

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS 80TH RECONNAISSANCE TROOP  
APO 80, U. S. Army

31 May 1945

Subject: Organization History.

To : Commanding General, 80th Infantry Division, APO 80,  
U. S. Army.

1. Original unit:
  - a. 80th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized).
  - b. 15 July 1942.
  - c. Camp Forrest, Tennessee.
  - d. General Order, 80th Infantry Division.
  - e. Cadre for Troop was obtained from 8th Cavalry

Reconnaissance Troop with the remainder of the men being furnished by Selective Service.

2. On 6 October 1942 the 80th Reconnaissance Troop was enlarged to form the 80th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Provisional). The change never became permanent and on 7 November 1942 the Provisional Squadron was disbanded and the organization became a Troop again.

Table of organization 2-27, dated 15 July 1943, under which the Troop is now operating, reduced the Troop to its present size.

3. Strength, Commissioned and Enlisted:	<u>Officers</u>	<u>EM</u>
a. At beginning of period	8	136
b. Net increase during period	0	12
c. Net decrease during period	2	11
d. At end of period	6	137

4. Stations:

1 May 45 - HONIGSBACH, Germany (445242)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Braunau W7

2 May 45 - HACKERSHOFFEN, Germany (505140)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Braunau W7

2 May 45 - RESBACH, Germany (605085)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Braunau W7

2 May 45 - EGGENFELDEN, Germany (715910)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Braunau W7

3 May 45 - BRAUNAU, Germany (925770)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Braunau W7

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4 May 45 - SCHWANENSTADT, Austria (495575)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Wels X8  
5 May 45 - MILTREGE, Austria (885555)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Wels X8  
6 May 45 - VOITSDORF, Austria (712543)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Wels X8  
6 May 45 - KIRCHDORF, Austria (765430)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Wels X8  
7 May 45 - GARSTEN, Austria (935240)  
MAP: Admont Y9 Middle Danube 1/100,000  
21 May 45 - SCHORFLING, Austria (371445)  
Map: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Wels X8  
22 May 45 - UNTER ACH, Austria (302280)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Wels X8  
28 May 45 - WEISSENBACH, Austria (371278)  
MAP: Middle Danube 1/100,000 Wels X8

5. Marches:

Departed HONIGSBACH, Germany, 1430 1 May 45. Arrived HACKERSKOFEN, Germany, 0030 2 May 1945. Distance travelled 15 miles.

Departed HACKERSKOFEN, Germany, 1000 2 May 1945. Arrived RESBACH, Germany, 1350 2 May 1945. Distance travelled 7½ miles.

Departed RESBACH, Germany, 1500 2 May 1945. Arrived EGGENFELDEN, Germany, 1800 2 May 1945. Distance travelled 21 miles.

Departed EGGENFELDEN, Germany, 1000 3 May 1945. Arrived BRAUNAU, Germany, 1400 3 May 1945. Distance travelled 15 miles.

Departed BRAUNAU, Germany, 0300 4 May 1945. Arrived SCHWANENSTADT, Austria, 1800 4 May 1945. Distance travelled 50 miles.

Departed SCHWANENSTADT, Austria, 1000 5 May 1945. Arrived MILTREGE, Austria, 1500 5 May 1945. Distance travelled 24 miles.

Departed MILTREGE, Austria, 1000 6 May 1945. Arrived VOITSDORF, Austria, 1315 6 May 1945. Distance travelled 27 miles.

Departed VOITSDORF, Austria, 1700 6 May 1945. Arrived KIRCHDORF, Austria, 1945 6 May 1945. Distance travelled 12 ½ miles.

Departed KIRCHDORF, Austria, 1145 7 May 1945. Arrived GARSTEN, Austria, 1410 7 May 1945. Distance travelled 24 miles.

Departed GARSTEN, Austria, 0015 21 May 1945. Arrived SCHORFLING, Austria, 0500 21 May 1945. Distance travelled 62 miles.

Departed SCHORFLING, Austria, 1030 22 May 1945. Arrived UNTER ACH, Austria, 1200 22 May 1945. Distance travelled 15 miles.

Departed UNTER ACH, Austria, 1500 28 May 1945. Arrived WEISSENBACH, Austria, 1530 28 May 1945. Distance travelled 4 miles.

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All marches during the period were mounted.

Condition of Roads:

Roads were generally good throughout the period. Through mountainous terrain a scarcity of roads was noticeable with usually only one road useable between destinations.

Weather:

Excellent weather played an effective part in the rapid advances made by the Troop during the early part of the period until tactical operations ceased. The latter part of the period was marked with occasional rains.

6. Campaigns:

- a. Name - battle of Germany.
- b. Duration - 15 September 1944 to 9 May 1945.
- c. Purpose - to conquer Germany.
- d. Authority ordering - Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force.

