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NARRATIVE HISTORY FOR 500TH A F A BATTALION
1 November - 30 November 1944

30 November 1944

The 500th AFA Bn. moved from its first bivouac area in the European Theater in the vicinity of Marseille, France, to an assembly area North of Epinal in the vicinity of Portieux-la-Verrerie. This move was accomplished by driving the wheeled vehicles overland and taking the rest by train. After a period devoted to supply and organization, 500th AFA Bn. moved up with other elements of CCA, 14th Armored Division, to become part of the 7th Army in the Northeast of France.

The mission assigned to CCA, 14th Armored Division and other units of 7th Army was to assault the enemy in fortified positions in the Vosges Mountains and establish a breakthrough. The tank and infantry elements of CCA with the supporting fires of the 500th AFA Bn. were successful in their effort in the areas assigned to them. Operation in such mountainous country for an armored unit was extremely difficult due to the few roads, wooded slopes, narrow defiles, and sodden ground.

The 500th AFA Bn., though; being road bound for the most part of the early phase did succeed in occupying positions from which to support the advance. This was in the vicinity of St. Quirin - Grandfontaine. The enemy seized every opportunity to slow the advance by clogging the roads and blocking the passes. Road blocks were encountered at V495008, vicinity V560990, V585931, V582890 and proved to be very effective. These road blocks were lightly defended by infantry and mortar fire. Little artillery was encountered on his road blocks the enemy could rely upon his mortars zeroed on his road blocks to impede clearance. The enemy withdrew apparently according to plan leaving numerous snipers to harass our troops. These snipers were effective in claiming several car and tank commanders. Upon the ultimate breakthrough, our troops descended upon the flat of the Alsatian plain and our advance went ahead rapidly until the tanks were halted in the vicinity of Goxwiller. In the town of Niedernai, the 500th AFA Bn. went into position on an exposed flank from which we supported the advance to the South of the tanks and infantry. We repulsed a counterattack from the vicinity of Gertwiller. The enemy organized his defenses in and around the towns on our route of advance at Goxwiller and Barr roadblocks by placing 88 AT guns at blind corners which were effective in stopping our tanks from entering to the town.

The enemy used what appeared to be one and two gun 105MM in their defense. Their fire was mostly

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DOWNGRADING OFFICIAL FILE

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614-F4-(500)-0,2 Niederbay
500th AFA Bn
14th Armored Div
1 Nov-30 Nov 44
Mason

NARRATIVE HISTORY FOR 500TH AFA BN. (CONTINUED)

harassing fire on suspected artillery positions, possible observation posts, and cross roads. Enemy artillery was on the whole ineffective. Enemy batteries were observed at V805730, V569590, V579916, and at V581915. This battalion was instrumental in silencing these positions without help from Corps Artillery. Snipers were encountered in towns as we advanced and were liquidated.

On the 29th of November 1944, the 500th AFA Bn. moved from the vicinity of Niedernai and the date of this report finds the battalion in position in Gertwiller firing South. There were a total of 13 prisoners captured and approximately ~~1300~~ rounds of ammunition fired during this period.

Howard T. Graber, Jr.
HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., FA
Historian

Incl.

Chronological calendar of events.

Maps: France Luneville-Epinal Scale 1:100,000 Sheet 15G Ltr V.
France Strasbourg Scale 1:100,000 Sheet W2

November 1 In Bivouac Area vicinity of La Malle, 2 Kilometers
North of Septemes, 15 Kilometers North of
Marseille.

November 2 In Bivouac Area vicinity of La Malle, 2 Kilometers
North of Septemes, 15 Kilometers North of,
Marseille.

November 3 In Bivouac Area vicinity La Malle, 2 Kilometers
North of Septemes, 15 Kilometers North of
Marseille.

November 4 In Bivouac Area vicinity of La Malle, 2 Kilometers
North of Septemes, 15 Kilometers North of
Marseille.

November 5 In Bivouac Area vicinity of La Malle, 2 Kilometers
North of Septemes, 15 Kilometers North of
Marseille.

November 6 In Bivouac Area vicinity of La Malle, 2 Kilometers
North of Septemes, 15 Kilometers North of
Marseille.

November 7 In Bivouac Area vicinity of La Malle, 2 Kilometers
North of Septemes, 15 Kilometers North of
Marseille.

November 8 First train section consisting of the following
left Septemes at 1430 on 8 November 1944, Major
Murtha in charge:
12 Half Tracks
12 M-10 Trailers
3 M-4 Tanks
5 Box Cars
112 Enlisted Men
9 Officers

November 9 Second train section consisting of the following
left Septemes at 1215 on 9 November 1944, Captain
Rice in charge:
14 Half Tracks
18 M-10 Trailers
8 Box Cars
140 Enlisted Men
7 Officers

- November 10 Convoy of vehicles left Bivouac Area at 0700 consisting of all wheeled vehicles. Lt. Col. Swanson in charge of March Serial. Major Lanigan in charge of 1st March Unit. Capt. Adams in charge of 2d March Unit.
- November 11 Remainder of Battalion consisting of 18 M-7s and 2 Recovery Vehicles with drivers and assistant drivers remained in Bivouac Area in charge of Capt. Alexander. Mr. Weis and a maintenance detail were assigned to accompany the full track vehicles.
- November 12 First train section arrived at Chatel (V995692) about 1530 detrained vehicles and proceeded to Battalion Bivouac at V982762 vicinity of Portieux-La-Verrerie. Motor convoy arrived at Chatel.
- November 13 Second train section arrived at Chatel about 1100 proceeded to Battalion Bivouac Area.
- November 14 Lt. Col. Swanson, Capts. Thompson, Rice, Newman, Adams, and Lieutenant Jahnke, left bivouac area to visit Artillery positions of the 93 AFA Bn. vicinity of Belmont-Sur-Buttant (V274583).
- November 15 Majors Murtha, Lanigan and Lieutenants Cobb, Novacek, and Parvin left Bivouac Area to visit Artillery positions of the 93 AFA Bn. vicinity of LaChapelle (V303554).
- November 16 Battalion Staff, one officer per battery and NCO car commanders attended a small task force demonstration vicinity of Portieux (V965731).
- November 17 9 M-7s arrived at Bivouac Area.
- November 18 Lt. Col. Swanson and Major Lanigan visited CP of 69 AFA Bn. vicinity of Raon-L'Etape (V331798).
9 M-7s arrived Bivouac Area. All present.
Red alert sounded at 1730 in Bivouac Area.
All clear sounded at 2310 in Bivouac Area.
- November 20 Attached to VI Corps today. Battalion moved from Bivouac Area, Portieux-La-Verrerie, 0705 - Arrived Assembly Area vicinity Ste. Helene, 0950. Distance traveled - 20 miles. Battalion moved from Assembly Area, Ste. Helene, 1730, and reached outskirts La Salle, 2230. Distance traveled - 12 Miles. Weather - rain; road - muddy.

- November 21 After remaining on road all night. Battalion moved into position Northeast of La Salle - no firing.
Battalion moved from position, vicinity of La Salle, 1530 and marched to vicinity Blamont arriving 2400. Distance marched - 31 miles.
Weather - rain; road - muddy.
- November 22 Battalion moved from vicinity of Blamont, 0800, and arrived vicinity of Fremonville, 1300.
Distance marched - 14 miles. Weather - rain; road - muddy.
- November 23 Battalion marched from vicinity of Fremonville, 0915, to vicinity of Lafrimbolle, 1145. Distance marched - 7 miles. Weather - rain; road - muddy.
"B" Battery attached to 48th Tank Battalion; closed in position at 1630 at V550005.
"A" Battery attached to 62d AIB; closed in position at 1700, coordinate V475013.
- November 24 Battalion (-) moved from vicinity of Lafrimbolle, 1220, and arrived at St. Quirin, 1530. Distance marched - 3.6 miles. Weather - rain; road - muddy.
"A" Battery released from 62d AIB and returned to Battalion control, 1015.
"C" Battery attached to 62d AIB; closed in position, 1500, at V529965.
"A" Battery attached to 48th Tank Battalion at 1630; closed in position at V562972.
"B" Battery fired 17 missions (210 rounds) - 6 missions counter battery, 1 enemy mortar, 1 smoke, 9 interdiction. All missions believed effective.
- November 25 St. Quirin.
- November 26 Battalion departed St. Quirin, 0510, marched approximately 17 miles. Halted 1000 at V579916.
Weather - snow; road - muddy. "C" Btry, 3 prisoners.
- November 27 Battalion moved from V579916, 0710, and marched to Niedernai and occupied position at V838838, map - Strasbourg, arriving at 1230. Distance 29 miles.
First KIA - 1st Sgt. Paul B. Green, Headquarters Battery.
Enemy artillery shelled Niedernai from 1500 - 1520.
Battalion fired scheduled fires at Gertwiller throughout the night.
Medical Detachment, 2 prisoners

- November 28 CCA requests artillery support for East column on road South of Obernai at 0205. Battalion fired 20 missions; 2 counter battery, 60 observed, 4 unobserved, 1 AT gun, 7 enemy infantry, enemy counterattack repulsed at 0945.
- November 29 Battalion departed from Niedernai, 1645, and marched to position in vicinity of Gertwiller arriving, 1730. Distance traveled - 4 miles. Battalion fired 44 missions for day - 40 harrassing, 2 preparations, 2 MG positions.
- November 30 Gertwiller, V805791. Battalion fired 27 missions - 5 counterbattery, 1 Division C.P., 4 Automatic Weapons, and 17 harrassing. Headquarters Battery captured 4 prisoners. "C" Battery captured 4 prisoners.

S-2 Intelligence Summary of Operations from 1 November through 30 November 1944.

During the period 1-30 Nov. the Battalion was in action from 20 Nov. to 30 Nov. inclusive.

I. Enemy Troops: General

- A. Prisoners of War taken indicated that the morale of the enemy opposing us was very low. PW's talked freely of fortifications etc. and were definitely second and third grade soldiers. Many were soldiers from conquered countries forced to serve in the German army and surrendered when the opportunity presented itself. They were generally poorly equipped and clothed and their morale was very low.

II. Action in the Vosges Mountains.

- A. Very mountainous and difficult for tank operations. Due to bad weather and rugged terrain tanks were confined to roads.
- B. Obstacles
 - 1. Fighting was confined to roads through the passes in the Vosges Mts. and afforded the enemy ample opportunity to build extensive fortifications to block these passes.
 - 2. Road blocks were encountered at V495008, vicinity V5699, V585931, V582890, and were very effective in slowing the advance of our troops. These road blocks were lightly defended by infantry and mortar fire.
- C. Artillery
 - 1. No artillery was encountered in the mountains. The enemy zeroed mortar fire on their road blocks and were very effective in slowing the clearing of the block by our troops.
- D. Snipers
 - 1. Numerous snipers were left along the route of advance and were very effective in knocking out car and tank commanders. These snipers usually surrendered when cornered.
- E. Strong Points
 - 1. The enemy fought a definite delaying action at numerous strong points along the route of advance which could not be bypassed. These defenses showed prior planning and preparation and had they been properly manned would have made the passes through the Vosges practically impassable.

III. Action in the Rhine Valley

- A. Terrain
 - 1. Terrain flat, crossed by numerous streams. Road net very good with numerous towns at main crossroads. Due to inclement weather, heavy vehicles were road bound in their area.
- B. Obstacles
 - 1. The enemy organized his defenses in and around the towns on our route of advance at Gertwiller and Barr Roadblocks at blind corners covered by 88mm AT guns were effective in stopping our tanks from entering the towns.
- C. Artillery
 - 1. The enemy used what appeared to be one and two gun 105mm and 88mm gun batteries in their defense. Their fire was

mostly harassing fire on suspected Artillery positions, possible observation posts, and cross-roads. Enemy artillery was on the whole ineffective. Enemy batteries at V805730, V56959005, V579916, and at V581915. Those reported were silenced by this Battalion or by Corps Artillery on request.

D. Snipers

1. There were numerous snipers left in the towns, slowing our mopping up operations considerably. Our artillery fire had some effect in neutralizing these individuals.

E. Strong points.

1. Realizing that we were still ^{confined} to the road the enemy employed similar tactics in the valley in organizing his defenses. Road blocks channelized our troops into antitank traps at strong points and made our progress exceedingly tedious.

James J. Cobb
JAMES J. COBB
1st Lt FA
S-2

S-3 SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS FROM 1 NOV THROUGH 30 NOV 1944

I. During the period 1-30 Nov the Battalion was in action from Nov 20 to Nov 30 inclusive.

1. A total of sixty missions were fired on targets as indicated below:

<u>Target</u>	<u>Number of Missions</u>	<u>Observed</u>	<u>Unobserved</u>
Counterbattery	11	2	9
Machine Guns or Automatic Weapons	6	6	
Mortars	1	1	
Infantry	16	11	5
Interdiction	12		12
Harrasing	12		12
C.P.	1		1
A T Gun	1	1	

II. Effect of Fires.

1. Counterbattery Missions - All Enemy Batterys brought under our fire ceased firing on our troops. Inspection of three areas after our troops pushed on showed definite evidence of hasty withdrawal. On one observed mission an explosion indicated a hit on some ammunition.

2. Machine Guns: Effect as desired. Enemy fled and ceased firing; number of casualties unknown.

3. Mortars - This one mission silenced heavy mortar fire on our troops.

4. Infantry - Fire very effective. Fifty dead Germans were reported in one house alone after our shells set at delay fuze penetrated to the ground floor before detonating. One local counter-attack by ey. infantry at Gertweiler was repulsed with good effect by two time fire missions.

5. Interdiction and Harrasing Missions. These missions were conducted and is is believed that they accomplished the desired result of causing the enemy difficulty in his night withdrawals at Shärneck and Gertweiler.

6. Defensive Fires - Defensive fires were computed to cover our Infantry and Tanks whenever they took up a position to hold for the night. None were fired as the enemy did not attack. It is highly recommended that more attention be paid these fires by the Infantry and Tank Bn. Commanders so that they can be prepared as early in the day as possible. On two occasions an enemy counterattack at 2000 would have found us with no prepared fires due to delays in getting the artillery the information concerning our positions and desired barrages, etc.

-2-

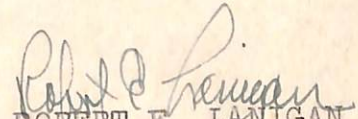
III. Observation. Observation was very difficult during the first phase of the operation in the mountains near Grandfontaine. Heavy fog and limited terrestrial observation made it difficult to support the action in an adequate manner.

IV. Gun Positions. Gun positions were at a premium in the area due to poor footing for our heavy weapons and a lack of any position at all in some of the mountain passes. Flash defilade is highly important but must be forgone on occasions due to the presence of so much artillery in our areas.

V. Communications. Radio communication was very poor in ~~the~~ the mountains but good in the Rhine Valley. Wire is to be much preferred because of comparative security and dependability.

VI. Ammunition Expenditure -

2281 Rounds.


ROBERT E. LANIGAN
Major, FA
S-3

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:

CANCELLED

BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

T.O. McCarty Capt AGO
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE *28 May 46*

NARRATIVE HISTORY FOR 500TH AFA BATTALION

1 December - 31 December 1944

31 December 1944

The 500th AFA Bn. continued on its mission in the Alsatian Plain moving South from Gertwiller to Epfig, Alsace, and was attached to 36th Inf. Div. Arty. On 2 December 1944, the Battalion was attached to 17th FA Group, with the mission of re-enforcing fires of 928th FA Bn. The advance continued with our Fire Direction Center and firing batteries moving to vicinity Ebersheim, Alsace, the next day. The Battalion was drawn back to Epfig, the same day, from its point into the enemy front lines, and returned to CCA, 14th Armored Division, control. That night, CCA, 14th Armored Division, went into division reserve, and moved to vicinity of Hochfelden--the Battalion going to Geiswiller for reorganization and maintenance. "C" Battery was detached from Battalion control, and sent on mission to support a small task force in its attack of enemy infantry positions in the vicinity of Gamsheim, Alsace, in close proximity to the Rhine River.

