

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

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

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: Report After Operations Against the Enemy.

TO: THE ADJUTANT GENERAL, Army War College, War Department,
Washington 25, D.C.

THRU: COMMANDING GENERAL, Third United States Army, APO 403.

COMMANDING GENERAL, VIII Corps, APO 308.

COMMANDING GENERAL, 90th Infantry Division, APO 90.

1. In compliance with Paragraph 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 (SP).

3. Report After Operations Against the Enemy -- Period 010001A February 1945 - 282359A February 1945.

1 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. located at BIWISCH (74507040). No change. Ron Co. - 1st pltn in BIWISCH left Company at 1415 hours for C Co. at BURG-REULAND. Attempted to establish communications with two pltns at WINTERSPELT. 2nd pltn remained inactive in BIWISCH. 3rd pltn with B Co. at 838747 remained inactive. A Co. - 1st pltn in position at 81207220. Prepared to fire illuminating shell laying on compass 1387. 2nd pltn in position at 93957480 are ready to move to high ground at 84507510 just before daybreak. At 1700 hours, 3rd pltn moved across river and went into position on high ground at 87007450. No other changes. B Co. - 1st and 2nd pltns (2 M10's) each remained in position 879755. No activity during day, but received very heavy mortar fire. At 1300 hours, 3rd pltn moved out of STAUBACH to support 1st Bn, 358th Inf. in attack on HECKHUSSEID. No enemy armor encountered, but pltn did meet scattered remnants of enemy infantry and did quite a bit of small arms firing and taking five prisoners.

C Co. - 1st pltn in support of 2nd Bn, 359th Inf. advanced with infantry and occupied position at WINTERSPELT (915805). 2nd pltn in support of 3rd Bn, 359th Inf advanced with infantry and occupied position at GROFLANGENFELD (943812). The infantry met very little resistance and the TDS met no enemy armor. At approximately 1600 hours, 1st pltn moved into firing positions 1000 yards N of WINTERSPELT (925805), firing 23 rounds 3" HE in GROFLANGENFELD as supporting fire for the advance of the 2nd Bn, 359th Inf. into that town. Pltn returned to WINTERSPELT after firing. The ammo in one TD of the 2nd pltn (Sgt Halloran) mysteriously exploded, destroying five rounds HVAP and six rounds APC. Radio and electric firing wiring and ammo holding rod blown out. One man injured. Detailed investigation being held to determine cause.

Weather, cloudy and warmer.

2 February 1945

Bn Hqs and Hqs Company - No change. Ron Co. - 1st pltn moved to WINTERSPELT. Made road reconnaissance to GRODLANGENFELD and attempted radio relay station between CP and pltns. 2nd pltn remained in BIWISCH. 3rd pltn in LEITHUM. No other changes. A Co. - 1st pltn remained in same position, ready to fire illuminating shell upon order from infantry. 2nd and 3rd pltns remained in same position. Both positions received light artillery fire during the day.

2 February 1945 Continued)

B Co. - 1st pltn, no activity. At 1300 hours, 2nd pltn moved to 86907540 to set up an anti-tank defense for 2nd Bn, 358th Inf. 3rd pltn moved to HECKHUSCHEID at 0100 hours after the infantry had gone into the town. Sector generally quiet during the day. At 1100 hours a threatened counterattack failed to materialize. No other changes. C Co. - 1st pltn supporting 3rd Bn, 359th Inf. left WINTERSPELT at 0700 hours advancing to occupied positions in South part of EIGLS-CHEID. Enemy activity was observed 1000 yards to the South and taken under fire, results approximately 50 enemy dead, one halftrack vehicle and one field piece KO'd. Enemy artillery and mortar fire active. 2nd pltn in GROFLANGENFELD received light artillery fire and mortar fire. No activity.

Weather, light rain, warm.

3 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - CP and 2nd pltn at BIWISCH. 1st pltn HECKHALENFELD and 3rd pltn LEITHUM. Pltns received mission of route and road reconnaissance in general area from 886762 and a line NE through HECKHALERFELD. A Co. - CP moved from WEISWAMPACH to BIWISCH with the 1st pltn. 2nd pltn moved from LEITHUM to WEISWAMPACH to BIWISCH. 3rd pltn pulled out of position at OBERHAUSEN to LEITHUM to BIWISCH. 1st pltn test fired one new M10 with 3 rounds HE. Company spent balance of day settling down. B Co. - 1st pltn moved to position 87907480; 2nd pltn to 89007530 and 3rd pltn to 89807490. No activity during the period. C Co. - At 1645 hours all TDS assembled in WINTERSPELT for fuel, rations, etc. In compliance with division defensive plan at 1800 hours, 1st pltn occupied positions at HECKHUSCHEID (921766) and 2nd pltn at EIGELSCHEID (932797). 3rd pltn with two TDS did maintenance on one and the other was attached to 1st pltn.

Weather, cold, snow.

