

AFTER ACTION REPORT

53RD ARMD. INF. BATTALION

FOURTH ARMORED DIVISION

JULY 44 THRU MAY 1945

~~842-24~~

853 AIB 131

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF, AND SHOULD BE RETURNED TO.,
THE CLASSIFIED DOCUMENT SECTION, INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, S-2,
BUILDING T-5, (T-1782)

CPD
2101

53RD AIRBORNE INFANTRY BATTALION

AFTER ACTION REPORTS - July & August 1944

100-1007

5

17

IVC # 18

[REDACTED]

16100044

HEADQUARTERS 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. ARMY

1 November 1944.

SUBJECT: Action against Enemy, Reports After.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division, APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Par. 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March to AR 345-105, dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted:

The 53rd Armd. Inf. Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. George L. Jaques, left a bivouac area 5½ miles Southeast of Barnville, Normandy, France at 1157, 17 July 1944 to move to CC "B" assembly area about 5 miles Southeast of Baupe, France, arriving at 1600 hours. Distance marched 38 miles. At about 1800 hours, Companies "A", "B" and "C" and the Mortar and Assault Gun Platoons of Headquarters Company moved forward approximately 5 miles on foot to relieve the 8th Infantry Regiment in a defensive position Northeast of Perriers, France.

On 18 July at approximately 2100, the Germans made a counter-attack through Company "B"'s position breaking through and forcing the company to withdraw. The counter-attack and heavy artillery fire caused the battalion to suffer the following casualties, 4 killed and 11 wounded. The same night, 2nd Lt. James Duffy, Jr, Co. "B" was killed in action while inspecting a patrol in the front lines. The 10th and 51st Armd. Inf. Bn's. were alerted and moved up to reinforce our positions. For the above action total casualties suffered were: 10 KIA, 27 WIA and 40MIA.

The entire battalion was withdrawn at about 1400, 19 July and moved back to an assembly area 5 miles Southeast of Baupe, France arriving at 1600. At 1945, the battalion was again alerted to go back to the original positions to be in CC "B" reserve, moving out at 2000, dismounted. The battalion remained in CC "B" reserve through the 27th July.

On 28 July at 0530 hours, the battalion spearheading an advance to the South by the 4th Armored Division advanced as far as the outskirts of Coutance, France at about 1800 hours meeting light enemy delaying action all the way. Many prisoners were taken. On the outskirts of Perriers, France, one of Company "C" half-tracks struck a land mine destroying the vehicle but only shaking up the crew. The battalion went into bivouac 1 mile North of Coutance. Still a part of CC "B", the battalion was engaged in mopping up the town of Coutance, 29 July, and at 1400, CC "B" with Avranches, France as our objective, continued the attack to the South, advancing a total of 11 miles. Casualties were light. Between 400 and 600 prisoners were taken throughout the day. The battalion went into bivouac for the night at 2100 near the northern edge of Avranches. The battalion entered the town of Avranches at 2100 hours. 30 July - Small clashes with the enemy continued throughout the night. 31 July - The battalion with the aid of tanks, artillery, air support and hand to hand combat, forced the enemy to withdraw from the town. Approximately 600 to 700 prisoners were taken. The attack to the South continued at about 2100, driving about 3½ miles South of Avranches the battalion went into bivouac at 2300 hours.

For the above period, the battalion suffered the following casualties:
31 KIA, 116 WIA, 21 MIA and 39 battle fatigue.

Enemy Casualties - KIA unknown, WIA unknown, Prisoners taken between 1800 and 2000.

Aug 1st and 2nd continued the drive South with Rennes, France as the objective. At 0130, the battalion under CC "B", after a march of 30 miles bivouaced ½ mile North east of Betton, France, and remained in bivouac the balance of the day. Reconnaissance

found the city of Rennes to be heavily fortified with troops and fortifications. On 3 Aug. the battalion minus "A" and "C" companies was shifted under CC "A" control and left Betton to by-pass Rennes while the 8th Infantry Regiment took over our position. Companies "A" and "C" were attached to the 37th Tank Battalion on another mission. CC "A" by-passed Rennes to the West and South, with the mission of seizing the airport South of the city. In the vicinity of Crevin, the battalion ran into a little enemy opposition. The encirclement of the city of Rennes caught the enemy completely by surprise. Several enemy vehicles were caught on the main road just North of Bain De Bretagne and were destroyed. The battalion went into bivouac in the vicinity of Crevice. Four outposts were established about 2 miles to the north of the Battalion CP, strategically located so as to block the routes of any enemy withdrawal from Rennes, France.

4 Aug, word was received by battalion that the 8th Infantry Regiment with attached units had taken Rennes, and also that Company "A" with the 37th Tank Battalion and the F.F.I. had taken the city of Vannes, France.

On 5 Aug, the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Jaques received orders from CC "A" that the battalion (-"A" and "C") as a part of a task force was to proceed to Vannes, France and clean out any enemy there. The Task Force consisted of A/37, B/53, Bn Hq & Hq Co/53, A/24, 66 PA, C/10, 704 TD Bn (-1 Co) and Sv/53.

Units of the 8th Infantry Regiment relieved the battalion in the vicinity of Crevin. The task force left bivouac area at 1415, mission accomplished at 2000. Little opposition was met and arrived in bivouac 3 miles North east of Vannes at 2230. One platoon from the battalion was alerted to stand by to work with CA Officer in Vannes, however, only the officer was needed.

6 Aug, the battalion remained in bivouac area 5 miles Northeast of Vannes, sending out the Reconnaissance Platoon to patrol a large airfield, the enemy had abandoned about 6 miles Northwest of our position. The buildings and hangers had been destroyed but the runways were in good condition. The next few days the battalion (-"A" and "C" Cos.) was given a mission of protecting Divisions rear area and outposting Vannes and Auray. Very little enemy activity.

At 1130 14 Aug, the battalion (-"A" & "C") left area in the vicinity of Vannes and under control of Reserve Command, marched to a bivouac area 3 miles East of Vergennes, arriving in the area at 1830 hours, travelling 86 miles without encountering any enemy. The next morning the battalion left their area for another march to St. Calais, France. On the march, detoured around several bridges that the enemy had blown up arriving at a point $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles West of St. Calais at approximately 2200, travelling a distance of 113 miles, meeting no opposition. Remained in this area until 161300, at which time began a 30 mile march to an area 5 miles Southwest of Vendome arriving at 1600. Companies "A" and "C" rejoined the battalion in this area at 1800, 16 August, coming up from the vicinity of Lorient, France.

The battalion was alerted at 0700 18 Aug as part of CC "B" and to be ready to move within an hours notice. Left the area at 1230 and marched to an area in the vicinity of the eastern edge of La Loupe, arrived at 1900, travelling 81 miles. No accidents or enemy encountered. Remained in this area until 20 Aug at 1000 when the battalion resumed the march (still under control of CC "B") to an area one mile South west of St. Laurent, arriving at 1700, travelling 91 miles. At 2000 the battalion was transferred to control of CC "R" and Co. "B" was given a mission to outpost a line from Blois to Beaugency. One platoon was sent to Blois, one to Mer and one to Beaugency. The platoon at Blois reported small arms fire from the south bank of the Loire River throughout the night.

Company "A" was ordered out by CC "R" to outpost a line from M^gung Sur Loire north to the town of Preau on 21 Aug at 1930. Company "C" was alerted to stand by for orders from CC "R".

On 22 August the Assault Gun and Mortar Platoons of Hq. Co were ordered to the vicinity of Mer. departed at 1500 with mission of firing at a few scattered targets that were harassing our troops from across the river. Results of the mission



were very satisfactory.

