

HEADQUARTERS
773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion(SP)
APO 403, U. S. Army

1 January 1945

SUBJECT: Report After Operations Against the Enemy.

TO: The Adjutant General, Army War College, War Department,
Washington 25, D.C.

THRU: Commanding General, XX Corps, APO 340, U. S. Army.
Commanding General, 90th Infantry Division, APO 90,
U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Par 10, AR 345-105, as amended by Change 3 dated 9 March 1943, the following report is submitted:

2. The information contained herein has been extracted from the Unit Journal of the 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion.

3. Report After Operations Against the Enemy - Period 010001A December 1944 - 312359A December 1944.

On 1 December Battalion (Fwd CP) located in BIRINGEN, Germany (Q137909). Headquarters Co. located at ST FRANCOIS (Q063836), France. Reconnaissance Company locations: Hq pltn, FLASTROFF; 1st, 3rd and Pioneer Pltns, COLEMAN; 2nd pltn, DAMPONT FARMS. The three Ron pltns reconnoitered for gun positions; 1st pltn in vicinity of EIMERSDORF, SEIDS DORF and HEMMERSDORF; 2nd pltn in vicinity of EIMERSDORF and 3rd pltn on high ground W of FREMERSDORF. A Co. - No action; everything quiet. Location of pltns as follows: CP (Fwd) 171870; CP (Rear) 158859; 1st pltn 168857; 2nd pltn 207876; 3rd pltn 190862. B Co. - CP and all pltns (less 3rd pltn) no change. 3rd pltn moved to a position at Q213849, and pltn leaders went forward on foot to secure gun positions for direct fire into BUREN. Pltn then went into position at 223853. Location of other pltns, CP, 1st and 2nd pltns, 139909. C Co. - CP and 1st pltn located at SONNENHOF (Q18908980); 2nd pltn in FREMERSDORF (Q21209020). 3rd pltn moved from 18208975 and assembled at a position just SE of MONDORF where they waited for completion of bridge across stream so that they might cross and establish roadblocks in town. Weather, cloudy and rainy.

On 2 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. no change. Ron Co. - All pltns remained in same positions. No activity. A Co. - The 1st and 3rd pltns remained in same positions. At 2030 hours, 2nd pltn moved to GUERLFANGEN (188883) preparatory to assembling of company from position 207876 where they had received sporadic enemy artillery fire throughout the day. B Co (minus 3rd pltn) no action. At 1200 hours, 3rd pltn moved to a position at 225857 in BUREN. No action. C Co. - At approximately 1100 hours, the 2nd pltn fired upon and neutralized six pillboxes across the river from FREMERSDORF. Upon request of CO, 359th Infantry, two houses suspected of being occupied by the enemy were also fired upon and destroyed. At 0615, the 1st pltn took up positions at 19909055. At 0730 hours, the 3rd pltn plus four .50 cal. MG sections took up positions at: 2 MG's at 199913; 2 MG's at 204902. Pltn at 19859125. Both pltns have commanding views of river and valley. 2nd pltn at FREMERSDORF received some enemy shelling. Weather, cloudy and rainy.

On 3 December, Ron Co. - 1st, 2nd and 3rd Ron pltns alerted for movement then taken off alert. 2nd pltn lost bivouac area to elements of a FA Bn so new position was found in NEUNKIRCHEN and movement made there at 1610 hours. No other changes. A Co. - 2nd pltn moved to FURWEILER at 1000 hours and 3rd pltn moved to FURWEILER at 1130 hours. Rear CP moved from SCHWERDORF to FURWEILER at 1030. All three pltns in assembly position doing cleaning and maintenance. CP 220863; 1st pltn 168857; rear CP, 2nd and 3rd pltns 171870. B Co. - Company minus 3rd pltn no action. 3rd pltn in

BUREN received some artillery fire. Pltn leader (de reconnaissance) in vicinity of 237856 and located positions from which they could fire across the river in case such fire was needed. In the morning five PW's were captured after being driven out of a cellar. C Co. - At approximately 1100 hours, 2nd pltn fired on enemy pillboxes by request of 359th Inf. commander. Enemy artillery still active in and around all positions. 1st and 3rd pltn leaders reconnoitered for new positions. Weather, cloudy and rainy.

