

1-30 Sep 44 (8pp)

SECRET

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

30 September 1944

Subject: Transmittal of Organization History and Reports After Action
Against Enemy.

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

1. Transmitted herewith is Organization History and Reports After
Action Against Enemy prepared by this organization for the month of
September 1944.

Paul L. Smith
PAUL L. SMITH
1st Lt., Cavalry,
Commanding.

2 Incls:
Organization History
Report After Action Against Enemy

380-CAV-0.22

NOV 29 1945

26217
master

S E C R E T

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

30 September 1944

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 October 6, 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, with Change 1, dated 15 September 1943, reduced the Troop to its present size.

3. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.	<u>Officers</u>	<u>EM</u>
a. At beginning of period.	6	143
b. Net increase each month.	1	25
c. Net decrease each month.	1	14
d. At end of period.	6	154

4. Stations:

Arrived Camp Mobberley Hall, England on 8 July 44. Departed on 31 July 44.

Arrived Marshalling Area, Southampton, England on 1 August 44. Departed on 2 August 44.

Arrived France 6 August 44.

5. Marches:

Departed Bar Le Duc, France (last reported location on August report) at 0600, 1 September 44. Arrived Gery at 0800, 1 September 44. Distance travelled $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Departed Gery 1600, 1 September 44. Arrived 1 mile S Commercy at 2000 1 September 44. Distance travelled 19 miles.

Organization History (continued)

Marches (cont'd)

Departed 1 mile S Commercy at 1400, 2 September 1944. Arrived Xivray at Marvoisin at 1630, 2 September 44. Distance travelled 10 miles.

Departed Xivray at Marvoisin at 2000, 4 September 44. Arrived 2 miles N Limey at 2359, 4 September 44. Distance travelled 10 miles.

Departed 1 mile N Limey at 1000, 12 September 44. Arrived 1½ miles W of Montauville at 1130, 12 September 44. Distance travelled 7 miles.

Departed 1½ miles W of Montauville at 0900, 14 September 44. Arrived Loisy at 1100, 14 September 44. Distance travelled 12 miles.

Departed Loisy 1200, 14 September 1944. Arrived 1 mile S St. Genevieve at 1330, 14 September 44. Distance travelled 2 miles.

Departed St. Genevieve 0700, 15 September 44. Arrived 2 mile W Dieulouard at 0800, 15 September 44. (Note: reason for above march was local counterattack on St. Genevieve and vicinity by a reported force of 10 tanks and one company of German Infantry). Distance travelled 5 miles.

Departed 2 miles W Dieulouard at 1200, 15 September 44. Arrived Villers en Haye at 1330, 15 September 44. Distance travelled 2 miles.

Departed Villers en Haye at 2000, 15 September 44. Arrived 2 miles S Rogerville at 2100, 15 September 44. Distance travelled 3 miles.

Departed 2 miles S Rogerville at 1200, 16 September 44. Arrived 1 mile N Griscourt at 1300, 16 September 44. Distance travelled 4 miles.

Departed 1 mile N Griscourt at 1100, 19 September 44. Arrived Belleville at 1200, 16 September 44. Distance travelled 6 miles.

Departed Belleville at 1400, 25 September 44. Arrived vicinity Faulx at 1600, 25 September 44. Distance travelled 12 miles.

Departed vicinity Faulx at 1800, 25 September 44. Arrived Custines at 1900, 25 September 44. Distance travelled 4 miles.

Departed Custines at 2200, 26 September 44. Arrived ½ mile W Leyr at 2359, 26 September 44. Distance travelled 5 miles.

Departed ½ mile W Leyr at 0600, 27 September 44. Arrived 1 mile W Leyr at 0700, 27 September 44. (Note: reason for march was to improve position of the Troop CP). Distance travelled ½ mile.

Departed 1 mile W Leyr at 0700, 28 September 44. Arrived Custines at 0900, 28 September 44. Distance travelled 5 miles.