4 February 1945.

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - 1st pltn remained in WINTERSPELT. 2nd pltn reconnoitered TD routes into WINTERSPELT from ST VITH (Hwy 17 to St. Vith, Hwy 8 to Winterspelt), distance of 24-miles. 3rd pltn made road reconnaissance of routes for TDS from LEITHUM to PETERSKIRCHE. Encountered minefields not defended (reported to S-2, 357th Inf). TD route located from LEITHUM to OBERHAUSEN river road to STOUBACH. Bridge at OBERHAUSEN out. Pltn moved from LEITHUM to Co. CP at BIWISCH. A Co. - Company located completely in BIWISCH (745704). Company followed training schedule. B Co. - Pltns all relieved at 1200 hours and moved to BIWISCH for rest and maintenance of vehicles. At 1000 hours, CP moved to BOURG-REULAND. C Co. - CP and 3rd pltn located in WINTERSPELT. 1st pltn HECKHUSCHEID; 2nd pltn EIGELSCHEID. No activity. Some artillery and mortar fire falling in all towns occupied by the company.

Weather, cloudy and cool with occasional showers.

5 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - 1st pltn remained in WINTERSPELT with C Co. 2nd and 3rd pltns remained in BIWISCH.. At 1600 hours one section of Pioneers attached to B Co. A 10-man searching party returned to OBERWAMPACH to search for Lt. VonBehren who has been missing since 18 January 1945. Information and items found belonging to Lt. VonBehren turned in to Bn. CO. A Co. - Company remained in BIWISCH performing Motor maintenance. B Co. - CP remained in BOURG-REULAND. Pltns alerted and moved out at 1600 hours. 1st pltn attached to 2nd Bn, 358th Inf. 2nd pltn attached to 3rd Bn, 358th Inf., and 3rd pltn to 1st Bn, 358th Inf. 1st pltn went to WINTERSCHEID (94208240). 2nd pltn to BLEIALF (96608320) and 3rd pltn to 94208240. Pltns are in readiness for coming operation. C Co. - At 0200, 0400 and 0600 hours, 1st pltn in HECKHUSCHEID and 2nd pltn in EIGELSCHEID pulled a demonstration - maneuvering vehicles and attempting to create the impression of an armored thrust from that area. 1st pltn fired 20 rounds 3" HE into HABSCHIED as part of

5 February 1945 Continued

the demonstration. No return fire was drawn and it is not known if the enemy received the intended false impression. At approximately 1400 hours, 1st and 3rd pltns assembled at the Co. CP in WINTERSPELT in preparation for the Division attack scheduled for 060400 Feb. 45. Weather, cold and rainy.

6 February 1945

Bn Hqs. - No change. Hqs Co. - (Minus S-4 and Bn Maintenance) moved from BIWISCH to NEIDINGEN (866847) closing in by 1800 hours. Ron Co. - 1st pltn remained in WINTERSPELT with C Co. One section of Pioneers attached to B Co. Hqs, 2nd and 3rd pltns left BIWISCH closing in by 1330 hours at GALHAUSEN (851854). A Co. - At 0930 hours, Company moved from BIWISCH to WINTERSPELT closing in by 1115 hours. Rear CP moved to HEMMERES. Company in readiness to move in attack with 357th Inf. B Co. - CP at BOURG-REULAND. Firing pltns moved with their respective battalions of 358th Inf. 1st pltn with 2nd Bn and 2nd pltn with 3rd Bn; 3rd pltn with 1st Bn. 1st and 3rd pltns moved into BRANDSCHEID. 2nd pltn moved into BLEIALF. All pltns received mortar, artillery and nebelwerfer fire during the day. C Co. - Approximately 0530 hours, 1st, 2nd and 3rd pltns in support of 3rd, 2nd and 1st Bns, 359th Inf. respectively, pushed off in the attack and by 2400 hours succeeded in taking and reaching the town of HABSCHEID. 2nd pltn fired on various pillboxes, destroying four of them. Pltn also placed fire on suspected open MG positions. Pltn received some direct AT fire but were unable to locate gun which apparently was neutralized by advancing infantry. Enemy artillery and mortar fire extremely heavy in HABSCHEID. Weather, cool and rainy.