25 Aug at 0715, the battalion under CC "R" left the vicinity of St. Laurent and marched to an area about 4 miles north of Villeneuve. No accidents or enemy encountered. Distance travelled 124 miles. The 26th and 27th of August were spent in assisting CC "A" and relieving the 10th Armored Infantry Battalion in Troyes, with the mission of clearing out the city of enemy and to outpost and guard all approaches to the city. Casualties were light. Many enemy were taken prisoner. At 2030 27 August a part of the 35th Division relieved the battalion. The battalion was given the mission of taking the town of Vitry-Le-Francois approximately 40 miles Northeast of Troyes, stopped for the night about 10 miles Northeast of Troyes. Continuing the march at 0700 28 Aug on Vitry-Le-Francois, arriving at the outskirts of the town at 1100 hours meeting very little opposition up to this point. Reconnaissance showed the town occupied by enemy. Companies "A" and "B" crossed the Marne River by wading and seized the high ground North of the town. The battalion (- Co. "C" who was attached to the 37th Tank Battalion and assisted in the capture of Marson at 2000) set up a defensive position on the northern outskirts of town. An undetermined number of enemy were killed and taken prisoner. A good number of vehicles were captured or destroyed.

The battalion area was shelled throughout the night from the city of Vitry-Le-Francois. The 29 Aug orders were received from CC "A" that the battalion would proceed to St. Dizier to an assembly area there. At 0700, 30 Aug, the battalion left area 2 miles North of Vitry-Le-Francois. Near the West edge of St. Dizier, the advance guard came under A/T, artillery and small arms fire and at 0915 tanks and artillery were brought up into position. Large calibre AA guns were located in a large airport just West of town and were brought under fire by our Division Artillery. The Artillery Liaison plane reported about a battalion of enemy in the vicinity of Villers-Eu-Lieu and artillery was brought down on this area. Tanks and Infantry were then sent in to clear the village. Many vehicles and guns were destroyed with many enemy killed and a good number of prisoners taken, the balance withdrawing to the East. The battalion then outposted the town and airport and awaited further orders.

31 Aug at 0900, the battalion left the bivouac area 1 1/2 miles North of St. Dizier with the mission of advancing to the East and seize the town of Commercy and to establish a bridgehead across the Meuse River, encountering very little resistance on the march to the objective. Arrived in Commercy at about 1700 and went into bivouac 2 miles North of Vignot at 1900. An enemy column of foot troops was observed passing through Boncourt-Sur-Meuse going East. Artillery fire was brought down on this column with very good results. Approximately 60 locomotives and 20 box cars containing enemy equipment were captured at Lerouville. The area around Boncourt-Sur-Meuse and the area just east of Commercy were outposted by the Battalion.

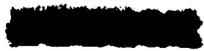
Total casualties for the period 1 - 31 Aug: 5 KIA, 6MIA, 28 WIA and 23 battle fatigue.

Enemy losses unknown because of the rapid movement of the battalion, however, an estimate of between 800 and 1000 prisoners were taken.

2. I certify that all maps, overlays, messages and documents in all of the above action were either destroyed or lost through enemy action.

For the Battalion Commander:


 RENO BITZER,
 Capt., 53rd Arm. Inf. Bn.,
 Adjutant.



[REDACTED]

HEADQUARTERS 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. ARMY

10 Nov 44
OPR
[REDACTED]

7 November 1944.

SUBJECT: Action against Enemy, Reports After.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division, APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Par. 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March to AR 345-105, dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted;

1 September the battalion was still outposting the area around Boncourt-Sur-Meuse and the area just east of Commercy, France. At 0800, an enemy column was observed going East through the town of Boncourt-Sur-Meuse. Artillery fire was brought down on the road with very good results. Artillery and Headquarters Company Assault Guns fired on enemy concentration points in the town of Boncourt all morning. Fourteen (14) planes (ME 109's) strafed and bombed our positions at 1300. Several casualties were suffered by Headquarters Company and the Medical Detachment from 88mm fire. Friendly P-47's located enemy artillery that had been shelling our rear areas all day and enemy troops, strafed them at 1600. It silenced them. Heavy fighting was going on in Boncourt-Sur-Meuse. The 80th Infantry Division attacked the town from the West inflicting heavy casualties. The enemy withdrew to the East.

On 2 September the 80th Infantry Division took over our positions and moved to occupy the high ground 1 mile South of Gironville broadening our front and at the same time giving us control of all the high ground in the area. The battalion as part of CC "A" continued to hold the high ground around Boncourt-Sur-Meuse and Commercy until 11 September at 1800 at which time orders were received that CC "A" would move in two task forces to proceed to an assembly area in the vicinity of Pagny-Sur-Moselle. The battalion in Task Force Jaques left area 1 mile south of Gironville (1800 hours) and arrived in the assembly area 2 miles West of Vieville-En-Haye at 200 hours. Distance marched 20 miles. The Machine Gun Platoon of Headquarters Company and one platoon of Company "A" was sent to Pagny-Sur-Moselle, site of a proposed crossing of the river (Moselle) to protect the Engineers while they put in the bridge. 604-7012

12 September the Engineers and the two platoons protecting them were under heavy enemy mortar fire all night (Monday Night) preventing them from building the bridge. Received word from CC "A" that Task Force Jaques would remain in position all day. Company "B" sent one platoon to relieve the platoon of Company "A" at the river at 1200 hours. At 1500 a change of plans was received from CC "A". The battalion (-Co B) would move to Dieulouard, France where the 80th Infantry Division had forced a crossing and erected a bridge early in the morning. After crossing the entire Combat Command would proceed East to Chateau Salins and South to an assembly area to be designated later. From there, three task forces would be organized to block the main roads leading East from Nancy, France.

Left bivouac area two miles West of Vieville-En-Haye at 0500, 13 September, minus Company "B", detached to Task Force Abe. Enroute to the bridgehead, word was received that the enemy had counterattacked during the night and had blown two of the three bridges at Dieulouard.

Task Force Abe proceeded across the remaining bridge and drove the enemy from the high ground. Task Force Jaques followed and continued through Bezaumont and St. Genevieve, France and bivouaced for the night 1 mile Southeast of Lemoncourt arriving



at 200 hours. Distance marched 37 miles, ~~the~~ being under light artillery and mortar fire. Company "C" captured 10 prisoners and one vehicle. Company "A" captured 7 prisoners.

At 1000 hours, 14 September the Assault Gun Platoon was given a mission to fire on an enemy column approaching our position from the South in the town of Jallaucourt. In this area, Company "C" destroyed one armored car and 1 motorcycle.

The battalion commander, Lt. Col. Jaques attended a meeting at CC "A" and received orders to have his task force proceed to Sallannes to cut off the railroad and roads leading from Chateau Salins. The battalion (- Co. "B") left the bivouac area 1 mile Southeast of Lemoncourt at 1730 hours and arrived in bivouac area 1 mile North of Arracourt at 2000 hours. Original mission being changed by CC "A" with a new mission of occupying high ground in the vicinity of Arracourt, cutting off the routes of escape from Nancy, France, when the 35th Infantry Division attacks the city 15 September.

15 September Headquarters Company outpost captured 10 prisoners during the night. At 1045, Company "A" brought in to the PW inclosure 200 more prisoners, capturing them at crossroads 1 mile North of our position. At 1400, Company "A" engaged an enemy column of 95 vehicles, both combat and general purpose. The column was located on a road running through Forest of Bezange La Grande. 194 prisoners were taken and one enemy was killed.

16 September, Company "A", 10th Armored Infantry Battalion joined the battalion to replace our Company "A" that had been sent to join Task Force Abe. The battalion still blocking the roads from Nancy. The period 16 September to 25 September was spent holding the high ground around Arracourt, France. Not much action except for cleaning out Forest Bezange La Grande and another small woods that enemy troops escaping from Nancy were infiltrating through. A couple of German Infantry and Tank counter-attacks were repulsed.

The period 26 September to 30 September in a dug in defensive position on high ground around Arracourt. The town of Moyenvic, France seemed to be a German concentration point and caused the battalion a good number of casualties. Artillery, mortars and dug in tanks used as artillery were the main source of trouble from Moyenvic. Occasional enemy patrols tried to penetrate our lines at different points, but with no success.