Organization History (continued)

Marches (cont'd)

Condition of roads: In general, roads travelled were good. Heavy rainfalls, however, hampered movement over unpaved roads. Continuous rainfalls throughout the month made movement cross-country impossible and slowed up operations considerably. On several occasions vehicles were stuck because of attempted movement off the roads.

6. Campaigns:

- a. Battle of France (Nancy-Metz area)
- b. Still in progress.
- c. To liberate France and destroy the German Army.
- d. SHAEF.

7. Battles: See attached narrative account of action.

8. Commanding Officer in important engagements:

- a. Robert W. Hill, Captain, Cavalry, from 1 September 44 to 0630, 15 September 44.

Paul L. Smith, 1st Lieutenant, Cavalry, from 0630, 15 September 44 to 30 September 44. Assumed command of Troop per 80th Division Special Order 20 September 1944.

- b. Battle of France.

9. Losses in action: Officers and men.

- a. Battle of France.

b. Killed in action:

Sgt. John F. Bosetin (listed as missing in action 31 August 44 but found dead on 2 September 44)

Pvt. Albert M. Abood (listed as wounded in action on August report but died of wounds on 2 September 44)

c. Wounded in action; Injured in action:

Captain Robert W. Hill
 Tec 5 Harold F. Bratton
 Cpl John NM Kozar
 Tec 5 Rocky J. Sandy
 Tec 5 Charles H. Carr
 Pvt Wilbur W. Meyer
 Pvt Albert W. Borchers
 Pfc William J. Ratsch
 Pvt Earl A. Erwin
 Sgt Robert M. Kercher
 Sgt Albert M. Durbin
 Pfc Carl J. Schmidt

d. Missing in action:

None

10. None

11. None

S E C R E T

NARRATIVE ACCOUNT OF ACTION

The 80th Division mission of seizing the high ground northeast of Commercy had not been completed on 31 August 1944 and the Troop was still engaged in the mission of reconnoitering to the east and leading the advance of the three Division combat teams toward their objective on 1 September 1944.

All three platoons jumped off at daybreak and moved steadily without interruption to their individual objectives. By 2300 all three had crossed the historic Meuse River and were set up in separate towns approximately 20 miles east of their morning's starting point. The first platoon after fording the Ornain River at Bar Le Duc, reconnoitered along the Division's southern boundary through Silmont, Nancois sur Ornain, then eastward through St Aubin sur Aire, Commercy, and finally Vignot. Lt. Rork's second platoon, operating in the centerzone, moved along the route Brize St Dizier, Sampigny, Mecrin, Pont sur Meuse and Boncourt sur Meuse. Lt. Camp's third platoon, minus a complete section which had been lost at Nettancourt on the previous day, followed along the Division's northern flank and reconnoitered through les Marais, Rumont, Rupt devant St Mihiel, and Koer la Petite. No enemy was encountered.

The Division's advance went according to schedule and on the 2nd of September 1944, the platoons were again assigned the mission of reconnoitering to the east and northeast with a secondary mission of maintaining liaison with the 2nd Cavalry conducting an area reconnaissance of the terrain lying to the west of the Moselle River between Nancy and Metz. Both missions were completed successfully but just prior to nightfall the second platoon contacted enemy forces in Essey et Maizerais and drove them away from a railway station with mortar fire. Here the platoon captured a train with 30 carloads of signal equipment and then proceeded to secure the northeast entrance into the town until Division infantry moved in. The first platoon under Lt. Wagner moved without contact to Villers en Haye and the third platoon, after completing its reconnaissance, moved into reserve at the Troop CP.

The second and third platoons were given area reconnaissance missions on 3 September 1944 of a strip approximately 10 miles wide, bounded by the Moselle River on the east, Nancy on the south and Pagny sur Moselle on the north. The first encountered slight enemy resistance in Mamey but forced them to withdraw and then advanced to Martincourt, a small village of a few hundred inhabitants. Here the Germans had burned the town to the ground and killed a large percentage of the population after, it was reported, several German officers had been slain by civilians. The first platoon picked up a German map, taken from German officers by Martincourt civilians, which indicated German defenses along the Moselle River in the Division sector.