On 4 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) moved from BIRINGEN (Q137909) to FURWEILER (170869) closing in at 1430 hours. Distance travelled 4 miles. Hqs and Rcn Companies, no change. A Co. - remained in same location. No action. B Co. - remained in BUREN with no action. Remainder of company left BIRINGEN at 1230 and moved to FURWEILER (171869) closing in at 1330 hours. C Co. - No change in situation, no action, but enemy artillery active. Weather, clear during the day, cloudy and rainy in the evening.

On 5 December, Hqs Co. (less S-1 & S-4 sections) moved from ST FRANCOIS to BIRINGEN (Q137909). Rcn Co. - Pltn leaders reported to firing companies for missions. A Co. - At 0500 hours, the 3rd pltn moved from FURWEILER to REHLINGEN (236875). At 1000 hours, 1st pltn moved to 243849. At 1430 hours, 2nd pltn moved to 219863. At 1400 hours, 1st pltn fired at eleven enemy pillboxes from ranges of 1600 to 3000 yards, but final results were not definitely known due to distance and poor visibility. All pltns were again subjected to heavy enemy mortar and artillery fire, two M10's of 1st pltn receiving shrapnel damage. B Co. - 1st & 2nd pltns remained in FURWEILER. Pltn leaders made a reconnaissance for firing positions along the SAAR River. Hqs pltn and 3rd pltn moved to IHN (178810), closing in at 1130 hours. C Co. - At approximately 1530 hours, one gun of the 2nd pltn fired on house occupied by enemy across the river. Results unknown. FREMERSDORF continued to receive enemy artillery fire. 1st and 3rd pltns received heaviest artillery and mortar fire yet encountered. No change in positions. At 1530 hours, Colonel SPIESS, Bn CO, presented 11 Bronze Star Awards and 14 Purple Heart Awards to members of this battalion. Weather, cloudy.

On 6 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) moved from FURWEILER to WALLERFANGEN (252818) closing in at 1530 hours. Travelled 13 miles. Rcn Co. - Co. CP moved from FLASTROFF to FURWEILER closing in at 1345 hours. No other change. A Co. - No change in position. All pltns were under enemy artillery and small arms fire, the 2nd pltn receiving the heaviest fire encountered to date. 1st pltn fired at and neutralized two enemy pillboxes. Visibility was fair in the afternoon establishing a credit of 11 enemy pillboxes fired at the previous day by the 1st pltn. B Co. - No change. Firing pltns were alerted to cross SAAR River as soon as bridge was completed. C Co. - All pltns plus the four .50 cal. MG's fired over 15 minute periods at 0806 hours, 0858, 0923 and 1014 hours. 1st pltn fired at ranges of 900 to 1700 yards on 15 pillboxes, trenches and MG emplacements. One pillbox neutralized and numerous hits scored on all targets. 2nd pltn fired at ranges of 400 to 900 yards at 7 pillboxes, neutralizing three and scoring hits on all. HE fire was also placed on two houses reported as having enemy occupants. 3rd pltn fired at ranges of 800 to 1500 yards on 15 pillboxes and trenches also scoring numerous hits. All pltns received some heavy enemy artillery and small arms fire during the day. At 1615 hours, the 2nd pltn moved to OBERESCH, followed by the 1st and 3rd pltns at 1900 hours. Weather, cloudy.

On 7 December 1944, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Company, no change. Rcn Co. - Pltns remained inactive. CP and 1st section Pioneers, FURWEILER; 1st pltn and 2nd Section Pioneers, SIERSDORF; 2nd pltn, NEUNKIRCHEN; 3rd pltn, COLMEN. A Co. - All pltns received enemy artillery fire. The 3rd pltn in position in REHLINGEN was on the receiving end of plenty of enemy automatic weapons and small arms fire zeroed in on all openings in houses near guns. 1st Rcn pltn with 2nd Section Pioneers attached and located in SIERSDORF with Co. CP. B Co. - At 1715 hours, 1st and 2nd pltns moved to BUREN to an

assembly position, ready to cross SAAR River. No other change.
C Co. - assembled in OBERESCH doing motor maintenance and cleaning up.
Weather, cloudy and rainy.

