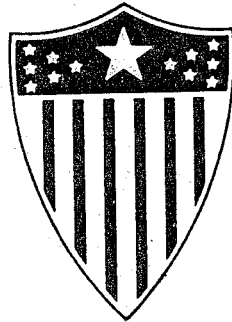


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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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HISTORICAL RECORDS SECTION

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Narrative History - 980th Field Arty Bn.

18 Feb 43 - Sep 45

18 Feb 43 -
Sep 45

NARRATIVE SECTION
HISTORY
980TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

The 980th Field Artillery Battalion was redesignated as a separate Battalion at Fort Lewis, Washington, from the old 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment, by Special Orders No. 30, Headquarters, 144th Field Artillery, dated 18 February 1943, in accordance with General Orders No. 2, Headquarters, 76th Field Artillery Brigade, dated 17 February 1943 and pursuant to authority contained in War Department Letter, File No. AG 320.2(2-5-43) Subject: "Redesignation of Field Artillery Regiments". At that time the assigned strength of the Battalion was thirty seven (37) Officers, one (1) Warrant Officer and seven hundred and forty six (746) (approximately) Enlisted Men.

The Commanding Officer was designated as Lieutenant Colonel HAROLD O. WELCH. The unit was equipped with 155mm Guns M1, tractor drawn, and was undergoing reorganization, having over three hundred (300) recruits and about 70% recently added Officer personnel as a result of understrength coupled with furnishing a cadre for Camp Maxey, Texas.

The unit left the first week in March 1943 and marched over the Snoqualmie Pass to the IX Corps Artillery Firing Center at Yakima, Washington to help test-fire the fuze M51A1 for Ordnance. Five hundred (500) rounds were allotted for this period. Only one muzzle burst occurred (in the 497th round). The weather was cold and dusty. Heavy ice was encountered in the mountain passes on the march home in the third week of March.

Upon returning to Fort Lewis, the Battalion began preparation for a rail movement to the Desert Training Center in the Colorado Desert, California. Before leaving Fort Lewis, Captains Smith and Wyatt, and Lts. Mahan, Richmond, Moe and McPherson had left the unit and 1st Lts. Nuttal (S-2) and Ames (C.O. Btry "B") and WOJG Jackson had joined the organization.

The advance parties consisting of the Battalion S-3 and a small work detail under Group S-4, arrived at Freda, California on April 1, 1943, setting up a camp fifteen (15) miles West on the site of the old Iron Mountain Camp of the 3rd Armored Division. In the next three weeks, Camp Granite was laid out on the opposite (North) side of the Freda-Indio Highway.

The main body of the Battalion arrived at the end of the three weeks and unloaded from the train in a sand storm. From this time until the 26th of June 1943, the Battalion spent the time getting acclimated to the heat and experimenting with the terrain obstacles of the desert.

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History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 2 Continued

The Battalion was motorized (given 7½ ton Mack trucks, 6x6 Prime Movers) just as they left Fort Lewis for the Desert. However, all through the desert maneuvers, the Battalion was forced to use tractors to pull the guns over rough obstacles and through loose sand. During this period convoys were organized to take men into Los Angeles so that they might have a night, a day and a night in the metropolitan area. A muzzle-burst killed Private Arthur J. Bendizen, Battery "C". The entire Battalion went through the Infiltration Course, including the Chaplain and the Medics. Only one casualty occurred. Pfc Nardini, Headquarters Battery was found on the course with a bullet hole through the center of his helmet. A board of investigation found it due to faulty ammunition and failed to establish any negligence on the part of the personnel conducting the course.

Before maneuvers Captain Nuttal, who was promoted while at Camp Granite, was transferred to the Air Corps, Captain Johnson and Major Stewart were transferred to other Artillery units, and Major Stevens from the 144th Field Artillery Group and Lts McCrae, McCreight, Deppen and Furth from the 33rd Division joined the unit. On the 26th, the IX Corps Maneuvers began, with the 144th Field Artillery Group reinforcing the 8th Division as Red Forces. The Blue Forces consisted of the 77th Infantry Division, 7th Armored Division and the 76th Field Artillery Brigade less 144th Field Artillery Group. The first phase was a holding defense of a fortified pass (Palen Pass) from about 26th June to 2nd July, and the last part consisted of grouping the Red Forces West of Needles and the Blue Forces at the Mexican Border and turning them loose for free maneuver. For this second phase the Blue Forces again had the 7th Armored Division, 77th Infantry Division and the 76th Field Artillery Brigade while the Red Forces received additional Tank Destroyer and anti-aircraft units. The maneuver began July 5th and ended July 14th, with the surrounding of the Red Forces in the vicinity West of Needles and the break through of Blue Tanks into the Red rear areas by an outflanking movement. The Battalion closed in camp the evening that maneuvers ended and remained there until it left the desert, 15 August 1943 on two trains, having sent an advance detachment to the New Station (Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri). Before leaving the desert, Lt. Christie was transferred to the Air Corps and Lt. Cheek to the XV Corps.

The Battalion arrived at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri on the 18th of August, where it was met by the advance party and put into barracks. The Battalion and 144th Field Artillery Group at this time passed from IX Corps to IV Armored Corps control (later the IV Armored Corps was redesignated as XX Corps). Here the Battalion continued its 14 day furlough policy and prepared to take the G.H.Q. Test No. 2 and No. 3, which were passed on the first trial with scores of 82.6 and 95.4 respectively. Lt. Rosenbaum was transferred to the Air Corps and Lt. Thomas H. Evans was assigned as Liaison Pilot.

On 29th September 1943 the Battalion was reorganized on the new 1/0 6-55, dated 31 July 1943, by General Orders No. 1, this Headquarters, to 26 Officers, 2 Warrant Officers and 530 Enlisted Men, but did not loose its overstrength personnel until 18th November 1943.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 3 Continued

The Battalion spent the remainder of its stay at Fort Leonard Wood, preparing for overseas movement. It qualified 99.4% of the Battalion as Marksman with 30 Cal. Carbines at this time. On the 19th of November, the Battalion left for Camp Myles Standish, Mass., in two trains composed completely of day coaches. One pullman was added at St. Louis. Major George W. Stevens left the Battalion for 144th Field Artillery Group and Major Henry Morrow joined the Battalion as Bn S-3. Lts Wood, Terry and Andre were transferred into the Battalion by 144th Field Artillery Group. The Battalion Officers were assigned at this time, all other officers had been re-assigned by XX Corps when Battalion left for staging area.

Two days later, the morning of the 21st November, the Battalion arrived at the Staging Area, Camp Myles Standish, Mass., and was quickly housed in Area #1 and processed. By noon the 25th, the Battalion was processed, repacked and ready for embarkation. The Battalion had been stripped of equipment for shipment to the E.T.O. It carried only the minimum house-keeping equipment necessary. All else was to be supplied upon arrival in Britain. The Battalion was alerted but did not move out as the assigned transport, upon arrival, was found to need dry-dock repairs and the Battalion waited in the Staging Area for the next convoy on 27th December. While waiting, one and three day absences were authorized the Battalion and Battery parties were taken advantage of by everyone.

The Battalion was designated to be the advance party on the ship. It arrived by train the night of the 27th of December in the Boston harbor and boarded the U.S. Army Transport, Edmond B. Alexander, 24 hours before the other troops embarked. Colonel C. B. Cole, 144th Field Artillery Group was the Ship's Troop Commander. The feeding from the central kitchen was under the supervision of Major Henry Morrow of the Battalion, and the police and guard of the ship was under Major Burdett E. Haessly also of the Battalion. The guard and MP personnel of the ship were drawn exclusively from the two Battalions of the 144th Field Artillery Group. The guard each day required 150 men. Men of the Battalion also were used to help man the ships 20mm and 3 inch guns. Over 5,000 men were fed twice daily from the central kitchen. The food was excellent.

The troops consisted of three general hospitals, (1st, 16th and 50th personnel complete), a replacement battalion of infantry, the 144th Field Artillery Group (980th and 981st Bns) and other miscellaneous groups. The troops made an orderly trip. No liquor or gambling was allowed, motion pictures and Church Services were held twice daily in the common recreation room for groups of about 300 enlisted men. The crossing was uneventful, the sea calm and weather very warm for this time of the year. There was only one alert, which turned out to be a British Surface Craft.

New Years Eve passed without incident other than a small dance for the Officers and Nurses after the last movie for the Enlisted Men. The convoy first saw land (Ireland) on the 7th day of January 1944 about 1130 hours.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 4 Continued

Later about dusk, Scotland was sighted. The convoy split entering the Irish Sea, half going to Glasgow and half to Liverpool. At noon on the 8th of January 1944, the ship drew alongside the dock at Liverpool. The Battalion unloaded about 1700 hours and marched through the blacked out streets of Liverpool to the Central Station, where they were fed coffee and doughnuts by the American Red Cross and boarded the train for their first blackout train ride. The Battalion travelled in two troop trains all night, one train arriving at Basingstoke, Hants, just before dawn and the other later in the morning. A billeting party furnished by ETOUSA met the train and introduced the Battalion to the Administrative and Housekeeping set up in the European Theater of Operations.

The Battalion marched in the dark through the clay-mud about 1 1/4 miles to Oakridge Farm, where they were installed in a British Camp which was formerly brick mushroom houses, and fed a hot meal from the common camp kitchen. The Battalion was assigned to the First United States Army and attached to the VII Corps as a Battalion of the 142nd Field Artillery Group, commanded by Colonel Jerome F. Thompson. Also stationed at this camp were Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 142nd Field Artillery Group and two companies of Infantry, 9th Infantry Division. The Officers of the Battalion were quartered about two miles away at Danes Hill Manor, a large house with a beautiful view and terraced gardens belonging to Mrs. Hoare.

After a weeks indoctrination period, the troops were given short passes to visit the neighboring country side. The bulk of the work consisted of drawing equipment and sending personnel to special schools for water-proofing, gas, air observers and the like. At this time the Battalion Commander asked for volunteers to train as Naval Gun Fire Observers to drop with the paratroopers on "D" Day. 60% of the Officers volunteered, and two, Lts Couse and Locken, were sent for special training with the 101st Airborne Division.

On the 12 of February 1944, the 142nd Field Artillery Group consisting of this Battalion and the 981st Field Artillery Battalion moved to Camp Merley, Merley Park, Wimborne, Minster, Dorset. Here the Battalion spent two periods at the Lark Hill Firing Center of the Royal Artillery on Salisbury Plains and another at Dartmoor. Battery "B" furnished a detail for rifle instruction to the 90th Medical Battalion and received a letter of commendation. In addition the Battalion furnished billeting parties for three units arriving in the vicinity from the U.S.A. and exchanged personnel, both officers and enlisted men, with British Artillery Units. Battery "B" was detached on the 21st of April for duty with the 4th Infantry Division. The remainder of the Battalion completed last minute organization for "D" Day. Lt Philip M. Steen was transferred to the Signal Corps. Lt Thomas J. Wilson joined the unit and was assigned to "A" Battery. Lt Albert W. Hennrikus, Jr Headquarters Battery was hospitalized and later evacuated to U.S. A.

On June 1, 1944, the 980th Field Artillery Battalion, less Battery "B" (attached to 4th Division) was stationed at Merley Park awaiting a call to the marshalling Area. Its morning report strength was 25 Officers, 2 Warrant Officers, and 530 Enlisted Men. Lieutenant Colonel Harold O. Welch, 0302124, was Commanding.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 5 Continued

At that time the strength of the command was organized into three commands as follows:

- a. Captain KENNETH F. AMES, commanded Battery "B" which was attached to the 4th Infantry Division in Marshalling Areas W-13 and W-7, and was to land on "D" Day.
- b. Lt Colonel HAROLD O. WELCH commanded the remaining combat-stripped elements of the Battalion who were to land on "D" plus 3.
- c. Major BURDETT E. HAESSLY, commanded the residual elements of the Battalion (1 Off, 2 Warrant Off., and 153 EM) who were to land on "D" plus 9.

The Battalion was not completely reunited under the Battalion Commander until the 19th of June 1944 in France.

During this period, June 1st to 19th, Battery "B" which had been attached to the 4th Infantry Division since 21 April 1944, was loaded on two LST's with a liaison pilot and plane on the 3rd of June 1944 ("D" minus 3). It stood off the coast of Normandy on "D" Day and landed early on the 7th of June ("D" plus 1) on Utah Beach. It was the first American heavy Artillery to land in Normandy. That same day it went into position near Turqueville and fired its first rounds against the enemy, with its liaison plane in the air. On the 10th they moved to positions near Neuville au Plains, 1500 meters from the front lines where Lt. Monroe J. Ellingson and S/Sgt Roy E. Kirchner were wounded when the position was bombed by enemy aircraft using anti-personnel bombs. Lt. Ellingson was evacuated to England but S/Sgt Kirchner was returned to duty. The Battery shifted two guns to fire on other missions while the other two continued to fire the 4th Division missions. On the 11th the Battery was moved to the vicinity of Bendeinville to fire on Carentan for the VII Corps. On the 13th it was returned to the 4th Division at Bendeinville. On the 16th the Battery moved to positions north of St Mere Eglise, where it rejoined the Battalion.

At the beginning of this same period, June 1st to 19th, the remaining combat elements at Camp Mereley, England were awaiting orders. On the morning of the 7th of June they moved to the Marshalling Area D-8; on the 10th they loaded on three LST's. They arrived on the evening of the 11th off Utah Beach, Normandy and waited in turn to unload. The LST's were beached at high tide and the Battalion waited until low tide and rolled off on to dry sand. Unloading was completed without casualties on the morning of the 12th. On arrival at the transit area for de-waterproofing the Battalion captured its first prisoner who was hiding in a house nearby.

Upon arrival the Battalion was placed in direct support of the Corps. That day the Battalion went into action with Battery "A" in position, as Battery "B" was still attached to the 4th Infantry Division and Battery "C" was still unloading, the position was about 600 meters west of St Mere Eglise, Coor. 3344-1961. It was the first heavy Battalion of the Corps to fire in the Normandy Campaign.

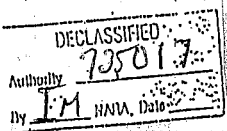
History 980th Field Artillery Battalion page 6 Continued

On the 14th three pneumatic rubber dummy guns were attached from the 603rd Engineer Camouflage Company and Lt Idean M. Locken was called for duty as Naval Gun Observer by VII Corps. This left the Battalion short five Officers, one having been transferred to the Signal Corps, one evacuated to the United States prior to "D" Day, two on duty as Naval gun fire observers, and one Officer wounded in action on June 10th. Battery "B" reverted to the Battalion on the 16th and displaced to a position about 300 meters north of St Mere Eglise and ten to a position about 800 meters west of St Mere Eglise, while in this position Lt Carn and S/Sgt Hiserman established an OP in Pont de L'Abbe. The Battalion displaced to new positions near Bonneville, Coor. 3252-1951, three and one-half miles east of St. Sauveur le Viscomte on 17 June 1944. The Battalion received twenty-four enlisted men replacements here although it had sustained no permanent casualties and remained here, until the arrival of the residuals on the 19th of June 1944. In this position Battery "B" fired over 100 rounds in less than ten minutes when the Battalion was called upon to repel a counter attack.

The residual elements, who were stationed at Merley Park, Wimborne, Dorset, on the first of the month, moved to their concentration area in Bournemouth on June 11th, spending four days in the Bath Hill Court. From there, traveling both by rail and vehicle, they left for the Marshalling Area, 9-D on the 15th of June. They loaded and left for the beachhead on the 17th. The LST's were beached late the 18th on Utah Beach and the residuals joined the Battalion on 19th at noon. There were no casualties except one case of appendicitis while disembarking on the beach.

Prior to the reuniting of the Battalion, the Battalion Commander was almost daily in the front lines and observed the fighting closely. On the 13th he observed enemy fire on Pont'de L'Abbe, from the front lines, in a sector where about 60 slit trenches had been dug. He saw that after the area had been shelled only the occupants of slit trenches that were at least two feet deep, were able to get up and move forward. Those in shallower ones, about 50% were killed. On the 14th he was again observing in the streets of Pont'de L'Abbe where he met Captain Campbell a Commanding Officer of a Headquarters Company of the Airborne Division whose troops were held up by fire from machine guns, the coordinates of which were sent to the Fire Direction Center and the first round, although at the extreme left of the Battalion sector, was range correct, deflection correct. All enemy resistance ceased after five, three gun volleys. (only three guns could reach the target). This was the first time the Battalion had been able to check the accuracy of map coordinate locations.

It was also the first time the SCR 536 (Handy Talkie") was used in adjusting fire. The Battalion found it excellent. The use of the SCR 536 was found to draw mortar fire at close range when we were on reconnaissance for observation, the Battalion Commander and Capt McGinty were fired on by trench mortars between Amfreville and Renouf each time the set was used. The second time it drew fire when it was used the Battalion Commander was on reconnaissance for observation with the 82nd Airborne Division, 500 meters west of Bonneville, when two artillery observers of that division were killed, four infantry men were killed and we saw four that were wounded. Corporal Elmer W. Burroughs who also transmitted on the set was forced to move his vehicle and the Battalion Commander no longer used his set. No members of this command were wounded. Lt Wood accompanied the Battalion Commander.



History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 7 Continued

The third experience of this kind was during the morning of June 24th while the Battalion Commander and Major Haessly were on reconnaissance. Each time a transmission was made on this set we were fired on by trench mortars and each time it was in a new position which in all cases were concealed. Later that day the signal officer of the Ninth Infantry Division informed the Battalion Commander that it was this set that was drawing fire. We did not use the set near the front lines after we withdrew the OP from that position.

On the 19th, Battery "A" was attached to the VIII Corps on the Southern Front and left the Battalion area. The rest of the Battalion less the rear echelon, displaced by batteries on the 20th to positions east of Brigubec and one mile west of Negreville, Coor. 3173-2063, where they could fire on Cherbourg. They were placed in general support of the VII Corps. The War had not touched this part of Normandy very much, so the civilians had not evacuated. As the trucks passed along the roads, the people came out and threw flowers and kisses to the soldiers.

The Battalion went into position some 5000 yards in front of the light Artillery of the 79th Division and fired the first rounds of land artillery into Cherbourg when Battery "C" registered at about 0930B on the 20th. Earlier in the morning at about 0730B the Battalion Commander, Captain Richard R. Watson and the VII Corps Artillery Executive Officer, Colonel Sampson, were strafed as they stood together in the streets of Negreville. That evening "A" Battery of the 453rd AA was given the mission of providing AA security for the Battalion. The registration on the artillery fire into Cherbourg was done by the Air OP with S/Sgt Max E. Young as pilot and Lt Norman J. Furth, as observer.

About noon of the 21st, Battery "B" was fired on by .50 caliber machine guns. Although they were thought to be fired by remnants of the enemy troops near Valonges, the fire proved, upon investigation by the Battalion Commander, to come from a neighboring AA unit, whose Officer had ordered his men to "spray the hedges as there might be a sniper in them". As Battery "B" did not return the fire, there were no casualties. While proceeding to investigate the firing the Battalion Commander and Executive were told by the personnel in a fleeing 3/4 ton Command and Reconnaissance containing a Lt Colonel and Major, that there were snipers 500 yards ahead. However, upon a personal check, the story proved a rumor.

On the 22nd, the Battalion saw enemy fighters attack and destroy the nearby ammunition dump (#702). The attached AA shot down one FW190 and received a category one. The rear echelon was brought forward to L'Etang Bertrand, and the Air OP S/Sgt Young and Lt Furth adjusted on six large coastal guns west of Cherbourg on the waters edge. The guns were not observed to fire again during the campaign. Battery "C" received several rounds of harrasing fire.

On the 23rd two of the pneumatic dummy guns were sent to the 981st FA Bn. The Air OP fired on an enemy AA position which exploded and left a large fire that burned for two days sending smoke 200 feet in the air. Lt Evans was the pilot and Lt Furth the observer.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 8 Continued

On the 24th the Battalion Commander discovered from a personal reconnaissance of the front lines near Sattevoast that the 79th Division was effecting a break-through and sent the Battalion Executive Officer with Lt Carn (observer) and Sgt Hiserman (Survey Sergeant) to establish an OP in the breakthrough salient where they could observe Cherbourg. That afternoon, the OP was established on top of la Mare a Canards, in front of a burning fortified enemy 105 AA position. Communication was by SCR 536 to a forward SCR 610 relay (Tec 5 Jone and Tec 5 Kelso, Battery "C") stationed 250 meters from a subordinate headquarters of the 79th Division, which was hit by mortars during the ensuing action, destroying two vehicles and killing two men and wounding eight. From here, communications were by SCR 610 to the main radio relay, a SCR 608 at the throat of the salient. This relay team at the throat of the salient was but 1000 meters from German lines on La Motterie on one side and 1200 meters from the German held Rau de Trautebec on the other side. It was subject to continual unobserved, "radio-locator" directed fire whenever transmitting. One round burst directly overhead in the trees by their foxholes, and several within 100 yards. (Corporal Chec and Pfc McGuire were the radio operators and Corporal Meyers the driver, all of Headquarters Battery. When given permission to seek a safer spot to relay, they returned to the same position when they found that the relay would not reach from anywhere else. They were taken under fire twenty minutes after returning to the area. The OP itself was subject to three accurate artillery concentrations each of which fell after about three transmissions on the SCR 536, preparatory to fire missions.

When the Battalion Commander went forward, on the morning of the 25th to visit the OP he captured seven prisoners when he yelled into a hole by the fortified position area near the OP and they came out. They were turned over to the MP's. Due to the accuracy of enemy radio locators, the OP was withdrawn on the late afternoon of the 25th with the intention of laying wire into the OP from the relay station further to the rear. However, that evening the Battalion was disengaged from the battle and the OP was not re-established. The Battalion had fired about 6,000 rounds on the push from the beaches to Cherbourg.

On the morning of the 26th, the Battalion reconnaissance parties left and by noon the light vehicles were infiltrating through the rain to the new position of the Battalion at Picauville, coor. 3280-1933. Here they were placed under command of the 142nd Field Artillery Group in the VII Corps sector, about 6 miles from the positions of Battery "A".

At 0130B the 27th, the guns of Battery "C" left with an MP escort for Picauville. Battery "B" delayed by rain soaked secondary roads, did not leave until 0400B, about five minutes before the position area was bombed. The unit saw the AA fire at the approaching planes, but did not witness the bombing which was reported by the Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery to the Battalion Commander later.

At the new area, Battery "A" reverted to Battalion control although it did not join the Battalion in position until the morning of the 30th. The Battalion lay quiet until the 30th when it began firing VIII Corps missions, although radio silence was in effect.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 9 Continued

On the 2nd of July, 1944, "A" Battery of the 453rd AA left because of a new mission and the Battalion got word that "H" Hour and the lifting of radio silence would be at 0530B the next morning, July 3rd.

At about dark (2330B) the night of July 2nd, Major Henry Morrow, the Battalion S-3 was shot by a sentry of the 1110 Engineer Group as he left the 91st Evacuation Hospital which was adjacent to the 980th FA Bn rear CP. The Battalion Commander was only about five yards behind him and heard no challenge given. Major Morrow was pronounced dead at 0030B 3 July 1944 at the 91st Evacuation Hospital and buried at the St Mere Eglise American Cemetery on the 4th July. Graveside services were held on the 5th which were limited to twenty-five members of this battalion. (Grave No. 74, "Jayhawk" (VII Corps) Cemetery No. 2.)

This accident left the Battalion short six officers which were requisitioned on the Fourth. That same day, a new AA Battery, (Battery "A", 456th AAA (AW) Captain Niland, Commanding.) was attached for duty and rations to the Battalion. While in this position the Battalion had no trouble from enemy aircraft but was subject to extremely close harassing fire daily, however there were no casualties. In the meantime the front lines advance about 7 kilometers and hills "121" and "131" were taken. Battalion OP's were established on both hills (121 and 131) by Lts Carn and Sherron as soon as they were vacated. During the night of the 5th the Battalion moved its field of fire 400 mils to the left successively by Battery to cover the VII Corps front on the 6th.

On the 7th the Battalion less the rear echelon displaced to new positions near Coigny, Coor. 3295-1869 the light vehicles infiltrating forward during daylight, the heavies and the supplemental fire direction center remaining until dark before closing station and displacing.

