

AFTER ACTION REPORT
80TH INFANTRY DIVISION

MAY 1945

1 May to 9 May 1945

1 May found the 80th Div exploiting its bridgehead across the Isar R at Dingolfing and preparing to continue the pursuit to the S. the main body of the enemy retreated rapidly to the s. and the 80th Div motorized, seized crossings of the Vils R on the 2d May, and by nightfall closed on the N bank of the Inn R throughout the Div Zone of advance. The following day, leading elements of the div crossed the Inn R into Austria and prepared to continue the pursuit to the E. A bridge was thrown across the swift Inn R in extremely short time and on the 4th May the pursuit was pressed to the E. The cities of Vocklabruck and Schwanenstadt were captured against scattered resistance during the day.

On the 5th May the 80th Rcn Tr reached the Enns R and CT 319 advanced ninety-five (95) miles during the day to close up behind the Rcn Tr. In the southern part of the Zone, the 317th Inf advanced fifty-two (52) miles during the day.

The Enns R had been established as the restraining line between the United States and Russian Troops. 80th Div patrols crossed the Enns R and pushed fifteen (15) miles to the E without contacting Russian troops. On the 6th May the 71st Inf Div relieved the 80th Div along the bank of the Enns R and the 80th Div received orders to continue the pursuit to the s. Task Force Shythe was formed for this purpose and assembled in the vicinity of Kirchdorf during the late morning of the 6th May.

Late the afternoon of the 6th May, Task Force Shythe jumped off and reached Micheldorf without opposition. Word was received however that the pass s of Micheldorf was strongly held by the enemy and representatives of the Gauleiter of Oberdonau met our troops in Micheldorf under a flag of truce. Negotiations were carried on unsuccessfully during the night and at 0630 Task Force Shythe jumped off again and advanced rapidly to the s encountering scattered enemy resistance and demolitions. During the late morning of the 7th May the German Commander, General Soeth, surrendered all forces N and W of the Enns R to General McBride. Almost simultaneously word was received of the German surrender and the 80th Div was ordered to take no more offensive action.

On 8 May, General Balck, surrendered the Sixth German Army to Major General McBride. On the 8th and 9th May the 80th Inf Div was engaged in disarming the German troops in the Div area.

General Soeth surrendered approximately 20,000 troops which were under his command. The 6th German Army surrendered approximately 102,000 troops to the 80th Div. - During the period, 136,129 prisoners of war were processed by the 80th Div prisoner of war enclosure.

During these operations the 702d Tk Bn and 811th TD Bn (SP) and 633d AAA Bn were attached to the 80th Div. The 702d Tk Bn and 633d AAA

Bn joined the Division in Normandy and were attached to the Division in all of its actions.

1 May 1945

317th Inf remained in Div Reserve. During the afternoon the 2d Bn outposted Dingolfing to protect the bridging operations on the Isar R.

318th Inf: The 1st Bn pressed the attack to the W on the S bank of the last enemy resistance along the Isar R. The 1st Bn immediately continued the attack to the S reaching the Vils R by nightfall. The 2d Bn advanced s from the Mamming crossing site early in the morning and during the afternoon seized crossings of the Vils R and captured the town of Reisbach. The 3d Bn also closed on the Vils R by nightfall.

319th Inf: The 1st Bn made an unopposed crossing of the Isar R during the early morning at Niederviebach. The 2d Bn made an unopposed crossing of the Isar R at Niedraichbach. By 0925 both Battalions had completed the crossing and the advance was pressed to the E. The 3d Bn followed the 1st Bn across the ISAR R and passing through the 1st Bn reached the VILS R at 2155.

At 2235 a bridge across the ISAR R at DINGOLFING was completed by the 179th Engr Bn. The Div Artillery fired fifty-seven (57) missions in support of the crossing operation; mainly against enemy dug in positions surrounding DINGOLFING. One thousand thirty-two (1332) prisoners were taken during the day.

2 May 1945

317th Inf crossed the ISAR R and went into an assembly area S of DINGOLFING in Div Reserve.

318th Inf with the 80th Pcn Tr attached, moved rapidly to the S by motor and by darkness all three Bns had closed on the INN R and made contact with Elms of the 13th Armored Div in the vicinity of BRAUNAU.

319th Inf advanced rapidly to the S against scattered resistance. The 2d Bn reached the INN R at NINEBORING by darkness and the 1st Bn closed in on the left of the 2d Bn during the night.

The Div Arty fired forty-two (42) missions during the period in support of the advance. The limited and poor road net together with occasional enemy demolitions impeded the speed of the advance.

3 May 1945

317th Inf: The 1st Bn moved from DINGOLFING to BRAUNAU AND OCCUPIED the part of the city N of the INN R. The remainder of the regiment remained in assembly area S of DINGOLFING, prepared to move to BRAUNAU.

318th Inf: The foot elements of the regiment crossed the INN R on the rubble of the RR bridge and relieved Elms of the 13th Armored Div in BRAUNAU. The foot elements were deployed in and around BRAUNAU to maintain law and order and to protect the bridge site.

The 319th Inf moved into assembly areas N of BRAUNAU prepared to cross the INN R.

4 May 1945

317th Inf: At 0500 the 2d and 3d Bns entrucked at DINGOLFING and moved S across the INN R at BRAUNAU. The 1st Bn followed the 2d Bn. The advance was pressed rapidly to the S and E and by nightfall the city of VOCKLABRUCK had been captured. Stiff resistance was encountered by the 3d Bn in clearing VOCKLABRUCK. The 2d and 3d Bns had traveled a distance of ninety-eight (98) miles by the close of the day. The Rcn Co of the 811th TD Bn was attached to the 317th Inf and preceded the advance of the motorized column.