On 8 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP), Hqs Co and Rcn Co., no change.
A Co. - No change except rear CP closed in with forward CP at
SIERSDORF. 3rd pltn again received enemy artillery fire. B Co. - No
change. Pltns awaiting transportation across the river. C Co. - No
change. Vehicle and weapons maintenance continued. Weather, cloudy
and rainy.

On 9 December, Hqs (Fwd CP), Hq Co. and Rcn Co., no change.
A Co. - No change in pltn positions. 1st and 3rd pltns were again
on the receiving end of heavy enemy artillery fire. Sgt Ward, while
returning to the 3rd pltn from the company CP discovered one dead and
two wounded infantrymen about 300 yards from the CP. They had evi-
dently been trying to secure parts from a group of wrecked vehicles,
including one tank, two 6x6's and one 1/4-ton wrecked by mines. He
evacuated the wounded, notified the CP and the unit to which the men
belonged. B Co. - At 1530 hours, the 1st pltn moved to a position on
road leading to SAAR River 1000 meters E of ITZBACH. As of 2400 hours
pltn in same position because ferry was not completed for operation
as of that time. C Co. - Remained in OBERESCH continuing maintenance
and cleaning up. Weather, cloudy, rain and cold.

On 10 December, A Co. - 1st and 2nd pltns, no change. The 3rd
pltn moved from REHLINGEN to SIERSDORF under heavy enemy mortar fire,
closing in at Co. CP at 1800 hours. The radiators were pierced on
one M10 by a very "close" one. Lt. Michaels (1st pltn Rcn),
Lt. Fielden (Rcn), Reconnaissance Company, six EM 2nd pltn and four
EM Hqs pltn, Co. A, carried supplies and equipment and helped evacu-
ate the wounded at the ferry site under heavy enemy mortar and MG
fire. B Co. - 1st pltn, less one M10 were ferried across at 0400 in
support of 1st Bn, 358th Inf. on E side of SAAR River. Two M10's
bogged down in the mud half-way between ferry site and DILLINGEN and
could not be evacuated due to enemy observation and artillery fire.
One M10 on the west side of river, threw a track on road to ferry
approach. Heavy enemy artillery concentrations were received late in
the afternoon. 2nd and 3rd pltns, no change. C Co. - At 1600 hours
2nd pltn and Co. CP moved to BUREN. No other changes; balance of
company remained in OBERESCH. At 1530 hours, Col. SPIESS, Bn CO,
presented one Bronze Star and two Purple Heart awards to members of
this command. Weather, cloudy, rain and cold.

On 11 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. and Rcn Co., no
change. A Co. - At 1700 hours, 1st pltn moved to position at
Q260815. This pltn is part of a Task Force consisting of four TD's
and five tanks that were to cross the SAAR River by ferry during the
hours of darkness, but at 2400 hours they were still waiting to
cross. The 2nd and 3rd pltns, plus 1st Rcn and 2nd Section Pioneers,
received heavy enemy artillery shelling during daylight hours. At
1730, the Pioneer section were employed in crossing and recrossing
the river delivering supplies and picking up wounded. B Co. - No
change. C Co. - At 1330, the 2nd pltn moved into BUREN which had
been shelled heavily in the past 24 hours. Weather, cloudy and light
rain.

On 12 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co., no change.
Rcn Co. - The 3rd pltn received mission of carrying supplies for
357th Inf. No other changes. A Co. - The three firing pltns crossed
the river and went into the following positions in the vicinity of
PACHTEN: 1st pltn, Q253845, closing in at 1115 hours; 2nd pltn and
forward CP, Q252829, closing in at 1700 hours; 3rd pltn, Q239819,
closing in at 1730 hours. No other changes. B Co. - 1st pltn, no
change. 2nd and 3rd pltns went into position on SAAR River road on
North outskirts of WALLERFANGEN and fired on suspected enemy OP's in
DILLINGEN. At 1600 hours, one M10, 2nd pltn was ferried across the
river and it joined the column of TD's already stuck on the far shore
Remainder of company awaiting crossing at Q249845. At 2400 hours,

3rd pltn still waiting at 246844 to make crossing. Four M10's of company bogged down on both sides of river. C Co. - At 1000 hours, the 1st pltn moved from position in BUREN and went into firing position at 25008300 on heights overlooking the town of DILLIGEN. The pltn was not called on to fire, so they returned to their former position in BUREN. At 1600 hours, the 2nd pltn at NIEDER LIMBERG (25208180), alerted for river crossing. At 1730 hours, the 3rd pltn (less 1 M10) located in BUREN. No other changes. At 1430 hours, Major General VAN FLEET, 90th Infantry Division Commander presented 2 Silver Star Awards to Lt. Kenneth C. Sutter and Tec 5 Ira J. Conklin at the battalion CP. Weather, cloudy.