Both at Picauville and at Coigny, the Medical Detachment was placed in buildings, but no other elements of the Battalion used civilian buildings for shelter. In the new Coigny position, there was no infantry, only a marsh, separating Battery "A" from the German front lines.

On the 8th the Battalion OP in the Church Steeple at Baupte saw a lone German soldier crossing the marsh. He was captured by Battery "A", and proved to be a polish deserter. That same day an MELO9 was taken under fire by the AA Battery protecting the Battalion. Battery "C" was connected directly with the 13th Field Artillery Observation Battalion and used for counter-battery on roving guns.

On the 9th while on reconnaissance for observation the Battalion Commander accompanied by Corporal Elmer W. Burroughs was taken under enemy small arms and machine gun fire.

On the 10th the Battalion moved an OP from the Church at St Jores to the forward slope of the Foret De Mont Castre, which had just been taken by the 90th Infantry Division. This OP was commanded by Lt Sherron. The Battalion communications Officer, Captain Watson and Pvt Rasmussen, his driver had a 105mm shell burst less than 100 yards in the center of road in front of them, near Baupte, but there were no casualties.

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History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 10 Continued

On the 11th about 0330B, Battery "A" was taken under light counter-battery fire and at 0410B and ME 109 was fired on by the AA protecting the Battalion. That afternoon, Tec 5 Zanto, Battery "A" had two fingers blown off when he tried to disassemble a German 20mm shell fuze.

On the 12th, ASP #701 caught fire while an "A" Battery ammunition truck was in the dump. The truck could not be removed that day and the dump could be heard exploding for miles around. Ammunition expenditures in the Battalion were frozen except for enemy counter-battery or "Serenade" missions.

About 0126B on the 14th, "B" and "C" Batteries received counter-battery fire, tearing a few holes in a trailer, a one quarter ton C&R truck and a rocket launcher, but no casualties were received. On the 15th the O.P. on the Forest de Mont Gastre brought in a German prisoner and the Battalion Commander came back from reconnaissance of the front lines near Sainteny with a flat tire caused by shell fragments. On the 17th the Battalion reconnoitered for new positions east of Bois du Hommet, the Batteries shifted successively 100 miles to the left and the Battalion fired a preparation for the VII Corps attack at 1845B to straighten the line. In order to get a registration prior to the preparation the Battalion Commander and S/Sgt Young, the liaison pilot, flew through the haze to a position in enemy territory 600 feet above the base point, hovering around it during the registration. Visibility was 2000 to 600 yards depending on the momentary conditions. All the flash and visual O.P.'s were blinded by the haze. This was the only way the registration could have been effected. The Base Point was about 2000 meters behind the enemy front lines.

On the 17th, Private Styers of Service Battery, was wounded by shell fragments in the new position area where he had been sweeping the area, to be occupied, for mines. He died later in the hospital. On the 19th the Battalion moved into its new position to remain silent until the Corps began its new offensive. The light vehicles displaced by daylight infiltration and the heavy column with the MP escort after dark, during a great display of enemy flares (40) and resulting friendly AA fire. There were no casualties from enemy air activities, but one gun of Battery "A" was upset on the slippery road leading in to the position area. The gun was only slightly damaged and was back from Ordnance Shop by 1800B that night.

On the 21st the Fourth Division reserves bivouaced in the gun position areas. At about 2000B there was an unconfirmed gas alarm sent in by the Air Officer from the air strip. The next day the Battalion cancelled the old officer replacement requisition which had not been filled because of a shortage of Field Artillery Officer replacements and put in one of three new officers and recommendations that two enlisted men of this unit be given commissions. Late that same night about midnight, another false gas alarm was spread. This was followed by a few harassing rounds of enemy artillery shelling landing in the Battalion area.

About 0600B the 23rd, some twenty rounds of harassing fire landed just northeast of the Battalion CP. The Batteries prepared their positions so that they could shift their fields of fire 800 miles to the right, on short notice. That evening there was heavy AA fire at ME 109's flying over the area. The

History, Headquarters 980th Field Artillery Battalion page 11 Continued

Church where Lt Sherron and Corporal Knudtson were observing had about 50 rounds of medium artillery placed on the cross-roads beside it.

*25-30th
Operation Cobra*

"H" hour for the First Army push was first set for 1300B the 24th, but due to weather was delayed until 1100B on the 25th. At that time the real attack began with the use of 1500 heavy bombers, 500 medium, and 500 light bombers and 500 escort fighters, of which only three were observed to be hit by enemy flak by the Battalion.

The Battalion witnessed the air preparation preceding the attack and fired its scheduled fires in support of the attack. By the 27th the Battalion found it necessary to look for new positions to support the VII Corps attack. Before the reconnaissance parties left in the early morning of the 28th, at 0300B, Battery "B" and "C" positions were bombed with "bread basket" type anti-personnel bombs with a total of ten casualties. Corporal Carmen J. Tufo, Battery "B" was killed and three men were hospitalized. The remaining six were treated at the Battalion Aid Station and then returned to duty with their Batteries. The light column left at daylight and the heavy column left at 1050B but due to road congestion, caused by armored divisions moving south, did not close in the new position area at Le Messial Amey until 1600B. The rear echelon joined at 2135B the same day.

*US take Outank
Break-out of
S. Co*

The Battalion was given the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 3rd Armored Division and sent the Battalion S-2, Lt Wood as Liaison Officer to them on the 29th. On the 30th, the Battalion light column displaced by infiltration to a new position below Cergy la Salle. The heavy column could not get road clearance until 0725B the 31st, and it joined the Battalion at 1130B. The Battalion remained here in rendezvous, as the Battalion Commander was already forward on reconnaissance for new positions. The attached AA Battery took six prisoners while making a reconnaissance for positions for their AA guns.

The Battalion was given a new mission of reinforcing the fires of the Fourth Infantry Division. Battery "C" and Fire Direction Center were displaced to new positions west of Hambye, Coord. V1340445, at 1100B. By 1145B the entire Battalion was on the move to the new positions and was in position ready to fire at 1800B. Lt Wood was sent to the Fourth Infantry Division Artillery CP at 1510B as Liaison Officer. Battery "B" reported small arms fire falling in their area at 2255B, but there were no casualties.

At 0020B 1 August 1944 the Battalion suffered a bombing attack with the enemy using cannister-contained anti-personnel bombs. Hq Battery received direct bomb hits with some damage to materiel. Communication lines were knocked out by bomb hits within five yards of the Battalion switchboard. The areas of Battery "A" and "B" were also bombed with no resulting damage. There were no casualties in the Battalion, however the 142nd Field Artillery Group, 100 yards due west of Headquarters Battery, suffered four casualties, one of whom was Colonel Jerome F. Thompson, the Group Commander. At 0030B Pfc Marvin W. Rinner Battery "C", was accidentally shot by Tec 5 Joe Ward, with a carbine, and evacuated to the 96th Evacuation Hospital.

*US. Reach
Avanches
780th 30 miles
behind front line*

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History, Headquarter 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 12 Continued

The 756th AAA received a new mission and Battery "A", 456AA was replaced by Battery "D", 438th AAA as Battalion AA security at 2315B. At 0900B 2 August 1944 Major Burdett E. Haessely was sent to VII Corps Artillery and Captain Richard R. Watson was assigned Adjutant and Executive Officer. Lt Ralph J. Mouw was assigned Battery Commander, Headquarters Battery while Lt Sherron was sent to Battery "C" as Executive Officer and Lt Carn was assigned as Executive Officer, Battery "A". At 1200B orders arrived from First United States Army to discharge T/Sgt Elbin K. Polen and Tec 4 George A. Long, Jr. and to commission them as Second Lieutenants, Field Artillery, in Army of the United States. These were the Battalions first two battlefield commissions. Lt Polen was assigned Executive Officer, Headquarters Battery and Lt Long was assigned as Assistant Battalion S-2.

At 1300B the Battalion Commander left with his reconnaissance parties to reconnoiter for new position area in the vicinity of 2 miles north of Villedieu-Les-Poeles, Coor. T370360. The light vehicles moved to the new position area by infiltration and the heavy column left at 1731B. The guns arrived at the position areas at 1944B and the Battalion was ready to fire at 2120B. Battery "A" was detached and attached to the First Infantry Division at 2215B. Lt Colonel Welch and Captain Todd left immediately to report to the First Infantry Division Artillery CP. There were fired upon by enemy machine guns 1 mile south of the town of Villedieu-Les-Poeles, but were not hit. It was impossible to go through the center of town due to the Artillery fire falling in it. Therefore it was necessary to find an alternate route through alleys and side streets in total darkness while the city was entirely deserted. The guns left early the next morning and arrived at their destination without incident. Battery "B" captured three German Officers in their area at 2300B. Sgt Rude was the senior Non-Commissioned Officer present at the capture.

At 0052B 3 August 1944 Battery "C" observed two planes going down in flames forward of their position. At 0140B green flares were dropped by enemy aircraft and the adjacent AA units fired on the planes over Battery "C" area.

At 2130B one of the Battalion Liaison planes crashed, piloted by S/Sgt Max E. Young and Lt Deppen as observer. The crash occurred while S/Sgt Young was attempting to take off from the landing strip, which had become rain soaked. Both Lt Deppen and S/Sgt Young received slight lacerations about the head.

At 2150B the Battalion was instructed to register by the Flash Section of the attached Observation Battalion as the Air Strip was becoming too muddy for airplanes to be operated from it.

At noon the next day the Battalion received Glose Station March Order and started to move to its new position at 1345B. The Battalion closed in its new position at Coor. T431287, 3 miles southeast of Villedieu-Les-Poeles at 1447B. At 1730B the Battalion had registered and was ready to accept fire missions. Tec 5 Joe Ward, Battery "C" was evacuated to the rear because of Battle Exhaustion.

Early the next morning 142nd Field Artillery Group reported that a German plane had been shot down and part of its crew had been captured. A part of the crew was still at large and there was also a possibility of paratroopers being dropped. At 1320B, VII Corps Artillery reported counter-attacks in the vicinity of St Pois and the Battalion was laid on this point for possible counter attack missions. About 5 miles in front of 980th

48°52'05"N
10°14'56"W

15 miles behind front lines

48°48'19"N
10°09'41"W

4 AUG

805

History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion page 13 Continued

At 1150B August 6 1944 the Battalion was given Close Station March Order by 142nd Field Artillery Group. Release time was to be 1900B that evening. The light vehicles infiltrated to the new position area Coor. V1518123, 4 miles west of Mortain. The heavy column left at 1900B, arriving at the new position at 2220B. At 2355B the Battalion was ready to fire. Lt Donald A. Wood, Battalion S-2 reconnoitered for an OP near Mortain and returned at dark. The next morning he attempted to occupy the OP was unable to do so because enemy armor had infiltrated during the night and held the roads between the Battalion and the OP. Enemy armored vehicles were apparently massing for a counter attack near Mortain. On the afternoon of the 7th the Commanding General of the 30th Infantry Division Artillery visited the Battalion CP for a few minutes. The next morning an Air Corps Radio Set and Operators were sent to the Battalion for the purpose of firing Arty/R Missions with high performance aircraft as observers. At 2345B enemy aircraft flew over the Area and were fired on by adjacent AA units.

Between 0300B and 0400B the next morning the Battalion received about 50 rounds of counter-battery fire. Shells landed in the Battalion CP Area and one round penetrated a barn, causing no casualties. Service Battery reported ten rounds of heavy caliber landing within 40 yards of the rear echelon CP. By 0630B all shelling in the Battalion and adjacent areas had ceased. There were no casualties or damage to materiel, except that several communication lines were cut. At 0830B the 981st Field Artillery Battalion took over the Arty/R Mission and the Air Corps Radio Set was sent to them. The Air OP's of 142nd Field Artillery Group, 980th Field Artillery Battalion and 981st Field Artillery Battalion were to fly a patrol searching for enemy flak positions for the rest of the day. About noon a TWX communication was received from Commanding General, First Army directing that First Sergeant George E. Carlson and S/Sgt William K. Miller be discharged as of 8 August 1944 and commissioned Second Lieutenants, Field Artillery, in the Army of the United States as of that day, 9 August 1944. This made a total of four battlefield commissions since the Battalion landing in France. At 2055B Headquarters Battery and adjacent areas received a few rounds of harrasing fire. At 2230B Service Battery reported enemy shells landing in their area.

At 1200B, 10 August 1944, 142nd Field Artillery Group ordered the Battalion to take over the Arty/R Mission commencing at 1400B. British Typhoons strafed the Battalion area with rocket guns but there were no casualties. The same day First Sergeant Joe Dial Jr., Service Battery, because of Battle Exhaustion, was evacuated to the 622nd Collection Station. At 1300B the Arty/R Mission was cancelled by the 142nd Field Artillery Group. At 1450B the missions of the 142nd Field Artillery Group was changed to direct support of the 35th Infantry Division. The initial attack was to be at 1500B. The mission of the 980th Field Artillery Battalion was to continue support of the 30th Infantry Division and to furnish fires for the 35th Infantry Division from its same position. The Battalion was given an unlimited ammunition allowance for the support of the 35th Infantry Division.

Early on the morning of the 11th several rounds of harrasing fire fell near the Battalion CP area. At 0300B Battery "C" reported 20 flares dropped north of the Battery position and bombing, with location unknown. At 0320B enemy planes bombed near the Battalion area and Battery "B" reported one hit on road adjacent to the Battery Area. There was no damage reported. During the afternoon the Battalion Commander visited Battery "A" which was in position near Mayenne, in support of the 1st Infantry Division.

to Chevaley

Br. Gen. Arthur H. Hoff

German counter attack toward Avranches.

48° 39' 41" N
1° 01' 59" W

Aug. 6-12
Battle of Mortain

He was afraid and spent remain of his way trans. England.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 14 Continued

At 1900B the Battalion received a schedule of fires from the 35th Infantry Division calling for 19 missions to be fired. At 0035B the next morning the Battalion area was again bombed; Battery "B" received a hit close to its No. 1 Gun Position and two bombs fell near the Battalion CP. A large fire was started to the rear of Battery "C" area, one enemy plane was seen falling in flames at 0110B. At 1840B six rounds of artillery fire landed in the CP of Battery "B". One man, Private Victor Clementoni, 33549008, was killed and four enlisted men injured in Battery "B".

Early the next morning at 0715B 13 August 1944 the Battalion Commander and party left on reconnaissance for new position. The Battalion received Close Station March Order at 1450B from 142nd Field Artillery Group but the heavy column was to remain in the position area until the next morning due to traffic. The light column left and closed in the rendezvous area at 1835B. At 0530B the next morning the Battalion received orders that the heavy column would not march until 1130B. Heavy column closed in rendezvous at 1450B, at St. Mars-Sur-Culmont, Coor. Y750800. The Battalion was to remain here in rendezvous awaiting orders to move forward, rather than to occupy positions.

At 2210B the Battalion received Close Station March Order and was to leave as soon as possible for the First Division Zone of Action. The Battalion was detached from VII Corps Artillery and attached to the First Division for tactical control. At 0445B the Battalion closed in its rendezvous area north of Couterne. The Battalion Commander reported to the First Infantry Division Artillery CP, first at 0800B and then later in the morning. During his absence two men of the Division Artillery Headquarters Battery were killed by snipers. At 0945B the Battalion left its rendezvous area for its new position area. Battery "A" which had been attached to the First Infantry Division during this time reverted to Battalion Control effective 1040B, 15 August 1944. The Battalion, less Battery "A", closed in position at Coor. 1965-025, approximately one-half mile north of St. Michel-Less-Andaines at 1300B. Battery "A" was unable to join the Battalion until 1700B because of traffic congestion.

The Battalion went into position where the First Infantry Division had a front line patrol only. The entire Battalion was temporarily in front of the front line. On the afternoon of the 15th the Battalion OP was occupied by Lt Donald A. Wood, Battalion S-2. Five round trips were made to the OP by the S-2 and Battalion Commander and the vehicles drew machine gun fire and small arms fire from both sides of the road each time. The OP was withdrawn for the night and re-established early the next morning, however, visibility was poor for the entire day.

By 0600B 16 August 1944 the Battalion had fired a total of 16,505 rounds in action in France. All of the gun tubes were now well worn and Tube No. 745 in Battery "B" was replaced by a new tube No. 725. Tube No. 745 had received an unofficial title of "Whistling Bessie" due to the fact that it threw several rotating bands before being replaced.

At 1800B thirty enemy planes were reported flying towards the Battalion area, but were never sighted. At 2300B Battery "A" reported small arms fire in woods to their right front but were unable to determine whether it was enemy or friendly.

48° 22' 48" N
0° 42' 02" W

48° 35' 23" N
0° 25' 30" W
ahead of
INFANTRY

4356

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 15 Continued.

The next day Lt Wood was still unable to observe due to the heavy ground haze. At 1105B 17 August 1944 the First Division Artillery Commander ordered the gun crews to be reduced to skeleton crews and start cleaning their materiel in preparation for a new campaign. Orders were received from the Commanding General, First United States Army promoting Captain Robert W. Clirehugh to Major and 2nd Lt Norman J. Furth to First Lieutenant.

At 1055B 18 August 1944 the First Infantry Division Artillery ordered all radios closed down except the SGR 193. The Battalion received orders to maintenance vehicles, equipment and personnel over a 48 hour period commencing 1200B 18 August 1944.

At 0825B 19 August 1944 the Commanding General, First Infantry Division Artillery ordered the guns to march order as the Battalion's tactical responsibility for the position was over and Battalion went into its first rest period since landing in France. S/Sgt Max E. Young, Air Liaison Pilot was commissioned a Second Lieutenant upon orders of Commanding General, First United States Army.

At 1445B 20 August 1944 Major General Collins, Commanding General, VII Corps presented the Air Medal to 1st Lt. Norman J. Furth, Battery "B", Air Liaison Observer and Second Lieutenant Max E. Young, Headquarters Battery, Air Liaison Pilot, at a small formation held at Headquarters Battery area. Later in the afternoon the Commanding General VII Corps Artillery visited the area for 15 minutes at which time the officers of the Battalion were presented to him. The Corps Artillery Commanding General commented upon the excellent record of the Battalion.

First Sergeant Charles W. Barrett was commissioned a Second Lieutenant, Field Artillery, in the Army of the United States upon orders of the Commanding General, First United States Army. This made a total of six battlefield commissions within the Battalion for the month of August 1944.

The Battalion, less Battery "A" was detached from First Infantry Division Artillery and reverted to VII Corps Artillery control as of 1300B 22 August 1944.

The Battalion remained in rest period until 0900B 25 August 1944 when it was alerted for movement to a rendezvous position, 2½ miles east of Courville Sur Eure, the Battalion crossed the IP at 1000B and arrived at its rendezvous area at 1905B. By 2230B all disabled vehicles had been repaired and were closed in the area. Total distance of the march was 110 miles.

On the 26th August 1944 the Battalion left the rendezvous area at 1715B and marched to a new rendezvous area one-half mile west of Bouray, arriving at 0035B the 27th. Total distance of march was 65 miles. At 1050B the Battalion was ordered to attach one officer, ten enlisted men and four vehicles to the 692nd QM Battalion to help form a provisional truck company.

On the 28th the Battalion remained in rendezvous and the officers and men attended a USO Show at 142nd Field Artillery Group area, featuring Dinah Shore.

closed to base packet

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History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 16 Continued

At 0930B 29 August 1944 the Battalion left for a new rendezvous area and arrived at 1410B at Coord. S3933, 1 mile south of Villeneuve le Comte. The Battalion remained in rendezvous until 0821B the 31st of August 1944, when it left for a new position. The Battalion was attached to the First Infantry Division Artillery as of 1000B enroute. The Battalion went into a previously selected rendezvous position at Coord. S810820, 8 miles south of Soissons, for 1 1/2 hours and then continued its march arriving at its destination at 1837B, Coord. O-026092, 3 1/2 miles south of Laon, at 2010B the Battalion was ready to fire.

49° 30' 35" N - 3° 37' 31" E
History of Battery "A", 980th Field Artillery Battalion from 3 August 1944 to 15 August 1944 while attached to the First Infantry Division Artillery.

Battery "A", 980th Field Artillery Battalion, commanded by Captain Byron W. Todd was attached on August 3, 1944 to the First Infantry Division Artillery as general support artillery for the First Division drive to the southeast of Avaranches. Reconnaissance was made from the battery position one and one-half miles north of Villedieu, on the night of 2 August 1944. Because of rapid advance of the First Division, the Battery moved into bivouac one mile north of Brecey, rather than into a firing position in the same area. Further reconnaissance was made, and the battery moved into position late in the afternoon, one and one-half miles west of the town of Juvigny, which was still in enemy hands.

From this position, the battery rendered general support in the form of harassing and counter battery fire. One platoon of ~~Battery "D", 103rd AAA~~ was attached to the Battery 4 August 1944. Considerable aerial activity on the part of the enemy was seen in this area; and while the battery received no aerial attack, it was subjected to some counter-battery fire on the afternoon of 5 August 1944.

On Sunday 6 August 1944 the First Division having secured a line running generally southeast through Mortain and Barenton, was relieved by the 30th Infantry Division. The First Division then marched to the southeast to take position along the Mayenne river in the vicinity of Mayenne. Battery "A" being attached to the 26th Combat Team which was in Division Reserve, move to a bivouac area one mile northwest of Ouisseau. Enroute, a light enemy air attack occurred which caused neither damage nor casualty. The reception given the Americans by the also recently liberated French people was impressive. The Battery went from bivouac to firing position in the same area and continued its missions of general support.

Sunday, 13 August 1944 the Battery moved to a position one-half mile north of Lassay with the mission of delivering fire to the North to protect the First Division's advance to the northeast of Mayenne.

Monday the battery again displaced to the Northeast, and took up a position two miles west of Couterne, where it delivered harassing fire to the North.

Tuesday, 15 August 1944 the Battery rejoined 980th Field Artillery Battalion one-half mile north of St. Michel-le-Andaines.

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History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 17 Continued

Battery "A", 980th Field Artillery Battalion, commanded by Captain Byron W. Todd, was attached to First Infantry Division Artillery at 1300B 22 August 1944. A billeting party was sent to Division Artillery and the Battery remained in rendezvous north of St. Michel-Les-Andaines until 1650B the 24th. It marched to a rendezvous area at Lepi Beauvis, Coor. W098994, arriving there at 2330B.

On the 25th the Battery left its area at 1130B and proceeded to a rendezvous area near Boissy-le-Cutte, Coor. R965004, arriving there at 1800B. The Battery stayed in rendezvous the 26th and left at 1745B the 27th for its new rendezvous area, Coor. S257270, arriving at 2300B.

On the 28th the Battery moved to a new area to Coor. S444462, closing in the area at 1815B. On the 29th the Battery marched again to an area at Coor. S578662, arriving at 2000B. Time of march 2 hours and 45 minutes.

On the 30th the Battery moved to a new position, leaving at 1930B and arriving in position at 2130B, Coor. S754994.

At 1500B 31 August 1944 the Battery left to rejoin the 980th Field Artillery Battalion at a position three and one-half miles south of Laon. The Battery joined the Battalion at 1800B, 31 August 1944.

By this date, 1 September 1944 the Battalion had fired 16,886 rounds in combat. An OP was established in Laon on top of a water tower at noon of the First, commanded by Lt Carlson. At 1545B the First Division Artillery Executive Officer visited the OP for 20 minutes and gave orders for the Battalion's displacement and at 1633B the Battalion Commander and Reconnaissance parties left on reconnaissance. At 1840B the Battalion Commander radioed back, March Order and returned in a few minutes. The Battalion left at 1920B and closed in the new position at Coor. 0143241, one mile east of Pierrepont at 2110B.

49° 38' 57" N - 3° 46' 34" E

Early the next morning several "Flying Bombs" passed over the Battalion aimed in the general direction of Paris. The Second Platoon, Battery "C", ~~1030B (AA)~~ who had been attached 31 August 1944 arrived and joined the Battalion. At 1245B the Battalion Commander left on reconnaissance and the Battery Commanders and reconnaissance parties left at 1330B, to meet the Battalion Commander at Fontenelle. The Battalion received orders to move at 1500B, and the march route, from First Division Artillery at 1310B. The Battalion left at 1500B and arrived at its new position near Flamengrie, Coor. 0265633, at 1905B.