7 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) moved to URB, GERMANY, from BIWISCH, closing in by 1300 hours. Distance travelled 23-miles. Hqs Co. - Battalion maintenance and S-4 sections moved and closed in with company at NEIDINGEN. Ron Co. - No change. A Co. - At 0930 hours, the rear CP moved to WINTERSPELT. 2nd pltn located in WINTERSPELT. 1st pltn in position at HABSCHEID received mortar and artillery fire during the night and day. At 1245 hours, they moved and went into position at 97307680 with the forward company of 3rd Bn, 357th Inf. At 0930 hours, 3rd pltn moved to 95707760 to cover the advance of some tanks who were moving forward to help the infantry who were having trouble with dug-in Jerries. At 1900 hours moved to positions (96607740) with 1st Bn, 357th Inf. B Co. - 1st pltn moved out of BRANDSCHEID to support infantry in attack on pillboxes. Several pillboxes were taken under fire and one was destroyed for sure, others probable. One M10 hit mine which blew off the track, then was hit by enemy bazooka fire. The 3" gun would not traverse and the MG disabled by the bazooka round. There was no friendly infantry around and German infantry was closing in on the vehicle from three sides, and the crew was forced to abandon it under heavy enemy small arms fire. The TD was destroyed by another M10. No casualties. At 0900 hours, the 2nd pltn moved to 994822. No action. Received a lot of artillery fire. At 1900 hours, pltn moved into BRANDSCHEID. 3rd pltn moved into the outskirts of BRANDSCHEID and shot at a few pillboxes. Pltn also underwent enemy artillery and mortar fire. C Co. - CP plus 1 section 3rd pltn in WINTERSPELT. 1st pltn plus 1 section 3rd pltn at 95307784. 2nd pltn SE of HABSCHEID (93857700). Infantry continued attack thru HABSCHEID and to SE. Several times they were held up by automatic weapons fire from pillboxes and reinforced houses. The TDs were called upon for supporting fire and effectively silenced this fire and the infantry was able to reach the division objective #2. (This objective was not completely occupied by our troops). At 1130 hours, Pfc Scott was KIA by a mortar tree burst while loading the 3" gun while the TDs were giving supporting fire. Enemy fire of all types heavy in HABSCHEID. Weather, cold, overcast.

8 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Rcn Co. - No change.
 A Co. - At 0845 hours, one TD from 1st pltn was hit by direct fire from a tank while trying to get into position. The first round hit gun disabling it and wounded the driver. Tec 5 Meyer volunteered to drive TD out of line of fire and was killed by another round hitting the TD and three other men were wounded trying to get him out of the TD. Heavy artillery was falling in area, wounding Lt. Fielden who was evacuated. S/Sgt Land took charge of platoon. Pltn located at 97407650. Sgt Ward, 3rd pltn (96507730) captured a pillbox and three PsW during the morning. At 1230 hours pltn fired 12 rounds HE at dug-in MG's and 5 rounds AP at possible tank. Results unknown as yet. At 1300 hours, 2nd pltn moved to the town of GROBLANGENFELD.
 B Co. - The three pltns fired on enemy pillboxes during the day. A total of 240 rounds of AP and 165 rounds HE were fired destroying 10 pillboxes and 1 AT gun. All pltns received heavy artillery and mortar fire. CP - WINTERSCHEID. 1st, 2nd and 3rd pltns - BRANDSCHEID.
 C Co. - 1st and 3rd pltns inactive. 2nd pltn giving supporting fire on pillboxes and gun positions NE of HABSCHEID. Sgts Happel and Halloran received wounds while making terrain study for possible movement, in vicinity of 3rd pltn positions.
 Weather, cold, sporadic rain and snow.

9 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Rcn Co. - CP, 2nd and 3rd pltns - GALHAUSEN. 1st pltn in WINTERSPELT attached to C Co.
 A Co. - CP and 2nd pltn - HABSCHEID. 1st pltn at 97507650. One section 3rd pltn 97207720 and one section at 96507730. 1st pltn received heavy artillery, mortar and small arms fire. The TD that was hit yesterday was set afire by mortar fire today. 2nd pltn moved to HABSCHEID, at 1230 hours. Ready to move out with 2nd Bn, 357th Inf. sometime during the night. 1st section 3rd pltn remained in position. 2nd section moved forward a short distance. S/Sgt Holmes spotted the position from where the Germans were firing the Nebelwerfer, but could not fire upon it because 359th Infantry were in line of fire. B Co. - CP, 94408250, WINTERSCHEID. 1st and 2nd pltns combined (total 4 M10s) 98808070, BRANDSCHEID. At 0800 hours they moved out to support 2nd Bn, 358th Inf. One M10 burned out one motor and had to withdraw. Another M10 hit a mine and had a track blown off. Remaining two TDS fired upon some pillboxes destroying 5 pillboxes. They returned to BRANDSCHEID to refuel and rearm. At 1700 hours, these two TDS moved out again in support of 3rd Bn in an attack to the SE. Results unknown as yet. 3rd pltn continued in support of 1st Bn. firing upon pillboxes, at pointblank range (15 to 25 yards) and penetration was achieved usually with 4 or 5 rounds of AP. A total of 32 pillboxes were destroyed. Total for the company: 37 pillboxes and 22 MGs. (This figure includes some of the pillboxes KO'd yesterday). At 1500 hours, 3rd pltn returned to BRANDSCHEID.
 C Co. - At 1300 hours, 2nd pltn with 2nd Bn, 359th Inf. reverted to Division reserve and assembled in BLEIALF. Enemy artillery and mortar fire was light during the day, but increased during the hours of darkness. CP and 1st Rcn pltn at WINTERSPELT. 1st pltn 95207680 and 94907770. 3rd pltn, 1 gun at 95807660 and 2 guns at 95507620.
 Weather, cold, rain and snow.