On 13 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. no change. Rcn Co. - Hqs and 3rd pltn, no change. 1st and Pioneer pltn moved to WALLERFANGEN. At 1940 hours, the 2nd pltn left NEUNKIRCHEN and reported to 357th Inf. Hqs. to act as carrying party for them. A Co. - All elements of company across river except rear CP and 1st Rcn pltn attached, located in WALLERFANGEN (25488140). B Co. - Fwd CP in DILLINGEN, rear CP at IRN. 1st pltn with one M10 in support of 358th Inf. The 2nd pltn made river crossing at 1115 going into position at DILLINGEN in support of 3rd Bn. The 3rd pltn also made crossing at the same time going to PACHTEN in support of the 2nd Bn. C Co. - At 1300 hours, the company was alerted to cross the SAAR River. At 1345 hours the 2nd pltn had crossed and by 1500 hours the three pltns had completed crossing and assembled in PACHTEN (25608460). At 1630 hours the company joined 359th Infantry at 25758585, but situation warranted the use of only one, 2nd pltn, which remained in support of the 2nd Bn. The 3rd pltn returned to PACHTEN. 1st pltn unable to use RR underpass at 25658587 and were forced to remain there for the night. Colonel SPIESS, Bn CO, crossed the river and remained there through the 19th of December during which time he coordinated the battalion attack on enemy pillboxes with the infantry. Major General VAN FLEET presented 4 Silver Star Awards to the following men of the battalion; Cpl James F. Cunningham, Tec 5 Sam Schwartz, Pvt John E. Melzer, Pvt Gilbert C. Kerr. Weather, cool and cloudy.

On 14 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. no change. Rcn Co. - The 3rd pltn received mission and acted as carrying party for 357th Infantry. No other changes. A Co. - CP, 1st and 3rd pltns at PACHTEN (25408483). 2nd pltn located at 25738550. Rear CP and 1st Rcn pltn at 25458140. During the day 4 pillboxes were knocked out by the company. At 1900 hours the maintenance truck loaded with supplies needed on other side moved to ferry site for crossing. C Co. - CP and 3rd pltn at 257844. At 0730, 2nd pltn moved in support of 358th Inf. to take one block on the E side of the RR tracks in DILLINGEN. The TD's were used to silence MG fire from emplaced positions and to protect the infantry from possible attacks by enemy armor. The one pillbox in this area was taken under fire by the 1st section at a range of 75 yards; immediately thereafter 19 prisoners, two wounded and three dead were removed from the pillbox. This enabled the infantry to move in and take the block. This was the first ground gained on the east side of RR tracks, in the city of DILLINGEN. The section continued to fire into buildings on the bordering streets and silenced machine gun fire from this sector. The 3rd pltn fired on enemy OP's during the afternoon. Results unknown. The 1st pltn with only one gun in operation saw no action. C Co. - At 0900 hours, 1st section, 1st pltn succeeded in moving through RR underpass and returned to PACHTEN. 2nd section, 1st pltn joined 2nd pltn at 25758585. The 2nd section, 1st pltn and 2nd pltn fired on two pillboxes, houses and troops in area NE of check point 206. Houses were demolished but results of firing on pillboxes unknown at this time. At 1500 hours, positions were reconnoitered at 26508390 for possible occupation by 3rd pltn. Weather, cold and cloudy.

