



FIRE MISSION

Pfc JOE MASTY

Officers and Men of the Battalion:

With the end of the war in Europe comes an opportunity to look back over our experiences of the past months. Somewhat over ten months ago we landed on the beach in Normandy and moved directly into action - it was a great day, one for which we had trained long and hard. In the subsequent months of action you did your job magnificently. You pursued the "hun" across France, forcing him out of position after position. You played an important part in the reduction of the heretofore impregnable Fortress of Metz. You did much to hold the line during the dangerous days of the Ardennes Bulge. Finally in March, the green light for attack came on and once again you took off after the enemy. The part played by this battalion in the battle of the Saar-Moselle-Rhine Triangle was great. You were constantly the foremost artillery unit on the front. You had a big part in the successful action which forced the "hun" back across the Rhine, after which you pursued rapidly, chasing his remnants back into the laps of our Russian allies, east of Chemnitz. A quick change of direction with a long march, moved you into position to drive into the very heart of the vaunted "Final Redoubt," which was to be the "huns" final defense position. During this smashing drive this battalion was constantly in the foreground, surprising and confusing not only the enemy, but, in the words of our Group Commander, "surprising and amazing our own supported units by the rapid displacements, which often out-manuevered our own light battalions, to arrive when you were needed long before it was considered possible for you to get there."

My personal pride in this organization is beyond expression. Your great accomplishments have been possible only through the constant unwavering cooperation, devotion to duty, and will to win of every officer and man of the battalion. The support given to me as your commanding officer has been unhesitating and constant. For all of this I wish to express my deepest appreciation. My proudest privilege is that I can say, "I commanded the 204th Field Artillery Battalion."

Minian L. Yuille
MINIAN L YUILLE
Lt Col FA
CO

12 July 1944

SWANAGE, ENGLAND

D plus 36

At 0600 this date, the Battalion moved out of the billets at Swanage for the marshalling area. At 0952 the Battalion arrived at the marshalling area at ROMSEY, ENGLAND where men were fed, rations were given out, and all English money was changed to francs. Men were quartered in tents, but not for long, at 1930 the Battalion Commander received the orders to move Headquarters, "A" and "B" Battery to the P.O.E. with "C" and Service Battery to follow later under a different serial. The first serial arrived at Southampton at 2200. All vehicles were pulled into the loading dock for the night. The second serial consisting of "C" and Service Battery left the marshalling area and arrived at Pier 103, loading being started immediately.

13 July 1944

SOUTHAMPTON, ENGLAND

D plus 37

Loading was completed on the DAVID STARR JORDAN at 1800 and the loading of the SS LOUIS MARSHALL was completed at 0600. Both ships were away from their docks that night and into anchorage to join the morning convoy.

14 July 1944

AT ANCHORAGE AT SOUTHAMPTON

D plus 38

At 0700 the DAVID STARR JORDAN joined the convoy, but went aground while entering the needle channel. The SS LOUIS MARSHALL joined the morning convoy at 0730 and sailed for Utah Beach, arriving at 1600. The first serial was not doing so well - at 1600 tugs tried to remove the DAVID STARR JORDAN from the sandbar without success.

15 July 1944

ENGLISH CHANNEL

D plus 39

The DAVID STARR JORDAN was free from the sandbar at high tide with the help of tugs and returned to anchorage in the outer harbor. Service and "C" Batteries arrived at concentration area "B" at 1800 and moved to Briquebec, France, coord: 3083-3064.

16 July 1944

ENGLISH CHANNEL

D plus 40

The DAVID STARR JORDAN was delayed in sailing by fog, but steamed out of the outer harbor at 2205 and into convoy under extremely foggy conditions.

17 July 1944

ENGLISH CHANNEL

D plus 41

The DAVID STARR JORDAN lost the convoy after being forced from position by passing ship at 0230, then dropped anchor 10 miles out at sea for escort to arrive at 0310. The JORDAN joined the morning convoy at 0700 and dropped anchor at Utah Beachhead after a foggy trip during nine out of eleven hours at 1800.

18 July 1944

UTAH BEACH, FRANCE

D plus 42

Fifteen men from the unloading crew were taken from a duck aboard the ship to start the unloading at 1415. The first barge load landed at high tide at 2330 and arrived at the troop concentration area "B", field #29 at 0100. The second barge load remained at the beach while the third barge load remained on the JORDAN because of air alert.

19 July 1944

UTAH BEACH, FRANCE

D plus 43

Unloading complete at 1620 and remainder of units closed in Field #29 at 1725.

20 July 1944

BRICQUEBEC FRANCE

D plus 44

The Battalion, less "C" and Service Btrys. left the assembly area NW of Bricquebec France, Coord: 3683-2065 arriving at 2117, where they were met by "C" and Service Btrys, who had about given the rest of the Battalion up for lost, either dead, wounded, or missing. The Battalion Commander received order to report to the Artillery Officer of the Third Army and on his orders reported to the Commanding General of the 8th Corps Artillery. Orders were received to report to the Commanding Officer of the 196th FA Group, Col. Roberts.

21 July 1944

BRICQUEBEC FRANCE

D plus 45

The Commanding Officer of the Battalion reported to the Commanding Officer of the 196th FA Group where orders were received for the first position to be occupied by this Battalion in combat. Reconnaissance of the position was begun by the Battalion Commander and party in the area below Carentan, France at 0840. Pvt. York Zetterberg, Btry. "C" was the first casualty of the Battalion, by accidentally discharging his carbine while cleaning his carbine in his pup tent.

22 July 1944

CARENTAN FRANCE

D plus 46

The Battalion occupied its first combat position South of Carentan, France. Coord: 362-799 at 1200 this date. The first mission fired was a base point registration from the Bn Air O.P. Pilot- Lt. Smith and the observer was Lt. Morefield. The honor of firing the first round on foreign soil in combat went to Pvt. Edward Curtis, No. 1 man of Sec. 3, Btry. "B" at 1730 and the mission was completed at 1745. Missions fired this date were 20 harrassing missions and one counter battery mission. Rounds expended this date 103.

23 July 1944

CARENTAN FRANCE

D plus 47

Enemy aircraft were over the area to-day, one of which drew fire from the 455 AAA unit attached to the Battalion. A picture show was in progress at the time, there was a mad dash for cover at the sight of the first enemy plane.

Two enemy batteries were located by the air OP and fired upon, reports from observer, Capt Prior, showed the battery was well hit and neutralized.

Missions fired this date:

10 Enemy Btrys	99 rds.
1 Enemy Pill Box	37 rds.
1 Enemy Machine Gun Nest	8 rds.
1 Enemy Mortar Platoon	12 rds.
1 Base Point Registration	15 rds.
1 Check Point Registration	3 rds.
Rounds fired this date	<u>173 rds.</u>

24 July 1944

CARENTAN FRANCE

D plus 48

Enemy 88 mm Artillery fire fell 500 yards over "C" Btry. at 0200- twelve rounds of artillery fire (est. 88 mm) fell on the road junction just over the Battalion C.P. where Sgts. Morris and Gentry were repairing lines. No casualties. Enemy planes dropped flares over "C" Btry. position at 2350, but no bombs were dropped.

Missions fired this date:

8 Harrassing Missions	31 rds.
26 Counter Battery	26 rds.
22 Interdiction	22 rds.
1 Registration	4 rds.
1 Preparation	39 rds.
Rounds fired this date	<u>122 rds.</u>

25 July 1944

CARENTAN, FRANCE

D plus 49

Enemy Aircraft dropped flares over the battalion area at 0125 and drew heavy machine gun and ack-ack fire from the AAA unit with the Battalion. "H" hour for the big attack in the western sector preceded by 2000 medium bombers and heavy artillery fire on German AAA positions. "H" hour and the attack was on; the sky was filled with the drone of motors of the bombers and the noise of the bursting bombs. Dust from the impact area of the bombing drifted back to the position area as a cloud or fog, this attack continued until 1100 hours. Two Forts and Two Libs were seen hit and fired on by the German ack-ack. Reports from the forward observers stated that the first volley from the Battalion's fire has set fire to either an ammo or gasoline dump. Prisoners brought from the front said that the American artillery fire was devastating and feared by the Germans.

Missions Fired this date:

Counter Battery	12	
AAA Btry	2	
Base Point Adjustment	1	
Enemy Tanks	1	
Total rounds fired this date		205

26 July 1944

CARENTAN, FRANCE

D plus 50

"H" hour for the attack in the northern sector was preceded by heavy artillery and bombing preparations for the attack. The Battalion continued the mission with the 196th FA Group, reinforcing the fires of the 8th Corps Artillery.

Missions fired this date:

Preparations	26	
Interdiction	3	
Counter Battery	7	
Occupied Houses	1	
Mortar Positions	1	
Total rounds fired this date		401

27 July 1944

CARENTAN, FRANCE

D plus 51

Enemy artillery fell in the northern sector most of the day today, but none fell in the area of the Battalion. Due to the lack of ground OP's the air patrol was constant by the pilots of the Ln Section of the Battalion. The Battalion Commander inspected all of the Btry positions this date and made recommendations for the improvement of positions.

Missions fired this date:

1 Base Point Registration	9 rounds
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28 July 1944

CARENTAN, FRANCE

D plus 52

The Battalion Commander and his party went on Recon for new positions in the vicinity of Raids, France at 0930 this date. The Battalion received Close Station March Order at 1240 and moved to the new position in the vicinity of Raids under the Battalion Ex O and closed on the new positions at 1430. Base Point Registration was completed by the use of Air OP.

Missions fired this date:

Base Point Registration	9 rounds
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29 July 1944

RAIDS FRANCE

D plus 53

The Battalion Commander and the Commanding Officer of the 196th Field Artillery Group reported to Army Headquarters at 1000 hours for briefing on the situation, returned at 1208. The Battalion Commander left the Battalion Area with the Group Commander to pick positions in the area of San Sauveur Lendelin. The Battalion Commander enroute to meet the Group Commander, after the positions had been picked, had his 3/4 ton C & R Car blown up by a teller mine. The vehicle was destroyed but the only casualty was one quart of Black and White Scotch Whiskey which was being saved for an occasion. A mine sweeping detail was sent back to the scene of the mishap to salvage what was left of the radio and the personal effects of the people that were in the vehicle.

The Battalion was notified this date of a change in command, the change was from the 196th Field Artillery Group to the 202nd Field Artillery Group. one hour later the Battalion was notified of change to 174th Group.

Missions fired this date: None

30 July 1944

St SAUVEUR LENDELIN FRANCE

D plus 54

After a meeting of all of the Battery Commanders the Battalion moved out of the positions in this area to a rendezvous area in the vicinity of Quettreville. Arriving at 1230. Capt Ellsworth discovered a new type German "S" mine under one of the apple trees and probed around for it with his trench knife. Under orders received from the Group Commander the Battalion Commander and Reconnaissance party moved out to pick positions in the vicinity of Oncteville, France. The Battalion moved out of the positions in the vicinity of Quettreville and closed in the new positions at 1835. At about that time the Battalion Commander received orders from the Commanding General of the 8th Corps for further reconnaissance at 1900 hours, the reconnaissance was completed at 2250 hours and the parties returned to the Battalion position.

Missions fired this date: None

31 July 1944

LINGREVILLE FRANCE

D plus 55

The Battalion Commander and party were away on reconnaissance at 0700 and arrived in the area of Lingreville at 820. New orders were received by the Battalion Executive Officer for further reconnaissance and were carried out by he and the Battalion L.N.O. after calling the Battalion Commander by radio to the effect. While on reconnaissance the Battalion Commander and party captured 9 German prisoners in the position area and turned them over to the Infantry in the area. The Battalion Commander and party departed the area to meet the Battalion S-2 in the city of Folligny and returned to the Battalion area at 1650.

At 2130 hours the Battalion thought that they had Adolph himself in the area. Four low flying bombers strafed and bombed the area, heavy ack ack fire went up but to no avail. 13 men from Btry "A" were wounded by 20mm explosive shells and one man from Btry "E" was wounded by bomb fragments. Btry. "B" found a booby trap in the area, consisting of a flare pistol with wire attached to a charge. Orders from the Battalion Commander for the rest of the night were to shoot anything suspicious moving in or near the battery positions. The smell of the dead horses in the area was bad, the horses were some that had been killed by our air force and belonging to the retreating Jerries which were used for pulling their wagons and Artillery pieces. The planes returned and continued to drop bombs until 2300 hours. AAA insisted on firing and giving away the position of the troops to the bombers was responsible for the bombing and strafing. Passive Air Defense recommended.

Missions fired this date: None

1 August 1944

AUBIN-DES-PREAUT

D plus 56

At 0830 the Battalion Commander was ordered to report to Group HQ. for meeting and reconnaissance. Received instructions for change of Groups. Battalion assigned to 202nd FA Group in general support of the 79th Division. Battalion moved to the area of Aubin-des-Preaut, closing at 1310.

Missions fired this date: None.

2 August 1944

AUBIN-DES-PREAUT

D plus 57

Today there was again a big change in orders. At 1308 the Battalion Commander went on reconnaissance with Group Commander, but was recalled by radio and returned to old area. Orders were to displace next day. Two enemy paratroopers, Signal Corps men, were captured by Hq Btry men, Cpl Holbrook and Cpl Paxton.

Five stray German paratroopers ran into the outpost of Btry "B". One resisted capture and died from .45 cal. pistol wounds inflicted by Lt Flood. The five Germans were holding a S/Sgt from the 8th Division, who, when the Germans were halted by the guards, jumped into the nearest fox-hole yelling, "Shoot the bastards, they're Jerries". Comrades dug a grave and performed a short ceremony for the dead German, ending with "Heil Hitler".

Missions fired this date: None.

3 August 1944

ST. GERMAIN

D plus 58

Battalion Commander and parties to the 202nd FA Group area south of Avranches at 0540, while the Battalion under the Battalion Executive began march at 0615 hours. The Battalion Commander and parties with the Group Commander hit the road again on another reconnaissance for positions in the vicinity of L'Ecouisse at 1945. Enemy aircraft was over the area at 2200.

Missions fired this date: None.

4 August 1944

ST. GERMAIN

D plus 59

Orders were received from the Group Commander to look for Btry. positions in the area of St. James. 24 German ME 109's were spotted over the area at 1345. At 1340 the Bn was relieved from positions near St. Germain by 974th FA Bn. The Bn pulled out of positions at 1600 hours and closed in new positions 2 1/2 miles west of St James, coord: 271-985 at 1815 hours. The Bn CO, LNO, & S-2 were called to VIII Corps at 1840 and returned with instructions to all BC's for movement to new rendezvous area. Enemy planes were over the area at 2230, dropping one bomb at 2315; no damage or casualties.

Missions fired this date: None.

5 August 1944

Vic. PLEINE-FOUGERES

D plus 60

As in the past few days the Bn CO and party went forward with advance elements with instructions to the Exec. Officer to follow in about an hour with the Bn CO, and left for new positions ~~area at 0750 followed by the Bn~~ under Exec. Officer at 0815. Bn closed in area vic. Pleine-Fougeres at 0918. The Bn CO and party went on Recon. at 1800, returning at 2000.

Missions fired this date: None.

6 August 1944

Vic. PLEINE-FOUGERES

D plus 61

Enemy planes were over the 202nd Group air strip bombing and strafing at 0130. Two Group pilots were slightly wounded. Wounded pilots were brought to the Bn aid station and evacuated by ambulance at 0220. At 1200 another msg to displace at once. At 1215 all Btries were on road ready to move and lined up in order of march. Bn CO and parties had left forward. At 1225, msg. to Bn Exec from Group: Don't move-await further orders from 8th Corps - relayed to CO by radio.

Bn LNO (Capt Corn) to XX Corps for movement orders and S-2 to VIII Corps for orders. Road block delayed msgr movement to Corps, caused by collision of gasoline truck and tank, causing large fire. Ammo in tank bursting caused concern-sounded like small arms fight. S-3 and asst. S-3 went on road recon. around town, found route

around road block and returned. Change of assignment: Battalion loaned to XX Corps and ordered to report vicinity of Vitre. Battalion CO and party moved out of rendezvous area at 2020 with the Battalion Exec. and Battalion moving out at 2030. A change of Groups was ordered, from 202nd FA Group to 195th FA Group. Battalion CO and party arrived vicinity Vald'Ize at 2050. Battalion closed in above area at 2300.

Missions fired this date: None

7 August 1944

VITRE FRANCE

D plus 62

The Battalion CO and parties went on reconnaissance in the vicinity of Vitre at 1255 for positions for a wide spread and close defense of the Battalion. The Bn. under the Bn. Exec. departed the same location at 1400 and arrived in the location at 1540. During the day there were various meetings of the Staff of the Group and the Bn. Staff members. There was organization of an inter perimeter defense. Motor patrols with heavy machine guns were organized and patrolled the roads around the area.

Missions fired this date: None

8 August 1944

VITRE FRANCE

D plus 63

The Bn. CO reported as ordered to the Commanding General of the XX Corps concerning our operations with the 195th FA Group and with the 5th Inf. Division. Two men from the Bn. were lost this day from the action of enemy planes on the night of 31 July 1944.

Missions fired this date: None

9 August 1944

VITRE FRANCE

D plus 64

Enemy planes were low over the Bn. early in the morning but Bn. was not located and they committed no hostile acts. This date the Bn. was attached to the 5th Inf. Division to reinforce the fires of the 5th Division Artillery in the Angers sector. The Bn. closed in the area NW of Angers to await orders to move into firing positions. All the Battery locations were picked by the Bn. CO and party by 1943 and the Bn. was to move into position under the cover of darkness at 2400 hours. The Bn. moved into firing positions at 2400 hours, there was no registration that night but plans were made for early morning registration.

Missions fired this date: None

10 August 1944

ANGERS FRANCE

D plus 65

The Battalion closed into the position area at 0145 hours. West of Angers (742797) and were registered by the FO of the 5th Inf Div at 0800. Forward observers from "A" and "C" Btrys were attached to the 10th Inf. Regt. Lt Morefield to the Loir River bridgehead and Lt Hoover to Pruniers (781763). Lt Morefield received a commendation for the Battalion for the accurate fire of the Battalion in support of laying the bridge across the Loir River.

Missions fired:

1 Base Point Registration	8 rds.
3 MG and Mortar Emplacements	49 rds.
2 Interdiction	60 rds.
2 Bridge Targets	120 rds.
1 Enemy Strong Point	30 rds.
Rounds fired this date	267 rds.

11 August 1944

ANGERS FRANCE

D plus 66

Msg received from 5th Div Arty: Initiate Recon at once. Bn Commander and his party moved through the city of Angers with the forward Infantry and picked positions across the Loir River in South Angers. Meeting place of the Bn Commander and the Btry commanders received a heavy shelling by enemy 88's forcing the parties to pick positions in area 800 yards further south. At this time the Bn under the Bn Ex officer was already on the road and crossing the river. A very hasty job of picking positions was accomplished and Btrys moved into position upon arrival. Moved into position at 1510. Enemy planes were over the area at 1830. Enemy artillery landed in the battalion area between 2220 and 2250.

Missions fired this date:

1 Base Point Registration	22rds
8 Interdiction fires	99rds
18 Harrassing fires	116 rds

12 August 1944

6½ MILES S OF MONTSURS

D plus 67

The Bn continued harrassing fire and called fires from the forward observers. Capt Prior observed and fired on enemy tanks across the Loir river destroying same. At 1525 Officer Courier from XX Corps Arty ordered detached from the 5th Div Arty and returned to XX Corps control at 1525.

The Bn under the Bn CO moved out of the Bn area at 1725.--Cleared the East bridge at 1800 hours. The Bn CO and party moved ahead of the convoy leaving the convoy in charge of the Bn executive. The CO and party reached the rendezvous area at Montsurs 872418 with the Bn closing same area at 2000. Message from the CO 195th FA Gp to the Bn CO: Move into position tonight. Time of order 2140. Orders were later changed to Recon only. The Bn CO and party moved out of position area on recon, and were met by the Gp representative at 2210. Orders were to return and await further orders.