10 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Rcn Co. - No change.
 A Co. - All pltns remained in position. 1st pltn received two rounds direct fire very close to one TD. At daylight, pltn leader is moving TD to new position across road due east as he thinks enemy knows his position. 2nd pltn received six barrages of Nebelwerfer fire during night. 3rd pltn position quiet. Fired 3 rounds illuminating shells at request of infantry. No other changes. B Co. - The two M10s of the 1st and 2nd pltns were combined into one section and advanced in the morning in support of 3rd Bn, 358th Inf. This section advanced to high ground at 006782 where they received very heavy artillery

and mortar fire. At 1400 hours received heavy fire from enemy tanks. One TD hit several times - damage unknown. One man LWA. 1st pltn TD fired and KO'd two of the tanks which turned out to be Tiger Royals, driving off the attack. At 0830 3rd pltn moved out with 1st Bn, 358th Inf. to position 99577 where they were pinned down by direct fire, not being able to move forward or backward, for the balance of the day. At dusk they received a lot of very close direct fire from their left. C Co. - No activity. No change. One EM LWA, hit by debris when nearby pillbox blasted by the Engineers.

Weather, cold, snow.

11 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - 3rd pltn and Pioneer pltn repaired road leading into the Bn CP. Other pltns no change. A Co. - No change in positions. 1st pltn encountered some small arms fire during night. At 1830 hours, 1 section of the 1st Ron pltn moved to 1st pltn position to help out as security. No other changes. B Co. - (Additional information for 10 February 1945- 1st pltn KO'd 2 AT guns, 5 pillboxes and 2 MGs.) No change in position. 1st and 3rd pltns received direct fire, artillery fire and mortar fire during the day. Two officers and two EM received slight wounds but were not evacuated. C Co. - No change in positions. 3rd pltn receiving heavy artillery and mortar fire. No other changes. Weather, cold, snow and rain.

12 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP), Hqs Co. and Ron Co. - No change. A Co. - 1st pltn remained in position. Received intermittent mortar fire throughout the day. Are alerted to move back to WINTERSPELT to rear CP around 0200 13 February. 2nd pltn moved to new positions at (1 TD 93007550, 2 TDs at 92507650) to be in defense. At 1815 hours, 3rd pltn moved to positions - 1 section 96607555 and 2nd section 95607530 with one section each from 1st Ron pltn. B Co. - 1st pltn in same position, received heavy indirect fire. One EM killed and pltn leader wounded in both legs. Permission was obtained from 1st Bn, 358th Inf. to withdraw the section to BRANDSCHEID. The 3 M10s of 3rd pltn remained in same position throughout the day and night. Received artillery and mortar fire. At 1800 hours three crews of 2nd pltn relieved the 3rd pltn crews. These three M10s will be called the 2nd pltn until further notice. C Co. - All pltns assembled in WINTERSPELT at 0800 hrs, and proceeded to AUER, being in reserve with 359th Inf. Company performed maintenance and general cleaning. Weather, cold.

13 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - Hqs pltn moved from GALHAUSEN to URB. 1st pltn at WINTERSPELT reconnoitered roads NE from HABSCHEID to BRANDSCHEID at 1600 hours. 2nd pltn with A Co. has one section each with each section of 3rd pltn A Co. 3rd pltn with Pioneers repaired road leading from highway to Bn Hqs at URB. A Co. - No change in positions. 2nd and 3rd pltns received some direct fire at their positions. No other changes. B Co. - 1st pltn remained in BRANDSCHEID. At dawn 14 February, pltn is to move to HABSCHEID to join 3rd Bn, 358th Inf. 2nd pltn remained in same position. Received sporadic artillery fire during the day. C Co. - No change. Company continued to perform motor maintenance and general cleaning. Weather, cold, cloudy and rain.

14 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - Hqs and 3rd pltn made salvage drive in area occupied by Ron and Bn Hqs - buried dead cows, horses, etc. 1st pltn relieved of attachment with C Co. and moved from WINTERSPELT to URB at 1600 hours. 2nd pltn remained with B Co. Pioneers attached returned to company at URB. No other changes.

14 February 1945 Continued

A Co. - Rear CP moved to HECKHUSCHEID. 1st pltn remained in WINTERSPELT. 2nd pltn moved one TD further down road in position with 3 tanks. The other two remained in same position. 3rd pltn with 2nd Ron pltn remained in same position. 2nd and 3rd pltns received artillery and mortar fire. B Co. - At 0730 hours, 1st pltn moved from BRANDSCHEID to HARSCHHEID to support 3rd Bn, 358th Inf. and went into the following positions, 958775. 2nd pltn remained in position. Sector very quiet. C Co. - No change. Remained in reserve. Company continued performing maintenance, and correcting accrued deficiencies in signal and ordnance equipment.

Weather, warm, clear.

15 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP), Hqs Co. and Ron Co. - No change. A Co. - All pltns remained in same positions. Heavy artillery fire was received at 2nd and 3rd pltn positions. B Co. - 2nd pltn relieved by 3rd pltn. No other changes. C Co. - No change. Continued performing motor maintenance.

Weather, clear.

At 1530 hours, Colonel SPIESS, Battalion Commander, presented 11 Bronze Stars, 1 Oak Leaf Cluster to Bronze Star, 1 Purple Heart and 1 Oak Leaf Cluster to Purple Heart to Officers and EM of this battalion.