With CCA, 14th Armored Division, going into reserve, the Battalion ended its first combat. The campaign that took us through the Vosges Mountains and the Alsatian Plain was over for us. We had accomplished our mission as artillery.

Our next orders placed us under the command of 103rd Infantry Division Artillery to re-enforce the fires of the 928th FA Bn., and the Battalion left for the Northern front of the 7th Army in the vicinity of Miesenheim, Alsace. Here the town where our C.P. was located was strafed by what appeared to be two P-47s that the Germans had captured and were using against our troops. They were driven off by our antiaircraft defenses without causing any casualties. The Battalion was then placed under 14th Armored Division Artillery control and supported the attack of CCA, 14th Armored Division, from Surbourg to Ober-Otterbach. Our fires could reach into Germany and the Siegfried Line from our positions at Wissembourg, Alsace. Our fires proved very effective against the enemy mortar and infantry positions.

On 22 December 1944, the Battalion was pulled back from Wissembourg and placed under the command of CCR, 14th Armored Division, and moved into Lorraine where it went into position, after several jumps, around Baerenthal, Lorraine. Here our guns

614-FA (500th) - 0.3
14th Armored Div
500th AFA Bn
14th Armored Div
Dec 44
Moore

NARRATIVE HISTORY FOR 500TH AFA BN. (CONTINUED)
1 December - 31 December 1944

could reach the town and fortifications of Bitche, an anchor of the Maginot Line. Again our fires were effective on enemy infantry and other elements when caught in the open. We fired many effective missions on such targets here and accounted for many German casualties--the exact figure is not known.

The end of December found the Battalion still in Baerenthal, Lorraine. The terrain had changed from the flat Alsatian Plain to the hilly wooded forests of Bitche. The type of target had changed from the enemy on the run or defending towns to a strongly defended and fortified position. Increasing enemy activity in our sector indicates that a strong counter-attack against our positions is imminent.

Howard T. Graber, Jr.
HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., FA
Historian

Incl.

Chronological calendar of events.
Roster of Key Personnel.
List of Promotions (EM).
S-2 Intelligence Summary.
S-3 Report.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR
1 December - 31 December 1944

L-1118

Maps: France, Strasbourg Scale 1:100,000 Sheet W2
France, Haguenau Scale 1:50,000
France, Wissembourg Scale 1:25,000 Sheet 56

- December 1 Battalion departed Gertwiller, 1240, arrived and went into position Epfig, V798733, 1450. Distance marched 4 miles. No casualties. Headquarters Battery captured 1 prisoner--1800. No missions fired.
- December 2 Battalion remained in position, Epfig, V798733. No missions fired. "A" Battery captured two prisoners. No casualties. Battalion detached from CCA, 14th Armored Division, attached 36th Infantry Division Artillery. Battalion detached from 36th Infantry Division Artillery, attached 17th FA Group, with mission to re-enforce fires of 928th FA Bn. Ln. O. to 928th FA Bn. C.P., Epfig, 1630.
- December 3 S-2, S-3, Ln. O., working with 928th FA, FDC, Obersheim.
"A", "B", and "C" Batteries displaced from Epfig to position vicinity Ebersheim, V805680, at 0800. Adjusted Battalion on Base Point with Liaison plane. Battalion detached from 17th FA Group, attached to CCA, 14th Armored Division, 1500, and moved to the vicinity of Epfig.
Battalion (including trains) departed from Epfig, 1900, for Geiswiller.
- December 4 Battalion closed in Geiswiller, Alsace, France, 0330, Q828211. Distance marched 38 miles. No casualties. Battalion carrying out reorganization and maintenance, Geiswiller.
- December 5 Geiswiller. Reorganization and maintenance. "A" Battery captured German soldier in civilian clothes. Otherwise no contact with enemy.
- December 6 "C" Battery attached to 94th Rcn. Sq. at 1600 and departed from Geiswiller at same time, as part of a task force consisting of a small unit of Infantry, Reconnaissance, and one battery of Field Artillery, for Weyersheim where the battery went into defensive position. Battalion (-) continued after-action maintenance, Geiswiller.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (CONTINUED)
1 December - 31 December 1944

- December 7 Geiswiller, Alsace, France. "C" Battery departed position at Weyersheim, 0730, and marched to Wantzenau (R065065) where the battery went into position in the town, 0830. Enemy infantry supplied excellent targets in Gambsheim and vicinity (R110105). Battery fired approximately 600 rounds. Two enemy planes (ME-109) flew over and strafed battery position--their object was to draw fire, for when the attached AAA and machine gunners opened fire, a battery of enemy artillery (88mm) shelled the battery position a few minutes later from across the Rhine River--less than 2500 yards away. Battery moved position to the other side of town. A few scattered rounds fell here, and one wounded Pfc Lloyd Mello in the left chest, SWA, SFW.
- December 8 Col. Swanson departed for 14th Armored Division Artillery and Reconnaissance of front in the vicinity of Mietesheim, Q930310, 0800. Returned, 1445.
S-2, S-3, Bn. R0 and Survey Section, and "A" Battery departed from Geiswiller, 1600, and went into position--CP in Mietesheim, Q932310, "A" Battery at Engwiller, Q910314. Battalion re-enforcing fires of 928th FA Bn.--attached to 103rd Infantry Division Artillery Command.
"C" Battery released from attached 94th Rcn Sq. and arrived at Geiswiller, 1900.
- December 9 Battalion Headquarters Section departed from Geiswiller, 1130, arrived at Mietesheim, Q932310, at 1300.
"B" and "C" Batteries departed from Geiswiller, 1430, arrived vicinity of Engwiller, Q910314, at 1700. Distance traveled--about 12 miles. Road--muddy. Weather--rain.
- December 10 Mietesheim, Alsace, France.
"A" Battery at Q591.268-231.200
"B" Battery at Q591.125-231.241
"C" Battery at Q591.400-230.968
- December 11 Headquarters Forward C.P. section and firing batteries departed from Mietesheim, 1030, and closed in vicinity of Griesbach, Q960320 at 1300. Headquarters Rear C.P. and Service Battery remained in Mietesheim.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

1 December - 31 December 1944

- December 11 (continued) Battalion Maintenance moved from Ettendorf, Q887237, 1000, and arrived at Mietesheim at 1500. Mietesheim strafed by two enemy planes at approximately 1330. Enemy driven off--no casualties.
- December 12 Battalion (-) remained in Mietesheim. Firing Batteries--no change.
- December 13 Battalion assembled by joining firing batteries at cross roads 1/2 mile South of Hinterfeld (R012316) after leaving Mietesheim, 0430, and arrived Surbourg, 1610. Distance marched--16 miles. Co-ordinates new location--R084345. Weather--cloudy. Roads--muddy. Co-ordinates "A" Battery R088346, "B" Battery R086343, "C" Battery R083535. Battalion attached to Division Artillery Command, 14th Armored Division.
- December 14 Battalion left Surbourg, 1215, and arrived at Schoenenbourg, R130380, at 1245. Distance marched--3 miles. Weather--fair. Roads--muddy. No personnel or vehicular casualties. "C" Battery captured 2 prisoners (EM).
- December 15 "A" Battery captured 1 prisoner (EM). S-2, S-3, and R0 Sections, Batteries "A", "B", and "C" left Schoenenbourg, 1800, and marched to Ingolsheim R148418, going into position about 1845. C.P., Message Center, and Headquarters Battery remained in Schoenenbourg.
- December 16 S-2, S-3, and R0 Section, Batteries "A", "B", and "C" left Ingolsheim, 1345, closed in Wissembourg, 1630, R158480. C.P., Message Center, and Headquarters Battery left Schoenenbourg, 1600, and arrived Riedseltz, R160438, 1645. Distance traveled--3.8 miles. Weather--cloudy. Roads--good.
- December 17 C.P., Message Center, and Headquarters Battery left Riedseltz, 0900, and arrived at Wissembourg R151483, 0945. Distance traveled--3.3 miles. No personnel or vehicular casualties. Headquarters Battery captured 2 prisoners. "A", "B", and "C" Batteries in position in railroad yards, Wissembourg.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

1 December - 31 December 1944

- December 18 Battalion fired pre-arranged fires at Siegfried Line outposts. Battalion remained in position.
- December 19 Battalion fired missions on outposts of Siegfried Line--remained in position.
- December 20 Battalion fired missions on outposts of Siegfried Line. A Battalion Forward Observer adjusted one 8" gun on a large pill-box. With 3 rounds for adjustment, the fourth round was a target hit and effected penetration. The fifth and sixth rounds were fired for effect and put the pill-box out of action. Battalion remained in position.
- December 21 Battalion fired harassing and observed missions on outposts of Siegfried Line. Battalion remained in position. C.P. shelled by enemy artillery spasmodically.
- December 22 Battalion detached from 14th Armored Division Artillery Command and attached to CCR, 14th Armored Division. Battalion departed from Wissembourg at 1100, and arrived at Gumbrechtschoffen, Q922342, 1400. Distance marched--22 miles. Weather--fair. Roads--good. No casualties.
- December 23 Battalion left Gambrechtschoffen, 0815, arrived at Baerenthal, 0915 Q841420. Distance traveled--8 miles. Weather--cold and cloudy. Roads--good. No casualties.
- December 24 Battalion in position, Baerenthal--harassing and observed missions fired.
- December 25 Battalion in position, Baerenthal--harassing and observed missions fired.
- December 26 Battalion in position, Baerenthal--harassing and observed missions fired.
- December 27 Battalion in position, Baerenthal--harassing and observed missions fired.
- December 28 Battalion in position, Baerenthal--harassing and observed missions fired.
- December 29 Battalion in position, Baerenthal--harassing and observed missions fired.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

1 December - 31 December 1944

- December 30 "C" Battery moved to Fourneau Neuf, Q818429, 1400. Went into position, 1445. Small counter-attack by enemy, 1930--repulsed by our artillery and infantry weapons. Battalion (-)⁴⁰ remained in position, Baerenthal--harassing and observed missions fired.
- December 31 Battalion (-) remained in position, Baerenthal.

S-2 Intelligence Summary of Operations from 1 December through 31 December 1944.

The Battalion was in action from the 1 to 31 of December.

I. Action in the vicinity of Mietersheim-Griesbach.

A. Terrain:

1. Enemy held the Lauter River line. Terrain west of river afforded good observation on enemy positions. Country generally open and rolling.

B. Obstacles:

1. River defended by entrenchments and automatic weapons. Mortar fire was used to protect their MLR. Bridges were blown and approaches mined. Road blocks at defiles protected by mortar fire.

C. Artillery:

1. Fire scattered throughout the area but no heavy concentrations were encountered.

D. Enemy Reactions to Attack:

1. Although the enemy had elaborate defenses, he readily fell back as our troops crossed the Lauter River, and continued to fight a delaying action until we reached Woerth.

II. Action in the vicinity of Wissembourg.

A. Terrain:

1. Rolling terrain which afforded good observation and lines for defense.

B. Obstacles:

1. Enemy defended in hastily fortified positions between Surbourg and the Siegfried Line making a fairly strong stand at Riedseltz. Several lightly defended roadblocks were encountered. Tank traps and barbed wire were covered by automatic weapons and AT guns from pillboxes.

C. Artillery:

1. Heavy concentrations of mortar and artillery fire aided in defending positions north of Riedseltz. High ground north of Wissembourg was effectively neutralized by constant sniper, mortar, and artillery fire. Light harassing artillery fire was received in Wissembourg.

D. Enemy Reactions to Attack.

1. Enemy dropped back to successive delaying positions along ridge-line during the hours of darkness. Siegfried Line was well manned. Mobile reserves succeeded in pushing our troops out of Ober-Otterbach by counter-attacking.

III. Action in the vicinity of Bitche.

A. Terrain:

1. Very mountainous woody terrain with numerous passes offering approaches to defensive positions.

C. Artillery:

1. Harassing artillery fire was received throughout the sector. Heavy concentrations were received in Phillipsbourg and around gun positions. Artillery OP's were well placed along ridges overlooking towns and our defensive positions.

D. Enemy Reactions to Attack:

1. During the last several days of December the enemy action was confined to organization of defenses and reconnaissance patrols probing our defensive positions.

J. J. Cobb H.B.
J. J. COBB
1st Lt., FA
S-2

MONTHLY FIRE MISSION SUMMARY
month of December 1944

L-1118

OBSERVED MISSIONS			UNOBSERVED MISSIONS		
Type	Air O.P.	G.O.P.	Type		
Personnel		36	Preparation		18
Vehicles	1	1	Vehicles		4
MG & Mtrs.		12	Harrassing		91
Armor		2	Interdiction		9
Registration	27	13	C.B.		9
Defen. Reg		5	TOT		7
C.B.	4	5	Bingo		4
C.P.		5	Mortars		7
Pillbox		4	Smoke Screen		1
Smoke Screen		4	Working Party		1
Propaganda	1	1	Tanks		4
Misc.		2	O.P.		2
			Neutralization		1
			Identification		1
			Propaganda		10
TOTAL	33	90	TOTAL		169

Ammunition Exp. for December 1944 --

M48	M54	M60	M84	T-105	T-80
6206	418	337	88	49	6

500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BN
APO 446, c/o Postmaster
New York, New York

6 January 1945

Promotions of EM since arriving overseas

Date	Name	Battery	Old Grade	New Grade
3 Nov 1944	Stanley J. Rossi	Service	T/Sgt	M/Sgt
3 Nov 1944	Hiram G. Presley	"A"	4/Sgt	1st/Sgt
3 Nov 1944	Eugene J. Nagan	Service	Tec 4	T/Sgt
3 Nov 1944	William N. Wingstrom	Service	Tec 4	T/Sgt
3 Nov 1944	Edward D. Partrick	Headquarters	S/Sgt	T/Sgt
3 Nov 1944	Eugene M. Dolan	Service	Sgt	S/Sgt
3 Nov 1944	Paul H. Schurke	Headquarters	Tec 5	S/Sgt
3 Nov 1944	George J. Theiss	Headquarters	Cpl.	Sgt
3 Nov 1944	Jack A. Eledge	Service	Tec 5	Tec 4
3 Nov 1944	Everett L. Rhoades	Service	Pvt	Tec 4
3 Nov 1944	James N. Gifaldi	"A"	PFC	Tec 4
3 Nov 1944	Francis J. Goss	Headquarters	Tec 5	Tec 4
3 Nov 1944	Andrew A. Ballachino	"A"	PFC	Cpl
3 Nov 1944	Mark J. Costello	Headquarters	Tec 5	Cpl
3 Nov 1944	Donald W.A. Moeller	Headquarters	Tec 5	Cpl
3 Nov 1944	John B. Rossi	Headquarters	Tec 5	Cpl
3 Nov 1944	Robert E. Gerstacker	Headquarters	PFC	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Martin Grushkin	Headquarters	PFC	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Joseph F. Alfano	Headquarters	Pvt	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Olin K. Hopper	Headquarters	Pvt	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Clarence R. Arnold	"C"	PFC	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Sam Messina	"C"	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Thomas W. Shearer, Jr.	"C"	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Earnest Wingate	"C"	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Clarence E. Ansburn	Service	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	William A. Brett	Service	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	John P. Dreyer	"A"	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Louis L. Erickson	"A"	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	James M. McMahon	"B"	Pfc	Tec 5
3 Nov 1944	Charles E. Schilling	"A"	Pvt	Tec 5
28 Nov 1944	Harold W. Kraft	"C"	Cpl	Sgt
28 Nov 1944	Oliver C. Brissette	"C"	Pvt	Tec 5
3 Dec 1944	Edward J. Giannotti	"A"	Tec 4	Sgt
10 Dec 1944	Elmer J. Sullentrop	Headquarters	Cpl	Sgt
10 Dec 1944	Louie J. Biasotti	"A"	Cpl	Tec 4
10 Dec 1944	Theodore H.D. Wilson	"A"	Pvt	Cpl
10 Dec 1944	Russell E. Moore	"A"	Pfc	Tec 5
20 Dec 1944	Francis E. Walsh	"C"	Pfc	Cpl
20 Dec 1944	Raymond V. Lehr	"B"	Pvt	Tec 5
21 Dec 1944	Edwin H. Jenkins	Headquarters	S/Sgt	1st/Sgt
21 Dec 1944	Raymond H. Brown	Headquarters	Cpl	S/Sgt
26 Dec 1944	Lawrence W. Campbell	"B"	Tec 5	Tec 4
26 Dec 1944	Roy K. Moore	"B"	Pvt	Tec 5
26 Dec 1944	Norman G. Gladfelter	"B"	Pvt	Tec 5
26 Dec 1944	Ernest K. Hedman	Headquarters	Pfc	Tec 5
26 Dec 1944	Lee M. Flew	Headquarters	Pfc	Tec 5