Missions fired 156 rounds harrassing.

13 August 1944

1½ miles S of EVRON

D plus 68

At 0010 the Bn received orders: Move to new position. The Bn CO and parties reported to CO 195th Gp at 0200 hours. The Bn under the Bn executive moved out of position at 0200 hours, cleared the release point at 0235 and closed in position 1½ miles S of Evron at 0315. Radio communications were kept during the operation.

Col Clark, CO of the 195th FA Gp arrived in the Bn CP at 0655 with orders and plans for the displacement on call. The Bn CO and the S-3 went on Recon at 0715. FO "C" and FO "B" reported to the CP of the 313 FA Bn 80th Div Arty. The artillery CP was to move ahead of the artillery column in march formation, with enemy contact imminent in the drive north to close the Falaise Gap. The Bn CO and party reported to the Gp CO that the mission of Recon had been completed. They were informed that the Gp CO had erroneously assigned the wrong area to the Bn. Correct area was received and the Bn CO and party started Recon at 1418, which was complete at 1500. Orders from officer Courier from the XX Corps. The Bn CO and party returned to the old position area to await further orders. (1605) At 1645 the Bn CO was ordered out of the Bn and ordered to report to the representative of the XX Corps at a point 15 miles E of Le Mans, arrived at 1900 and met the representative of the XX Corps. The Bn under the Bn executive really moved out of the position area after a long day of SNAFU and arrived in the picked position area 1½ miles W of Maixent at 2000 hours. Btry "C" was ordered to position in the vicinity of St Jean as an Anti Tank Battery by order of XX Corps Artillery officer.

14 August 1944

MAIXENT FRANCE

D plus 69

3 enemy ME 109's were over the Bn area straffing the roads in the Bn area. They made no passes at the Bn positions but flew over low many times keeping all men on the ground and under cover. The Bn CO visited Btry "C" at St Jean where the Btry is fulfilling the task of anti tank Btry for the XX Corps. Inter perimeter defense was set up in the Bn area and was coordinated with Gp plan.

15 August 1944

AUBIN des ROIS FRANCE

D plus 70

At 0802 the Bn commander received orders to report to Gp Hq immediately. Received information as to the change of mission from General support of the 80th Div which was heading north to close the Falaise Gap to the 7th Armored Div which was moving south in the vicinity of Paris. Reconnaissance was made in the designated area of Authon du Perche. The Bn CO and party waited in that area for further orders. Orders were received to make further reconnaissance at once. The battalion moved to the new picked positions while the Bn commander and party moved forward to pick positions. On this reconnaissance, parties captured 8 German prisoners and turned them over to the American Military Authorities without receipt. The party picked gun positions in the vicinity of Cintray about 5 miles from the town of Chartres. The Bn on the road traveling to the new positions had only one SNAFU when the Exec officer of the 195th FA Gp turned Hq Btry on the wrong road. The Bn commander and party came along in time to turn the situation and rerouted Hq Btry to the correct position area. The entire Bn closed the new position area at 2010.

Missions fired: None

16 August 1944

CINTRAY FRANCE

D plus 71

Lt Langham, Bn Asst S-2 adjusted the battalion on a group of German Infantry dug in a woods on a knoll N W of Chartres. Enemy infantry was neutralized. C O of the 7th Armored Div complained that the Bn was shooting up his troops and requested we cease fire. Investigation showed that the shells from this Bn were falling 300 yards from the Armored.

The CO and the Recn party went looking for positions in the vicinity of Amilly in the flat plains N W of Chartres, but the enemy had not yet been cleared from all pockets in that area, no friendly infantry were in front of the Bn position. The Bn moved forward 500 yards to new locations within sight of the occupied city of Chartres. The Bn S-2 encountered two French civilians 6 miles West of Chartres who turned out to be two American flyers, 1st Lt John J Meade 248-54, 88th Dr Bellerose L I, N Y, and 2nd Lt John D Bonnin, Hotel Baltimore, NYC N Y. Both of the men were of the 801st Prov. Gp 850th Squad, who were shot down over Paris on the 4th of July 1944 and were on their way through the lines via Paris - Chartres. The men were turned into the Corps G-2 at 1752 this date. Lt Langham, Pvt Bubrowski, and Pvt Cannizzarro with the aid of Capt Hiles of the attached AAA Bn captured 37 enemy EM in the area that the battalion fired on the strong point this date at 0900. Prisoners were a mixture of Poles, Austrians, Czechs, and German and were generally of low calibre soldier. The prisoners stated that the officers of the unit had left the day before in red-cross vehicles. One spoke English and said that they had been under our fire that day and said the Flack (meaning our time fire) was terrible. A search in the area revealed 12 enemy dead, and abandoned and destroyed materiel consisting of 4 88mm PAK 41 AT guns, 12-20mm AA guns, 3 concrete emplaced AT guns, 4 MG Skoda Czech models, 1 heavy mortar and numerous small arms and automatic weapons, plus 2 2½ ton vehicles which were taken and used in the battalion, and several half tracks complete with AA weapons.

This date Lt Morefield reported to the infantry in Chartres as FO for the Bn.

Missions fired this date: 1 enemy strong point: 78rds.

17 August 1944

Vic CHARTRES FRANCE

D plus 72

The Bn still occupied its position in a large flat field on the outskirts of Chartres. There was no cover at all in the position area and the Btrys were well spread for protection. The CG and S-2 of the XXth Corps Arty were into the Bn CP and were directed to the former German strong point for an inspection of the area. Btry "C" took one prisoner this date, the prisoner was one of the remaining men of the strong point still at large. Lt Morefield sent urgent message into the Bn CP to the effect that he and his party were under heavy Arty both friendly and enemy coming in from all directions. Snipers were still at large in the city but the work of moping up is moving fast.

Two German prisoners were taken today by M/Sgt DeVries, Tech Sgt Koons, and Tec 5 Canning of Hq Btry and a frightened Ord officer who was on a survey of the enemy guns at the position. Some wild shooting was encountered coming from the French FFI. Both prisoners were treated at the Bn aid station, one for wounds in the arm and the other for lip bruises and cuts from the butt of someones gun. The Ord officer when asked if he wanted to return to the strong point said that he had seen enough.

Missions fired--1 enemy strong point--46rds.

18 August 1944

Vic CHARTRES FRANCE

D plus 73

There was no change in the situation of the Bn this date. There were no missions fired. The Bn S-2 went on forward Recn for new routes. The route was through sniper infested areas which had to be cleared by the engineers before the return route could be taken.

19 August 1944

Vic CHARTRES FRANCE

D plus 74

The Bn received orders this date as to the change of command from the 195th FA Gp to the 193rd FA Gp. The Bn CO received orders to report to the CO of the 193rd FA Gp for Recn of position and move around the outskirts of Chartres to follow the Armor Div. On the Recn the Bn CO and party discovered a large amount of wrecked and abandoned equipment and vehicles at the Chartres airport that had been pounded by the Allied Air Forces, the French in the area who were already stripping the vehicles were outranked to the tune two silver oak leaves, seven cigarettes and one package of gum. Comments from the CO "It was not a case of outranking but strictly a purchase." Close station march order was given the Bn at 1116. The Bn closed the position area at 1315. There was no firing most of the time was spent in cleaning and care of material. All the vehicles that were taken in the area included one Lincoln Zepher, one Plymouth, one Mercury sedan.

The first days association with the CO 193rd FA Gp was not so good. The CO was very unhappy in regards to the taking of the enemy vehicles and he was not allowed any of the vehicles. All of the vehicles were given a coat of OD paint and allied markings painted on.

20 August 1944

2.4 MILES N E OF CHARTRES

D plus 75

There was no activity around the Bn area this date, the day was spent in bathing for men, cleaning and care of vehicles, and general care of all equipment there were no missions fired this date.

21 August 1944

Vic SAINVILLE FRANCE

D plus 76

The Bn CO reported to the Gp CO at 0645 on Recn and returned to the Bn at 0730 with the close station march order. The Bn moved out onto the road in rear of the slow moving 5th Infantry Div and Tank Destroyers in combat march. The CO and S-3 had designated the town of Auneau as the meeting place for the Bn and the CO went forward in head of the infantry to pick positions for the night and night occupation. The Bn closed in the Vic of Sainville at 2117 with guns in position. No missions fired this date.

22 August 1944

EAST OF ETAMPES

D plus 77

The Bn S-2 was relieved as the IN officer at the 5th Inf Div. The Bn forward party moved out of position on Recn in the vicinity of Etampes but returned on orders from the IN officer at 5th Inf Div. The battalion moved out of position at night and were moving to new area in the vicinity of Arbonne, France when they were moved off the road by the CO of the 5th Div Combat team who was given the priority on the roads. The Bn Commander and party had picked the position in the area of Arbonne but had to sit and wait for the Bn to arrive. The night was very black and occupation of position was very difficult. Recn was complete at 2349.

23 August 1944

Vic ARBONNE FRANCE

D plus 78

After a very hectic night the Bn closed the position area at 0215 and settled for the night. The Bn area was outposted against possible enemy attack. At 0905 the Bn received orders to move to the vicinity of Milly and to pick positions in that area. The Btry Commanders arrived in the chosen area at 1319, just in time to hear the radio order for the Bn Commander to further his reconnaissance in the area of St Martin-Arbonne. All positions were picked in that area and the Bn moved into combat positions in that area which was located 6 miles W of Fontainebleau, France. Two Russian former German PW's were turned over to the Bn S-2 for interrogation and were turned over to the American Military Authorities. The Bn experienced a very hard rain that night, in fact it rained Cats and Dogs. The next morning most of the men woke up with a puddle in bed with them (Corney Gag thru courtesy of Lt McKinney, Btry B.)

No missions fired this date.

24 August 1944

Vic FONTAINEBLEAU FRANCE

D plus 79

At 1221 the Bn Commander received orders from the CO 193rd FA Gp to report for reconnaissance. Enroute the party stopped at the CP of the 19th Field Artillery Bn of the 5th Div. Orders were received from them that the Bn was to reinforce the fire of the 19th FA Bn who was in direct support of the 11th Combat team. The fight was for the city of Fontainebleau and the Bn was ordered to move into position as soon as possible and support building of the bridge across the Seine River. The occupation of position was the fastest on record. All the speed laws on the roads in the city were broken as the D T drivers poured it on moving into position. The order to the Bn Exec officer was given at 1430 and the occupation was complete at 1535 at the race track in the city of Fontainebleau. Captain Prior fired the first base point registration from that position. The YUILLE Groupment was formed by order of CG XX Corps this date and consisted of the 204th FA Bn and the 949th FA Bn.

Missions fired this date:

2 BP Reg	35 rds
1 Enemy Inf Assembly	17 rds
2 Counter Btry	21 rds
1 Enemy tank	71 rds
Total rounds fired	144 rds

25 August 1944

Vic FOUNTAINBLEAU FRANCE

D plus 80

The Bn. continued the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 5th Division Artillery in the crossing of the Seine River. The bridge was established across the river and the 5th Division Artillery moved across the river. One Btry of the Bn. was alerted for a possible move across the river. The Bn. CO. and the Bn. S-2 crossed the river enroute to the C.P. of the 50th FA Bn. to contact LNO Com with the 50th FA Bn. The CO of the 193rd FA Group came into the Bn C.P. with the information that the Bn. was to revert back to Control as of 2230.

Missions fired this date:

13 Interdiction.	106 rnds.
1 Barrage	60 rnds.
3 Enemy Tanks	65 rnds.
Total rounds fired	<u>231 rnds</u>

26 August 1944

Vic. FOUNTAIN BLEAU FRANCE

D plus 81

Enemy planes were over the Bn. area in force at 0300 but committed no hostile act and were not fired on. The Bn. received orders to make plans for a possible move. The route was received and route reconnaissance was made by the Bn. S-2 but the route was changed and a Officer Courier was sent to XX Corps for the new route and the possible time of move. The Bn. CO made the protest to the Group CO. against a night move and reconnaissance at night but it was to no avail. The Bn. moved out in column at 2014. The Bn. column was moved off the road at the pontoon bridge over the Seine river by the MPs with priority instructions for the Bn. to move after 1½ hour wait.

Hq Btry and "B" Btry closed in the position area at 2400 but the remainder of the column was diverted towards Melun after crossing the river and lost temporarily until contacted by radio by the Bn. S-2. Btry's "C" and "D" and Service closed the Rez area at 1300 hours. There were no missions fired this date.

27 August 1944

Vic. Chatnay-sur-SEINE

D plus 82

The RO of Btry "C" on duty as LNO with the Group arrived at the Bn. C.P. with information and the new plan of attack at 0900. Air reconnaissance of the route to be taken and the area to be occupied was made by the Bn. CO at 1045 and returned to the C.P. again at 1255. The Battalion Commander and party went forward on reconnaissance and all batteries were ordered to prepare for displacement. Close station was given to all batteries and ordered to hit the road. The Bn. moved into position area at 2150. There were no missions fired this date.

28 August 1944

1.2 Miles NE ESTERNAY FRANCE

D plus 83

At 0015 the Bn. CO. reported to the CO of the 193rd FA Group for instructions for the next operation. At 0800 the Bn. CO. reported to the CO. of the 10th Inf. Reg. to make plans for the displacement. The Bn. column pulled out on to the road the first Bn. in the march of all of the Corps Artillery of the XX Corps. The Bn. CO. arrived in rendez-vous area in vicinity of Esternay and Hermite at 2035. Missions fired this date: 3 Harrassing Missions-- 28 rds expended.

29 August 1944

Vic. LE BAIZEL FRANCE

D plus 84

At 0120 an enemy patrol was spotted in the vicinity of the Battalion bivouac area. The patrol was first spotted in the area of the 193rd FA Group. All men were alerted and machine gunners were ready but could not fire because of the proximity of the friendly troops. The patrol dispersed after being challenged. One first Sgt SS was captured and held until the battalion was able to turn him over to the PWE.

At 0915 the Battalion Commander and party pulled out of the Bn. area with the battalion right on its heel under the battalion EX. At 0945 6 Italian, one Armenian, and three German prisoners were taken by the battalion road markers while on duty, directing traffic of the battalion on the road. All ten of the prisoners were turned over to the PWE at 1205. The Battalion closed in a rendezvous area awaiting further orders. The Battalion Commander was called to the Command Post of the 193rd for further orders for the crossing of the Marne river. The Commanding Officer returned at 2110 with the word that the Battalion was to move the following day.

30 August 1944

6 MI. EAST OF REIMS FRANCE

D plus 85

The Battalion received orders to be ready to move at any time after 1000 hours. A radio message was received for the commanding Officer and his party to report to the Commanding Officer of the 193rd FA Gp. at once for orders. The Battalion moved out of its position with the Battalion Commander and all Battery Commanders in front of the column. The trip thru Reims was one of the most dangerous yet. The people in the city were wild with excitement of the liberation. The people jammed the streets and at times would not allow our vehicles to pass. It seems that the people were able to locate the ~~kitchen~~ trucks in the battalion column and would almost overturn them. The people in the city all express their opinion of thanks and were sorry that they had nothing for the troops to drink, the jerries had taken everything with them when they left. This was the biggest and best welcome the battalion had ever seen, and will be long remembered by members of this command. Many of the vehicles in the column were forced to stop and clear the streets of civilians so that they could pass. The crossing of the Marne river was not as tough as was expected. The bridge used for the crossing was built for the FrenchFFI after the jerries had left. They had also removed all of the roadblocks in the town and destroy the charges that had been placed in them. After the trip thru the city of Reims the Battalion pulled into bivouac in a former battle ground of 1939 and 1940 closing the position at 1735. The Battalion received a letter of commendation from the Commanding General of the Third US army for the work of the XX Corps in the taking and holding of the bridgehead of the Seine River.

31 August 1944

6 MI. EAST OF REIMS FRANCE

D plus 86

The battalion was held in bivouac area with orders to be ready oncall. All wire communications were taken out and radio communications maintained. One enemy plane was over the area at about noon to have a look at what was in the area. In all the shooting that resulted Sgt DeVries got hit by one slug which did nothing more than bruise him in the left arm and the right leg, put one large hole in the command car of the commanding Officer and set some web equipment on fire. The shell was an incendiary and exploded when it hit throwing small frags. The shell had hit Sgt DeVries in the left elbow, hit the command car, and went down the left leg of Sgt DeVries who after all of the shooting pulled the slug out of his pants leg. The Battalion pulled on to the road at 1939. The Battalion Commander and all of the Battery Commanders moved to the head of the column as the column moved forward. At 2150 the Battalion received orders to bypass everything on the road and hurry to the picked position as fast as possible. At 2325 the Battalion closed into position area near Cornay France. There was no registration or firing done from this position.

1 September 1944

Vic VARENNES FRANCE

D plus 87

Passed through Argonne Forest famous battleground of last world struggle symptoms of which are still in evidence. The forest is thick and practically impassable except for the narrow road running through it. Had the enemy not been in complete rout, and chosen to defend this sector, they could very well have made our passage through it very hard indeed. Deep trenches still criss-cross through the area and old weapons, ammo, and equipment are still upon the ground. Fortunately our move was made unhampered and was more or less uneventful. Battalion closed positions near Varennes. Slight enemy aerial activity, bombs and flares dropped.

2 September 1944

VACHERAUVILLE FRANCE

D plus 88

Battalion continued it's pilgrimage to Vacherauville, France near Verdun. During course of day's travel battalion crossed Meuse River, near Verdun. One noted feature is the difference in terrain, the flat mesa-like land has been left behind and we are approaching rolling chalk hills. Position is closed in the midst of these hills in what was formerly an old battle ground. Dug-outs extend far into the sides of the hill and are occupied with memories of other men from our land who came there many years before on the same mission that we are now engaged. It is our earnest hope that these tomb-like catacombs will never again play host to us or our successors. Battalion pitched camp among these grim reminders of other days, surrounded by old shell holes, duds, and rusted barb-wire concertinas. Flares and bombs were again dropped that night by enemy aircraft.

3 September 1944

VACHERAUVILLE FRANCE

D plus 89

Battalion, as well as practically all other units of the Third Army, are compelled to remain stationary because of lack of gasoline. Apparently, a crisis has developed. Capable as we are to continue our pursuit of the enemy, we are unable to do so with empty gas tanks. The day itself is uneventful however, 9 enemy aircraft made us another visit during the night but were frightened away by heavy Ack-Ack fire.

4 September 1944

VACHERAUVILLE FRANCE

D plus 90

5 September 1944

D plus 91

Battalion still motionless, gas has not arrived.

6 September 1944

ETAINE FRANCE

D plus 92

At last, gas has arrived, we can move again. It is wonderful that it has. Modern warfare is helpless without it. The battalion received 0810, 0830 and hit the road. Positions were closed near Etaine, France close by an extensive German airfield.

7 September 1944

Vic. BOULIGNY FRANCE

D plus 93

As battalion started it's move today, column is attacked by 2 ME 109's flying low over the road and strafing. Planes are immediately picked up by the 50 Cal. MG's of the battalion and by the Bofors and M 51 Quads of the 455th AA units supporting the Bn. As the consequence of good shooting both ME's are shot down. There are two more good Nazis. Once they raised their hands in the same gesture that the children in our country do at school when they must go somewhere, and pledged to support the ~~fuehrer~~ even with their lives, and we, it rained to be courteous, helped them. Following this slight interruption we continued the move to the new battalion positions east of Boulogny.