50° 00' 26" N - 3° 55' 02" E

At 0212B the next morning, 3 September 1944 a message was received from First Infantry Division Artillery stating that French troops were to be dropped in Northern France, but none were cited by the unit. At 0920B the Battalion received Close Station, March Order, the Battalion Commander and his party left on reconnaissance at 1020B and the Battalion left at 1130B. At 1455B the Battalion stopped in a rendezvous position one mile south of Avesnes until 1825B to allow the Infantry to clear the area ahead of the Battalion, and then the Battalion continued on to its rendezvous position, 2 miles east of Maubeuge, Coor. 0289937, arriving at 2040B. Near Mons

50° 16' 53" N / 3° 55' 46" E

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 18 Continued.

The next morning the Battalion drained 200 gallons of gasoline from its vehicles and turned it over to the First Infantry Division Quartermaster to help relieve the gasoline shortage. This left the Battalion enough gasoline for about thirty miles of travel. At 0750B the same morning, the Battalion Commander left for First Division Artillery CP. At 1015B men from Headquarters Battery and Battery "B" under command of Captain Richard R. Watson and Captain Kenneth F. Ames captured 123 prisoners about 1000 yards northwest of the Battalion CP. These German soldiers would surrender to the American Army but not to the French Forces of the Interior. The prisoners were marched to the First Infantry Division PW Cage. At the same time the attached AA unit, 2nd Platoon, Battery "C", 103rd AA, under command of Lt Harlan Meyer captured 60 prisoners, in the same vicinity. The Battalion Commander returned to the CP at 1100B.

The Battalion Commander left for First Division Artillery CP again at 1250B and the reconnaissance parties left at 1445B, and accompanied the Battalion Commander on reconnaissance. While making reconnaissance ahead of the Battery Commanders, Lt Colonel Welch, Captain McGinty and Lt Wood were shot at with enemy machine gun fire but were not hit. The fire came from buildings across the open fields about 400 yards in front of Battery "B" position area. The Battalion left for its new position at 1615B. The head of the Battalion column crossed the Belgium border at 1750B and closed in position, in Belgium by 1755B, at Coor. J308086, two and one-half miles south of Mons. The Belgium population was extremely happy to see American soldiers and wished the Battalion to stay for two weeks. The Battalion sent nine men and three .50 caliber Machine Guns to the 3rd Armored Division PW Stockade to help guard over 4,000 Prisoners of War. The Stockade was attacked during the night and the men fired over 300 rounds in repelling the attack. By 1930B, personnel of Headquarters and Battery "A" and "B" had taken 18 prisoners. A Battalion PW Stockade was set up by Headquarters Battery with a special guard, as the prisoners were brought in too fast to evacuate them during the night. By 0600B the next morning the Battalion had taken 36 prisoners. At 0600B a Machine Gun crew under command of Corporal Quinlan, Headquarters Battery halted two German soldiers near the Battalion Fire Direction Center, who immediately took cover at the roadside. Corporal Quinlan fired a burst from the Machine Gun and the enemy called out "Kamerad". Private Ross moved up on the flank to capture them when one of the enemy opened fire with a machine pistol. Corporal Quinlan returned the fire with his machine gun, killing one and badly wounding the other. It was found that the soldier carrying the German machine pistol was a litter carrier carrying a Geneva Convention Card.

524'58N
356'44E

While Battery "B" was capturing some prisoners the same day, one of the prisoners pulled the release on an "egg" grenade and rolled it towards his captors after he had surrendered and then immediately put up his hands. Private Zammit picket the grenade up and threw it to the flank where it exploded, causing no damage.

By 0800B the same morning, Lt Long Jr had occupied an OP upon a coal mine dump near Battalion Headquarters but did not observe any hostile activity during the day. By 1400B the Battalion had taken 197 prisoners in the previous 48 hours.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 19 Continued

At 0830B the next morning, Enlisted Men of Batteries "A" and "C" captured 2 and 8 prisoners respectively. At 1200B the Battalion Commander and billeting party left for a new rendezvous area and the Battalion followed at 1745B. By 2005B the Battalion had closed in rendezvous at Coor. J600070, three and one-half miles east of Charleroi. The Battalion had received some quarters of beef and a steak fry was enjoyed in this position, the first since leaving England. As usual the Belgians were out in great force looking for something to eat or smoke.

50° 24' 51" N
4° 21' 26" E

At 1240B, the next day, 7 September 1944, the Battalion Commander and reconnaissance party left to look for a new bivouac position and the Battalion followed at 1520B. The Battalion closed in its new area at 2035B, at Coor. K217189, 2 miles northwest of Huy. The Battalion was in bivouac by a mill with the guns parked on hard standing.

50° 32' 34" N / 5° 11' 11" E

The next day while the Division Executive Officer was visiting the Battalion to give details for its next move, 2 FW 190's flew over the area at 1345B. The attached AA unit opened fire and caused one of the planes to leave the area trailing black smoke. The Battalion Commander immediately ordered the guns to pull out of the area and disperse along the main road in case the enemy planes returned for an attack. At 1400B the Battalion Commander and reconnaissance party left for reconnaissance of the new area and the Battalion followed at 1540B. The Battalion closed in its new area at 1800B, at Coor. K329282, 9 miles west of Liege. Here the Battalion spent a quiet night and the following day.

50° 37' 47" N / 5° 22' 25" E

At 2210B, the next evening, 9 September 1944, Captain Frank Fagin, Battery "A", 557th CA(AA) reported to the Battalion for orders concerning his Battery which was on the march to join the Battalion. Battery "A", 557 CA(AA) was to replace the 2nd Platoon, Battery "C", 103 AA as AA security for the Battalion. The Battery's armament consisted of eight 40mm Bufor's and eight .50 caliber M51 mounts on trailers.

At 1315B the next afternoon, the Battalion Commander and his reconnaissance party left for a new position area. The Battalion followed at 1523B and closed in the new position one mile northwest of Herve, Coor. K605299, at 1835B. 2nd Lt R. G. Booth reported for duty from the 92nd Replacement Battalion per paragraph 14, SO #56, that organ and was attached to Battalion Headquarters, unassigned.

50° 39' 08" N
5° 15' 14" E

Captain Paul H. Richards and 10 Enlisted Men who had been attached to the 692nd Quartermaster Battalion as part of a provisional trucking company returned from Detached Service to the Battalion at 1900B.

The next morning, 11 September 1944, General Andrus, First Infantry Division Artillery Commander assigned the Battalion a harrasing mission on a railroad overpass in Germany. The mission was fired by the No. 3 Gun Section of Battery "A", 980th FA Bn. The method of fire was No. 3, 3 rounds. The gun was located at Coor. K8071538695. The Gun Target Range was 24,130 yards. The first round landed at 0829B plus 50 seconds. The Battery Commander was Captain Byron W. Todd, the Section Chief was Sgt Robert L. Hayden, and the operations Sgt was Tec 4 Thomas J. Hildago. These three rounds were believed by General Andrus to be the first American Artillery Shells to land in Germany in World War II.

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History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 20 Continued.

At 0825B the same morning, Battery "A", 557 CA (AA) which had been marching to join the Battalion arrived and replaced, 2nd Platoon, Battery "C", 103 CA (AA) as Battalion AA security. Lt Thomas H. Evans Jr., Battalion Liaison Pilot was evacuated to the hospital because of an ear infection and Lt Hennricks, 142nd Field Artillery Group, Liaison Pilot, reported for duty at 2100B.

The Battalion Commander and reconnaissance party left early the next morning and the Battalion left its position at 0830B and marched to its new position 2 miles south of Aubel, Coor. $\sqrt{K673328}$, arriving at 0940B, without incident. The total distance of march was six miles, over a rather winding road.

9-12-44
50°40'47"N
5°51'30"E

At 0640B the next morning, 13 September 1944, Lt R.G. Booth left with three 5th Section trucks to help form a truck train to haul ammunition for First Infantry Division. At 0700B Battery "C" captured 4 prisoners who were walking down a Railroad track and walked into the Battery Area. The prisoners were taken to the First Infantry Division, PW Cage.

At 1030B the Battalion Commander and reconnaissance party left on reconnaissance and at 1315B the Battalion Commander returned and left with the Battalion at 1650B. The Battalion closed in its new position at 1815 at Coor. $\sqrt{K765328}$, four miles northwest of Eupen, and was ready to fire at 1844B. At 1105B the next day the Battalion was given the additional mission of reinforcing the fires of the VII Corps. At 1503B the Battalion fired 48 rounds on a railroad train, which was moving south of Aachen, with excellent results. Lt Young, Liaison Pilot and S/Sgt Kirchner, Observer, adjusted the fire on the train.

50°40'54"N
5°59'19"E

The next day, 15 September 1944, the Battalion fired a few missions but nothing unusual. Between the hours of 0020B and 0430B 16 September 1944 enemy artillery fire fell in the area to the rear of the Battalion. Captain Richards, Battalion S-2 investigated the impact area after daylight and found shell fragments which indicated large caliber. The fragments were turned over to the Survey Officer, First Infantry Division Artillery, for further study. It is believed the shelling was from an 8 inch gun. Time fire from a smaller caliber weapon was also received during the early morning hours. By 0600B the Battalion had fired 18,082 rounds in combat. Between 1755B and 1835B the Battalion witnessed an aerial "dog fight" between P-38's and FW 190's. Three planes were seen to fall, two of which were identified as FW 190's.

Operation "Market Garden" Begins Sept 17, 1944

The next morning at 0110B the Battalion was ordered to cease fire on all missions. All watches in the Battalion were set back to 0200 at 0300B. The new time zone was to be ABLE.

17 Sept
18 Sept

At 1100A the next morning the Battalion was ordered to relieve Lt Hennricks, Ass't Air Officer, 142nd Field Artillery Group and he returned to his organization. At 1220A the Battalion received orders that it would revert to VII Corps Artillery and would work directly under Corps Artillery control, upon displacement of the Battalion. The Battalion Commander and

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History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 21 Continued

reconnaissance parties left at 1250A and the Battalion Commander returned to the Battalion CP at 1431A. At 1450A the Battalion received orders to displace anytime after 1530A, and left position at 1545A. The Battalion closed in its new position area at Coor. K873338, 6 miles south of Aachen, at 1745A. This was the first position occupied by the Battalion in Germany. At 0231A the next morning, No. 1 Gun of Battery A was temporarily out of action because of a frozen elevating brake. At 1100A an enemy plane flying low over the area was shot down by nearby AA units. Lt Booth who had been on an ammunition hauling detail returned to the Battalion at 1500A. He reported a successful trip except for two of the trucks becoming mired in the mud which had to be pulled out by the Battalion wrecker. At 1633A, an enemy plane flying high over the Battalion area was fired at by the attached AA and driven away. At 2030A the Battalion was placed under control of the 142nd Field Artillery Group.

At noon the next day the Corps Artillery Commanding General visited the Battalion for an hour and commented upon the excellent appearance of the men of the Battalion and the leadership of the officer personnel. The Battalion calibrated a gun tube No. 725 which it had received some time before and found it to have a muzzle velocity of 53 f/s greater than the rest of the guns of the Battalion. At 2130A the Battalion was notified by the attached AA Battery that, night-fighter cover would be available and the AA would do no night firing. At 2230A the Battalion fired approximately 200 rounds in close support of a task force of the 3rd Armored Division, 2 miles east of Stolberg. Paragraph 2, Field Artillery Periodic Report No. 93, Headquarters VII Corps Artillery, 20 September 1944 reported the mission as follows: "980th FA Bn (155 G) fired several close support missions in support of an isolated task force of the 3rd Armd Div. Fire was brought within 500 yards of friendly troops with results and accuracy reported excellent".

Early the next morning at 0030A 20 September 1944, the Battalion received a small amount of counterbattery fire. Both time fire and percussion fire was used. One round landed between Battery "A" CP and the Executive Officers Post. There were no casualties nor damage of materiel in the Battalion. At 1130A the Commanding Officer, 142nd Field Artillery Group visited the Battalion CP for half an hour.

At 0300A 21 September 1944 the Battalion received a message from the attached AA to be especially on the watch for, and report any large explosions, flying bombs, or any other evidence of new vengeance weapons.

At 1308A the No. 2 Gun of Battery "B", Gun #839, started throwing rotating bands, Gun No. 725, also of Battery "B" was turned in to Ordnance because of a faulty counter recoil mechanism and was replaced the same day by Gun #1721. The next afternoon Gun #1721 was calibrated and found to have a muzzle velocity of 65 f/s greater than the other guns of the Battalion. At 1930A Battery "A" was designated to work with a direct hook-up with the 13th Field Artillery Observation Battalion for counter battery work. A 5th Section truck of Battery "C" returning from the ASP with ammunition dropped its trailer thru a bridge which had been weakened by the truck passing over it. The trailer was removed, unloaded and left by the roadside. The Battalion wrecker retrieved the trailer the next morning after daylight. The trailer axle was sent to Ordnance to be straightened.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 22 Continued

At 0010A 23 September 1944 the Battalion fired 24 rounds on an enemy battery two and one-half miles east of Eschweiler. Par 2 Field Artillery Periodic Report No. 96, Hq VII Corps Arty, 23 September 1944 reported the mission as follows: "The 13th FA Obsn Bn reported from a flash OP a 4 gun battery active at 0001A. A shelrep from the 9th Div Arty was received at 0005A. The 980th FA Bn (155 G) and 195th FA Bn (8" H) fired 2 volleys each at 0010A TOT. Flash base reported large explosion and 2 fires started; the 9th Div Arty reported the shelling on them had ceased".

At 0600A the No. 4 piece of Battery "B", Gun #1721 was sent to Ordnance to have its carriage changed.

At 0930A the next day ^{24 Sept} the Battalion fired on an enemy gun position two and one-half miles east of Eschweiler. Par 2, Field Artillery Periodic Report No. 97, VII Corps Arty, 24 September 1944 reported the mission as follows: "Ground observation from 3rd Armd Div Arty adjusted 980th FA Bn (155 G) on a heavy enemy gun. The battalion fired 2 volleys for effect with converged sheaf, range 16,400 yards; observer reported entire position blown up with explosions continuing for 5 minutes".

At 1130A No. 3 Gun Battery "C" was taken out of action for three and one-half hours in order to have the recoil mechanism checked and repaired. Gun #1721, Battery "B" was returned from Ordnance and was ready to fire at 1206A.

The Battalion fired a concentration on a enemy gun battery, line over VII Corps Artillery CP, as the Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery was being decorated with the Silver Star Medal, at 1515A 25 September 1944. At 1655A 2nd Lt Vincent W. Linzman reported for duty from 92nd Replacement Battalion, per Par. 10, SO #100, 25 September 1944, same Headquarters.

By this date No. 2 piece, Gun No. #725, No. 4 piece, Gun No. #701 of Battery "A" and No. 4 piece, Gun No. #737 of Battery "C" were throwing rotating bands.

At 1040A the next day, 26 September 1944 Battery "B" reported small arms fire and machine gun fire in front of their position area. At 1555A an Air OP of the First Infantry Division Artillery adjusted the Battalion on an enemy battery at Kinzweiler, northeast of Aachen. Par. 2, FA Periodic Report No. 100, VII Corps Arty, 27 September reported the mission as follows: Par. 2: "980th FA Bn (155 G) while adjusting on a enemy battery at a range of 14,000 yards, obtained a hit with the second round on some ammunition causing large explosions. Two Battalion volleys were fired for effect and a direct hit was scored on one gun. The mission was observed by an Air OP of the 1st Div Arty".

At 2010A No. 4 piece of Battery "A" was out for 12 hours because of a faulty obturator spindle plug.

The next afternoon the Red Cross Clubmobile "20th Century" served the Battalion coffee and doughnuts. At 1630A two ME 109's flew over the Battalion area and were fired on by the attached AA unit. One plane was reported to be trailing black smoke as it left the area.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 23 Continued

At 1400A ^{28 Sept} the next day the Battalion received orders to shift one battery to the right to cover an additional field of fire due to the displacement of the 981st Field Artillery Battalion. Battery "B" was shifted 400m to the right, one gun at a time.

At 1500A Major General Collins, presented awards to individuals of the VII Corps at the 296th Engineer Area, one mile northwest of Roetgen. Captain Kenneth F. Ames, Tec 5 Marvin L. Snyder, and Pvt Leonard A. Smith were presented citations for the Bronze Star Medal. Lt Max E. Young was decorated with the Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal, and Lt George D. Deppen was decorated with the Air Medal. At 2000A Battery "A" was ordered to cease fire on all missions for Battery "B", 13th Field Artillery Observation Battalion due to lack of ammunition. At 0750A the next morning, 29 September 1944, Battery "A" was released to fire missions again for Battery "B", 13th FA Obsn Bn. At 2055A Battery "A" was again ordered to cease firing on all missions from Battery "B", 13th FA Obsn Bn.

At 0919A 30 September Battery "A" was released to fire missions for Battery "B", 13th FA Obsn Bn. At 2310A Battery "A" was suspended from firing missions for 13th FA Obsn Bn for the night.

By 0600A 1 October 1944 the Battalion had fired a total of 20,665 rounds in combat. The gun tubes by now were very badly worn. At 1440A the No. 3 gun of Battery "B" was out of action due to a faulty recoil mechanism.

^{2 Oct}
The next morning the Battalion fired four counter-flak missions before the air attack at 0900A and fired preparations for the attack of the XIX Corps at 1055A. Captain Arthur J. Read was relieved from the duties of Battalion S-4 and Commanding Officer, Service Battery and assigned as Battalion S-2. Captain Paul H. Richards was relieved of assignment as Battalion S-2 and assigned as Battalion S-4 and Commanding Officer, Service Battery. At 1040A the No. 3 Gun of Battery "B" was back in action. At 1407A No. 4 gun of Battery "A" was out of action with a faulty obturator spindle plug until 1912A.

At 0204A 3 October 1944 the Battalion fired a counter-battery mission from a sound location. Paragraph 2, Field Artillery Periodic Report No. 106, HQ VII Corps Artillery reported the mission as follows: "One counter-battery mission fired by the 980th FA Bn (155G) silenced the enemy batteries that were neutralizing the 7th FA Bn of the First Div. Bn 4 volleys were fired on an accurate sound plot, and the fire immediately ceased on the 7th FA Bn".

Lt Max E. Young, Liaison Pilot and S/Sgt Kirchner, Observer were fired upon from vicinity of K0039 while on an observation mission. One bullet penetrated the plane six feet from the occupants. The same day orders were received from First United States Army announcing the battlefield promotion of Captain Richard R. Watson to Major and 1st Lts Donald A. Wood and Ralph J. Mouw to Captain, effective the 29th of September 1944. 50°43'00" N
4°54'11" E

At 1031A 4 October 1944 the Battalion received orders for Battery "A" to resume taking fire missions direct from the 13th FA Observation Battalion.

From 1430A to 1500A 5 October 1944 enemy planes were over the Battalion area and were fired on by attached and adjacent AA units. Battery "A", 557th AAA claimed one category II. At 2300A Battery "A" was ordered to cease firing on 13th

History, Headquarters 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 24 Continued

Field Artillery Observation Battalion missions, until 0913A the next morning. Also the night of October 6-7th Battery "A" was suspended from firing for 13th FA Obsn Bn.

At 0930A 7 October 1944 a complaint was received from a German citizen that one of his milk cows had been killed and butchered in the Battalion area. Higher Headquarters was notified and 2nd Lt Wm. J. O'Connor, Company "B", 507 Bn, MP, VII Corps was sent to make and investigation. The results of his investigation were that apparently a cow had been killed at the edge of a field about 500 yards from the Battalion CP, as evidenced by a pool of blood there; a search of the kitchens of the Battalion failed to find any meat or any knowledge of a butchery. The MP officer was of the positive opinion that the killing had been done by some other unit.

No. 4 gun of Battery "C" was out of action from 1040A until 1330A when the Ordnance finished inspecting it and reported it in satisfactory condition to continue firing.

The next day, 8 October 1944 the Battalion received one more package of cigarettes per man. The Battalion received one days rations of cigarettes and candy on 1 October 1944 and one days rations on 4 October 1944, this made a total of three packages of cigarettes per man in a total of eight days. By this time the men's reserve supply, which had been built up in Normandy had vanished. All efforts to obtain more cigarettes had been futile due to serious shortage at the supply bases. To add to this, the Battalion was on "B" rations which had no cigarettes in it as did the "10-1".

About noon 2nd Lt Vincent Linzman was sent to the 981st Field Artillery Battalion on Special Duty. At 1430A the Battalion received instructions to draw only 2% WP shell in the future from the ASP. Previously the Battalion had drawn whatever it had need for.

At 2040A Battery "A", 440th AA Battalion, Commanding Officer, Captain Raymond C. Bishop replaced Battery "A", 557th AAA Battalion as AA security for the 980th Field Artillery Battalion. The roads in the Battalion area and adjacent area to the north were either restricted or closed for use of the ASP #127 by joint agreement of the Battalion Commander and the Commanding Officer of ASP #127.

1st Lt Monroe J. Ellingson reported directly to the Battalion from the 92nd Replacement Battalion and on Detached Service from the 981st Field Artillery Battalion at 2200A.

At 1030A the next morning Lt George A. Long, Jr, Battalion Assistant S-2 investigated a rumor that Battery "A", 557th AAA had removed property from the factory building that they had occupied. Investigation revealed that some furniture, and felt packing material was gone.

At 1010A the next day 10 October 1944 the direct line between Battery "A" and the 13th Field Artillery Observation Battalion was taken out and the direct counter-battery work with them ceased.

History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion - page 25 Continued

The 240th Field Artillery Battalion (155 G) commanded by Lt Colonel Jones, joined the 142nd Field Artillery Group which had previously been composed of the 980th Field Artillery Battalion (155 G) and the 195th Field Artillery Battalion (8" H). At 1840A the No. 2 gun of Battery "A" was out of action for one hour and twenty minutes with a faulty equilibrator. The next day six of the eleven old guns of the battalion were calibrated against the one new tube. An average of six rounds per gun were fired. The results showed that although the older guns were shooting about 500 yards short, the error was a constant factor however and it was therefore possible to compute a K factor for each tube. After completion of the calibration the Battalion fires were massed with 9 other Battalions for a Serenade mission of First Infantry Division against a counter attack against the 3rd Battalion of the 18th Infantry. Special Order #274 was received from Headquarters First United States Army assigning 1st Lt. Lloyd O. Pruett to the Battalion as a Liaison Pilot as of 6 October 1944. Lt Pruett had been on Detached Service to the Battalion as a pilot to replace 1st Lt Thomas H. Evans who was in the hospital.

At 1420A 12 October 1944 the No. 2 gun of Battery "A" was out of action for a few minutes while replenishing an equilibrator with nitrogen.

At 0530A 13 October 1944, the packing, in one equilibrator of the No. 2 gun of Battery "A" was blown so bad that it did not warrant replenishing. By 1000A all the nitrogen in the Battalion had been used up replenishing the other equilibrators. The Battalion received orders to clear all fire missions through 142nd Field Artillery Group due to the ammunition shortage. The ammunition allowance for the day was 160 rounds. At 1730A the No. 2 gun of Battery A was back in action with a new equilibrator. At 1925A several red and white flares were dropped about 2000 yards northeast of the Battalion by enemy aircraft.

On the 15th orders were received from Headquarters First United States Army transferring 1st Lt Monroe J. Ellingson from 981st Field Artillery Battalion to 980th Field Artillery Battalion and 2nd Lt. Vincent W. Linzman from 980th Field Artillery Battalion to the 981st Field Artillery Battalion. At 1415A Arty/R adjusted the Battalion on an enemy 3-gun battery at Coor. K982505. Two hits were reported on the guns. Battalion one volley was repeated on the Battery at 1520A to catch the personnel out of their fox holes. At 1510A approximately four P-47's strafed and bombed in vicinity of the 3rd Armored Division Rear Echelon, near Maeran. One bomb fell near the Battalion Service Battery Area.

At 1800A 1st Lt Lander E. Carn, 980th Field Artillery Battalion was placed on Detached Service with 981st Field Artillery Battalion and 1st Lt Charles Ackard, 981st Field Artillery Battalion was placed on Detached Service with the 980th Field Artillery Battalion pending transfer orders from First United States Army.

