Palecek had been killed in an effort to go into Hatten in order to supplement Lt. Grainger there. He and his "19" call sign had become very familiar to us at Phillipsbourg, and his work with the 19th AIB, earlier south of Hatten had earned him their appreciation and gratitude. His wise cracks, professional ability and at times urgent voice, are gone but the officers and the men of the 499th Armd FA Bn will miss them as long as our Bn executes its missions.

Other casualties in this action were in the "B" Btry RO crew, "B" Btry How section and the Hq wire section. These casualties only added to our urge to hit the krauts wherever and whenever they could be found.

For over a week the battle for Rittershoffen and Hatten continued, developing into one of the toughest contested battles for a couple of towns so far fought in and around this section. It was also during this action that the first jet propelled planes were encountered.

The feeling concerning those two Hell Holes, is that we got our share of krauts.

Casualties during the month were one KIA, 7 battle casualties, and 9 non-battle casualties.

The battalion moved south west of Hagenau to Ohlungen in support of the 79th Inf Div and a few days later took over positions of the 493rd Armd FA Bn near Brumath in support of the 36th Inf Div. This mission lasted only two days when the battalion was called back to the vicinity of Wintershouse again in direct support of CCB for their attack near Schweighause in restoring the MLR.

January promotions were those of 2d Lt Houston to 1st Lt; and the battlefield promotion of Sgt Baur to that of 2d Lt.



Unit History - Cont'd

A General summary of events for January is as follows:

- 1 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved by infiltration from Langensoultzbach 10 miles to Villa Mellon (Q945406 Sheet V2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). Bn reinforcing fires of the 45th Inf Div Arty and in direct support of the 275th Inf Regt reinforced by the 17th FA Bn. 983 rds were fired on targets observed by our observers and on harrassing missions. Weather: Clear, cold, with snow on the ground.
- 2 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 957 rds fired on targets reported by the 275th Inf Regt an enemy armor vehicles and personnel. Weather: Bright warm with snow on ground.
- 3 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 2033 rds fired on attacks of the enemy, tanks, vehicles, personnel and harrassing fires during the night. Weather: Very hazy, heavy fog in late afternoon, snow on ground.
- 4 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved from Villa Mellon two miles to the courthouse in Niederbronn less Bains (Q938388 Sheet V-2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). Mission no change. 2402 rounds were fired on enemy personnel, tank targets, and on heavy harrassing fires during the night. Weather: Cold, clear to overcast at night with snow.
- 5 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved from courthouse in Niederbronn les Bains one half mile to the Kur Hotel in Niederbronn les Bains (Q935390 Sheet V-2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). No change in mission. 17th FA Bn moved out we are now reinforced by Corps. 3028 rounds were fired on personnel, counterattacks and an unusual amout of harrassing fires requested by 275th Inf Regt. Weather: Cold, clear snow on ground.
- 6 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 1330 rds fired on counterattacks and observed missions, harrassing fires fell off during the night. All battery commanders were sent out as Ln officers, BC's and FO's were also sent out with various units of both the 274th and 275th Inf Regt's. Weather: Cold, overcast, snow on ground.
- 7 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 1034 rds fired on the infantry and counterattacks with harrassing fires during the night. Weather: Cold-er, cloudy, snow.
- 8 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Mission now direct support of Task Force Herren. Bn placed on 2 hour allert for move with 14th AD. AOP active today firing on infantry troops, and horse drawn vehicles moving towards Phillipsbourg. 1316 rds fired on targets today, Weather: Cold, clear, snow at nite.
- 9 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Mission now reinforcing fires of the 158th and 17th FA Bn's in Task Force Herren sector. 817 rds fired on enemy targets, mostly personnel and harrassing missions. Weather: Cold, clear to overcast with snow, now about 6" on ground.
- 10 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 530 rds fired on enemy targets. Weather: Cold, clear.



Unit History - Cont'd

11 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved from Niederbronn les Bains 12 miles to Soultz sous Forets (R106376 Sheet V-2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). Bn reinforcing fires of 312th FA Bn of the 79th Inf Div. 567 rds fire on enemy. The move was accomplished with great difficulty due to the iced condition of all roads. Tracked vehicles slid all over the road with no traction at all possible. Weather: Cold, clear to overcast and snow at night. Snow now about eight inches on the ground.

12 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Mission attached to CCB as direct support artillery in their attack to restore the MLR in the vicinity of Hatten. 725 rds were fired on enemy targets. Weather: colder w/fair visibility.