On 15 December, Bn Hqs and Hqs Co. no change. Recon Co. - CP at FURWEILER. 1st and Pioneer pltns at WALLERFANGEN. 2nd pltn at NEUNKIRCHEN. 3rd pltn at GELMEN. 2nd pltn alerted for mission with 357th Infantry, but taken off alert at 2000 hours. No other activity. A Co. - No change in positions. Three pillboxes destroyed during day. B Co. - After having made a very thorough reconnaissance the previous day, Lt. McMahon lead the 3rd pltn over the RR tracks in advance of the 2nd Bn, 358th Infantry, whom he was supporting. This was a coordinated attack between the 1st and 2nd Bns to move into the town of DILLINGEN. Each of the four guns took a pillbox under fire and kept them buttoned up while the infantry moved across the hazardous zone. They continued to fire at these pillboxes until the four of them were blown by the engineers. Later in the day they knocked out a fifth pillbox on the left flank which was out of their zone but still firing on the infantry. The Bn Comdr of the supporting infantry said that this was the finest piece of work he had ever seen by the armored forces. The one gun of the 1st pltn fired its basic load of ammunition at two pillboxes in the 1st Bn sector. A total of seven pillboxes were neutralized during the day. One TD, 3rd pltn damaged by running over an enemy mine. C Co. - The 3rd pltn in coordinated attack with 1st Ea, 358th Infantry, brought fire on three pillboxes which commanded passages across RR tracks in DILLINGEN. Enemy fire from these pillboxes silenced. After crossing RR tracks took enemy strongpoint in house next to church under fire from one gun and neutralized it resulting in capture of 8 enemy and 5 enemy dead. Weather, cold and cloudy.

On 16 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. no change. Recon Co. - At 1825 hours, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd pltns and Pioneer pltn crossed the SAAR River to the vicinity of PACHTEN to support A, B and C Companies. A Co. - No change. B Co. - 3rd pltn fired on a pillbox as the infantry advanced. This pillbox was knocked out by shots that penetrated the 6-feet of concrete. 2nd pltn relieved the 3rd pltn at 1400 hours. Heavy enemy artillery fire was received by both pltns. 1st pltn remained in reserve. One casualty suffered. C Co. - No change. 2nd pltn fired 3 rounds HE on enemy troops; results unknown. Weather, cloudy to clear.

On 17 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) no change. Hqs Co. Battalion Maintenance Section moved to WALLERFANGEN. No other changes. Recon Co. - CP moved to WALLERFANGEN. No other changes. A Co. During day destroyed two pillboxes. During the day a total of 39 rounds HE, 37 rounds AP, 17 T105 and 1000 rounds .50 cal. fired on pillboxes and troops. B. Co. No change. G. Co. - 1st and 2nd pltns no change. The 3rd pltn by request of 1st Bn, 358th Infantry fired on enemy positions in factory district in DILLINGEN, and all enemy small arms fire from that sector was silenced. The officer assignments were changed and the company commanders are as follows: Hq Co. Captain RICHARD; Recon Co. Captain KELLY; A Co. Captain WILLIAMS; B Co. Captain EMHARDT; C Co. Captain MAIDA. Captain PATERSON assumed the S-3 position in place of Captain BLOMQUIST who was injured and evacuated to a hospital on the 15th of December. Weather, cloudy and cool.

A forward aid station was set up in the vicinity of PACHTEN and immediately started to function with Captain SINGER, S/Sgt Slutsky and Tec 3 Geisenhoffer treating wounded infantrymen, tankers and civilians until they were withdrawn on 22 December.

A Co. - 1st and 2nd pltns moved to 267844. No activity. B. Co. - 1st pltn relieved 3rd pltn C Co. and now located at 269842. 2nd pltn moved to 282849. No other changes. C Co. - the 3rd pltn moved back to CP in PACHTEN. No activity. During the period 13 to 18 December, inclusive, Major MOORE, Bn Executive Officer, coordinated moving supplies across river for the battalion and also visited positions of all firing companies. Weather, cloudy and rain.

On 19 December, Bn Hqs, no change. Hqs Co. (less Bn Maintenance) moved to WALLERTANGEN closing in at 1630 hours. Ron Co. - 2nd and 3rd pltns alerted to move to BIRINGEN and OBERESCH, respectively. As of 2400 hours they were still being ferried across the river. 1st pltn and pioneers remained with A Co. A Co. - 1st and 2nd pltns moved to positions in DILLINGEN and 3rd pltn moved to position North of PACHTEN. No other changes. B Co. - Company alerted for move to BIRINGEN for counterattack. At 2400 hours company plus 3rd Ron pltn atchd completed river crossing for move to BIRINGEN. C Co. - 1st pltn by request of infantry fired on pillbox and K'd same. At approximately 1800 hours company left PACHTEN, crossed river and assembled at OBERESCH (15208950) by 2330 hours. At 1000 hours, Lt. Beckman was presented the Silver Star Award by Major General VANFLEET, 90th Infantry Division CO, at the 358th Inf headquarters. Weather, cool and cloudy.