By the 4th of September 1944, the Division had secured their bridgehead across the Meuse River with their forward infantry elements holding objectives farther east in the Moselle Valley. The Division was planning to advance in conjunction with OCA of the 4th Armored Division on the 5th of September 1944, cross the Moselle River in the vicinity of Pont A Mousson and attack Nancy from the north and east. The Troop established two OP's overlooking the river on 4 September 1944 and then received the mission, with Co D of the 702nd Tank Bn attached, of protecting the Division's north flank during the river crossing on 5 September 1944. The first and second platoons took the mission and set up in sections along an east-west line through Vigneulles, St Julien, and Pagny sur Moselle, a distance of some 17 miles. All roads leading into the Division sector from the north were secured. After the Division's first attack across the Moselle was repulsed by

S E C R E T

heavy enemy automatic weapons fire, the Division zone was narrowed and the first and second platoons pulled their defenses farther southward to a line running east and west from Vigneulles to Vilcey sur Trey. No enemy contact was made wither on the 5th or 6th of September 1944.

On the 7th of September the first and second platoons were given new missions of forming a firing line running north and south along the west bank of the Moselle at Vandieres and Norrey to screen the withdrawal of elements of the 317th Infantry which had crossed the river. The third platoon was ordered to move north and maintain liaison with the 7th Armored Division which was moving east on the Division's north flank. The next day the Division continued its preparation for a second try at crossing the Moselle and the Troop again had the mission of protecting the Division's north boundary and of contacting friendly elements on that flank. Several minor assignments were given the Troop during the day and Lt. Wagner's first platoon took two prisoners in the Bois le Pretre after combing that area in search of enemy stragglers who had been bothering friendly artillery units. Considerable trouble was experienced in locating F Company of the 317th Infantry, a task assigned to the third platoon in addition to their liaison mission to the north.

Nothing of consequence occurred from the 8th of September 1944 to the 11th as the Division continued its preparation to shove elements of two CT's across the Moselle, and operation which evidently was a bigger job than had been contemplated.

On the 12th of September two CT's of the Division forced the Moselle and two platoons of the Troop, the third and the first, were engaged in firing from the west side of the river to opportune targets on the east side between Pont a Mousson and Norrey. Both platoons supported the attack with 37mm fire from the armored cars, light machine guns and mortar fire from the scout sections. Distance from the firing line to targets made it practically impossible to give accurate results of the firing. Later in the day, after the crossing had evidently been successful, the second platoon was given the task of patrolling the river on the west bank from Dieulouard and Belleville and to contact friendly units to the south.

The enemy launched a heavy counter-attack against the Division bridgehead on 13 September 44 and were almost successful in driving our forces back across the Moselle before the thrust was finally stopped. In order to facilitate communications the second platoon was ordered to contact the 318th CP, report the location and disposition of their troops whose positions had been scattered considerably by the counter-attack. The second and third platoons, in the meantime, were still carrying out their fire mission on targets to the east of the Moselle. At dusk on the same day, the troop was ordered to send a sneak patrol onto pont a Mousson Hill, on of the heights on the west side of the river apparently held by enemy. The patrol was successful and returned with positive information on gun positions early in the morning of the 14th.

Throughout the 14th of September 1944, the Division continued to enlarge and consolidate the bridgehead and the Troop again received missions of area reconnaissance to the east within the Division zone. They moved without difficulty but movement was considerably slower than it had been at any other time since the drive east from Chalons sur Marne started. During the day the second platoon captured two prisoners and the first took three. The Troop CP, after moving across the River, underwent their first taste of enemy artillery in Loisy without casualty.