16 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP), Hqs Co. and Ron Co. - No change. A Co. - One TD of 2nd pltn left HECKHUSCHEID and moved 2000 yards South (93507520) with another TD of 2nd pltn. Other pltns remained in same position. B Co. - Situation remained unchanged at both platoon positions. Received some nebelwerfer fire during the night. C Co. - No change. At 1415 hours, Major General Rooks, 90th Division Commander, presented the Silver Star Award to Lt. Phillips, Lt. McMahon, Sgt Rayburn, Pfc Lajenusse and Pfc Clayton at the 358th Inf. CP.

Weather, clear, warmer.

17 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - 2nd pltn relieved of attachment from A Co. and returned to company control at URB. Company assembled complete in URB. 1st and 3rd pltns performed maintenance. A Co. - Company assembled complete in WINTERSPELT by 1645 hours. No other changes. B Co. - No change in positions. CP, GROFLANGENFELD 943811; 1st pltn 965773, 2nd pltn BRANDSCHEID 967809, 3rd pltn 993767. 3rd pltn tried to start motors of M10s about 1800 hours and drew direct fire. C Co. - CP at WAIMERATH (908810). By 1400 hours platoons were in following positions: 1st Pltn HECKHUSCHEID 920767, atchd to 3rd Bn, 359th Inf; 2nd pltn HOLLNICH 957768, atchd to 2nd Bn, 359th Inf; 3rd pltn EIGELSCHEID 981797, atchd to 1st Bn, 359th Inf. Company prepared to jump off in attack in the early morning hour.

Weather cloudy.

18 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Ron Co. - Hqs, 2nd and 3rd pltns remained inactive in URB. 1st pltn attached to C Co. Left URB at 0830. Pltn remained in WINTERSPELT all day, 1st section returning to URB at 1700 hours, 2nd section remaining in WINTERSPELT. A Co. - No change. Company in reserve in WINTERSPELT and performing maintenance of vehicles. B Co. - CP no change. 1st pltn moved to position S of HERNACH (973763) at 0600 hours. Attached to 2nd Bn, 358th Inf. No activity but received artillery fire at this position. 2nd pltn took over 3rd pltn vehicles at BRANDSCHEID approximately 1200 hours. Pltn moved to HARSCHHEID to join 3rd Bn in attack on MASTBORN. Pltn again moved to vicinity of 965745 where they received heavy enemy artillery fire. At 1900 hours pltn moved into MASTBORN without opposition and remained there for the night. Early in the morning the 3rd pltn assisted the 1st Bn in cleaning out area.

18 February 1945 Continued)

pillboxes, in vicinity of 995762, taking two pillboxes and 30 Pw. Pltn received some direct fire, no TDs hit and only one casualty. Pltn relieved at 1100 hours and returned to BRANDSCHEID.

C Co. - 1st and 2nd pltns in support of 3rd Bn and 2nd Bn 359th Inf. respectively, jumped off at approximately 0430 hours, moving to 1st pltn - 935749 and 2nd pltn - 938743. 3rd pltn in support of 1st Bn left EIGELSCHEID at 0900 hours, proceeded to HOLLNICH and at 1600 hrs occupied position 953753. At 1300 hours, CP moved to HECKHUSCHEID.

Weather, cloudy, mist, rain.

19 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP), Hqs Co. and Rcn Co. - No change. A Co. - At 1000 hours, all pltns alerted to move with their respective battalions. 1st pltn in support of 3rd Bn, 3rd pltn in support of 2nd Bn, and 2nd pltn with 1st Bn. Pltn locations as follows: 1st pltn 93907410; 2nd pltn NEIDER UTTFELD (94207180); 3rd pltn 93007650. Pltns remained in readiness to move with the infantry. 2nd pltn received some artillery fire. At 1600 hours 2nd pltn fired 6 rounds HE and silenced a 20mm gun. B Co. - At 0800 hours, 1st pltn moved to position 97707640 taking up an anti-tank position. 2nd pltn, no change. Received some artillery and mortar fire during the day. C Co. - No change in position. At 1700 hours, 3rd pltn KO'd one 20mm AA gun.

Weather, clear.

20 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP), Hqs Co. and Rcn Co. - No change. A Co. - At 1730 hours, 1st pltn moved with the 3rd Bn, 357th Inf. to 94107190. 2nd pltn in position at 94107190 received artillery fire during the day. At 1600 hours one TD was moved to 94707170. 3rd pltn remained in position. No other changes. B Co. - At 1400 hours, 1st pltn was released and moved to BRANDSCHEID. 2nd pltn, no change. C Co. - 1st and 3rd pltns advanced in a series of bounds with 1st pltn going to position 955717 and 3rd pltn 964719 and 95857118. 1st and 3rd pltns received several barrages of enemy artillery. 2nd pltn, no change.

Weather, cloudy.