During the period 1 to 30 September, the following casualties were suffered by the battalion and inflicted on the enemy.

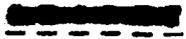
FRIENDLY

Personnel		Vehicular and Weapons.
6 Killed in Action	1 1/4 ton 4 x 4	9 MG's .50 Cal.
5 Missing in Action	1 H/T M3A1	2 MG's .30 Cal.
40 Wounded in Action	1 Trailer Ammunition M10	7 SMG's .45 Cal.
74 (Battle Fatigue, Sick Non Battle)	4 Rocket Launchers	8 Rifles M1 Cal. .30
	4 Carbines.	1 60mm mortar
		2 81mm mortars.

ENEMY (Estimated)

~~300~~ Prisoners of War 370 Killed.

Vehicles Captured		Vehicles destroyed
3 Red Cross trucks	1 Truck	10 Trailers
2 Red Cross Ambulances	3 Armored Cars	48 2 1/2 ton trucks
2 2 1/2 Ton trucks	14 Motorcycles	9 Staff Cars.
3 Sedans	2 Misc. Vehicles	4 Wagons
3 bicycles	40 Sedans	4 Buses
1 motorcycle	10 Panel Trucks	30 bicycles
2 .50 Cal MG's (US)	1 20mm AA Gun	1 75mm Gun
2 Airplane Engines (US)	1 88mm Gun	1 MK VI Tank



14

[REDACTED]

Awards issued September 1944

Silver Star

Capt Roy C. Breaux
 Capt Hosah Holloway
 Pvt Peter Patera
 Maj. Henry A. Crosby
 Tec 5 Lester Burns
 Tec 4 Marcus Watson

Co "C"
 Med Det
 Med Det
 Bn Hq
 Med Det
 Med Det

Bronze Star

Capt John R. Finnegan
 Capt Robert R. Volz
 1st Lt John P. Petrelli
 T/Sgt Manual Figuiera
 S/Sgt Edmond J. Saintignon
 Tec 5 Benjamin Westenzweig
 Tec 5 Edmond W. Andres
 Pfc Harold Mongold
 Pfc Peter Vukadinovich
 S/Sgt Joseph Kreise
 S/Sgt Frank Flym
 Tec 5 Glen Dickens
 Pfc William Sorenson
 Capt Luther Keller II
 1st Lt Ervin W. Smith
 T/Sgt Arthur W. Pugh
 S/Sgt John G. Teffenhart
 Sgt James Wheten
 Pfc Frank D. Zicker
 Tec 5 Joseph Russe

Co "A"
 Bn Hq
 Co "C"
 Bn Hq
 Med Det
 Bn Hq
 Bn Hq
 Bn Hq
 Co "C"
 Hq Co
 Med Det
 Co "C"
 Bn Hq
 Hq Co
 Co "C"
 Co "A"
 Co "A"
 Co "A"
 Med Det.

The period 1 October-7 October the battalion still in a defensive position holding high ground around Arracourt, France. The night of 7 October the 101st and 104th Infantry Regiments moved into our positions. On the 8th of October all elements of the battalion were relieved by the above regiments of the 26th Infantry Division and moved to the vicinity of Bezange La Grande and held under CC "A" control as mobile reserve to assist the 26th Infantry Division. From 8 October to 18 October still under CC "A" mobile reserve in vicinity of Bezange La Grande. During this period passes to 5% of the command to visit Nancy.

On 19 October the battalion was given the mission of guarding bridges in Nancy, Laneuveville, and St. Nicholas. The companies were moved as follows- Company "A" to Laneuveville to guard 4 bridges; Company "B" to St. Nicholas to guard 4 bridges and Company "C" to Nancy to guard 5 bridges. Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company moved to Lenoncourt. The battalion remained as above until the evening of the 26th when Companies "A", "B" and "C" were relieved by the 25th Cav. Rec. Bn..

Company "B" moved to an assembly area 1 mile west of Lenoncourt. Company "A" was attached to CC "A" and moved to an assembly area 1 mile North of Remerville. Company "C" moved to Haraucourt and was attached to CC "B". Headquarters Company and Battalion Headquarters remained in Lenoncourt.

The battalion (2 Co "A" & "C") was ordered under control of CC "R" 31 October. The period 28 - 31 October was utilized by Co. "B" and Hq. Co with the aid of the 24th Engineers in training in attack of a fortified position.

For the period 1 - 31 October the following casualties were suffered by the battalion and inflicted on the enemy

FRIENDLY

Personnel

2 Killed in Action
 10 Missing in Action
 15 Wounded in Action
 88 Sick or Injured (Non Battle)

Equipment

7 Carbines, Cal. .30 M1
 1 Pistol, Auto, Cal. .45 M1911A1
 1 Rifle Cal..30 M1903-A4 (Snipers)

[REDACTED]

ENEMY (Estimated)

2 Prisoners of War

69 Killed or Wounded.

Awards Issued October 1944.

SILVER STAR				BRONZE STAR		
T/Sgt	Edward J. McCormack	Co "B"	Maj	John G. Hughes		Bn Hq
2d Lt	Ivan D. Green	Co."B"	Capt	Reno Bitzel		Bn Hq
Tec 5	John Dankoff	Med Det	Capt	Stanley W. Sampson		Bn Hq
Pfc	Edward E. Hasenbuhler	Med Det	Capt	Clifton E. Blackburn		Hq Co
Pfc	Elvin Bean	Med Det	Capt	Thomas E. Pell		Co."A"
Tec 5	Lyle Francis	Med Det	Capt	Alfred J. Owen		Co "B"
Pvt	Lyle Vincent	Med Det	Capt	Roy C. Breaux		Co "C"
			Capt	Arthur W. Harbart		Sv Co
			Capt	Mortimer I. Ironson		DC
			1st Lt	Alfonso Zawadski		Sv Co
			WOJG	Ronald Plews		Sv Co
			WOJG	Leo A. Dzialowy		Sv Co
OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO BRONZE STAR			T/Sgt	Foy R. Bouknight		Co "A"
1st Lt. Robert F. Everson	Co "B"		S/Sgt	Anthony Laurino		Co "A"
			Sgt	Raymond Cooper		Co "B"
			Pfc	Richard Pomager		Co "C"
			Tec 5	Edward Lemme		Med Det

2. Attached hereto S-2,3 Journal for period September 27 to 8 October. No messages available. Operations conducted by radio. I certify that all maps overlays and documents for the above period were either destroyed or lost through enemy action.

For the Battalion Commander:


 RENO BITZEL,
 Capt., 53rd Arm. Inf. Bn.,
 Adjutant.

1 Incl: S-2,3 Journal.

[REDACTED]

HEADQUARTERS 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. Army

3 December 1944.

SUBJECT: Action against Enemy. Reports after.

sep-oct

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division, APO 254 U.S. Army.

1. In compliance with Par. 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March to AR 345-105, dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted:

1 November the Battalion (-A & C Co.) still under CCR control was in a sort of training area in the vicinity of Lenoncourt, and remained so until 10 November when it was put on a 1 hour alert. During the above period nothing of an unusual nature took place. The Companies carried out training in the attack of a fortified position.

On the 11th of November the Battalion (-A & C Co.) moved from the vicinity of Lenoncourt to Chateau-Salins, with the mission of outposting the city, under control of CCR, remaining on this mission until 20 November. During this period Co's A & C returned to Battalion control and plans were made for our next move. This period was mainly devoted to reorganization within the Battalion and refitting of equipment lost. 18 November the Battalion received a troop list changing from CCR control to CCF control and showing the organizations that were to be a part of CCF and Task Force Jaques. Task Force Jaques under command of the Battalion Commander consisted of the 53rd Armd Inf Bn, B Co. 8th Tank Bn., C Co. 25th Cav., Sect 24th Engineers, plus 704, Sect 489th AA, 253rd Armd FA Bn. (-1 Battery), 1 Section of 126th Ordnance Maintenance Battalion, 1 Section of B Co. 46th Armored Medical Battalion. This Task Force was to be held with CCF in Corps Reserve and to move only on Corps orders in direct support of the 26th Infantry Division.