318th Inf continued to occupy positions surrounding BRAUNAU. The I & R Flat was employed to control the flow of prisoners to the rear.

319th Inf closed across the INN R at 2150 and went into an assembly area S of BRAUNAU.

TF SMITH commanded by Capt Smith of the 80th Rcn Tr and composed of the 80th Rcn Tr and Co D of the 702d Tk Bn crossed the INN R in the Zone of advance. The Task Force then advanced rapidly to the SE and by nightfall had entered the town of SCHWANENSTADT.

The bridge across the INN R at BRAUNAU was completed by the 1154th Engr Gp at 0930 well ahead of schedule. The rapid advance to the E netted over four thousand (4000) prisoners during the period.

5 May 1945

317th Inf pressed to the E against scattered resistance and by the end of the day had advanced fifty-two (52) miles to close on the ENNS R. The ENNS R was the limit of advance set for the U. S. Troops and patrols crossed the ENNS R to attempt to establish contact with the Russian Forces.

318th Inf remained in Division Reserve S of BRAUNAU.

319th Inf less the 1st Bn, advanced ninety-five (95) miles to the E and closed on the ENNS R by nightfall. The advance of the 319th Inf was preceded by Task Force SMITH. The 1st Bn 319th Inf moved by train from BRAUNAU TO VOCKLABRUCK.

Task Force SMITH on reaching the ENNS R, patrolled across the river to establish contact with Russian Forces.

No contact with Russian Forces was made during the day and during the late afternoon the direction of advance of the 80th Div was changed and the Division was ordered to move to the S. Patrols were recalled and the 71st Inf Div prepared to relieve the 80th Div along the line of the ENNS R. OVER seven-thousand (7000) prisoners were taken during the day.

6 May 1945

317th Inf less the 3d Bn was relieved by Elms of the 71st Inf Div and prepared to move to the SE for attachment to Task Force SMITH.

318th Inf: 2d and 3d Bns moved from BRAUNAU by train to VOCKLABRUCK and went into an assembly area NE of VOCKLABRUCK. Motorized patrols from the 2d and 3d Bns moved S from SCHWANENSTADT to ALMSEE. The 1st Bn

6 May 1945

remained S of BRAUNAU prepared for movement forward.

319th Inf, less 1st Bn, moved to an assembly area E of SCHANENSTADT on relief by the 71st Inf Div. The 1st Bn remained in VOCKLABRUCK.

Task Force SMYTHE commanded by General (then Colonel) SMYTHE was formed for the purpose of carrying out the Division mission of pursuing the enemy to the S. The following units were attached to Task Force SMYTHE: 702d Tk Bn (- Cos B and C), 3d Bn 317th Inf, 80th Rcn Tr, Rcn Co 811th TD Bn and 313th FA Bn.

The Task Force assembled N of KIRCHDORF during the late morning and at 1700 began the advance to the S. The advance was halted at MICHELDORF when the enemy sent forward representatives to negotiate for the surrender of all enemy troops in the province of OBERRDONAU. The negotiations were unsuccessful but it was discovered that the enemy held strong positions in the vicinity of KLAUS and no further advance was made that night.

7 May 1945

318th Inf: 1st Bn moved forward from BRAUNAU by train. Remainder of the regiment was occupied in maintaining law and order and collecting prisoners of war W of the LAMBACH - GRUNDEN road.

319th Inf maintained law and order and collected PWs E of the LAMBACH - GRUNDEN road.

Task Force SMYTHE: The 317th Inf was attached to Task Force SMYTHE early the morning of 7 May and during the day moved into assembly areas around KIRCHDORF, prepared to support the attack to the S.

At 0630 Task Force SMYTHE jumped off and advanced rapidly to the S despite enemy demolitions, this was accomplished during the early morning. During the late morning, the German commander, General Soeth surrendered unconditionally all the troops N and W of the LEINS R. In SPITAL, the entire treasure of the National Bank of HUNGARY was surrendered. The German troops were ordered to assemble in the valley N of LIEZEN and road blocks were established in the passes surrounding the valley. During the afternoon and night German formations coming into the area continued to surrender to our troops.

At noon on the 7th in accordance with SHAEF instructions, all offensive action was halted and defensive positions were established along the Division Front.

8 May 1945

On the 8th of May all units of the Division were occupied in maintaining law and order and in collecting the tremendous number of PWs of and displaced persons. At 1945 General Balck surrendered the 6th German Army to Major General McBRIDE.

9 May 1945

The work of organizing, collecting and disarming the German troops in the Division area was continued by all organizations and preparations were made to establish a central collecting point S of BRAUNAU. Combat in EUROPE was ended for the 80th Inf Div and all troops set to the tremendous task of restoring order to the disorganized mass that had been the German Army and the displaced persons who had been their slaves.

A. G. ELEGAR,
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SECTION III - TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

1. Motor

a. Trucks from the Corps Artillery were used in motorized operations conducted during the period.

b. Movement of the Sixth German Army was accomplished using German vehicles supplemented by wagons and the existing rail net.

c. Much civilian and displaced person traffic was encountered during the period which required considerable control so as not to impede the movement of troops.

2. Rail

All rail lines in the division sector were placed in operation. A major part of the supply and movement of troops was accomplished employing civilian rail personnel in the operation of the railroads.

SECTION IV - MISCELLANEOUS

1. Shower and Bath

a. An Army shower and bath point was established within the Division sector.

b. Military laundry facilities not being available a commercial laundry was placed in operation. The services of this laundry were very satisfactory, making available to the division as a whole, for the first time, clean clothing which had been ironed.