7. Battles:

(See attached narrative account of action)

8. Commanding Officers in important engagements:

- a. Battle of Germany.
- b. CAPTAIN ROBERT W. HILL, O-1030156, Commanding Officer, 80th Reconnaissance Troop, from 1 May 1945 to 2 May 1945.  
CAPTAIN PAUL L. SMITH, O-1030419, Commanding Officer, 80th Reconnaissance Troop, from 3 May 1945 to 28 May 1945.  
CAPTAIN ROBERT W. HILL, O-1030156, Commanding Officer, 80th Reconnaissance Troop, from 29 May 1945 to 31 May 1945.  
1ST LT PHILIP H. WAGNER, O-1032403, Platoon Leader, 1st Platoon, 80th Reconnaissance Troop, from 1 May 1945 to 31 May 1945.  
1ST LT GEORGE P. RORK, O-528682, Platoon Leader, 2nd Platoon, 80th Reconnaissance Troop, from 1 May 1945 to 31 May 1945.  
1ST LT MAX E. MOE, O-399172, Platoon Leader, 80th Reconnaissance Troop, 3rd Platoon, from 1 May 1945 to 31 May 1945.  
2ND LT JAMES H. MANEILLY, O-2010339, Assistant Platoon Leader, 80th Reconnaissance Troop, 3rd Platoon, from 1 May 1945 to 31 May 1945.

9. Losses in Action: Officers and EM.

- a. Engagement: Battle of Germany.
- b. Names: None.
- c. Killed in action: None.
- d. Wounded in action, Injured in action: None.

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10. Former and present members who have distinguished themselves in action: None.
11. Photographs of Personnel, Important Scenes, Events: None.

*Robert W. Hill*  
ROBERT W. HILL  
Captain, Cavalry,  
Commanding.

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NARRATIVE ACCOUNT OF ACTION:

The 80th Infantry Division, continuing the attack southeast, forced crossings of the Isar River at four places and cleared the south bank of the river in the Division zone. The 2nd and 3rd Platoons, who had covered the engineers during the ferry operations, were now ordered, together with the remainder of the Troop, to assemble south of the river and prepare to move southeast in advance of the 318th Infantry Regiment, to whom the Troop was attached. Some difficulties were encountered as the Troop proceeded across the Isar River in the vicinity of Mammaring (530130) on the night of 1 May 1945. A heavy snow storm hampered the operations of the ferry which had to be discontinued before the complete Troop had cleared the river. The Troop was finally assembled early the next morning at Hackerskofen (555140) and the 2nd and 3rd Platoons proceeded immediately from there on their new mission. One section of the 1st Platoon remained with the 318th Headquarters while the remainder of that Platoon continued in reserve with the Troop CP.

The 2nd Platoon raced southward meeting no resistance, and took 270 prisoners, including a major general, along their route of advance. They continued unopposed until they reached the Inn River at 670730 where a blown bridge halted their progress. They made contact with elements of the 15th Armored Division in that area and acted as liaison with them for the remainder of the day. The 3rd Platoon travelled equally as fast and moved unhindered in advance of the motorized infantry columns reaching a point north of the Inn River at 671809, capturing 55 prisoners, which increased the Troop total for the day to 325 PW's.

On 3 May 1945 the Troop was detached from the 318th Infantry and reverted to Division control, and ordered to assemble in Braunau awaiting orders to cross the Inn River. After closing in Braunau in which 200 prisoners were captured enroute, the Troop received its new mission. Company D and three assault guns of the 702nd Tank Battalion were attached to the Troop which composed Task Force Smith, under the command of Captain PAUL D. SMITH, with orders to cross the Inn River, advance rapidly and seize crossings over the Ager, Traun and Alm Rivers. If possible Task Force Smith was to complete the XX Corps mission of contacting the Russian forces along the Enns River.

On 4 May 1945 Task Force Smith crossed the Inn River at 020800 in the 71st Division's zone and entered Austria. A rapid advance was continued all day slicing through hilly terrain with such speed that any possible enemy resistance was surprised and prevented. Upon reaching Schwanenstadt (495575) and seizing a bridge intact across the Ager River the Task Force immediately consolidated their position and took control of all enemy military equipment and installations in the area. Over 2000 prisoners were taken along with numerous enemy trucks and equipment and a great number of freight cars loaded with military supplies. Preparations were then made to continue the advance east early the next morning.

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An enemy airfield and personnel surrendered without resistance upon the arrival of one jeep in the vicinity of Schwanenstadt on 5 May 1945. The 1st Platoon then led the advance to the east where they met a pocket of enemy resistance at 640600. They were fired on by SS troops armed with 20mm guns and after a short fire fight they were forced to bypass this resistance that hindered their rapid advance. No further resistance was encountered and they succeeded in capturing a bridge intact over the Steyr River at 887555. While friendly infantry forces pushed men across this bridge, the 1st Platoon, later joined by the 2nd Platoon, moved north to Steyr, crossed the river there and proceeded south to the Enns River at 960555. Patrols were organized which crossed the river in search of Russian forces. After progressing several miles they were unsuccessful in their attempt and returned to the west side of the river.