8 September 1944

PIENNES FRANCE

D plus 94

0400. Shell fire and small arms and automatic weapons fire, SE of Bn. and is seemingly drawing nearer. 0600. TP message from GP. 90th Division has been attacked during the night. Communications with Division GP are out. Bn. is ordered to prepare for defense and eventual withdrawal. IG outposts were immediately established, as were bazooka outposts and other precautionary establishments. 0700. First enemy shell fire, gun slugs, 88 mm and 105 mm, falls near Battalion area. Enemy tanks reported approaching battalion. Batteries alerted and all precautions taken. From this time forward for several hours we are very busy. Gone are all thoughts of everything else. We are in a tight spot. During period 0730 to 1000 our IG gunners and bazookas brought fire on enemy infantry and armored vehicles with good effect.

8 September 1944 (continued)

PIEMNES FRANCE

D plus 94

RO "C" battery with wire crew temporarily surrounded by enemy troops succeeded in withdrawing to Battalion positions. One man, wire Cpl Guerrero captured while checking a line, was later recaptured. He was well treated. Enemy party ran into 90th Division Armored troops, whereupon his captors, about 20 men, decided to surrender and sent their prisoner ahead to give cease fire. They were then captured. Our man was released and made his way back to the Battalion. BC of Btry "A", serving as IFO with a crew was pinned down temporarily by machine gun fire. One man, Fay Bredsguard, was wounded in neck and chest. They succeeded in withdrawing to a place which gave them a little cover where first aid was administered until the Bn Med Det could arrive and dress the wounds and take the man away on a litter.

At the end of the period reports indicated that the enemy force was the 106th Pz Gren Brig had attacked with armored and tank support. The attack was a reconnaissance in force to take and hold the high ground that the battalion was in position on. Effective Artillery fire from this battalion and other neighbor battalions, and effective fire from some anti tank weapons in the area the attack was repulsed. The men of this Battalion who had functioned as infantry were responsible in knocking out the enemy halftracks and destroying the personnel. Great concern was felt for the Bn. LNO and his crew who were with the 90th Division HQ, which had been surrounded and attacked during the night. No communication had been held with them since 0400 in the morning.

Two prisoners were taken by Btry "A", but the highlight of the day was when Lt Scott and Lt Miller who were on a mission in the plane, and spotted a group of Jerries who when they flew over waved the white flag. Landing the plane they lined the enemy troops up and turned them over to the infantry. In all they had accounted for 30 enemy prisoners.

9 September 1944

BETTAINVILLERS FRANCE

D plus 95

The Battalion displaced to the area of Bettainvillers with the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 344th FA Bn, and with further orders that there would be a displacement later in the day. The Battalion displaced at 1630 and arrived in the vicinity of Trieux France. At 2150 the Battalion received information from higher headquarters that 200 German tanks were near Thionville moving south toward Metz. No further word was heard of the tanks.

10 September 1944

LOMMARANGE FRANCE

D plus 96

Enemy planes were over the area during the night but committed no hostile act and was not fired on by the attached AAA unit. The Battalion displaced to the area in the vicinity of Lommarange and was registered soon after 1300. Fire missions this date included many counter battery missions and enemy mortars. There was considerable enemy activity in this sector, many missions were fired on enemy personnel and vehicles.

11 September 1944

BASSOMPIERRE FRANCE

D plus 97

The 90th Division kicked off again this morning, and from all reports everything was progressing as planned. Information received from the LN O of the 344th FA Bn caused the Battalion to make preparations to move but upon direct order from the Commanding Officer of the Group the Battalion remained in place until order from him.

At 1337 the orders from the Commanding Officer of the Group came and the Battalion displaced to the area of Bassompierre, France. Friendly night fighters were over the area during the night. All guards and machine gunners were informed not to fire on any aircraft unless attacked or if it was definitely proved that the plane was enemy. The Battalion expended 356 rds this date on the following targets: Pillboxes, preparations and infantry in the open.

12 September 1944

THIONVILLE FRANCE

D plus 98

13 September 1944

D plus 99

The Battalion displaced to the area of Thionville, France and in Artillery range of the city of Thionville. The city of Thionville was laying in the valley below us and from the position of the CP some of the artillery fire was seen falling in the city. Some of the forts of the city of Thionville were visited by members of

12 September 1944 (Continued) Thionville, France D plus 98
 13 September 1944 D plus 99
 this battalion and were really impressed by the size of them. In the capture of hill 300, this battalion was the only unit that was in position to deliver effective fire. The Battalion layed down a rolling barrage and walked it up the hill when the command cease firing came down, some of the enemy wanted to surrender. A short time later the fire was resumed and the hill was taken. The Battalion Commander was sort of concerned about the expenditure of the ammunition and upon calling the F.O. was informed that the Commanding General of the 90th Div was screaming down his neck for the fire and being the only Battalion in the area able to deliver fire the fire was delivered as called for. The OP's of the battalion continued to call for fire and were highly insulted when they were refused fire because of the shortage of ammunition. Enemy tanks guarding the bridge in the City of Thionville were crippled by artillery fire but were still in position and firing and were later abandoned by the enemy.

14 September 1944 Montois la Montagne, France D plus 100
 10 Mi NW of Metz
 Commencing at midnight, sporadic bursts of enemy artillery fire fell in battalion area. During day battalion displaced to vicinity Montois la Montagne, before Metz, and closed position area. Here again we were greeted by what apparently was artillery and mortar fire. However, the fire did not reach our positions and had no ill effect.

15 September 1944 St Marie le Montois D plus 101
 More artillery and mortar fire received

16 September 1944 D plus 102
 17 September 1944 D plus 103
 Position maintained, intermittent artillery and mortar fire received in adjacent areas. Occasional visits from "Bed-Check Charlie".

19 September 1944 D plus 104¹⁰⁵
 20 September 1944 D plus 105¹⁰⁶
 21 September 1944 D plus 106¹⁰⁷
 Situation stable.

22 September 1944 D plus 107¹⁰⁸
 23 September 1944 D plus 108¹⁰⁹
 No change.

24 September 1944 D plus 109¹¹⁰
 Due to inclement weather and muddy conditions, Battalion Hq & Hq Btry displaced to Homecourt, France and occupied two schoolhouses.

25 September 1944 D plus 110¹¹¹
 Battalion is commencing to deliver continually heavier fire in the assault on the fortress city of Metz. Records show that through the centuries, the fortress Metz has been assaulted many times and thus far has never been invaded. From all indications this will be a tough nut to crack but I think that we Americans are the nut-crackers that can do it. Metz is an ancient city surrounded by numerous supposedly impregnable forts strategically placed so as to cover every possible avenue of approach. Unlike most cities, this one can not be bypassed less it prove to be the thorn that festers the wound. It is heavily garrisoned and its inmates are equipped with latest weapons and devices that German Military ingenuity has devised. Too, it is the site of the German Army's equivalent to OCS. The attendants of this OCS are purportedly Hitler's finest and are fanatical. These being the obstacles that confront us as we commence the assault, we hope that this which confronts us will not have to be purchased at too great a price. It will not be easy.

HOMECOURT, FRANCE

26 September 1944

D plus 110 112

27 September 1944

D plus 111 113

No Change

28 September 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 112 114

1200, Battalion closed new positions at Jouaville, France. Although we are no nearer to Metz, move has been ordered to facilitate firing and to allow us to obtain greater effect from the fire that we put out.

29 September 1944

D plus 113 115

Stage being set for seige

30 September 1944

D plus 114 116

Visited by CG XXI Corps Arty.

1 October 1944

D plus 115 117

2 October 1944

D plus 116 118

Routine. Federal voting ballots received by battalion. Though we be far from home, our voice may yet be heard.

3 October 1944

D plus 117 119

1200, H hour for attack on Fort Driant. 1645, objective reached. However, enemy is throwing several counter-attacks.

4 October 1944

D plus 118 120

Enemy shell fire received in area. No damage.

5 October 1944

D plus 119 121

Pierce fighting inside Fort Driant.

6 October 1944

D plus 120 122

I G Inspection

7 October 1944

D plus 121 123

Generally no change. We have been privileged to see the "Jabos" function. It is a pleasure to see them operate as a "team" (but not the P---P--- team that we had heard before). Usually the P 47's would come over just before sunset, when the sun was low and silouetted the targets. Hovering over the target like vultures, gathering the necessary data, and then peeling off in a power dive, swooping as graceful as birds and then pulling out in a dizzy climb, only to maneuver back into position to drop another egg or to fire another rocket. We would hate to be in the German's shoes when those "babys" come over.

8 October 1944

Jouaville, France

D plus 122-124

Church services were held this date in the railroad station in which battery "C" was stationed. This building was also a place where many of the shows were shown during the time that the battalion was stationed in the town of Jouaville. All during this time the fight for the control of Fort Driant still continued. Fighting was done on top of the fort and in the underground passages under the fort. Most of the fighting was done with explosives in an attempt to blow the fort but without success. The walls of the fort were in some cases from 10 to 15 feet thick and doors leading to the passages were of thick steel. All the gun and mortar positions which were outside the fort were kept under control by our artillery fire. A telephone message from the group this date: "Send one EM and vehicle w/driver to XX Corps for special duty with the CIC".

9 October 1944

Jouaville, France

D plus 123-125

This date the following decorations were given to members of this battalion: Bronze Stars to Lt Harauld D Langham, Asst Bn S-2, Capt William G Nechanicky, S-2, Pvt Ralph P Cannizzaro and Pvt Stanley Bubrowski. Lt Langham and and Privs Cannizzaro and Bubrowski were decorated for the heroic work done at the City of Chartres, France and Capt Nechanicky for Meritorious service between 21 July and October 7th 1944. 1st Lt Eugene H Scott, Liaison Pilot of the Battalion was awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement. In addition to the above Lt Scott was awarded four (4) Oak Leaf Clusters to Air Medal for combat missions flown and Lt Smith was awarded the Air Medal for 35 combat missions. In 102 days of combat, these pilots have flown 337 combat missions with 352 hours in the air.

10 October 1944

Jouaville, France

D plus 124-126

This date the battalion received the Verdun Medal. This medal was established by the City of Verdun on 20 Nov 1916 and was awarded to all members of the XX Corps, Third US Army upon the liberation of the city of Verdun in this present conflict. Also the name of the units participating in the liberation were written in the golden book of the City of Verdun.

12 October 1944

Jouaville, France

D plus 125-128

Battery "A" decided to call it quits in the present position and move to a place where there was just a little less mud and water. In fact they were flooded out. The Battalion received a drastic cut in ammunition allowance today, in fact you may say that it was cut out. We were allowed to expend 4 rounds per day. The only time we were allowed to fire was in case of a counter-attack or other emergency. This date the Battalion received its authorization to wear three battle stars. One of the Battle of Normandy from June 6 to July 24, The Battle of Northern France, from July 25 to Sep 14, and the Battle of Germany, Sep 14 to date.

13 October 1944

Jouaville, France

D plus 126-129

No change. All members of this battalion have been in the present position so long they are about to take out citizenship papers in the City of Jouaville.

- 14 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 127/30
The Articles of War were read to all members of this command and also the General Orders on Looting and Pilfering. The above was read by Capt Corn, Battalion Liaison Officer. Enemy patrols were active in the battalion area at 1925. They were reported about 3000 yds to the right front of the battery positions. All batteries were alerted to be on the lookout for the above patrol.
- 15 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 128/31
Two Purple Hearts were awarded to members of this battalion this date for wounds received in action. The weather was still continued bad, the mud was getting deeper and the rain continued to come down.
- 16 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 129/32
Improvement of the drainage system in all the gun positions was ordered this date by the Battalion Commander, the condition of the gun positions made it impossible for the guns to be dug in. The gun positions had to be built up and drainage ditches built in the position and in the Ammunition pits.
- 17 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 130/33
All non-TBA and captured weapons have to go. That was the orders received from HQ TUSA. Many of the men had come into possession of captured enemy arms but the above order required the arms to be turned in. In the pile of arms turned in there was everything from safety pins to cemetery lots. German rifles, machine guns, ~~barp~~ guns etc, were turned in.
- 18 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 131/34
Forward Observers report increased enemy activity.
- 19 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 132/35
Battalion established road guards at each end of town to screen civilians attempting to trespass. This ^{was} necessitated by the increased number of Germans resorting to all manner of guises and tricks to procure information. Lt Smith was awarded Cluster to Air Medal for combat missions flown.
- 20 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 133/36
S-2 reports indicate increase in enemy patrol activity. More spy and enemy agents ~~reported~~ operating in rear of lines. Battalion takes necessary precautions by establishing outposts, alarm trip wires, and other methods of apprehension of enemy personnel.
- 21 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 134/37
Normal duties.
- 22 October 1944 Jouaville, France D plus 135/38
Appearance of jet propelled aircraft flying over HQ Btry area ~~at~~ approximately 3000 to 4000 feet altitude. Reports from several observers agree upon the fact that it has all the characteristics of the "flying bomb" but due to its apparently much larger size and because it described a large "S" curve some are of the opinion that it could be a new type jet propelled plane. Battalion received an odd assortment of ammunition: German 155mm Howitzer projectiles, French powder, British fuzes, and American primers. The result of this will probably be called an "International Serenade". The Germans are sending more flying bombs over these days. Nightly, many may be seen flying overhead. Recently one came low over the battalion area, and dropped into the nearby town of Aubouis. Damage and casualties have been reported.

23 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 136/39

Ordnance team arrives to inspect and repair howitzers and small arms. Battalion has Special Service show at railroad station in Batilly. Battalion received one (1) 155mm Howitzer 1918 Schneider to be used in firing new ammunition. 2 Carrier pigeons bearing messages shot in Battalion area.

24 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 137/40

Quiet Day.

25 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 138/41

Red Cross Clubmobile visits Battalion area -- donuts and coffee appreciated by all. MP roving patrol of highways has been established in this area -- all suspicious individuals picked up will be handled by this patrol. Too, uniform passes are distributed to all civilians for identification. Battalion turns 1918 How. over to 270th FA Bn. Lone enemy plane flies over area and along RR tracks to rear, dropping flares every 5 to 10 seconds -- is apparently pictures.

26 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 139/42

Preparation for inspection.

27 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 140/43

Inspection of Battalion by Corps.

28 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 141/44

Inspection by Third Army inspectors.

29 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 142/45

Inspection by Battalion CQ.

30 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 143/46

Lts. Smith and Scott, Liaison Pilots, awarded Air Medal Clusters.

31 October 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 144/47

Monthly physical inspection held.

1 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 145/48

The new month has really opened with a bang. Both forward OP's are subjected to enemy shelling from enemy artillery. Later, Battalion received a severe lambasting from enemy artillery. Shells fell throughout the Battalion area. No one from the Battalion was injured, however one man from the attached AAA unit was hit by shrapnel in back, head, and hand. During the evening there was a large amount of traffic through Bn area, due to moving into position of the 95th Division, replacing the 90th Division. 90th Division to leave for rear areas in the morning. During the night the Bn again had Buzz Bombs over the area. One came over at 2155 and another one over at 2315. Large flashes in the sky and later the sound of the bursting bomb were heard, but as far as this Bn was concerned, it was a complete miss.

2 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 146/49

At 0745 all **Btrys** reported the crash and the explosion of a "V" bomb or a large plane to the east of the Bn position. Later reports showed that the explosion was from a "V" bomb that had exploded in the town of Auboué, 6 K NE of the Bn position, killing several civilians. There was more enemy shelling in the battery position; there were several rounds short of the Bn C.P. and just over Battery "C". Later, reports from the shell fragments brought in showed the shells to be Russian 105mm shells.

3 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 147/50

Still at Jouaville and we are getting tired of it, and I suppose so are the Jerries. The Battalion came into a few more guns today. We received two Btrys of German 88's and Russian 76mm guns. They were to be used in the defense of the positions and also to replace other units that were leaving the front. About all they were used for is to make noise and a flash. Many rubber guns were put in the positions of some of the units that left the area. The above operation was known as Dallas Operation. The rubber guns had flash crews that worked the flash at night to make the enemy think that the area was still full of artillery. All the artillery that moved out was going to other fronts or in different sectors in preparation of flanking attacks on the city of Metz. To many of the men in the Bn little was known of the operation. The guns were perfect duplicates of the American artillery pieces, but it was not long before the wise GI's had the answer to the whole operation, but it still remained a secret. During this time, the Bn was operating fire direction and massing 18 guns, maintaining 42 miles of telephone wire, and drawing gas and rations for 950 men in addition to the normal battery duties. The ruse was maintained for a period which lasted 7 days. The highlight of the deal came when Capt Corn and his battery of German 88's blew out the tube of one gun shooting AP ammunition.

4 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 148/51

Battery "B" received CSMO this date and moved to the position of the 733rd FA Bn. Dummy positions were set up in the old Battery "B" positions. The Dallas operation was in full swing, some of our vehicles designation numbers have been changed on the bumpers to other units and even fake phone calls have been coming into the Bn C.P. Some of the enlisted men and officers of this command went to hear an orientation lecture by the Commanding General of the Third US Army today; from all reports on the speech, old "Blood and Guts" is still on the ball as far as speaking is concerned.

5 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 149/52

Today members of the 12th Army Group were in the C.P. requesting a plane from the Bn to do a little photographing over the Bn to check the camouflage and the deception of the Dallas Operation. According to the Forward Observers there was more activity than usual on the front. Our friends, the OCS boys from the Metz garrison, seem to be getting tough about it. Patrols were sent out during the night to check the blackout in the Bn and to observe some of the suspicious blinking lights.

6 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 150/53

This day the Bn received a very nice report on the inspection held by the Third Army Artillery Section, and on the inspection held by members of the XX Corps. Both were highly complimentary with ratings of excellent. Mr Hartig, CWO, and the Bn mail orderly wrecked the mail jeep at 1325 on the way to the Bn with mail. CWO Hartig received slight leg injury and small head lesion and the mail clerk received cut on the head. The vehicle was wrecked.

7 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 151/54

The Dallas operation came to an end this date. Members of the 244th FA Bn came into the Bn area to learn firing of the German 88's and the Russian guns. Fire missions were picking up in the last couple days; this date the Bn fired 8 time on target missions expending 82 rounds. Other missions consisted of working parties and the shooting up of bunkers occupied by the enemy.

8 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 152

Today the Bn received the orders for the attack to reduce the city fortress of Metz. "H" hour to be at 2100 on the 9th of November. This Battalion was to reinforce the fires of the 359th FA Bn of the 95th Div. This was the first time the 95th Inf Div has seen action and they have the biggest job of all the troops on the Western Front. The fortress of Metz was built in the year 300 AD and has never been taken; it is surrounded by many forts. The forts which have to be taken are the following: Fort Oriant, Fort Jeanne D'Arc, Fort Kellerman, Fort St. Quentin, and Fort Plappeville.

9 November 1944

JOUAVILLE, FRANCE

D plus 153⁶

10 November 1944

D plus 154⁷

11 November 1944

D plus 155⁸

12 November 1944

D plus 156⁹

13 November 1944

D plus 157⁶⁰

14 November 1944

D plus 158¹

15 November 1944

D plus 159²

16 November 1944

D plus 160³

The following account covers the above dates and the big subject for the dates was the attack on the city of Metz. The jumpoff for the attack was fast and bloody. Capt Corn, LNO of the Bn with the 2nd Bn of the 379th Inf Reg. was wounded in the first minutes of the fight along with the Regimental commander of the 379th Inf Reg, both were hit by mortar fragments. Capt Corn received a fracture of the left arm at the wrist and the Reg Commander received a broken leg. The radio operator of Capt Corn's was also wounded but carried on the duties with the Inf Reg until his radio was knocked out. He then carried on with the infantry, assisting the wounded men. Lt Morefield with the "F" company went all the way with the company. His radio operator was wounded in the fight by heavy machine gun fire in the fight up past Fort Jeanne D'Arc and Fort De Guise and on to the city of Metz. Infantry men used heavy machine guns as tommy guns and carried and fired their mortars without baseplates and sights to reduce enemy strongpoints. Many mine fields were encountered during the trip and caused many casualties among the infantry. At one time during the trip, the company that Lt Morefield was with, became isolated behind Fort Jeanne D'Arc without food, water, ammunition, and medical supplies. All the available planes of the 95th Div Arty and attached units were called for and were used for dropping the above supplies to the troops. The planes of this Bn piloted by Lt Smith and Lt Sullivan made a total of 33 flights. During one flight Lt Smith saw one doughboy that had been wounded and missed by the medics wave at the sound of the plane. Upon returning to the air strip near the collecting station, Lt Smith reported the incident to the Medical Officer in charge. The Medical Officer supposed that the area had been cleared, but volunteered to accompany Lt Smith in a flight over the area. On the next flight the man again waved, although he was laying face down. Aid-men were dispatched to the area and the man was picked up. During this small action 300 out of 450 participating were casualties.