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Btry</u>	<u>Old Grade</u>	<u>New Grade</u>
26 Dec 1944	Robert E. McCollum	"B"	Pfc	Opl
28 Dec 1944	Veto P. Spohn	Service	Tec 5	Tec 4
28 Dec 1944	John J. George	Service	Pvt	Tec 5
30 Dec 1944	Guntner H. Manthei	"A"	Pfc	Tec 5

ROSTER OF KEY PERSONNEL

L-1118

Headquarters

Lt. Col. Dale V. Swanson	0-240321	FA	Battalion Commander
Major Joseph J. Murtha	0-260553	FA	Executive Officer
Major Robert E. Lanigan	0-23896	FA	S-3
1st Lt. James J. Cobb	0-25629	FA	S-2
1st Lt. Louis W. Vasaly	0-1171807	FA	Ln. O.
1st Lt. Bill Allison	0-1178054	FA	Rcn & Svy O.
Tec 4 Francis V. Goss	32 589 354		Radio Operator

Headquarters Battery

Capt. Howard W. Thompson	0-1014679	FA	BC & Asst S-3
1st Lt. John J. Novacek	0-1171703	FA	Comm O.
1st Lt. Alvin E. DeLong	0-1182813	FA	Ln Pilot
2d Lt. Arthur W. Dorland	0-1180169	FA	Ln Pilot
2d Lt. Frank H. Cotton	0-1171499	FA	F. O.
2d Lt. Philip Wrathall	0-1171850	FA	F. O.
2d Lt. Donald C. Richardson	0-522625	FA	F. O.
2d Lt. Vincent F. Luceri	0-1168787	FA	Motor O.
M/Sgt. Warren Coleman	15 860 55		Sgt. Major
1st Sgt. Edwin H. Jenkins	38 002 438		First Sergeant
Tec Sgt. Frank Padykula	31 097 809		Commo. Chief
Tec Sgt. Harry B. Bryant	38 178 480		S-2 Sergeant
Tec Sgt. Edward Partrick, Jr.	34 465 150		Operations Sergeant
S/Sgt. Raymond H. Brown	20 715 677		Survey Sergeant
S/Sgt. Frank R. Brown	18 168 348		Supply Sergeant
S/Sgt. Louis F. Spagnola	32 371 280		Mess Sergeant
S/Sgt. John W. Huckins	37 175 023		Motor Sergeant
S/Sgt. Paul H. Schurke, Jr.	37 466 764		FDC Computer
Sgt. W. E. Stephenson	37 250 524		F.O. #1
Sgt. James I. Paroubek	36 628 158		F.O. #2
Sgt. E. J. Sullentrup	37 077 518		F.O. #3
Sgt. Edwin F. Day	37 250 933		Ln. Sergeant
Sgt. Nelce Lancaster	38 151 606		Msg. Ctr. Chief (Bn. Hqs)
Cpl. C. H. Corley	38 303 573		Wire Sec. #1
Cpl. G. M. McKellar	39 032 523		Wire Sec. #2

Medical Detachment

1st Lt. Horace D. Orr	0-1785644	MC	Bn. Med. O. (Atchd)
S/Sgt. John F. Mangan	33 057 637		Medical NCO
Tec 3 Jerome A. Krutzch	37 182 850		Surgical Tec.

Battery "A"

Capt. Donald C. Alexander	0-447424	FA	B.C.
1st Lt. Albert J. Elgin	0-1171526	FA	Ex. O.
2d Lt. Norman W. Jahnke	0-1171612	FA	R.O.
2d Lt. Kenneth R. Harkins	0-539396	FA	Asst. Ex. O.
1st Sgt. Hiram G. Presley	38 148 372		First Sergeant
S/Sgt. John W. Bailey	35 571 583		Recon. NCO
S/Sgt. Ulrich S. Amos	14 095 265		Chief of Section
S/Sgt. John R. Hixon	36 612 382		Motor Sergeant
S/Sgt. George F. Thornberg	32 349 995		Supply Sergeant
S/Sgt. Paul L. Jackson	38 002 050		Mess Sergeant
Sgt. Robert F. Hebl	39 268 879		Commo. Chief
Sgt. John L. Tassi	20 262 907		Chief of Section
Sgt. Thomas S. MacDonald, Jr.	35 501 178		Chief of Section
Sgt. Steve L. Okeneski	36 286 057		Chief of Section
Sgt. Earl R. Mueller	36 628 143		Chief of Section

ROSTER OF KEY PERSONNEL (CONTINUED)

Battery "A" (Cont'd)

Sgt. Octavio Ponzi	32 583 532	Chief of Section
Sgt. Edward J. Giannotti	32 584 740	Chief of Section
Tec 4 James N. Gifaldi	32 585 152	Radio Operator
Tec 4 Louie J. Biasotti	39 115 684	Arty Mech.
Cpl. Arthur E. Abrahamson	36 626 552	Clerk
Cpl. Dewey D. Yates	37 250 532	Agent

Battery "B"

Capt. Maurice D. Adams	0-404434 FA	B.C.
1st Lt. Robert L. Hocker	0-1171592 FA	R.O.
2d Lt. Vincent J. Hanneken	0-1178175 FA	Motor O.
1st Sgt. Urbie P. Innes	15 042 354	First Sergeant
S/Sgt John F. Bruce	13 077 615	Supply Sgt.
S/Sgt William J. Stellato	32 371 265	Mess Sgt.
S/Sgt LeRoy H. Eggers	37 122 368	Motor Sgt.
S/Sgt Leo Alch	32 091 773	Commo Chief
Sgt. Michael F. Messich	33 264 298	Chief of Section
S/Sgt Thomas J. Mason	20 216 149	Chief of Section
Sgt. Henry C. Nothaft	36 501 431	Chief of Section
Sgt. Joseph T. Wakula	32 589 281	Chief of Section
Sgt. Carlton A. Orth	32 672 143	Chief of Section
Sgt. Fred E. Whittington	34 274 710	Chief of Section
Sgt. George W. Belcher	31 330 009	Chief of Section

Battery "C"

Capt. E. H. Newman, Jr.	0-1165254 FA	B.C.
1st Lt. Charles H. LeRoy	0-1014588 FA	Ex. O
1st Lt. Franz E. Miller, Jr.	0-1171680 FA	R.O.
2d Lt. Maurice D. Keller	0-515641 FA	Ln. Obs.
1st Sgt J. C. Frederick	6658750	First Sergeant
S/Sgt. Ernest Salvati	36 337 008	Mess Sgt.
S/Sgt. Frank C. Young	35 306 816	Supply Sgt.
S/Sgt. Clinton Glendinning	31 111 911	Motor Sgt.
S/Sgt. George Medves	35 027 107	1st Chief of Section
Sgt. Christian Andreason	36 286 491	Chief of Section
Sgt. Vachiel Jenks	35 718 516	Chief of Section
Sgt. Michael Marincel	37 269 759	Chief of Section
Sgt. Carl Tritle	37 250 632	Chief of Section
Sgt. Harold Kraft	37 246 090	Chief of Section
Sgt. Anthony Aufiero	38 298 822	Commo Chief(Radio)
Cpl. Bernard E. Flotkoetter	34 070 550	Commo Chief(Wire)
S/Sgt. William R. Cluff	12 028 838	Rcn Sgt.

Service Battery

Capt. William B. Rice	0-1171734 FA	B.C. & S-4
1st Lt. Robert J. Vanderbeck	0-1171806 FA	Asst. S-4
1st Lt. John C. Parvin	0-1178283 FA	Bn. Motor O.
1st Lt. Howard T. Graber, Jr.	0-389297 FA	S-1
2d Lt. Everett E. Hill	0-1181632 FA	Motor O.
CWO Lucas H. Baumann	W-2119800 USA	Pers Off.
WOJG Robert J. Weis	W-2123166 AUS	Maint. Off.

ROSTER OF KEY PERSONNEL (CONTINUED)

Service Battery (Continued)

1st Sgt Francis Tominosky	33 165 779	First Sergeant
S/Sgt Eugene Dolan	36 221 075	Ammo Sgt.
S/Sgt Stanley L. Stockus	36 627 090	Mess Sgt.
S/Sgt E. L. Atkins	14 095 270	Motor Sgt.
T/Sgt. Albert Pennell	35 034 602	Supply Sgt.
S/Sgt George R. Kalinich	39 237 732	Supply Sgt.
T/Sgt Eugene Nagan	36 285 848	Adm. NCO
T/Sgt William N. Wingstrom	36 612 167	Auto Mech.
M/Sgt Stanley Rossi	39 242 274	Bn Shop Foreman
S/Sgt Wilton C. Stokes	34 201 544	Bn. Supply NCO
Sgt. Norbert Koester	37 047 511	Chief of Section
Sgt. Henry V. Smith	34 213 852	Chief of Section
Sgt. Claude Handley	32 589 083	Chief of Section
Tec 4 Jack A. Eledge	37 475 008	Radio Oper.
Tec 4 John E. Joyce	33 401 477	Radio Repair Sgt. (with Hq Btry)

HEADQUARTERS
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446 U. S. Army

NARRATIVE HISTORY FOR MONTH OF JANUARY 1945

On the first of January, 1945, the 500th AFA Bn., was in Baerenthal, France, attached to Task Force Hudelson, which was composed of: 500th AFA Bn. supported by 17th FA Bn.; 117th Cavalry Mech.; 94th Cavalry Mech. (-one troop); 62d AIB; A Co., 125th Armd. Eng. Bn.; B Co., 645th TD Bn.; C Co., 83d Chemical Mortar Bn.; 1st Bn., 540th Eng. Regt.; B Co., 84th Armd. Medical Bn. On 31 December 1944, the Task Force was warned of an impending enemy attack. At 2400 that day the enemy attacked our left flank, and, by 0300, 1 January, they had inflicted serious losses on the 117th Cavalry, Mechanized. A strong attack was also launched from Eguelshardt, towards Bannstein. Throughout the night, the 500th FA fired prearranged defensive fires, and, at daylight, heavy concentrations were fired at observed enemy columns proceeding from Eguelshardt to Bannstein. At 1030, C Btry., at Fourneau-Neuf, received a heavy artillery concentration. At 1130, a 70 round concentration of 105mm fell in Baerenthal bracketing our Headquarters installations. Under cover of this fire, enemy infantry advanced to within 100 yards of town, and, at 1145, we were fighting off this attack with small arms fire. The Bn. withdrew to the alternate position in Picardie by infiltration. At 1215, C Btry. was driven from its position by intense enemy mortar and small arms fire. One M-7 hit a mine on leaving the position and was abandoned after maximum possible destruction had been effected by the crew. By 1400, the Bn. was registered in its alternate position and fired missions on cross-roads in the vicinity of Fourneau-Neuf, slowing down enemy advance along that route. During the night, 1-2 January, our mission was changed to reinforce the fires of the 155th FA Bn., then in direct support of the 313th Inf. Regt., which came in during the night. During the 2 January, defensive fires were shot in, and enemy columns advancing on Reipertswiller from the North were struck repeatedly by our massed fires. At 1600, the enemy attacked Reipertswiller and were driven back with heavy losses by our machine-gun and artillery fire. At this time, C Btry., and parts of Hqs. Btry., moved to positions in the vicinity of Lichtenberg, France. At 2300, A Btry., displaced to Ingwiller and were registered at 0200, by using WP shells. When this was completed, B Btry. displaced to Ingwiller and was registered at 0600, 3 January 1945. At 0700, 3 January 1945, a strong enemy attack, estimated to be two battalions, was stopped by our artillery fire just North of Reipertswiller, costing the enemy at least 400 dead or wounded, one light tank and several light vehicles. Enemy attacks on Wildenguth were also broken up by our fire. At 1200, C Btry., and Fire Direction Center displaced to Ingwiller, leaving a radio relay station at Lichtenberg, thus, completing our displacement. Although firing continuously in support of our infantry, we were able to make this night displacement without losing the fire of more than one battery at any time.

NARRATIVE HISTORY for MONTH of JANUARY 1945 (Cont'd)

At 1200, 3 January, the 500th FA became a part of the 14th Armored FA Group, whose mission was support of our troops in the Reipertswiller-Wildenguth area. Fires consisted mainly of TOT's on enemy troop concentrations and routes of communication within the Bitche salient.

At 1800, 6 January, the Bn. was attached to CCA and moved to Reimerswiller to support CCA's attack against any enemy penetration of the Maginot fortifications in that area. On 12 January, the enemy penetrated to the Rittershoffen-Hatten area, but were driven back by CCA's counter-attack. Again on the 13 January, the enemy attacked and were driven back from this area. On the 14 January, the enemy attacked in force and were stopped by artillery fire massed in Hatten and Rittershoffen. Our observers with CCA and CCR called for all possible fire, and within ten minutes, seven battalions of artillery were pounding this area. Enemy losses were so heavy that they were on the defensive in this sector for the remainder of the engagement. Our forces attacked the towns of Rittershoffen and Hatten until the 20 January, but did not accomplish the mission of reestablishing the main line of resistance. Our failure was due to a bitter enemy defense built around strong points in the towns, and to our own heavy losses in vehicles and personnel. During our stay in Reimerswiller, France, we were attacked by Jet Propelled planes and ME 109's daily. One ME 109 was brought down by our Anti-Aircraft fire.

On the night of 20-21 January, Sixth Corps fell back to the Haguenau Switch position. CCA, of which we were a part, was the rear guard in this withdrawal. The Bn. displaced to Surbourg by echelon keeping up normal harrassing fires and completed the withdrawal from Surbourg to Uhlwiller at 1030, 21 January. No enemy action was encountered by the rear guard. The Bn. occupied positions in Uhlwiller, moved to Hattendorf on the 22nd, and thence to Guedertheim on the 23rd, with the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 131st FA Bn. Our fires were directed at the enemy bridge-head in the vicinity of Gamsheim, France. Here our AAA attachments shot down a second enemy plane - an ME 109. On the night of 26-27 January, in the midst of a blizzard, the Bn. moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Lixhausen, and from there occupied positions in Uttwiller the following day, reinforcing the fires of the 103rd Div. Arty. The Bn. remained here through the 31 January, firing night harrassing missions.