S E C R E T

The next morning the CP underwent a bigger dose of artillery as the Germans shelled the bivouac just south of St Genevieve from 0500 to 0715 and then counter-attacked from the north with an estimated company of infantry and 10 tanks. The CP escaped after an hour's skirmish but the attached tank company lost six tanks and four men while the Troop lost two vehicles, a quarter-ton and a captured German 2-ton truck. During the skirmish the Troop Commander, Captain Robert W. Hill, was shot in the foot by Smezer fire and was forced to be evacuated. Lt. Paul L. Smith, Executive Officer, took command. The situation became more complex throughout the day as the platoons, each reconnoitering on separate routes to the east, moved out farther into enemy territory. Considerable enemy activity was reported by the first platoon which penetrated as far as Letricourt before being ordered to turn around and move back to the west. The third platoon, moving on the south flank, reconnoitered south and east of Manoncourt, keeping liaison with a battalion of the 317th and reporting a great deal of enemy movement in that vicinity. They escaped several artillery barrages and enemy direct fire at Bezaumont with only slight shrapnel wounds to three men. The second platoon, operating southwest of Nomeny escaped an enemy tank trap and underwent an artillery barrage east of St Genevieve without injury to personnel. Before nightfall, the second and first platoons were ordered back to the west side of the river for patrol duty along the river bank after several reports of attempted enemy crossings in the southern sector of the Division zone. At times during the day it became questionable as to whether the first platoon could return to friendly territory unassisted because of their deep penetration and extensive enemy activity, but they contacted elements of CCA of the 4th Armored Division at Nomeny and moved with them on a route that was to take several days to return to friendly territory.

The second and third continued their river patrol throughout the 16th and no enemy was reported during the day despite sporadic artillery concentrations on their positions. The first platoon, still with CCA of the 4th Armored Division, was in the vicinity of Chateau-Salins, approximately 20 miles east of the Moselle, making preparations to escort 1000 prisoners taken by the CCA back to friendly lines south of the Division zone.

As the Division continued to expand the bridgehead despite constant enemy local counter-attacks, the Troop was given the mission on the 17th of September of outposting the north flank on the east side of the river and contacting friendly elements in that sector. The second platoon was assigned the task and completed the mission with three separate outposts in the vicinity of Morville. At 1900 the first platoon arrived at the Troop CP near Griscourt after they had returned from Chateau-Salins by a route Moivenz, Einville, St Nicholas, Purl and dropped their 1000 prisoners at the 4th Armored Division CP in the vicinity of Toul.

The second and third platoons were relieved of their river patrol mission on the 18th of September and ordered to move north and contact elements of the 5th Infantry Division and the 7th Armored Division and maintain liaison with those units and the Division. Before the mission could be completed, however, the third was called back and assigned the duty of contacting the 318th Infantry and Performing liaison with them. All three regiments of the Division developed communication difficulties and shortly before nightfall the first was ordered to perform a similar mission with the 317th Infantry.

By the 19th of September, the Troop had at least one section with each Infantry regiment of the Division and sections with the 5th Infantry Division and the 7th Armored Division on the north and with the 35th Infantry Division on the south, performing liaison with all units direct to the Division. Since the advance of

SECRET

Infantry elements was extremely slow because of fierce enemy resistance, the Troop continued on the same liaison mission until 21 September 1944, until the third platoon was given the task of patrolling the river in the vicinity of Custines and established an OP to observe any German threat to the Division sector from a slight gap which existed between the 80th and 35th Division. This situation existed through the 23rd of September when Lt. Camp's platoon was ordered to reconnoiter Belleau, Bratte and several smaller towns in the Division's southern sector. The mission was a difficult one since the enemy held dug in positions along the high ground which dominated the sector. The third, made road bound by the heavy rains, escaped an enemy trap in the vicinity of Belleau during the early evening. The enemy, set up along the hillside, permitted the platoon to move through and then shot down prepared trees across the highway to cut off possible retreat back along the same route. They then opened fire on Lt. Camp's column but the platoon moved out of danger after one of the attached tanks shoved aside the road block and allowed them to retreat.

The next day the third was given the mission of finding a supply route from Morey to Bratte for Infantry units in that sector and the first platoon was engaged in road reconnaissance eastward in the vicinity of Faulx. The second platoon, in the meantime, was still maintaining liaison with adjacent units on both the north and south flanks of the Division, a mission they carried on until the end of the month.