On 20 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. no change. Ron Co. - 2nd and 3rd pltns with B and C Companies reconnoitered territory to the North of BIRINGEN and OBERESCH. A Co. - CP, 26008500 1st pltn 25858499, 2nd pltn 26998450, 3rd pltn 25908550. Pioneer pltn atchd at CP. 1st Ron pltn atchd with 2nd pltn. Company remained in support of 90th Infantry Div in defense of DILLINGEN bridgehead. B Co. - No change. Co. located in BIRINGEN. C Co. - No change. Co. located at OBERESCH. Weather, cool and cloudy.

On 21 December, Hqs (Fwd CP) no change. Hqs Co. moved from WALLERFANGEN to HALSTROFF closing in at 2100 hours. Ron Co. - Co. CP moved from WALLERFANGEN to FLASTROFF (128361). The Pioneer pltn atchd to A Co. destroyed the following: 2 disabled M10's at PACHTEN, 2 - 2½ 6x6 (Chemical Company vehicles) and 1 75mm German AT gun. They prepared a bridge for demolition which was to be blown by engineers. At 1600 hours, the Pioneers crossed the SAAR River and proceeded to FLASTROFF. The 1st pltn completed crossing the river by 1700 hours. A Co. - Co. remained in support of 90th Infantry Div in defense of DILLINGEN. Alerted to the SAAR for withdrawal. B Co. - Located in BIRINGEN. Pltn leaders made a reconnaissance to the W and NE in the event of an attack. At 1700 hours, company moved to HALSTROFF closing in at 1800 hours. C Co. - Co. continued reconnaissance to the North. No other changes. Weather, cold and light snow.

On 22 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) moved from WALLERFANGEN to HALSTROFF closing in completely by 1200 hours. Heavy enemy mortar and artillery fire was falling in WALLERFANGEN while moving out. Distance travelled 15-miles. Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - Lt. Michaels (1st pltn) still in PACHTEN. He destroyed one 1/4T vehicle due to inability to recross river, but the MG was salvaged. Lt. Michaels and driver crossed river at 0200 hours completing all of company crossing. 3rd pltn in RITZING making move with C Co. from OBERESCH. The pltn made a reconnaissance for gun positions along line BUSENDORFF to OBER-TUNSDORF, also line from LAUNSTROFF, WELLINGTON and BUDING. A Co. - At PACHTEN started crossing SAAR River at 0115. The first two M10's were crossed by a push and pull ferry. At 0530 hours, seven TD's were across and also all of the infantry leaving the rest of the TD's on their own. Good smoke, a little snow, hard-working men and men who stuck to their vehicles allowed them to get all vehicles across by 0930, except one 1/4T of 1st Ron pltn which was stuck so bad it could not be evacuated. Hard, steady work of Major MOORE and Captain WILLIAMS was a great help to all concerned. During the move from PACHTEN to the ferry site, heavy artillery and mortar fire was received everywhere. The company closed in at HALSTROFF at 1400 hours. B Co. - Co. was alerted to move but remained in present location at HALSTROFF. C Co. - By 1330 hours company had assembled in RITZING moving from OBERESCH. Reconnaissance to the north was continued. No other changes. Weather, cold.

On 23 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. no change. Ren Co. - No change in position. 1st pltn reconnoitered for gun positions along SAAR River from MECHERN South to EIMERSDORF for A Co. Enemy machine gun fire heard along east bank of river. 2nd pltn made a road reconnaissance of roads KIRCH LES SIERK, EVENDORF, KIRCHNAUMEN, RITZING, OBERNAUMEN and HALSTROFF. The 3rd pltn at RITZING made a reconnaissance of the area W of MERZIG to FITTEN and area North of WONDORF, SILLWINGEN to HILBRINGEN and FITTEN. A Co. - No change. Co. performed maintenance and checked shortages of equipment. B Co. - Pltn leaders made a reconnaissance in RUSTROFF-KIRSCH area for gun positions while the 2nd Ren pltn made a road reconnaissance. No other changes. C Co. - Reconnaissance continued to be made in C Co.'s area. Routes of approach studied and probable gun positions selected. Weather, cold.