At 1930A the Battalion was alerted for a possible enemy airborne attack. At 2255A No. 1 gun of Battery "C" was out of action because of a faulty equilibrator. The pressure in the equilibrators of the No. 4 gun of Battery "A" dropped but as there was no nitrogen in the Battalion to replenish it the gun had to be operated as it was. This caused the gun crew to be slower due to the extreme trouble in elevating the tube.

History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion page 26 Continued

At 2320A Battery "C" and "A" fired on an enemy counter-attack at Coor. K898449 to K903445. The fire was brought as close as 250 yards to friendly troops.

No. 1 gun of Battery "C" left for Ordnance for inspection and repair at 1300A 16 October 1944. At 1620A a few rounds landed well in front of the Battalion area causing no damage.

At 1500A the next day Battery "A" and "C" received March Order for their guns, which were to be ready for movement to Ordnance the next morning. The Battalion was due to undergo its Class "A" Ordnance Inspection of all Ordnance equipment including the guns, vehicles, small arms and fire control instruments. At 1630A Lt Colonel Jones, Commanding Officer, 240th Field Artillery Battalion visited the Battalion for an hour and a half. Orders were received from Headquarters First United States Army for the battlefield promotion of 2nd Lts George A. Long, Jr., Elbin K. Polen, and Max E. Young to First Lieutenants, effective 14 October 1944. At 2230A the Battalion S-4 reported observing a flashing light southeast of his CP, as if someone were signaling. It was impossible to determine who it was due to the distance involved.

At 0655A the next morning, 18 October 1944, Battery "B" received March Order for its guns and two left for the 516th Ordnance at 0840A. At 0800A the remaining three guns of Battery "C" went to the 255th Ordnance and two guns of Battery "A" left for the 559th Ordnance. Twenty vehicles of the Battalion also left for the 255th Ordnance for an Ordnance Inspection. All of the vehicles were sent to the 255th Ordnance except 10 which were inspected by 3456th Ordnance in the Battalion area. A small arms and instrument inspection team was sent to the Battalion from the 255th Ordnance, who completed their inspection in one day. A few items were sent to the 255th Ordnance which the inspection team could not repair on the spot.

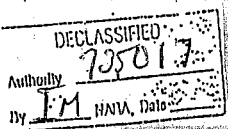
As of 0700A the same day, the Battalion had fired 25,583 rounds in combat and guns had fired a total service rounds as follows:

BATTERY A			BATTERY B		
Tube No.	701	- 1573 rounds	Tube No.	839	= 1810 rounds
" "	784	- 1611 "	" "	1721	= 248 "
" "	734	- 1672 "	" "	782	= 1644 "
" "	735	- 1581 "	" "	749	= 1686 "
BATTERY C			TUBES TURNED IN TO ORDNANCE		
" "	755	- 1800 "	" "	725	= 24 "
" "	742	- 1687 "	" "	745	= 1087 "
" "	722	- 1648 "			
" "	737	- 1665 "			

At 1230A 18 October 1944 the remaining two guns of Battery "B" left for the 516th Ordnance.

The next few days were spent in house cleaning, repairing camouflage nets, cleaning the guns at Ordnance, doing laundry and normal maintenance.

At 2150A on the 19th, enemy planes dropped anti-personnel bombs in Service Battery Area. A few fragments struck the Battalion wrecker and put one small hole in the hood, there were no casualties.



History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 27 Continued

At 1215A, the next day, the two remaining guns of Battery "A" were sent to the 559th Ordnance for inspection and overhaul.

Orders were received from VII Corps transferring 1st Lt Lander E. Garn, 980th Field Artillery Battalion to the 981st Field Artillery Battalion and 1st Lt Charles B. Ackard, II, 981st Field Artillery Battalion to the 980th Field Artillery Battalion.

On the afternoon of 21 October 1944 the attached AA reported four enemy artillery shells falling 400 yards in front of one of their guns. This area was well in front of Battery "A", 980th Field Artillery Battalion.

Sunday, 22 October 1944 Captain John F. McGinty the Battalion Assistant S-3 and also Post Exchange Officer, established a PX with a ration of one cigar, one candy bar and one roll of hard candy per man. A few cans of fruit juice was also available for the Battalion.

The next day Captain McGinty ^{23 Oct} procured 1000 gallons of rather good tasting beer, non-alcoholic Belgium beer, and the beer flowed freely for the next few days. At 1545A, the same day orders were received from the 142nd Field Artillery Group for the Battalion to be prepared to open fire the morning of 25 October 1944. The Battalion was to occupy the same positions as it had previously except that the Batterys were to be laid so that the left limit of fire for the Battalion was to be an azimuth of 100m and the right limit azimuth 1300m.

The Battalion Commander made a reconnaissance of the front lines looking for positions for OP's on the afternoon of 24 October 1944. He visited front line CP's of the 16th Infantry but was unable to find a suitable location. He reported Aachen to be virtually destroyed. The Infantry Commanders stated that they believed the enemy was crossing the lines in civilian clothes because the Infantry CP's were always shelled soon after they were occupied. At 1720A the Battalion was back in position ready to fire but were ordered to remain silent and not register until further orders.

The next afternoon the Battalion Commander ^{25 Oct} made a front line reconnaissance in, and east of Stolberg area and found a suitable area for an OP. Permission was received for the Battalion to calibrate its guns the next day.

The Battalion Commander established an OP the next day, 26 October 1944 at Stolberg with Lt Sherron, Battery "C" as observer. The 6821 Velocity Calibration Team (Prov) calibrated Battery "A" guns and three guns of Battery "B" before dark. Average velocity was approximately 2680 f/s per tube. Two of the rounds bracketed VII Corps CP. The first round to fall short was fired at 1303A at a range of 15980 yards but landed only 3970 yards from the gun in the area of Battery "B", 266th Field Artillery Battalion. The quadrant was 272m, BD207, using Shell HE, supercharge and quick fuze. The muzzle velocity of the round was 2677 f/s. Four of the rounds from Battery "B" fell short. At 1710A the Battalion received cease fire on all missions and the OP personnel was recalled to the Battalion area because of lack of visibility due to fog conditions.

At 1645A 27 October 1944 the two guns of Battery "B" that had fired the rounds short, guns number 749 and 782, were taken to Ordnance for new tubes.

The next day orders were received from First United States Army announcing the Battlefield promotions of 2nd Lts William R. Miller, Charles W. Barrett, and

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 28 Continued.

George E. Carlson to the grade of 1st Lt effective 24 October 1944.

At 1300A 29 October 1944, the Battalion Commander and his reconnaissance party made reconnaissance for a position from which to finish the calibration of the Battalion. At 1240A the Battalion OP had been reoccupied by Lt Sherron. At 1900A enemy aircraft over the area were fired upon by the adjacent AA Units. The personnel at the Battalion OP were recalled to the Battalion area at dark, due to dense fog and heavy shelling of OP area.

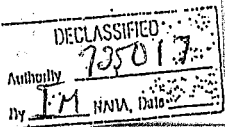
At 0700A the next morning, ^{30 OCT} the 4 guns of Battery "C" and one gun of Battery "B" were taken to an alternate position for calibration at Coor. K938377. At 1330A the one gun of Battery "B" had returned to the Battalion area and by 1530A, Battery "C" had also completed calibration and was back in position ready to fire. At 1825A, the two guns which Battery "B" had sent to Ordnance had returned with new tubes and were in position ready to fire. The new tubes were Nos. 1092 and 1243.

1st Lt Max E. Young and Pfc's Melvin D. Henderson and Jose J. Vellerreal left at noon the 31st, for a 48 hour pass in Paris. They were sent to Paris in 2½ ton trucks, along with other artillerymen from the VII Corps. 1st Lt Thomas H. Evans reported to the Battalion on DS from the 981st Field Artillery Battalion, at 2300.

On November 1, 1944 the Battalion was still in position at K873338, 6 miles south of Aachen. By 0600A the Battalion had fired 25,691 rounds in combat. A message was received from VII Corps that three M-4 Tractors were being transferred to the Battalion.

On the 19th of October an Anti-Airborne Defense Plan was started in the VII Corps. Colonel Stevens, 1st TD Group was placed in charge of the Corps Anti-Airborne Section. The Corps area was broken down into several sub-areas with the senior tactical commander in each area in command. Lt Colonel WELCH the Battalion commander was in charge of area A-3 in which the Battalion was located. Major Clirehugh acted as his operations officer and also in command of a mobile reserve of the Battalion for use anywhere in the area. Major Watson was in command of Sub Area "A", which included the Battalion. On 24 October 1944 an SCR 606 with operators was sent to the Battalion Headquarters as part of an Anti-Airborne Defense radio net. On 1 November 1944, 1st Lt Lawrence B. Peterson, CA was attached to Lt Colonel WELCH's Headquarters as a special staff officer for Anti-Airborne Defense. By this time the Anti-Airborne Defense Plan was well-knit and workable plan. Main features of the plan was the close liaison established between adjacent units, extensive communications, and a rapid means of employing troops at any threatened point.

At 0900A the next morning, 2 November 1944, the Battalion re-occupied its OP at Stolberg, with Lts Sherron and Ellingson as observers and using personnel from Batterys "C" and "B" respectively. At 1920A, the No 2 piece of Battery "B", gun No 839 was called out of action by higher Headquarters for an indefinite period because of a short round landing in the 991st FA Bn (155G-SP) area. At 2012A the attached AA reported enemy aircraft over the area.



History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 29 Continued.

At 1715A, 3 November 1944, the Battalion was ordered by higher Headquarters to cease firing on all missions until further notice. This was due to three rounds falling short, from No. 3 piece of Battery "C", Gun No. 737, during an air observed registration.

At 1805A, enemy aircraft over the area were fired on by the adjacent and attached AA units. Anti-personnel bombs were dropped in the Battalion area. Tec 5 Richard W. Dirks, 37074854 and Private Richard R. Ford, 33458707 of Battery "A", were wounded by shell fragments from 37mm AA fired at the enemy aircraft. Apparently the time fuses on the shell had failed and the shells exploded upon hitting the ground.

The men were awarded the Purple Heart Medal at the Battalion Aid Station by the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Welch. Pfc Herbert E. Swift of Battery "A", 440th AAA was also wounded by AA shell fragments.

At 0900A, the next day the Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders went forward to look for Battery position in the vicinity of Breinig, and returned at 1135A. At 1130A an enemy flying bomb passed over the Battalion area at an altitude of 3000 feet, line of flight northwest.

Instructions were received from 142nd Field Artillery Group, the morning of 5 November 1944 that all missions on enemy gun batteries would be coordinated through Group and that fire for effect would be placed on the target by VII Corps Artillery using at least four Battalions.

At 1000A, Lt Morgan replaced Lt Ellingson on the Battalion OP using personnel from Headquarters Battery and Lt Wilson established an OR at 1545A using Battery "A" enlisted personnel. 2nd Lt David E. Davis replaced 1st Lt Lawrence B. Peterson as special staff officer to the Battalion Commander for Anti-Airborne Defense. Several Flying bombs passed over the Battalion area during the day, all travelling in a north western direction.

More flying bombs were over the area the morning of 6 November 1944, all traveling in a Northwestern direction at an altitude from 4,000 to 5,000 feet. The gun batteries sent details forward to prepare the new positions at Breinig for occupation. Three more flying bombs were over the area between 1840A and 2155A at an altitude of 700 to 1000 feet.

On the 7th, 2nd Lts Reginal G. Booth and Peter R. Andre were relieved from assignment to 980th Field Artillery Battalion and assigned to 981st Field Artillery Battalion and 751st Field Artillery Battalion respectively, and 1st Lt. Thomas H. Evans, Jr., was relieved from assignment to 981st Field Artillery Battalion and assigned to 980th Field Artillery Battalion per paragraph 1, Special Orders No. 151, Headquarters, VII Corps, dated and effective 4 November 1944.

A Battalion Ammunition detail under command of Lt Dmytryk hauled 900 rounds of ammunition to the new position at Breinig and dumped it on the ground and reloaded the Battalion ammunition trucks with a basic load. This was the first time in combat that the Battalion had dumped ammunition on the ground in addition to the basic load carried on the trucks.

History 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 30 Continued

7 Nov.
The batteries continued to improve their positions at Breinig during the day. At 1510A guns No. 839 and 737 of Battery "B" and "C" were given Close Station March Order for the purpose of getting new tubes at 559th Ordnance and left the following morning. Orders were received for the displacement of the Battalion for the following day, March Order time being 08 1400A with three minute intervals between Batteries. The March Number was J-41. 1st Infantry Division was to have road priority.

At 0920A, the 8th of November the Battalion fire direction center was established at Battery "B". At 1000A, the Battalion Commander relinquished command of the Anti-Airborne Defense Area A-3 to the Commanding Officer, Rear Echelon, 3rd Armored Division and Lt David E. Davis left to join that command. At 1200A Close Station March Order was given to the Battalion less Service Battery and Air Section. The OL was closed at the same time. At 1330A, Battery "A" and "C" each sent one gun to the 255th Ordnance for new tubes. At 1400A the Battalion left its old position and arrived at the new position at Breinig, Coor. *50°43'51N* *6°12'54E* K926379 at 1515A. Lt Sherron replaced Lt Wilson on the OP at OR. 1st Lt. Lloyd O. Pruett was decorated with the Air Medal, by Major General J. Lawton Collins, Commanding General VII Corps, at the Viviers Rest Camp. At 2040A word was received from 142nd Field Artillery Group that the Battalion was to remain silent, but that all installations were to be manned, and the Battalion be able to fire, using map data corrected, upon call.

9 Nov.
The next day was spent by the Battalion in improving positions and providing shelters for the men.

On the afternoon of the 10th the OP reported considerable enemy traffic including half tracks, busses, passenger cars, wagons and bicycles. At 1730A, gun No. 1108, of Battery "C" having returned from Ordnance was in position and ready to fire.

11 Nov.
By 1225A the next day Gun No. 2042, Battery "C", Gun No. 1751, Battery "B", and Gun No. 1732 of Battery "A" had returned from Ordnance and were in position ready to fire. Gun Numbers 722 and 755 of Battery "C" were given Close Station March Order at 1204A and left for 559th Ordnance at 1314A for the purpose of obtaining new tubes.

On the 12th propelling charges in the Battalion, Lot No. 11386 were frozen for future calibration. By 1715A the remaining two guns of Battery "C" had returned from Ordnance with new tubes and the guns were laid and ready to fire.

At 0850A, 14 November 1944, a few heavy caliber shells landed near the Battalion CP causing no casualties. The OP was shelled at 1645A as the observers, Lts Long, Deppen, and Ellingson were leaving. The only route from the OP was rather exposed and several shell fragments landed among the observers but there were no injuries.

15 Nov.
The next day the Battalion received word that it would receive three more new tubes to finish equipping the Battalion with new tubes.

Battle of Hurtgen Forest

History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion. Page 31 Continued

At 0325A the 16th, orders were received that the attack was to be at 1115A that day, and the Battalion was to begin registration at daylight. At 0315A, the Command line to Battery "C" was knocked out by shell fire. By 0600A the Battalion had fired 26,099 rounds in combat. The Battalion fired counter flak missions for the bombers and then fired its preparations and interdictions to maintain neutralization of counter-battery in support of the attack. The Battalion was the only Corps Battalion chosen to fire counter-flak missions. The first day of the attack 837 rounds were fired on counter battery and supporting missions. The entire Battalion was ordered to take cover in foxholes and shelters during the bombing and therefor was unable to view the bombing as it had during the St. Lo breakthrough. At 1128A five heavy caliber bombs or shells landed south of the Battery "A" position.

Prior to the attack other units established OP's in the same building in which the Battalion OP was located and one hour before H-Hour all the following were present:

Major General Rose	3rd Armored Division
Brig General Boudinot	3rd Armored Division
1st Lt George Deppen)	
1st Lt George A Long)	980th Field Artillery Battalion
Corporal Banghard)	
1st Lt Stevens	54th F.A. Battalion (3rd Armored Division)
Captain McNeil	7th F.A. Battalion (1st Inf Div)
Mr Ernest Hemmingway	Correspondent, Colliers Magazine
Mr Tim Correll	Associated Press

During the early part of the tank advance, Major General Rose ordered Lt Deppen to contact a nearby tank and request Machine Gun fire be brought on 5 Germans running across a field in front of the OP. Lt Deppen hugging the hedge line ran the forty yards to the tank, delivered the General's orders and returned to the OP. Lt Deppen had exposed himself to the fire that was being directed at the OP and the tanks nearby. Lt Deppen's remark of surprise to Lt Long upon returning to the OP building was, "Say, did you see what I just did? Go out there in all that fire."

At 1302A guns No. 701, 734 and 784 of Battery "A" were given Close Station March Order. At 1445A gun No. 734 left for 255th Ordnance and guns No. 701 and 784 left at 1530 for 559th Ordnance for new tubes. Five men from 50th Signal Battalion were assigned to the Battalion by VII Corps and placed on Detached Service with 50th Signal Battalion. The next morning Battery "B" reported a 15cm artillery shell dud in the house next to their CP and requested the BDS to remove it. At 1245 guns No. 1143 and 1194 of Battery "A" had returned from Ordnance, replacing guns No. 784 and 701 and were in position ready to fire at 1532A. Gun No. 1397 replacing gun No. 734 of Battery "A" returned from the Ordnance at 1350A and was in position ready to fire at 1535A.

In compliance with First Army directive all men in the Battalion in excess of T/O except eight were transferred to the Army Ground Forces Replacement System the 18th. The eight men were retained by verbal authority of G-1, First United States Army for use as drivers and assistant drivers of the three M-4 tractors and one RD-8 bulldozer authorized the Battalion as special equipment by First United States Army. The total of men transferred was fourteen.

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History, Headquarter 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 32 Continued

Counter flak missions were fired by the Battalion from 1155A to 1215A with neutralization being maintained from 1245A to 1255A and again at 1335A. At 1445A the Battalion CP and adjacent areas were subjected to enemy time fire but there were no casualties. At 1230A enemy aircraft were over Battery "B" and "C" areas dropping anti-personnel bombs and strafing. Slight damage to vehicles was caused in Battery "C".

Early in the morning of 19th November 1944 approximately 50 rounds of light caliber artillery shell fire fell in an area about 600 yards to the rear of Battery "A", starting a fire in some powder charges of another unit. From 0600A 18 November 1944 to 0600A 19 November 1944 the Battalion expended 816 rounds in support of bombing missions and the infantry attack. The Battalion had two successful Arty/R missions. The first target was an enemy battery in the open, the Coor. of which were transmitted to the pilot. The Battalion was adjusted on the target by the pilot who reported the fire to be very effective with the area well covered. On this mission only 11 minutes elapsed between the firing of the first round and receipt at the Fire Direction Center of the pilot's report on the effectiveness of the second fire for effect. Following the first mission the pilot picked up an emplaced enemy battery and again adjusted the Battalion. Upon completion of the mission the adjusted Coor. were sent to the 751st Field Artillery Battalion (155mm How) and the 195th Field Artillery Battalion (8" How) who joined the Battalion in repeating fire for effect. The pilot reported four direct hits on the emplacement. These missions were reported in the Field Artillery Periodic Report No. 154, VII Corps dated 20 November 1944.

From 0600A 19 November to 0600A 20 November the Battalion expended 909 rounds, the record 24 hour expenditure of ammunition since the Battalion's entry in combat. At 1320A 20 November 1944, Battery "B" adjusted by an Air OP, on an enemy battery at a range of 26,213 yards with effect reported as excellent.

On the morning of the 21st the Battalion S-4 notified the gun batteries that when using time fuze with smoke shell, to use fuze M67 with unmodified booster.

Early in the morning of 22 November 1944, the Battalion received a warning of hostile activity in gun positions of neighboring artillery units and all batteries were notified to report any suspicious activity to the Battalion.

On the 23rd, the No. 3 gun of Battery "B" was out of action at 0705A with low nitrogen pressure in one equilibrator. For Thanksgiving dinner, roast turkey was served and plenty of it. The menu included roast turkey, sage dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, cranberry sauce, peas and carrots, bread, butter, coffee, beer and hard candy.

142nd Field Artillery Group displaced to a new CP at Coor. K943422 at 1100A the 24th and the Battalion went under direct control of VII Corps Artillery. Telephone communications were established by Corps Artillery at 1100A. Corps Artillery requested that a report be telephoned in immediately after 1200A each day covering the number and type of missions fired and the rounds expended for the preceding 24 hour period. At 1201A the No. 3 gun of Battery "B" was back in action.

50° 46' 11" N
6° 14' 17" E

History, Headquarters 80th Field Artillery Battalion page 33 Continued

The Battalion reconnaissance parties went forward on the afternoon of the 25th to look for positions in the vicinity of Mausbach. Battery "A" was to occupy positions southeast of Mausbach and Battery "B" and "C" to the south of Mausbach.

The Battalion was given Close Station March Order at 0800A the next morning 26 November 1944 and Battery "B" left its old position at Breinig at 1030A, Battery "A" at 1100A and Battery "C" at 1130A. The Battalion closed in its new position near Mausbach, Coor. K971409 at 1245A. The Battalion reverted to control of 142nd Field Artillery Group upon occupation of position at Mausbach. *50° 45' 37" N
6° 16' 41" E*

Between 0406A and 0414A the next morning the 27th, six heavy caliber shells landed near the Battalion CP. The only casualty was the "Cadet Bag" of Captain Elmer McGraw the Battalion Surgeon which was pierced by a shell fragment.

On the 28th the powder lot which had been reserved for calibration was released by the Battalion S-3 for firing.

At 1123A, 29 November 1944, the No. 2 gun of Battery "A" was out of action with a faulty equilibrator.

At 0915A, 30 November 1944 Battery "A", 440th AAA was relieved from attachment to the 980th Field Artillery Battalion as AA security and Battery "A" 438th AAA commanded by Captain Snyder joined the Battalion. Several rounds of heavy caliber artillery time shells burst in the vicinity of the Battalion CP between 1630A and 1800A.

By 0600A 1 December 1944 the Battalion had fired 33,716 rounds of ammunition in combat. At 0840A the No. 2 gun of Battery "A" was out of action for several hours with equilibrator trouble. At 1220A enemy aircraft were over the area, apparently on a reconnaissance mission. The planes were fired on by the surrounding AA units. At 1630A, the Battalion was ordered to occupy an OP at Coor. WF039429. This was a tower OP that had been constructed by the Engineers.

On 2 December 1944, about 40 percent of the Battalion attended a USO show in Stolberg featuring Marlene Dietrich. The show was greatly enjoyed by the personnel of the Battalion. At 1400A, 1st Lt Max E. Young was decorated with the Second Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal by the Commanding General, VII Corps. S/Sgt Kirchner of Battery "B" was also decorated at the same time with the Air Medal. The ceremony took place at the VII Corps Forward Headquarters. From 1405A to 1440A enemy aircraft over the Battalion area were fired on by the adjacent AA units. At 1715A Battery "A" was bombed by a single enemy plane using fragmentation bombs. Pfc Harvey J. Clefish was killed and five men were wounded. One of the wounded, Pfc Falcon was evacuated to the hospital and the other four were treated at the Battalion Aid Station and returned to duty. The four men, Pfc Snow and Ricciardi and Privates Giambattista and Buso were decorated by the Battalion Commander with the Order of the Purple Heart.

Orders were also received the same day from VII Corps awarding the Bronze Star Medal to Tec 4 John W. Chec, Tec 5 Lloyd O. Myers and Tec 5 Howard G. McGuire all of Headquarters Battery, 980th Field Artillery Battalion.

At 1200A 4 December 1944 the Battalion was detached from 142nd Field Artillery Group and attached to the 188th Field Artillery Group. The Battalion however was to continue firing for the 142nd Field Artillery Group until 1900A.

History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 34 Continued

During the afternoon of the 4th the Battalion was visited by Lt Colonel Culehan, Assistant Inspector General, VII Corps. Lt Colonel Culehan was inquiring into the matter of unequal Officer-Enlisted Men relations, such as officers getting the pick of the rations for their mess; officers living in buildings while the men slept in pup tents or whether the officers were getting more passes than the men. Lt Colonel Culehan report for this Battalion was satisfactory. At 1615A enemy planes were over the area and were fired upon by the adjacent AA units.

By the 6th, the gun tubes had been worn to such an extent that a few of the guns were beginning to throw rotating bands, particularly Gun No. 1721 of Battery "B".