On the 20th of November the Task Force with CCF was ordered to move on to Munster. All went well and the Task Force moved in one column until it arrived in the vicinity of Wittersheim where enemy opposition was met and overcome. The Task Force continued the advance to Kirrberg where very stiff opposition was met the morning of 24 November. Clearing that situation up by 1230 hours and continued on toward Baerendorf. Between Kirrberg and Baerendorf the Task Force was engaged in a bitter fire fight and by evening this situation was cleared up and the town of Baerendorf was outposted for the night. During the night the outposts were under constant enemy shelling.

On the 25th of November the advance was continued toward Eschwiller. The same situation existed in the taking of Eschwiller. On the 26th the advance continued toward Eywiller - with the mission of securing and holding the high ground to the north of the town. Enemy resistance was very stiff. Most of the casualties suffered were from enemy artillery and exposure. The weather was foggy and rainy, visibility very poor. The mission was accomplished by morning of the 27th.

604-70.2

19

11

[REDACTED]

From the 27th through the 30th the Task Force continued its advance taking the town of Berg and Thal meeting fierce enemy resistance and overcoming it. Fierce fire fights and close in fighting took place in both towns and the Task Force finally on the 30th of November accomplished its mission of seizing and holding the high ridges north of Thal.

During the above period the following awards were made to members of this Battalion.

BRONZE STAR

lt. Col.,	George L. Jaques	(Battalion Commander)
1st Lt	Herbert E. Nofziger	(Liaison Officer)
1st Sgt	Edward E. Conkle	6308883 C Co
Pfc	Charles E. Bunnell	32073685 C Co
S/Sgt	Virgil L. Eshleman	37524657 C Co
S/Sgt	Ruford H. Benass	35449660 C Co
S/Sgt	William P. Cordle	33132131 C Co
T/Sgt	Herbert L. Ingersoll	32041895 B Co
T/5	David R. Herman	35104150 B Co

Total Casualties for the above period:

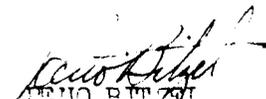
<u>PERSONNEL</u>	<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>EQUIPMENT</u>
KIA-DOA 34		3- 1/4 ton 4x4
MIA 135		4- Half Tracks
Disease-) 233		1- 2 1/2 ton 6x6
Battle Fatigue)		1- ambulance
<u>Total 402</u>		

ENEMY CASUALTIES

<u>PERSONNEL</u>	<u>EQUIPMENT</u>
POWs 42	4- Tanks (3 Mk Vs)
MIA - MIA 168 (est)	2- Trucks (1 ton or better)
	3- A/T guns
	1- Machine gun
	1- 20 MM dual purpose SP (Dest.)
	1- 20 MM AA gun (Dest.)
	1- 40 MM gun (Dest.)

2. Inclosed S-2-3 Journal, Messages, overlays and CP lists. Maps are still being used and will be submitted upon completion of present operations.

For The Battalion Commander:


 Paul R. Bittel
 Capt., 53rd Armd Inf Bn.,
 Adjutant

1 Incl. Battalion Operations Journal

ETO
/

HEADQUARTERS 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. ARMY

1 January 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division, APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. On 1 December, 1944 the battalion under CC "B" was engaged in action against the enemy in the vicinity of Thal, France. Enemy contacted here were identified as the 1st Panzer Co of the 25th Panzer Division. This information was obtained from prisoners captured in the vicinity. At 0925, 2 December 1944, the battalion attacked advancing along the West edge of the woods East of Rimsdorf, continuing North. The objective (Rimsdorf) was taken by 1250 and the companies were given the mission of holding the high ground North of the town until further orders.

2. At 0300, 4 December 1944 the battalion was transferred from CC B to CC A and given the mission of attacking Domfessel, outposting it while the Engineers build bridges across the railroad and river, then pushing on to their objective, Hill 332, South West of Dehlingen. The attack started at 0930, 4 December 1944, proceeded by a 30 minute artillery preparation on the town. By 1300, the town had been taken and 128 prisoners captured. On 5 December 1944, the battalion attacked Hill 332, South West of Dehlingen. The objective was taken by 1300 and positions consolidated. At 1000, 6 December 1944, the Battalion CP was moved up to Dehlingen. On 7 December 1944, the 12th Armored Division relieved our units in their present positions and the battalion was pulled back to an assembly area in the vicinity of Thal, France. At 1015, 8 December 1944, the battalion moved from Thal to an assembly area at Bisping, France. Distance travelled 17.5 miles. All the troops were billeted in town.

3. During the period 9 to 18 December 1944, the battalion was in a rest period at Bisping, France. New replacements received training in crew drill, extended order drill, also firing of M1 rifle, mortar and carbines. The rest of the personnel were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons. On 14 December 1944 Major General Hugh S. Gaffey visited the battalion CP and presented 9 Bronze Stars 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star and 21 Certificates of Merit to personnel of the battalion.

4. At 1130 on 19 December 1944 the battalion moved out from Bisping under CC "A" enroute to Luxembourg. The battalion arrived at Mont St Martin, Luxembourg at 0300, 20 December 1944. Distance travelled 112.3 miles. Remained here until 1510 at which time the battalion moved to Chatillon, Belgium. Arrived in Chatillon at 1600. Distance travelled 9 miles. CP was set up in school house there. The Battalion had the mission of outposting Chatillon, all day of the 21st and reverted from control of CC "A" to Reserve Command at 1800 this date. At 0800 on 22 December 1944, the battalion moved from Chatillon to Loernick a distance of 5.2 miles. At 1345 the battalion left Loernick and arrived at Bonmert at 1410. Distance travelled 6.1 miles. On 23 December 1944, the battalion, under Reserve Command had the mission of clearing out the town of Flatsbourhof, thus aiding the advance of CC "A". By 1230 one company of tanks and one company of infantry had fought their way through Flatsbourhof, thus the high ground North of the town and

19

8

14022

were ready to begin the attack on Bigonville by 1430. Two infantry companies advanced on Bigonville with two tank companies in support. Company "B" was held in reserve. At 1700 the attacking companies were meeting heavy resistance and due to darkness all units consolidated their present position for the night, ready to continue the attack in the morning. At 0745, 24 December, the battalion, with the 37th Tank Battalion in support began the attack on Bigonville. By 0900, the force had entered the town and was held up by heavy small arms fire from the North side of the town. At 1600 the town was cleared of enemy resistance and the force then reorganized on the high ground North of the town. At 0930 the battalion was alerted by Reserve Command for movement with the rest of the Division to an assembly area 15 kilometers SW of Bastogne, Belgium with the mission of driving through to Bastogne and relieving elements of the 101st Airborne Division cut off by enemy forces there. The battalion left Bigonville at 0500 and arrived at Bercheaux at 0645. The Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel George L. Jaques left immediately to get the plan of attack from Reserve Command. At 0915 the company commanders were called to the CP and given the plan of attack which was as follows. An advance guard consisting of D/37 and B/53 under command of the S-2/37 was to move on Voules Rosieres, seize and outpost the town of Nives, Cobreville and Remoiville and secure the high ground North of Remoiville. The attack started at 1100 and at 1115 leading elements of the column were passing through Voules Rosieres and through Petite Rosieres at 1130 with no opposition in the town but heavy small arms fire coming from the high ground North of the town. At 1233 the head of the column was entering Nives, meeting no enemy opposition there. At 1410 the head of the column was entering Cobreville, meeting heavy resistance. After over-coming the opposition there, the column moved on to Remoiville and by 1630 the town was taken and Co. C was given the mission of outposting same. At 2000 the Battalion Commander received orders and the plan of attack for the next day. This plan was as follows.