On the 24th, with the Infantry planning an attack on Moivron, the third platoon was ordered to set up a road block at Leyr, performing flank protection to the 2nd Bn of the 317th which was carrying out the attack. They held this position until the 30th of September, despite the failure of the 2nd Bn to seize Moivron. The first platoon was relieved on the 24th and went into reserve at the Troop CP.

On the 27th, the entire troop, minus the second platoon but including the CP, was ordered to assist the third platoon at their road block at Leyr because of an apparent enemy threat in that vicinity. After spending one day there, the CP and first platoon returned to their bivouac at Custines, leaving the third to maintain the block and hasty mine field they had established, and to maintain liaison with elements of the 44th Infantry of the 6th Armored Division.

[REDACTED] 10 A/A 80 Rcn
Sep

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

30 September 1944

Subject: Reports After Action Against Enemy.

To : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C.

In compliance with Memorandum #64, Headquarters 80th Infantry Division, dated 24 August 1944, and Paragraph 1, Change 3, AR 345-105, the following report is submitted:

Section I

The 80th Division mission of seizing high ground northeast of Commercy had not been completed on 31 August 1944 and the Troop was still engaged in the mission of reconnoitering to the east and leading the advance of the three Division combat teams toward their objective on 1 September 1944.

All three platoons jumped off at daybreak and moved steadily without interruption to their individual objectives. By 2300 all three had crossed the historic Meuse River and were set up in separate towns approximately 20 miles east of their morning's starting point. The first platoon, after fording the Ornain River at Bar Le Duc, reconnoitered along the Division's southern boundary through Silmont, Mancois sur Ornain, then eastward through St Aubin sur Aire, Commercy, and finally Vignot. Lt. Rork's second platoon, operating in the center zone, moved along the route Erize St. Dizier, Sampigny, Mécirin, Pont sur Meuse and Boncourt sur Meuse. Lt. Camp's third platoon, minus a complete section which had been lost at Nettancourt on the previous day, followed along the Division's Northern flank and reconnoitered through Les Marais, Rumont, Rupt devant St Mihiel, and Koer la Petite. No enemy was encountered.

The Division's advance went according to schedule and on the 2nd of September 1944, the platoons were again assigned the mission of reconnoitering to the east and northeast with a secondary mission of reconnoitering to and maintaining liaison with the 2nd Cavalry conducting area reconnaissance of the terrain lying to the west of the Moselle River between Nancy and Metz. Both missions were completed successfully but just prior to nightfall the second platoon contacted enemy forces in Essey et Maizerais and drove them away from a railway station with mortar fire. Here the platoon captured a train with 30 carloads of signal equipment and then proceeded to secure the northeast entrance into the town until Division infantry moved in. The first platoon under Lt. Wagner moved without contact to Villers en Hay and the third platoon, after completing its reconnaissance, moved into reserve at the Troop CP.

The second and third platoons were given area reconnaissance missions on 3 September 1944 of a strip approximately 10 miles wide, bounded by the Moselle River on the east, Nancy on the south, and Pagny sur Moselle on the north. The first encountered slight enemy resistance in Maney but forced them to withdraw and then advanced to Martincourt, a small village of a few hundred inhabitants. Here the Germans had burned the town to the ground and killed a large percentage of the population after, it was reported, several German officers had been slain by civilians. The first platoon picked up a German officer from German officers

by Martincourt civilians, which indicated German defenses along the Moselle River in the Division zone.