Howard T. Graber, Jr.
HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., FA
Historian ^{W4}

HEADQUARTERS
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446 U. S. Army

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR
for the
MONTH of JANUARY 1945

MAPS:

W issembourg Sheet V-2 1/100,000
Saverne Sheet 1/50,000
Brumath Sheet 1/50,000

- 1 January 1945 Enemy struck Task Force Hudelson in Bitche Sector at about 0001. At 1030 C Btry. was shelled at Fourneau-Neuf. At 1130 enemy shelled Bn. (-) still in position, vicinity of Baerenthal, Lorraine (Q 844-420), for 15 minutes, and again at 1200 for 15 minutes. Pfc Eric Hoffman, Hq Btry, and Pfc Leo V. Fox, B Btry., WIA, during shelling and evacuated. At 1230, enemy overran Baerenthal and Bn. at 1235 was forced to withdraw. Street fighting ensued in which we accounted for several enemy dead. Vehicular casualties consisted of: (1) M-7, C Btry.; (1) Half-Track, B Btry.; (1) M-4 Tank; (1) Weapons Carrier 3/4 ton; (1) one ton trailer. During withdrawal two M-7s slid on icy roads and overturned. The following men were KIA as result: Sgt. John Tassi, A Btry., and Cpl. Micheal Cerrato, A Btry. The following men were IIA: Sgt. Steve L. Okeneski, Cpl. Leonard L. Soucy, Pfc William McNickle, Pvt. Lloyd Gillem, Pvt. Marvin H. Zabel, Pvt. Frank A. Howard, Pvt. William J. Hintz, all of A Btry. Bn. arrived Picardie (Q 815-360), 1400. Distance traveled-18 miles. Roads icy. Weather clear.
- 2 January 1945 C Btry. left Picardie at 1255; arrived at Lichtenberg (Q 816-357) at 1310. Distance moved 1 mile. Roads icy. Weather clear. No casualties. Missions fired-10 observed, 8 unobserved. 362 rds expended, (15) M-7s firing.
- 3 January 1945 Bn. left Lichtenberg by echelon at 0330; completed move to Ingwiller (Q 812-304), at 1200. Distance traveled-18 miles. Roads snowy and icy. Weather-snowing. No casualties. Bn. released from OOR, 14th AD., and placed under control of 14th AD Artillery, 1800. Missions fired-32 observed and 8 unobserved. 873 rds expended-(15) M-7s firing.
- 4 January 1945 Lt. Col. Swanson relieved from assignment, 500th AFA Bn., and assigned Tns. Hqs. 14th AD, per Par 9, SO #1, Hqs. 14th AD, dated 1 January 1945. Major Murtha assumed command this date. Bn. in position, vicinity of Ingwiller. Missions fired-12 observed-234 rds expended- (15) M-7s firing.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (Cont'd)

Month of January 1945

- 5 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Ingwiller. Missions fired - 2 observed, 15 unobserved - 240 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
- 6 January 1945 Missions fired - 2 observed, 10 unobserved - 84 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
Bn. released from Division Arty control, 14th AD, and assigned to CCA, 14th AD. Bn. moved from Ingwiller at 2245; arrived Reimerswiller (R 106-350), 7 Jan. 1945; at 0600. Weather - cloudy. Roads - snow and ice. No personnel casualties. One vehicular casualty (M-7 from C Btry.)
- 7 January 1945 Bn. arrived Reimerswiller at 0600 and went into position about town.
Missions fired - 4 observed - 36 rds fired - (16) M-7s firing.
- 8 January 1945 Telephone message from CCA, 14th AD - "Patrol reports Cleeburg held in strength by enemy at 2005. PW from 1st Co., 937th Regt., 245th VG Div. captured at (R 092-462) while enroute to establish contact with Harat Regt. at Climbach (R 090-460). States Harat Regt. attached 245th VG Div. and his own company in vicinity of Cleeburg - strength about 170 men."
Missions fired - 9 observed, 25 unobserved - 349 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
- 9 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller. Missions fired - 2 observed, 9 unobserved - 377 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
- 10 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller. Missions fired - 5 observed, 33 unobserved - 777 rds expended - (15) M-7s firing.
- 11 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller. Missions fired - 7 observed, 23 unobserved - total 471 rds fired - (15) M-7s firing.
- 12 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller. Missions fired - 9 observed, 25 unobserved - 106 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
1st Lt. Vanderbeck, WIA, SFW, serving as forward observer near Hatten, Alsace.
Pvt. Albert F. Reiss, C Btry., WIA, SFW, Kuhlendorf, Alsace.
- 13 January 1945 Bn. released from CCA, and assigned to 14th AD Artillery. Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller. Missions fired - 4 observed, 36 unobserved - 767 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (Cont'd)
Month of January 1945

- 14 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller.
Missions fired - 21 observed, 27 unobserved - 1795 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
Pvt. Willie F. Goodman, Serv. Btry., WIA, SFW, in enemy bombing of Surbourg, Alsace.
1st Lt. Hocker, WIA, SFW, serving as forward observer near Hatten, Alsace.
- 15 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller.
Missions fired - 1 observed, 53 unobserved - 1202 rds expended - (15) M-7s firing.
- 16 January 1945 Bn. in position vicinity of Reimerswiller.
Message from CCA, "SOI Items, 10-5, 24-8-30-11, 22-5 has been compromised. Avoid traffic in Afcode and Afbuzz. New items forthcoming."
1st Lt. Orr promoted to Captain.
2nd Lt. Dorland promoted to 1st Lt.
Missions fired - 7 observed, 19 unobserved - 489 rds expended - (15) M-7s firing.
- 17 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller.
Missions fired - 6 observed - 39 unobserved - 629 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
- 18 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller.
Missions fired - 15 observed, 4 unobserved - 271 rds fired - (16) M-7s firing.
- 19 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller.
Missions fired - 17 observed - 54 unobserved - 1012 rds expended - (16) M-7s firing.
- 20 January 1945 Bn. assigned to CCA, 14th AD.
Bn. in position, vicinity of Reimerswiller.
Missions fired - 13 observed, 11 unobserved - 127 rds expended - (18) M-7s firing.
Bn., less S-2, S-3 and Communication Section, and firing batteries, left Reimerswiller at 1800; arrived Altenheim ¹⁹⁴⁵ (Q 800-134), at 2400. Distance traveled - 28 miles. Weather cold and snowing. Roads icy. No casualties.
- 21 January 1945 Firing batteries and Fire Direction Center left Reimerswiller at 0430 and arrived Surbourg (R 080-345) at 0530. Distance traveled - 2½ miles. Traffic very heavy on roads.
Firing batteries and Fire Direction Center left Surbourg at 1130 and arrived Uhlwiller (Q 952-245) at 1230. Distance traveled - 11 miles. No casualties.
Hqs. Detachment left Altenheim at 1815, and arrived Uhlwiller at 2000. Distance traveled - 18 miles. No casualties.
Missions fired - 1 observed, 10 rds expended - (18) M-7s firing.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (Cont'd)
Month of January 1945

- 22 January 1945 Bn. left Uhlwiller 0800. arrived Huttendorf (Q 930-223), at 0930. Distance traveled - 4 miles.
Captain Alexander awarded Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service near Ober Otterbach, Germany, 18 Dec., 1944, per GO #3, 14th AD, 22 Jan., 1945.
Cpl. B. E. Flotkoetter, C Btry., awarded Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service at Kilstee, France, 7 Dec., 1944, per GO #3, 14th AD, 22 Jan., 1945.
Pvt. Albert F. Reiss, C Btry., awarded Purple Heart per GO #3, 14th AD, 22 Jan., 1945.
Missions fired - 13 unobserved - 293 rds expended - (18) M-7s firing.
- 23 January 1945 Bn. left Huttendorf at 1000; arrived Guedertheim (R 015-136) at 1110. Distance traveled - 10 miles. Roads icy. Weather cold. No casualties.
Bn. released from 14th AD Arty., and attached to CCA, 14th AD.
Bn. given mission of reinforcing fires of 131 FA Bn., 36th Infantry Division.
Missions fired - 1 observed - 61 rds fired - (18) M-7s firing.
(1) Vehicular casualty - Half-Track, " C" Btry., FO vehicle - knocked out by enemy mortar fire.
- 24 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Guedertheim.
Missions fired - 10 observed, 7 unobserved - 266 rds expended - (18) M-7s firing.
- 25 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Guedertheim.
Missions fired - 6 observed, 6 unobserved - 210 rds expended - (18) M-7s firing.
Bn. left Guedertheim at 2300 for Lixhausen (Q 863-216).
- 26 January 1945 Bn. arrived at Lixhausen 0300. Distance traveled - 12 miles. Weather - snowing. Roads - heavy snow fall. Bn. went into position.
Missions fired - 16 observed - 433 rds. expended - (18) M-7s firing.
Bn. left Lixhausen at 1600, arrived Uttwiller (Q 820-275) at 1700. Distance traveled - 7 miles. Weather - cloudy. Roads covered with snow. No vehicular casualties.
- 27 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Uttwiller - with mission of General Support, 103 Infantry Division Artillery.
Missions fired - 3 observed, 52 rds expended - (18) M-7s firing.
- 28 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Uttwiller.
Missions fired - 1 observed, 3 unobserved - 39 rds expended - (18) M-7s firing.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR (Cont'd)
Month of January 1945

- 29 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Uttwiller.
Missions fired - 3 observed, 18 unobserved - 167 rds fired-
(18) M-7s firing.
- 30 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Uttwiller.
Missions fired - 5 unobserved - 95 rds expended - (18) M-7s
firing.
- 31 January 1945 Bn. in position, vicinity of Uttwiller.
Missions fired - 6 unobserved - 110 rds expended - (18) M-7s
firing.

S-2 Intelligence Summary of Operations from 1 January through 31 January 1945.

The Battalion was in action from the 1 to 31 January.

I. Enemy Troops: General

- A. Enemy troops opposing our lines were more aggressive than any thus far encountered. Ambitious leadership was apparent during the entire period. At times the enemy appeared to be doped. Invariably he would run directly into our fire shouting at the top of his lungs. Due to his success in over-running our positions, the morale of the enemy was much higher than usual.

II. Action in the Bitch area.

A. Terrain:

1. Rugged terrain which confined tanks to roads. Numerous passes were present for attacking our defenses. Several high hills offered excellent observation points which were used to maximum advantage.

B. Artillery:

1. Heavy concentrations of artillery and mortar fire fell on our positions immediately preceding an assault. The attack was then initiated with the support of howitzer, bazooka, and mortar fire. Artillery employed was mostly horse-drawn and towed.

C. Patrols:

1. Enemy infiltrated through our outer defenses with numerous patrols of varying sizes probing our defenses for weak spots.
2. Small groups infiltrated behind our MLR during hours of darkness and remained in hiding during the day. When the bulk of his forces were in position, the enemy would launch his attack. Enemy was active in disrupting lines of communication and attacking CP's.
3. On several occasions the enemy used U.S. uniforms and equipment which made it difficult to distinguish him from our troops.

III. Action in the Reitterschoffen-Hatten area.

A. Terrain:

1. Rolling terrain with spotted wooded areas affording good observation and lines for defense. However, inclement weather hindered observation during most of period.

B. Obstacles:

1. Enemy defended his positions with dug in tanks and other more elaborate entrenchments.

C. Artillery:

1. Numerous counter-attacks by the enemy disclosed a marked increase of artillery fire, which, although still moderate, showed signs of growing more intense in the near future. Artillery on the east bank of the Rhine was used in supporting attacks and shelling our rear areas. Light harassing fire fell during the hours of darkness and several heavy concentrations during the daylight hours. A great number of flares was observed during the period.

<u>M49</u>	<u>M54</u>	<u>M60</u>	<u>M84</u>	<u>T 80</u>	<u>Total</u>
11,339	1889	1113	168	609	14,853 rds.

MONTHLY FIRE MISSION SUMMARY
Month of January, 1945

OBSERVED MISSIONS			UNOBSERVED MISSIONS	
Type	Air O.P.	G.O.P.	Type	
Personnel	1	58	Preparation	16
Vehicles		5	Vehicles	15
Armor	2	10	Harassing	234
Registration	17	20	Interdiction	8
Defen. Reg.		31	Counter-Battery	22
Counter-Battery	3	1	TOT	45
Smoke Screen		5	Bingo	7
Propaganda		2	M.G.'s & Mortars	5
Counter-Attacks		40	Armor	6
A T Guns		10	Propaganda	15
Preparation		3	Personnel	26
Normal Barrage		1	Counter-Attacks	108
AA Guns	1		Defensive Fires	13
Calibration		1	Normal Barrage	4
M.G.'s and Mortars		3	Emergency Barrage	2
Misc.		2	A T Guns	1
			Identification	3
			Counter-Preparation	2
TOTAL	24	192		537

Ammunition Expenditure for January 1945--

M48	M54	M60	M84	T 80	Total
11,339	1989	814	102	609	14,853 rds.

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A/A

~~NARRATIVE HISTORY~~
of the
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

FEBRUARY, 1945

The mission of the 500th AFA Bn., on 1 February 1945, was that of General Support, reinforcing the fires of the 383 FA Bn., 103 Inf. Div. The Bn. was in position in the following locations: Bn. Hqs., F.D.C., and Communications Sections, "A" and "C" batteries in Uttwiller, France, "B" battery in Menchhoffen, France, Hq. Btry. in Bouxwiller, France, Bn. Maint. in Steinbourg, France, and Serv. Btry. in Altenheim, France. Bn. Maint. moved from Steinbourg on 3 February 1945, to Bouxwiller, so as to be closer to the firing batteries. On 5 February 1945, the Bn's. mission was changed from that of reinforcing the fires of the 383 FA Bn., to reinforcing the fires of the 928 FA Bn., 103 Inf. Div. There was no change in the General Support mission. On 16 February 1945, Serv. Btry. moved from Altenheim to Steinbourg. The Bn. reverted to 14th AD Arty. control on the 18 February 1945, and moved into the 14th AD sector finding positions in the following locations: Bn. Hqs., F.D.C., Communication Sections, and "B" battery in Ettendorf, France, "A" and "C" batteries in Ringendorf, France, and Hq. Btry. and Bn. Maint. in Lixhausen, France. Serv. Btry. moved from Steinbourg to Wickersheim, France, the next day. The Bn. remained in these positions the rest of the month.

There was very little enemy activity on the VI Corps front during February, hence the 500th AFA Bn. gave attention to maintenance of vehicles and equipment, sanitation, and personal cleanliness.

Howard T. Graber, Jr.
HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., FA
Historian.

Incls:

- Chronological Calendar for month of February, 1945.
- S-2 Intelligence Summary for month of February, 1945.
- S-3 Report for month of February, 1945.
- Promotions of Officers for month of February, 1945.
- Promotions of Enlisted Men for month of February, 1945.

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CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR
of the
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
FO 446 U. S. Army

MONTH OF FEBRUARY, 1945

MAPS USED:

Wissembourg, Sheet V2, 1/100,000
Haguenau Sheet 1/50,000

- 1 February 1945 Bn. in position in the following locations:
Bn. Hqs., Fire Direction, and Communications Sections -
Uttwiller, France (Q 820-276).
Hq. Btry. - Bouxwiller, France (Q 813-251)
Btry. "A" - Uttwiller, France (Q 819.67-277.77)
Btry. "B" - Menchhoffen, France (Q 820.43-291.36)
Btry. "C" - Uttwiller, France (Q 816.28-274.99)
Serv. Btry. - Altenheim, France (Q 800-133)
Bn. Maint. - Steinbourg, France (Q 763-190)
Missions fired - 5 unobserved - 75 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 2 February 1945 No change in position.
Bn. attended orientation film, "Germany".
Missions fired - 5 unobserved, 1 observed - 54 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 3 February 1945 Bn. Maint. moved from Steinbourg to Bouxwiller, France -
no other change in position.
Missions fired - 7 harassing, 1 observed from A.O.P. - 45 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 4 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 1 observed, 7 unobserved - 45 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
1st Lt. Jahnke, "A" Btry. and S/Sgt John W. Bailey, "A" Btry., awarded the Bronze Star Medal per GO #10, Hq 14th AD, dated 4 February 1945.
- 5 February 1945 No change in position.
2d Lt's. Cotton, Jahnke, Wrathall, Luceri and Keller promoted to 1st Lt's. by SO #32, Hq. 7th Army (received this date) - date of rank from 1 February 1945.
Mission of Bn. changed from General Support reinforcing fires of the 383 FA Bn., 103 Inf. Div., to General Support, reinforcing fires of the 928 FA Bn., 103 Inf. Div.
Missions fired - 8 unobserved - 96 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.