5. The attack was to start at 0800, the first objective being the high ground north of Remichampagne. C/53 and C/37 were to take the high ground while B/53 and B/37 clean out the town. A/53 and A/37 were to be held in reserve. After the first objective had been taken, the attack was to continue North to Clochimont and thence on to Sibret. At 0930 on 26 December 1944 the attack started supported by air support. By 0955 the first objective had been taken and B/53 was starting to move into Remichampagne. After a 2 hour battle for the town, the high ground North of the town had been seized and the column then moved on to Clochimont, succeeding in taking the town with little resistance. Here the companies reorganized and prepared to push on to the next objective which was Sibret. At 1330 the mission was changed and it was decided that Sibret would not be attack, but the high ground East of the town would be seized. At 1515, 26 December 1944 the companies jumped off to take their assigned objective and at 1610 the objective was taken. At 1645, radio contact was made with isolated units in Bastogne and at 1700 physical contact was made. C/53 and C/37 ran into a heavy fire fight North of Assenois, receiving heavy bazooka fire coming from dense woods North of the town. Six half tracks were knocked out in this engagement. At 1930, the Battalion Commander received orders from Reserve Command that the attack would be continued North to Bastogne, with the mission of escorting 50 2½ ton trucks and ambulances for relief and evacuation of the wounded there. At 0630, 27 December 1944 the force moved from Remichampagne and arrived in Bastogne at 0730. During the period 28 - 30 December the battalion was in Bastogne with the mission of protecting the supply route leading South from the town.

During the period covered by this report the battalion inflicted the following casualties on the enemy; 1576 prisoners, 393 killed or wounded, 1 Mk V and 1 Mk IV Tanks destroyed, 3 half tracks, 2 2½ ton trucks, 122 MG's, 1 pillbox, 4 80mm

mortars, 23 bazookas, 1 40mm AT gun, 5 105mm Howitzers, 4 88mm guns, 2 Rcm vehicles, 2 37mm guns destroyed.

Our casualties for the period were as follows: 40 killed, 181 wounded, 15 personnel carriers destroyed, 4 peeps, 1 2½ ton truck, 85 ml Rifles, 18 Carbines, 13 Machine Guns, .30 Cal, 3 Machine Guns, .50 Cal. and 1 Pistol destroyed.

For the Battalion Commander:


REUBEN H. JOHNSON,
CWO USA,
Acting Adjutant.

3 Incls:

1. Journal for period.
2. Messages for period.
3. Overlays for period.

31 January 1945

SUBJECT: Action against the Enemy, Reports after.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division,
APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Par 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March 1944 to AR 345-105 dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted:

On 1 January 1945, the battalion was under CC "B" in reserve in the vicinity of Chaumont, Belgium. At 1700 this date, the battalion was transferred to CC "A" control and orders to move from its present position to an assembly area at Sainlez was given. At 1900, the entire battalion was closed in the assembly area vicinity of Sainlez, Belgium.

The battalion remained in CC "A" reserve in the vicinity of Sainlez, Belgium until 1000, 3 January 1945, at which time it reverted to control of CC "B" forming part of a task force with the 37th Tank Battalion, and the 22nd Field Artillery Battalion, to be held in mobile reserve and be ready to meet a possible threat from the Northeast.

At 1300, 4 January 1945, the battalion moved to an assembly area at Chaumont, Belgium and was held here in mobile reserve under CC "B" until 8 January 1945. During the period, the companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons and firing of small arms, mortars and assault guns.

At 1800, 8 January 1945, the battalion was alerted for movement and started moving out from Chaumont Belgium at 1930, and arrived in an assembly area in the vicinity of Assenois, Belgium at 2150. At 1500, 9 January 1945, the battalion moved out of this assembly area and arrived in an assembly area 1 kilometer Northeast of Bastogne, Belgium at 1700, in support of the 101st Airborne Division's attack scheduled for the following day. At 2100, this date, a company commander's meeting was held at the battalion CP, at which time the plan of attack was given out. (The battalion together with the 37th Tank Battalion under CC "B" to attack to the Northeast at 0900, 10 January 1945 with the town of Fourcy as the objective. The 101st Airborne Division to attack at the same time on the left and CC "A" to attack on the right.)

At 0925, 10 January 1945, the attack started to the Northeast with units on our left and right coordinating. By 0950, leading elements of the task force were 500 yards beyond the Line of Departure, receiving heavy small arms and artillery fire, but were moving forward slowly. 15 prisoners captured in this sector were identified from the 7th Co., 696th Regiment, 340 V. G. Division. The first phase line (Red) was reached at 1140 after a heavy fire fight and the attack was continued on beyond this phase line. At 1235, forward elements were under heavy fire and tanks following up behind the infantry were receiving bazooka fire.

1945
14022
6

At 1400, 10 January 1945, the battalion received orders from CC "B" to disengage and return to an assembly area in vicinity of Assenois, Belgium as soon as relieved by elements of the 6th Armored Division. By 2040, all companies were closed in in their respective assembly areas. Orders were then received from CC "B" to be prepared to move to an assembly area Southeast of Luxembourg City on notice.

The battalion moved out from the assembly area at Assenois, Belgium at 1600, 11 January 1945 and arrived in Lassel, Luxembourg at 2345. Distance travelled 55 miles. Remained in this assembly area until 15 January 1945. Companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons.

At 1430, 15 January 1945, the battalion left the assembly area in the vicinity of Lassel, Luxembourg and arrived in Leudelange, Luxembourg at 1515. Troops were billeted in town. Remained in this assembly area until 23 January 1945, being held in Army Reserve. During this time the companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons, range firing and training of new replacements. 5% of the battalion were given passes to Luxembourg City. Quota on passes to Paris were also given to the battalion on the 17th.

At 1030, 23 January 1945, the battalion was alerted for movement to an assembly area in the vicinity of Birkerch. At 1415, the battalion left Leudelange and arrived in an assembly area at Rollingen, Luxembourg at 1600. Distance travelled 15.8 miles. Remained at this location under CC "B" until 29 January 1945. During the above time the companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons, range firing and training of new reinforcements. A reconnaissance party of one staff officer and one officer from each company left on the 24th to make a reconnaissance of positions held by units of the 4th Infantry Division and possible assembly areas in the event the battalion is to be committed.

At 1300, 29 January 1945, received orders from CC "B" to move to Petteendorf. Moved out of Rollingen at 1400 and arrived at Petteendorf at 1600, relieving the 2nd Battalion of the 319th Infantry Regiment of the 30th Infantry Division.

The battalion was held in reserve in this assembly area until 31 January 1945.

ENEMY CASUALTIES

PW's	26
MIA or WIA	55

FRIENDLY CASUALTIES

MIA	48
KIA	7
MIA	8

For the Battalion Commander:

Ruben H. Johnson
 RUBEN H. JOHNSON,
 CTO, USA,
 Adjutant.

2 Incls:

- Incl # 1 - Journal & Message File
- Incl # 2 - Overlays

HEADQUARTERS 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. ARMY

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: Action against the enemy, Reports after.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division,
APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Paragraph 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March 1944 to AR 345-105 dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted:

During the period 1 - 3 February 1945, the battalion was in reserve at Bettendorf, Luxembourg, under control of CC "B". At 0800, 4 February 1945, the battalion left Bettendorf, Luxembourg, moving to an assembly area in vicinity of Beaufort. Companies "A" and "C" relieved two companies of the 3rd Battalion of the 318th Infantry Regiment immediately upon arrival. Company "B" was held in reserve at Beaufort. At this time the battalion was placed under direct control of the 318th Infantry Regiment. The battalion remained in defensive positions in this sector until 10 February 1945. On 7 February 1945, the battalion supported by fire an attack by the 318th Infantry Regiment across the Our River, South of Dillingen.

On 11 February 1945, the battalion was relieved by the 318th Infantry and reverted back to control of CC "B". The battalion moved out from its position in vicinity of Beaufort and moved back to Rollingen.