By the 4th of September 1944, the Division had secured their bridgehead across the Meuse River with their forward infantry elements holding objectives farther east in the Moselle valley. The Division was planning to advance in conjunction with OCA of the 4th Armored Division on the 5th of September 1944, across the Moselle River in the vicinity of Pont a Mousson and attack Nancy from the north and east. The Troop established two OP's overlooking the river on the 4th of September and then received the mission, with Company D of the 702nd Tank Bn attached, of protecting the Division's north flank during the river crossing on 5 September 1944. The first and second platoons took the mission and set up in sections along and east-west line through Vigneulles, St Julien, and Pargy sur Moselle, a distance of some 17 miles. All roads leading into the Division sector from the north were secured. After the Division's first attack across the Moselle was repulsed by heavy enemy automatic weapon fire, the Division zone was narrowed and the first and second platoons pulled their defenses farther southward to a line running east and west from Vigneulles to Vilcey sur Trey. No enemy contact was made either on the 5th or 6th of September.

On the 7th of September the first and second platoons were given new missions of forming a firing line to the north and south along the west bank of the Moselle at Vandieres and Norrey to screen the withdrawal of elements of the 317th Infantry which had crossed the river. The third platoon was ordered to move north and maintain liaison with the 7th Armored Division which was moving east on the Division's north flank. The next day the Division continued its preparation for a second try at crossing the Moselle and the Troop again had the mission of protecting the Division's north boundary and of contacting friendly elements on that flank. Several minor assignments were given the Troop during the day and Lt. Wagner's first platoon took two prisoners in the Bois le Pretre after combing that area in search of enemy stragglers who had been bothering friendly artillery units. Considerable trouble was experienced in locating a Company of the 317th Infantry, a task assigned to the third platoon in addition to their liaison mission to the north.

Nothing of consequence occurred from the 8th of September to the 11th as the Division continued its preparation to shove elements of two CT's across the Moselle, and operation which evidently was bigger job than had been contemplated.

On the 12th of September two CT's of the Division forced the Moselle and two platoons of the Troop, the third and the first, were engaged in firing from the west side of the river to opportune targets on the east side between Pont a Mousson and Norrey. Both platoons supported the attack with 37mm fire from the armored cars, light machine guns and mortar fire from the scout sections. Distance from the firing line to targets made it practically impossible to give accurate results of the firing. Later in the day, after the crossing had evidently been successful, the second platoon was given the task of patrolling the river on the west bank from Dieulouard and Belleville and to contact friendly units to the south.

The enemy launched a heavy counter-attack against the Division bridgehead on 13 September 44 and were almost successful in driving our forces back across the Moselle before the thrust was finally stopped. In order to facilitate communications the second platoon was ordered to contact the 318th CP, report the location and disposition of their troops whose positions had been scattered considerably by the counter-attack. The second and third platoons, in the meantime,

RESTRICTED

[REDACTED]

were still carrying out their fire mission on targets to the east of the Moselle. At dusk on the same day, the Troop was ordered to send a sneak patrol onto Pont a Mousson Hill, on the heights on the west side of the river apparently held by enemy. The patrol was successful and returned with positive information on gun positions early in the morning of the 14th.

Throughout the 14th of September, the Division continued to enlarge and consolidate the bridgehead and the Troop again received missions of area reconnaissance to the east within the Division zone. They moved without difficulty but movement was considerably slower than it had been at any other time since the drive east from Chalons sur Marne started. During the day the second platoon captured two prisoners and the first platoon took three. The Troop CP, after moving across the River, underwent their first taste of enemy artillery in Loisy without casualty. 15th

