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Formerly CO. B-37 &
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9 MAY 1990

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15 July 1944

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Army Div, APO 254, U.S. Army.

JULY 1 TO JULY 15 1944

The period 1 to 3 July was devoted to final preparation for movement to the Marshallian Area.

On 1 July, the Battalion B-1 attended a meeting on Graves Registration at Neeld Hall in Chinanien.

On 3 July, the Battalion Commander attended a Unit Commander's meeting at Greenways.

On 4 July, the Battalion was alerted for movement on six hour notice.

On 7 July, the Battalion was alerted at 0540 for movement of first element at 0730. The Battalion Hq & Hq Company left the area at that time. The head of the column arrived at Blanford at 1340 and at RCPPL of Area D at 1450. Arrived Camp D-12A five (5) miles West of Dorchester at 1555. Hq, A and B Company camped at Camp 12A, D Company and Service Company went into Camp 5, and C Company into Camp 10. Briefing of craft Load Commanders, drawing of supplies and payment of the men, as well as the assembling of vehicles in craft load order occupied the time until 0300, 8 July, 1944.

The afternoon and evening of the 8th were relatively quiet, with the exception of the continual loud speaker blaring for the Battalion Supply Officer.

On one occasion Captain Wysocky had answered the third imperious call to report to the Camp Supply Officer, and had returned to the now unfamiliar ease of his cot when the P. A. system announced that he was again to report to the Camp Supply. The Battalion Adjutant and Communication Officer awakened him, and at that time two soldiers of the Battalion passed the tent. The remark of one was "They are certainly running the ass off that poor bastard, aren't they?" Very apt.

The Division Commander visited the Battalion Camps at 2100, 8 July.

On 9 July, the first section of the Battalion, with Lt. Col. Abrams as Craft Load Commander, moved to the Embarkation Area at 0650, and was followed by quarter-hour intervals by the rest of the Battalion Craft Loads.

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Battalion Convoy, HQ 27th Inf Bn, 15 July, 1944 (Cont'd)

All vehicles were loaded aboard LCT's and after spending the afternoon moored in Portland Harbor, the convoy left at 2230.

Dawn of 10 July found the convoy widely scattered with only a few ships in visual contact. Rough seas continually broke over the weather side and drenched those men and officers on Anti-aircraft alert. In spite of this dirty weather and the turbulence of the sea few men were sick. This surprised the LCT Commanders who agreed that this was the roughest crossing they had experienced.

Several officers took advantage of an opportunity to visit the bridge, and all were surprised that the LCT's, which look puny beside larger landing ships, could take such a pounding.

At 2030 of the 10th, the coast of France was sighted, and a few of the original convoy moored together at 2200.

At 0600, 11 July, disembarkation began on "Utah Beach". The first elements of the Battalion arrived in Transit Area "B" at 0700 and remained there for the most of the afternoon in hopes that the rest of the Battalion would arrive. At 1530, the Commanding General of CCB ordered Captain Dwight, the senior staff officer present to move the elements of the Battalion to the Division Assembly Area. At 1700, these elements moved from the Transit Area and arrived in the assembly area at 2030. The Battalion CP was placed 1/8 mile SW of Gennetot and the other companies surrounding it. Captain Dwight, Lt. Harris, the Reconnaissance Platoon Leader, were engaged in reconnoitering the company areas when the Battalion Commander with the greater part of "A", "B", and "C" Company arrived. The companies went into bivouac and were settled by 1200, 12 July. At that time the only persons missing were Major Bautz, Lts. Marston, Wrolson, and Anderson with two platoons of tanks. The officers and men of these platoons arrived at 0430, 14 July.

On 14 and 15 July, The Battalion Commander and Company Commanders visited part of the front areas on reconnaissance.

For the Battalion Commander:

Robert L. White
Major Robert L. White
1st Lt. Infantry
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, U. S. Army

21 August 1944

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, U. S. Army.

JULY 27, 1944 - RAFFOVILLE, FRANCE

The Battalion was alerted for movement at 0630. Orders received from CCA explained the situation as follows:

The 90th Division continues its mission and moves through Periers to Coutance.

The 6th Armored Division pushes South to Lessay and vicinity of Coutance.

The 3rd Armored Division moves South.

The 2nd Armored Division moves on to Brehal.

