

SECRET
*Anti-BC, 771 T. En.
*Initials: [redacted]
*Date: 1 February 1945

AFTER ACTION REPORT
No. [redacted]

From: O10001 Jan 1945
To: 312400 Jan 1945

Unit: 771 T. En.
Date: 1 Feb 1945
Place: K01345022

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Maps: GSG. 4041, sheets 481, 50N, scale 1/25,000.
GSG. 4414, sheets 4902, 4903, 4904, 5002, 5003, 5004, scale 1/25,000.

1. SUMMARY

- a. No units positively identified by our troops, since they have not been in actual contact.
- b. G-2, 102d US Infantry Division, reported following enemy units or elements thereof, in the sector in which our troops operated. All identifications were made from interrogation of prisoners of war.
 - (1) 50th Infantry Division
 - (2) 193d Infantry Division (Volkssturm)
- c. Enemy activity during the period consisted of a static defense, punctuated by normal patrols which failed to make contact with our elements. Increased air operations on 1 January did not affect our dispositions nor cause casualties, and toward the end of the period they fell off considerably. Harassing artillery fire also diminished greatly by the end of the month.
- d. The successive attacks on our left starting on 16 January by the 7th Armored Division (Br), 52d (L) Division (Br) and 43d Division (Br) appeared to have the effect of drawing enemy elements from our front to the 12 Corps (Br) zone to reinforce troops there. Furthermore, the A-DUTTER offensive undoubtedly drew on some forces from this sector, since at the close of the previous period three (3) Infantry Divisions, a GAF Regiment and a GAF Battalion were reported as being in the sector opposite our troops. These two factors, no doubt, account for the decreased artillery fire, coupled with the fact that the enemy's withdrawal of his forces on the night of 24-25 January from the ROUWEND-SIEBE RIVER-MAAS RIVER triangle undoubtedly meant a displacement and repositioning of most of his artillery. Lack of such aerial activity can be laid both to heavy losses on 1 January in attacks on British and US airfields in BELGIUM and FRANCE and to bad flying weather.

2. OWN SITUATION

- a. See overlay 1 (front lines and own troop disposition at beginning of period).
- b. See overlay 31 (adjacent friendly troops)
- c. At the beginning of the period (O10001 to 312400 Jan. 1945) the Bn CP was located at LUTERICH, Germany. The companies were located as follows at the opening of the period; maintaining the AT defense of the 102d Div. sector.
 - A Co CP 909670; A1 909670, A2 914166, A3 902648 was in direct support of the 405th, see overlay 31. One (1) Recon platoon attached which maintained listening and observation posts at each platoon position.
 - B Co CP 959619; B1 934674, B2 932675, B3 937642 had one (1) Recon platoon attached, which maintained listening and observation posts at each firing platoon position. Co. was in direct support of 407th, see overlay 31.
 - C Co CP 916627; C1 966654, C2 915634, C3 937653, had one (1) Recon platoon attached which maintained listening posts and observation posts at each firing platoon position. Co. was in direct support of the 11th Cav Gp. The second platoon was in indirect firing position at this time.
- Recon Co CP 915604, Pioneer platoon 916604; all other platoons were attached on basis of one per firing company.
- Hear Kobelen was located at SALZBURG, Germany at opening of period.
- On this date, XIII Corps AT officer visited the unit and suggested that it institute "pin-point night firing", as prescribed in TC 950 and also execute roving gun missions.

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On 2 Jan 1945 all companies continued in direct AT support of the Div Sector. Co F reconnoitered roving gun positions in vic GENECKENWEILERBOE ENL-PUR WADORN-at following coord: 96186169; 95956243; 95856286; 95856117; 94526140; 94266238; 93476135; 93446090; 92336234, see overlay #2. The 2nd Pioneer platoon completed the corduroy of dug in positions on the Regimental Reserve Line and the Secondary Lines.

On 3rd Jan Co C was assigned position areas in vic GEILENKIRCHEN, Germany, then in the English 52 (L) Div. Sector and ordered to reconnoiter and prepare positions in this area, in preparation for any German thrust through this area; one platoon in BACHMAY; one on NE GEILENKIRCHEN; and one as a mobile reserve in the city itself, see overlay #3.