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CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR Month of February, 1945 (Cont'd)

- 6 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 2 observed, 8 unobserved - 107 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
Corrective maintenance check began on M-7's, 2 each 2 days.
- 7 February 1945 No change in position.
Received copies of 79th Inf. Div. Commander's commendation of CCA, 14th AD, for action at Hatten, France. Received copies of 14th AD Commander's commendation of CCA's work at Hatten, France, including commendation naming Bn.
Missions fired - 2 observed: 1 personnel, 1 high burst registration - 15 unobserved: 3 preparations, 10 harassing, 2 T.O.T. - 153 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 8 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 7 observed: 2 registration check, 1 from A.O.P., 2 from G.O.P., 2 personnel - 7 unobserved: 5 harassing, 2 T.O.T. - 156 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 9 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 5 observed: 2 personnel, 2 registration, 1 enemy dug-out - 6 unobserved, 4 harassing, 2 T.O.T. - 127 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
Red alert, 1430 - all clear, 1445.
- 10 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 6 observed: 4 personnel, 1 registration, 1 registration check - 5 unobserved: 5 harassing - 114 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
Red alert, 1420 - all clear, 1450.
- 11 February 1945 No change in position.
2 Jet-propelled enemy planes reported in area, 0930 - all clear, 1000.
Missions fired - 9 observed: 6 harassing, 1 enemy personnel in open from G.O.P., 1 registration, 1 registration check - 88 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
Sgt. Steve L. Okoneski, Btry. "A", awarded the Purple Heart per GO #14, Hq. 14th AD, dated 11 February 1945.
- 12 February 1945 No change in position.
Two red alerts - 1030 and 1500 - all clear - 1100 and 1520, respectively.
Missions fired - 4 unobserved: 4 harassing - 30 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
1st Lt's. DeLong, Dorland, Keller, and Luceri, awarded the Air Medal per GO #15, Hq. 14th AD, dated 12 February 1945.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR Month of February, 1945 (Cont'd)

- 13 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 6 observed: all harassing from G.O.P. - 60 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 14 February 1945 No change in position.
Three red alerts during the day.
Missions fired - 18 observed: 3 registration from A.O.P., 10 personnel from G.O.P., 1 enemy machine gun, 3 registration checks, 1 pill-box - 9 unobserved: 3 preparation, 3 harassing, 3 T.O.T.'s - 297 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 15 February 1945 No change in position.
Red alert, 1030 - all clear, 1140.
Major Murtha and Capt. Adams attended demonstration of 60 barrel rocket-launcher at St. Jean, France, 1400, 15 February 1945.
Missions fired - 1 observed from G.O.P. on mortars - 8 unobserved: 5 harassing, 2 T.O.T.'s, 1 personnel - 137 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
1st Lt's. Wrathall and Hocker awarded the Bronze Star Medal per GO #16, Hq. 14th AD, dated 15 February 1945.
- 16 February 1945 Service Btry. moved from Altenheim, France, to Steinbourg, France.
No other change in position.
Missions fired - 3 observed: 1 personnel, 1 machine gun and mortar, 1 registration - 4 unobserved: 2 harassing, 2 T.O.T.'s - 96 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
1st Lt. Wrathall awarded the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal, per GO #17, Hq. 14th AD, dated 16 February 1945.
- 17 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 12 observed: 9 harassing, 3 on enemy vehicles - 166 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 18 February 1945 Battery Commanders and Reconnaissance party left Uttwiller, 0930, on reconnaissance of gun positions in Ringendorf and Ettendorf, France.
Bn. reverted to Div. Arty. control, 14th AD.
Bn. left Uttwiller, 1345, and arrived in new positions at 1515.
Bn. Hqs. F.D.C., and Communications Sections - Ettendorf, France, (Q 888-235).
Hq. Btry. - Lixhausen, France, (Q 863-217).
"A" Btry. - Ringendorf, France, (Q 872.57-230.96).
"B" Btry. - Ettendorf, France, (Q 887.08-232.94).
"C" Btry. - Ringendorf, France, (Q 878.95-228.00).
Serv. Btry. - Steinbourg, France, (Q 763-190).
Bn. Maint. - Lixhausen, France, (Q 863-217).
Distance traveled - 9 miles. Roads muddy and slippery.
No personnel or vehicular casualties.

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR Month Of February, 1945 (Cont'd)

- Missions fired - 3 unobserved, all harassing - 30 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 19 February 1945 Service Btry. moved from Steinbourg, France to Wickersheim, France, (Q 852-205).
No other change in position.
Missions fired - 7 observed: all registrations, (3 from A.O.P. and 4 from G.O.P.) - 53 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
Maintenance check completed on all M-7's.
- 20 February 1945 No change in position.
Lt. Cotton, R.O., "B" Btry., established an O.P. at (Q 913-234) at 0900.
Missions fired - 3 observed: all from G.O.P. - 1 observed: T.O.T. - 39 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 21 February 1945 No change in position.
Bn. attached to CCA, 14th AD, in General Support of CCB, 14th AD, - in event CCA is committed, Bn. will support CCA.
Missions fired - 1 observed: from A.O.P. - 20 rds. expended on counter-battery - 17 M-7's firing.
- 22 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 1 observed: registration from A.O.P. - 16 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 23 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 2 observed: 1 registration check from A.O.P., 1 registration from G.O.P. - 2 unobserved both counter-battery - 82 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 24 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 3 unobserved: 1 on personnel, 2 on machine guns - 30 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 25 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 1 observed: G.O.P. registration - 23 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
Pfc Merrill D. Parker, Serv. Btry., awarded the Soldier's Medal per GO #22, Hq. 14th AD, dated 25 February 1945.
1st Lt's. Cobb and Vasaly, promoted to the grade of Captain, per SO #47, 7th Army, APO 758, U. S. Army, dated 16 February 1945.
- 26 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 3 observed: all personnel from G.O.P. - 43 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 27 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - none.
- 28 February 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 2 observed misc. G.O.P. - 3 unobserved: all T.O.T. - 81 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.

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S-2 Intelligence Summary for the period 1st to 28th February 1945.

The Battalion was in action from the 1st to the 28th of February.

I. Enemy Troops: General

- A. Enemy troops contacted during the period seemed to have lost the aggressiveness displayed by those encountered during the all out German offensive of the preceeding month. Many of the men were not of efficient fighting age and had little military training.

II. Action in the vicinity of Haguenau.

A. Terrain:

1. Rolling terrain crossed by numerous streams. Heavy snow-fall during the early part of the month, followed by slush and mud, kept vehicles roadbound.

B. Obstacles:

1. Enemy defended his line from dug-in positions which were made during the lull in activity. Though personnel defending the positions were rather light, there was a decided increase in mines and booby traps.
2. The use of GI equipment and uniforms by the enemy is still being practiced. Combat troops have been reported using the shield of medical men for protection.

C. Artillery:

1. Enemy artillery was generally light throughout the period. Harassing fire was received in a few places. Heavy caliber guns, including some 380mm railroad guns, harassed our troops in a few of the larger cities. The damage inflicted by enemy artillery was slight. The enemy has apparently withdrawn much of his fire power to deeper defensive positions.

D. Enemy Reactions:

1. Enemy dropped back to delaying positions in an attempt to delay our advance as long as possible. Since our occupation of this sector, most of the SS troops have been withdrawn. The 6th SS Mtn. Division remained in the wooded area north of Rothbach. Along the Moder River the line was held by troops of the 36th and 47th VG Divisions and the 245th Inf. Division. The divisions are understrength and show a definitely defensive attitude.

James J. Cobb
JAMES J. COBB
Capt., FA
S-2

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500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

MONTHLY FIRE MISSION SUMMARY
Month of February, 1945

OBSERVED MISSIONS			UNOBSERVED MISSIONS	
Type	Air O.P.	G.O.P.	Type	
Personnel		26	Preparation	13
Registration	9	14	Harassing	98
Counter-battery	1		Vehicles	3
Pill-box		1	Counter-battery	2
M.G.'s & Mortars		3	T.O.T.	21
Misc. (Reg. Checks)	8	8	Personnel	2
Total	18	52		141

Ammunition Expenditure for February 1945:

M48	M54	M60	T-80	Total
2247	19	35	70	2371 rds.

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H E A D Q U A R T E R S
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446 U. S. Army

21 February 1945

The following is a list of Officers promoted during the months of January and February 1945.

1st Lt., Horace D. Orr, 01785644, Medical Detachment, promoted to Captain, 16 January 1945.

2d Lt. Arthur W. Dorland, 01180169, Field Artillery, promoted to 1st Lt., 16 January 1945.

2d Lt. Frank H. Cotton, 01171499, Field Artillery, promoted to 1st Lt., 1 February 1945.

2d Lt. Norman W. Jahnke, 01171612, Field Artillery, promoted to 1st Lt., 1 February 1945.

2d Lt. Phillip Wrathall, 01171850, Field Artillery, promoted to 1st Lt., 1 February 1945.

2d Lt. Vincent F. Luceri, 01168787, Field Artillery, promoted to 1st Lt., 1 February 1945.

2d Lt. Maurice D. Keller, 0515641, Field Artillery, promoted to 1st Lt., 1 February 1945.

1st Lt. James J. Cobb, 025629, Field Artillery, promoted to Captain, 16 February 1945.

1st Lt. Louis W. Vasaly, 01171807, Field Artillery, promoted to Captain, 16 February 1945.

2d Lt. Vincent J. Hanneken, 01178175, Field Artillery, promoted to 1st Lt., 1 January 1945.

For the Commanding Officer:

Howard T. Graber, Jr.
HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., FA
Historian

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H E A D Q U A R T E R S
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446 U. S. Army

22 February 1945

The following is a list of promotions of Enlisted Men for the months of January and February 1945, in this unit.

Pfc Marlin P. Moore, 19188435, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 12 January 1945, Battery "A".

Cpl. Felix J. Sefick, 36073544, promoted to Sergeant, 14 January 1945, Battery "A".

Pfc Russell A. Stuessi, 37520071, promoted to Corporal, 14 January 1945, Battery "A".

Pfc William H. Schneider, 35224330, promoted to Corporal, 14 January 1945, Battery "A".

Pfc Waldemar L. Zummach, 37094457, promoted to Corporal, 14 January 1945, Battery "A".

Pfc Melvin L. Attig, 37251552, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 20 January 1945, Battery "A".

Pvt. Joshua Cooper, 32992107, promoted to Private First Class, 22 January 1945, Battalion Headquarters.

Pvt. Joseph W. Maples, 38370737, promoted to Private First Class, 22 January 1945, Battalion Headquarters.

Pvt. Howard C. Schaffer, 32642346, promoted to Private First Class, 22 January 1945, Battalion Headquarters.

Tech. 4 Donald G. Olsen, 39459756, promoted to Staff Sergeant, 28 January 1945, Service Battery.

Tech. 5 Emil J. Lewandowski, 36286467, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 28 January 1945, Service Battery.

Pfc Louis A. Comis, 32859475, promoted to Corporal, 2 February 1945, Battery "C".

Tech 5 Luther L. Stallings, 33217730, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 11 February 1945, Battery "C".

Pfc Rexford O. Pratt, 32587770, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 11 February 1945, Battery "C".

Cpl. Alfred R. Hall, 11130831, promoted to Sergeant, 11 February 1945, Service Battery.

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Promotions of EM for the months of January and February 1945 (Cont'd)

Pvt. Charles May, 35711247, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 14 February 1945, Battery "B".

Pfc Thomas A. Barbera, 12188246, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 25 February 1945, Service Battery.

Pvt. Edward J. Wencel, 36776484, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 25 February 1945, Battery "C".

Pfc Joseph Terejko, 32589064, promoted to Corporal, 25 February 1945, Battery "C".

T/4 Frederick W. Stacey Jr., 32671974, promoted to Staff Sergeant, 25 February 1945, Headquarters Battery.

Howard T. Graber, Jr.
HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., FA
Historian.

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NARRATIVE HISTORY
of
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446 U. S. Army

MONTH of MARCH, 1945

The 1st of March found the battalion in general support of CCB, 14th Armored Division, and was located in the following positions:

Bn. Hqs., F.D.G., and Comm. Sec. - Ettendorf, France (Q 888-235)
Hqs. Btry. - Lixhausen, France, (Q 863-217)
"A" Btry. - Ringendorf, France, (Q 872.57-230.96)
"B" Btry. - Ettendorf, France, (Q 887.08-232.94)
"C" Btry. - Ringendorf, France, (Q 878.95-228.00)
Serv. Btry. - Wickersheim, France, (Q 852-205)
Bn. Maint. - Lixhausen, France, (Q 863-217)

On 2 March 1945, our mission was changed to direct support of CCB. On 4 March 1945, our mission was again changed to direct support of CCA. During the period of March 1-15 the battalion supported the defensive sector held by the division. On 15 March 1945, the battalion moved into position in the vicinity of Pfaffenhoffen, France. Our mission at this time was to reinforce the fires of the 133 P.A. Bn., 36th Infantry Division, for the opening assault of the drive to reach the Siegfried Line. On 17 March 1945, we advanced to Eberbach, France, on our final drive to clear the Germans from Alsace. On 18 March 1945, the battalion was relieved from its mission with the 36th Division and was placed in direct support of CCA. Early that morning we left Eberbach and traveled through Rittershoffen to the town of Hatten, France, occupying positions just East of the town. The towns of Rittershoffen and Hatten played an important part in this battalion's history during the month of January. The opportunity to again revisit the scene of one of the most bitter defensive battles fought by our division was an experience long to be remembered by every member of this battalion. Meeting light resistance in this area we moved on East and North to Oberlauterbach, France, but it was slow going due to blown out roads and bridges along our route. On the 19 March, we occupied positions in Schleithal, France. On 23 March 1945, the battalion was attached to CCB, in direct support of 19th A.I.B. and 47th Tk. Bn., and left Schleithal for Wissembourg and the wooded hills of the Northwest. Our mission was to expedite a break-through by the 103rd Inf. Div., and to secure any bridges across the Rhine River left intact in that area. The break-through came in the vicinity of Klingenstein, Germany, and the Combat Command moved rapidly Eastward to Rohrbach, Germany. When the leading battery ("A" Btry.) reached the Western edge of the town, it received a fire mission, and, within 4 minutes, was in position to engage enemy anti-tank guns. The effectiveness of our fires that afternoon was attested for the next day when counter-battery pieces knocked out and two flack guns destroyed. On March 24th we arrived in Bellheim, Germany, where we went on the other side of the Rhine River. On the night of 25-26 March 1945, we fired over the Rhine River a diversionary demonstration conducted

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:

CANCELLED

BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE

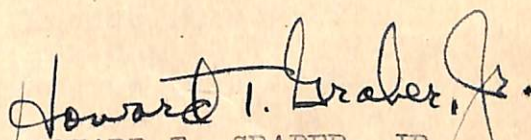
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Narrative History, Month of March 1945 (Cont'd)

by VI Corps to cover the XV Corps crossing of the Rhine River. On March 26 the battalion reverted to Division Artillery control and left for a Division assembly area at Dierbach, Germany, where we remained until the end of the month making preparations to cross the Rhine River.

Total Number of Rounds Fired for the Period - 8,284.

Total Number of Prisoners Captured for the Period - 5 Officers
- 264 EM


HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., F.A.,
Historian.