At 0900, 12 February 1945, the battalion moved out of Rollingen, returning to Leudelange, Luxembourg on orders from CC "B". The battalion remained in reserve under CC "B" in Leudelange until 19 February 1945. During this time the companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons, range firing and training of new reinforcements.

On 19 February 1945 at 1215, the battalion moved from Leudelange, Luxembourg and arrived at Ammeldingen, Luxembourg, at 1620, a distance of 40 miles. The battalion was placed under control of the 319th Infantry Regiment in defensive positions along the Our River. B/53 was given the mission of guarding five bridges in the vicinity of the junction of the Our and the Sauer Rivers. The battalion remained in this sector through 20 February 1945. During the day the front lines were extended approximately two kilometers and 15 prisoners were taken.

At 0600, 21 February 1945, the battalion jumped off in attack with Roth and Obersgegen as their objective. A/53 and B/53 started out abreast as the mortars and artillery laid down a barrage on pill-boxes in front of the battalion zone of advance. A/53 reached its objective (Gentingen) at 1130. B/53 reached its objective (Roth) at 1415 and C/53 reached Obersgegen at 1320. At 1530, this date, the battalion was relieved by elements of the 80th Infantry Division.

At 0700, 22 February 1945, the battalion was given mission of locating an assembly area for CC "B" in vicinity of Geihlingen. At 1100, Battalion Headquarters and A/53 arrived in Geihlingen, relieving the 2nd Bu, 319th Infantry Regiment here. The 53rd Infantry and 10th Infantry Battalions were assembled in this vicinity preparatory to making an attack on Niedersgegen. The 10th Infantry

101-7012

19



14022

Battalion was to follow in close support of the 53rd Infantry Battalion during the attack. At 2400, Company "C" crossed the IP at RJ North of Geichlingen By 0012 23 February 1945, leading elements were at 956524 and had met no opposition. At 0130, C/53 had advanced to cross-roads at 969531 and was receiving heavy small arms fire and direct fire from tanks. By 0440, C/53 had advanced 200 yards past this cross-road, was mopping up and expanding in all directions, as A/53 moved through to continue the attack. At 1000 leading company was moving through to continue the attack. At 1000 leading company was moving in to Niedersgeckler. At 1040, B/53 was sent forward to assist Company "A" in mopping up resistance in the town. At 1045, the town was cleared of all resistance and 71 prisoners taken and 4 tanks destroyed. At 1300, the Dth Infantry Battalion was engaged in attacking high ground North of the town, and the 51st Infantry Battalion was attacking the high ground South of the town. At 1520, the Battalion CP moved from Geichlingen to CR South of Obergeckler. At 2015, two companies were across the river at Sinspelt, plus some tanks and TD's and were in a defensive position to defend the bridge.

At 1100, 24 February 1945, the Battalion CP moved into Sinspelt. Companies continued to hold the high ground Northeast of Sinspelt.

On 25 February 1945, the battalion was placed under control of Reserve Command. Company "A" relieved A/10 on Hill 426. Company "B" relieved C/10. The Battalion CP moved out from Sinspelt at 0940 and arrived in Brimingen at 1045.

At 1300, 26 February 1945, the battalion was transferred to CC "A" control. The battalion CP moved from Brimingen at 1445. The companies went into an assembly area on high ground East of Rittersdorf, preparatory to attack on Matzen to be made on 27 February 1945.

At 0745, 27 February 1945, Company "B" plus one platoon of tanks moved out in attack on Matzen. At 0830, the company moved into the town after receiving small arms fire from the town. By 1030 the town had been completely cleared of all resistance. At 1310, the high ground South of the town had been seized and defensive position set up. At 1930, the Machine Gun Platoon was attached to B/53 to support that company in outposting the town.

The battalion remained in defensive position Southeast of Matzen through 28 February 1945 under control of CC "A". Battalion CP left Rittersdorf at 1345 this date, arriving in Matzen at 1415. At 1800, the battalion CP was under heavy enemy artillery fire.

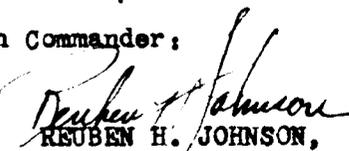
ENEMY CASUALTIES

200 Prisoners of War,
60 Killed in Action
92 Pill-boxes destroyed.
1 Bunker destroyed.
1 150mm gun destroyed

FRIENDLY CASUALTIES

78 WIA
9 MIA
19 KIA
1 Half-track knocked out.
15 M-1 Rifles lost.
1 Sub-machine gun destroyed.

For the Battalion Commander:


REUBEN H. JOHNSON,
CWO, USA,
Adjutant.

3 Incls:
Incl 1 - Messages
Incl 2 - Overlays
Incl 3 - Journal

NO 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BN 4TH ARMORED DIVISION
APO 254, % Postmaster, New York.

12 April 1945.

SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division, APO 254, U.S. Army.

1. Forwarded herewith After Action Report for the period of 1 March 1945 to 31 March 1945.

For the Battalion Commander:

4 Incls.

1. After Action Report (Trip)
2. Map overlays.
3. Battalion Log.
4. Messages (Radio) *not rec'd*

A. L. Eirich
A. L. EIRICH,
WOJG USA,
Personnel Officer.

CLASSIFICATION

43
~~DECLASSIFIED~~

BY THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

COMMITTEE 15 May 45

HEADQUARTERS 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. ARMY.

1 April 1945.

SUBJECT: Action against the enemy, Reports after.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division, APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Par 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March 1944 to AR 345-105, dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted:

On 1 March 1945, the battalion was in defensive positions SE of Metz, Germany under control of CC "A". Bn CP located at Metz. After receiving two direct hits from heavy artillery fire, the battalion CP moved back to Bitburg. The battalion remained in defensive position along the Kyle River in the vicinity of Metz, Germany thru 3 March 1945. During the period, patrols were sent out to gather enemy information and locate enemy positions. No enemy contact was made west of the river, however, much enemy activity was observed east of the river and possible defensive positions being prepared. On 3 March, all companies were pulled back to an assemble area vicinity of Bitburg and plans were made for an attack to the NE. Objective: to reach the Rhine River near Coblenz, Germany. The battalion remained in the assemble area near Bitburg thru 7 March 1945 as final plans were made for the drive on to the Rhine.

At 0640, 5 March 1945, the battalion left Bitburg attached to CC "A". The column encountered scattered resistance along the route of advance throughout the day and arrived in Ginsdorf at 2110. CP was set up in town. Distance travelled 12.7 miles.

The battalion left Ginsdorf at 1130, 6 March 1945, joining CC "A"'s column. The column advanced to Udersdorf, arriving at 1950 after meeting little, or no resistance. Distance travelled 20.3 miles. Left Udersdorf at 0900, 7 March 1945 and advanced to Kerben, remaining here for the night. Total distance traveled to here 36.2 miles. No enemy resistance was encountered during the day. Some prisoners were captured, and also some foreign workers liberated. At 1411, 8 March 1945, the battalion left Kerben, arriving at Volken at 1035, a distance of 6.7 miles. At 1510, a task force was formed from elements of the 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion and the 8th Tank Battalion and moved out to attack Rubenach, Germany. Hopping up was in progress at 1800. The town was outposted by B/53 and D/8. Companies were tied in for the night by 2000. At 2145, plans were made for establishing a bridgehead across the Rhine:

At 0900, 9 March 1945, the battalion was alerted for movement and notified of change in mission. The Division now would establish a bridgehead across the Moselle River as soon as relieved by 11th Armd. Div. and probe to the West and South, cleaning out pockets of resistance in that area. At 1250, 10 March 1945, the battalion left Volken, moving to Rubenach. Distance marched 12.0 miles. The battalion remained in defensive positions in vicinity of Rubenach through 13 March 1945. Companies were engaged in cleaning out all resistance in that area.

At 1200, 14 March 1945, the battalion moved to an assembly area vicinity of Kerben, arriving at 1230. Distance travelled 10.3 miles. Plans were drawn up for movement South across the Moselle River, pass through the 90th Inf. Div and seize bridgehead across the Mahe River at Bad Kreuznach, then be prepared to move North to seize bridge across the Rhine at Mainz or Worms.