On 8 December 1944 the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Welch made an inspection of the Battalion OP's and a reconnaissance for more observation. He found the front areas to be heavily mined by the enemy. He was strafed once by enemy aircraft. The Battalion began experimenting with a '11 Flash Reducer. The Flash Reducer consisted of two strips of red cotton cloth fitted with silk tie strings for tying the Reducer to the powder charge. The cotton strips were divided into three channels filled with Potassium Sulphate and black powder. The Flash Reducer was also supposed to increase the muzzle velocity slightly. After firing several rounds the following data was obtained: On the first round from the gun, the reducer was not effective, the second was partially effective and from the third round on the muzzle flash was reduced about 95 percent, both in daylight and darkness. At the same time the muzzle blast was reduced correspondingly. The use of the reducer produced excessive amounts of a white smoke which tended to disclose the position area during daylight hours. When using supercharge, the muzzle velocity was increased slightly, but decreased when using normal charge. The effect of the reducer on the range was so extremely erratic that it was impossible to be sure where the rounds would land. The speed of the recoil was also increased which resulted in a much greater shock to the recoil mechanism and caused the gun to buck violently. The Battalion Commander recommended that the '11 Flash Reducer not be used because of the extreme range error. At 2130A Battery "A" was subjected to 19 rounds of 170mm Artillery fire. Most of the rounds were air or tree bursts. However, four rounds burst on impact within 15 to 20 feet of the No. 1 gun. There were no casualties or damage to materiel.

At 0745A 10 December 1944 the VII Corps made an attack on the entire Corps front. The Battalion supported the attack by firing counter-battery missions and concentrations on towns from H Hour minus 36 minutes to H Hour plus 42 minutes. At 0940A No. 2 gun of Battery "C" was temporarily out of action due to an equilibrater leaking nitrogen. No. 4 gun of Battery "B" went out of action at 1622A, because of an obturator spindle bushing burning out. At 1725A, some 28 enemy planes over the Battalion area were fired at by the attacked AA unit. No. 4 gun of Battery "B" was repaired by Ordnance and back in action at 1800A. On the afternoon of 10 December 1944 a school of fire was established by the Battalion Executive Officer, Major Richard R. Watson, for the purpose of instructing the new officers, that had been commissioned by battlefield commissions, in the methods of precision fire. The school was also a refresher course for the older officers of the Battalion.

During the night of 10-11 December 1944, one of the Battalion Liaison airplanes No. 4330116, was torn loose from its moorings by a high wind and thrown over on its back, completely demolishing the plane. Investigation disclosed that the mooring stakes were torn loose from the anchors by the force of the wind.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 35 Continued.

At 0840A 11 December 1944 the No. 3 gun of Battery "C" was temporarily out of action with a faulty equilibrator. At 2355A a robot bomb passed over the Battalion area at an elevation of 2300 feet, travelling in a northwesterly direction.

On the 13th the Battalion received authorization from First United States Army to increase the basic load of the Battalion by 60 rounds as long as the Battalion was equipped with the three M-4 tractors. This addition brought the authorized basic load to 1308 rounds.

On the afternoon of the 13th, Brigadier General Palmer, Commander VII Corps Artillery visited the Battalion for 20 minutes, speaking to the Battalion Staff and Battery Commanders.

On the morning of the 14th, the Battalion fired preparations and counter-battery missions in support of the Infantry attack at 0715A. The Battalion Commander and Executive Officer made a reconnaissance to the north and east of the Battalion for possible future occupation.

By 0600A the next day the 15th the Battalion had fired 40,027 rounds in combat. The Battalion Commander attended a demonstration of a new type artillery fuze in Holland. This new type of fuze was designated primarily for howitzers so this Battalion did not have the use for it.

Gun No. 2042 of Battery "C" threw a rotating band the morning of the 16th and Gun No. 1143 of Battery "A" threw a rotating band in the afternoon. At 2010A enemy aircraft over the area were fired on by the 90mm AA units.

At 0050A 17 December 1944 enemy aircraft over the area were again fired on by adjacent 90mm AA units. At 0540A the Battalion received word that at 0330A 90 transport planes were heading west 25 miles south of Aachen and at the same time 25 JU88's were flying towards Aachen, also 90 other unidentified planes seemed to be regrouping over the VII Corps area. The 188th Field Artillery Battalion reported approximately 15 paratroopers landing in and near their area. The 104th Infantry Division sent Infantry patrols to investigate. The attached AA unit report that the British had intercepted a German radio message stating that German paratroopers would be dropped near Aachen at 0530A. One bomb, apparently a delayed fuze type, exploded near the No. 2 piece of Battery "A" at 0525A, causing four casualties. Three of the wounded, Corporal Johnson, Private Lessard and Private Martin were evacuated to the hospital while Private Bassuck was treated at the Battalion Aid Station and returned to duty. He was decorated with the Order of the Purple Heart by the Battalion Commander. At 1030A Gun No. 1751 of Battery "B" threw another rotating band. At 1115A a "dog fight" took place over the Battalion area with a large number of planes taking part. At 1900A the Battalion established road blocks in the three gun battery areas. The 438th AAA reported that ten paratroopers were dropped at Hastenrath at 2130A. At 2236A, 24 hostile aircraft were reported east of Stolberg.

At 0025A 18 December 1944, 20 to 50 white flares were reported being dropped south of Battery "C" area. Battery "B" reported anti-personnel bombs to their left rear and Battery "A" reported anti-personnel bombs to their left front. At 1030A enemy aircraft over the area were fired at by 90mm AA units.

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History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 36 Continued

At 0400A one JU 88 was shot down in flames and crashed approximately one mile south of Battery "C" area. The pilot though badly burned, parachuted to safety and was captured by men of the 90mm AA unit in position to the rear of Battery "C". Battery "A" 438 AAA also captured an enemy pilot who had been shot down during the night. Approximately 15 enemy aircraft were over the area at 0905A. Enemy aircraft were over the area again at 0955A, 1004A and 1020A. Personnel of the Battalion Air Section captured two German paratroopers near the Battalion Air Strip at 1100A. During the afternoon the Battalion commander and Battery Commanders' parties made a reconnaissance for occupation of position one mile north of Heister.

At 1125A, 19 December 1944, the Battalion Commander left the area with complete reconnaissance parties to reconnoiter for positions south of Rotgen in the V Corps Sector. An enemy plane over the area at 1345A was shot down by adjacent 90mm AA units. At 1525A, the Battalion Executive Officer reported to the VII Corps Security Officer to receive plans for the formation of a provisional Task Force to be used as a Corps Reserve in case of emergencies. The Battalion Commander and his reconnaissance parties returned to the Battalion area at 1530A. At 1920A, personnel of Battery "B" halted a quarter ton G&R car approaching a road block. After the second command to halt was given to the occupants, the vehicle was brought to a stop and one of the occupants fired two shots at the sentries and the vehicle was immediately turned around and driven off in the opposite direction. The back-up guard fired two rounds from his carbine without visible results. It was impossible to use the .50 caliber machine gun covering the road block because of lack of visibility.

By 0800A 20 December 1944 the Battalion had formed a Provisional Task Force consisting of a Task Force Headquarters and Three Task Force Companies for use as a mobile reserve for the VII Corps. The Force was set up with the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Welch as Task Force Commander and the Three Gun Battery Commanders as Company Commanders. At 0820A the reconnaissance parties left to make a reconnaissance for positions north and west of Rotgen, but returned to the Battalion area at 1030A when it was learned that the contemplated move had been cancelled.

The Battalion Commander left the area at 0800A 21 December with complete reconnaissance parties to reconnoiter for positions in an area approximately six miles north of Marche, Belgium. Until the arrival of the Battalion the reconnaissance parties were the only American troops opposing the German lines along the L'ourthe River from the towns of Noiseux, Grand Enneille to Petite Enneille. At 0840A the Battalion received the orders to cease firing and to place the guns on hard standing. Movement orders were received from VII Corps at 1200A. At 1600A, the Battalion left the area to begin its 89-mile counter-march to the vicinity of Noiseux, Belgium in support of the VII Corps counter-attack against the German break-through. The Battalion marched from its position at Mausbach, through Stolberg, Aachen, Eupen, and Liege clearing there at 2300A. From there the Battalion turned south passing near Emptinne (Coor. PL495) and arriving at Marche, Belgium at 0700A 22 December 1944 and went into temporary rendezvous at 0740A on the highway two miles north of Marche. At 1145A the Battalion went into a bivouac position north of Noiseux, Coor. P3291. The Battalion established a position defense with a perimeter guard, coordinating with the 2nd Battalion, 290th Infantry. On arrival into the area the Battalion received orders to maintain radio silence.

50°19'32"N
5°07'22"E
50°11'42"N
5°22'39"E

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By EM NAVA, Dale

History, Headquarter 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 37 Continued.

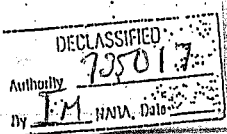
At 2020A the Battalion received orders to occupy positions in the near vicinity with an Azimuth of fire of 3400 mils. The Battalion made a night reconnaissance night survey and night occupation of position; this was the first night survey for the Battalion since its entry into combat. By 0150A 23 December 1944, the Battalion was layed and ready to fire. The Battalion CP was established in the town of Grande Enneille, Coor. P321934. At 0930A orders were received from the Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery that the Battalion would neither register nor fire except in an emergency. The Mission of the Battalion was to hold at all costs. There would be no withdrawal. A limitation of Air OP's was established allowing only one Air OP in the air at a time from the Corps Artillery. The Battalion Executive Officer investigated a rumor that the enemy was forcing a river crossing near the Battalion area. Investigation revealed that a Belgium civilian had been shot while crossing the river in the company of four other civilians. It was impossible to determine from whence the shot had come. At 2340A the Battalion shifted two guns to a compass of 2300 mils to handle missions on the left flank of the Battalion. The guns shifted were Battery "C" No. 3 and Battery "B" No. 4.

50°19'50"N
5°22'40"E

On the morning of the 24th the Battalion established an OP south of Marche on the Infantry OPFR. At 1230A a P38 was shot down over the Battalion area by an enemy jet propelled plane. The P38 crashed to the rear of Battery "C" area, setting the CP of the Attached AA unit on fire. A FW190 flew down to strafe the area of the crash and was shot down by an American P51. The FW190 crashed approximately one and one-half miles from the Battalion area. The remaining three guns of Battery "C" were shifted to a center of field of fire, 2300 mils and the No. 4 gun of Battery "B" shifted back to Azimuth 3400 mils. Battery "A" was moved to the flank on an Azimuth of fire of 3400 mils so that the dangerously crowded conditions of the Battalion area could be relieved.

Turkey was served for dinner the next day, Christmas, and most of the Batterys invited a few Belgium children to dinner in true American spirit. At 1430A Battery "C" was shifted back to a compass of 3200 mils. Guns No. 1243 threw several rotating bands during the afternoon and evening. Four P38's bombed and strafed an area 1000 yards northwest of the Battalion CP. It was apparently misidentification of target. At 1635A the Battalion was warned to be on the watch for a Major Davis claiming to be from the XVIII Corps and advising civilians to evacuate the area.

During the 24 hour period from 0600 25 December 1944 to 0600A 26 December 1944 the Battalion fired 1034 rounds of ammunition; the record expenditure for the Battalion during any similar period. The Battalion fired so much ammunition for supporting fires and counter-attack missions that the normal fifth section ammunition train could not resupply the Battalion fast enough. A second ammunition train of six 7½ ton gun trucks was formed and used. A third train of seven 2½ ton trucks and one ton trailers was also formed and used to haul ammunition. Three of the 2½ ton trucks were borrowed from the attached AA battery. At 2010A the Battalion was warned to expect enemy bombers in support of the 116th Panzer Division from 2100A to 0100A 27 December 1944. Authority was given the Battalion to fire on an L4 airplane flying over the Battalion area during the hours of darkness. This plane was captured plane being used by the enemy. At 2155A an enemy airplane dropped four HE bombs to the left rear of Battery "B" and was fired on by the adjacent AA units.



History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 38 Continued

The 84th Division reported that an American 1/4 Ton vehicle was operating in the area with five German soldiers in it. VII Corps reported that an American 2-1/2 Ton GMC loaded full of enemy soldiers had been spotted in the towns of Maffe and Failon.

On the 27th the Battalion furnished a 3/4 Ton weapons carrier to carry the body of a Belgian civilian, that had been killed at the river crossing, to the graveyard. 1/Sgt Heath of Headquarters Battery was in charge of the vehicle and acted as guard of honor during the funeral ceremony. At 1735A the road blocks were warned to be on the lookout for a 2-1/2 Ton vehicle stolen from the 116th AAA Bn. Two paratroopers were reported descending in the vicinity of P1890 at 2313A flashing red and green signals during the descent. No airplane had been shot down at that time. The 84th Division Artillery reported that two paratroopers were also dropped in the vicinity of P230950 sometime before midnight.

The 84th Division Artillery observers reported that the Battalion had knocked out and set on fire three enemy tanks with concentration No. 247 fired at 0135A 28 December 1944. Colonel Jones, 84th Division Artillery reported that the enemy infantry attack had been stopped.

A "flying bomb" landed between Batterys "A" and "B", Coor. P38149434 at 1545A on the 29th. The crater was nine feet deep and 33 feet in diameter. Parts and fragments were sent to higher headquarters. There was no damage nor casualties. A 3/4 ton C&R car of Battery "C" skidded on an icy road and went over a seven foot embankment killing Tec 5 James Peterson and injuring Tec 5 Musick and Pfc Humphrey all of Battery "C". All batterys reported guns throwing an occasional rotating band.

General Palmer, Corps Artillery Officer visited the Battalion at noon for about 15 minutes. He expressed regret at not being able to have visited the Battalion on Christmas day but wished the Battalion a Happy New Year and good shooting. He remarked that the Battalion was the best damned artillery unit that he had ever been around. Guns No. 2086, 1108 and 1143 each threw a rotating band during the afternoon.

A British "Spitfire" airplane strafed near the road block of Battery "A" at 1015A 31 December 1944. Corporal Edward Davis, Battery "B" Agent was wounded by shell fragments from the plane's 20mm guns. At 2215A the Battalion Commander was notified to meet the Group Commander at 0900A the next morning, prepared to go on a reconnaissance. As a New Years Greeting to the Germans, the Battalion fired three volleys, at 2400A, on a selected target, along with other Field Artillery Battalions of the VII Corps.

The Battalion fired a total of 45,986 rounds of ammunition in combat during the year of 1944. The present tubes have been worn to such an extent that they have thrown a total of 20 rotating bands to date.

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By FM NAWA, Date

History, Headquarters, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 39 Continued.

At 0001A 1 January 1945 the Battalion was in position at Noiseux, Belgium, Coor. P321934. The Battalion was attached to the 188th Field Artillery Group and in support of the VII Corps Counter-attack against the German thrust into Belgium through the Ardennes.

An enemy plane over the area at 0425A was fired upon by an adjacent AA Unit. At 0845A, the Battalion Commander left on reconnaissance with complete parties. At 0935A, the Battalion received Glose Station March Order and the Battalion Executive Officer reported to the Group Command Post to receive the march time and route. The IP time was to be 1400A and the IP was the Noiseux Bridge. The March Number was J-5. The Battalion left the area at 1400A and reached the release point at 1610A. The Battalion closed in position south of Fanzel, Coor. P448-918, at 1640A, the Battery "B" was laid and ready to fire at 1730A. Battery "C" was unable to occupy a position within the Battalion area and went into bivouac for the night pending assignment of a new area by VII Corps Artillery.

50° 18' 21" N
5° 33' 24" E

Battery "C" occupied position outside of the Battalion area early the next morning. The Battalion was refused permission to register and remained silent throughout the day. The Battalion received an additional allowance of 8 gasoline beacons per prime mover over and above T/O and E, from First United States Army.

During the morning of the 3rd, the Battalion supported the attack of the 2nd Armored Division, without registration. After the preparation for the attack had been fired the Battalion received permission to register. After registering the following data was found to be: Battery "B" - the initial elevation and adjusted elevation were identical. The deflection was 20 yards right of the target. Battery "A", the initial round was 20 yards to the right of the target and 50 yards beyond it. Battery "C", the initial round was 20 yards left of the target and 50 yards beyond. During the afternoon, Gun No. 1108 threw two rotating bands and Gun No. 1194 threw one.

At 2230A 4 January 1945, a "Flying Bomb" passed over the Battalion area at a very low altitude, travelling West.

The Battalion continued to support the attack of the 2nd Armored Division on the 5th. Several guns of the Battalion threw rotating bands during the day.

During the forenoon of the 6th, the Battalion fired several missions in support of the 2nd Armored Division attack. Two B-26 Bomber Crews visited the Battalion on a Ground Force Orientation course. The gun crews of the Battalion explained the workings of guns to the Bomber Crews and a Battalion volley was fired with the visitors in the gun pits.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 40 Continued

During the forenoon of January 7th, the Battalion Commander made a reconnaissance for new positions in the vicinity of Odeigne.

During the 24 hour period from 0600 7 January 1945 to 0600 8 January 1945, the Battalion fired 1097 rounds, the greatest 24 hour expenditure to date. At 0612A, 8 January 1945, the Battalion fired its 50,000th round in combat while firing a harrassing mission of Battalion 3 volleys on an assembly area one and one half miles North of Laroche. At 0733A the Battalion received Close Station March Order. The Battalion marched to its new position by Battery, Battery "C" leaving at 0930A, Battery "B" at 1015A, and Battery "A" at 1100A. The Battalion experienced some difficulty on the ice covered roads in braking the guns. It was felt that chains were necessary on the gun wheels to provide better braking surface. The M-4 Tractors with rubber treads could hardly make the trip even with no towed load, due to lack of traction. Prior to the arrival of Battery "A" in its new position, Capt Byron W. Todd, the Battery Commander, was injured and evacuated to the hospital when his command car struck a tellermine. The driver was uninjured and the Radio Operator, Tec 4 Bateman was slightly injured on the leg. He was decorated with the Order of the Purple Heart later at the Battalion Aid Station by the Battalion Commander. By 1500A all the guns had arrived in the new position at Odeigne, Coor P538862 and were ready to fire. The Battalion shared its new position area with an Infantry Cannon Company that was in position firing.

50° 15' 27" N
5° 41' 07" E

At 0200A the next morning 9 January 1945, the Battalion was ordered to shift 5 guns of the Battalion to a compass 3800 m to provide close support for the 2nd Armored Division. At 0235A, the Battalion was ordered to cease firing on all interdiction missions for the night to save ammunition for its scheduled fires in support of the attack. At 0345A the Battalion was ordered not to fire into its new field of fire until a new minimum elevation could be obtained, which was not obtained until late the next morning due to the heavy snowstorm and resulting lack of visibility. At 1138A, two "88" duds landed between the gun positions of Battery "B" and Battery "C". T/Sgt Triggs, Service Battery, was wounded and evacuated when the Battalion wrecker ran over a Tellermine while attempting to retrieve the Command Car of Battery "A" which had been wrecked the previous day. Tec 4 Winegar, Service Battery, was slightly wounded at the same time, and was treated at the Battalion Aid Station. He was decorated with the Order of the Purple Heart by the Battalion Commander. Sixteen tellermine had been found and detonated in the immediate area by the Engineers and they had abandoned the area as it was impossible to detect all the mines because of the snow. A 3/4 ton Weapons Carrier had the left rear wheel and gasoline tank blown off at the rear echelon of Battery "C" at Manhay, Belgium at 1605A. The vehicle had returned from hauling water and had been parked in the Battery Area about 20 minutes. The left rear wheel was sitting over a small wooden drain which apparently contained some sort of delayed fused mine. 1st Lt Thomas H. Evans, Jr., was assigned Battery Commander of Battery "A". Lt Ackard was transferred to Battery "B" and Lt Deppen was transferred to Battery "A" as Executive Officer.

← Granddads bulldozers

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 41 Continued

On the morning of the 10th, the Battalion supported the 2nd Armored Division with scheduled fires. GO#1, VII Corps, dated 10 January 1945 was received awarding the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to S/Sgt Hiserman, and the Air Medal to 1st Lt Carlson. At 1550A, the Battalion shifted the five guns that were laid on an azimuth of 3800m back to an azimuth of 3300 A. During the period from 8 January to 10 January the Air OP's were unable to operate due to the heaviest snowfall of the season.

At 2315A 11 January 1945 a TWX was received from First United States Army stating that the Flash Reducer M-1 would not be used in the guns when firing supercharge, nor would supercharge be fired without first firing two warm-up rounds of normal charge when the temperature was 20 degrees Farenheit or lower.

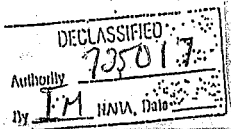
At 1950A the next day, Battery "A" and "B's" Y Azimuth of center of field of fire was shifted to 2500 A. Gun No. 1721 of Battery "B" was back in action at 1435A the 13th, after being out of action for 48 hours. During the afternoon the Battalion Commander and his reconnaissance parties made a reconnaissance for position to the west of Bihain.

The Battalion received Close Station March Order for Battery "B" and "C" and Headquarters Battery at 0700A 14 January 1945 and the Fire Direction Center was taken over by Battery "A" under direction of the Battalion ASS't S-3, Captain Read. The Battalion marched by infiltration with the first elements leaving at 0800A. Battery "B" was laid and ready to fire at 1130A. Battery "A" received Close Station March Order at 1215A and left its position area at 1245A. The Battalion was closed in its new position at Les Tailles, Coor. P580827 at 1505A. Corporal Penn and Pfc Wallace, Headquarters Battery, were slightly wounded by shell fragments at the kitchen at noon. They were decorated with the Order of the Purple Heart by the Battalion Commander. Lt Colonel Campbell, VII Corps Artillery S-3 visited the Battalion Fire Direction Center for 10 minutes at 1455A. The No 1 Gun of Battery "B" and No 3 Gun of Battery "C" went out of action at 2050A with equilibrators trouble. Gun No. 1143 of Battery "A" went out of action at 0115A the next morning with a stuck breech block. General Palmer, Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery visited the Battalion during the afternoon for half an hour. The no. 3 Gun of Battery "C" was back in action at 1705A.

50° 13' 38" N
5° 44' 44" E

The No. 1 Gun of Battery "A" was back in action at 1135A on the 16th. The Battalion Commander made a reconnaissance during the afternoon to the South and East, but the Battalion did not occupy the new positions. The Battalion received verbal authority from the Signal Supply Officer, First United States Army to retain an extra PE-75. This extra PE-75 was to be on a loan basis.

The village Priest in whose house the Battalion CP was located, requested the Battalion Commander to have the Armored Unit take their prisoners from out of his Church. The Battalion Commander made arrangements to have the prisoners taken out the following morning. Prior to the arrival of the American Forces, the enemy had stabled their horses in the Church.



History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 42 Continued

The Battalion was detached from 188th FA Group at 1355A, 19 January 1945 and attached directly to VII Corps Artillery. The Battalion was attached to the 142nd FA Group for Administration only, except Class V Supply.

The No. 1 Gun of Battery B was back in action on the afternoon of the 21st.

At 1145A, 22 January 1945 the village Priest noticed two young civilian men walking down the road in front of the Battalion CP, whom he didn't recognize. He called attention to this fact to the Battalion Commander who notified the Battalion S-2 to pick the men up. Captain Mouw and r/Sgt Ferguson placed the men under arrest. They carried no identification papers and were unarmed. They stated they had escaped from Germany and had passed through the lines. The two men were taken to VII Corps CIC where they related they were Frenchmen who had been taken to Germany as forced laborers on July 20, 1944. They had escaped and were on their way to Strasbourg when they were apprehended. VII Corps evacuated them to First United States Army for further questioning.

Since the village in which the Battalion was located, was too small, to have its own Civil Affairs officials, the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Harold O. Welch contacted VII Corps G-5 for food for the hungry villagers. Twenty-two cases of "C" rations, 4 cases of "C" ration biscuits and 20 blankets were procured which were distributed to the villagers by the priest. At 2031A, the same day, the Battalion, along with 21 other artillery battalions, fired the same day, the Battalion, along with 21 other artillery battalions, fired Battalion five volleys at the Division Artillery Headquarters of the 2nd SS Panzer Division. The target was located at P776795, four and one half miles southwest of Thommen.