Artillery fire from this Bn from all reports received was very accurate. This Bn was adjusted many times by Lt Morefield on enemy counter-attacks from his position behind Fort Jeanne D'Arc causing heavy casualties on the enemy and breaking up the attacks. On the 14th of November, Lt Williams was assigned LNO with the Inf in the place of Capt Corn. Lt Flood relieved Lt Williams on the 18th of November and continued until the end of the action. All the men are to be complimented on the fine work that was done for the Battalion. Lt Morefield finally got out from the Infantry on 20th of Nov and was relieved by Lt McKinney. Lt Hoffer was assigned FO with the 3rd Bn of the 379th Inf Reg on 16th Nov. Both Lts McKinney and Hoffer did fine work for the Battalion.

17 November 1944

Jouaville France

D plus 161/64

Two CIC EM came into the Battalion this date to investigate the shooting of one civilian at Ferme Farm in which Service Btry. was located. The civilian was caught going through the duffle bags of men of the Battery and refused to halt when ordered. He was shot by one member of the Btry. The CIC members came into Battalion area to investigate the farm for anything other than gifts that the occupants of the farm might have. The Battalion continued its fire on the Fort Jeanne d' Arc which was still holding out. 6 missions were fired on the Fort with a total rounds expenditure of 341 rounds.

18 November 1944

Jouaville France

D plus 162/65

Fort De Guise fell to the 95th Div today, in addition to the former, there was also reports that the Germans were blowing up ammunition dumps in the area of Chatel St. Germain and have started a hasty retreat. Two tremendous explosions were observed in the rear of Ft. De Guise at 1448. Black smoke was seen going up 500 to 1000 feet in the air in the general vicinity. At 1812 the Bn. received a call from the Battalion EX, "H ad slight accident, send Med Officer to check two small children that walked into the side of the vehicle." At 1830 Med Officer reported into the C.P. "Had accident also, hit horse and wagon, no damage done."

19 November 1944

Jouaville France

D plus 163/66

Lt. Flood relieved Lt. Williams as LN O with 379th Infantry, 1st Battalion. Three P-47's circled the area at 1100 this date waiting to land at the air strip that was as yet not completed. The planes had been out on a mission and had run into trouble and were forced to land at the provisional strip. One plane crashed in the landing and one pilot bailed out crashing his ship.

Today the 90th Div and the 5th Div joined at the city of Metz. The City was completely surrounded. A radio relay station was sent out under the direction of Lt. Langham at the bunker just East of Leipzig Farm in the vicinity of the Fort Jeanne d' Arc. The Fort was still holding out and fire was still coming from the Fort.

20 November 1944

Jouaville France

D plus 164/67

Reports were received from the Infantry Commander today on the work of the Battalion on the speed and accuracy of the Battalion in firing of the TOT's on some of the Forts. The Forts were kept busy with Artillery fire while the Inf. advanced. Many times the Battalion was called to fire heavy concentration on the Forts to stop the heavy machine gun and mortar fire coming from the Forts.

21 November 1944

Jouaville France

D plus 165/68

Good news was received from all the units engaged in the attack on Metz. The 1st Battalion reported that Fort Driant had been surrounded; the 2nd Bn. had surrounded Soy-Chazelles, and the 3rd Bn. has Ft St Quentin surrounded. A German Major, taken at the Fort, reported that the troops in the Fort are very discontented, they take pot shots at their officers when they have a chance, it was for that reason that he took off. He said that he knew the war was lost but that Hitler had such a hold on the people that they could do nothing but fight. Purple Hearts were awarded today to the following: Tec 5 George White and Pfc Czernopowicz. Rations arrived-thanksgiving turkeys were included.

22 November 1944

Jouaville France

D plus 166/69

One French civilian was brought into the Battalion Aid Station this date, the above had stepped on a mine in the vicinity of Amanvillers. His foot was blown off and the man was not expected to live. Civilians report that the area from Amanvillers to Roncourt is heavily mined, accidents happen every day.

The Battalion received close station march order at 2305 today with orders that we would move the first thing in the morning. It looks like we are really going to get away from Jouaville at last.

23 November 1944

Fleury France

D plus 167
170

The Battalion reconnaissance party moved out early in the morning and took the northern route through the city of Mazieres les Metz, over the pontoon bridge into the city of Metz and then south to the area assigned to the Bn. in the vicinity of the dead city of Fleury, France. The Battalion, under the Bn. EX O, moved over the southern route crossing the Mosel River at Pont-a-Mousson and into Fleury, France.

The weather was nothing but bad and the city of Fleury was the most shot-up place the Battalion had seen, there was not a building in the place that was not hit by artillery fire. Near the town of Fleury there was still a young war going on in one of the Forts of the city of Metz. The Battalion closed in the rendezvous area in the town of Fleury where Thanksgiving meal was served.

24 November 1944

Fleury France

D plus 168
171

Movement orders were received this date and reconnaissance was made in the area of Maizeroy, France and the Battalion Commander and Reconnaissance Party returned to the area of Fleury. The Battalion was to move out of Fleury at daylight in the morning and move to the new position area. Trails were to be dropped in the new area and the guns made ready to fire if called for but there was to be no work done on occupation of the position.

25 November 1944

Maizeroy France

D plus 169
172

The move out of Fleury was made in the dark over some of the worst roads that were slippery with mud and full of bomb craters, the vehicle of the Commanding Officer went into one of the bomb craters but was stopped in time and pulled out by one of the heavy vehicles of the Battalion. The move into Maizeroy was made without incident although there were a few mines encountered. Positions were not occupied in the area, because the situation was moving faster than had been anticipated by the Infantry. Reconnaissance was made in the vicinity of Brouck and the Battalion moved into the area at 1430. There was considerable firing done from this position. Gun positions were established in the village limits and people were informed to open all of the windows to prevent the breaking of them by the artillery blast. Many of the people failed to open the windows and every time a round was fired you could hear the glass fall and the baby cry. Sherman was right, War is Hell. Most of the firing from this position was done on the town of Teterchen from which a lot of Artillery fire was coming. 6 Counter battery missions were fired in this area.

26 November 1944

Brouck France

D plus 170
173

The Battalion stayed in the city of Brouck this date and continued the mission of supporting the fires of the 358th. Many missions were fired in this including 6 counter battery, 4 interdiction, 2 enemy personnel and 6 prep missions. The name of this town received a change of name. The Germans had named the town Brucken and the name was being confused with the name that had appeared on the map so Lt Korsh and his little paint brush done the job. The sign had letters 2½ feet high and could be spotted from a long ways off.

27 November 1944

Teterchen France

D plus 171
174

The Battalion displaced to Teterchen, France, entering the town on the heels of the departing Germans, in fact, just an hour behind them. Some of the houses were still burning as we entered the town. We had previously fired on Teterchen from our former positions at Brouck and we could now see the effects of our fire. A German Artillery Battery had been in position defoliated by a small rise. We had scored several hits and near misses on the battery. Some of the guns were still there together with storage piles of ammunition. There was also a vast underground ammo dump in the side of a nearby hill. Evidently the Krauts left in a hurry for they left a quantity of ammunition and supply behind them.

28 November 1944

Teterchen France

D plus 172
175

Battalion fired 328 rounds this day against a variety of targets. Good effect reported by observers.

29 November 1944

vic Villing France

D plus 173
176

Battalion displacements brought us to vicinity of Villing, France, situated on the border between the province of Lorraine and Germany. Above the rise in front of the Battalion positions is a sign erected by the dough-foots. "You are now entering Germany through the courtesy of the 95th Division." We are now about to do what the Nazis said we would never do-- set foot on German sacred soil-- about the only thing that could make this soil sacred is the quantity of "bovine excrement" on display-- perhaps this is the reason why Hitler never ran out of it to feed to his people. The rarity of the German air is also unique, smells like "Essence le Abatoir" - a self respecting swine would shun some of these places.

30 November 1944

vic Villing France

D plus 174
177

There was enough Artillery in the vicinity of Villing to blow the city of Saarlautern off the map, in fact they had already begun to do so. All of the Artillery positions were right in the front lines with the Infantry outpost and the Infantry mortars. The Artillery fire from the artillery in the position was constant. There was everything there from 105mm to 240mm and all firing. The windows were falling out of the buildings, some of the C.P. crew on duty were almost victims of falling plaster. In addition to the above artillery fire there were also Infantry Cannon Companies which were keeping up the fire. At 0235 this date the Battalion Commander received a telephone message to the effect that the enemy, with tanks had made a counter attack. The Infantry had had severe losses and were attempting to form. The area you are in is considered in jeopardy. Upon a check on the source of information it was found that there had been a counter attack but it had been thrown back with losses to the enemy. The 358th Inf Regt informed us that they had received no word of a counter attack of such an extent, that reports of counter attack was exaggerated. In the attack on the Sarr Basin the Infantry jumped off from the battery positions. The Battalion fired preparations for the attack, firing one round per minute for a period of 30 minutes. The Infantry took the town of Felsburg without much fight and moved on forward. Today was payday and the troops were paid in Marks for the first time. There was another counter attack at 1635 which was broken by Infantry and Artillery fire, killing 10 enemy and knocking out 10 tanks. Today the Battalion received commendation from the Commanding General, Third US Army for the work done in the Metz Campaign.

1 December 1944

Villing France

D plus 175
178

Preparations were being made for the attack on the Saar Basin. The Ammo train pulled into Battalion positions at 0710 and were ordered to return to ASP for more ammo. Visitors coming into Battalion CP in search of information on attack included Brig Gen Kane and Colonel Watlington, III Corps Arty. Enemy artillery fell on "A" Battery position and caused one casualty, S/Sgt. Conroy-- injury slight. Battalion received Commendation from General Marshall for excellent work done by XX Corps during Metz operations. During last 24 hour period Battalion fired 739 rounds.

2 December 1944

VILLING FRANCE

D plus 176

179

Preparations for General Attack in Northern Third Army Sector under way. Plan "B" to be used. Formation of friendly fighter bombers to start attack at 1000 hours. 1000 hours - Large formation of fighter bombers overhead, heavy Jerry flack could be seen and heavier bombs going down. The Jerries really caught hell. The battalion then received orders to start firing Plan "B" at "H" hour. At 1345 the battalion received a message from Group CO to send reconnaissance forward, to reserve Btry positions and there was possibility of a long frog displacement. This position to be the last before crossing the Saar River. At 1500 hours, Battalion Sergeant-Major, M/Sgt DeVries, reported at Group CP at Oberdorf France, and was presented the Croix de Guerre Medal given him by the French Government for Meritorious Service.

3 December 1944

VILLING FRANCE

D plus 177

180

This morning battalion received information that the 379th Infantry Regiment, 95th Div had crossed the Saar River during the night taking the only bridge across the Saar River still intact. Battalion changes of assignment this date are as follows: Capt Moore rlvd Asst S-3 assigned LN O; Lt Lingham rlvd Asst S-2, to Asst S-3; Lt Korsh rlvd assignment Asst S-2 to Motor O Btry "B"; Lt Morefield rlvd asgmt LN O & RO Btry "A" to Asst S-2; Lt McKinney rlvd asgmt Motor O Btry "B" to RO Btry "A". Battery commanders ordered to prepare to winch all guns out of mud, possibility of move. TP message from LN O that enemy column observed on left flank possible counter-attack; 358th Infantry Regiment preparing to take Oberherrn, Germany.

4 December 1944

VILLING FRANCE

D plus 178

181

Survey operations were in progress all day for positions in the Saar Valley these positions are in vicinity of Alt-Forweiler, Germany - under observation and guns of German Artillery. A hot time is expected by all. At 1300 Battery "B"'s Third Section fired first rounds on Germany. Chief of Section: Sgt Christensen; #1 man Pvt Edward Curtis. Incidentally, Pvt Curtis also pulled the lanyard on the How that fired our first round in combat. Air Corps was out today - the P47's bombed, strafed, and fired rockets at enemy columns on roads to our right flank. We are really pooping out the "beaucoup ammo" - 617 rounds fired today.

5 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 179

182

"H" hour for the big attack on the city of Saarlautern was at 0430 and again heavy Artillery went with it. This battalion fired on enemy btrys in the area as their part of the attack. All Btrys were alerted for displacement to move on call. The following awards were made to members of this battalion. The Silver Star to Lt Col YUILLE, for gallantry in action. Oakleaf Cluster to Air Medal to Lt SMITH and the Air Medal to Sgt Leigh for participating in aerial flights over France. The German Marksmanship medal (purple heart) to Pvt Bodner and the oak leaf cluster to the purple heart to Sgt Conroy for wounds received in action. The Battalion moved to positions in the Saar Valley, 6000 yards S W of Saarlouis, Germany and the Saar River. The positions were taken up in the town of Alt-Forweiler, Germany under the guns and observation of the Germans. This should be very interesting.

6 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 180

183

The heavy woods, Staats Forrest Karlsbrun, which was by-passed by the advancing and thought to contain many German troops was ordered cleared by the 5th Inf Div. All Btry commanders were alerted to the fact and were ordered to place machine guns and bazooka teams in position to protect the right flank of the battalion. Orders were to take as few prisoners as possible. The Battalion Commander went to the hospital at Metz for an examination of the right arm. Saluting has been very difficult these days.

7 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 181
184

The Battalion had a very good day today, observation was very good and there were plenty of juicy missions to be fired. Some of the missions were on enemy Btrys and enemy guns. The Lt planes of the battalion were in the air all day and really gave the landscape a working over. The town of Alt-Forweiler is in rough shape, there are a lot of houses standing but there are not many of the houses in the town that have not been hit by Artillery fire. Most of the civilians have moved into the fatherland with the Germans but there are still a few of them in town. The ones who have stayed behind have been brought into one area or moved to the town of Biston. The town seemed to have taken quite a pasting from our TOT's.

8 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 182
185

The battalion received secret orders today ordering the transfer of 5% of the enlisted strength to the infantry. All Battery commanders were informed of the order and informed to turn in the names of the men in the Btry who were to go. Enemy counter attack in the bridgehead area today was repulsed by Infantry and Artillery fire, this Battalion expended 32 rounds on the counter attack. The enemy were thrown back with losses and the establishing of the bridgehead went on.

9 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 183
186

This date was another of the days when we were harrassed by inspecting officers of the Group. The S-1 of the Group was into the CP reporting to the commanding officer, to inspect the Howitzers, the small arms, positions and vehicles. The comments after the inspection was all to the satisfaction of the inspecting officer.

10 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 184
187

3 officers and 12 FM returned from passes to Paris this date, stories were wierd and conflicting but all were certain of one thing. It's a wonderful place. Total rounds fired this date was 555, most of the rounds were fired on enemy Btrys, Guns, Ammo dumps and buildings housing the enemy.

11 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 185
188

The Medical Detachment made the news for today, booster shots were given for typhoid fever, sore arms prevailed. Both the OP's of the battalion took a good shelling today, no rund, no hits, no errors.

12 December 1944

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 186
189

Action was generally quiet on this front today except for Lt Williams who was bothered by enemy mortars all day and kept him in the foxhole most of the day. One thing he did get out of it was a dog which he calls RALPH. Its a German dog and really nice looking as far as dogs go. All the civilians were released today and returned to there homes, as far as we are concerned the fraternization rule is still in effect. The commanding officer of the 193rd FA Group was in the battalion area today for a little inspection and conflag with the battalion commander.

13 December 1944

ALTFORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 187¹⁹⁰

Major Hanna, Gp S-4, arrived at Battalion C.P. to inspect men that are to be transferred from this organization to the infantry. Enemy artillery fire in vicinity of Battalion area. At 2330 all artillery had temporary ceased fire to allow FOB to pick up sound plots of enemy firing. The 7th FOB was located right across the street from the Battalion C.P. and wire communications was maintained. When urgent sound plot were obtained the coordinates were sent over to the Battalion FDC and were fired after they were cleared by higher headquarters, and then the FOB would get soundings of our fire to determine the effect.

14 December 1944

ALTFORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 188¹⁹¹

The Battalion received information that none other than General George S. Patton Jr. (blood and guts to the boys) was to be in the area and he might stop in for a visit, (we hope). The Battalion received orders to check the chow lines for stragglers who were to be held and turned over to the proper authorities. The Battalion Air Strip received a little shelling today but all of the rounds were sensed as over, no effect.

15 December 1944

ALTFORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 189¹⁹²

Coffee and doughnuts were served today by the American Red Cross, the Red Cross clubmobile arrived at 0945. All went well until 1205 when the Jerries started lobbing shells in to the Battalion area. They were of 170 mm's and some of the frags flew thru the Headquarters Battery chow line. One building in Battery "B" area was hit by a shell but the round was a dud and broke in half on impact and put a large hole in the wall of the building. The Red Cross girls seemed to think it was all very interesting and were amazed at the noise of the incoming shells, but they were glad to get out of the area. Enemy planes (ME 109's) were over the area today but committed no hostile act and were not fired on. Two P-47's came over the area at 1533 and dropped one 500 lbs bomb which hit an ammunition truck belonging to a tank Battalion, killing five men and injuring one. The bomb hit 200 yds. east of the Battalion C.P. and blew in all of the windows on one side of the building but caused no casualties. No explanation has been received of the friendly planes dropping the bomb as yet.

Today the Battalion was informed of the change of Groups, from the 193rd FA Gp to the 204th FA Group under Col. Pyle.

16 December 1944

ALTFORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 190¹⁹³

III Corps became operational this date. 193rd FA Gp takes over duties of III Corps Artillery. Unidentified P 47's flew over the Battalion area today. Contrary to customary coloring, these were painted black. 24 men of this Battalion were transferred to the 26th Infantry Training Center at Metz.

17 December 1944

ALTFORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 191¹⁹⁴

The Group (204th FA Gp) CO visited the Battalion C.P. today at 1120. The Bn CO and the Gp CO visited the Battery Commanders and Battery positions. At 1913 the Bn received orders that men being transferred to the infantry on 19th Dec. will be at Group C.P. for inspection at 1100 18 December 1944.

18 December 1944

ALTFORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 192¹⁹⁵

At 0400 today the air was hot with enemy activity. At 0445 one enemy two motor Bomber was shot down in the city of Felsberg. The plane was an ME 110- 3 Jerries were reported kaput. In the early hours of the morning the Battalion was alerted for a possible paratroop attack. The mission of the Battalion changed from support fires to the 358th FA Bn to 50th FA Bn, 5th Division. At 1136 Cpl Shannon Parker walked into a swinging door. It seems the gun in full recoil caught him right on the button. He lost a few teeth and gained a bump on the head. Moral- never walk into a swinging door- your mama ain't in there. Report from Exec. Officer, 50th FA Bn. fires of the Battalion were very effective today. In case of Paratrooper attack- all men were instructed to stay in buildings and to shoot anything that moves outside.