Co A reconnoitered roving gun positions in vic AFWILLER, Germany; IFFELBOE, Germany; FURCHEN, Germany; HEMMHOVEN, Germany, and following positions selected: 91376292; 90646292; 89946320, 89266308, 88726330, 88326340, 88246396, 88326412, 90236406. See overlay #2.

A fire schedule of 143 targets was set up for the roving guns and targets included fire upon the following towns and surrounding grounds: AFWILLER; FURCHEN; HEMMHOVEN; IFFELBOE; BACHMAY; HOTTORF; KOLBACHEN; GOTTESBACH; GLEIBACH; HEMMHOVEN; FURCHEN; KATZEN; HEMMHOVEN; HOTTORF; HILDEBRUNN; HILDEBRUNN; HILDEBRUNN; HILDEBRUNN. See target list as of 5 Jan 1945.

As of 4 Jan the companies remained in same positions defending in assigned sections. 100% of the RRL was prepared; position in Corps area 90% completed; positions on the Secondary line and switch positions were 100% prepared. Positions in the GILBERT area were also 100% completed. All companies received instructions to reconnoiter for defensive positions on a 3rd and 4th line for division AT defense. See overlay #4.

Co B began preparations for complete defense of the town of IFFELBOE. Machine gun emplacements, armored car emplacements, and fox holes for riflemen were completely prepared. Town was provided with a complete perimeter defense.

On 6 Jan 1945 Co B performed one (1) direct fire operation. The previous afternoon a thorough reconnaissance of the area was made and firing positions were laid according to instructions as laid down by TC 50. At 050600 Jan tank destroyer was moved to a cover position 100 yards from firing position. At 060500A Jan the tank destroyer moved to the firing position at 060600, without covering fire or other covering noise to draw out the tank destroyer cover. Firing began at 060945. Target was approximately 1500 yards away at coord: 939687. 2rds M2 at a quadrant of 12.1 were fired during the 1st minute. At a quadrant of 11.3 and in a period of 30 seconds three rds M2 n/ch delayed fuse and seven (7) M2 n/ch quick fuse. After this 30 seconds of firing, the destroyer returned to former cover position. Observation was conducted from an axial position and a flank position. Aiming circle used in axial position, but proved unsatisfactory. Field glasses proved satisfactory. The ground haze prevented observation of results of firing that morning, but on 7 Jan target was found to be successfully struck in several places. It is believed that all rounds fired took effect.

On 8 Jan. no change in situation. Co A test fired the two 90MM guns mounted on M-7C chassis. Fired 16 rds M2 at targets in vic of IFFELBOE, which ranged from 12,500 yards from the gun positions. The following observations were made following the firings:

1. When firing at long ranges, gas tanks shouldn't be over half full because destroyers must be placed on a ramp in order to attain range of 15,000 yds.
2. Destroyers should be placed far forward of other artillery pieces and can reach targets at great distances.

In the course of the 8th Jan 1945, Co D fired one (1) destroyer in a direct fire mission. At 090345 the tank destroyer was moved through the town of IFFELBOE to a position on the northern outskirts of the town at 090430. Another tank destroyer moved back and forth through the town during the same period to provide covering noise for the one moving into firing position. An observation post was established on roof of a house 100 yds to the S of the firing position; an unobstructed line of sight between observation post and destroyer was maintained for use of TC 50. Visibility did not permit fire until 0945; at which time the target at coord: 920600 (7 C yds from firing position - suspected MG emplacement) was taken under fire. Target believed to be completely destroyed. TC 105 and

Delayed fired rounds caused some delay towards the building before dete-
nation; actual fire resulted from the fifteen (15) M-10 aircraft
shots. Work to improve on accuracy of fire with use of white sheets
which gave a definite indication.

From the 11th through 14th Jan. there were no changes in the positions
of the firing batteries (1, 2, 3) up to or on 14 Jan, however, the rear
batteries moved from vicinity 100 000 to 100 000, Germany.