13 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Relieved from attachment to CCB now under Div Arty control with mission continued support of CCB's attack on Hatten. AOP's were able to observe many of the targets fired on today. AOP's accounted for, other and harrassing fires brought the total to 1485 rds fired on the enemy today. Jet propelled planes used by the enemy were observed for the first time today. Weather: Colder, ground haze to clearing.

14 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. B Btry bombed by jet propelled planes today - no casualties. First officer casualty, Lt. Palecek, killed in action today while acting as an FO with CCR. 1406 rds fired on targets of wide variety reported by our forward observers. Weather: Clear and colder.

15 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 2229 rds were expended on the enemy during heavy counter-attacks and defensive fires in and around Hatten. Weather: Cold and cloudy.

16 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 916 rds were fired on enemy personnel, tanks and other targets located by our forward observers. Weather: Cold and clear with early morning fog.

17 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 1160 rds were fired on harrassing missions and on enemy targets located by the forward observers. Weather: Colder and overcast with light snow.

18 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 550 rds were fired on various targets (pill boxes, tanks, personnel, etc) picked up by our observers. Weather: Scattered clouds, warmer, windy.

19 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 970 rds were fired at the request of our observers, on targets picked up by them. One FO (Lt Thomas) adjusted heavy artillery (240mm) on an enemy pill box, but was forced to stop without observing the results, because the enemy had laid down a smoke screen. Weather: Very windy, colder to rain.

20 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved from Soultz sous Forets 15 miles to Ohlunger (Q975235 Sheet V-2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). Mission reinforcing fires of 79th Div Arty still under 14th Armd Div Arty control. 395 rds were fired on the enemy targets which were mostly infantry. The battalion moved after dark over congested and iced roads without accident. Weather: Cold and snowing.



Unit History - Cont'd

21 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Mission reinforcing fires of 904th FA Bn of the 79th Inf Div. Only 47 rds were expended on harrassing missions on the enemy. Weather: Colder and snowing.

22 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved by infiltration from Ohlungen one mile to Wintershouse (Q974214 Sheet V-2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). Mission no change. 67 rds were fired on enemy targets. Weather: Cold with snow on ground, clearing in afternoon.

23 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved by infiltration from Wintershouse six miles to Brumath (Q981142 Sheet V-2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). Mission reinforcing fires of the 132nd FA Bn and general support of the 36th Inf Div but still under control of 14th Armd Div Arty. Bn took over positions now occupied by the 493rd Armd FA Bn of the 12th Armd Div. 100 rds were expended on enemy targets. Weather: Cold, heavy snow.

24 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 480 rds fired on targets picked up by our FO's and one harrassing mission during the night. Weather: Cold, general overcast.

25 Jan 45 -- Bn CP moved from Brumath six miles to Wintershouse (Q975216 Sheet V-2 Map Central Europe 1:100,000). Mission in direct support of CCB in their attack near Schweighausen to restore the MLR. 459 rds were fired on enemy targets in accomplishing the above mission. Weather: Cold, overcast to snow.

26 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Mission reinforcing fires of 904th FA Bn of the 79th Inf Div from present positions. 564 rds were fired on enemy targets. Weather: Cold, snow flurries, clear in afternoon.

27 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Mission to reinforce fires of 101st Airborne Div Arty. 255 rds fired on harrassing fires and TOT's. Weather: Cold and snowing all day.

28 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 174 rds fired on enemy targets. General situation very quiet, this is the nearest to a rest condition this battalion has had since going into action on 1 Dec 44. Weather: snow, poor visibility, clearing at nite.

29 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 301 rds fired on enemy targets picked up by the air observers and on harrassing missions. Weather: Cold and clear.

30 Jan 45 -- Bn CP and mission no change. 259 rds fired on enemy targets. Our German 88mm gun again put into action after finding a new supply of ammunition. Weather: Very cold with snow flurries.

31 Jan 45 -- Bn CP no change. Mission to reinforce fires of 463rd Paratroop FA Bn of 101st Airborne Div. 148 rds fired on enemy targets. Sgt. Baur received a battlefield promotion to 2d Lt. today, he continues his work as an FO. Weather: Warmer, snow melting fast, overcast and raining in afternoon.



**CONFIDENTIAL**

HEADQUARTERS  
499TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
APO 446, U. S. Army

14 Mar 45.

*A/A*  
SUBJECT: ~~Unit History~~.

TO : Commanding General, 14th Armd Div, APO 446, U. S. Army.