Incls:

Chronological Calendar, Month of March 1945.
S-2 Report, Month of March 1945.
S-3 Report, Month of March 1945.
Promotions, Officers and Enlisted Men, Month of March 1945.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446 U. S. Army

CHRONOLOGICAL CALENDAR
OF EVENTS
MONTH OF MARCH

Maps Used:

Haguenau Sheet, 1/50,000

- 1 March 1945 Bn. located in the following positions:
Bn. Hqs., FDC, and Comm. Sec. - Ettendorf, France (Q 888-235)
Hq. Btry. - Lixhausen, France (Q 863-217)
"A" Btry. - Ringendorf, France (Q 872.57-230.96)
"B" Btry. - Ettendorf, France (Q 887.08-232.94)
"C" Btry. - Ringendorf, France (Q 878.95-228.00)
Serv. Btry. - Wickersheim, France (Q 852-205)
Bn. Maint. - Lixhausen, France (Q 863-217)
All 105mm Howitzers calibrated.
Bn. in general support of CCB, 14th A.D.
Missions fired - 1 observed (calibration) - 5 unobserved: harassing - 88 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 2 March 1945 No change in position.
At 1200, Bn. placed in direct support of CCB.
Missions fired - 19 observed: 4 (G.O.P.) personnel, 5 (G.O.P.) registration, 8 (G.O.P.) propaganda, 2 (G.O.P.) registration check - 3 unobserved: harassing - 174 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
Coordinates of O.P.'s - No. 1 (Q 9133-2510)
No. 2 (Q 9263-2760)
No. 3 (Q 9049-2642)
No. 4 (Q 9064-2575)
No. 5 (Q 9085-2811)
No. 6 (Q 9326-2655)
- 3 March 1945 No change in position.
Red alert at 1400 - All clear at 1420.
Missions fired - 24 observed: 13 propaganda, 1 registration, 1 vehicle, 8 personnel - 9 unobserved: 4 harassing, 4 T.O.T., 1 smoke screen - 287 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 4 March 1945 No change in position.
Mission changed to direct support of CCA, 14th A.D.
Missions fired - 18 observed: 5 (G.O.P.) personnel, 1 M.G. & mortar, 1 armored vehicle, 2 defensive registration, 1 enemy O.P., 8 propaganda - 5 unobserved: 2 T.O.T., 3 defensive fires - 120 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.

Chronological Calendar, Month of March 1945, (Cont'd)

- 5 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 12 observed: 5 (G.O.P.) personnel, 1 (G.O.P.) registration, 2 (G.O.P.) propaganda, 4 (G.O.P.) defensive registrations - 4 unobserved: harassing - 173 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 6 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 14 observed: 10 propaganda, 4 personnel anti-tank, - 4 unobserved: T.O.T. - 91 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 7 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 6 observed: 1 (G.O.P.) personnel, 2 (G.O.P.) counter-battery, 3 registration checks - 2 unobserved: 1 T.O.T., 1 harassing - 110 rds. expended - 15 M-7's firing.
- 8 March 1945 No change in position.
Captain Adams, S-3, promoted to Major as of 1 March 1945, per SO 60, Hqs. 7th Army.
Missions fired - 7 observed: 2 deflection registration, 1 mortar, 1 O.P., 3 personnel - 6 unobserved: 4 harassing, 1 T.O.T., 1 personnel - 80 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 9 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 11 observed: 3 personnel, 1 vehicle, 1 O.P., 1 registration check - 9 unobserved: 4 harassing, 2 T.O.T., 1 M.G. & mortar, 1 propaganda, 1 identification - 188 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 10 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 4 observed: 2 personnel from G.O.P., 2 M.G. & mortar - 8 unobserved: 2 harassing, 1 T.O.T., 5 propaganda - 85 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 11 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 15 observed: 4 (G.O.P.) personnel, 4 M.G. & mortar, 1 S.P. gun, 3 registration, 3 screening - 4 unobserved: 3 harassing, 1 T.O.T., - 186 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 12 March 1945 No change in position.
Red alert at 1755, all clear at 1810.
Missions fired - 11 observed: 6 personnel, 1 M.G., 2 registration, 2 counter-battery - 2 unobserved: harassing - 145 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.

Chronological Calendar, Month of March 1945, (Cont'd)

- 13 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 8 observed: 6 (G.O.P.) personnel, 2 (G.O.P.) registration - 9 unobserved: 4 harassing, 1 T.O.T., 1 armored vehicle, 3 M.G. & mortars - 174 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 14 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 8 observed: 1 (G.O.P.) personnel, 4 (G.O.P.) vehicle, 2 (G.O.P.) armored vehicle, 1 M.G. & mortar (G.O.P.) - 1 unobserved: harassing - 69 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 15 March 1945 Bn. left positions, 1200, and arrived Pfafenhoffen, France, (Q 910-272) 1245. Distance traveled - 5 miles.
Bn. went into position to support fires of 133 F.A. Bn., 36th Inf. Div. - still under Div. Arty. control 14th A.D.
Missions fired: 3 observed: registration (G.O.P.), 4 unobserved: harassing - 72 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 16 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 5 unobserved: preparations - 370 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 17 March 1945 Bn. left Pfafenhoffen, France, 1630, and arrived at Eberbach, France, (Q 986-346) at 1800. Distance traveled - 9 miles.
Missions fired - 3 observed: registration (A.O.P.) - 6 unobserved: 1 preparation, 5 Bingo - 287 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 18 March 1945 Bn. left Eberbach, France, 0530, and arrived at Hatten, France, (R 175-336) 1200, and went into position.
Distance traveled - 17 miles. "B" Btry. left column at Surbourg, France, (R 083-347) and became attached directly to 501st AFA Bn.
Bn. in direct support of CCA, 14th A.D.
"A" Btry. in position at (R 185-328)
"C" Btry. in position at (R 192-324)
Bn. left Hatten, France, 1800, and proceeded toward Oberlauterbach, France. Roads very congested. One German prisoner captured.
- 19 March 1945 Bn. arrived at Oberlauterbach, France, (R243-389) 0500 and went into position. Distance traveled - 6 miles. No vehicular or personnel casualties.
"A" Btry. in position at (R 2385-3884)
"C" Btry. in position at (R 2388-3884)

Chronological Calendar, Month of March 1945, (Cont'd)

- 19 March 1945 (Cont'd) Missions fired - 7 observed: 6 A.O.P., 1 rocket gun, (A.O.P.), - 1 unobserved: rocket gun - 84 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
Two German vehicles captured in Schleithal, France.
- 20 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 9 observed: 1 registration (A.O.P.), 1 A.T. gun (A.O.P.), 1 pillbox (A.O.P.), 1 personnel, (G.O.P.), 2 armor (G.O.P.), 3 pillboxes (G.O.P.) - 18 unobserved: 3 preparation, 2 harassing, 8 rocket guns, 2 propaganda, 3 smoke screen, 1037 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 21 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 2 observed: 1 rocket gun (A.O.P.), 1 pillbox (G.O.P.) - 22 unobserved: 14 preparation, 1 interdiction, 2 Bingo, 2 personnel, 2 counter-battery, 1 vehicle - 813 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 22 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 1 observed: registration check (A.O.P.) - 15 unobserved: preparations - 780 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 23 March 1945 Bn. attached to CCB, and placed in direct support of 19th A.I.B. and 47th Tk. Bn.
Bn. left Schleithal, France, 0600, crossed German frontier, 0700, and arrived at Rohrbach, Germany, (R 289-598) at 1800. Distance traveled - 28 miles. Roads littered with enemy equipment, vehicles, dead horses and German soldiers. Weather was very clear.
1st Lt. John C. Parvin promoted to Captain as of 16 March 1945, per SO 75, Hqs. 7th Army.
Prisoners captured: "B" Btry. - 106 EM.
Serv. Btry. - 3 EM, 3 Officers.
At Klingenstein, Germany, Bn. passed through elements of 103rd Inf. Div. consisting of 2 companies of Medium Tanks, 1 company of Light Tanks, plus 1 battalion of Infantry.
Missions fired - 10 observed: 1 personnel (A.O.P.), 2 registration (A.O.P.), 3 personnel (G.O.P.), 1 M.G. & mortar, 1 smoke screen, 2 A.T. guns (G.O.P.), 1 unobserved: preparation - 355 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 24 March 1945 Bn. left Rohrbach, Germany, 0705, and arrived Bellheim, Germany, (R 401-659) 1630. Distance traveled - 12 miles.
Missions fired - 10 observed: 1 registration (G.O.P.), 5 personnel, 1 harassing, 3 A.T. guns - 18 unobserved: 1 counter-attack, 14 harassing, 2 A.T. guns, 1 interdiction - 825 rds. expended -

Chronological Calendar of Events, Month of March 1945 (Cont'd)

- 24 March 1945 18 M-7's firing.
(Cont'd) Prisoners captured: "B" Btry. - 103 EM, 2 Officers
Serv. Btry. - 51 EM
- 25 March 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 9 observed: 6 personnel (G.O.P.),
1 ammo dump (G.O.P.), 1 flack gun (G.O.P.), 1 reg-
istration (A.O.P.) - 4 unobserved: 1 personnel, 3
harassing - 369 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
- 26 March 1945 Bn. released from CCB, 14th A. D., 0800, and re-
verted to Div. Arty. control.
Missions fired - 2 observed: 1 pillbox (G.O.P.),
1 personnel (G.O.P.) - 24 unobserved: preparation -
1132 rds. expended - 18 M-7's firing.
Bn. left Bellheim, Germany, 1530, and arrived at
Dierbach, Germany, (R 240-539) at 1730. Bn. re-
joined 14th A.D. at 1800. Distance traveled -
18 miles. Roads good except for by-passes at
two blown bridges. Weather fair.
- 27 March 1945 Bn. in Assembly Area under Div. Arty. control,
doing maintenance work on vehicles.
- 28 March 1945 No change in position or atatus.
- 29 March 1945 No change in position or status.
- 30 March 1945 No change in position or status.
Tec 5 Manthei, "A" Btry., died of wounds received
in action on 22 March 1945.
- 31 March 1945 No change in position.
Div. alerted for movement across Rhine River to
an assembly area, vic. Darmstadt, Germany.

S-2 Intelligence Summary of Operations for the Period 1st to 31st March 1945.

The Battalion was in action from the 1st to the 26th of March.

I. Enemy Troops: General

- A. Prisoners of War taken during the period indicated that a good majority of their men were only too willing to surrender if the opportunity presented itself. Commanders were reported to have threatened violent action against the families of deserters. Personnel attempting to desert were to be shot by their fellow soldiers. Anyone captured uninjured was considered a deserter. Troops whose home communities had been overrun by the allies, especially Poles, were relieved from frontline units in order to curb the number of desertions. Allied propaganda broadcasts brought favorable results, especially after the allied offensive in the northwest had begun. Due to the immense devastation of enemy communication facilities in rear areas by our air force, supplies and troops were moved with great difficulty. Food and gasoline were meager in quantity, also largely due to strategical bombing. Equipment was poor and morale reached a low ebb in most units. Replacements were few and nearly all known enemy units were identified in the line. Few, if any, reserve units were available to meet increased pressure. Shifting of troops along the front was done in an attempt to slow the tide of the allied advance.

II. Action in the Vicinity of Haguenau.

A. Terrain:

1. Rolling terrain crossed by numerous streams. Principal defense line made use of the Moder River and the Haguenau Woods.

B. Obstacles:

1. Enemy defended his lines with emplacements, bunkers, and machine-gun positions which were enlarged and improved during the lull in activity.

C. Artillery:

1. Enemy artillery fire was generally light with little more than harassing fire from various caliber weapons being encountered. Ammunition supply was critical.

D. Patrols:

1. Patrols were frequently encountered. Their primary mission was to take prisoners. Enemy outposts were alert and sensitive to our patrols.

E. Enemy Reactions:

1. Enemy was content to hold the ground that he still had control of. Most of his time was spent in preparation for the expected allied offensive in this sector. The line was largely held by elements of the 36th and 47th VG Divisions.

III. Action in the Vicinity of Wissembourg.

A. Terrain:

1. Rolling terrain with heavily wooded areas and the Lauter River which afforded excellent lines for defense. The enemy fell back to the Siegfried Line after increase of allied pressure and with the threat of flank attack by the Third Army from the northwest.

100th Armored Field Artillery Bn.

B. Obstacles:

1. Enemy defended in successive delaying positions. Elaborate entrenchments in extremely good vantage points were utilized by the enemy. Extensive minefields, road craters, and road-blocks were used to impede our advance. Booby traps also became more numerous.

C. Artillery:

1. Enemy let loose with heavy concentrations of artillery and nebelwerfer fire as he fought a delaying action. Self propelled guns were left behind while the slower moving vehicles were moved back to the Siegfried Line. Most of the artillery was horse drawn. Daylight movement was held to a minimum.

D. Enemy Reactions:

1. Enemy dropped back to successive delaying positions employing every means possible to slow our advance, thus gaining more time to evacuate supply depots and troops. Although troops were well trained they were ready to surrender after only moderate resistance. Their companies were far understrength with few replacements coming in. The majority of the troops realized that any further resistance was useless and would only bring on more casualties.

E. Summary:

1. Penetration of the Siegfried Line was accomplished upon the withdrawal of enemy troops hastened by threat from their flanks with the rapid advance of Third Army armor and infantry from the northwest. Rapid follow-up and penetration of the fleeing troops towards the Rhine was accomplished and thousands were made prisoners of war. The German Army suffered a major defeat as the Seventh and Third Armies mopped up the entire area west of the Rhine.

AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE:

M48
6827

M48
6827

MCO
299

M41
171

T-105
23

TOTAL: 8142 RDS.

Louis W. Vasaly

LOUIS W. VASALY
Capt., FA
S-2

500th Armored Field Artillery Bn.

MONTHLY FIRE MISSION REPORT

for
March 1945
U. S. Army

OBSERVED MISSIONS			UNOBSERVED MISSIONS	
Type	Air O.P.	G.O.P.	Type	
Personnel	1	67	Preparation	63
Vehicles		6	Harassing	60
Armor		6	Interdiction	2
Registration	17	4	Vehicles	1
Defensive Registration		16	Counter-Battery	10
Counter-Battery	2	4	TOT	17
Smoke Screen		4	Bingo	7
AT Guns	1	6	M.G.'s & Mortars	4
Propaganda		41	Armor	1
Pillboxes	1	5	Propaganda	8
M.G.'s & Mortars		20	Smoke Screen	4
O.P.'s		5	Personnel	4
Calibration		1	C/A's	2
Miscellaneous	1	9	Defensive Fires	3
	<u>23</u>	<u>194</u>	AT Guns	2
			Identification	1
				<u>189</u>

AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE:

M48	M54	M60	M84	T-105	T-80	Prop M54	M-67
6823	402	299	121	23	329	143	2

TOTAL: 8142 Rds.

HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., F. A.,
Historian.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446 U. S. Army

9 April 1945

The following is a list of promotions of Officers and Enlisted Men for the month of March 1945, in this unit.

Captain Maurice D. Adams, 0404434, Field Artillery, promoted to Major, 1 March 1945.

1st Lt. John C. Parvin, 01178283, Field Artillery, promoted to Captain, 16 March 1945.

Pvt. William Roy, 33800169, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 1 March 1945, Battery "C".

Pfc Cranston F. Jones, 36284486, promoted to Corporal, 1 March 1945, Battery "B".

Pfc Francis X. Preuhs, 33406341, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 8 March 1945, Battalion Headquarters.

Pfc Walter H. Fullerton, 39903886, promoted to Corporal, 16 March 1945, Service Battery.

Pfc Frederick Keene, 39547054, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 16 March 1945, Service Battery.

T/5 John D. Secash, 32584595, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 16 March 1945, Headquarters Battery.

Howard T. Graber, Jr.
HOWARD T. GRABER, JR.
1st Lt., F. A.,
Historian.

NARRATIVE HISTORY
of the
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

MONTH of APRIL 1945

SECRET

On Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945, in its first mission under XV Corps control the 500th AFA Bn. went on its Easter parade by making a 109 mile overnite road march, which was climaxed by the crossing of the Rhine River at 0800 that morning. In an impressive ceremony prior to leaving several members of the Battalion were decorated by Brig. General A. G. Smith, Commanding General of the 14th Armored Division. The Bronze Star Medal was awarded to Major Joseph J. Murtha, Battalion Commander, Lt. Robert L. Hocker, Lt. Kenneth Harkins, Sgt. Warren Stevenson, Sgt. James Paroubek, Cpl. Charles Dixon, and T/5 Russell Moore. Lt. Philip Wrathall was awarded the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star. Lts. Dorland, Luceri, DeLong and Keller, were awarded the Air Medal and Pfc Merrill Parker received the Soldiers Medal.