At 1115, 15 March 1945, head of column moved out of Pölsch. Resistance was encountered at Leisenfeld from four enemy gun positions. Two enemy AT guns were destroyed near RR crossing East of the town. At 1430, the Battalion moved into Leisenfeld and CP was set up in the town. Distance travelled 21.0 miles.

The battalion moved out of Leisenfeld at 0630, 16 March 1945, Column was held up at coordinates 942572 by an AT gun at 0835. By 0835, resistance was overcome and column moved on. At 0945, column was approaching Riehhollen and was receiving small arms and baroque fire coming from the town. By 1045, this resistance was overcome and the column moved through the town. A/53 and A/8 were given the mission of cleaning out the town and C/53 and C/8 moved up to the head of the column to lead the attack. At 1900, the battalion arrived at Langelsheim. Battalion CP was set up in the town.

At 0600, 17 March 1945, Company "A" jumped off to attack the town of Bretzenheim. By 1330 both A/53 and A/8 were across the river and by 1500 they were in command of the high ground East of the River. At 0630, 18 March 1945, the infantry and tank teams jumped off to attack the town of Bassenheim and Sprendlingen, and Mackenheim. At 0830, the battalion CP moved into Check Point #91. Distance travelled 5.5 miles.

Early on 19 March 1945, plans were discussed for drive on Worms, Germany to secure RR bridge on North side of the town still reported to be intact. At 1230 the battalion moved out in the attack. At 1545, the battalion CP moved to check point 532 after it had been cleared by forward elements. Distance travelled 7.0 miles.

At 0715, 20 March 1945, the battalion moved out from vicinity of check point 532. Infantry-Tank teams advanced on check points 244, 278, and 52, supported by artillery. These teams continued to attack and mop up pockets of resistance in the zone of advance throughout the day.

At 0845, 21 March 1945, CC "A" was split into two task forces under command of CO/8 and CO/53. At 0945, the battalion CP moved to an assembly area West of Check Point 26. At 1400, forward elements of the column entered town of Dexheim, encountering no resistance and at 1630 were entering Oppenheim and Niederstein, meeting no resistance there. At 1700 received orders to pull the battalion back as soon as relieved by elements of friendly infantry division. The battalion moved from Dexheim at 1800 and arrived at Check Point 255 at 1910. Distance travelled 31.7 miles. The battalion moved to a Division assembly area vicinity check point 62. At 1300, arriving there at 1515. On 23 March 1945 the battalion was in a division assembly area at check point 62. Personnel spent entire day in maintenance of vehicles, weapons and equipment and getting showers, etc. Late in the afternoon, the battalion was alerted for movement the following day. The battalion as part of CC "A" would cross the Rhine River vicinity of Oppenheim, push through the 5th Infantry Division and seize bridge over the Main River at Hanau. Left check point 62 at 700, 24 March 1945.

Forward elements of the column crossed the Rhine at 0900. The column moved through positions held by the 5th Infantry Division and advanced through check points 193, 227, 66 and 120, meeting light resistance from AT and small arms fire. The battalion CP was located at check point 231 during the night.

At 0615, 25 March 1945, the battalion left check point 231 moving on to the North as part of CC "A". The task force moved on through check points 211 and 99. The column was held up SE of check point 99, by mines on road leading to the town. The column continued on and advanced to check point 54, 116 and 42. At 1610 the column was entering Klein Auheim, moving along fast to take the bridge intact across the river. The artillery laid down a TOT over the bridge, and North bank of the river as the column approached the span. The head of the column reached the bridge at 1620, finding it still intact. Companies "C" and "A" moved across dismounted and established a bridgehead on the North Bank of the river. During the evening an enemy troop train pulled in and unloaded enemy infantry men in the vicinity of the bridgehead. Artillery fire was placed on the train. Direct hits were scored on this train. At 2000 the enemy counter-attacked pushing the troops holding the bridgehead back to the edge of river. Company "B" was sent across the river to aid Companies "A" and "C". By 2400 the situation was under control and engineers were engaged in working on the bridge, getting it prepared to hold heavy vehicles. Battalion CP was set up at Klein Auheim at 1800. Distance travelled 41.3 miles.

At 0530, 26 March 1945, the enemy counter-attack again but was repulsed. Engineers continued to work on the bridge and the infantry was engaged in mopping up the town. At 1400, a combat team of the 26th Infantry Division crossed the river, pushed through positions held by our troops and advanced on to take the town of Grossenheim.

At 0700, 27 March 1945, the 26th Infantry Division pushed through our positions slowly. At 0800, the enemy counter-attacked forcing the infantry back to our lines. By 0915, the situation was under control and the attack repulsed. During the day the engineers continued work on the bridge, completing the job by 1500.

At 0545, the battalion moved from Klein Auheim across the river to an assembly area North of the River. From here the column moved out. "B" team leading followed by A, then C. Division objective, Grunberg. The column was held up by 2 road blocks at 260723 at 0645. By 0830, road block was cleared and column moved on again, meeting little or no resistance. At 1530, forward elements encountered and destroyed an enemy column approximately 2 miles long. The battalion arrived in Grunberg at 1800. CP was set up in the town. Distance travelled 36.7 miles.

Left Grunberg at 1700, 29 March 1945 in the mission to take Grossluden. The column ran into a road block at Stockheim at 0710. This was cleared by 0800 and column moved on. By 1225 forward elements were approaching the objective, meeting little resistance. BN CP moved into Herstein at 1430. At 1900, the column forced its way through to its original objective. CP was set up in the town.

At 1145, 30 March 1945, the battalion moved out from Grossluden to an assembly area outside of the town.

At 1630, our task force moved out from the assembly area, passing through Neukirchen at 1700. The head of the column reached the objective at 2100, meeting light resistance here. Battalion CP set up in Schenklingenfeld. Distance travelled 31.0 miles.

At 1400, 31 March 1945 the battalion moved out, continuing the drive. "B" team was given the mission of securing a bridgehead at Niembatsheim. At 1530, received word that the bridge there was blown so the column moved in direction of Herringen to cross there. Arrived in Herringen at 1845. CP was set up in Wolfershausen. Tank-Infantry teams outposted high ground in this vicinity during the night. All personnel were alerted for movement early the following day.

ENEMY CASUALTIES

Personnel		Equipment Destroyed	
3,122	POW's	2 AT guns	3 75's
341	Wounded	74 Vehicles	2 88's
625	Killed	12 AA guns 20mm	2 Nebelwerfers
		6 37's	5 Staff Cars
		3 105 Hows.	16 AA Guns
		Large No of Aircraft Motors.	
		1 Train load of supplies	
		1 Locomotive and 6 cars.	
		1 Motorcycle.	

FRIENDLY CASUALTIES

Personnel		Equipment
20	MIA	1 M4A3 (105mm SP)
101	MIA	1 Light Tank, M5
3	MIA	1 Half-Track, M3A1
		1 1/4 Ton C&R Truck.

For the Battalion Commander:

REUBEN H. JOHNSON,
2nd Lt., 53rd Armd. Inf. Bn.,
Adjutant.

[REDACTED]

HEADQUARTERS 53RD ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. ARMY

1 May 1945

SUBJECT: Action against the enemy, Reports after.

TO : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division,
APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Paragraph 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March 1944 to AR 345-105, dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted:

On 1 April 1945, the battalion was located in the vicinity of Wolfershausen, Germany. At 0610 the battalion moved out from this location attached to Combat Command "A" with the mission of driving to the East and seizing Gotha, reported by prisoners to be the present seat of the German Government. After meeting little or no resistance, the battalion arrived in Willershausen, Germany, remaining here for the night. Distance travelled 12 miles. Delay here was caused by bridges blown over the Werra River at this point. During the day, the Engineers were engaged in erecting a bridge in this vicinity. By 0545, 2 April 1945, all rifle companies had crossed the river and occupied the high ground on the opposite bank. At 0930, the first battalion of the 359th Infantry Regiment passed through our positions to attack the town of Krauthausen and Modgeburg to open up our route for us to continue the attack on Gotha and Ohrdruf. At 1600 the bridge was completed and vehicles were started moving across. At 1800 the Battalion CP moved to Pfersdorf where the CP was set up. Distance travelled 1.2 miles.