In compliance with Memorandum, Hq, 14th Armd Div, dtd 4 Jan 45,  
the attached history is submitted:

For the Commanding Officer:

*Clifford E. Huckleberry*  
CLIFFORD E. HUCKLEBERRY  
1st Lt, FA  
Adjutant

4-Incls.

- 1-Unit History
- 1-Unit Journal
- ~~1-Compiled S-3 Report~~
- 1-Bundle of FO's & Overlays

*Feb.*

*614-912*

**CONFIDENTIAL**

*#16*

AUG 21 1945

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UNIT HISTORY

The month opened with the battalion located in Winterhouse reinforcing the fires of the 463rd Para FA Bn of the 101st Div Arty. The situation at this time was entirely deffensive and the artillery and other action very slight.

Weather conditions for the first part of the month was not favorable for air observation nor observation from the few ground OP's manned by the battalion. A slight increase in the temperature broke the cold spell and ground conditions were quickly changed from snow and ice to slush and mud.

General activity was limited to patrols by our troops as well as the enemy, no aggressive attacks being made by either side.

On the 18th the battalion moved six mile north when under direct control of the 14th Div Arty we supported the 14th Armd Div in this sector on the MLR. Action here was again light as the mission was merely a holding one.

On the 24th of the month the battalion was visited by General Smith who pulled the lanyard, firing the 100,000 round of the 14th Div Arty in combat. "B" Btry was selected for this honor as they had fired the greatest number of rounds for our battalion to date.

On the 24th of Feb the Battalion received the following communication from Colonel W. N. Gillmore of the 101st Airborne Div Arty, quote "As commander of the arty of the 101st Airborne Division I wish to tank you for the services you have rendered and the cooperation you have given while reinforcing the fires of our division artillery. The fires that you executed for us were both prompt and accurate. If in future operations we should again have the opportunity to work together, I shall deem it a great good fortune."

Bronze Stars were awarded to the following officers and enlisted men for the Month: Capt Joseph B. Zehnder, Lt D. L. Grainger, Lt J. F. Baur, Lt A. C. Emerson, Lt H. Heyburn, Cpl Thomas A. Graham, Pfc George B. Turner, Tec 5 Charles Wolfe, Jr, Pfc T. B. Abernathy, Jr., and Pvt Wilbur C. Hansel.

Air Medals were awarded to Lts Beaubien, Holtan, Sanders and Hixson.

During Feb the battalion received four new officers, namely, Capt George P. Wentworth, 2d Lt. Harlan W. Currier, 2d Lt. James W. Drake and 2d Lt. Everett J. Abrams.

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H E A D Q U A R T E R S  
499TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
APO 446, U. S. Army

12 Apr 45.

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TO : Commanding General, 14th Armd Div, APO 446, U. S. Army.

In compliance with Memorandum, Hq, 14th Armd Div, dtd 4 Jan 45,  
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For the Commanding Officer:

*Clifford E. Huckleberry*  
CLIFFORD E. HUCKLEBERRY  
1st Lt, FA  
Adjutant

- 3-Incls.  
1-Unit History  
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614-61.2

NOV 17 1945

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CLASSIFICATION  
**CANCELLED**  
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
*William D. Tap, 1st Lt, FA*  
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE 19 FEB 46



### UNIT HISTORY

The first week of the month was very quiet, with the battalion supporting, first CCB and then CCA in the division sector. This support consisted in firing minor missions in support of patrols and propaganda in our general area.

The battalion moved back to Wintershouse on the 11th of the month, to be in direct support of CCB, as the combat command took over a sector of the front relieving the 36th Inf Div of a part of their front line defenses. The action along all of the division front continued to be only patrolling.

On the fifteenth of the month the battalion, still in direct support of CCB, was reinforcing the fires of the 131 FA Bn of the 36th Inf Division as the general attack was launched across the Seventh Army front.

The seventeenth of the month found the battalion starting to move and by night the CP had been moved to Laubach with a mission of direct support of the 1st Bn of the 141st Inf Regt. One noted event of the day being the taking of the first PW for the Battalion. This occurred when some of the men were checking the cellars in the town before the Hq moved into the buildings.

On the eighteenth the Battalion was following CCA eastward to positions southeast of Hatten. We were now in direct support of the south column of CCA on their advance thru Alsace. Our units passed thru some of the French Colonial Troops much to the interest of personnel from both sides. There were no missions fired during the day.

It was necessary to detour a bit the next day to get across a stream where all of the bridges had been blown, but by night the battalion was in position in the vicinity of Oberseebach, firing into Germany.