At 0255A the next morning, ^{23 Jan} Gun No. 1092 of Battery "B" was out of action with the obturator spindle bushing burned out. The Battalion Commander left with billeting parties for each of the batteries at 1050A to make a reconnaissance for bivouac positions at Ciney, Belgium. The Battalion Commander returned at 1835A leaving the billeting parties at Ciney.

The Battalion executed Close Station March Order at 0900A the 24th and left the position areas at 1200A. This constituted the first complete withdrawal from action on the continent after over seven months of combat and 55,555 rounds had been fired against the enemy. The March No. was J-125 and the route of march was from the position to Manhay, Erezee, Hotton, Marche and then to Pessoux arriving at the release point at 1540A. The Battalion was closed in its new area at 1645A. Batterys "A" and "B" were located in Chateaux, Battery "C" and Headquarters Battery were stationed in the town of Ciney. Service Battery was located at Leignon. The Battalion CP was in Ciney at Coor. PL23915. Lt Colonel Welch was placed in temporary command of the 142nd Field Artillery Group, while Colonel Thompson was on leave to London, England. The Battalion was to remain in this position until further notice, repairing and maintenancing its equipment and rehabilitating its personnel.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 43 Continued.

The 25th and 26th were spent cleaning and repairing materiel. At 1800A 26 January 1945 two road blocks were established to check all military and civilian personnel coming into the Corps Area. The town of Ciney was placed on Limits to the 980th Field Artillery Battalion with curfew set at 2400A each night. Small arms firing, footdrill and motion pictures were scheduled in addition to the care and maintenance of materiel and rehabilitation of personnel.

A TWX was received from First United States Army dated 25 January 1945 appointing Tec 3 Fred W. Tyree, Medical Department Detachment a Second Lieutenant in the Medical Administration Corps, AUS. He was sworn in as a 2nd Lt AUS on the morning of 26 January 1945 by the Battalion Commander.

Battery "B" moved to a new location at noon, into a Chateau which the British had vacated. At 1330A General Palmer, VII Corps Artillery Commander decorated members of the Battalion before a formation composed of a representative battery of Enlisted Men from the Battalion and all of the Battalion Officers. At the close of ceremony, he gave a short speech on the excellence of the American Artillery and the excellent record that the 980th Field Artillery Battalion had established. He stated the Battalion had never been given a job which they hadn't accomplished in a superior manner. Those being decorated were as follows: Bronze Star Medal: Tec 4 Chec, Tec 5 McGuire, Tec 5 Meyers and Pfc Burlingame; Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal: 1st Lt Max E. Young; First Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal: 1st Lt Lloyd O. Pruett and S/Sgt Hiserman; Air Medal: 1st Lt Carlson and S/Sgt Hiserman.

Captain Read, Battalion Ass't S-3 left on a three day orientation tour with the 9th Tactical Air Force. The Battalion established its own Provost Guard in the town of Ciney.

On the 28th, Colonel O'Meara, Assistant VII Corps Artillery Officer visited the Battalion CP to gain information to help in securing new gun tubes for the battalion. The average number of service rounds per tube at this time was 1768 rounds.

On the 28th the drill schedule was cut to four hours with the remainder of the time taken up in shows, recreation and trips to the shower point.

On the 30th the Battalion CP was moved to an adjacent house, Headquarters Battery was moved into other billets in town. Captain Read returned from his orientation tour with the 9th Tactical Air Force. He reported an interesting time and that things in the Air Corps were also rough.

On the 31st Service Battery moved from Leignon to the building in Ciney which had been vacated by Headquarters Battery. Two First United States Army Ordnance Officer visited the Battalion inspecting gun tubes, for the possibility of replacement.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 44 Continued.

At 0001 1 February 1945 the Battalion was in bivouac in and around Ciney, Belgium, Coor. P123915 for the purpose of rehabilitation of personnel and maintenance and repair of equipment. A four hour drill schedule was in use, with the afternoon being taken up with recreation.

At 1730A 2 February 1945 the Battalion was placed on a 25 hour alert for movement back into action. All the equipment in Ordnance repair shops was to be withdrawn immediately.

At 0100A on the 3rd, the Battalion was ordered to be ready to leave on two hours notice anytime after 0730A. A three truck reconnaissance party was to be at VII Corps Forward CP at 0730A, prepared to stay and not return to the Battalion at Ciney. Previous arrangements had been made to have ten old tubes exchanged for ten new tubes at the 516th Ordnance Company at Namur, Belgium starting at 0930A on the 3rd. At 1011A the 3rd, the Battalion received orders to check with the Assistant Corps Artillery Officer at 0700A for verification of the exchange of gun tubes. The Battalion Commander and reconnaissance parties left the area at 0630A to report to the VII Corps Forward CP. At 0745A, a message was received from VII Corps Artillery to replace the old tubes as planned. Three guns of Battery "C" left the area at 0900A, three of Battery "A" at 0930A and the four guns of Battery "B" left the area at 1030A for the 516th Ordnance Company at Namur, Belgium for the purpose of obtaining new tubes. At 1100A the Battalion received orders to send the remaining two guns to Ordnance as the orders had been changed and the Battalion was to receive a complete set of new tubes. The two guns left the area at 1130A. A salvage drive was held to recover gasoline beacons in and around the Battalion area at Ciney. Some 1200 beacons were found and turned in at the gasoline railhead at Barse Station near Modave, Belgium. Major Robert W. Clirehugh left the area at 0900A to report to the Information and Education School at Paris, France.

The Battalion Commander and reconnaissance parties returned to the Battalion area at 1900A, with the word that the occupation for position had been postponed for this Battalion. At 2300A the Battalion Commander received orders to make a reconnaissance of three possible position areas in the vicinity of Gressenich. At 2330A, Captain Ralph J. Mouw, Battalion S-2 was sent to VII Corps Artillery Section as Liaison Officer. The Battalion Commander left on reconnaissance with Battery Commanders at 0745A the next morning, and returned to the Battalion area at 2005A.

At 0100A, 6 February 1945 the Battalion was ordered to move at 0800A with all available guns and the remaining guns at Ordnance would go direct to the position area as soon as the guns were ready. At 0710A Close Station March Order was given and the Battalion crossed the IP north of Ciney at 0817A. The Battalion traveled north on Highway N36, crossing Highway N4 at 0823A. The Battalion continued north, passing through Hauvelange at 0905A and arriving at the junction of Highway N35 and N36 at 0950A. From there the Battalion continued on to the junction of Highway N36 and N43 arriving thereat at 1024A. The Battalion turned east on Highway N43 and traveled to Liege, Belgium arriving at 1100A. The Battalion then marched northeast

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 45 Continued

On Route N3 to Aachen, Germany arriving at 1330A. From there the Battalion marched to its position area at Gressenich passing through Stolberg at 1415A Mausbach at 1429A and arriving at the release point at 1435A. The total distance of march was 76 miles. Only three guns of the Battalion made the march as the other nine were still in Ordnance. The Battalion CP was located in Gressenich, Germany, Coor. K999423. The three guns of Battery "A" that made the march, were ready to fire at 1728A. Considerable difficulty was experienced in emplacing the guns due to mud conditions. The fourth gun of Battery "A" arrived from Ordnance and was in position ready to fire at 1930A.

50° 46' 18" N
6° 11' 02" E

The four guns of Battery "C" returned from Ordnance and closed in the position area at 0945A, the next morning, 7 February 1945 and the four guns of Battery "B" closed in the position area at 1040A. Battery "C" was ready to fire at 1120A. At 1150A No. 3 gun of Battery "C" was out of action with traversing trouble. At 1230A Battery "B" was ready to fire. The No. 4 piece of Battery "A" was out of action at 1345A. Nitrogen was leaking past the floating piston in the recoil mechanism.

The Battalion Commander left on reconnaissance at 0845A the next ^{8 Feb} morning and returned to the Battalion area at 1205A. The Battalion went under control of the 18th Field Artillery Group at 1200A. The Battalion Commander made a reconnaissance for positions in the vicinity of Weisweiler and Langerwehe during the afternoon. Service Battery closed station at 1715A and moved to their new area southeast of Eschweiler. The No. 3 piece of Battery "C" was repaired by Ordnance and was back in action at 1700A.

The Batteries were given March Order at 0500A on the 9th and Close Station at 0600A. The Battalion was to march by infiltration starting at 0600A and clearing Schevenhutte by 0830A. The route of march was from Gressenich to Schevenhutte to Langerwehe and from there to the position areas in the vicinity of Weisweiler. The Battalion was attached to the 188th Field Artillery Group at 0500A. The first gun left the area at 0655A and the Battalion less Battery "C" had closed in the new area by 0930A. The position area of Battery "C" had been taken over for the CP location of the 104th Infantry Division Artillery. A new position area for Battery "C" was obtained and the Battery closed in position at 1030 A. The Battalion CP was located in Weisweiler at Coor. F002486. Orders were received from 188th Field Artillery Group to draw from the A.S.P. one unit of fire (600 rounds) over basic load at once. At 1700A the Battalion was restricted from firing on targets of opportunity until further notice.

During the morning of the 10th the Battalion Commander made a reconnaissance in the vicinity of Mariaweiler-Hoven for possible future occupation. At 1915A the Battalion was detached from the 188th Field Artillery Group and was attached to the 142nd Field Artillery Group. The Battalion was notified by the CIC that one of the five civilians that the Battalion had stopped at a road block and turned over to the CIC while the Battalion was at Ciney, Belgium had turned out to be a German counter-espionage agent wanted by both the American and Belgium Governments. This agent had worked his way into the Belgium underground who were aiding Allied fliers to escape after they had been shot down. The agent would notify the Germans, who, when, where

Hestory, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 46 Continued.

and how the escape was to be managed, and armed with this knowledge, they would appear on the scene and shoot all taking part, including the fliers.

Btry "A", 438th AAA which had been providing AA protection for the Battalion left the Battalion at 1300A 11 February 1945. At 1214A, two ME 109's over the area were fired upon by adjacent AA units. One of the AA shells either 37mm or 40mm caliber burst on striking the ground directly in front of the Battalion CP. The No. 2 piece of Battery "B" was out of action at 0950A 12 February 1945.

Major Robert W. Clirehugh who had been attending an Information and Education School in Paris, France returned during the morning. General Palmer, Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery visited the Battalion for ten minutes during the afternoon.

The No. 2 piece of Battery "B" left the Battalion and after having been repaired by Ordnance was back in action at 1135A on the 13th.

Enemy aircraft were near the Battalion area, dropping flares and bombs, between 1930A and 2030A the 14th. Some of the flares were dropped over Battery "C" position area but none of the bombs landed in the Battalion area.

As of 0600A 15 February 1945 the Battalion had fired 56,331 rounds in combat.

The First United States Army Velocity Calibration Team began calibrating the Battalion's guns at 1400A on the 16th.

The Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders made a reconnaissance for position areas in the vicinity of Mariaweiler-Hoven during the morning of the 17th.

The No. 4 piece of Battery "A" came back from Ordnance at 1030A the 18th and was ready to fire at 1215A. The Velocity Calibration of the Battalion was completed by 1600A, the results of the Calibration were as follows:

	TUBE NO.	MUZZLE VELOCITY		CORRECTIONS	
		in f/s	Yds		Mils
Btry A	3013	2809	minus 58.7	minus	2
	3018	2796	plus 29.2	plus	1
	3067	2806	minus 43.8	minus	1.6
	3072	2824	minus 175.2	minus	6.3
Btry B	1079	2827	minus 197.1	minus	7
	1201	2803	minus 21.9	minus	.08
	1700	2803	minus 21.9	minus	.08
Btry C	3021	2815	minus 109.5	minus	4
	1121	2826	minus 189.8	minus	6.8
	1199	2808	minus 58.4	minus	2
	1364	2825	minus 182.5	minus	6.5
	1739	2799	plus 7.3		0

Fired with Super-charge at a range of 17,000 yards and 2800 f/s taken as standard.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 47 Continued.

On the 21st Lt Colonel Miles N. Culehan from the VII Corps I.G. Officer visited the Battalion. It was a follow-up visit that he had made previously. He was checking on the morale of the men, whether they had the opportunity for showers or baths, laundry service, mail service and whether or not they were receiving Stars and Stripes regularly. He was very well satisfied with the condition of the men in the Battalion. At 2000A enemy aircraft over the area were fired upon by adjacent AA units.

At 0750A 22 February 1945, enemy aircraft over the Battalion area were fired upon by adjacent AA units. Pfc Louis Manzi, Battery "A" was wounded in both legs by a 37mm or 40mm AA shell which burst on striking the ground near him. He was evacuated to the 102nd Evacuation Hospital. Two 37mm AA projectiles burst on striking the ground, within 10 yards of Majors Clirehugh and Watson, while they were observing German jet-propelled airplanes. Neither officer was injured. One of the enemy aircraft, a JU 88 was observed leaving the area trailing smoke and apparently on fire. At 1105A, an enemy jet-propelled plane dropped two bombs, 200 yards from the Battalion CP, however there were no casualties among the personnel of the Battalion. Major General Collins, VII Corps Commander and Brigadier General Palmer, VII Corps Artillery Commander visited the Battalion at 1127A and talked to the Battalion Commander, Senior Staff Officers and Battery Commanders. Those present were; Lt Colonel Harold O. Welch, Majors, Robert W. Clirehugh, and Richard H. Watson, Captains, Kenneth F. Ames, John F. McGinty, Paul H. Richards, Donald A. Wood and 1st Lt Thomas H. Evans. General Collins quoted General Palmer as stating that the 980th Field Artillery Battalion was the best Corps in the Army. General Collins further stated that the Department of the Battalion had been excellent. Also that the Battalion always presented an excellent appearance. He stated that one way to judge an outfit was by its appearance; better the appearance the better the outfit.

Enemy jet-propelled aircraft were operating over the Battalion areas from 1655A to 1725A.

At 0215A, the next morning, 23 February 1945, a flying bomb passed over the area at an altitude of 500 feet. It was traveling from northeast to southwest. Starting at 0245A the Battalion fired a preparation in support of the attack of the First and Ninth Armies at 0330A. At noon, enemy aircraft operating over the Battalion area, were fired upon by adjacent AA units.

Nine privates were transferred from the Battalion to the 1255th Engineer Combat Battalion on the morning of the 24th by order of First United States Army. Captain McGinty, Lt Sherron, S/Sgt Peterson, Sgt Hargraves, Cpl Williamson and Tec 5 Schumacker were injured at 1400A the 24th in the vicinity of Mariaweller-Hoven, when the 3/4 ton C&R vehicle in which they were riding struck four American Anti-Tank Mines. S/Sgt Peterson, Sgt Hargraves and Cpl Williamson were evacuated to the hospital. The other three occupants of the vehicle were treated at the Battalion Aid Station and returned to duty. They were decorated with the Order of the Purple Heart by the Battalion Commander.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 48 Continued

The Battalion received Close Station March Order at 1810A and were to leave the area at 2200A. The Battalion marched to Mariaweiler-Hoven, Germany, Coor. WF089471 arriving there, at 2315A with nine guns. One gun was at Weisweiler being repaired by Ordnance and two of the gun prime movers stalled with engine trouble, but were repaired and closed in the area at 2340A.

50° 48' 59" N
6° 26' 38" E

All eleven guns of the Battalion were laid and ready to fire at 0300A the next morning 25 February 1945. The last gun arrived at the position area at 1100A after being repaired by Ordnance. An OP was established in a church tower near the CP. Church services were held in the church while observers were firing missions from the tower. Enemy jet-propelled aircraft were operating over the Battalion area throughout the day.

The Battalion Commander made a reconnaissance with the Battery Commanders during the morning of the 26th in the vicinity of Merzenich.

The Battalion received Close Station March Order at 0430A the next morning and a March Time of 0830A. The Battalion infiltrated with elements of the 3rd Armored Division, 8th Infantry Division and 104th Infantry Division and arrived at its new position area at 0940A. The Battalion CP was located at Merzenich, Germany, Coor. WF158484. The No. 1 piece of Battery A, Gun No. 3067 was out of action at 1025A with emulsified oil in its recoil system and left for Ordnance at 1550A.

Battery "A" 438th AAA Battalion rejoined the Battalion at 1000A 28 February 1945 with the mission of providing AA security. At 1300A the Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left on reconnaissance to reconnoiter for positions in the vicinity of Etzweiler. The Battalion received Close Station March Order at 1540A and left the area at 1645A. The Battalion closed in its new position at Etzweiler, Coor. WF173571, at 1821A. At 1730A, Battery "B's" M-4 tractor struck a land mine near Blatzheim as it was attempting to turn around, after having missed a turn in the route because of darkness. The front part of the tractor was burnt but the ammunition in the back-end and in two M-10 trailers being towed by the tractor were not damaged. Tec 4 Bland, Pfc's Zammitt, Battistella, Zerkowski and Babb, who were riding in the M-4 tractor were slightly injured and were treated at the Battalion Aid Station and returned to duty with their Battery.

50° 54' 27" N
6° 33' 39" E

At 0001A March 1, 1945 the Battalion was in position at Etzweiler, Germany, Coor. F173571 supporting the rapid advance of the VII Corps. At 0300A the Battalion fired preparation fires for the attack of the 104th Infantry Division. At 0920A, an enemy plane strafing in the Battalion area was shot down by adjacent AA units. At 1205A enemy aircraft were again over the area and drew a barrage of fire from the AA guns.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 49 Continued.

At 0655A the next morning, 2 March 1945, the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Harold O. Welch left for a seven day leave to London, England. Major Robert W. Clirehugh took command as acting Battalion Commander. During the afternoon the Acting Battalion Commander attempted to make preliminary reconnaissance for position near Huchelhoven but could not because the area was still under control of the enemy. The No. 4 piece of Battery "A" came back from Ordnance and was in position ready to fire at 1455A.

Major Robert W. Clirehugh made another reconnaissance for position during the morning of the 3rd but was unable to reach the assigned area as it was still occupied by enemy forces. Gun No. 1700 of Battery "B" threw a rotating band at 0922A. By noon, Liaison Plane, No. 4480345, that had been hit by falling anti-aircraft shell fragments at 0400A the 2nd, had been repaired and was ready for operation again. The Acting Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders attempted to reconnoiter in the vicinity of Huchelhoven during the afternoon but were unable to reach the assigned area. The Battalion sent an M4 tractor and the RD8 Bulldozer to the 635th Field Artillery Battalion (155mm Gun ML) to help the Battalion emplace its guns. The No. 1 piece of Battery "B", Gun No. 1079 was sent to Ordnance at 1445A to have the recoil repaired or replaced, as nitrogen was leaking past the floating piston. Guns No. 3013 and 3018 of Battery "A" each threw a rotating band at approximately 1740A.

The Batterys were given March Order at 0100A the 4th, and Close Station was given at 0445A. The Acting Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left the area at 0530A to make a reconnaissance for position in the vicinity of Neideraussem. The Battalion passed the Initial Point at Elsdorf at 0600A, arrived at the release point at 0700A and had closed in the area at 0720A. Coor. of the CP was W 250654. The Battalion was ready to fire at 0855A.

At 0830A on the 5th, the acting Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left to make a reconnaissance for position in the vicinity of Stommeln and Sinnersdorf and returned to the area at 1210A. While five men of Battery "B" were loading gravel into a 2½ ton truck near Elsdorf, Germany Coor. F16717000, a pile of German explosives detonated, killing Corporal Rensink, Pfc. Gardner, Pfc. Whitten, and badly injuring Pfc. Lovvold, who was evacuated to the hospital. The bodies of Corporal Rensink and Pfc. Gardner were not recovered. Pfc. Lovvold stated that all five of the men were present at the time of the explosion but he didn't know the cause of it. Close Station March Order was given at 1435A to Battery "A". Fire Direction Center was taken over by Battery "C" to direct the fires of Batterys "B" and "C" remaining in position. Battery "A" left the area at 1612A and was in the new area ready to fire at 1815A. The Battalion Fire Direction Center, Headquarters Battery and Service Battery also displaced at 1600A. The forward CP was established at Stommeln F319698 and the rear CP was established at the CP of Battery "C". March Order was given Batterys "B" and "C" at 0400A the next morning, 6 March 1945 and they left the area at 0700A. They made the trip to their new area North of Sinnersdorf in 55 minutes. An OP was established on the West Bank of the Rhine River by Lt. Morgan, Headquarters Battery.

51°01'25"N
6°45'58"E

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Authority 735017
By EM HMA Date

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 50 Continued.

A report was received from the 4th Cavalry Group the morning of the 7th, that concentrations 842, 844, and 845, fired by this Battalion in support of the 4th Cavalry Group was the most accurate firing that they had ever seen in the VII Corps. Orders were received from the French Government at Paris, that the Order of the Armee, Croix de Guerre with Palm, had been awarded to Lt. Colonel Harold O. Welch; the Order of the Corps d l'Armee, Croix de Guerre with Etoile Vermeil had been awarded to Major Richard K. Watson; and the Order of the Regiment, Croix de Guerre with Etoile de Bronze had been awarded to Corporal Leo. M. Carter, Headquarters Battery; all for meritorious service in action against the enemy in France. The Number 4 piece of Battery "B", Gun Number 1079 back from Ordnance and ready to fire at 1330A. The Battalion was detached from 142nd Field Artillery Group and attached to 179th Field Artillery Group at 1530A. The Battalion Commander, S-3, Communications Officer, and three Gun Battery Commanders, plus several Enlisted Men from the 635th Field Artillery Battalion visited the Battalion during the afternoon, taking notes on the Battalion's method of operations.

At noon of the 9th, the basic load of ammunition of the Battalion was reduced by one third until noon of the 10th. Lt. Colonel Harold O. Welch returned from leave at 1300A on the 10th. During the afternoon, the 142nd Field Artillery Group requested 100 rounds of HE ammunition, but the request was not approved by higher headquarters, so the transfer was not made. The following message was received from Headquarters ETOUSA and Headquarters, First United States Army dated March 10th:

The whole Allied Force is delighted to cheer the First United States Army, whose speed and boldness have won the race to establish our first bridgehead over the Rhine. Please tell all ranks how proud I am.

Signed, Eisenhower

To the men of the First Army who won this race, I extend my congratulations. I share the pride of the Supreme Commander in your fine achievement.

Signed, Courtney H. Hodges, Commanding

The Battalion Commander with his reconnaissance parties left the area at 0710A the 11th to report to the Commanding Officer of the 1st Infantry Division Artillery and make a reconnaissance for positions in the 1st Infantry Division zone of action. The Battalion was detached from 179th Field Artillery Group and attached to the 1st Infantry Division Artillery as of 0800A, with the mission of general support. The Battalion was given Close Station, March Order at 0730A and left the area at 1000A. The Battalion marched South arriving at the release point near Breinig, Germany at 1402A and closing in position at 1428A. The Battalion CP was located at Breinig at Coor. F459-395. General Palmer, Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery visited the Battalion for a few minutes at 1505A. The Battalion was ready to fire at 1715A. The Batterys had a difficult time occupying positions because of the soft, muddy terrain. At 2320A the Battalion joined with the 32nd Field Artillery Battalion and the entire 188th Field Artillery Group in a fire mission on a concentration of enemy vehicles in the town of Bevel.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 51 Continued.

At 1450A, the next day, an enemy aircraft over the area was fired at by adjacent AA units. The Battalion adjusted a Battalion of the 188th Field Artillery Group on enemy personnel implacing mortars at F559358, obtaining two direct hits. Battery "B", 153rd Field Artillery Battalion (8" Gun) was attached to the 980th Field Artillery Battalion at 1700A, for tactical operation. Captain Curtis, the Battery Commander reported to the Battalion Commander for orders at 1730A and the Battery closed in the Battalion area at 2100A but did not occupy until the next day due to darkness.

Battery "B", 153rd Field Artillery Battalion was laid and ready to fire at 1130A on the 13th. The Battalion received one T-83 (155mm self-propelled gun M-1) from the 559th Ordnance Company at 1930A for experimental purposes. The Battalion was to operate the gun under various conditions and make suggestions for changes and improvements. At 1800A the Battalion received orders from the 142nd Field Artillery Group to displace the following morning to a position area on the North edge of Bonn, Germany, and that the Group was moving to the South of Bonn and that the Battalion would be attached to them on their arrival.