On 24 December, Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) no change. Hqs Co. - moved from HALSTROFF to ELZANGE closing in at 1930 hours. Ren Co. - Co. CP moved from FLASTROFF to HALSTROFF. The three Ren pltns made a reconnaissance of roads, bridges, gun positions, etc. 1st section pioneers reported to B Co. at HALSTROFF and exploded German duds and swept vicinity for mines. A Co. - No change. B Co. - At 1230 hours company moved from HALSTROFF to EVENDORF closing in at 1330 hours. Pltn leaders made a reconnaissance for positions along a general line from MONTENACH to RITZING. There were very few good gun positions found, so a bulldozer was taken to the high ground East of MANDEREN and two positions were dug in. C Co. - Reconnaissance continued for routes and positions. By 1900 hours, the 2nd pltn occupied previously dug in positions in vicinity of LAUNSTROFF. No other changes. At 1500 hours, Colonel SPIESS presented three Bronze Stars, two Oak Leaf Clusters and nine Purple Heart Awards to the following named men of this battalion: Bronze Stars: Captain LYNN F. WILLIAMS, 1st Lt. JOHN SHARP, JR., Sgt Joseph T. Hekele; Bronze Oak-Leaf Cluster: Sgt Anthony O'Savage, Cpl Lawrence L. Woodie; Award of the Purple Heart: Sgt Merritt E. Ward, Sgt Kenneth O. Happel, Sgt Herbert A. Matranga, Tec 5 Kenneth L. Osterhoudt, Tec 5 Wesley J. Koerner, Pvt Vincent L. Roussell, Pvt Jesse B. Brown, Pvt Everett Wermager and Pvt Marion C. Banks. Weather, cold.

On 25 December, Bn Hq (Fwd CP) and Hq Co. No change. Ren Co. - The Ren pltns continued on reconnaissance of roads and gun positions. The Bn CP and Ren Co. were attacked by enemy planes at HALSTROFF between 1230 and 1300 hours, but driven off with .50 cal. MG Fire from both the CP and Ren guns. No damage or casualties although one bomb dropped 100 yards East of CP. A Co. - No change. B Co. - The pltn leaders reconnoitered for positions along a general line MOSELLE River-FRECHTING-KIRCHNAUMEN-REMELING and good positions were selected. C Co. - At 0930 the 2nd pltn returned to RITZING having spent the night in position in vicinity of LAUNSTROFF. No other changes. General VAN FLEET, 90th Div Cmdr, presented Colonel SPIESS, Bn CO, the Silver Star Award at division headquarters. Weather, cold.

On 26 December, Bn Hq (Fwd CP) moved from HALSTROFF to ST FRANCOIS closing in at 1045 hours. Distance travelled five miles. Hq Co. - No change. Ren, A and B Companies continued reconnaissance for gun positions and routes of approach. C Co. - Co. moved from RITZING to ST FRANCOIS closing in at 1325 hours. Weather, cold.

On 27 December, Bn Hq (Fwd CP) and Hq Co. No change. Ren Co. - The Ren pltns remained inactive. The Pioneer pltn prepared bridges South of SIERCK (004938) for demolition. Co. alerted for enemy aircraft at 1150 hours; all guns manned for the remainder of day. At 1630 hours eight enemy planes were sighted and all MG's engaged planes; some hits were made but no damage done. A Co. - Pltn leaders continued reconnaissance. Co. performed motor maintenance. At 1715 enemy planes were fired upon with all .50 cal. MG's. B Co. - Pltn leaders continued reconnaissance. At 1715, nine enemy planes sighted over area and fired upon. C Co. - No activity, no change. Weather, cold.

On 28 December, Bn Hq (Fwd CP) and Hq Co. no change. Ren Co. - Pioneer pltn reported to B Co. and proceeded to 025914 where they blew holes with TNT for gun positions. Completed mission and reported back to company at 1700 hours. The 1st and 2nd pltns reconnoitered area occupied by 74th TD Bn and plotted gun positions. Mortar fire was encountered by 2nd pltn at WOOHERN. A Co. - No activity, continued maintenance. B Co. - No activity. C Co. - Pltn leaders continued reconnaissance to the East and South of ST FRANCOIS. No other changes. At 1445 hours, Colonel SPIESS presented six Purple Heart Awards to the following men: Tec 4 Clarence A. Roy, Tec 5 Frank Thlenfeld, Jr., Pfc Martin A. Hollingsworth, Pfc Robert Eberly, Pfc John H. Norman and Pfc Angelo J. Pennacchia. Weather, clear and cold.