The march was continued on the twentieth of the month and it was necessary to stop in the vicinity of Altenstadt as the fighting began to pick up, we were now getting within range of the Siegfried Line and its defenses.

On the twenty-first of the month the entire battalion moved into Germany. The CP was located in Schweighofen where conditions were very hot with the enemy continually shelling the town and areas nearby. The forts and pill boxes of the Siegfried Line continued to hold up the advance by well placed mortar and artillery fire, and many missions were fired supporting the infantry.

The morning of the twenty-second the battalion put on a twenty-three minute preparation for CCA's attack on the town of Steinfeld and the next day the preparation was repeated for the attack on Schaidt, which was finally cleaned up about 1600. The battalion then moved with CCA to an assembly area west of Schaidt. During the approach of "A" Battery to the assembly area some rifle sniper fire was received from one of the pill boxes. The section chief of an M-7 turned it around and did a bit of sniping on the pill box with 105 How whereupon about thirty PW's were taken from the pill box by men mopping up nearby. After moving into an assembly area the battalion continued the march that night to the vicinity of Minefeld, where a halt was made for the balance of the night.



On the next day the units moved forward again but about noon, upon reaching the vicinity of Hayna, the mission was cancelled and all units were halted. That afternoon, with the division artillery, the battalion moved back to an assembly area in the vicinity of Vollmersweiler. After breaking thru the defenses of the Siegfried Line in the vicinity of Schaidt it was not necessary to use the artillery again while we were going forward, there being no suitable targets to shoot.

On the twenty-fifth the battalion was out of firing position and in a temporary rest area for the first time since going into battle position on the first of December. The next few days were spent in mopping up the pill boxes, and the area already passed thru. A much needed rest was also obtained by all personnel.

On the twenty-eighth of the month the Division Commander visited the battalion and presented many well earned awards to personnel of the battalion.

The battalion was alerted on the 30th for a move with CCB to a new assembly area; but, it was not until 2130 on the 31st that the battalion, then under Division Artillery control began its move. The end of the month found the battalion still on the road moving towards a new assembly area somewhere, across the Rhine River, in Germany.



**RESTRICTED**



**RESTRICTED**  
UNIT HISTORY

The month of April opened with the battalion moving, on army order, towards the Rhine River. At dawn on Easter morning the battalion was crossing the Rhine River via pontoon bridge #4, headed for an assembly area some sixty miles further in Germany. At about 1000 the entire battalion closed into an area in the vicinity of Spachbracken; after completing, with minor vehicle casualties, a night march of 112 miles. So far this has been the longest single march made by the battalion. On crossing the Rhine River the division moved from VI Corps to XV Corps control.

A day of maintenance and rest was contemplated upon arrival in our assembly area; but this was changed by a march order and at 0200 the battalion attached to Combat Command "B" was moving towards a new area. Again in the early morning hours the battalion was crossing a river, the Main, on a pontoon bridge at Worth. The previously designated area was reached about 1100, but the assembly area orders were no doubt changed to attack orders, because we continued the march until the head of the column encountered trouble in the vicinity of Lohr. Whereupon the batteries were placed in firing positions and the CP was established in a large house up the valley before reaching Lohr. Several prisoners had been picked up during the day. These prisoners were all found in fox holes along the road, where they had been left with "panzerfausts" and grenades.

The fight at Lohr developed into quite a battle and held up our forces until late the following day. Many missions were fired during this period, with excellent results, on personnel and equipment. As Lohr was cleared the fight proceeded up the Main River Valley. The battalion moved to Neuendorf and on to Langenprozelten in close support of CCB's attacking force. East of Langenprozelten the combat command was again held up by bridge trouble and on the 6th moved on, after a day of heavy fighting, towards the objective at Hammelburg.

The fight from Lohr to Hammelburg Military Camp had consumed four days of fighting and although many prisoners had been taken during the time, many more allied PW's were released at the Hammelburg camp upon the arrival of the forward elements of the combat command.

After staying at the military camp overnight, Combat Command "B" was again on its way northward. Our battalion supported the two pronged attack by attaching "C" battery to one column and leaving "A" & "B" batteries with the other column. This developed into some firing by both columns during the late afternoon and then a move during the balance of the night. In this night move "C" battery went into position and after day break was subjected to quite a bit of counter battery fire, two rounds of which accounted for casualties in the battery. The balance of the battalion moved on to establish a CP above Munnerstadt. "C" Battery closing in later that night.