On 2 April 1945, at 0300 while continuing on its march the Battalion was strafed by enemy planes. Several vehicles were hit and Lt. Charles Leroy and Pfc John Wozniak were wounded by shrapnel from the planes 20mm cannon.

Under XV Corps control and a member of CCA, the Battalion jumped off during the morning hours of 2 April. Resistance was unusually light and the armored spearhead was halted only temporarily by light and scattered enemy opposition. The Battalion working in direct support of the 68th A.I.B., fired on enemy infantry and self-propelled guns, with excellent effect. Two direct hits were also scored on an enemy OP neutralizing it. Another mission on the same day found the Battalion firing on enemy personnel boarding railroad cars in a station. The fire was particularly effective and wiped out large numbers of the rapidly shrinking Nazi army. In the first two days of this drive the Battalion captured many prisoners with Btry. "A" taking 134 PW's and Btry. "B" with 106 PW's leading the parade. In the vicinity of Rossbach, Germany, Capt. William B. Rice, while reconnoitering for a battery position, on 4 April, fell into enemy hands.

On the 7 April 1945, Lt. Milton O. Turner, acting as a forward observer, with the 48th Tk. Bn., was killed by a sniper in Bendlorenzen, Germany. Cpl. John Rossi, his gunner, was hit by the same bullet and was slightly wounded. The Battalion entered the town behind the Tankers and for a while had a hot time with enemy snipers firing from all directions, and enemy 152mm Nebelwerfers falling into the positions regularly. Two men of Btry. "C" were slightly wounded by this rocket fire. An enemy observer was spotted on a nearby hill and was immediately brought under direct fire by our M-7's and 3.1 inch hows. He disappeared in thin air after a direct hit from a 105mm shell. To combat the snipers fire the batteries had to send out patrols in infantry fashion. They succeeded in killing or capturing a large number of enemy. In the space of 12 hours this hotbed of enemy activity had become so near rear echelon that the men had to go forward to reach the ordinarily rear echelon elements, as the division APO, Ordnance Battalion and the like. At this time the division was bypassed by the 45th Inf. Div. and for the next

SECRET

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Apr 45

619

new

Narrative History, Month of April 1945, (Continued)

four days the time was spent on repair and maintenance of material. This area marked the beginning of a procession, which now seems as if it will never end. The return by foot, bicycle and wagon of the millions of enslaved peoples to their native lands. On this phase of the drive the Battalion took 282 prisoners.

Returning to action the Battalion was again assigned to direct support of the 68th A.I.B., and on 12 April crossed the Main River. As our columns penetrated deeper into the redoubt there was a great increase of enemy activity, with our AA crews downing two Focke Wolf 190's and scoring several other possibilities. On the night of the 14 April enemy air activity was again heavy with our columns first exposed by enemy flares and then strafed and bombed. The Battalion fired thousands of rounds at the planes with no immediate effect, but in a few minutes out of the woods came a group of 74 SS troops lined up in column of twos, carrying a white flag as their guidon. They had been frightened out by the heavy AA fire. The Division's objective had been to cut the autobahn leading into Nuremberg, and this was accomplished on 15 April 1945.

On 16 April, Capt. William B. Rice, who had been MIA since 4 April, escaped from his captors, the 2nd Panzer Division, and returned to the Battalion that morning. At 2000 that same day, while making another reconnaissance, Capt. Rice and his vehicle party were ambushed. He again fell into enemy hands, with his vehicle destroyed and he himself reported wounded. The remainder of the party led by Capt. Ezra Newman, managed to escape and returned to the Battalion.

On 18 April a report was received from Higher Headquarters that the enemy was preparing to counter-attack with at least three divisions on the line extending from Neumarkt to Puchelt. Orders were to hold our positions using all available weapons. The Battalion was in position at Grubb and established a very strong perimeter defense. Our guns at times were firing at compasses that varied 3200 miles from one mission to the next. GCR on our right flank received the brunt of the enemy attack, which it repulsed lessening the immediate danger. At one time one battery was firing in ~~the~~ opposite directions at the same time and though organized resistance in strength ^{was} crushed our combat command was continually harassed by small pockets of fanatical SS men. The rank and file of the German Army at this time appeared to be quite willing to quit when given the opportunity, but the SS troops appeared as equally determined to fight to the bitter end.

In the action at Neumarkt, Sgt. Warren Stevenson, was seriously wounded and Lt. Norman Jahnke slightly wounded when the house they were using for an OP was hit by an enemy AP shell. On this day the Battalion got in some effective fire knocking out enemy tanks, a personnel carrier, several enemy mortars and a number of anti-tank guns. The Battalion also fired many missions on enemy personnel with good effect observed in each case.

Following this action the division was put into the III Corps of the Third Army. The Battalion was again put in direct support of the 68th A.I.B. Our mission was to protect the left flank of the division and to seize all crossings on the Danube River. The column ran into fierce resistance. The Battalion was called upon for many fire missions with enemy personnel,

SECRET

Narrative History, Month of April 1945 (Cont'd)

anti-tank guns, vehicles and tanks being among the targets. Again effect was observed to be excellent.

On 22 April 1945, the Battalion was put under Div. Arty. control in general support. The division continued on its mission and moved rapidly to the Southwest to secure crossings on the Danube River, where blown bridges prevented immediate crossings. The Danube was crossed at 1330 on 23 April 1945. The column then took off at great speed for the town of Mandshut, where it was again held up by blown bridges. In this last mission our columns liberated the first American Prisoners of War seen so far in this sector. As a fitting climax for the drive, Sgt. W. A. Thomas found his brother T/ Sgt James Thomas of the Army Air Corps among the liberated prisoners at Moosburg.

The Battalion as a part of the 7th Army received from Lt. General Alexander Patch, Commanding General of the 7th Army, a commendation for its drive on the East of the Rhine River.

On 8 April 1945, a commendation was also received from Lt. General Jacob Devers, 6th Army Group Commander, for this same action.

Gordon M. Janth
GORDON M. JANATH,
2d Lt., PA
Historian.

SECRET

CHRONOLOGICAL STATEMENT
500TH AIRBORNE FIELD ARTILLERY BATTAL ALIAS
120 446 U. S. Army

MONTH OF APRIL 1945

- 1 April 1945 Cn. left Biebach, Germany, at 1150, 31 March 1945. Arrived at Zickhard, Germany, at 1030, 1 April 1945. Roads and weather good. Distance traveled 109 miles. Cn. was relieved from attach to VI Corps, 7th Army, and came under control of the IV Corps, 7th Army. Cn. attach to "CCA".
- 1 April 1945 Cn. left Zickhard, Germany, at 0100, crossed the Rhine River at 0000 and arrived at Leestadt, Germany, at 1840. Distance traveled - 52 miles. Cn. arrived by enemy planes at 0330, Lt. Charles E. Leroy and Pfc John S. Rozniak were wounded.
- 3 April 1945 At 1330 Cn. left Leestadt, Germany, arrived at Ramersbach, Germany, at 1605. Left Ramersbach, Germany, at 1630, arrived at Lohrhaupten, Germany, at 1740. Distance traveled - 12 miles.
- Positions at Ramersbach:
Btry "A" - 2012-5800
Btry "B" - 2190-5895
Btry "C" - 2170-5895
Hq., 1st Btry - 2170-5890
- Positions at Lohrhaupten:
Hq., 1st Btry - 2470-7122
Btry "A" - 2773-6182
Btry "B" - 2497-7187
Btry "C" - 2465-7121
- Missions fired - observed 4. 3 A.O.P., personnel,
1 A.O.V., A.O.P., - rounds expended - 67, 16 M-7's
firing.
- 4 April 1945 Cn. left Lohrhaupten, Germany, at 0730 - arrived Schnittdorf, Germany, 1700. Distance traveled 25 miles.
- Positions in Schnittdorf:
Btry "A" - 3830-8367
Btry "C" - 4070-8770
- At 1030, Cn. less Btry. "A" moved to 3 d Bruckmann.
Btry "A" rejoined Cn. at 2110.
Capt. W.A. Sten, became ill in vicinity of Bruckmann, Germany, at or about 2330.
- Positions at 3 d Bruckmann:
Hq., 1st Btry - 4313-9089
Btry "A" - 4293-9074
Btry "B" - 4293-9074
Btry "C" - 4313-9089
- Missions fired - 3 observed: 1 A.O.P., personnel, 2
A.O.V., A.O.P., - rounds expended - 16 M-7's firing.

SECRET

Chronological Calendar, Month of April 1945 (Cont'd)

- 5 April 1945 Bn. in position at Bad Bruckenau, Germany. At 1030, Btry's "A" and "B" moved to Bruckenau, Germany. At 1200 remainder of battalion moved enau. Distance traveled - 2 miles.
Positions at Bruckenau:
Btry "A" - 4598-9154
Btry "B" - 4542-9144
Btry "C" - 4554-9160
Missions fired - 6 observed: 2 G.O.P., AT guns, 2 G.O.P. SP guns, 2 A.O.P., SP guns. Unobserved: 4 harassing, 3 counter-battery. 508 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 6 April 1945 Bn left Bruckenau at 0900, arrived Oberriedenburg, (5144-9349) at 0930. Bn moved to Oberbach (5300-9700) arriving at 1630. Distance traveled 6 miles.
Missions fired - 6 observed: 1 G.O.P. registration, 4 G.O.P. counter-battery, 1 G.O.P., E.O.P. 252 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 7 April 1945 Bn left Oberbach at 0500, arrived Bendlorensen at 1800. Distance traveled - 19 miles.
Bn under continual rocket and sniper fire. Lt. M.O. Turner, KIA, T/5 J.B. Rossi, WIA at Bendlorensen.
Missions fired - 6 observed: 4 G.O.P. registration, 1 G.O.P., rocket gun, 1 A.O.P. rocket gun. 2 unobserved 1 rocket gun, 1 harassing. 108 rds expended - 16 M-7's firing.
- 8 April 1945 No change in position.
- 9 April 1945 No change in position.
- 10 April 1945 No change in position.
- 11 April 1945 Bn left Bendlorensen at 1630, arrived at Trappstadt, (019-949) at 1930. Distance traveled - 21 miles.
Bn still under control of "OCA".
- 12 April 1845 Bn left Trappstadt at 0600, arrived at Doringstadt, (2800-7000) at 1530. Distance traveled - 39 miles.
- 13 April 1945 Bn left Doringstadt at 1300, crossed Main River at 1530, and arrived at Sweisdorf (35-6100) at 0130, 14 April 1945. Distance traveled : 23 miles.
Missions fired - 2 observed: 1 G.O.P., AT gun, 1 G.O.P. registration - 41 rds expended - 17 M-7's firing.
- 14 April 1945 Bn left Sweisdorf at 0630, arrived at Drosendorf, (0490-3300) at 1420. Distance traveled - 15 miles.
- 15 April 1945 Bn left Drosendorf at 0600, arrived Leopoldstein (1160-6328) at 2200. Distance traveled - 28 miles.

Chronological Calendar, Month of April 1945 (Cont'd)

- 16 April 1945 Mr. left Leopoldsdorf at 1530, arrived at Hornersdorf at 1430. Distance traveled - 5 miles.
Capt. W. S. Hico, TIA to duty at 0900 to 1100 at 1930.
Missions fired - 4 observed: 1 A.O.F. personnel, 3 A.O.F. registration. 15 rds. expended - 17 A-7's firing.
- 17 April 1945 Mr. left Hornersdorf at 1430 arrived at Grubb (64-89) at 2240. Distance traveled - 20 miles.
Missions fired - 3 observed: 1 A.O.F. personnel, 1 A.O.F. collection, 1 A.O.F. registration. 9 observed: all Hornersdorf. 315 rds. expended - 16 A-7's firing.
- 18 April 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 22 observed: 1 A.O.F. personnel, 1 A.O.F. tank, 3 A.O.F. registration, 2 A.O.F. collection, 3 A.O.F. personnel, 2 A.O.F. AT gun, 3 A.O.F. armor, 1 A.O.F. AT gun, 1 A.O.F. interdiction. 539 rds. expended - 16 A-7's firing.
- 19 April 1945 Mr. left Grubb at 1440, arrived Huesheim (609-975) 2200. Distance traveled - 5 miles. "A" Str. was attached to 40th Td. Bn.
Capt. W. S. Hico, TIA, 4/18/45. Hico and 1st Lt. Henson, TIA.
Missions fired - 2 observed: 2 A.O.F. counter-battery, 3 A.O.F. personnel, 3 A.O.F. vehicles, 2 A.O.F. armor, 3 A.O.F. registrations, 3 A.O.F. AT guns, 1 A.O.F. registration. 840 rds. expended - 17 A-7's firing.
- 20 April 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 12 observed: 1 A.O.F. counter-battery, 4 A.O.F. personnel, 2 A.O.F. vehicular, 4 A.O.F. defensive fired, 1 A.O.F. miscellaneous. 1 unobserved - miscellaneous. 766 rds. expended - 17 A-7's firing.
- 21 April 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 12 observed: 4 A.O.F. personnel, 4 A.O.F. collection registration, 2 A.O.F. vehicular, 1 A.O.F. counter-battery, 1 A.O.F. miscellaneous. 766 rds. expended - 17 A-7's firing.
- 22 April 1945 As of 0601 Mr. was placed under Div. Arty. control in general support.
Mr. left Huesheim at 1400, arrived Surwang (62-52) 2000. Distance traveled - 30 miles. Str. "A" supported 40th Td. Bn. 19-22 April 1945.
Missions fired - 11 observed: 2 A.O.F. counter-battery, 3 A.O.F. personnel, 1 A.O.F. A.O.F. 4 unobserved: 3 personnel, 1 enemy CP. 711 rds. expended - 16 A-7's firing.

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Chronological Calendar, Month of April 1945 (Cont'd)

23 April 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 1 observed: A.O.P. armor. 1 un-
observed: harassing. 4 rds. expended - 17 M-7's
firing.

24 April 1945 At 0100 the 14th Arad. Div. was released from XV
Corps and placed under the III Corps, 3rd Army.
Bn. left Burwang at 2030, arrived Pfahldorf (63-
46) at 2230. Distance traveled - 5 miles.

25 April 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 4 unobserved: harassing. 72 rds.
expended - 17 M-7's firing.

26 April 1945 Bn. left Pfahldorf at 1330, arrived at Demling at
2300. Distance traveled - 19 miles.
Bn. released from Div. Arty. control and reverted
to "OGA" control.
Missions fired - 2 observed: A.O.P. registration.
2 unobserved: counter-battery. 111 rds. expended -
18 M-7's firing.

27 April 1945 Bn. left Demling 0830, arrived Theising, 0900.
Distance traveled - 1 mile.
Missions fired - 4 observed: 1 A.O.P. personnel,
1 A.O.P. SP gun, 1 A.O.P. in f. OP, 1 A.O.P. misc.
87 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.

28 April 1945 Bn. left Theising 1200, arrived Unterepfenbach
(81-30) 1900. Distance traveled - 36 miles.
Bn. crossed Danube River at 1330 at Ingolstadt.
Missions fired: 4 observed: 1 A.O.P. infantry, 3
A.O.P. vehicles. 120 rds. expended - 16 M-7's
firing.

29 April 1945 Bn. left Unterepfenbach at 0600, arrived Pfettrach
(95-11) 1730. Distance traveled - 16 miles.
Bn. attached to OGA in direct support of 68th A.I.B.
Btry "B" attached to 47th Tk. Bn. in direct support.
Missions - 3 obs. 1 AT gun, 2 personnel, 71 rds fired.