On 14 Jan. 1945, received and executed the order to reconnoiter
possible gun position areas along the right flank of the division sector
(100 000 - 100 000 - 100 000) in preparation for any attack from
this direction. See overlay #5.

On morning of 13th Jan several batteries changed positions as follows:

- B1-877042; B2-877045
- B1-877044; B2-877043

On 14th Jan. the policy of moving two (2) destroyers from each
company to the front line was in effect. For proper servicing of all
destroyers, the order to action to move went into effect.

One battery battery received one (1) Pak 40 to use on direct fire
missions. One (1) round A 3 were test fired from the ridge
west of 100 000 at target.

On 15 Jan 1945 the German Pak 40 (75mm) carried out direct fire
mission from city of 100 000, Germany. An artillery reconnaissance was
carried out during the daylight hours of 13 Jan 1945. Route of approach,
gun position - 877045, target 87704600 and shelter location were chosen.
On 15th three rounds were fired. Gun trigger mechanism was found to be
faulty. After one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes, trigger mechanism
was repaired and eleven (11) more rounds were fired, trigger mechanism
went out completely and gun was evacuated to entrance. Eleven hits were
observed on target which was believed to be source of much enemy small
arms disturbance.....On this same date one (1) M-10 destroyer was moved
into position at 877040 to take suspected CI in church steeple at
100 000 (877044) under fire. However, firing could not take place
due to poor visibility.

No change on 14th Jan. All companies began turning in all small
arms and machine artillery loads for delivery inspection which was
completed on 14 Jan.

On 15th Jan. Plans were prepared and submitted for the coming
operation.

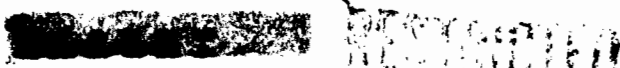
1. It was recommended that A Co 771 TD Bn be employed in following
manner: one (1) platoon in direct support of 407th BCT; one (1) platoon
in reserve at 100 000 prepared to move on order or execute indirect
fire missions; one (1) platoon to occupy position on the ridge to NE of
100 000, as reserve.

2. It was recommended that Co. B, 771 TD Bn be employed in the
following manner: two (2) platoons in direct support of 406th BCT in
attack on area North of 100 000 high ground approximately 2000 yds
to west of 100 000, known as objective He lock; one (1) platoon to
remain in reserve in 100 000, and one (1) section on west end of town, one
(1) section on eastern edge of town.

3. It was recommended that A Co. 771 TD Bn be employed in the
following manner: three (3) platoons in direct support of 405th BCT; one
(1) platoon for objective line (100 000) one platoon for objective Fir
(area 100 000 to area 100 000) and one (1) platoon for
objective Spruce (100 000). See overlay #6 and #6A. These recommendations
were submitted for approval to CG 1024 Div Arty.

No change through 15th Jan. In morning of 15th, the direct fire
mission previously scheduled for the 15th but which was postponed due to
poor visibility took place. M-10 destroyer was moved into position
(877040) at 0900. As enemy fire was drawn. From 1045 to 1100, thirty
(30) rounds M n/ch were fired at target (suspected enemy CI in church
steeple in 100 000 - 877044). Twenty-five (25) hits and five (5)
misses were observed. When firing ceased, an enemy aircraft appeared over
the gun position, apparently attempting to locate the gun; however, there
was no shelling, bombing, or strafing of the gun to indicate position
had been located.

From 15th to 21st Jan there was no change in situation or platoon



positions. In the morning of 21st Jan 1945, one platoon B Co moved from position in LINDERN to position on ridge to NE of GERECHSWEILER. One platoon Co C moved from GERECHSWEILER ridge to LINDERN. This was accomplished in preparation for "Operation Swift". On this date the fifth (5th) direct fire mission took place, using Pak 40 (75mm). Gun was moved into position (97226592) at 0400 under cover of darkness, to take target 97486592 under fire (building on opposite bank of ROHR River, from which enemy small arms fire had been received). Two (2) .50 Cal MG were used for covering fire, sweeping East bank of the river. Enemy smoked targets after commencement of firing. The target was taken under fire at 0715 and 0730. Thirty (30) rounds were fired; fifteen (15) hits observed.