The battalion with CCB was attached to the 3rd Inf Div and moved southeast in a coordinated attack with them. During this advance "B" Btry in position was engaged in a small arms fight where they captured about 15 officers and 120 men, but suffered the loss of Lt. McDevett and the injury of an enlisted man. Continued support of this days action was



Unit History Cont'd---

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made by leap frogging batteries. The battalion finally moved into the vicinity of Eberthausen.

After staying three days awaiting the mopping up of adjacent areas the battalion started out on an "end around end" move. This move consisted in going back, then north, then again coming southeast on corps east flank with the rest of the division. There was no firing during this move, just an extensive road march to an assembly area in the vicinity of Schottenstein, which was reached at 1530. About 1800 the battalion again out with CCB in a continuation of the march to an area near Steinfeld. During the nights march we again crossed the Main River. This time on a Bailey Bridge near Nedensdorf about midnight. The column was held up by elements of CCA who had run into a fire fight in Scheszlitz. It was necessary to pull off the road and it was not until late afternoon that we were able to continue to our assembly area at Steinfeld, closing in there about 1700, after covering 78 miles since the previous morning.

The moving continues; with, the battalion again taking off late in the afternoon to follow CCB to the southeast. The move into an assembly area near Waischenfeld was accomplished by 2300 without the necessity of firing along the way. There being no more in sight the next day was spent in a bit of much needed maintenance.

On the 16th the battalion returned to Div Arty control and we were alerted for an early morning move on the 17th to the vicinity of Neudorf. This move was accomplished by 1000, but our attachment to Div Arty was very short. At 1400 we again went, in direct support of CCB, on their attack to the south. CCB attacking in two columns it was again necessary to separate the firing batteries, putting two batteries in the tank column and the Hq and a firing battery in the Infantry column. The tank column made good progress and reached Schnaitach, supposedly for the night but were ordered to continue the attack. The other column ran into several fire fights and by morning was still having trouble. The two batteries with the tanks rolled on and by 0900 were in positions in the vicinity of Weinhof while the remainder of the battalion did not get in until about 1600. Considerable artillery fire was delivered from these positions during the next few days as the enemy objected to our further advance southward.

Our positions after a day of firing came under observed fire from the enemy and we received heavy counter battery fire. It was deemed safer for continued operation to move back a few kilometers as one after another of the batteries were "zeroed" in by the enemy, and enemy infantry were taken prisoners in the battery positions. Some casualties were received by our battalion at this time. CP was moved back to Altdorf at this time. On the 22nd the battalion moved on to Schwarzenbach.

The moves to the south continue and this time the battalion reached an area in the vicinity of Grauwenkel by 2200. Army boundaries change and today we find ourselves out of Seventh Army into Third Army with III Corps.

Combat Command "B" is again off on an attack in two widely separated columns. It again becomes necessary to attack one battery to the tank column and the remainder of the battalion goes with the main column. Bridge trouble holds up the main column for about six hours but in spite

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of this the battalion minus "C" Battery reaches an assembly area near Kaldorf by 1900. "C" Btry still supporting the tankers in an position some six kilometers to the east. The head of the column has encountered enemy oposition as well as another blown bridge. Many missions were fired supporting our engineers in their bridge building operations. Artillery of the 809th FA Bn in general support was very helpful and effective in reducing enemy artillery fire on our bridging operations. After two nights the bridge across the Altmuhl River is completed and the battalion moves on with CCB to the southeast.

The attack continues southeast toward the Danube River and available bridges, but due to bad detours thru heavy timbered areas progress is slow. Enemy resistance after the establishment of a bridge on the Altmuhl has been non existant. CCB encountered strong artillery fire on the bluffs above the Danube and as a result the battalion moved into position near Lobsing.

All bridges were blown by the enemy. During the day missions we fired for elements of the 99th Inf Div who had succeeded in getting elements across the river. About noon on the 28th the battalion started to move for the crossing at Ingilstadt. At 1630 the Danube was crossed and the battalion moved on to an assembly area at Engelbrechtsmuster.

The move southeast continues and with no firing the battalion moved to the vicinity of ObSussbach only to move on to Pfettrach. Our mission there is to reinforce the fires of the 500th AFA Bn, in their firing for CCA on Landshut.

The battalion moved on the 30th into position near Thulbach as general support artillery for CCA & CCR in the establishment of a bridgehead across the Isar River at Moosburg.

The month closed with the battalion prepared to move again as direct support artillery with CCB in their continued attacks to the southeast. The month has been one of continued firing, and moving, with a distance of some 500 odd miles covered since crossing the Rhine River on the first of the month.

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