On 29 December, Bn Hq (Fwd CP) and Hq Co. No change. Ren Co. - Hq, Pioneer and 3rd pltns remained inactive. 1st and 2nd pltns made road reconnaissance, location of minefields, road craters. Information placed on overlay and turned in to Bn Hq. One man of Pioneer pltn was attached to B Co. to blow the bridge South of SIERCK if necessary. A Co. - Co. took up positions of Plan 1 at 1415 hours. Returning at 1630. The Bn CO and Colonel TULLY, Ass't Division Commander, inspected positions under Plan 1. B Co. - At 1430 hours, the 1st and 2nd pltns occupied positions in area of 024961 and 025949, respectively, in accordance with Plan 1. Further plans were made to improve these positions by blasting, camouflage, etc. Colonel SPIESS and Colonel TULLY also inspected these positions. At 1300 the Co. CO went up in a L-5 plane to inspect forward area for terrain, dragon teeth, SAAR River and to familiarize himself with town roads. C Co. - No change. Weather, cold.

On 30 December, Bn Hq (Fwd CP) and Hq Co. No change. Ren Co. - The Ren pltns made a reconnaissance of the area to be occupied by the firing companies. The mission was to locate (pin-point) OP's and relay stations. 12 men were sent to each firing company for assistance in camouflaging TD's. The Pioneer pltn was split into three sections, one to each firing company to help dig-in the M10's. Progress was slow due to the frozen ground and difficulty in obtaining the necessary amount of TNT. A Co. - At 1300 hours, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd pltns moved out and took up positions of Plan 1. No other change. B Co. - During the morning the pltn leaders picked exact positions for Plan 1. A section of the 2nd Ren pltn assisted company in camouflage work. A section of the Pioneers dug holes for all M10's of the 2nd pltn. At 1400 hours order was received to execute Plan 1; 2nd pltn occupied four positions, 1st pltn three positions, 3rd pltn no positions. At 1630 hours the 3rd pltn received one M10 and went into position 047913. At 2030 hours one man accidentally shot himself in the knee when getting out of his M10. C Co. - Pltns prepared and occupied previously selected defensive positions as follows: 1st pltn 12708560, 12608490; 2nd pltn 13258680, 13308595; 3rd pltn 14008400. Weather, cold and light snow.

On 31 December, Bn Hq (Fwd CP) and Hq Co. no change. Ren Co. - One section of 2nd pltn reconnoitered alternate gun positions of OP's and relay stations. 36 men of Ren pltns sent to the firing companies to assist in camouflage of TD's. The Pioneer pltn continued in blowing holes for hull-down positions of TD's. 1st pltn was sent out to verify report of two enemy tanks at 120996 but found them to be friendly and returned at 1600 hours. A Co. - All pltns remained in position and were dug-in by the Pioneer pltn. Pltn leaders made a reconnaissance of routes to positions for Plan 2. The engineers swept for mines for 1200 yards on an old road leading to 3rd pltn's positions. B Co. - Co. remained in position, no changes. C Co. - Bn CO and Co. CO inspected gun positions occupied in accordance with Plan 1. The Co. CO and pltn leaders selected positions for Plan 2. No other changes. Weather, cold and light snow.

This concludes operations for the period.

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Frank G. Spiess
FRANK G. SPIESS
Lt. Colonel, FA,
Commanding.

BOX BOOKS as of 31 December 1944

MOVED VEHICLES										Direct		Indirect		TLOS			
IV	IV	III	SP	Oth- ers	GP Veh	AT Guns	Fill Box-	en	MB's	ured	AP	RE	ENK	AP	IS	ENK	FUSE
14	22		3	62	32	10	24	4	285	337	677	1	18	2601	6	32	
1	7		2	6	4	1	8	7	108	434	619			1216	70		
18	41	9	8	80	20	29	13	9	182	753	1044			1131	42	33	
01	1					4		2	51								
sta	19	70	9	19	149	56	30	45	22	622	1524	2340	1	18	4972	116	65