On 6 May 1945 Task Force Smith was ordered to assemble in the vicinity of Sautern (755430) and upon their arrival there at 1200, Task Force Smith was dissolved. The Reconnaissance Troop was then attached to Task Force Smythe under the command of Colonel Smythe, Assistant Division Commander, with the mission of clearing the enemy from the eastern sector of the Division zone as the Division moved south into the Austrian mountains. The 1st and 3rd Platoons were attached to Task Force James and the 2nd Platoon was attached to Task Force Black, both task forces being a counterpart of Task Force Smythe. Task Force Smythe occupied defensive positions in the vicinity of Kirchdorf (786430) and on 7 May 1945 the 1st and 3rd Platoons under Task Force James moved out on their mission and reached Liezen (888065) where they were directed to halt in place. The route they followed was over extremely mountainous terrain and although they encountered no enemy resistance from the ground they were strafed by enemy planes but no damage was inflicted. The 2nd Platoon, under Task Force Black, reconnoitered northeast from 810373 to clear the enemy of that area. As the Platoon reached 854419 they were approached by the 26th Hungarian Division in column. The Commanding General of the Division produced papers that he had already surrendered and that he was to assemble his unit in the vicinity of Molln (870415). They were allowed to pass and the Platoon proceeded on their mission to 840440 where they were ordered to return to Kirchdorf. Task Force James CP and the Reconnaissance Troop CP moved to Garsten (935240) whereupon they received the following field message through channels: "1. A representative of the German High Command signed the unconditional surrender of all German land, sea and air forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Force and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command at 0141 hours Central European Time, 7 May 1945, under which all forces will cease active operations at 0001B hours 9 May 1945." 2. Effective immediately all offensive operations by Allied Expeditionary Force will cease active and troops will remain in present position. Moves involved in occupational duties will continue. Due to difficulties of communication there may be some

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delay in similar orders reaching enemy troops, so full defensive precautions will be taken. "3. All informed, down to and including Division, Tactical Air Commands and Groups, Base Sections, and equivalent. No release will be made to the press, pending an announcement by the heads of the three governments. Eisenhower".

The 2nd Platoon under Task Force Black continued to maintain defensive positions and patrolled roads in the vicinity of Kirchforf. The 1st and 3rd Platoons under Task Force James moved from Liezen to Garsten and set up defensive positions and patrolled road in the vicinity of that town. The bulk of the Germany 6th Army began streaming north in continuous columns and as they passed through Garsten they were disarmed and all knives and weapons taken from them. For several days this endless column of German prisoners proceeded along an assigned route of march to an assembly area agreed upon under the surrender terms. The 2nd Platoon moved to Garsten to assist in maintaining order there. Headquarters of Task Force James was temporarily used in performing Military Government problems, controlling the traffic of Hungarian and German PW's and liberated allied personnel, and as a consultant and authority on civil affairs.

Task Force James was dissolved and the Troop reverted to Division control. On 11 May 1945 the 1st Platoon was given the mission of guarding the bridge at Hieflau (2614) to prevent the passing of displaced persons and civilians from Russian occupied territory to that under allied control. At 1545 the Platoon contacted element of 202nd Regiment, 68th Division, 30th Corps, 26th Russian Army. The following day the Platoon was relieved of guarding the bridge by elements of the 317th Infantry Regiment.

While the Troop remained at Garsten and conducted a schedule of motor maintenance and the cleaning of weapons, the 3rd Platoon was ordered to report to the 2nd Battalion, 317th Infantry, at Spital with the mission of guarding a gold shipment from Spital to an undisclosed destination. However, before the gold shipment was under way, the complete Troop was given the mission and at 0800 on 15 May 1945 the convoy left Spital with the destination Frankfurt. After an uneventful journey, in which the gold was delivered to proper authorities, the Troop began the return trip arriving in Garsten on 20 May 1945.

The Troop remained inactive in Garsten until 21 May 1945 when they moved on order to relieve the 3rd Cavalry Group in the sector 0847 to 5445 to 4219. The Troop moved into the vicinity of Schorfling at 1000 and proceeded the following day to Unter Ach (3028). Two patrols were operated daily in the assigned area, east and west of Kammer See until relieved by XX Corps artillery. The boundaries of the Troop's assigned area was changed to include the area 3746 - 3223 - 4119 - 5230 - 5347 and immediately road blocks were set up to check all traffic passing through the area. The 1st Platoon set up blocks between the two points, the 2nd Platoon blocked Weyregg (358395) and patrolled from that point to 510365. The 3rd Platoon ordered to Langbath (515300) guarded three bridges and checked all traffic passing through the town. As the period ended, the occupation of the assigned area was becoming routine.

ous tactical operations  
9th Reconnaissance Troop  
ation participated in  
e, raced into Luxembourg  
pursued them across  
e into Austria.  
as necessitated 121 Command  
following a route covering  
, captured 7461 prisoners  
ng 38 casualties lost to  
. Seven tanks and over a  
with great quantities of  
played an important part

*Robert W. Hill*  
ROBERT W. HILL  
Captain, Cavalry,  
Commanding.