30 April 1945 Bn. left Pfettrach 0845, arrived Wang (10-97) 1030.
Distance traveled 14 miles.
Missions fired - 11 observed: 5 personnel, 2 regis-
tration, 4 AT gun. 7 unobserved: 3 preparation, 4
harassing - 414 rds. expended - 17 M-7's firing.

Total Prisoners of War captured - 810
Total miles traveled - 502
Total Missions fired - 169
Total rounds fired - 5694

SECRET

Chronological Calendar, Month of April 1945 (Cont'd)

23 April 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 1 observed: B.O.P. armor. 1 un-
observed: harassing. 4 rds. expended - 17 M-7's
firing.

24 April 1945 At 0100 the 14th Grad. Div. was released from XV
Corps and placed under the III Corps, 3rd Army.
Bn. left Burwang at 2030, arrived Pfahldorf (63-
46) at 2230. Distance traveled - 5 miles.

25 April 1945 No change in position.
Missions fired - 4 unobserved: harassing. 72 rds.
expended - 17 M-7's firing.

26 April 1945 Bn. left Pfahldorf at 1330, arrived at Beulitz at
2300. Distance traveled - 19 miles.
Bn. released from Div. Arty. control and reverted
to "OGA" control.
Missions fired - 2 observed: A.O.P. registration.
2 unobserved: counter-battery. 111 rds. expended -
18 M-7's firing.

27 April 1945 Bn. left Beulitz 0830, arrived Theising, 0900.
Distance traveled - 1 mile.
Missions fired - 4 observed: 1 B.O.P. personnel,
1 B.O.P. SP gun, 1 B.O.P. in f. CP, 1 B.O.P. misc.
87 rds. expended - 16 M-7's firing.

28 April 1945 Bn. left Theising 1200, arrived Unterepfenbach
(81-30) 1900. Distance traveled - 36 miles.
Bn. crossed Danube River at 1330 at Ingolstadt.
Missions fired: 4 observed: 1 B.O.P. infantry, 3
B.O.P. vehicles. 120 rds. expended - 16 M-7's
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Total Prisoners of War captured - 810
Total miles traveled - 502
Total Missions fired - 169
Total rounds fired - 5694

SECRET

500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
MONTHLY FIRE MISSION REPORT
for
April 1945

OBSERVED MISSIONS			UNOBSERVED MISSIONS	
Type	Air O.P.	G.O.P.	Type	
Personnel	2	49	Preparation	8
Vehicles	1	6	Harassing	25
Armor	1	10	Counter-Battery	4
Registration	5	7	TOT	2
Ref. Registration		16	Personnel	2
Counter-Battery	1	5	AT Guns	1
AT Guns	2	14	Identification	1
M.O.'s & Mortars		3		
Miscellaneous	1	3		
	<u>13</u>	<u>113</u>		<u>43</u>

AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE

M49
4706

M54
443

M60
485

M84
35

T-80
5

TOTAL: 5694 Rds.

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 446, 4TH ARMORED DIVISION, U.S. Army
U. S. Army

The following is a list of promotions of Enlisted Men for the month of April 1945, from this unit.

Pvt. Floyd M. Connor, 19177398, promoted to Private First Class, 1 April 1945.
Pvt. Edward A. Rna, 32562795, promoted to Private First Class, 1 April 1945.
Pvt. Thomas Garcia, 38169963, promoted to Private First Class, 1 April 1945.
Cpl. Donald W. A. Hoeller, 37663547, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 6 April 1945.
T/5 Robert B. Gerstaecker, 35057975, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 8 April 1945.
T/5 Olin E. Hopper, 35688441, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 6 April 1945.
T/5 Iru S. Collard, 37245194, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 8 April 1945.
Pfc Charles E. Harris, 37402626, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 8 April 1945.
Sgt. Melce E. Lancaster, 38151606, promoted to First Sergeant, 16 April 1945.
Pfc Joe T. Garner, 34903597, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 16 April 1945.
Pfc James B. Embrey, 18214654, promoted to Corporal, 16 April 1945.
Pvt. Melvyn E. Brooks, 37615475, promoted to Private First Class, 18 April 1945.
Pvt. Nicholas S. Linco, 32872233, promoted to Private First Class, 18 April 1945.
T/5 Lee M. Flew, 37250574, promoted to Technician Fourth Grade, 24 April 1945.
Pfc Alden L. Magault, 37339443, promoted to Technician Fifth Grade, 24 April 1945.

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
14TH ARMORED DIVISION, APO 446
U. S. ARMY

CHK/nrb
30 March 1945

SUBJECT: Appreciation of Support Rendered.

TO : Commanding Officer, 14th Armored Division Artillery,
APO 446, U. S. Army.

THRU : Commanding General, 14th Armored Division, APO 446,
U. S. Army.

1. Combat Command A has now fought several actions in which it has had the direct support of a part or all of the 14th Armored Division Artillery. The most recent battle was that for the penetration of the SEIGFRIED LINE, near KAPSWYER, GERMANY.

2. I wish to take this means of making of record that the cooperation of yourself, staff and battalion commanders has been complete and of highly proficient character. The organization of your artillery fires, the communications to effect prompt delivery, the distribution of your liaison officers and forward observers to insure coordination and certainty of results, and the generous attitude of your representatives at my headquarters, have met my fullest expectations of fine artillery support for the tactical operations of Combat Command A.

3. your command at the earliest opportunity.

2. I further take this opportunity to state that the VI Corps Commander and the VI Corps Commander have each stated that in their view of this Division is the equal of any artillery unit under their command.

/s/ C. H. Karlstad
/t/ C. H. KARLSTAD
Col., CCA
Comdg.

SECRET

AG 201.22 (G) 1st Ind. jpm
(30 Mar 45 - Appreciation of Support Rendered)
HEADQUARTERS 14TH ARMORED DIVISION, APO 446, U. S. Army, 4 April
1945.

TO: Commanding Officer, 14th Armored Division Artillery.

The Commanding General is pleased to transmit this letter of commendation and to add his personal commendation for the outstanding work of all artillery units in the Division.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL SMITH:

/s/ William C. Golden
/t/ WILLIAM C. GOLDEN
Lt. Col., A. G. D.
Adjutant General.

AG 201.22 (G) 2nd Ind.
(30 Mar 45) - (Appreciation of Support Rendered).
HEADQUARTERS 14TH ARMORED DIVISION ARTILLERY, APO 446, U. S. Army.

TO: Hq. Btry., 499, 500, 501 A. F. A. Bns.

1. The Artillery Commander is pleased to note this letter of appreciation and the commendation by the Commanding General contained therein and desires that the contents of this letter be made known to all members of your command at the earliest opportunity.

2. I further take this opportunity to make known to you that the VI Corps Commander and the VI Corps Artillery Commander have each stated that in their belief the artillery of this Division is the equal of any artillery that had been under their command.

/s/ Maurice K. Kurtz
/t/ MAURICE K. KURTZ
Colonel, FA
Commanding.

SECRET

AG 201.22 (G) 3rd Ind.
(30 Mar 45 - Appreciation of Support Rendered)
HEADQUARTERS 500TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, APO 446,
U. S. Army, 11 April 1945.

TO: All Battery Commanders.

1. I wish you would bring to the attention of all members of your respective batteries the above commendations.

2. I would also like to add my commendation at this time, to each officer and enlisted man for the splendid and outstanding performance of this battalion during the last operation.

Joseph J. Murtha
JOSEPH J. MURTHA,
Major, F. A.,
Commanding.

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH ARMY GROUP
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
APO 23

27 March 1945.

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Commanding General, VI Corps, APO 46, U. S. Army.

THRU: Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758,
U. S. Army.

In reviewing the operations of the Seventh Army for the past 12 days, I once again wish to express to you and your gallant troops my appreciation for the outstanding job which they have done. As one of the tried and proven veteran Corps of our Army you have again demonstrated your superiority over the enemy. You have added another victory to your already well known campaigns of Salerno, Anzio and Southern France.

On 15 March you were ordered to attack the German defensive positions along the Moder River and, continuing that attack, breach the Siegfried Line. With the 3 DIA and CG6 of the 5 DB attached, you soon cleared the city of Haguenau and by 18 March had captured Lauterbourg. Wissembourg fell to your forces on 19 March. Task Force Meabert, including the Allied forces already attached to you, was formed on the 19th. The VI Corps continued its attack and by 22 March had breached the Siegfried Line. In cooperation with the other Corps of the Seventh Army and the Third Army you then completed the mopping up of the Sear pocket and closed to the Rhine River.

No such difficult operation could have been completed in so short a time had it not been for the brilliant leadership and sound application of tactical principles by you and your commanders and the efficient execution of orders by your troops.

I desire that you express to every officer and man in the VI Corps, including the attached Allied troops and attached supporting troops, my sincere appreciation for your past deeds and my complete confidence in you in battles to come. I will always be proud to have the VI Corps as part of my command.

/s/ Jacob L. Devers
/t/ JACOB L. DEVERS,
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
Commanding.

H/L Hq Sixth Army Group 27 March 1945 Re: Commendation
AG 200.6-A 1st Ind. AMP/gwp

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY, APO 758, U. S. Army, 31 March 1945.

TO: Commanding General, VI Corps, APO 46, U. S. Army.

I wish to add my commendation to that of the Commanding General, Sixth Army Group, and to express my congratulations and admiration for the magnificent achievement of the VI Corps.

/s/ A. M. Patch,
/t/ A. M. PATCH,
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army,
Commanding.

AG 200.6 2d Ind.
HEADQUARTERS VI CORPS, APO 46, U. S. Army, 6 April 1945.

TO: The Men and Officers of VI Corps and Attached Troops.

1. It gives me great pleasure and pride to forward to you the above Commendation from General Devers, Sixth Army Group Commander, with added Commendation from Lieutenant General Patch, Seventh Army Commander.

2. WELL DONE!

/s/ Edward H. Brooks,
/t/ EDWARD H. BROOKS,
Major General, U. S. Army,
Commanding.

DISTRIBUTION
"C"

AG 200.6 (G) 3rd Ind. rh
(27 Mar 1945 - Commendation).
HEADQUARTERS 14TH ARMORED DIVISION, APO 446, U.S. Army,
9 April 1945.

T: All Unit Commanders.

The Division Commander desires that this commendation be brought to the attention of all personnel at the earliest practicable date.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL SMITH:

/s/ William C. Golden
/t/ WILLIAM C. GOLDEN
Lt. Col., A.G.D.,
Adjutant General.

DISTRIBUTION: A, C.

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
XV CORPS UNITED STATES ARMY
Office of the Commanding General

AG 200.6 (A)

APC 436, U.S. Army
8 April 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Officers and Men of the XV Corps.

1. It is with utmost pride that I publish to you the following commendations from the Commanding General, Sixth Army Group and the Commanding General, Seventh Army, on the recent accomplishments of the XV Corps.

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH ARMY GROUP
Office of the Commanding General
APC 23

27 March 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Commanding General, XV Corps.

THRU: Commanding General, Seventh Army, APC 758,
U. S. Army.

Since the morning of 16 March, the XV Corps has achieved new and magnificent successes. Acting as the spearhead of the Seventh Army's attack on that date, you launched a blow at the enemy forces in your sector which resulted in the ultimate destruction of the major part of two German Armies.

On the second day of the attack you captured the heavily fortified city of Bitch. Continuing your advance you breached the Siegfried Line and on 20 March captured the cities of Zweibrücken and Homburg. In conjunction with the other Corps of the Seventh Army, and the Third Army, you completed the mopping up of the Saar pocket, and closed to the Rhine River.

Without pause you crossed the Rhine and established a firm bridgehead on the east bank. From that bridgehead the Seventh Army will be able to assist in launching the final blow at Nazi Germany.

Your actions have been bold, thoroughly planned, and efficiently executed. The combination of brilliant leadership and stalwart fighting men has paid rich dividends.

I am proud of the XV Corps and I desire that you express to your divisions, your Corps troops, and your service troops my admiration and sincere gratitude for a job well done.

/s/ Jacob L. Devers
/t/ JACOB L. DEVERS
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Commanding.

SECRET

Ltr Hq XV Corps, file AG 200.6 (A), subj: Commendation, dtd
8 April 1945. (Cont'd)

AG 200.6-A

1st Ind.

AMP/Gwb

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY, APO 758, U.S. Army, 31 March 1945

TO: Commanding General, XV Corps, APO 436, U. S. Army.

I wish to add my commendation to that of the Commanding General, Sixth Army Group, and to express my congratulations and admiration for the magnificent achievement of the XV Corps.

/s/ A. M. Patch
/t/ A. M. PATCH,
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
Commanding.

2. I desire to thank you personally for the splendid accomplishment of every task assigned. Your aggressive spirit and outstanding efforts in contributing to the defeat of the German forces opposing the advance of the XV Corps have done much towards the achievement of final victory. My sincere thanks and best wishes to you all.

/s/ Wade H. Haislip
/t/ WADE H. HAISLIP,
Major General, U. S. Army
Commanding.

DISTRIBUTION:
"A" & "B"

AG 200.6 (G)

2d Ind

rh

(8 Apr 1945 - Commendation)

HEADQUARTERS 14TH ARMORED DIVISION, APO 446, U.S. Army, 14
April 1945.

TO: See Distribution.

The Division Commander desires that this commendation be brought to the attention of all personnel at the earliest practicable date.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL SMITH:

/s/ William C. Golden
/t/ WILLIAM C. GOLDEN
Lt. Col., A.G.D.,
Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION: A, B.

SECRET

S-2 Intelligence Summary of Operations for the Period 1st to 30th April 1945.

The Battalion was in action from 1st to 30th of April.

I. Enemy Troops: General

- A. The number of prisoners taken for any one period reached a new high during the month of April. Many were captured after putting up a last ditch stand while others voluntarily surrendered after little or no resistance. Prisoners of War who willingly submitted to capture frequently gave evidence that several of their fellow soldiers wished to surrender also. The allied advance was so rapid that on several occasions prisoners were taken while eating and sleeping. Germans, both military and civilian, watched with amazement as allied troops overran town after town. Not a few Nazi soldiers changed into civilian clothing upon the approach of our troops. Many suspicious "civilians", upon being questioned, were discovered to be in this category. Units were disorganized to such an extent that any hope of regrouping was out of the question. Due to the pounding of communication lines by our air force, there was a major shortage of supplies. Movement of troops was kept to a minimum due to lack of gasoline and the hazards involved.

II. Action in Germany.

A. Terrain:

1. Mountainous terrain with heavily wooded areas and numerous streams which offered excellent barriers for defense.

B. Obstacles:

- III. 1. Elaborate entrenchments, pillboxes and dragons teeth caused considerable trouble to the advance of our troops. The actual crossing of the Rhine was accomplished with less difficulty than anticipated. Once past the west wall, the defenses encountered were, for the most part, hastily built and lightly defended. Each stream and each town were designed to be delaying positions. Townspeople, under orders from the military, assisted in the defense. These so called defenses by the Volkstrum were usually overcome in short order. Of those not of military age, the Hitler Jugend group was the most dangerous. These fanatical youngsters, still of school-boy age, continued hostile acts after the older and wiser men realized that further resistance was futile.

C. Artillery:

1. Enemy artillery during the period was generally light. Ammunition supply was critical as was the means to transport it. Allied planes scored record successes in knocking out all means of transportation behind the lines. The Nebelwerfer and Panzerfausts were used quite extensively in lieu of heavy caliber weapons.

D. Summary:

1. Penetration and breakthrough of the Siegfried Line plus the crossing of the Rhine River gave new aspects to the Nazi soldier as to the fate in store for him. A major defeat was suffered by the German Army in the Ruhr sector. Communication and rail centers fell one after another. Armies linked up and trapped thousands of Nazi troops in huge pockets. From the Rhine, east to the Elbe, and south to the Danube the German Army met defeat after defeat with little hope for a comeback.

Louis W. Vasaly
LOUIS W. VASALY
Capt., FA
S-2

SECRET