19 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 196

To start the morning off right the enemy artillery fired a few rounds into the Battalion area. No damage and no casualties. There was a sharp increase in automatic and artillery fire from the bridgehead north of Battalion position.

20 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 196

There was a small infantry attack in the bridgehead area. A few more houses in the bridgehead area were taken and held. Enemy aircraft were over the Battalion area. They drew anti-aircraft fire but no hits were scored.

21 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 198

The day hadn't been 10 minutes old when the jerries started throwing artillery fire this way. 6 to 8 rounds fell into Battery "A" area. The calibre was estimated 105mm - 2 guns were put out of action, one EM was injured, Pfc Vernon True. He received a slight cut on the face from fragmentation, communications were cut between the Battalion and Battery "A" and with 204th FA Group. Our infantry was compelled to evacuate part of bridgehead area to consolidate positions. At 1715 the information was received that the enemy was counter-attacking in the bridgehead area, committing one company of infantry accompanied by tanks. At 1715 observers reported that the counter-attack was broken up. Prisoners were taken and the tanks were destroyed. 1945, Capt Moore, LN O, reported Gas Grenades were being used in the counter-attack at 1700. The gas burned the nostrils and causes a sore throat - no ground was lost in the attack. At 2320 enemy artillery fell in the Battalion area, at approximately 5 minute intervals.

22 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 199

Enemy aircraft were over the Battalion area in the wee hours today. They were dispersed by heavy ack-ack fire. At 0042 there was some more incoming mail (artillery fire) a total of five rounds, estimated 105mm - # 3 section of "A" Battery received a hit putting the piece out of action. The oil recovery line was cut by fragmentation and the recoil cylinder was punctured. At 0220 more enemy planes were over the area. Colonel McClure - 95th Div Arty Commander came into the Battalion CP with information for change of mission - CO instructed to make necessary changes. Germans had recrossed the river on our south flank. American forces were forced to pull out of Wallenfingen due to heavy artillery fire falling in that area. T. P. Msg from LN O Moore at 1140- Enemy paratroops have been dropped near Boulay Moselle - strength of landing unknown. At 1232 radio message was received from CG XX Corps- all units will be on the alert for enemy paratroopers dropped in the vicinity of Gulackerchen. Any information regarding enemy paratroopers will be transmitted immediately to the Hq. Later reports from LN O Moore that paratroopers dropped with black and white shutes and had not been captured.

23 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 200

The Group CO (204th Group) presented awards at a formation to the following: BRONZE STAR MEDAL - Major Gordon L. Staker, S/Sgt Morris, S/Sgt Howard, Sgt Eisele, PURPLE HEART - Pvt Vernon True. Battery "C" reported 1 enemy soldier approached CP unobserved, fled to the north, losing cap in flight. Appeared young and was armed with carbine. Enemy air activity was heavy over area again. 15 white objects were dropped near battalion area. Third Army HQ warned there would be heavy enemy air activity over area - be alert for paratroopers being dropped.

24 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 201

Battalion received flash warning that the enemy troops were reported in area. Enemy were wearing US uniforms and driving US vehicles. Sign of recognition: They wore blue or pink scarves. "C" or "D" was painted on the left side of vehicle hood. Recognized each other with 2 taps on the helmet. Their mission was to kill or capture General Officers or others of high rank. Received orders that the above were not to escape - They were to be shot on sight or captured. CWO arrived with the hot poop on the situation in the Ardennes front or the Bulge. At 1917 "B" CP reported a big 4 alarm fire burning in enemy territory.

27 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 202

At 0020 this morning the Battalion received information from XX Corps to be on the lookout for two men on motorcycles who would not stop when halted at XX Corps CP. They were to be stopped when they came along. At 0930 the Jerries really opened up with a Merry Christmas in the form of aircraft which remained over the area all morning, giving the Battalion machine gunners something to shoot at. 2 American P 47's piloted by German pilots strafed the road at the Battalion Air Strip and attacked an L 4 liaison plane over Battalion area. Attacking planes were driven off by heavy ack-ack fire. One Jerry ME 109 crashed east of Battalion position killing pilot- one Jerry FW 190 knocked down in Felsberg made a belly landing nearby. The pilot stepped on wing and drew his pistol- this was his last move. Some dead-eye Dick shot him through the head. The American Artillery had a Merry Christmas for the jerries in the form of a new fuze which would require no time setting, but still would burst 20 yards above the ground. At 1832 the fuze was fired in a heavy barrage all over the Western Front. All shells were marked Merry Christmas in chalk by the cannoneers. Some Batteries had the whole battery cut pulling lanyards and saying, "Merry Xmas, you ----- (various and sundry expletives).

26 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 203

Battery "A" was moved to new positions to rear to fire protection cover for Battalion in case they were forced to withdraw. More enemy planes were over the area- everything but the kitchen stove was thrown at them in efforts to bring them down. Battalion pilots in the air at that time were also attacked by enemy aircraft.

27 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 204

The S-2 spent the day administering to the needs of the German civilians in the town. This and fighting was really making things tough. We have to fight them and then care for them. Four Germans were captured this date in vicinity of Biston by members of 920 FA Bn. Germans were burying German guns and ammunition in that area for future use.

28 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 205

Enemy planes were over the area this A.M., but committed no hostile act and were not fired upon. S-1 & S-3 went to XX Corps. S-3 demonstrated Deflection Correction Fan and Metro Slide Rule to Corps G-3 and CG XX Corps Artillery, Gen. Slack. Motion picture team into Battalion area with G.I. show for Battalion. Colonel Rogers, Ex O 40th Group into Bn CP. for visit at 1535. At 1623, the enemy dropped two shells near Battalion area.

29 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 206

At 0002 Bn received a telephone call from 377th Infantry Regiment - be on look-out for man using name of Armstrong, Anderson, or Amsterdam. 5' 9", heavy set, wearing G.I. clothing, and posing as a Captain or a Lt. This man will be taken- dead or alive. Tour of inspection made by inspector from XX Corps. Inspection was on tires and the prevention of trench-foot.

30 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 207

There was very little activity in the Battalion today. There were slight changes made in the AA set-up- one AA Section was moved to Btry "A" position on hill to rear of Battalion position.

31 December 1944

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 208

Pay day today - the Class "A" agent officer departed from this area for finance office. Enemy air activity consisted of 2 ME 109's circling the area at 1300 and 22 enemy planes were in the sector but did not appear over Battalion area. The enemy counter-attacked in the bridgehead area today but were driven off with heavy artillery, mortar, and MG fire with the resulting loss of half the attacking force and tanks. Patrol activity was heavy during the night, friendly vehicles were fired on from farm buildings southeast of the Battalion area.

1 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 206

Enemy air activity was heavy over the Battalion area today; there were many planes over the roads in the area strafing and raising Hell in general. One enemy plane made a pass at one of our liaison planes right in the area of the Battalion C.P., but was chased away by machine gun fire. The Bn received a change of mission today; the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 920th FA Bn was assigned to this Battalion.

The Bn received word today that enemy activity was more on the southern part of the front in this sector. Enemy infantry had crossed the Saar River at a point S.W. of Bous with tanks and had dug in along the river. At 1150 the enemy put on a counter attack; one Pz started that two companies had crossed the river on a ferry during the night. Some ground was gained and held by the enemy, but they were forced to halt and dig in. The enemy artillery shelled the Bn area between 1300 and 1645 this date. Battery "B" and Battery "C" received near hits. One ammo truck from Battery "C" took a near miss, resulting in five tires blown out on the vehicle and holes in the body and in the differential of the vehicle. About that time the shells started to land in the area of the Bn Hq. A phone call from Mr Hartig, CWO, "That was me that you saw going into the basement, my roof just now blew off". The shelling continued until 2000 hours, but there were no casualties to the personnel and no guns were hit. Our wire communications were out with higher headquarters and some of the batteries most of the time during the shelling, but were soon put into working condition by our wire sections.

2 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 207

Reports received on the counter attack yesterday showed that the enemy was east of the RR and south of Wadgassen. 106 PW's were taken and the others dispersed or were killed. The Bn received a new change of mission this date from reinforcing fires of the 920th FA Bn to direct support of the 358th FA Bn. Enemy planes were over the Bn area again today and dropped bombs near the Bn area; the blast from the bombs blew in some of the windows, but caused no casualties. Enemy planes were over the area all day today strafing roads and just making themselves a general nuisance. There was also a large group of friendly bombers over the area today. They bombed the enemy troops in the bridgehead area and in the city of Strassburg; as far as could be seen there was no enemy ack-ack fire coming up. Battery "A" received a little artillery fire at 1635 this date; there were a few rounds of high air bursts over the area at 1635.

3 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler

D plus 208

The Bn received information that the OP belonging to the XX Corps Artillery was under attack and that the above might be a build-up for a counter attack in the southern part of the front. The OP was located about 8 miles SW of the Bn area. The 106th Cav Group also reported stepped up activity on the front in their sector.

4 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 209

"C" Battery OP reported that they were receiving some incoming mail in the form of heavy mortar fire. Col Eastman was in the Bn C.P. for a short visit. He took the new deflection fan and the metric calculator of the Bn back to the engineers for duplication. Sgt Patterson, Hsg Center Sgt, on his regular run to the Group Hq reported seeing what he thought was an enemy patrol; all units in the near vicinity were notified and alerted. The final outcome of the report showed that the suspected patrol that was seen were some of our troops doing a little moonlight skiing in the hills near Falsberg.

5 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 210

General Slack, C.G. of the XX Corps Artillery made a visit to the Bn area today for about 15 minutes. The Bn pilots of the Bn had trouble all day due to bad weather and were forced to turn back because of motor failure due to icing. Enemy patrol action was heavy again today in the Bn area; one of our jeeps was reported knocked out by an enemy patrol which was moving along the road this side of the river in the vicinity of Werebln. 282 rounds were expended by the Bn this date.

6 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 214

The Battalion received awards today. The bronze star to: Lt Col Ninian L. Yuille and Tec 4 William Beck of Battery "A". A Bronze Oakleaf Cluster to the Air Medal was presented to S/Sgt Leigh for participating in aerial flights over France and Germany. 132 rounds were expended by the Battalion today, 100 of which were harrassing fires fired during the night.

7 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 215

Cpl Autry of Battery "A" turned out to be the lucky man of the Battalion. From all of the men in the Battalion he was chosen to return to the states on a 30 day rotation furlough. Although everyone is happy that he is fortunate enough to return, nevertheless, they are envious of him. Btry "A" reported that a shed full of German T.N.T. fuzes and 81mm Mortar ammo had been found near battery position.

8 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 216

The Battalion Cb pilots spent another day with cold weather hampering flights. On one flight, Lt. Smith reported that he was forced to return home because motor had iced and cut out, fortunately the motor started again in time to make a safe landing. Large formations of friendly bombers were over the area again today carrying Bombs for Berlin.

9 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 217

General Slack, CG XX Corps Artillery into CP today. At 1030, "C" Btry CP received 24 rounds of mortar fire and artillery fire in the CP area. No damage or casualties. Later in day, "C" Btry CP reported heavy movement of troops in that area. CP was smoked by the enemy - Visibility zero. Recommended that T.O.T. be fired in that area. At 1712 Battalion received word that Battalion pilot and observer had been forced down by snow storm at Bouzanville. One gun section under Lt. Flood, Btry "B", went out on a roving gun detail, moving well up to the enemy lines and firing harrassing fires well to the enemy rear area. After firing, gun was pulled out of position and fired from another position on other targets - Mission dubbed: "Task Force Flood." Gun fired 10 rounds from 3 different positions.

10 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 218

All the gas equipment was inspected today by Lt. Spring - Group Gas Officer. The roving gun was out again in the late morning. Gun from Btry "C" under Lt. Dixon. Right trail spade was broken during the firing. New spade was brought into position and firing continued.

11 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 219

Awards of Air Medal were made at the Group Air Strip by the Group CO to the following: Lt. Miller and Pvt. Belloni; a Silver Oakleaf Cluster to Lt. Smith; and Bronze Oak leaf Clusters to the Air Medal to Lt. Sullivan and Lt. Whiteley. The award of one Oakleaf Cluster to each of the above was for dropping supplies to cut off Infantry behind Fort Jeanne D' Arc.

12 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 220

The inspection team of the XX Corps, under Lt Col Peet into Bn CP at 0910. Colonel Pierce, XX Corps Ex into CP to supervize inspection. The roving gun departed Bn area to harrass enemy rear area from forward positions. The Battalion Roving Gun finished mission and returned at 2230.

13 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 221

1 enemy plane was spotted over the Battalion area today. The plane committed no hostile act and was not fired upon. The roving gun was out again on its normal mission. Rear town seen taking pasting these days. Rover returned to position at 2055. Mission completed.

14 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 222

Outpost of Btry "A" reported one man dropped by parachute between "A" & "Serv" Btrys - vic 21-75. Whether enemy or friendly undetermined. Received letter by messenger giving this Battalion credit for battle participation in The Battle of Northern France, this was our second battle participation credit. Survey crew and officer enroute to Battalion position, wrecked bus on icy curve, no one injured. Enemy artillery fire plastered the Battalion area at 2255 and 2315, the calibre of the shells were estimated at 150 mm. 5 men were killed and 9 men were injured in the shelling, one round bursting right in the gun pit, killing the crew. It and better be said right now that the above casualties were not of this Battalion but were of another Battalion in the near area. One round burst on the road in front of one of the buildings of Battery "B", five pipes were blown on the vehicle and holes were all over the bed of the vehicle, much of the fragmentation of the shell went through the building but there were no casualties among the personnel. One of the gun positions of Battery "B" was well covered by the fire but there were no hits on the gun. The Med Officer of this Battalion was called to the CP of the 455th AAA Bn to treat the wounded. The guns doing the firing were located by the FOB and were fired on by this Battalion this date.

15 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 223

The shelling continued during the night but not on as large a scale as it did during the early part of the night. The Battalion submitted the names of three men to the 204th FA Group who were to be used to go to the 3rd Army Depot in Belgium and drive vehicles back to the XI Corps area. The roving gun was out on the road again tonight firing into the rear areas of the enemy and harassing their towns and supply lines. The Battalion fired 352 rounds this date.

16 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 224

Three more rounds of artillery landed in the Battalion area today but they were misses. There were also unconfirmed reports of enemy patrols in the area again tonight, all sentries were alerted but no enemy patrols showed up. Plans for a fake attack were going on and all the plans were made and the time for the attack set. The object of the attack was to make the enemy open up with his artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire so that it could be located and reduced. A limited ground attack was to be made after an artillery preparation. Engineers were to make a fake river crossing by running outboard motors and beating the side of the boats with the paddle and make all sorts of confusing sounds. The roving gun was out again tonight, one of the spectators of the trip was Chaplain Hogan of the 204th FA Group.

17 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 225

We hate to admit it but the battle wise Jermies did not fall for the fake attack that was put on by the Infantry. A heavy artillery preparation was laid down and a limited ground attack made along with all of the noise made by the engineers, the only thing that opened up was one Jerry machine gun and that was destroyed by our mortars. The Battalion received orders today that all prisoners captured that belonged to any Panzer Division were to be questioned and the following information obtained: Unit to which he belonged, strength, and capabilities of the enemy. Higher headquarters was also to be notified of the place where the prisoner was being held and where he will be obtainable for further questioning. The Battalion expended 252 rounds this date.

18 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 226

The Jerries put on an attack today using two reinforced regiments with tanks but were being held with heavy losses in men and tanks by our infantry and artillery fire. The pinch of the Ardennes counter attack was being felt in this area, most of the friendly forces that had been in this area had moved north to meet the attack and this Battalion along with one division was left to hold the large front, in fact the units holding this front were covering the whole of the XX Corps front. Positions in the rear areas were being surveyed in case the Battalion had to displace in the face of a counter attack by the enemy. The roving gun was kept on the move daily to make the enemy think that there was more Artillery in the area than there really was and the rate of fire was stepped up all over the front. The report on the counter attack as stated above was in the area east of Trier, Germany.

19 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 227

The roving gun left the Battalion area today at 1000 hours for a morning mission for a change. Up to now all of the missions were being fired at night. Information was received down from higher headquarters that the enemy would try to push us off the bridgehead area tonight. A flare up all over the front was expected because the enemy had been reinforced by one new division, thought to be the 11th Panzer Division. All of the Cub planes were ordered to be out of the air by 1700 this date because posit fuzes were to be used about that time.

20 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 228

There was a counter attack in the bridgehead area today but it was broken up by heavy artillery fire, many of the "On Call" missions were fired by this Battalion. In the attack 60 prisoners were taken and many more killed in the attack. Enemy artillery fell in the Battalion area at 0650 and reports from the soundings made by the 7th Observation Battalion showed that there was also heavy artillery fire falling in the bridgehead area. Artillery fire fell again at 0755, estimated calibre was 150mm and was reported coming from an azimuth of 1600 mils. At 1257 the Observer Right reported a direct hit on his OP. No casualties or damage done. The Battalion fired 613 rounds this date, expending most of them on counter battery missions and on call missions during the counter attack.

21 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 229

0800 hours this date is the "H" hour for the attack in the bridgehead area in the city of Saarlautern. Capt Prior today caught 20 enemy on a bridge and used time fire on them and from all of the reports it really did put the finishing touches on the enemy when our time fire burst 20 yds over the heads of the enemy. They were said to just fall flat and did not get up again. The 95th Div reported that at 2005 a large enemy patrol had slipped through the lines and were in the general area of the Battalion. All the Battery Commanders were alerted and the guards were alerted. Investigation of the report was made but no reliable source of information could be found, and there was no one who could give information that they had seen the patrol.

22 January 1945

ALT-FORMERLY GERMANY

D plus 230

Very little activity on this front today. At 1910 the Battalion CO & S-3 departed from Bn CP for XI Corps HQ for meeting of all Battalion and Group Commanders & S-3's on Point Pines- consisted by GHO, Colonel Carter: highlights have not been released today. Fire is still on the secret list. Small area practice was resumed today under Major Staker. Chaplain Carter came into the CP at 1938, he desires to stay with Battalion for a short time to stay with Btry J. Observation was good today for all CP's.

23 January 1945

ALT-FORMERLY GERMANY

D plus 231

Something new has been added to the shooting of artillery. Sniping. S/Sgt Leigh, observing from our sub, noted a large amount of traffic on a road occupied by the Germans. Investigation on a cross-road was completed 13000 yds. away. One gun from Btry P was kept cocked and loaded, when a vehicle was seen coming down the road, the gun was fired, resulting in a tie at the cross-road. Colonel Pyle, 30 20' in 12 Group visited the Battalion CP, stated our snow camouflage was approaching excellent.

24 January 1945

ALT-FORMERLY GERMANY

D plus 232

The mission of the Battalion was changed today at 1000 from reinforcing fires 3500th FA Bn to reinforcing fires 3500th FA Bn, 95th Division. S/Sgt Leigh went before the Commission Board at Joint HQ prior to appointment as 2nd Lt. Bomb disposal school was held in the Battalion area. Reports from those attending was that it was very interesting. The roving gun was out again today, harassing enemy towns and supply lines.

25 January 1945

ALT-FORMERLY GERMANY

D plus 233

Formation for presentation of awards by Colonel Pyle was held today. Awards were presented as follows: Purple Heart: Gbl Parker. Bronze Star: Lt. Flood, T/5 Sharpshooters, PTO Mast. Orders were received today that no planes were to fly south of the 73rd Grid Line- Point Pines being fired in this area. There was a slight change in the position of "G" Btry Forward Co- it was established in the high church steeple in Saarlautern. The roving gun was out again today between the hours of 1800 and 2020. Harassing missions were fired into enemy areas, from forward positions.