At 0800, 3 April 1945, the battalion CP left Pfersdorf, crossed the Werra River and went into an assembly area on the opposite side, preparatory to resuming the attack. At 1300, the column started to resume the attack, starting out slowly after receiving reports that the bridge at Wenigenlupritz was intact. At 1700 the route of march was changed and the column moved Northeast to the right flank of CC "B". At 1930 the Battalion CP moved in to Aspach. Rifle companies outposted the tanks on the high ground during the night.

67

At 1140, 4 April 1945, the drive was continued toward Gotha. By 1210, forward elements were entering Gotha meeting no resistance. By 1430 elements were in Ohrdruf and set up there, encountering no resistance. At 1630, the Battalion CP moved into Ohrdruf and set up there. Distance travelled 12.0 miles. Tank-Infantry teams were given the mission of cutting the roads around the entire perimeter of the town.

During the period 5 - 7 April 1945, the Battalion remained under control of CC "A" and was engaged in outposting the town of Ohrdruf

SECRET

At 1710, 7 April 1945, the Battalion CP moved to the barracks located North of Ohrdruf. Distance travelled 1.5 miles.

From 7 April 1945 to 11 April 1945, the battalion remained in assembly area located in the barracks North of Ohrdruf. Companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons. Troops were paid during this time and the men enjoyed a well earned rest, movies, clubmobiles and other recreational activities. On 10 April 1945, the Battalion was transferred from CC "A" to Reserve Command control.

At 1555, 11 April 1945, the battalion left assembly area North of Ohrdruf, joining Reserve Command column, following CC "A"'s route of advance to the East. Arrived at Nohra at 2005, remaining in this position all night. Distance travelled 29.5 miles.

Left Nohra at 1400, 12 April 1945 and arrived at Mellingen at 1500. Distance travelled 10 miles.

At 0650, 13 April 1945, the battalion left Mellingen and arrived at Langenburg at 1815. Distance travelled 39.1 miles.

Left Langenburg at 0720, 14 April 1945 under control of Reserve Command. Arrived at Weidensdorf at 1015. Distance travelled 22 miles. Here a task force was formed from Reserve Command with mission of cleaning out the town of Glauchau. The battalion remained in defensive position vicinity of Weidensdorf on 15 April 1945, during which time a task force from the Reserve Command plus a battalion of the 319th Infantry Regiment were engaged in attacking Glauchau and cleaning up all resistance in that town. By 1700 resistance was overcome and the Battalion CP moved in to Glauchau, a distance travelled of 2 miles.

During the period 16 - 19 April 1945, the battalion remained in defensive positions in and around Glauchau.

At 0845, 19 April 1945, the battalion left Glauchau, arriving at Crimmitschau at 1145. Distance travelled 10 miles.

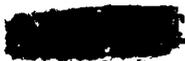
The battalion remained in defensive positions in and around Crimmitschau during the period 20 - 23 April 1945, during which time the battalion was engaged in regrouping under Reserve Command and in maintenance of vehicles and weapons.

Left Crimmitschau at 1200, 24 April 1945 and went into an assembly area North of the town. Crossed IP at 1550 enroute to destination, Bayreuth. Radio silence was observed during the movement. Arrived at Dressendorf at 0315, a distance travelled of 113 miles. All companies were closed in by 0430 and were set up in defensive positions in and around Dressendorf, NE of Bayreuth.

The battalion remained in defensive positions in and around Dressendorf during the period 25 - 30 April 1945 under control of Reserve Command. Companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons and in carrying out daily training schedule. All companies maintained a 24 hour patrol of their respective company areas during this period. At 1600, 30 April 1945, the battalion was alerted for probable movement.

SECRET

4



FRIENDLY CASUALTIES

<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicular</u>
KIA 12	3 Halftracks M3A1
WIA 56	1 1/4 ton truck
MIA 1	

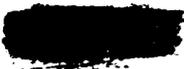
ENEMY CASUALTIES

<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Weapons</u>
KIA 110	4 120mm Mortars.
PW's 2655	

For the Battalion Commander:

A. L. Eirich
 A. L. EIRICH,
 WOJG USA,
 Acting Adjutant.

- 2 Incls:
- Incl: #1 - Journal
- Incl: #2 - Overlays



May 45

1 June 1945.

Subject: Action against the enemy, Reports after.

To : Commanding General, 4th Armored Division, APO 254, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Paragraph 10, Change No. 3, dated 9 March 1944 to AR 545-106, dated 18 November 1929, the following report is submitted:

On 1 May 1945 the battalion was in defensive positions in and around Dressendorf, alerted for possible move with Reserve Command.

At 1045, 2 May 1945 the battalion left Dressendorf and arrived in Wackersdorf at 2130. Distance travelled 65.0 miles. Went into defensive positions here for the night. Left Wackersdorf at 0900, 3 May 1945 and arrived in Lalling at 1900 and went into defensive positions there. Distance travelled 91.0 miles. The battalion remained in defensive positions at Lalling until 1400, 6 May 1945, at which time the battalion moved out under control of Reserve Command, following the route of CG "A", passing through positions of the 5th Infantry Division and advancing on Prague, Czechoslovakia. Arrived at Volyns, Czechoslovakia at 2040, a distance of 63.8 miles.

At 1555, 7 May 1945 received orders from Reserve Command to cease all offensive operations at once and remain in present positions.

During the period 8-16 May 1945 the battalion remained in defensive positions in and around Volyns, Czechoslovakia. On 9 May 1945 at 1030 a billeting party left for a reconnaissance of the area in Southern Germany the battalion is to occupy. At Volyns, Czechoslovakia companies were engaged in guarding PW's and cutting routes of escape South and Southeast of Steakonice.

On 17 May 1945 the battalion was attached to CG "A", engaged in turning over 12,000 Prisoners of War to Russian troops. First contact with the Russians was made at 0917 and by 1515 all Prisoners of War had been turned over to the Russian authorities, companies were released and returned to their original assembly area. At 1545, this date, "C" Company was relieved by a battery of the 953rd Field Artillery.

The battalion remained in defensive positions in the vicinity of Volyns, Czechoslovakia during the period 18-26 May 1945. Companies were engaged in maintenance of vehicles and weapons, and in carrying out daily training schedule. At 1400, 25 May 1945, the Battalion Commander, one staff officer, and all company commanders attended a meeting at CG "A" headquarters where plans were discussed for the Division's part in the occupation of Germany. At 1110 the battalion was alerted for movement to Germany early on the 27th.

604-70.2

26
119

[Signature]
NOV 2 1945
14022

I

Left Volyns, Czechoslovakia at 0415 on 27 May 1945, arriving in Essenbach, Germany at 1615. Distance travelled 122.0 miles. Companies were located in the following towns:

Essenbach: Bn. Hq., Hq. Co. and Med. Det.
Worth : "A" Company
Ergolding: "B" Company
Altdorf : "C" Company
Eltheim : Service Company

During the period 28-31 May 1945 the battalion remained in its assigned area in the vicinity of Essenbach, Germany and was engaged in normal occupational duties. Troops were engaged in setting up in their assigned quarters and in maintenance of vehicles and weapons. Patrols were formed to patrol assigned areas, screening teams were organized and briefed to aid Military Government in handling Prisoners of War and Displaced Persons.

For the Battalion Commander:

John
KEVIN H. JOHNSON,
2nd Lt., 53rd Armd. Inf. Bn.,
Adjutant.

2 Incls:

Infantry Journal
Operations Overlays