21 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) moved from URB to LEIDENBORN (92757130) closing in by 1700 hours. Distance travelled 11-miles. Hqs Co. - No change. Rcn Co. - Hqs, 2nd and 3rd pltns moved from URB to NEIDER UTTFELD. Co. CP set up in house at 928717. At 1100 hours Pioneer pltn swept road from 9317040 to town of BINSCHIED and main road running through town to 939693. 9 mines removed from road. 1st pltn relieved from C Co. and returned to company. No other changes. A Co. - CP, no change. At 1400 hours, 1st pltn fired upon and KO'd one 88 AT gun. 2nd pltn moved forward 1000-yards from NEIDER UTTFELD. 1st and 2nd pltns received some artillery fire during the day. 3rd pltn located at 95507260 are to move out in a night attack in the vicinity of 97206980. B Co. - 1st pltn moved to HABSCHEID to join 3rd Bn, 358th Inf. arriving at 1615 hours - moving with infantry in attack to vicinity of BINSCHIED. At 1300 hours, 2nd pltn was relieved in MASTHORN and returned to BLEIALF. TDs were turned over to 3rd pltn and were immediately alerted to move out with 1st Bn, 358th Inf. No other changes. C Co. - CP, No change (932728). 1st and 3rd pltns changed positions - 1st pltn, 1 section STRICHSCHEID, 1 section 968723. 3rd pltn NEIDER UTTFELD (942718). 2nd pltn at CP, inactive.

TF SPIESS was organized as of 212400A February 1945 by FO #34, 90th Inf. Div. It consisted of the following elements: Bn Hqs, 773d TD Bn; Rcn Co, 773d TD Bn, 3rd pltn, Company C, 773d TD Bn; 90th Rcn Troop; Company D, 712th Tank Bn; one pltn Company B, 315th Engineers. The following were attached to the Task Force: One Co. (-) 602nd TD Bn; AT Co., 358th Inf. The TF was attached to the 358th Inf. with the mission to protect the right flank of the 90th Div. as it pushed South and East to reduce the enemy salient between the OUR and FRUM Rivers. TF SPIESS was given five dominant hilltops -

21 February 1945 Continued)

a. Hill 516, due E of REIFF. b. Hill 543, 936667. c. Hill South of ARSFELD 941656. d. High ground East of NEURATH. e. High ground East of EILBACH, and later, as the division progressed, were given five other similar terrain features -- f. ALFERHOF. g. UPERSHAUSEN. h. BERKOTH. i. High ground PHILIPPSWEILER, to take and hold.

Weather, clear.

22 February 1945.

Hqs Co. - No change. Co. A - CP located at NEIDER UTFELD. 1st pltn moved from OBER UTFELD to 964965 and at 1830 hours moved to 967680. At 1400 hours, 2nd pltn moved to 960698. 3rd pltn moved out at 1600 hours and knocked out 2 enemy tanks at 98006845 at a range of 1500 yards. Fired upon another tank, hitting it twice but no damage, and tank withdrew. At 2000 hours, pltn moved to 97006895. B Co. - CP at GROSSELANGENFELD. 1st pltn left at 0900 for ARZFELD, attached to 3rd Bn, 358th Inf. While moving into the town, pltn KO'd 3 SPs, 1 truck and 1 halftrack. Balance of day spent setting up anti-tank defense. 3rd pltn with B Company. 1st Bn, 358th Inf. advanced to ARZFELD meeting no action. No other changes. C Co. - CP moved to NEIDER UTFELD at 1100 hours. At 1900 hours, one section of 1st pltn at 968723 moved to STRICKSCHEID joining other section. At 2330 hours, 2nd pltn moved to a position of readiness East of NEIDER UTFELD (963717). 3rd pltn with TF SPIESS.

TF SPIESS attacked at 0700 to secure objectives A and B. 1st pltn Rcn Co., 773d TD Bn, 1 pltn 712th Tks, 1 section (1 gun) of 3rd pltn Company C, 773rd TD Bn, and C Company, 358th Infantry, were ordered to take objective A. An officer PSW picked up by Rcn Pioneer pltn about 0100 as they swept the road running South in BINSCHIED, had revealed to Captain Furst that Hill A was to be an enemy strongpoint. His information was proven to be correct. The attacking force was pinned down by mortar and direct fire. The steep, bare hill was finally taken at 1400 hours by flanking it from the South as the armored cars moved in from the North. 72 PSW were taken, 18 enemy were killed and four SP guns, 1 Mark IV tank and 1 mortar were captured. During the day, BINSCHIED received 88mm flat trajectory fire, 105mm artillery and 120mm mortar. There were two direct hits on the CP of C Company, 358th Infantry. 2nd pltn of Rcn Company, 773rd TD Bn and 1 section of 3rd pltn C Company, 773rd TD Bn were ordered to move on from BINSCHIED to take objective B about 0900 by bypassing objective A to the East. This was taken, meeting moderate resistance, at 1020. The 3rd pltn of Reconnaissance Company, 773rd TD Bn moved from BINSCHIED at 1030 hours to take objective C. This pltn was reinforced by the 2nd pltn and 1 section of TDS that had taken objective B; these elements having been relieved by one pltn each of 90th Rcn Troop and Company D, 712th Tk Bn. Since the 90th Rcn Troop and Company D, 712th Tk Bn had been committed for several days, the TF commander used fresh elements of his own battalion to take objectives and then held them with the other troops. Objective C was taken at 1315. Mortar and HV fire forced the troops to occupy the northern side of the hill. Occupying this hill blocked one escape route of the enemy who were being pushed back by the 6th Armored Division and 11th Armored Division from the East. A minefield was laid across this main road. At 1815 hours the TDS were replaced by the 1st pltn of AT company, 358th Infantry, and they were moved into ARZFELD. One section of the 90th Rcn Troop was maintaining physical contact with the 11th Armored Division on the right as they moved to take the division's objective. At 2145 a force consisting of C Company, 358th Infantry, 3rd pltn C Company, 773rd TD Bn 1st pltn Rcn Company, 773rd TD Bn moved from ARZFELD to take NEURATH and the high ground overlooking it. (Objective D). The 1st pltn of Rcn Co. 773rd TD Bn had previously been relieved on Objective A.