The next morning the CP underwent a bigger dose of artillery as the Germans shelled the bivouac just south of St Genevieve from 0500 to 0715 and then counter-attacked from the north with an estimated company of infantry and 10 tanks. The CP escaped after an hour's skirmish but the attached tank company lost six tanks and four men while the Troop lost two vehicles, a quarter-ton and a captured German 2-ton truck. During the skirmish the Troop Commander, Captain, Robert W. Hill, was shot in the foot by Smezer fire and was forced to be evacuated. Lt. Paul L. Smith, Executive Officer, took command. The situation became more complex throughout the day as the platoons, each reconnoitering on separate routes to the east, moved out farther into enemy territory. Considerable enemy activity was reported by the first platoon which penetrated as far as Letricourt before being ordered to turn around and move back to the west. The third platoon, being on the south flank, reconnoitered south and east of Mancourt, keeping liaison with a battalion of the 317th Infantry and reporting a great deal of enemy movement in that vicinity. They escaped several artillery barrages and enemy direct fire at Bezaumont with only slight shrapnel wounds to three men. The second platoon, operating southwest of Nomeny escaped an enemy tank trap and underwent an artillery barrage east of St Genevieve without injury to personnel. Before nightfall, the second and first platoons were ordered back to the west side of the river for patrol duty along the river bank after several reports of attempted enemy crossings in the southern sector of the Division zone. At times during the day it became questionable as to whether the first platoon could return to friendly territory unassisted because of their deep penetration and extensive enemy activity, but they contacted elements of CCA of the 4th Armored Division at Nomeny and moved with them on a route that was to take several days to return to friendly territory. 15th

16 { The second and third continued their river patrol throughout the 16th and no enemy was reported during the day despite sporadic artillery concentrations on their positions. The first platoon, still with CCA of the 4th Armored Division, was in the vicinity of Chateau-Salins, approximately 20 miles east of the Moselle, making preparations to escort 1000 prisoners taken by the CCA back to friendly lines south of the Division zone.

As the Division continued to expand the bridgehead despite constant enemy local counter-attacks, the Troop was given the mission on the 17th of September of outposting the north flank on the east side of the river and contacting friendly elements in that sector. The second platoon was assigned the task and completed the mission with three separate outposts in the vicinity of Morville. At 1900 the first platoon arrived at the Troop CP near Griecourt after they had

returned from Chateau-Salins by a route Moivens, Einville, St Nicholas, Purl and dropped their 1000 prisoners at the 4th Armored Division CP in the vicinity of Toul.

The second and third platoons were relieved of their river patrol mission on the 18th of September and ordered to move north and contact elements of the 5th Infantry Division and the 7th Armored Division and maintain liaison with those units and the Division. Before the mission could be completed, however, the third was called back and assigned the duty of contacting the 318th Infantry and performing liaison with them. All three regiments of the Division developed communication difficulties and shortly before nightfall the first was ordered to perform a similar mission with the 317th Infantry.

By the 19th of September, the Troop had at least one section with each Infantry regiment of the Division and sections with the 5th Infantry Division and the 7th Armored Division and sections with the 35th Infantry Division on the south, performing liaison with all units direct to the Division. Since the advance of Infantry elements was extremely slow because of fierce enemy resistance, the Troop continued on the same liaison mission until 21 September, until the third platoon was given the task of patrolling the river in the vicinity of Custines and established an OP to observe any German threat to the Division sector from a slight gap which existed between the 80th and 35th Division. This situation existed through the 23rd of September when Lt. Camp's platoon was given a mission to reconnoiter Belleau, Bratte and several smaller towns in the Division's southern sector. The mission was a difficult one since the enemy held dug in positions along the high ground which dominated the sector. The third, made a road bound by the heavy rains, escaped an enemy trap in the vicinity of Belleau during the early evening. The enemy, set up along the hillside, permitted the platoon to move through and then shot down prepared trees across the highway to cut off possible retreat back along the same route. They then opened fire on Lt. Camp's column but the platoon moved out of danger after one of the attached tanks shoved aside the road block and allowed them to retreat.

The next day the third was given the mission of finding a supply route from Morey to Bratte for Infantry units in that sector and the first platoon was engaged in road reconnaissance eastward in the vicinity of Faulx. The second platoon, in the meantime, was still maintaining liaison with adjacent units on both the north and south flanks of the Division, a mission they carried on until the end of the month.

On the 24th, with the Infantry planning an attack on Moivron, the third platoon was ordered to set up a road block at Leyr, performing flank protection to the 2nd Bn of the 317th which was carrying out the attack. They held this position until the 30th of September, despite the failure of the 2nd Bn to seize Moivron. The first platoon was relieved on the 24th and went into reserve at the Troop CP.