26 January 1945

ALT-FORMERLY GERMANY

D plus 234

There was a very heavy snow all along the front- cold weather prevailed. Traffic to remote areas was impossible until cleared by Engineers. The Bn was shown a special service film today, Chester Morris in "Garbrier's Choice". Received Field Order from G1, XI Corps Arty. Request five additional of Cronin Detachment Paa and Metro Calculator operating instructions. The roving gun was out again today from Btry 40- under Lt. Flood and Section Chief #1 section- Albert Winget. Rover returned after firing 30 rounds in 6 minutes firing at 3 different targets, with shifts up to 200 mils.

27 January 1945

ALT-FORMERLY GERMANY

D plus 235

Chaplain Carter visited the Battalion at 1015 for Protestant Services to be held the following day. The roving gun - Dubbed "Rover" or "K-9" was on the roads again, harassing enemy rear areas. The Section was from Btry "C", Lt. Dixon and Sgy Wood being Fire and Section chief respectively. Battery A outpost reported they were under cross-fire of friendly fire from range below outpost. Enemy planes were again over the area at 1345.

28 January 1945

ALT-FORMERLY GERMANY

D plus 236

There was very little activity about the Battalion area today, Sunday. But this was not because it was Sunday. Days have no meaning in combat. Church services were held today. Catholic services at 1400 and Protestant services at 1500. Battalion received orders for 2 1/2 GMC trucks to report to Saarlautern to haul furniture for the Artillery Rest camp

29 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 237

Enemy artillery was again active in the vicinity today. Lt Kersh at the Bn OP reported fire in his area at Felsberg, approximately 83mm or 150mm. The mission was changed again today from reinforcing fires 352 FA Bn to reinforcing fires 102 FA Bn 26th Division Artillery. The Battalion CO flew 2 missions today to check the massing of the Battalion. One adjust mission was fired this afternoon (1900) for infantry FO - 26th Division. Request from the observers - "have gunners watch bubbles- house I am adjusting is across the street." 6 rounds were fired for effect- 4 target hits. Patrol sent out to observe, report that cries and screams of pain coming from Jerries who were in the house.

30 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 238

Mission changed again at 1030 to General Support, 26th Infantry Division, from reinforcing fires 102 FA Bn, 26th Infantry Division. Orders were received this day to have 24 men and one officer of the Battalion to go to the rest camp at Metz. 5 men were chosen from each Battery except Service which furnished 4. The Bn CO made a visit to the CP of the 26th Infantry Division. Colonel Pyle, CO 204th FA Gp visited the Battalion CP at 1700.

31 January 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 239

24 men and one officer departed this area for rest camp at Metz for 3 days. Pay day today - all men in the Battalion were paid. Men at rest center in Metz were paid by Class "A" Agent Officer, Lt Jones of Service Btry. The roving gun was out during the day - had difficulty in extracting spent primer. 1 mission was fired and returned for repairs, continued mission at night. Detail was under Lt. Dixon.

1 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 240

General Slack, CG, XX Corps Arty, was in the Battalion area today. Presented Silver Star to Lt Morefield for gallantry in action in Metz sector. Today the Battalion fired what is a juicy target for artillery, 1 Battalion consisting of 13 pieces of horse drawn artillery. All artillery in the Corps fired on the target - very good effect was reported. Calibration was fired in the afternoon. Air observers Lt Smith and Lt Col Yuille were forced down due to high winds that were blowing the plane over enemy lines.

2 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 241

The artillery was pounding all day long today, including the big boys in the rear areas. Outgoing mail is something every Artilleryman likes, it sounds like running water, the incoming mail isn't so good, it sounds like the end of the world. The Battalion was presented with another movie today by the boys of the 30th Special Service Company who should receive a lot of credit for their work. The show was "Sam atoga" with Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman. Our roving gun was out again tonight harrassing the enemy rear positions and raising hell in general.

3 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 242

After the pounding the Jerries took in the town of Saarwellingen yesterday, last night, and then again at 0600 this morning they decided to smoke out observation. Smoke shells plastered the area at the rate of one per minute. The men who were at the rest center in Metz returned today. All Battalion Commanders of the Group were called to the Group Headquarters for a meeting at 2000 hours. It was also decided that the snow had left for good and all of the white paint would have to come off the vehicles. (All the drivers in the Battalion became browned off).

4 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 243

The Executive Officer and the Survey Officer along with the survey crew went to the rear areas to survey the rear areas and locate routes out of the present positions in accordance with the orders of the 26th Div defense plans. Reports on the river, Noide, in the rear showed there was only one place to cross, the river was very high, the only place for a crossing was in the town of Bouzonville, France. Rover, more commonly known as Canine was out of the Battalion area again tonight to do the dirty work.

5 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 244

EXTRA, EXTRA,-- The Battalion is going to have a part in a salvage drive that is being put on by the Corps. All G.I. clothing, equipment, small arms, ammunition, gas-cans, etc. are to be picked up in the Battalion area. Two Majors were in the Battalion trying to get some information for their Battalion who were as yet in England, about to enter combat over here on this front. They discussed combat and the problems of supply and what to bring and what to leave behind, with the Battalion Commander and then were taken for a trip to the Battalion O.P.'s. It's too bad we didn't have a little shell fire coming in about this time to give them a little experience under fire, which you never forget.

6 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 245

Well the Battalion has been in this place so long the boys are having a hard time trying to decide who they are going to put up as candidate for Burgomeister; Battery "A" says it's going to be Pappy True, Hq Btry says it's going to be James Kelly, Battery "B" wants Otis Kelly, Battery "C" says it's going to be Louis Gianfrancesco, and as a candidate from Service Battery we have Cpl. Ivey or Jack Davis, both very good men.

24 EN and one officer of the Battalion departed for the rest center at Metz. The Group Dental Officer came into the Battalion to conduct a dental survey of the Battalion. Cpl Bredsgard reported into the Battalion CP today prior to departing to the Good Old U.S.A. on furlough.

7 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 246

The following decorations were awarded to members of the air section: To Lt Smith, the 6th and 7th Oakleaf Cluster to the Air Medal; to Lt Whiteley, the 3rd Oakleaf Cluster to the Air Medal and to S/Sgt Leigh, the 2nd Oakleaf Cluster to the Air Medal, all for Aerial flights over France and Germany. The roving gun was out of the Battalion area again tonight harrassing the rear areas to the Jerries.

8 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 247

We were harrassed by another inspection team from the XX Corps who were in the area making inspection of the motors, motor records, and the administrative records of the Battalion. A survey of all the grain in the buildings in the town of Alt-Forweiler, Germany, was made this date by the town Burgomeister, the grain was to be collected and milled for the use of the people in the town. The Battalion Commander went for a ride over the target area today and caught the enemy mortars firing from a position in town, correct coordinates were given and the Battalion fired for effect. When the rounds plastered the target the enemy was still firing. 52 rounds were fired for effect and from all reports some one suddenly got sick, no doubt they went all to pieces over the effect.

9 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 248

Meeting of all the Battery Commanders was called at 0830 this date. Civil Affairs Officer also came into the C.P. to discuss with the Battalion Commander the problems of the unit in the town. With the coming of good weather all of the able body men of the town were rounded up and given the job of cleaning up the town. All the dump heaps in the front yards of all the buildings were cleaned up and the dirt in the streets cleaned out. The roving gun was out of the area again tonight with the mission of harrassing the rear enemy towns and supply lines.

10 February 1945

Alt-Forweiler, Germany

D plus 249

Capt Bennett; Asst S-2 of the 204th FA Group was again in the Battalion C.P. with the two majors of the Artillery Groups that were in the combat area to gain battle experience for members of their command. The two Majors were about to return to the UK to join their Groups. During the day the Infantry of the 26th Div dug defensive positions along the ridge in front of the Battery positions. Friendly aircraft were over the area all during the night.

11 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 250

There was a pozit fuse demonstration held in the Bn area today by members of the Ord Dept of the U S Army. Teams were sent out to all the Btrys. The main demonstration was held in the Bn C P for all Staff Officers and personnel of the C P. The roving gun was out on its harrassing mission tonight and reported back that they had received some counter battery fire just as they were given close station March Order for the mission. There were no near hits and no damage or casualties.

12 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 251

In accordance with the training schedule in the change of sections, a detail of men to act as the fire direction center arrived in the Bn C P from Btry "C" under Capt Prior to take over FDC for the Bn. Many missions were fired by the men of Btry "C" under this plan. Starting at 1300 to 1500 on the 13th of Feb this plan was to be in effect. Also there was to be no telephone communications, all radio communications were to be used. Lt Hoffer at one of the Bn O P's had been sitting the O P for 12 days and never had a fire mission. At about 1500 the phone rang in the FDC. The voice on the other end of the line was yelling, "Fire mission, Fire Mission," 200 enemy in open, coordinates 3630-7725. Request TOT if possible. The mission was out of our sector but the mission was given to the group and arrangements were made for the fire of a TOT. In a few minutes there was a call from Group, "Will fire TOT, 36 guns, 2 volleys per gun, concentration so and so, it was not long before "On the way" was given. When the smoke had cleared away from the target area the report came back from the OP, "The Bastards are laying all over the place!" "Range correct, deflection correct, there are a few of them who got out of the fire but the most of them don't move anymore."

13 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 252

The work of cleaning up the town of Alt-Forweiler, Germany was really going forward in good shape. The detail was under Capt Moore in conjunction with the CIC in the area. On an average there were 15 men reporting each day for the work. Activity on the front was generally quiet but there still is a little enemy activity in the area. The roving gun was out again today and fired the normal missions in the enemy rear areas.

14 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 253

There was a movie team into the Bn C P area this date, the film was on Germany, and was required to be seen by all members of this command. The film was on non-fraternization and was seen by all members of this command. The enemy in this sector of the front seemed to have enough of the counter-attacks that they had been putting on for some time. All the artillery in this sector had things well zero'd in and every time they tried to counter-attack in the bridgehead area they were forced back with losses to men and material.

15 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 254

The road to the Bn O P was repaired today by members of this command. The men working at the O P's were getting tired of getting stuck all the time and decided to do a little work on the road. With the help of other members of the Bn the road was cordoroyed with logs and filled with earth. The roving gun was out again tonight expending their rounds on the enemy rear areas and harrassing the towns occupied by the enemy.

16 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 255

The Bn received notice today that due to the condition of the roads a clearance is necessary to pull a towed load over the roads in this area. A 12 hour delay is necessary in order to get clearance. Plans for the attack were received for the attack in the southern sector. At 1700 Btry "I" reported that friendly P-47's had strafed and set fire to two ammunition trucks on the road between Villing and Pelsberg. A detailed report was made to higher headquarters on the above action.

17 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 256

There was another attack in the bridgehead area today. The enemy made the attack at 1920 and were repulsed with heavy losses. The attack was made with small groups of Infantry and self-propelled guns. In the attack the enemy did succeed in taking two of the houses in the city of Saarlautern.

18 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 257

Three rounds of enemy artillery fire fell in the Bn area today at 2000 hours. The artillery fell to the left of the Bn area, as far as the Bn was concerned it was a complete miss. There was no damage done and no casualties. The Bn O P's reported some enemy vehicles and personnel moving on the road in our sector. The target was taken under fire and the enemy was dispersed with some casualties.

19 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 258

The cleaning up of the town of Alt-Forweiler Germany was going very well under Capt Moore and M-L Kraut chaser, Cpl Lion. The Bn received word from the 102 FA Bn that they had received orders from XX Corps to use only the 204 FA Bn for fires in the proximity of the front line troops (especially massed fires).

20 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 259

Capt Bretting XX Corps I G Section made an inspection of the Bn area, administrative records etc. The officer was well pleased with the general appearance of things. 14 EM and 1 Officer left for leave to Paris this date.

21 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 260

Another enemy counter-attack at 0600 in the bridgehead area, the enemy attack was repulsed with losses. (better luck next time boys). The Bn had another G I show for the Bn this date. At 1100 friendly planes strafed the area, just one burst was fired. The AAA unit sent up the recognition color of the day and the planes wiggled his wings and departed. At 1705 the Jerries threw in two rounds of artillery fire in the vicinity of Btry "B" and Hq Btry. The rounds were kicked up into the air and were getting air burst for what was thought to be a high burst registration. That is exactly what it turned out to be. There was a slight pause and then they fired for effect from 2 guns. 10 rounds were fired for effect and all of the men took for cover. The sound plot was picked up by the 7th FOB and the coordinates phoned to the Bn FDC. In fire for effect the Bn fired 40 rounds, since then the guns never have opened fire again. A total of 16 rounds landed in the area.

22 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 261

The fire missions this date consisted of all harrassing missions. At 1600, Capt Moore who was out on an air patrol fired on enemy guns. In the fire for effect large explosions were seen and smoke and flames went up 500 feet in the air. Lt Williams, firing mortars from his O P on a disabled truck set off a Jerrie Ammunition dump that burned and exploded all night.

23 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 262

Lt Kersh turned in the hottest piece of information of the war today, from his O P, thru the B C scope he could see one Jerry soldier necking a German Fraulein. Lt Kersh did not want any fire on them, his only comment was, The hell with firing on them, I want to watch them." Rover was out tonight again, all went well except for one man, Pfc Edwin Pape, who lost one finger on the traveling lock at CSMO.

24 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 263

Today the Jerries threw in everything but the kitchen stove. It was just after dinner when it all started, the Jerries started shelling the area of Btry "B" and Hq Btry. The area was well plastered but there was no damage or casualties, there were many near hits but no direct hits. Shell reports were turned in to higher headquarters. Capt Moore, who was on the air patrol spotted the guns doing the firing and adjusted on them. In the fire for effect two hits were seen on the gun position and explosions seen. Later in the day there were three rounds landed in the rear of Btry "C", S/Sgt Leigh who was out on the patrol at the time spotted the guns and adjusted on them. Some direct hits were seen and explosions were seen throwing objects 300 feet into the air. From the shell reports that were turned in it was found that the shells were 155mm French ammunition and must have been fired from a captured Long Tom rifle. Outside of that we had a very quiet day.

25 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 264

Reinforcements have arrived, two men reported to the Bn and were placed in Btry "A" and Btry "B". Everything was very quiet today, The Jerries must not have thought us a suitable target today.

26 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 265

Orders were received today to transfer Capt Finocchiaro to the 1st General Hospital in Paris, France. Men who were on the three day passes in Paris returned to the Bn this date. Rover was out again tonight firing the mission of harrassing the rear areas of the enemy. The Felsburg road took quite a pounding again from the enemy Medium Artillery, 24 rounds were known to have been fired.

27 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 266

The enemy continued the shelling of the Bn area today, most of the rounds falling in the area of Hq Btry and Btry "B". No damage was done and no casualties. The Jerries again shelled the area at 1704 and continued until 1722, one building was destroyed but no other damage was reported. The Battalion Commander was ordered to report to the Group Headquarters with the parties for a reconnaissance to an area about 25 miles north of the Bn position. The position was located in the vicinity of Biringen, Germany, 1 mile east of Waldwies, Germany. Upon return there was a meeting of all Btry Commanders to plan the move. (we all hope it will be tomorrow, we have all been in this town so long we are about to take out citizenship papers)

28 February 1945

ALT-FORWEILER GERMANY

D plus 267

The Bn parties went forward early in the morning to occupy the position with orders to the Bn to move the Bn up by infiltration. Btry "A" displaced at 1500 under a cover of fog in the Saar Valley and the rest of the Bn moved under the cover of darkness at 1900. The Bn closed the new area at 2100 hours and received the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 241st FA Bn. Lt Hubbard reported to the Bn for duty this date.

1 March 1945

BERINGEN GERMANY

D plus 268

Lt Hubbard who reported to the Bn CO yesterday was assigned to try "A" as Asst Executive Officer. 2 EIC of this Bn are leaving on 30 day furloughs to the states. They are to check out at Bn CP. Today was payday - the Class "A" agent officer for the Bn was Lt Jones. Awards were made this date to the following by the Commanding Officer, 204th Field Artillery Group. Bronze Star Medals: Capt Ellsworth, Lt Taylor, S/Sgt Prestwich, S/Sgt Barney and Sgt Ben Walker. Purple Heart Medals: Cpl Dennis and Pfc Schappie. Capt Prior left for the hospital today.

2 March 1945

BERINGEN GERMANY

D plus 269

The Commanding Officer of the 204th Field Artillery Group presented awards at the Bn Air Strip this date. 1st Oak Leaf Cluster presented to Lt Whiteley. Capt Obrinsky reported to Commanding Officer for duty as new Medical Officer at 1834. The front in this sector is very quiet.

3 March 1945

BERINGEN GERMANY

D plus 270

Chaplain Carter called into the Bn CP to arrange for church services for Sunday, 4 March. CWO Hartig into Bn CP, had talked to Capt Prior at the hospital. He had been operated on for acute appendicitis and was doing well. Lt Colonel Hatch into Bn area for inspection.

4 March 1945

BERINGEN GERMANY

D plus 271

Capt Finocchiaro checked out of the Bn CP - transferred to 1st General Hospital in Paris. Lt Scott returned to hospital. Bn received warning order at 1430: Be prepared to take over fires of 241st FA Bn. Find who they have - furnish LY O own and put in wire communications. Official information of the taking over of the fires of the 241st FA Bn. This Bn in Direct Support of 1258th Engineers to become effective 0600, 5 March 1945. Change of center lines were received at 2000 hours for all batteries. This change makes more complete coverage of front.

5 March 1945

BERINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 272

New mission. direct support of 128th Infantry. All 6th Infantry occupied by 128th Infantry. The 6th Infantry and 128th Infantry were furnished by 128th Infantry. 128th Infantry was broken with Lt Williams and for a while it was a great deal as was said. Lt Olson, who left to locate Lt Williams and was lost by telephone at 0130 that he had found Lt Williams. This time was the end and had to be organized before any report from Lt Williams could be received. Lines had been cut by tanks.

6 March 1945

BERINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 273

0930, Battalion 20 and 3rd of 1st for Coffee to obtain areas in vicinity of 128th. At 0930, word was received from Captain Moore, Battalion LN 0, that 26th of 1st of 128th Inf Div is to have 128th Inf Reg of 26th Inf Div at 2000. 128th of 128th Inf Div is to have 128th Inf Reg. Title of show. When a woman with Rosalind Russell. At 1745, several lines were planned for the change over of the 26th Inf Div to 128th Inf Div.

7 March 1945

BERINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 274

16 AM and 1 Officer departed for Metz for a three day leave at the Rest Center of III Corps Artillery. 128th, American Red Cross Clubhouse into Battalion area to service Battalion with coffee and doughnuts. This is always a welcomed occasion.

8 March 1945

BERINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 275

Except for routine duties nothing unusual occurred in the Battalion this day.

9 March 1945

BERINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 276

0630, code name of Battalion was changed from LOCKMAN RED to HELLBOUND.

10 March 1945

BERINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 277

0930, Battalion was massed on one point to check massing and observation by Commanding Officer. Massing excellent.

11 March 1945

BERINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 278

0600, orders received for Battalion Commander and party to assemble in Saarburg. At 0900, Battalion moved position at Beringen and moved out to accomplish the feat that had slipped us for so long, crossing the Saar River. This was accomplished at Saarburg and Battalion moved beyond this point to vicinity of Irseh, Germany. Orders were received that there would be no firing until ordered, radio silence. All planes of the Battalion grounded.

12 March 1945

IRSCH, GERMANY

D plus 279

Approaching this area. we marched out of Germany, across a small section of France, and back into Germany, across the Saar River near Saarburg, passed the hospitals, moved beyond the heavy artillery, brushed by the lights, waded to the Infantry Companies, went beyond the mortars, and finally found our positions behind the Infantry companies, the old SP spot. Everything was quiet, too quiet. This morning other artillery units moved up, in the short space of 2000 yards of front there were five other artillery battalions, three cannon companies, and dozens of SP AT guns. Stock piles of ammunition were transported to positions; yes, and attack was in the making. Every soldier hoped it would be good, it just had to be good - it was good.