At 0600A, on the 14th, March Order was given to Battery "C". Orders were received from 188th Field Artillery Group that the Battalion was to be under their control as of 0800A. Batterys "A" and "B" were given March Order at 0800A and Close Station was given all Batterys at 0825A. The Battalion left the area at 1000A and arrived at the release point by 1100A and was ready to fire at 1207A. The Battalion CP was located in Dransdorf, Germany Coor. W 517378. Battery "B", 153rd Field Artillery Battalion closed Station at 2315A in preparation for an early move the next morning.

As of 0600A, 15 March 1945, the Battalion had fired 65,688 rounds in combat. Battery "B", 153rd Field Artillery Battalion was detached from this Battalion at 0800A. Colonel Jerome F. Thompson, Commanding Officer, 142nd Field Artillery Group visited the Battalion at 1315A on the 16th with orders that the Battalion would revert to control of the 142nd Field Artillery Group as of 1600A.

The Battalion remained in position for several days firing to the North-east across the Rhine River, on enemy batterys and road junctions. During this time the guns and vehicles were washed and cleaned up. A letter was received from VII Corps dated 19th March 1945, addressed to all units, quoting the following message from the 12th Army Group:

"The Supreme Commander desires the following message to be transmitted to all ranks under your command."

The following message received from the Secretary of the United States Navy:

"For General of the Army, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force. The United States Navy joins the nation in admiration for the feats of Armies under your command and particularly sends its congratulations to the First United States Army on its historic crossing of the Rhine. Regards and all personal good wishes,

James Forrestal.

50°44'16"N
7°03'29"E

15 miles from
Remagen

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 52 Continued.

The following message received from Speaker Rayburn of the United States House of Representatives:

"At the request of the House of Representatives unanimously expressed, I send to you, the Officers and men of all services under your command, our congratulations and thanks for the magnificent victories recently achieved on the Western Front."

No Shell HE for the guns was available on the 20th at any of the ASP's. The Battalion Commander made a very detailed inspection of the Batterys, much to the sorrow of some of the Battery Commanders. On the 20th and the 21st, the carbines of the Battalion were modified by the 516th Ordnance Company. A new type sight, which included a windage scale and adjustable sight leaf, replaced the old type sight. The carbines were then taken and zeroed in, by the men on a rifle range at Battery "C's" CP, using an allotment of training ammunition.

During the afternoon of the 21st, the Battalion Commander made a preliminary reconnaissance for position East of the Rhine.

The Battalion Commander made another reconnaissance for position East of the Rhine on the morning of the 22nd. During the afternoon, the Battalion Commander brought back the message from the 142nd Field Artillery Group that the Battalion would not move for a few days, but would remain in position and fire to the Northeast across the Rhine in support of the 4th Cavalry Group. Wire communication was established with the 87th Armored Field Artillery Battalion and the 4th Cavalry Group.

The Battalion was given March Order at 1000A on the 24th and Close Station was given at 1025A. The Battalion passed its Initial Point at 1200A, crossed the Rhine River on a treadway bridge and arrived at the Release Point at 1330A. By 1350A the Battalion had closed into position at Ober pleis, Germany. Coord. F677346. The T-83 crossed the Rhine River on a ferry on the second attempt. The first time across the ferry grounded off shore, so the T-83 was brought back and transferred to a larger ferry which made the crossing without incident. The D-8 bulldozer crossed the Rhine on a heavy pontoon bridge to the South, as the trailer was unable to cross the treadway. Five or six shells of medium caliber landed in the Battalion CP area at 1425A, but caused no casualties within the Battalion.

Lt. Colonel Parsley from the Field Artillery Board visited the Battalion from 1030A to 1515A, on the 25th, inquiring into the performance of the T-83, whether or not the Battalion favored it, and what suggestions for improvement the Battalion wished to submit. The Battalion Commander, Lt. Colonel Harold O. Welch left the CP at 1250A with his driver Corporal Bonacci, to make a preliminary reconnaissance for position area in the vicinity of Bullesbach, Coord. F752349. They returned at 1450A with five German PW's that they had captured in the position area. The Battalion Commander left with the Battery Commanders at 1530A to complete the reconnaissance of the area and returned at 1740A. Battery "B" captured a prisoner while reconnoitering for gun positions. Gun Number 1364 of Battery "C" threw a rotating band at 2239A.

30° 42' 36" N
7° 16' 47" E

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By JM HANA, Date

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 53 Continued.

March Order was given at 0700A the next morning, 26 March 1945 and the Battalion Commander left on reconnaissance for position near Kircheib, Germany. Battery "B" captured 3 prisoners and Service Battery Captured 17 while reconnoitering their positions. The Battalion left Oberpfeis at 0900A, arrived at the Release Point at 1010A and closed in the position at 1050A. The vicinity of the Release Point was shelled by enemy smoke shells, just as the Battalion finished clearing. The Battalion Commander and the Executive Officer, along with a few Enlisted men present, took to the deepest and muddiest ditch available. The Battalion CP was established in Kircheib, Coor. F806345. The Battalion area was shelled intermittently during the afternoon with both smoke and Hb shell. Gun Number 1121 of Battery "C" threw a rotating band at 1830A.

0° 42' 35"
7° 27' 45"

At 1300A on the 27th, 142nd Field Artillery Group closed station and communications were established by radio. At 1315A, a German soldier in civilian clothes surrendered himself at the Battalion CP. General Palmer, Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery, visited the Battalion for 10 minutes at 1405A. The Battalion Commander left the Battalion at 1425A to make a reconnaissance for position in the vicinity of Altenkirchen. The Battery Commanders left later and met the Battalion Commander near the new position area. The Battalion Commander was injured in the right knee by falling debris when two shells struck the house in which he had taken cover.

March Order was given the Battalion at 0100A the next morning, 28 March 1945 and Close Station was given at 0145A. The Battalion left the area at 0400A and arrived at the Release Point Northeast of Altenkirchen at 0525A. The Battalion closed in position at 0545A and was laid and ready to fire at 0700A. The Battalion CP was located at F942326. At 2145A the T-83 was displaced forward to Coor. G12343424 to fire on the town of Siegen (G2053) at the rate of 12 rounds per hour until relieved the following morning by the 981st Field Artillery Battalion.

50° 41' 34" N
7° 39' 18" E

At 0815A, 29 March 1945, the Battalion was attached to VII Corps Artillery Fire Direction Center for fire missions only. The Battalion fired on personnel and vehicles north of the Sieg River during the morning for the First Division. As of 1200A the Battalion was relieved from the 142nd Field Artillery Group and VII Corps Artillery Fire Direction Center and attached to the 1st Infantry Division Artillery. The Battalion Commander left on reconnaissance for positions near Lippe, Germany at 1135A. The T-83 returned from its mission at 1225A. Close Station March Order was given to the Battalion at 1410A. The Battalion was to follow the 16th Infantry Regiment and did not pass the Initial Point until 1815A. The Battalion reached the Release Point at 2045A, closed into the area at 2215A and was ready to fire at 2330A. The Battalion CP was located in Lippe at coor. G227346. Service Battery captured a prisoner in their area while on reconnaissance at 1700A.

50° 42' 38"
8° 03' 32" E

Battery "A", 438th AAA AW Battalion received Close Station March Order at 0440A 30 March 1945 and left the area at 0500A with a new assignment. As of 0600A the Battalion fired 68,555 rounds in combat. Battery "A" captured a prisoner at 0700A. At 0900A the Battalion was given the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 32nd Field Artillery Battalion, in addition to general support of the First Infantry Division. Battery "A", 474th AAA, AW Battalion (SP), commanded by Captain Brothwell, assumed AA protection for

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By J.M. HNA, Date

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 54 Continued.

the Battalion at 1430A. The Battery was equipped with 8 M-15's, and 8 M-16's. Colonel Waters, Commanding Officer, 1st Infantry Division Artillery visited the Battalion CP for a few minutes at 1445A. Battery "B" captured 3 prisoners on the airfield near their position. Lt. George Long captured a German prisoner at Hof, Germany at 1800A while on a reconnaissance for adjacent units. Battery "C", 980th Field Artillery Battalion captured 4 prisoners at 0900A the 31st, in the woods near their gun position area.

At 0001A, 1 April 1945, the Battalion was in position at Lippe, Germany, Coor. G227346, attached to and in direct support of the First Infantry Division. Close Station March Order was given to the Battalion at 0900A. The Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left the area at 1000A with their reconnaissance parties, to march with the reconnaissance elements of Division Artillery. The Battalion was further attached to the 18th Combat Team for the march only and transported 100 Infantry men of the 18th Infantry Regiment on the Battalion's trucks. The Battalion marched from its area at 1530A, and crossed the Initial Point at Haiger, Germany, at its scheduled time, 1620A. The T-83 was marched at the head of the Battalion column for use as direct fire weapon in case of an attack upon the column by ground troops. The Battalion was forced to detour from the scheduled route due to enemy armored elements holding a section of the road. The Battalion marched 108 miles and arrived at the Release Point at Hagensdorf, Germany, at 0950B the next day. Just prior to arrival at the Release Point, two F-190's flew over the column but were fired on and driven away by Battery "A", 474th AAA Battalion, marching with in the Battalion column. The Battalion, less two guns of Battery "A", closed in position at 1100B. The Battalion CP was located in Hagensdorf, Coor. RB620259. The two gun trucks of Battery "A" were damaged in the radiator by running into the gun tubes in front of them in the blackout. Trucks were sent back after the guns and they were brought up during the evening.

SP 31 43" N
80 31 51 E

On the afternoon of the 4th, two prisoners were taken by the Air Section and one by Battery "B".

Orders were received from VII Corps on the 5th, awarding the 4th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to First Lieutenant Max E. Young and the 2nd Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to First Lieutenant Lloyd O. Pruett.

March Order was given the Battalion at 0800B 7 April 1945 and the Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left on reconnaissance for a new position at 0830B. Close Station was given the Battalion at 1000B and it left the area at 1035B crossing the Initial Point at Wunnenberg at 1100B. Battery "A", 474th AAA Battalion (SP) was detached from the Battalion upon the Battalion's displacement at 1035B. The Battalion was detached from First Infantry Division as of 1200B, and attached directly to VII Corps Artillery. The Battalion reached the Release Point at 1345B and was closed in position at 1430B. The Battalion CP was located at Dalhausen, Germany, Coor. RC078378.

51 37 44" N
90 17 39" E

The Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left on reconnaissance for position at 0600B the next morning 8 April 1945. Headquarters Battery captured a prisoner at 0735B. The Battalion Commander returned from reconnaissance at 0830B. Battery "B" was given Close Station March Order at 1000B and left the area at 1135B. They closed in their new position at 1330B and were ready to fire at 1415B. March Order was given to Battery "A" at 1030B and to

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History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 55 Continued

Battery "C" at 1530B. Close Station was given to both batterys at 1710B and the Batterys left the area at 1730B. Battery "A" was prevented from marching earlier because the 3rd Armored Division had road priority. Batterys "A" and "C" closed in the new position area at Deisel, Germany, Coor. G159338 at 1920B and were ready to fire at 2000B.

51° 35' 28"
9° 24' 36"

The Battalion Air Section took three prisoners on the afternoon of the 9th, after a short fire fight in which two Germans were wounded, but there were no American casualties.

The Battalion was detached from VII Corps Artillery at 0600B, 10 April 1945, and was attached to the 1st Infantry Division Artillery. Close Station March Order was given to the Battalion at 0600B and it left the area at 0800B. The Battalion Commander with his reconnaissance parties preceeded the Battalion and met it in a rendezvous position in the vicinity of Nienover, Germany. The Battalion crossed the Weser River and arrived at the rendezvous area at 1007B and was closed in the area by 1100B. The Battalion Commander left the rendezvous area at 1300B with his reconnaissance parties and the Battalion left the area at 1500B. The 2nd Platoon, Battery "B", 103rd AAA Battalion was attached to the Battalion at 1400B with the mission of providing Anti Aircraft security. The Battalion arrived at the Release Point at 1552B and was closed in its area at 1615B. The Battalion occupied a position of readiness by placing the guns over the gun stakes but did not uncouple the guns from the prime movers. The Battalion CP was located at Vahle, Germany, Coor. R4332437. All Batterys joined in rounding up a total of 17 prisoners in the Battalion area.

50° 40' 35"
9° 39' 48"

March Order was given to the Battalion at 0825B, the 11th and the Battalion Commander and the Battery Commanders left with their reconnaissance parties at 0900B. The Battalion left the area at 1000B, arrived at the Release Point at 1200B and was closed in a position of readiness at 1228B. The Battalion CP was located in Holtensen, Germany, Coor. R575494. Battery "A" captured 12 prisoners at 1300B while going after water. The Battalion Executive Officer took four prisoners while on reconnaissance for establishing road blocks at 1315B. Four more prisoners were taken during the afternoon to bring the total for the day to 20. Battery "A" captured five more prisoners during the night. Special Order No. 24, Headquarters, VII Corps dated 11 April 1945, awarded the Fifth Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to 1st Lt Max B. Young, and the Second Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to S/Sgt Richard Hiserman.

51° 43' 18"
10° 01' 01"

The Battalion received March Order at 0830B the next morning, 12 April 1945 and the Battalion Commander and the Battery Commanders left with their reconnaissance parties at 0840B. The Battalion closed station and left the area at 1000B. The Battalion closed in a position of readiness at Osterode, Germany, Coor. G739501, at 1145B. Personnel of Battery "A" were engaged in a fire fight with the enemy in a woods in front of the Battery gun position, during which Corporal R.H. Hutchins was killed and Pfc Fred Guyer was wounded. Pfc Guyer was returned to duty. Field Artillery Report Number 94, Headquarters VII Corps Artillery, dated 13 April 1945 reported the incident as follows:

51° 43' 24"
10° 15' 10"

On 12 April 1945, the three firing Batterys of the 980th Field Artillery Battalion (155G) were each in a small arms fire fight and took prisoners. Battery "A" received small arms fire while occupying position at G747488. A patrol

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 56 Continued

was formed immediately and the woods searched. In searching the woods, the patrol ran into a well defended road block and was forced to withdraw. One man was killed and another wounded in the action and one Prisoner of War was taken. Battery "B" took 27 prisoners, without loss to the Battery while occupying positions at U743489. Battery "C" received a report from a Polish worker that enemy troops were in the woods in the rear of the Battery position at U740487. A patrol was sent out to investigate and brought in 7 Prisoners of War. The Battalion total for the day was 35 Prisoners of War.

S-3 Periodic Report, Number 99, Headquarters 1st Infantry Division, dated 12 April 1945 reported the incident as follows:

The 980th Field Artillery Battalion in their new position just southwest of Osterode had several running fire fights with enemy infantry, capturing over 40 prisoners of war by 1800B.

At 1900B, the Battalion was given orders by the 1st Infantry Division Artillery to occupy firing positions and at 1915B the Battalion was ready to fire. Field Artillery Report Number 95, Headquarters VII Corps Artillery dated 14 April 1945 reported an Air OP adjustment at 1925B as follows:

At 1925B on 12 April 1945 an air observer of the 980th Field Artillery Battalion (155G) saw 3 tanks, a staff car, and a group of Infantry moving west along the road at Coor. C819495. The Battalion, not yet registered, fired one round at a road junction across the path of the column. The air observer was prepared to adjust the fire but the first round hit the road junction. Fire for effect was started at once and 42 rounds were fired. When the dust and smoke cleared, the Infantry had dispersed, the 3 tanks were stopped, and the staff car was racing down the road in the direction from which it came.

The Battalion took a total of 44 prisoners during the day.

Brigadier General Palmer, Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery, visited the Battalion for 50 minutes during the afternoon of the 13th. 2nd Lieutenant James B. Terry was transferred from the Battalion to Military Government, First United States Army.

The Battalion received orders at 0814B, 14 April 1945 to change the direction of fire to an azimuth of 1600 mils and by 0902B the Battalion was ready to fire in the new direction. Brigadier General Palmer visited the Battalion for 20 minutes during the afternoon. Battery "A" captured 5 prisoners during the day.

Battery "C" was given March Order at 0545B the next morning and left the area at 0700B. The Battalion Commander left on reconnaissance at 0640B to reconnoiter for a position area for Battery "C". Battery "C" closed in their new position area at Herzberg, Germany, Coor. C814428 at 0745B and was ready to fire at 0820B. The Battery captured two prisoners in its new area at 0830B. The T-83 (self-propelled 155mm Gun) was attached to Battery "C" at 1630B.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 57, Continued.

Battery "A" took two prisoners and Service Battery one, at 0800B the next morning, 16 April 1945. The Battalion was given March Order at 0835B and Close Station at 0900B. The Battalion crossed the Initial Point at 1000B, closed in the area at 1210B and was ready to fire at 1240B. The Battalion CP was located at St Andreasburg, Germany, Coor. G924495.

Battery "A" captured four prisoners at 1120B, the 17th. S-3 Periodic Report Number 104, Headquarters 1st United States Infantry Division Artillery, dated 17 April 1945, contained the following report on the Battalion.

"During the afternoon, considerable enemy vehicular and troop movement was observed and adjusted upon, on the road from O25529 Northeast to Rothehutte. The 5th, 7th and 980th Field Artillery Battalions conducted observed fire on the enemy traffic with excellent results. In addition, the 980th Field Artillery Battalion fired time on targets on possible assembly and traffic bottlenecks in Rothehutte, Elbingerode, and Elend."

At about 1900B, personnel at the Battalion CP were started by a great series of small arms fire coming down the main street. After the Battalion CP guards and other personnel had taken cover, they discovered that a man (German Prisoner) was trying to make a get away from the Military Police. The man was shot dead a few yards from the Battalion CP. The G-2 Periodic Report Number 299, Headquarters VII Corps, dated 17 April 1945 reported the incident as follows:

"One more notorious small time Hitler received better than he deserved when he was shot to death as he was trying to escape while being evacuated to rear areas. The man was a minor official in the town of St Andreasburg, well known for his brutality toward foreign workers and hesitant local citizens. This man shot and killed a captured American aviator, who refused to divulge military information. His guilt was unquestionable in the face of many sworn statements by eye witnesses."

The Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left on reconnaissance with their reconnaissance parties at 1000B, 18 April 1945 to reconnoiter in the vicinity of Tanne, Germany. The Battalion Commander returned from reconnaissance at 1320B. The S-3 Periodic Report Number 105, Headquarters 1st Infantry Division Artillery, dated 18 April 1945 contained the following report:

Konigshof was marked by the 980th Field Artillery Battalion for an Air mission and in addition, received harrassing fire. Many vehicles parked along side the Weriningerode Forest Road, from O3551 to O60560 were observed and adjusted upon by the 33rd and 980th Field Artillery Battalions. Several hits were reported and the column dispersed.

Captain Kenneth F. Ames was transferred from the Battalion to Headquarters VII Corps and assigned to the G-4 section. The Battalion rounded up a total of 18 prisoners during the day.

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History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 58 Continued.

The Battalion was given March Order at 0600B the next morning 19 April 1945, and Close Station was given at 0645B. The Battalion left the area at 0800B and arrived at the new position at Tanne, Germany, Coord. DO63485 at 1015B. Battery "C" captured two prisoners at 0910B. The Battalion Commander arrived at the new CP, complete with two prisoners that he had captured enroute. The Battalion was ready to fire at 1100B. Brigadier General Waters, Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division Artillery, visited the Battalion for ten minutes during the forenoon. Battery "C" captured ten male prisoners at 1030B and one female prisoner of war. Headquarters Battery captured three prisoners at 1130B and four at 1430B.

51041154
104319"

March Order was given the Battalion at 0600B, 20 April 1945 and Close Station was given at 0705B. The 2nd Platoon, Battery "B", 103rd AAA Battalion was detached from the Battalion at 0800B. The Battalion was detached from the 1st Infantry Division Artillery at 0800B and attached to VII Corps Artillery Fire Direction Center. The Battalion left the area at 0800B and closed in its new area at 1740B. The Battalion CP was located at Mosinkau, Germany Coord. EO42651. The Battalion CP was shelled at 1755B and 1825B. The Air OP adjusted on the suspected location from which the shelling was coming and all shelling of the CP area ceased and was not resumed. At 2040B orders were received that the Battalion would fire only on orders of VII Corps Artillery Fire Direction Center. Pfc Stanley W. Anderson was killed during the evening in a train accident at Liege, Belgium, on his way back from a pass to Paris, France.

514815
120859

At 2245B, 21 April 1945, the Battalion received orders that there would be no firing East of the Elbe River because of the Advance of the Russian Army.

1st Lt Pruett, Battalion Liaison Pilot with S/Sgt Hiserman as an observer sighted what they believed to be the Russians at Willenberg, Germany at 2000B, 22 April 1945. At 2200B orders were received that there would be no firing West of the Mulde River and South of the Elbe River.

A one-quarter ton Command and reconnaissance vehicle of Battery "B" which had been captured at Tanne, Germany on the 19th, was recovered by the 1st Division Military Police, two miles east of Tanne and returned to Battery "B" on the 23rd. It had been abandoned because of a flat tire. The liaison plane piloted by 1st Lieutenant Pruett with S/Sgt Hiserman as observer was forced down at 1730B, with a broken rocker arm. No one was injured. The Air Strip was moved in the edge of town near the Battalion CP at 2100B due to security reasons as all the troops were moving from the area in the vicinity of the old air strip.

On the 25th, the Battalion fired some experimental fires to determine the effect of Quick and Delay on destruction missions. 38 rounds were fired with fuze Delay from the T-83 (155mm Gun SP) at a range of 16,000 yards, obtaining one hit. 50 rounds were fired with fuze Quick from an M-1 gun (towed) at a range of 13,000 yards obtaining seven hits which set the target on fire, subsequently destroying it.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 59 Continued

M/Sgt LaVerne M. Triggs was discharged on the 25th and commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army of the United States by battlefield commission on the 26th. The Burgermeister of Mosingkau brought five German soldiers dressed in civilian clothes to the Battalion CP at 0930B on the 26th.

In request of the 9th Infantry Division Artillery, through VII Corps Artillery, the guns of the Battalion were displaced forward to a position near Alten, Germany, Coor. ~~EO~~075667 to fire on a bridge being used by the enemy. March Order was given the gun Batterys at 1855B. Battery "A" displaced at 1956B, Battery "B" at 2001B, and Battery "C" at 2014B. Only the guns and Battery Executive Posts were displaced. The Batterys CP, Battalion CP and Service Battery remained in their positions. Permission to register from the new position was requested from the VII Corps Artillery Fire Direction Center at 2005B but the request was not granted. The Battalion was ready to fire with all guns at 2100B.

514.9'00
12° 11' 36"

The Battalion Commander made a reconnaissance with the Battery Commanders for a rest area for the Battalion at Zorbig, Germany during the morning of the 27th.

March Order was given the Battalion at 0700B, the next morning, 28 April 1945 to move to a rest area. The Battalion was being withdrawn from action after more than ten months of combat. The Battalion had fired 71,141 rounds and had the gun tubes replaced twice. Close Station was given to Battery "B" at 0750B and to the remainder of the Battalion at 0800B. The order of march was Headquarters, Service, "A", "B", "C" Batterys. The Battalion closed at Zorbig, Germany Coor. ~~EO~~028461 in a position for rehabilitation of personnel, repair and maintenance of equipment at 1030B. The Battalion was detached from VII Corps Fire Direction Center and attached to the 142nd Field Artillery Group on arrival at Zorbig, Germany. Battery "A" took one prisoner at 2345B.

51938'04
12° 06' 49"

At 0730B, the 29th, the Battalion Commander left with his reconnaissance parties to make a reconnaissance of Weissenfels Kreis, Germany to billet the Battalion. The Battalion was given March Order at 1030B and left the area at 1130B. The Battalion closed in position at Weissenfels Kreis at 1400B. The Battalion CP was located in Weissenfels at Coor. ~~AD~~963977. The Battalion was given the mission of Security Guard and Military Government in the area occupied. Headquarters Battery, Service Battery, and Battery "B" were billeted in Weissenfels, Battery "A" in Langendorf, and Battery "C" in Gross Kayna.

52° 06' 02
12° 03' 45"

On the 30th, the Battalion established road blocks and security guard in the Battalion area.