On 22 Jan 1945 further movement of platoons was made to place all companies in proper "jump off" positions for "Operation Swift". 1st platoon Co B moved from vic LINDERN to LINDICH. 3rd Plat Co C moved from LINDICH to take up positions in vic of LINDERN. No change until 24 Jan 1945 on which day the 2nd platoon Co C moved from ABELLEN to LINDERN, completing final move in preparation for "Operation Swift". On this date FO #2 was issued to the companies of the unit. See attached copy of FO #2 dated 24 Jan 1945.

On 26th Jan 1945 the Bn was called upon to substitute roving guns for batteries of Div Artillery which were changing locations. Co B furnished five guns and Co A two guns for these missions.

On the early morning of 26 Jan 1945 "Operation Swift" took place. The infantry took their objectives with no opposition. Tanks and tank destroyers were not needed. Operation a complete success. When minefield had been cleared Co A platoons took up positions in vic of HONSDORF, East RANDEARTH and HIEBERICH. Co C remained in LINDERN. 1st Plat Co B prepared to move to South BRACHLEIN (one (1) section in vic of OELIKIRCH and one (1) section in vic coord: 946687). One (1) platoon Co B remained on ridge to NE of GERECHSWEILER and one platoon in indirect fire position in GERECHSWEILER.

On 22 Jan the Bn had been assigned two Piper Cubs, pilots and crews; to be used experimentally for registration, flight reconnaissance and operations observations..

On 26 Jan. at approximately 1200 one (1) plane, crashed in vic of railroad bridge 1500 yds to the NE of BRACHLEIN. Pilot and observer could not be located. See attached report. By 0600 27 Jan 1945 the two sections of 1st plat of Co B had moved in North BRACHLEIN and OELIKIRCH. Other companies had not changed their positions.

On 27 Jan 1945 recommendations were submitted to CG 102d Div Arty for employment of the 771 TD Bn after completion of "Operation Swift". Recommendations as follows:

- (a) Co A 771 TD Bn be moved to GERECHSWEILER, one (1) platoon to occupy indirect fire position at coord: 937653.
- (b) Co C 771 TD Bn (less one (1) plat) move to area, WURN-BUECK, one (1) platoon establish indirect fire position in vic of LEIFPARTH - prepared to fire to the North and East.
- (c) Co B 771 TD Bn (less one (1) platoon) move to FRUMMERN; one (1) platoon to remain in LINDERN.

See attached overlay #7.

On 27 Jan these verbal requests were made of CG 102d Div Arty to alter the above plans slightly. Co B was to remain in GERECHSWEILER, with one (1) platoon in indirect fire position; Co C was to move completely to the WURN area; Co A was to move completely to the BUECK area. All Ron platoons which were attached to A, B, and C companies were to return to LOVERICH. This plan was approved by CG 102d Div Arty.

On 28th Jan companies A, B, and C and Ron. were in the process of changing locations specified according to above approved plan. By 281700 Jan all companies had closed in their respective areas.

Companies A and C were to place two guns on roving missions as of 29 Jan 1945. Fire plan prepared. Companies reconnoitered gun positions. For gun positions and targets see attached sheet dated 28 Jan 1945 entitled "Roving Gun position Coords" and "Roving Gun Targets". Targets included the following towns and surrounding areas: BOSLAR, HOMPESCH, MUNTZ, HASSLEWEILER, GVENICH, GLIMBACH, KORNELIG, KOPPEREN, HOFTORF, RALSHOVEN, GEVELSDORF, RURICH, BAAL, LOVENICH, KLEINCOULLAR, KATZEN, DOVEREN, GRANTERATH, TERNOLT, KUCHHOVEN, DOVERHEIDE, DOVERHARN, GENEHEN, KYEL, GERDERATH, GENDSORF, BATHEN, BUSCH, NILLICH, GOLMBATH, K.L. GLADBACH, HUCKELHOVEN,

HOUSERATH, HOWARD, KATZMATH, WIKINS, TRIPINGHOVEN, WICKERATH, COTRICH, OR IN, and TRINER.

On 30 Jan all companies made reconnaissance of assigned areas for defense. These areas not to be occupied. See overlay #8 for chosen positions and fields of fire.