13 March 1945

IRSCH, GERMANY

D plus 280

At 0300 the entire front broke loose into illuminating flame - the attack was on. This organization fired 1574 rounds of 155 Howitzer ammunition in the short space of 15 hours. During the early phases of the attack heavy concentrations of enemy artillery and Nebelwerfer (Screamin' Meemie) fire fell on front line elements. In attempt to determine the position of the Nebelwerfers, Captain Nechanicky, Capt Langham, Cpl Baker, and Lt Carr and S/Sgt Bardsley went forward to observe. Reaching the top of a rise where enemy movements could be observed, the above mentioned party were bracketed by a volley of Nebelwerfers. Fortunately, the party was able to take cover and no casualties were suffered. Regardless of the personal risk involved the party managed to determine the origin of the fire and the fire of our Battalion was brought to bear on them. We are still waiting for them to fire another volley, in other words, Nebelwerfer Kaput or Kix Screamin' Meemies.

14 March 1945

IRSCH, GERMANY

D plus 281

Battalion remained in position.

15 March 1945

SCHILLINGEN, GERMANY

D plus 282

Battalion displaced to PASCHEL, GERMANY, stayed there a few hours and pressed on to Schillingen, Germany. Here we demonstrated conservative use of manpower. Forward observers not needed - just look out the window of the CP. We went into position in full view of the enemy. 1130, mission of Battalion changed to General Support of 94th Infantry Division. Due to the aggressive reconnaissance of the Battalion Commander the displacement to Schillingen was made. This move put the Battalion in a fine tactical position to accomplish its mission and eighteen hours in advance of any other Corps Artillery Battalion in support of the 94th Division. A few rounds of enemy artillery fire burst in Schillingen upon our occupation.

16 March 1945

KELL, GERMANY

D plus 283

Battalion displaced to Kell, Germany. Reconnaissance parties narrowly escaped enemy harrassing fire on the town. Battalion made a one - two occupation without incident. Before displacing from Schillingen a heavy enemy artillery concentration landed in the open fields 1000 yards east of the town. It was swell shooting - a complete miss. There wasn't anything within 500 yards of where the concentration landed. Battalion Headquarters was established in the railroad station at Kell and a rushing business was had in railroad tickets. If we had let him, Sgt DeVries would still be sitting there waiting for the Kalamazoo Limited to come in.

17 March 1945

BIERFELD, GERMANY

D plus 284

Battalion marched to positions near Bierfeld, Germany. This displacement was the most difficult yet encountered. Roads were soft and muddy, making it necessary to make repairs in addition to using field expedients in difficult traction. As if this wasn't enough, enroute we had to cross a very high hill, whose only road was very muddy.

18 March 1945

BIERFELD, GERMANY

D plus 285

At 0130 this date, a 15 man enemy patrol made a hit and run attack on #4 piece of Charley Battery. Sentries at the position immediately engaged the enemy with carbine fire. The action lasted only 10 seconds. Enemy used automatic weapons to spray the area, after coming up from the rear. Three of our men were killed and two wounded; those killed were: Pvt Ward H. Burt, Pfc Joseph Masty, and Cpl Kenneth North. Those wounded were: Pfc Francis L. Lavigne and Pfc Joseph McMenus. Battery personnel countered with small arms fire but no casualties were lost by the enemy. Prisoners taken the next day were all from the 187th Mountain Infantry Regiment, 2nd Mountain Division.

18 March 1945 (Cont'd)

BIERFELD GERMANY

D plus 285

This day also marked a change of mission to General Support 12th Armored Division. A Liaison Officer with radio was furnished by this Battalion to work with Cub planes of this organization, all, in turn, working in close harmony with Combat Command R, 12th Armored Division. These cub planes were the eyes of the armor. Time after time accompanying observers would report enemy columns moving eastward along escape roads to the Rhine River. The IN O passed the information on to the Armor Commander who in turn requested TIC assistance. When the P 47's arrived, our cubs would circle the target and route-mark for the big brothers, who went in for the kill. These little cubs and the pilots and observers who flew them truly did an invaluable job during the pursuit to the Rhine. In five days, Liaison pilots of this Battalion, working with the 12th Armored Division flew 80 combat hours.

19 March 1945

BIERFELD GERMANY

D plus 286

Battalion sent out patrols today to comb surrounding territory. A few prisoners have been picked up.

20 March 1945

BRUCKEN GERMANY

D plus 287

Organization displaced to Brucken, Germany.

21 March 1945

ROTHELEBERG GERMANY

D plus 288

All houses searched for firearms, and other military equipment. Surrounding woods searched by combat patrols. A total of 44 prisoners captured. Civilians reported that approximately 100 Nazi's under command of a General are holed up in a quarry approximately 3500 yards right of the Battalion position. Sentries alerted for possible attack. On one of the combat patrols, one of the Krauts tried to escape; Pfc Cannizaro opened up on him with his .50 Cal machine gun, splitting his head open. The distance from which hit was had was at least 1000 yards.

22 March 1945

ROTHELEBERG GERMANY

D plus 289

Group C O awarded Bronze Star Medals to the following: Captain David Prior, Captain Dean E Schumacher, Captain Louis K Sharpe, Captain Carroll N Madsen, M/Sgt Peter Jordan, Sgt Alfred Chambo, Sgt Walter I Goodwin, Sgt Arrel P Larsen, 1st Sgt Howard S Betenson, 1st Sgt Elmer D White, Tec 4 Albert Winget, Pfc Clarence D May.

23 March 1945

WOLFSTEIN GERMANY

D plus 290

On 23 March Battalion received relief of mission, General Support 12th Armored Division and together with IX Corps, reverted to army reserve. Displaced to Wolfstein, Germany to refit and clean up.

24 March 1945

WOLFSTEIN GERMANY

D plus 291

Town searched for firearms, and other military equipment. Notification received that the 3 men killed on 18 March are buried in US Military Cemetery at Hamm, Luxembourg.

25 March 1945

WOLFSTEIN GERMANY

D plus 292

Three officers and 15 EM leave on passes to Paris. Battalion placed on 6 hour alert.

26 March 1945

PLANIG GERMANY

D plus 293

Battalion displaced to assembly area near Planig, Germany and there received alert orders for displacement to position near Mainz, Germany.

27 March 1945

HECHTSHEIM GERMANY

D plus 294

Battalion displaced to positions via Hechtsheim, Germany. Battalion received new mission of General Support XX Corps. All possible preparations were made for pending attack at 0100 28 March 1945, to establish bridgehead across Rhine River.

28 March 1945

HECHTSHEIM GERMANY

D plus 295

By mid afternoon this day, the no-fire line had moved eastward across the Rhine River, the attack had been launched, the bridge-head secured, and the enemy was out of range.

29 March 1945

HECHTSHEIM GERMANY

D plus 296

At 0900 Battalion received CSMO, be prepared to move out after 1000 hours upon 30 minutes notice. Purpose, to cross the Rhine River at Mainz and to proceed eastward along prescribed route in General Support 65th Division Artillery. A fact to be noted at this time is the fact the Battalion reached the Rhine River exactly one year to the day from the time it departed from the states.

30 March 1945

OKERBEN GERMANY

D plus 297

At 1745 Bn departed positions at Hechtsheim, Germany, and entered the ghost city of Mainz. After a slow approach to the pontoon bridge across the Rhine, the Battalion crossed the Rhine River at 2300. Upon crossing the river the Battalion continued its march, destination unknown; keep going until you have to stop.

31 March 1945

HATTENBACH GERMANY

D plus 298

0400, Battalion has been traveling all night - Bn to halt and to remain in place for remainder of night each battery to have at least 2 flank guards out. Battalion to report to Group C O at head of column. 0745, column moving again. Arrived at Frienseen, Germany at 1100. During short stay here a German civilian was captured. It is claimed by the people of the town that he is an ardent National Socialist and that it was he who shot and killed an American Pilot shot down in this vicinity on 24 December 1944. At 1540 Battalion moved out again and arrived at new position at Hattenbach, Germany. At the close of March this Battalion had traveled 110 road miles beyond the famous German River, the Rhine. The marching was tough and rugged. For the most part, roads were bad because of wide detours, blown bridges, mud, cold, darkness, and with very little sleep. Over and above the normal load carried on vehicles this Battalion, 310 doughboys were attached for transportation, but not for rations. It was with pleasure that the men and officers of this Battalion shared "C" rations and coffee with the mighty doughboy.

1 April 1945

Beenhausen, Germany

D plus 299

April arrived with a combination of Easter, April Fools Day and fair weather, in addition to that we also received a change of mission, that of reinforcing the fires of the 867th FA Bn. of the 65th Div. The Battalion displaced at 0720 and after a two hour march arrived in the city of Hersfield, Germany, a fairly large city. Here the Battalion dispersed its vehicles in the streets of the town and awaited further orders. It was here also that the Battalion witnessed, for the first time, the mass liberation of foreign enslaved workers. After years of enslavement the workers were jubilant of their sudden liberation and they were high in spirits, in more ways than one. They swarmed the town, laughing and shouting, and waving the bottles of liquor. All of a sudden, looting started throughout the business section of the city. Workers took all they could carry - it was a common sight to see a ragged individual enter a store and in a few minutes later come out dressed to kill. Before the police force could organize, many of the shops had been gleaned of their wares. Law and order was finally restored and things returned to their normal sequence. At 1550 the Battalion departed from Hersfield and after two more moves settled for the night at Beenhausen, Germany.

2 April 1945

Cornberg, Germany

D plus 300

The 2nd of April was also a very hectic day, the weather was bad, it rained most of the day and the Battalion was going to displace. The Battalion Commander and party departed for the reconnaissance. They followed the leading elements of the infantry to the town of Cornberg and turned left at the town of Cornberg to go to the town of Rockensuss where the goose-egg of the Battalion was located. On reaching the high ground overlooking the town they noticed an explosion - between the party and the town - and people running. Upon questioning, they insisted that there were no German troops in the town. Not satisfied with the answers received, the Commanding Officer, with the Wire Sgt, Communications Chief, Survey Sgt. Sgt Major and the driver of the vehicle, mounted a 3/4 ton vehicle with 50 Cal Machine Gun and drove into the town to make a further investigation. Upon turning the corner and going into the town, two Jerries were seen crossing the street and were greeted with a burst of machine gun fire from a 45 Cal Thompson - making them dive for cover. Both of the Jerries threw off their helmets and guns and came out with hands over-head. Sensing that the enemy was in the town in force the party moved into the town with all possible speed and utilizing the element of surprise, sped down the main street, cut the enemy forces in half and then fanned out to clean out the rest of the town. Sgts Morris and Gillies received the surprise of their life when they rounded one corner and ran into 15 Jerries in the street. One of the Jerries was aiming a Panzerfaust at the corner trying to ambush a vehicle that would turn the corner. Letting some shots fly in the direction of the Jerries and then getting into the cover of the buildings to avoid getting the effect of the Panzerfaust. On taking a second look down the street and also taking a couple pot shots the Jerries decided that they had enough; some surrendered and some took off for the tall timber. Sgt Welch manning the 50 Cal Machine Gun was having a field day until the machine gun suffered a broken feeding pawl and the gun would not fire but one round at a time. Most of the troops were driven into the hills and returned some of the fire. Some of the men flanked the right and left of the town and fired down into the town. After a fight that lasted about 1 hour and 30 minutes the last Jerry was rounded up. A total of 14 men of the recon party accounted for the following: 2 killed, 3 wounded and 42 prisoners. All of the wounded were treated and evacuated to the hospital. The rest of the prisoners were marched to Cornberg and turned over to a service company of an Infantry Regiment as a cadre for a PW cage that they were cut to establish. The Recon party returned to the city of Cornberg, Germany, and stayed for the night.

3 April 1945 HORNEL, GERMANY L plus 301
 Battalion moved up to meet advance party at 1000 hours to Hornel, Germany, and closed at 1255. One prisoner of war in civilian clothes was captured and turned over to PWE. Change of mission was received at 1800. Battalion to continue support of 65th Infantry Division until out of range and then revert to General Support of 76th Infantry Division.

4 April 1945 HORNEL, GERMANY D plus 302
 Captain Ellsworth, Battalion Com O, recovered 1 dog tag of an American officer, an aviator, from a German civilian. The Officer's name was Charles Traunig and he was shot down and killed on 13 October 1944. Grave of the American aviator is located in DIEMERODE, GERMANY (48.3 - 77.7) Map R4 1/100, OOO, GERMANY. At 2130, 1 Polish Civilian and 1 German Soldier in civilian clothes were captured in a vertical position at Battalion Air Strip and turned over to PWE.

5 April 1945 HORNEL, GERMANY D plus 303
 The two men mentioned in account of 4 April, passed the CP again today, this time in a horizontal position. The whys and wherefore of the case are unknown.

6 April 1945 KRAUTHAUSEN, GERMANY D plus 304
 Battalion received change of mission to support 80th Infantry Division. GSO received at 1545 and new position closed at Krauthausen, Germany, at 2105.

7 April 1945 GOTH, GERMANY D plus 305
 Cleared positions at Krauthausen, Germany, and continued trek to vicinity Gotha, Germany. Battalion positions here were in a former German Officers' Barracks. This was really a spacious set-up, huge club rooms, bars, running water, electric lights, comfortable stuffed chairs, flush-toilets, and the other comforts of civilization. There were huge warehouses jammed with all manner of items; clothing, leather goods, machinery, weapons, and other array of army equipment. Last but not least there were well stocked PX's there. This was a very nice billet while it lasted.

8 April 1945 GUNTHERSLEBEN, GERMANY D plus 306
 At 0900 Battalion reconnaissance party was ordered to find positions in the area of Gunthersleben, Germany. The parties moved out, marched at 1100 and closed in new positions at 1110. Some concern was felt for the security of the positions because it was on the point of the front lines. Upon checking with the organization on the flanks it was found that the situation was well in hand. In this position we had the distinction of being the most easterly of any artillery unit in the Third Army. From this position too, a number of officers and enlisted men of this organization made a trip to the nearby town of Ohrdruf. Here the enemies and civilians from conquered countries were brought, executed, and cremated, or consumed by chemical process. Long trenches were filled with partially deteriorated bodies, hundreds of them. Elsewhere bodies were stacked in tiers, like cord-wood. The place reeked with the smell of death. It is beyond all imagination to visualize the horror perpetrated by the Nazis. No one with any semblance of humanity could have executed what these beasts had. The place has been dubbed by those who have seen it as "Why We Fight."

9 April 1945 COBSTADT, GERMANY D plus 307
 Battalion moved on to COBSTADT, GERMANY.

10 April 1945 FRIENSTEDT, GERMANY D plus 308
 Displacement to Frienstedt, Germany.

11 April 1945 TIEFTHAL, GERMANY D plus 309
 Battalion moved to Tiefthal, Germany. Upon arrival, Battalion was notified of the formation of a new groupment of which the Battalion was a part. Groupment to consist of 313th FA Bn, 241st FA Bn, and 204th FA Bn. Battalion Commander of 313th FA Bn to be Commanding Officer.

12 April 1945

TIEFFHAL, GERMANY

D plus 310

Battalion remained in position this day, firing several missions. Today the Bn received its first leveling mission. The mission was on the town of NEILBACH, GERMANY which refused to surrender and was giving advancing infantry trouble. The people were told that if the town did not surrender at 1700, the artillery would be turned loose; which was accomplished at 1715 to the tune of 15 volleys from all 12 pieces. When the infantry advanced into the town, there was not a rifle shot fired. The Bn was called upon to furnish ten 2½ ton trucks with drivers and assistant drivers to be placed at the disposal of the XX Corps. The above incident cut motor transportation of the Bn to the quick, but trucks were furnished as ordered. Mission of Bn also suffered a change - at 1555 the Commanding Officer received notice of relief of assignment and was to revert to group control.

13 April 1945

KLEINSCHWABHAUSEN, GERMANY

D plus 311

Battalion made plans in conjunction with 241st FA Bn to move to the town of MITTELHAUSEN, Germany, approximately 2 miles north of Erfurt, Germany. The move was made to strengthen the defense of the Battalion, due to the scarcity of other troops in the area; the town to be occupied jointly with the 241st FA Bn for mutual security. During the last few days, due to our scarcity of transportation facilities, all movements have been made shuttling, and through careful planning and co-ordination we have managed to have all our personnel and equipment where and when they were needed. The Bn displaced and closed in the position when orders were received for the Bn to move to the town of KLEINSCHWABHAUSEN.

14 April 1945

PORSDDORF, GERMANY

D plus 312

This day found the Bn on the move again. Utilizing the German Autobahn, thanks to Herr Hitler's foresight, the Bn moved 72 miles as fast as safety would allow. Evidently he never realized that you can roll on concrete both ways. Our engineers will probably send him a cactus seat cushion for his kindness. Bn closed in vicinity of Porsdorf, Germany at 1200. Major Cronin left the Bn for the hospital, and Captain Prior, BC of C Battery reported for duty as Battalion S-3. Bn reconnaissance party made route reconnaissance at 1800 to area vic Meerane, Germany and returned at 2045 after completing mission. Conference was called with all Battery Commanders and Staff-move to be made early next morning.

15 April 1945

ZUMRODA, GERMANY

D plus 313

The Battalion moved out of the area of Porsdorf, Germany and out on to the Autobahn and to the town of Meerane, Germany. We will have to say that the Fuhrer really knew how to build roads. The Battalion really made time on the Autobahn. All the drivers of the Bn really enjoyed it; it was a far cry from some of the slow-moving on some of the bad dirt roads that we have been on. Later in the day, the Bn moved out of the position at Meerane, Germany. One platoon of AAA was assigned to the Bn this date; the platoon was from the 633 AAA Bn.

16 April 1945

WITTENSDORF, GERMANY

D plus 314

On the morning of the 16th in the bag of prisoners there were two that were slightly out of the ordinary run of prisoners. We had captured two German Wacs who had been working as telephone operators in the city of Leipzig, Germany and their homes were in Munich, Germany - the telephone number of the girls we did not get. Through our courtesy, though they were of a different calibre, their new residence was soon the same as that of their brothers, the PWE. Evening arrived and the Bn continued its trek - this time to WITTENSDORF, Germany, a small town on the outskirts of Chemnitz, Germany. Chemnitz is the last stop before the big town of Dresden where we were to meet our allies, the Russians.

17 April 1945

WITTENSDORF, GERMANY

D plus 315

At 0030 in the morning the phone in the C.P. rang and the Group Executive was on the phone and gave the Bn an alert, pending a major move after 1000 hours. The nature of the move was unknown and the destination was still secret. At 0835 the Group Commander called to say that the Bn would not move today and was to continue with same mission. At 1910 the Bn received orders to move at 0530 the next morning and depart at 0615.

18 April 1945

LAHM, GERMANY

D plus 316

On the morning of the 18th, the Bn moved out on the time scheduled. The nature and the destination of the move was exposed and all our dreams of meeting the Russians were gone, when they told us we were moving to another sector of the front. On the march the Battalion hit the Autobahn and moved to the rear through the towns of GERA, JENA, WEIMAR, which is the home of the notorious Buchenwald Concentration Camp in which many of the political prisoners of the Nazi Government were kept, and then moved to ERFURT and then south to COBERG and then still further south to the town of LAHM near BAMBERG. Here the Bn closed an assembly area at 1810. We are now in the hilly country above the 7th Army sector at the approaches to BAVARIA, the home of the Nazi party. During the day, the Bn traveled 180 miles; all of the vehicles that started the move also moved into the assembly area.

19 April 1945

LAHM, GERMANY

D plus 317

The Battalion stayed in the assembly area this date, normal duties prevailed,

20 April 1945

DORNBACH, GERMANY

D plus 318

This day was really a day of moves, starting at Lahm, Germany, through Zips, and into position in the vicinity of Pagenche, Germany. At 1800, the Bn CO and party went on reconnaissance in the vicinity of the town of Pagenche. The Bn left the area and closed in the area of Dornbach, Germany at 2100 hours.