On the 27th, the entire troop, minus the second platoon but including the CP, was ordered to assist the third platoon at their road block at Leyr because of an apparent enemy threat in that vicinity. After spending one day there, the CP and first platoon returned to their bivouac at Custines, leaving the third to maintain the block and hasty mine field they had established, and to maintain liaison with elements of the 44th Infantry of the 6th Armored Division.

Section II

- (a) Because of the nature of the organization all missions of the Troop are classified as Intelligence Operations. These operations are included in the narrative account of the daily operations of the Troop. (See Section I).
- (b) Use of sections: The Troop is divided into three reconnaissance platoons and a headquarters platoon consisting of command element, liaison, supply and maintenance sections, and kitchen. During periods of action when the use of the reconnaissance Troop is advisable, two platoons are committed and one held in reserve whenever possible. Inasmuch as the T/O does not provide for a Command Post setup, liaison agents were employed in the operation of a message center. This setup has proved particularly satisfactory during the operations of this division since during periods when extended motorized reconnaissance is inadvisable and impracticable, the Troop was used to facilitate communications between the Regiments. This was accomplished by assigning one platoon to each Regiment. Each platoon in turn would be subdivided so that there was one radio vehicle with each Regimental and each Battalion Headquarters. The Troop was also used to the same extent to establish liaison with adjoining divisions on either flank of this Division.

Section III

Supply Procedure: Class I - Rations have been plentiful and no trouble to secure for attached units. The Troop maintained a 3-day reserve at Troop Headquarters and supplied each platoon with a two-day reserve. Rations were supplied to the platoons by the use of the organic half-tracks. This procedure is successful provided that the platoons are not too far in advance of front line infantry elements. However, on several occasions, it was impossible to reach the platoons due to presence of enemy between advance infantry elements and the reconnaissance platoons.

Class II - Items of individual clothing and equipment lost in combat have as a whole been replaced quickly. Blankets lost due to enemy action in one particular case were re-supplied within three days of the loss.

Class IV - Ammunition: Handling of ammunition has not as yet become a serious problem inasmuch as the platoons have not expended enough daily to become a burden on supply trains.

Class III - The supply of fuel is at present the most serious problem from the viewpoint of supply confronting the Troop. Organic transportation and number of gas cans allocated by T/E is insufficient to carry the amount necessary for proper functioning of this organization. The limited amount of space in which to carry gasoline has made frequent trips over long supply routes necessary. It is suggested that when possible one two and one-half ton truck be added to the organic vehicles of Reconnaissance Troops of Infantry Divisions.

Miscellaneous: The re-supply of weapons other than personal arms has been poor. One platoon of this organization lost two 60mm mortars as a result of enemy action. Replacement of these weapons has not as yet been effected although loss of weapons occurred approximately three weeks ago.

Section IV

Administration during combat operations must of necessity be kept at a minimum as far as practicable. Administration procedures have not as yet been a particular burden on the Troop. Daily summaries of the Morning Report and daily S-1 Reports have been submitted at Forward CP either by messenger or radio. Replacements as a whole have been excellent and it is felt that an earnest effort has been made to replace by MOS personnel lost to this organization. It is felt that due to the technical training of members of this organization it would be to the advantage of all concerned if personnel evacuated for short periods of time could be returned to this organization. It is suggested that all personnel entering combat zones be enjoined to dispose of 75% of their pay under the allotment system since it has been the experience of personnel of this organization that very little personal funds are needed.

Comments:

The missions assigned to this Troop have been logical and the operation of the Troop in complying with same has been very satisfactory. It is felt that the use of the Troop during periods when extended reconnaissance was inadvisable for liaison missions has been beneficial to all concerned. It is felt that the use of Reconnaissance Troops during periods of close-in contact is inadvisable other than for liaison missions heretofore mentioned.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that one additional two and one-half ton truck be added to the Troop trains to facilitate the movement of supplies from the rear to the front and also to provide transportation for a reserve supply of vital needs.

Paul J. Smith
1st Lt. - Cndy.