The Battalion at 0001B, 1 May 1945 was billeted in and around the town of Weissenfels, Germany. The Battalion was occupied by manning road blocks, transporting ex-prisoners of war, screening the civilian population, capturing German prisoners of war, and consolidating and guarding German ammunition dumps.

At 1100B on the 2nd, an FW190, "belly landed" in Battery "C's" area, carrying a German pilot and mechanic, who were deserting from the German Army.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 60 Continued

On the evening of the 4th, an F4U attempted to land in the Battalion area, but was unable to do so.

S/Sgt Richard Hiserman was discharged on the 6th of May 1945 and commissioned by a battlefield commission in the Army of the United States on the 7th of May 1945.

A Ju 87 circled the CP area and landed on the 142nd Field Artillery Group airstrip, where the crew of three surrendered themselves at 2110B, 7 May 1945. General Order No. 37, Headquarters, VII Corps, dated 7 May 1945 was received awarding the Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to 1st Lieutenant Lloyd O. Pruett and the Air Medal to 1st Lieutenant Charles B. Ackard II.

Brigadier General Williston Palmer, Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery, presented the Bronze Star Medal to nine Officers, one Warrant Officer and thirty-nine Enlisted Men of the Battalion for meritorious service, in support of combat operations against the enemy, at 1115B, 8 May 1945. The medals were presented at a ceremony which included the 980th Field Artillery Battalion, the 981st Field Artillery Battalion, the 195th Field Artillery Battalion, the 660th Field Artillery Battalion, and the 142nd Field Artillery Group. Three enemy ME 109's flying over the Battalion area at 1450B were fired upon by Anti Aircraft units stationed nearby.

Germany surrendered unconditionally at 0001B, 9 May 1945, but since the Battalion had been withdrawn from action on 28 April 1945, there was no change in the Battalion's duties. By this time the Battalion had captured 492 prisoners of war since landing on the Normandy beaches.

At 0800B on the 10th, Lt Colonel Harold O. Welch, who had been commanding the Battalion since February 1943, left the Battalion and took command of the 188th Field Artillery Group. Major Robert W. Clirehugh assumed command of the 980th Field Artillery Battalion. At 0830B the new Battalion Commander and the Battery Commanders left the area to make a reconnaissance for billets for the Battalion in Sondershausen, Germany, and returned at 1723B.

The Battalion was given Close Station March Order at 0600B the next morning, 11 May 1945 and it left the area at 0800B. The Battalion marched to its new position in and near Sondershausen arriving there at 1330B without incident. The Battalion CP was located at Coor. D182123. The 980th Field Artillery Battalion was relieved from assignment to the First United States Army and assigned to the Ninth United States Army, per Paragraph 4, Troop assignment, Letter No. 47, Headquarters, First United States Army, dated 9 May 1945.

Saturday, May 12th, was announced as Redeployment Day by the War Department and the point values were announced for the Adjusted Service Rating Cards. The Battalion men spent the day, totaling up their points and seeing if they were eligible for discharge.

Captain John H. Clark, 0414898, was transferred to the Battalion from the 142nd Field Artillery Group and assigned to Battery "B" as Battery Commander on the 14th.

51°22'07"
10°52'20"

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 62, Continued

Warrant Officer Junior Grade Elwin M. Jackson was transferred from the Battalion to the 142nd Field Artillery Group on the 15th.

Brigadier General Palmer, Commanding General, VII Corps Artillery, visited the Battalion for twenty minutes during the afternoon of the 16th.

On the 17th, Special Order No. 129, Headquarters, First United States Army, dated 11 May 1945 was received officially transferring Lt Col Harold O. Welch to the 188th Field Artillery Group as of the 16th.

At 1545B on the afternoon of the 19th, Pfc J.A. Seelandt, Battery "B", was fired upon from ambush and wounded in the lower part of a leg, while he was on guard on Post No. 7.

At 0800B, 21 May 1945, the first ten men to leave the Battalion under the point system left the Battalion bound for the States. At 0900B, the guns left the Battalion to be taken to the Ninth Army Ordnance Proving Ground at Hillersleben, Germany, by a crew of three Officers and eighty six (86) Enlisted Men. The guns were to be calibrated and to undergo a Class "A" Ordnance Inspection.

Capt Ralph J. Mouw departed on temporary duty, 25 May 1945 (par 1 Ltr OLL, Hq 980th Field Artillery Battalion) to the Information and Education Staff School at Paris, France.

On the 26th two more men left the Battalion, bound for the States, under the point system.

General Order No. 48, Headquarters, VII Corps was received on the 27th, awarding the First Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to 1st Lieutenant Thomas H. Evans Jr., and the Sixth Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to 1st Lieutenant Max E. Young. Warrant Officer Junior Grade Elwin M. Jackson was transferred to the Battalion from the 142nd Field Artillery Group, per Par. 5, Special Order No 79, Headquarters, VII Corps, dated 25 May 1945.

The guns of Battery "A" and "B" were returned from the Ninth Army Ordnance Proving Grounds at 2110B, 28 May 1945.

The guns of Battery "C" were returned from Ordnance at 1900B on the 30th.

Personnel of Battery "B", 980th Field Artillery Battalion (155mm Gun) were awarded the Bronze Service Arrowhead for assaulting the Normandy Beach on 7 June 1944, by authority of Par. 2, Letter, Headquarters, European Theater of Operations United States Army, Subject: "Individual Service Award, Bronze Service Arrowhead," dated 9 May 1945.

Between 9 May 1945 and 31 May 1945 the Battalion captured 1183 prisoners of war, bringing the Battalion total to 1662.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 62 Continued

The Battalion at 0001B, 1 June 1945 was billeted in and around the town of Sondershausen (Coord D182123) Germany. The primary mission was security guard for the area.

Captain Ralph J. Mouw returned to the Battalion on 4 June 1945 from the Information and Education School at Paris, France.

Promotion of 1st Lt Thomas H. Evans Jr. to Captain (AUS), effective 1 June 1945 was received 5 June 1945 (par 3, SO #152, Hq. 9th U.S. Army).

On the 7th June 1945 Lt. General Collins, Commanding General VII Corps arrived in the Battalion area at 1350B to address troops of the 142nd Field Artillery Group. Later the same day at 1950B Colonel Thompson, Commanding Officer 142nd Field Artillery Group arrived at the Battalion CP for a short visit.

Orders were received from VII Corps (Sect II, G.O. #52, 1945, Hq VII Corps) on 9 June 1945 awarding 1st Lt Max E. Young 0887816, 1st Sgt Richard L.G. Davies 39231841, S/Sgt Edouard W. Gonzell 20917968 the Silver Star Medal. On the same order Major Richard R. Watson 0414992 was awarded a Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal and Corporal Leo M. Carter 20954495 was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

A weapons carrier in which Corporal Burdette L. Treloar 20918722, "C" Battery was riding rolled over an embankment killing him almost instantly on 10 June 1945.

Battalion was relieved from attachment to VII Corps and attached to XXI Corps at 0001B hours on 11 June 1945. Later in the day at Altern, Germany, 1100B hours, the Croix De Guerre was awarded Major Richard R. Watson and Corporal Leo M. Carter by a French Liaison Officer. At the same place at 1400B hours Brigadier General Palmer, VII Corps Artillery Commander awarded Lt Max E. Young the Silver Star Medal. 1st Lt Marvin W. Sherron was transferred to Headquarters, VII Corps Artillery (par 2, S.O. #50 Hq VII Corps Artillery 11 June 1945)

The category of the Battalion as of 0001B hours 12 June 1945 in its post V-E Day job was established as Category IV by a letter dated 12 June 1945 Headquarters XXI Corps.

As of 0010B hours 15 June 1945 the Battalion was relieved from assignment to the Ninth United States Army and attached to the Seventh United States Army. Colonel Jerome F. Thompson, Commanding Officer, 142nd Field Artillery Group made a group of awards to men of the Battalion at 1430B hours. The Silver Star Medal was awarded 1st Sergeant Richard L.G. Davies and S/Sgt Edouard Gonzell; Major Richard R. Watson received the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal; Corporal Leo M. Carter was awarded the Bronze Star Medal; Captain T.H. Evans received the Air Medal and Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster; and Lieutenant Max E. Young and Lieutenant Lloyd O. Pruett were awarded Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal.

Per Par 2, Journal #20, Warning Order, Commanding General, XXI Corps dated 0001B hours 19 June 1945 the Battalion was to be prepared for movement to VI Corps Area after 21 June 1945 and upon arrival to be relieved of attachment to XXI Corps and attached to VI Corps.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 6B Continued

On 21 June 1945 Ltr "Categorizations of Units", Headquarters, Seventh United States Army dated 0001B hours 15 June 1945 (Par 2) was received which placed this Battalion in Category II correcting Ltr "Categorization Units", ETOUSA, 5 June 1945 placing Battalion in Category IV.

On 1 July 1945 the Battalion started movement by infiltration to new area at Alsbach, Germany (Nord de Guerre WM626269). "A" Battery, a portion of "C" Battery and 43 Officers and Enlisted Men from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery closed in the new area. The following day, the march was made Service Battery, Medical Detachment and "B" Battery. It was cloudy and rainy as Service Battery and the Medical Detachment departed 0800B followed by "B" Battery at 0845B. After a march of about 220 miles Service Battery closed in the new area at 1810B, Medical Detachment 1830B and "B" Battery at 1930B.

A detachment was left behind to meet the Russian occupation troops who were entering the area. On 3 July 1945 Major Richard R. Watson and the detachment met the Russian troops. The details of the change over having been completed the detachment rejoined the Battalion at Alsbach the following day 4 July 1945.

Upon arrival in Alsbach the battalion was attached to the 422nd Field Artillery Group. At this position the entire Battalion was quartered in tents.

In order to prepare the Battalion for its mission as a Category II unit high point personnel were transferred to category IV units and an equivalent number of low point men were transferred to the Battalion. Plans were started before the move from Sondershausen but the first exchange was made on 4 July 1945. On this date Captain Ralph J. Mouw 01171294, Captain John R. Clark 0414898, Captain Paul H. Richards 01172244, Captain John F. McGinty 0391205, Captain Elmer A. McGraw 01693760 MC, 1st Lt Elbin K Polen 0887362, 1st Lt George D. Deppen 01166041, 1st Lt Charles W. Barrett 0887395, 1st Lt George E. Carlson 0887373, 1st Lt Norman J. Furth 01169969 were assigned to 283rd Field Artillery Battalion (par 2 SO 41, Hq XXI Corps Artillery). Also to the 283rd Field Artillery Battalion went 1st Lt William R Miller 0887374 (par 24, SO 41 Hq XXI Corps Artillery). With the officers 79 Enlisted Men were transferred to the 283rd Field Artillery Battalion (par 13 SO 41 Hq XXI Corps Artillery). Captain Frank S. Cohen 0470782 MC was assigned and joined the Battalion 4 July 1945 (par 3 SO 41 Hq XXI Corps Artillery). Assigned and joined to this Battalion were 83 Enlisted Men from the 283rd Field Artillery Battalion (par 1 SO 58 Hq 980th Field Artillery Battalion). Within the Battalion on this day 1st Lt Monroe J. Ellingson 01175423 was relieved of assignment with "B" Battery and assigned to "C" Battery. Major George A. Aubrey 023110 joined and assumed command of 980th Field Artillery Battalion at 0001B hours 4 July 1945 (par 22, SO 41, Hq XXI Corps Artillery dated 30 June 1945)

On 5 July 1945 WOJG Elwin M. Jackson W2122931 departed for the 283rd Field Artillery Battalion (par 35, SO 41, Hq XXI Corps Artillery). The same day the following officers joined the Battalion and were assigned as indicated (par 2 SO 58 Hq 980th Field Artillery Battalion). Captain John C. O'Quin 01179562 "B" Battery, Captain Michael F. Sullivan 01168486 "C" Battery, 1st Lt George A. Lundgren 01178550 Headquarters Battery, 1st Lt Phillip L. Lull 01168344 Battalion Headquarters, 1st Lt Herman N.

History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion, Page 65 Continued

Grafe 01178165 "A" Battery, 1st Lt Fred B. Whitt 01176851 "A" Battery, 1st Lt Clarence D. Croft Jr. 01178112 "A" Battery, 1st Lt Roy A. Granger 0169900 "C" Battery, 2nd Lt Donald F. Silvertooth 01182711 "B" Battery, CWO William T. McGloskey W2110358 Battalion Headquarters; (par 1 SO 60 Hq 980th Field Artillery Battalion) 1st Lt Robert C. Campbell Jr. 01175665 Battalion Headquarters.

Captain Clifford S. VanValkenburgh 01168502 joined the Battalion 6 July 1945 (par 2 SO 58 Hq 980th Field Artillery Battalion) and was assigned to Service Battery.

On 8 July 1945 98 Enlisted Men left for 7th Armored Division (par 6 SO 40 Hq XXI Corps Artillery) and 64 Enlisted Men joined the Battalion from the 7th Armored Division.

At 0930B hours 12 July 1945 the Inspector General VI Corps arrived to make an inspection of the Battalion. The inspection was completed by 1630B. During the afternoon the Battalion softball team defeated the 348th Engineers to win the 422nd Field Artillery Group championship. A great deal of the success of the team was due to its pitcher, Pfc James Everidge, Headquarters Battery.

Battalion received written order on 13 July 1945 from Headquarters, 7th United States Army dated 8 July 1945 attaching Battalion to VI Corps effective of 2400B July 1945. In the afternoon the Battalion soft ball team defeated 991st Field Artillery Battalion in one of the play-off games for the VI Corps Soft Ball Championship.

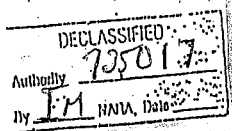
The next day the Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left the area at 1005B hours to reconnoiter new area. Reconnaissance parties returned at 1240B. In the afternoon the Battalion won the VI Corps soft ball championship by defeating the 13th Field Artillery Observation Battalion 4-0.

On 16 July 1945 Battalion closed station 0830B in preparation for move to new area. At 0900B "A" Battery crossed the IP followed by "B" Battery at 0930B and "C" Battery at 1000B. Battalion closed in new area after a 10 mile march, at Ober Ramstadt (Nord de Guerre WM723376) at 1130B. Communications were established with the 422nd Field Artillery Group at 1000B.

Before dawn 21 July 1945 at 0330 hours the Battalion started on its part of the famous Tallyho exercise of the 7th United States Army to apprehend German and other civilians with improper identification and make a check on black market activities. During the operation the Battalion checked approximately 7200 civilians and German military personnel.

The training schedule was set into motion to fit the Battalion for its role of Category II unit at 0830B on 25 July 1945.

The Battalion Commander on 28 July 1945 began a battalion inspection at 1000B hours and completed it at 1200B hours.



History, 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 65 Continued.

The Battalion was stationed at Ober Kamstadt (Nord de Guerre WM 723376) on 1 August 1945 with a primary mission of training personnel for their mission as a category II unit.

The first day of the month Captain Arthur J. Read, O-411883, was transferred to Headquarters, 46th Field Artillery Group (SO #65, Hq 980th FA Bn dated 1 Aug 1945) and Capt. Nathaniel P. Hanna, O-466721, CAG, was assigned to and joined the Battalion (SO #47 Hq 46th FA Group dated 1 Aug 1945). A physical inspection of all personnel was completed.

During the month the Battalion was continually in the throws of readjustment with transfers in and out of the organization (Ltr, Hq Seventh U.S. Army dated 28 July 1945, Subject: "Personnel Readjustment"). On 2 August 1945 nine enlisted men from 551st Field Artillery Battalion were assigned and joined (Par 1, SO #66, Hq 980th FA Bn).

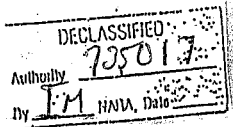
Eighty-one enlisted men joined the Battalion from the 793rd Field Artillery Battalion on 4 August 1945 (Par 1, SO #68, Hq 980th FA Bn). The Battalion transferred 5 enlisted men to the 793rd Field Artillery Battalion (Par 1, SO #67, Hq 980th FA Bn) and 3 enlisted men to 3rd Infantry Division Artillery (Par 2, SO #67, Hq 980th FA Bn) the same day.

On 9 August 1945 Captain Donald A. Wood, O1170256, was transferred to Headquarters, 46th Field Artillery Group (Par 1, SO #70, Hq 980th FA Bn, dated 9 August 1945) and Captain Warren D. Sower, O425487, joined the Battalion (Par 2, SO #70, Hq 980th FA Bn, dated 9 August 1945).

Effective 15 August 1945 Battalion was relieved from attachment to XXI Corps and attached to XXIII Corps.

A group of 41 enlisted men were transferred to the 69th ~~Infantry~~ Division Artillery on 21 August 1945 (Par 2, SO #72, Hq 980th FA Bn, Dated 20 August 1945) along with Major Robert W. Clirehugh, O-414897, 1st Lt Robert C. Campbell, O1175065, 2nd Lt Richard Hiserman, O2008788 and 2nd Lt La Verne M. Triggs, O2008647 (Par 1, SO #72, Hq 980th FA Bn, dated 20 August 1945). Within the battalion 1st Lt Clarence D. Croft, O1178112, was relieved from assignment to "A" Battery and transferred to Service Battery (Par 1, SO #74, Hq 980th FA Bn).

On 23 August 1945 1st Lt Philip L. Lull, O-1168344, departed for the 802nd Field Artillery Battalion (Par 3, SO #74, Hq 980th FA Bn, dated 21 August 1945).



History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 66 Continued.

Major Richard R. Watson, O-414992, and Captain Thomas H. Evans Jr., O-442002, were assigned to the 70th Infantry Division Artillery on 26 August 1945 (Par 2, SO #75, Hq 980th FA Bn, dated 24 Aug 1945) along with 78 enlisted men from the Battalion (Par 3, SO #75, Hq 980th FA Bn, dated 24 Aug 1945).

Battalion was placed in category IV on 27 August 1945 (Station List #2, Hq XXIII Corps Arty dated 27 Aug 1945).

On 30 August 1945 Major George A. Aubrey, O-23110, was assigned to Headquarters, 79th Field Artillery Group effective 29 August 1945 (Par 3, SO #69, Hq 422nd FA Gp), Captain Warren D. Sower, O-425487 (Par 7, SO #69, Hq 422nd FA Gp) and 2nd Lt Donald F. Silverthoth, O-1182711, (Par 5, SO #69, Hq 422nd FA Gp) were assigned to 3rd Infantry Division Artillery effective 29 August 1945. Within the Battalion 1st Lt George A. Lundgren, O-1178550, assumed command of Headquarters Battery as of 26 August 1945 and 1st Lt Herman N. Grafe, O-1178165, assumed command of Battery "A" as of 29 August 1945.

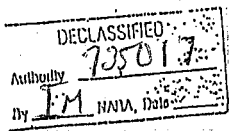
On 1 September 1945 the Battalion was stationed in Ober Ramstadt (Nord de Guerre WM 723376) preparing itself for eventual shipment to the United States. Captain Clifford S. Van Valkenburgh Jr., O-1168502, assumed command of the Battalion (Par 1, GO #14, Hq 980th FA Bn dated 29 Aug 1945). 1st Lt Clarence D. Croft, O-1178112, assumed command of Service Battery as of 29 August 1945.

The Battalion S-4 turned in the 155mm guns on 2 September 1945.

On 3 September 1945 the personnel records of the Battalion were checked by the personnel section of the 690th Field Artillery Battalion.

About 0500 on 10 September 1945 a small fire broke out in the "C" Battery area. As the entire Battalion was quartered in the same building the ensuing confusion woke most of the men. The fire was quickly brought under control by the local German fire Department and volunteers from the battery. Three men from "C" Battery were slightly injured. During the day the Battalion was alerted for movement to the Assembly Area.

Eighty-eight enlisted men were transferred to the 2nd Armored Division Artillery (par 4, SO #79, Hq 980th FA Bn) and 17 enlisted men to the 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion (par 3, SO #79, Hq 980th FA Bn) on 11 September 1945. The same day 127 enlisted men were assigned and joined to the Battalion from 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion (par 1, SO #80, Hq 980th FA Bn dated 11 Sept 1945). The following officers were assigned and joined to the battalion (par 1, SO #111, Hq 291st FA Obsn Bn): Capt. William L. Boosa, O-305695, Capt. Joe M. Proffer, O-376851, 1st Lt Orville L. Williams, O-1175007, 1st Lt Leslie K. Garrara, O-1175397, 1st Lt Alfred Crew III, O-340198, 2nd Lt Peter De Witt, O-1180166.



History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 67 Continued;

On 12 September 1945 the following officers departed for 1st Armored Division Artillery (par 2, SO #79, Hq 980th FA Bn dated 10 Sept 1945): Capt. John C. O'Quinn, O-1179562, Capt. Michael F. Sullivan, O-1168486, Capt. Frank S. Cohen, O-470732, MG, 1st Lt Herman N. Grafe, O-1178165, 1st Lt Fred B. Whitt, O-1176851, 1st Lt Thomas J. Wilson, O-449082, 1st Lt George A. Long Jr., O-837373, 1st Lt George A. Lundgren, O-11785501, 1st Lt Floyd O. Pruett, O-1130668, 1st Lt Edward J. Dmytryk, O-460970, 1st Lt Roy A. Granger, O-469900. Captains William L. Boosa, O-305695, assumed command of the Battalion (par 1, SO #15, Hq 980th FA Bn, dated 12 Sept 1945). The following officers were assigned to the batteries indicated (par 1, SO #81, Hq 980th FA Bn): Capt Joe M. Proffer, Battalion Executive; 1st Lt Orville L. Williams, Battery Commander, Battery "A"; 1st Lt Leslie K. Carrara, Battery "A"; 1st Lt Alfred Crew III, Battery Commander, Battery "B"; 2nd Lt Peter De Witt, Battalion Motor Officer. 1st Lt Gustave P. Morgan assumed command of Headquarters Battery and 1st Lt Monroe J. Ellingson assumed command of "C" Battery. The same day 72 enlisted men were transferred to and joined the battalion from the 78th Infantry Division (par 3, SO #81, Hq 980th FA Bn).

The following day Capt Clifford S. Van Valkenburgh Jr., O-1168502, was assigned to 1st Armored Division Artillery (par 1, SO #76, Hq 422nd FA Gp, dated 12 Sept 1945). Three enlisted men departed for the 422nd Field Artillery Group (par 2, SO #77, Hq 422nd FA Gp) and 3 enlisted men joined the Battalion from the 422nd Field Artillery Group (par 1, SO #82, Hq 980th FA Bn). All the men of the Battalion were advised that they were under movement orders involving service within the preview of Article of War 28.

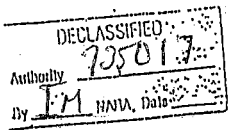
The Battalion left Ober Ramstadt at 0500, 15 September 1945 (ltr 370.5-C-478, Hq Seventh U.S. Army Subj: "Movement Orders - Redeployment" dated 8 September 1945) on its march to the Assembly Area. The day was overcast and rainy. At 1400 hours the German-French border was crossed in the vicinity of Saarbrucken. The entire Battalion pulled into the Metz Bivouac area at 1800 hours. Upon leaving Ober Ramstadt the Battalion was relieved from the 422nd Field Artillery Group and passed into the Control of the Assembly Area.

A readiness date of 25 September 1945 for departure from the Assembly Area Command, was given in the letter of instruction. Final destination was to be Camp San Antonio.

During the night 15-16 September the clocks were set back one hour. Verbal orders were received that the Battalion would report to Camp Chicago instead of Camp San Antonio.

At 0805 on 16 September 1945 Battalion left the Metz Bivouac Area and arrived Camp Chicago (0167160) 1700 hours.

The following day the Battalion began to change the German Marks and other monies in the possession of the officers and men to French francs. Work was started to prepare all records and supplies to enable the Battalion to proceed on its way to the Port.



History 980th Field Artillery Battalion Page 68 Continued

On 18 Sept 2nd Lt Peter De Witt was transferred to "C" Battery (par 1, SO #83, Hq 980th FA Bn). Battalion personnel were given a physical examination.

The following day the personnel records of the Battalion were checked and found to be in good condition.

The Inspector General inspected the Battalion Personnel roster for points and age on the 21 September 1945.

On the 25 September 1945 the Battalion was ready for shipment but no call was received from the Port Authorities.

The Battalion personnel received influenza immunization on 29 September 1945.