

REPORT ON SPECIAL MISSIONS FIRED BY 679TH T.D. BATTAL ON

(Total rounds fired 18 March - 2 May 1945: 47,404 (all indirect fire).
 Total rounds fired 5 April - 2 May 1945: 38,099. Guns were fired in platoons of 6 guns each, using 3 Company Fire Direction Centers).

(Total 34) 9315 Rds.

5 April 1945

The Battalion fired a preparation for the jump off of 1400 rounds fired from 0455 to 0505. 370th Infantry moved out under this preparation and took initial objectives on time. There were no short rounds among the Infantry. Number of enemy rounds fired: None observed.

14 April 1945

The Battalion was assigned the mission of neutralizing enemy guns on Punta Bianca, the point of land between the mainland and La Spezia and the principal defense of La Spezia. The principal enemy guns were batteries of 152 MM guns in concrete emplacements, with doors, in batteries of 3 and 4 guns each referred to as ASB, ALB, and AMB. In addition there were AA guns, tanks, and self propelled guns moving about the Peninsular. Concentrations of 12 guns each (indirect fire at 10,000 yards) on ASB, ALB, and AMB were prepared and each Company laid to fire on one target and prepared to shift to the other two. A direct wire was laid from the OP to the Platoons and four code names used; Sugar, Love, Mike and Geronimo. When an enemy gun of Sugar, Love, or Mike Batteries fired the OP, calling all six platoons direct, saying Sugar, Love, or Mike, automatically got 5 rounds each from 12 guns and by saying Geronimo got 5 rounds each from all 36 guns. By keeping a round in the chamber and a gunner at the lanyard at all times, rounds hit the enemy positions within 45 seconds of calling for ame, timed by Division Artillery. After 16 April only 30 guns were used against the Peninsular as one platoon was withdrawn for use against Aulla.

In addition numerous targets of opportunity were engaged. On 14 April a truck convoy of 8 trucks on one of the roads on the Peninsular was fired on and at least two of the vehicles destroyed.

On 15 April and again on 17 April the enemy's smoke generator was destroyed within a few minutes after it commenced operation. The enemy never smoked out the Peninsular after 15 April.

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On 15 April an enemy self-propelled 88 MM gun moved into position on the extreme tip of the Peninsular and began direct fire adjustment on our OP obtaining both overs and shorts with deflection correct. Before adjustment was completed a conference call to all three Fire Direction Centers resulted in fire of all 36 guns which hit the enemy vehicle, setting him on fire and blowing up his ammunition. 144 rounds were fired.

Total rounds fired on Punta Bianca Peninsular from 14 April - 19 April 1945: 11,066. Number of enemy rounds fired: impossible to estimate.

Consideration was given to the possibility of moving guns right on the coast and employing direct fire but the results from indirect fire were so effective that it was considered inadvisable to move any guns from positions where everything was working so smoothly.

Punta Bianca guns did not fire after 0200, 19 April 1945.

16 April 1945

The Battalion was ordered to put one platoon of guns in position on Mt. Grigola for the purpose of firing on the road net at Aulla. Positions were occupied the night of 16-17 April. The only possible gun positions were on the road itself on top of the ridge. The ridge dropped abruptly on either side of the road. Muzzle blast from these guns was therefore silhouetted against the sky and resulted in considerable enemy mortar and artillery fire (estimated 250 mortar rounds; 400 80 MM rounds). The Platoon suffered 2 men killed and 1 wounded but continued to deliver the fire. 7220 rounds were fired on Aulla during the period 17 April - 24 April. Reports

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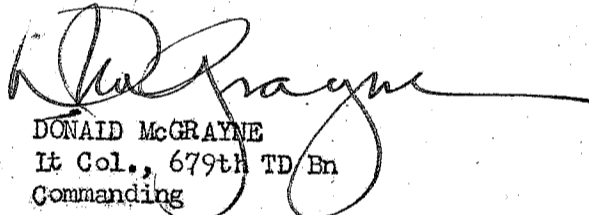
from Partisans and visual evidence after hostilities ceased indicated this fire to have been effective. The Company Commander of "B" Company, Captain Harold B. Kent, with the Fire Direction Center, fired this platoon (commanded by 1st Lt Hyman Glicksman) and the other platoon was attached to "A" Company and fired by "A" Company.

28 April 1945

The last enemy pocket of resistance in the vicinity of Genoa to surrender were the harbor defense guns high up on Monte Maro. These guns had fired on Genoa on 26 April causing considerable civilian casualties. The Commander came down to negotiate the surrender on 27 April but failed to complete the negotiations. The Battalion was ordered to put one Company in position to fire direct fire on the ports of the guns at approximately 400 yards range. At 0030, 28 April, Captain Kenneth B. Stark, Company Commander of Company "A" was given the mission of reconnoitering his gun positions and moving the guns into position before daylight. To accomplish this he made his reconnaissance in a steady rain, blackout, with no moon and moved his guns up steep streets barely wide enough for a half track. The half tracks could not negotiate the last turn but the guns were man handled into position and were in position and laid for direct fire at 400 yards on the enemy concrete emplacements openings by daylight. "A" Company also had machine guns laid directly on enemy machine gun positions. The enemy gun tubes, other than machine guns, could not be depressed to fire on our guns. The enemy had the following guns on Monte Maro:

- 2 - 381 MM
- 3 - 152 MM
- 4 - 90 MM

At 1430, 28 April, with the 12 "A" Company guns in position and laid and Infantry in positions in his rear, the enemy on Monte Maro surrendered.


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Commanding