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) moved to BINSCHIED (P936696) closing in by 1500 hours. Distance travelled 1 1/2-miles.

Weather, clear.

23 February 1945

Hq Co. - No change. A Co. - At 1700 hours, 1st pltn moved to MANDERSCHIED (008678). At 1600 hours, the 2nd pltn moved to LAMPERATH (002662). At 0700 hours a TD of the 3rd pltn hit a mine in the town of LICHTENBORN. One EM LWA. At 1900 hours, the 3rd pltn moved to KOPSCHIED (995687). S/Sgt Land went on a reconnaissance up front with the infantry and spotted four enemy tanks. Infantry had no bazookas and the tanks withdrew before Sgt Land could get the TDs into position to fire upon them. At 1600 hours, the 2nd pltn fired upon and KO'd a Mark VI tank. B Co. - At 0730 the 1st pltn jumped off with 3rd Bn, 358th Infantry in attack on KRAUTSCHIED and the town was taken by 1200 hours. Pltn KO'd one Mark VI tank and two SPs outside of the town. Pltn remained in position at 996638. At 0100 hours, the 3rd pltn moved to 971651 and at 0730 the pltn jumped off with the 1st Bn, 358th Inf. in an attack and took the town of HALZHEN, moving on into position 997657. At 1100 hours, CP moved from GROSSLANGENFELD closing in at ARZFELD by 1400 hours. C Co. - CP, no change. The 1st and 2nd pltns, no change, remained inactive. 3rd pltn attached to TF SPIESS.

TF SPIESS - At 0205 the objective was taken. (Objective D) Only moderate resistance was met. 21 prisoners were taken and two AT guns captured. Colonel BELKE, CO, 358th Infantry, had called Colonel SPIESS at 2105 and ordered him not to move on to objective E until so ordered. He was waiting until the 357th Infantry on his left came up abreast. At 0630 hours, the TF moved out to take objective E. At 1910 objective E was taken by one pltn of 90th Ren Troop and one pltn of 602nd TD Bn. 15 PSW were taken. When this was reported to the regimental commander, he ordered the TF to take objectives F and G. The TF commander decided that it would be necessary to clear the towns of AMMELDINGEN, IMMELBAUM and PLASCHEID as he moved to take objectives F and G. 1st Bn, 359th Infantry was attached to 358th Infantry with the mission of occupying the objective that TF SPIESS had taken. This enabled the TF commander to move his units ahead to take further objectives. During the morning the town of IMMELBAUM and AMMELDINGEN were cleared. One 20mm mortar and 18 PSW were taken. 3rd pltn, C Company, 773rd TD Bn, and one pltn of 90th Ren Troop moved from HEILBACH to take objective F. This action was completed by 1355 hrs. The town of PLASCHEID was also cleared. This attack was preceded by a heavy preparation fire by 274th Armored FA Bn which was supporting the TF. 15 PSW were taken. The TDs knocked out one Mark IV tank that was firing into PLASCHEID. Then they were put into position to cover the highway running into KRAUTSCHIED. At 1420 hours, unknown number of enemy tanks and one pltn of infantry were reported in UPPERHAUSEN which was objective G. It was decided to take G and H at the same time. The 3rd pltn of Ren Company, 773rd TD Bn and one pltn of 602nd TD Bn and one section 712th Tk Bn moved at 1600 hours to take G from the West; and 2nd pltn of Ren Company, 773rd TD Bn, one pltn of light tanks to take H from the North. G was taken at 1830 yielding six PSW and about 10 killed. H was taken at 1900 hours, meeting no resistance, although 11 PSW were taken. By 1930 hours, a pltn of 602nd TD Bn had been moved to cover H and the crossroad N of H. During the afternoon the AT company had moved its guns to IMMELBAUM, AMMELDINGEN, and PLASCHEID, covering roads to the South. Minefields were set up in these areas by the Pioneer pltn of Ren Co., 773rd TD Bn, and the pltn of Company B, 315th Engineers. At 2000 hrs Lt. Colonel SPIESS received word from Hq, 358th Infantry, that boundaries had been changed. Instructions were, not to take objectives I and J, but merely to take the high ground SE of RINGHUSCHIED.