Round expended this date : 181

21 April 1945

CRITTENBERG GRUNWALD, GERMANY

D plus 319

The Bn CO and the Bn S-2 went to the 608th FA Bn CP with the instructions to all of the Battery parties to stand by for further orders. From the above C.P., the Bn CO and the Bn S-2 made reconnaissance for new positions. Battery Commanders were called by radio to meet the Bn CO at a designated point. In the reconnaissance, the Bn S-2 captured 4 enemy prisoners on the road and treated them over to the P.M.E.

22 April 1945

LUPPERSRICH, GERMANY

D plus 320

The Bn departed the area of Crittenberg, Germany and moved to the area of Luppertsrich, Germany. The Bn has been moving on a very fast pace the last few days; firing was done when necessary to persuade the Jerries into realizing that we really meant business and were intending to move in on them, which we did.

23 April 1945

LITTERISCHWANG, GERMANY

D plus 321

Mission of Bn changed to reinforce fires of 609th FA Bn, 71st Division Artillery. Cleared position at Luppertsrich, Germany and moved to Hausen, Germany. After a brief stay, the positions were cleared and Bn closed at Litterischwang, Germany.

24 April 1945

PANHOLZ, GERMANY

D plus 322

In a conversation with the Group Commander, Colonel Pyle, the Battalion Commander, Lt Col Yuille, was informed that the Bn had been commended by 71st Division Artillery, who we are supporting, on its operations. Battalion has moved into its present position at Panholz, Germany smoothly, speedily, and without interfering with the movements of the Division's components. The fact to be noted was that while Division Artillery was wondering how and when they could move us into our allotted goose-egg, they were informed that we had moved and were in position, laid, and ready to fire any mission for the division in our zone of fire. This, though a somewhat short march, was a surprisingly difficult one. The route to be travelled entailed crossing a German Courtesy Card, an unhammed military bridge across a stream; the approaches to the bridge necessitated a right-angle turn which could be maneuvered by the individual vehicles, but not by the prime-movers with the hog-logs in tow. To accomplish this, the prime-mover was brought around as far as possible, the howitzer was then unshackled, the trail attached to a 3/4 ton W/C by tow chain and pulled straight ahead. The gun crew then man-handled the piece around so that it faced down the bridge, the prime-mover backed up and the piece was then hoisted into place and the vehicle proceeded with its load. This operation was by necessity repeated for each of the twelve pieces. To further complicate matters, this was carried out under sniper fire from the over-looking hill. As was later discovered, the snipers were a group of 24 enemy soldiers who had been left behind to harass our personnel attempting to utilize the bridge. All the snipers were captured. To move under the above-mentioned conditions and yet to arrive at our designated spot without hampering the Division we were supporting was an accomplishment worth mentioning.

25 April 1945

BRENNBERG GERMANY

D plus 323

This was again a day of movement but odd in the fact that we, the medium artillery, were as is often our lot, spearheading the attack. We start at the rear, approach the center, lo and behold, even the cavalry and infantry eat our dust - dusk finds us at Brenberg, Germany - just short of the Beautiful Blue Danube. Incidentally, in occupying present positions we policed a total of 217 enemy prisoners. Our bed partners this night are the 5th Rangers. Before us were only the Krauts. P. S. 0300 next morning the infantry caught up with us. On afternoon of 25th April 1945 at 1615 hours, C O, this battalion, Lt Col Minian L Yuille, and his reconnaissance party consisting of Battery Commander of each battery, and his party, departed assembly area Kirchberg, Germany to reconnoiter possible positions near Altenthann, Germany. Upon arriving at Altenthann, C O this battalion received orders from C O, 607th FA Bn, 71st Inf Division, to continue further reconnaissance and to occupy positions near Brenberg, Germany. At 1910 hours, this battalion was marching toward Altenthann, at same time battalion reconnaissance party was proceeding toward Brenberg, followed by Battalion S-2, Capt William G Mechanicky and route-marking party. From Altenthann forward to Brenberg the route was untraveled through hilly wooded terrain. Apparently, no other US vehicles had been on the road. Capt Mechanicky, knowing the battalion reconnaissance party was already at Brenberg, marked the route to destination and then decided to return to the small village of Bibersbach, Germany to pick up two German soldiers he had seen there. It was now 2100 hours. Upon passing the head of the battalion column, Capt Mechanicky requested a .50 Cal MG section from the battalion Exec; he also enlisted the service of Lt Orville E Miller and his driver, Cpl Glenn C Nielson. Upon approaching the town, they questioned two Russians as to the number of German soldiers in Bibersbach. They said there were one hundred. The .50 Cal MG was set up to cover the village street while the remainder of the party deployed around a sunken road leading around the town. One Russian was sent in to tell the Germans to come out; this failed. Capt Mechanicky and Lt Miller immediately ran into a house and captured two Jerries without a fight. These two Germans were told to inform their C O to assemble all personnel outside of the town or it would be shelled and burned. The result was startling. Bosche came from all attics and doorways; about one-third had their women with them. When all were assembled, Capt Mechanicky commanded an officer to have the captives count off, in all there were one hundred ninety-three (193). The women were left in Bibersbach and the 193 prisoners were interned in Brenberg. The battalion commander and party captured ninety-four (94) other prisoners near Brenberg on their reconnaissance.

26 April 1945

WEISENT GERMANY

D plus 324

This day, Lt Miller and Lt Clarence W Taylor with the battalion ammo train, while passing the village of Hauserbach, near Bibersbach, saw several enemy in the village. The town was covered with .50 Cal MG and 305 prisoners were taken. The total prisoner bag for this battalion from 1600 25 April to 1800 26 April was five hundred ninety-two (592). 1130 this date, battalion cleared positions at Brenberg and proceeded to Weisent, Germany. At 1840 this evening, the Bn celebrated an auspicious event, the firing of the 50,000th round of ammunition to be fired by this organization in combat. The projectile was duly festooned for the event and as if guided by the hand of fate, it was observed as a target hit, an enemy vehicle being the recipient thereof. The occupants of this vehicle, evidently sensing the honor the Bn had bestowed upon them must have gotten very excited because when last seen, they went "all to pieces."

27 April 1945

GEISLING GERMANY

D plus 325

Battalion displaced from positions at Weisent and at 1125 the Bn crossed the Danube River at Sulzbach, Germany via pontoon bridge. The "Beautiful Blue Danube" wasn't blue, it was green. We have taken the liberty to believe that since Hitler changed everything else in Germany he probably changed the color of the river too. Battalion closed position at Rosenhof, Germany but only for a brief period. Shortly, thereafter, Bn cleared Rosenhof and proceeded to Geisling, Germany for closure.

28 April 1945

GEISLING, GERMANY

D plus 326

Battalion remained at Geisling, Germany, nothing eventful transpired.

29 April 1945

STRASSKIRCHEN, GERMANY

D plus 327

Battalion displaced to Aiterhofen, Germany where they closed at 1140. Ten reinforcements were received by Bn and assigned to Batteries. At 1645 Battalion again displaced and closed final positions for day at STRASSKIRCHEN, Germany.

30 April 1945

UNTER-DACHING, GERMANY

D plus 328

In searching cellar of CP, the flying clothes and Mac West of an American aviator were discovered. Upon investigation, class ring and one dog tag were also discovered. Flyer was declared to have been killed by flak nearby on 15 April 1945. Grave was found in village churchyard, marked by paper marker on cross. Aviator's name is Lt Edward C Brinkley, 077 352. Dog tag was attached to marker for more positive identification. Manner of death was verified by French PW's. At 1000, Battalion displaced to Rutzenbach, Germany and at 1455 displaced again to positions at Unter-Daching, Germany.

1 May 1945

WEIHERN GERMANY

D plus 329

The dramatic entry of a month which may very well contain one of the most significant days of history the day when communications throughout war torn Europe will blare out with the words, "Cease Fire." The rumors of peace persist- they have been heard frequently recently - so frequent that they must have some credence. With the coming of May there was also the coming of the falling of more snow on the Southern Sector of the Western Front. The Bn Commander and party left for reconnaissance at 0835 and at 0940 the leading elements of the Bn displaced to the new area by infiltration. The potential enemy observation necessitated the displacement by infiltration. The battalion closed in the new area at Pilsting, Germany at 1130. Although the batteries were in position, the position was more or less a rendezvous area preparatory to crossing the Isar River at Landau, Germany. At 1230 a call received from C O, 204th Field Artillery Group ordering the Bn Commander to report to Group Headquarters at 1400. Reporting as ordered the Bn Commander with the Group Commander were presented the Air Medal by the Commanding General, XX Corps Artillery for participating in aerial flights in France and Germany. The remainder of the day for the Bn was just another "Parade Rest," on the alert to move and yet the care and cleaning of materiel and personal equipment was in order. The time for the river crossing for the battalion was set at "H" hour plus nine hours and the time of "H" hour was undetermined. Bn Commander and party crossed the river bridge soon after "H" hour and moved to the position in which the Bn was to move later. As the day closed the Bn was on the road moving to the approaches of the Isar River Bridge for the crossing of the river, which to this Bn was just another river to cross prior to the end of the war. The weather was bad, the night was black and there was a light fall of snow on the ground, making the movement of the battalion dangerous. The move was made over the worst of roads filled with blown bridges and craters left behind by the retreating Jerries. The Bn registered with eight rounds from this position, it is possible that these will be the last rounds fired by the battalion in combat in this war.

2 May 1945

RANDIG GERMANY

D plus 330

At 0025 on the 2nd of May the Bn crossed the Isar River at Landau, Germany and moved to the position area. Difficulty in moving on the soft roads was encountered and many vehicles became mired down and had to be winched out. At 0600 the Bn closed in position area. There was little time spent here because the Bn Commander called a meeting of all Battery Commanders at 0830 and briefed them on the situation and the coming events of the day. Bn Commander and party departed the area on reconnaissance at 0945, located new positions and gave CSMO by radio to the Bn which cleared the area at 1100 hours. The Bn moved into area vicinity of Falkenberg, Germany. At 1445 there was a meeting of all Battery Commanders and briefed them on the situation and the coming events of the day. Bn Commander and party departed the area on reconnaissance giving the rest of the Bn CSMO at 1615. The move was made through hostile woods which contained remnants of the Hungarian Army who were more than glad to see us. At one time during the move it was necessary to strengthen a bridge over which the Bn was to pass, the Hungarians pitched in and worked like "eager beavers" with the men of the Bn and it was not long before the bridge was completed and the Bn rolling again. Salutes were rendered to all passing vehicles by the Hungarians as the Bn passed. In the position in which the Bn closed at 1915, vicinity of Randlg, area was occupied by remnants of Hungarian Artillery. The Hungarians were well established. The officers of the regiment were in full uniform, and discipline prevailed in the organization. The air was full of pomp and ceremony at the meeting of the Bn Commander and the Lt Colonel of the Hungarian Artillery. The Bn closed the above area at 1915 and 1930 a radio message from Group was received; CSMO, Bn Commander and party to report to Div Arty, 71st Div for orders. At 1940 Bn Commander departed for Div Arty with the Btry Commanders on his heels, to meet him at a selected spot. The Bn Commander received his orders from Div Artilley and joined the Btry Commanders at appointed place, departing for the Rendezvous area in the vicinity of Rothalmunster, Germany, picking billets in the town. Rothalmunster is located very near the Austrian border

3 May 1945

OBER-HOF, GERMANY

D plus 331

After a few hours sleep, which has been few and far between for the last few days, due to two night moves, the Bn commander and party were ordered to make reconnaissance in the area of village of Ober-Hof, Germany. The Battalion received CSMO by radio and cleared old area at 1200. There was a complete Bn setup, but there were no rounds fired. The Bn S-2 was ordered to make a preliminary reconnaissance of dam over the Inn River into Austria for a possible crossing site for the Bn. Bn S-2 returned with following report: the width of dam is 600 yards and the thickness 8'9". There is a possible crossing site, but with the width of the trucks of the howitzer sections of the Bn being 8'2", it would be a tight squeeze. The move would be made in daylight, but a night move was definitely out. At 1510 the Bn received orders to furnish 7 -2½ ton trucks to be used at the disposal of the XX Corps. The vehicles were to have driver and assistant-driver plus one maintenance man and convoy officer. The vehicles and crews were placed on a one hour alert to report to Bn CP on call. At 1805 orders were received and the convoy officer departed under these, with convoy in tow. Convoy officer was Lt Miller of Service Btry. At 2105, this date, Lt Scott returned to the Bn for temporary duty.

4 May 1945

OBER-HOF, GERMANY

D plus 332

Battalion remained in position in vicinity of Ober-Hof with instructions that Bn would remain in this area until further notice. The time has arrived that has been long awaited, a chance to do a little stopping and a little resting. It was not long before there was washing on every line and all vehicles had their hoods up, also, there were forms seen hanging over the fenders and feet showing from under each vehicle - some possibly sleeping but the majority busily engaged in motor maintenance. The weather was bad; there was plenty of badly needed maintenance to be done because of the rain and mud, but, in spite of the inclement weather, a majority of the maintenance was completed. In one of the nearby towns that had been taken, some of the American Armed Forces discovered that they had "liberated" a brewery with a large stock of Bohemian beer. The owner of the brewery was so jubilant of the fact that the American Forces had arrived in time to prevent the Russians and other oppressed laborers from wrecking the brewery, that he opened his doors and placed the beer at the disposal of the soldiers. This Bn also got into line and received its share of the brew.

5 May 1945

OBER-HOF, GERMANY

D plus 333

Many distinguished visitors into CP. At 1055, Major Johnson, Air Officer of the XX Corps, arrived by air, buzzing the CP to warn of his arrival before he landed. There seemed to be quite a discussion in the CP between the Bn CO, the Corps Air Officer, and the Bn Air Officer, Lt Smith. After the meeting, the Bn Bn Air Officer seemed to come out on top, because he had in his hand a ten day leave to the Riviera in Southern France (what a deal). However, he is certainly worthy of this. Lt Smith has been acknowledged by the Third Army as the leading Artillery Liaison Pilot in number of combat hours flown. Colonel Eastman, XX Corps Artillery Executive Officer, was also in the CP, enroute to visit CO, 204th FA Group. At 1245 the Bn CO received a call from the CO, 204th FA Gp to have all Battery commanders of the Bn report to Gp CP at 1230. They were to travel in two vehicles and take their bedding rolls. At 1430, Lt Smith departed Bn CP for ten days on the Riviera. There were no missions fired this date.

6 May 1945

OBER-HOF, GERMANY

D plus 334

Battalion received a call from CO, 204th FA Gp, ordering inspection of all men in the Bn to determine shortages of clothing and equipment. The shortages were to be turned into Group Hq and the Bn was to fill up the shortages as soon as possible. The inspection was started without delay by all batteries. At 1105 the Group Commander visited the Bn on an inspection of all batteries. The only comment of the inspecting officer was that as far as he could see, there had been a lot of work done in the Bn, but there was still much to be done. The military courtesy was good. At 1800 there was a meeting of all NCO's of the Bn called by the Commanding Officer. The meeting was in regard to the wearing of the uniform by all members of the Bn, the plans for the future, and a reminder to all NCO's on the enforcing of discipline in the Bn. At 1900, there was a formation for the presentation of awards by the Group Commander. The formation was stood by all the NCO's. Awards were presented as follows: Award of the Bronze Star Medal: Lt Dixon, Lt Hoover, Lt Williams, CWO Hartig, 1st Sgt Gillman, T/Sgt Koons, S/Sgt Farrer, Sgt Gowan, Sgt Knell, Sgt Wilhite, Cpl Flavin, Cpl Gaylord, Cpl F. Hansen, Cpl Martin. Purple Heart Medals: Capt Langham, Lt Flood, Cpl Manhart, Pfc Creedon, Pfc Burns. The presentation was followed by a speech given by the Group CO complimenting all men standing the formation on their appearance. He also gave some clue of the future of the BN and complimented the men of the Bn on their past record which is not excelled in the XX Corps by any other Bn.

7 May 1945

OBER-HOF, GERMANY

D plus 335

Peace has actually come to Europe; its all over but the shouting. The radio has been giving out the good news all day, but the official word has not been received. Peace was not what it might be expected with the Battalion; it might be imagined to consist of a great deal of firing, the ring of a phone, and the command "Cease Firing", "Peace has been declared", but such was not the case. The Bn has had a lull the last few days and the coming of peace was just another day; maintenance work went on as usual. The Bn was given an area to search for a German plane reported shot down in the area. The plane was described as being four-motored and was last seen in a steep crash dive. Area was searched by Bn Air Section, but no evidence of plane was discovered. First sign of spring - some of the boys were out playing baseball.

8 May 1945

OBER-HOF, GERMANY

D plus 336

With the coming of peace there is also the coming of the training schedule and the Bn's S-3 was right on the ball. On the 8th of the month, there was a training schedule in the hands of all the Battery Commanders who were all trying to decipher it. Most of the training consisted of cleaning and care of equipment and materiel, mixed with a little competitive sports. At 1020 the Bn received a call from the Group Commander that all Battalions would stand a formation for the reading of the order of the day from the CG, XX Corps Artillery and the official announcement of the Cessation of Hostilities. All batteries were to have guidons for the formation and National and Battalion colors were to be displayed. With the ending of this day there also came the official ending of the European War (2400).

C O N C L U S I O N

THUS WE CONCLUDE THE COMBAT RECORD OF THE 204TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, THE 8TH DAY OF MAY, 1945. LET US RESOLVE THAT WITH THE CONCLUSION OF HOSTILITIES IN THIS, THE BLOODIEST OF ALL WARS, THERE WILL BE THE CONCLUSION OF ALL COMBAT RECORDS TO BE WRITTEN BY US OR OUR SUCCESSORS.

" VENI, VIDI, VINCI " - WE CAME, WE SAW, WE CONQUERED. WE CAME BECAUSE WE WERE COMPELLED TO COME BY THE CALL OF HUMANITY TO SAVE IT FROM A NATION OF TYRANTS. WE SAW WHY WE WERE CALLED AND REALIZED WHY WE COULD PREVIOUSLY NOT FULLY COMPREHEND THE EXTENT OF THE CRUELTY THAT WAS BEING ADMINISTERED IN EUROPE; THE REASON BEING THAT THERE WERE NO WORDS IN OUR OR ANY OTHER VOCABULARY TO DESCRIBE MAIDENHEIM, BUCHENWALD, OR CHIRDRUF. WE CONQUERED, BECAUSE WE ARE A STUBBORN PEOPLE - WE LOVE PEACE, WE CANNOT VISUALIZE CRUELTY, AND WE ARE HARD TO MAKE ANGRY. BUT, ONCE AROUSED, WE DEVELOP DETERMINATION THAT ANY COMBINATION OF HITLERS AND "V" WEAPONS CANNOT STEM. THIS, PLUS THE "KNOW HOW" THAT IS OUR HERITAGE BROUGHT TO EUROPE THE BRIGHT DAWN OF A NEW DAY, NOW WE MUST SEE THAT IT DOES NOT RAIN.

AS ONE LINK OF A MIGHTY CHAIN, COGNIZANT OF THE FACT THAT A CHAIN IS ONLY AS STRONG AS ITS WEAKEST LINK, THIS BATTALION ENTERED COMBAT IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THIS CONFLICT AND WE HAVE STRIVED TO DO ALL THAT WAS IN OUR POWER. NOW THAT THE ENEMY HAS BEEN VANQUISHED, WE ARE HAPPY IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A FINE COMBAT RECORD, NOT TO BE SURPASSED BY ANY OTHER ARTILLERY UNIT.