As of 31 Jan 1945 all companies were undergoing thorough maintenance and supply check plus all needed preparatory training for future operations.

For disposition of Bn at close of period see overlay #9 and 9A.

See attached sheet #3 for total of direct and indirect fire missions fired per company, plus total ammunition expenditures incurred during the period.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE

a. Status of Strength of Command and reinforcements needed.

(1) Officers and Warrant officers:

	Authorized	Assigned	Shortage
Hq. Co.	15	14	1
Reg. Co.	7	7	0
A Co	6	6	0
B Co	6	6	0
C Co	6	5	1
Med Det	1	1	0

(2) Enlisted Men

	Authorized	Assigned	Shortage
Hq. Co.	105	105	0
Reg. Co.	115	110	5
ACCo	124	119	5
B Co	124	114	10
C Co	124	121	3
Med Det	15	15	0

b. Casualties

(1) Officers and Warrant officers:

	Killed	Sick, Gassed, Wounded		Captured	Missing
		Evac	Non-Evac		
Hq. Co.	0	0	2	0	1
Reg. Co.	0	1	0	0	0
A Co	0	0	0	0	0
B Co	0	0	0	0	0
C Co	0	0	0	0	0
Med Det	0	0	0	0	0

(2) Enlisted Men

	Killed	Sick, gassed, wounded		Captured	Missing
		Evac	Non-Evac		
Hq. Co.	0	3	55	0	0
Reg. Co.	0	5	61	0	0
A Co	0	14	15	0	0
B Co	6	12	46	0	0
C Co	0	12	46	0	0
Med Det	0	1	0	0	0

c. Prisoners Captured: None

d. Evacuation of casualties has been divided approximately as follows: Eighty percent through Battalion Medical Detachment and twenty percent through Division Medical installations.

e. (1) No officers assigned to the organization during the period 1-31 January 1945.

(2) The following officer was lost to the organization during the period 1-31 January 1945:

Hq. Co. 1st Lt. Richard Woodard, Liaison Officer, Asst. 2-3.

f. Decorations awarded during the month of January 1945.

(1) Purple Heart
 Officers 0
 Enlisted Men 11

(2) Bronze Star
 Officers 0
 Enlisted Men 1

(3) Silver Star
 Officers 1
 Enlisted Men 0

g. Status of Supply

RESTRICTED 25

The over-all supply status during the period was good with certain critical exceptions:

1. Quartermaster:

- (a) Boots, combat service of 22 widths.
- (b) Overshoes sizes 12 and 13.
- (c) Mantles and generators for converted type gasoline lanterns.
- (d) Stoves, cooking, 1-burner.
- (e) Heaters, water, immersion type.

2. Ordnance:

- (a) Binoculars, M-3
- (b) M-36 Tank Destroyers
- (c) M-32 Tank Recovery Vehicles
- (d) Trailers, Ammunition, M-10

Several of the items considered critical on last report have been released. The unit at present has two (2) M-36 destroyers; are awaiting shipment of 34 more, rated in the new T/O & E, under which the unit has been organized.

Coordination of evacuation has accomplished a great deal toward relieving the maintenance situation. However, our new supporting ordnance assignments, 538th Heavy Automotive Maintenance, is located too far away to facilitate rapid evacuation and replacement.

David De G. Smith

DAVID De G SMITH,
Lt. Col., FA,
Commanding.

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COMPANY	MISSIONS	ROUNDS EXPENDED				
		3" HE (n/gh)	3" HE (r/gh)	HE (90mm)	PAK 40:13" AFG	
Co "A"						
DIRECT FIRE	0	0	0	0	0	0
INDIRECT FIRE	138	498	58	291	0	0
Co "B"						
DIRECT FIRE	1	10	0	0	0	2
INDIRECT FIRE	268	1427	715	0	0	0
Co "C"						
DIRECT FIRE	2	49	0	0	0	0
INDIRECT FIRE	728	2038	1311	0	0	0
Res. Co.						
DIRECT	2	0	0	0	49	0
TOTAL	1139	4022	2084	291	49	2

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