Bn Hq (Fwd CP) moved to NEURATH (P946646) closing in by 1300 hours. Distance travelled 5.3 miles.

Weather, clear.

24 February 1945

Hq Co., - no change. A Co. - At 1800 hours, the 1st pltn went into reserve in LICHTENBORN with 3rd Bn, 357th Infantry. At 1600 hours, the 2nd pltn went into reserve at HINSCHIED with 2nd Bn, 357th Inf. 3rd pltn remained in KOPSCHIED. Received light enemy artillery fire.

24 February 1945 Continued

B Co. - Rear CP and 2nd pltn moved to ARZFELD with the Fwd CP. The 1st pltn attacked with infantry at 0800 hours reaching final objective (L003651) at 1030 hours. 1 Gp vehicle KO'd. 3rd pltn at L002658 remained in position throughout the day. C Co. - 1st pltn in STRICKSCHEID received harrassing artillery fire. At 0600 hours, one section, 2nd pltn moved into EUSCHEID. Received some artillery fire during the day. 3rd pltn with TF SPIESS.

TF SPIESS - During the morning one pltn 90th Recon Troop and one pltn Company A, 602nd TD Bn blocked roads leading SE from RINGHUSCHEID. During the afternoon C Company, 358th Infantry was transported to an assembly area vicinity RINGHUSCHEID by the vehicles of the TF SPIESS headquarters. At 1300 hours, the pltn of TDS and the Recon pltn, and C Company moved onto the high ground SE of RINGHUSCHEID overlooking PHILLIPPSWEILER and the town of ROLLERSDORF without opposition. Patrols cleared the town of SUPPERSSEIFEN during the evening. Captain Brown, C Co. 358th Inf., reported troops and vehicles moving in PHILLIPPSWEILER and by 2220 hours 105mm, 155mm and 240mm fire was brought on the town. By 2300 hours, another fire mission was completed on LUPPERTSSEIFEN which effectively silenced activities observed there. Throughout the night enemy movement was heard on the East side of PHILLIPPSWEILER but could not be observed.

Bn Hq (Fwd CP) moved to KRAUTSCHEID (P995636) closing in by 1700 hours. Distance travelled 5-miles.
Weather, mild and sunny.

25 February 1945

Bn Hqs (Fwd CP) and Hqs Co. - No change. Recon Co. - At 1300 hours, Company moved to bivouac area in woods (943795) and set up camp. A Co. - CP and 1st pltn, LICHTENBORN. 2nd pltn BINSCHIED. 3rd pltn moved out of KOPSCHEID at 2000 hours and assembled in LICHTENBORN. All pltns awaiting orders to move. B Co. - CP, ARZFELD. At 1700 hours the 1st and 3rd pltns relieved. 1st pltn spent the night in KRAUTSCHEID, 3rd pltn returned to ARZFELD. C Co. - Company relieved by elements of the 6th Cavalry and 603rd TD Bn. At 2100 hours the 1st pltn returned to company CP. 2nd section, 2nd pltn relieved but remained in position until following morning.

During the day the Battalion along with TF SPIESS was relieved by the 6th Cavalry Group. TF SPIESS was relieved at 2153 hours. Major General ROOKS, 90th Division Commander, called Lt. Colonel SPIESS and commended him on the excellent performance of his Task Force.

Following towns and equipment were taken by TF SPIESS: KICKESHAUSEN, NEURATH, IMMELBAUM, AMMELDINGEN, HEILBACH, ALFERHOF, PLASCHEID, UPPERHAUSEN, HERKOTH, HEINISCHSEIFEN, HAUSMANNSDELL, BEHN SEIFEN, IMMELSELL, ROLLERSDORF, KOPFSCHEN and LUPPERTSSEIFEN.

4 SPs, 1 Mark IV tank, 2 AT guns (75mm), 2 150mm guns, 4 searchlights with generators in good condition, 11 that had been previously KO'd. 30 MGs, #26, still in cosmoline with spare parts. 178 PSW.

Weather, cold, overcast and rainy.

26 February 1945

Hq Co. - No change. Battalion (less Hq Company) moved from its several locations to bivouac area in woods at 945798 closing in by 1500 hours. Bn Hq (Fwd CP) moved from KRAUTSCHEID to the woods, then moved on to HARSTPELT (884723) closing in by 1800 hours. Distance travelled 28-miles.

Weather, cloudy, rainy and cold.

27 February 1945

Hq Co. - No change. Still located in NEIDINGEN. Bn Hq (Fwd CP) moved from HARSTPELT to the woods 945798 closing in by 1000 hours. Distance travelled 10-miles.

27 February 1945 Continued)

All companies performing motor and personnel maintenance.
Weather, cloudy and cold.

28 February 1945

All companies continued to perform motor and personnel maintenance.
Weather, cloudy and cold.

This concludes operations for the period.

Robert L. Moore
ROBERT L. MOORE
Major, FA,
Acting Bn Commander.

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