The 4th Armored Division in column of CG's, CCB leading, Reserve Command at the tail of column, moves South to Brehal, with the mission of seizing and holding RJ at 235420.

Troops CCA - 37, 51, 94, A/24, B/25, C/704, B/489, B/46, A/126.

JULY 28, 1944

Waited at Raffoville all day.

JULY 29, 1944

Moved from Raffoville at 0900 through Periers, St. Sauveur de Lendem. Arrived 2-1/2 kilometers East of Coutance (249589) at 1245. At 2140, the Battalion was alerted for movement to new assembly area South of Coutance.

JULY 30, 1944

Moved out at 1500 for new assembly area. While passing through Coutance we received orders from CCA to continue on route and not to go into assembly area. Route given was South to Legroume, South to Le Gros Vir, La Haye Pesnel, Avranches. The Battalion came under fire (small arms) at 270458 at 1050. "D" and "C" Company raked the woods at this point with machine guns. One Sergeant, "D" Company, WIA, 152 prisoners taken, 5 enemy dead, 10 enemy wounded. Prisoners taken to 2nd Armored Division PW point. This evening the Battalion pulled into an assembly area at 239318 (Follegny).

JULY 31, 1944

Moved out of area at 0745 through La Haye Pesnel, Rochelle, Les Mesnil, Avranches. Battalion tore through an enemy horse-drawn artillery unit outside of Le Mesnil, destroyed many caissons and guns. Most of the enemy took to the woods from which they were routed by elements of the Battalion Service Company.

Before this action (at Monfredon) a large number of prisoners were taken and several AT guns demolished by the combined action of "D" and "A" Companies.

During the morning and early afternoon the Battalion met resistance and came under fire while stopped on the road between Le Mesnil and Avranches. All opposition was quelled North of Avranches by 1300. At 1300, the Battalion Commander received orders to move the Battalion to the Selune River and seize the four (4) water crossings there.

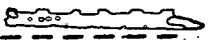
The order for this march was as follows:

"A" Company to take the main route South and seize bridge at 2810, supported by "B" and "C" Batteries of the 66th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. "B" Company to take the first secondary road to the left at 281158 with objective of Ducey, supported by balance of 66th and A/16. "C" Company supported by 94th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, and A/24, to take the main road left to Les Brousses and then right to Les Donets Durant. "D" Company, C/10, and Assault Gun Platoon to move South of La Gilardiere to Marcilly.

These four (4) combat teams, each under command of the senior tank officer, moved out at 1600. Each team met fierce resistance after passing through Avranches. The close cooperation between the tanks, artillery and Air Corps, made the mission successful. Captain Spencer, CO of "A" Company, and Lt. Bohn of "B" Company had their tanks knocked out, but not before they put the finis on their opponents.

Lt. Richard E. Donahue of "D" Company walked across the Selune River Dam at Marcilly and captured the commander of the German guard and returned with him to our lines without incident.

The "C" Company column fought its way to a position on the Selune South of Ducey and seized the bridge there intact. This force had to drive German troops from a field in order to assemble during the night, and in leaving this field the next morning. Colonel Abrams surprised an enemy tank and fired with three (3) quick AP shells.



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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 21 August, 1944 (Continued)

AUGUST 1, 1944

The trains were brought up from their position North of Avranches at about 1030, and the Battalion gassed, assembled, and after being relieved by a combat team of the 8th Division, moved out,

The Battalion (Minus "A" and "C" Company which were attached to 10th Infantry Column) and "A" and "C" of the 53rd moved through Ducey at 1220.

"D" Company found the crews of two (2) enemy tanks dismounted at 1440 and destroyed them with grenades.

The Battalion arrived at 165786 at 1600, three (3) kilometers North of Galaze at 1720, three (3) kilometers North of Sans at 1800.

At 1815, the orders were received from CCA to assemble in the vicinity North of Rennes.

At 1830, the Battalion moved into an assembly area fourteen (14) kilometers North of Rennes.

AUGUST 2, 1944

The Battalion stayed in assembly area all this day. Enemy planes were observed twice during the day. We were not attacked. 10th Infantry elements replaced by "A" and "C" Company, 53rd Infantry.

AUGUST 3, 1944

The Battalion was awakened at 0403 by what appeared to be heavy enemy gun fire. CCA ordered us alerted but at 0430, Colonel Clarke informed us that the enemy ammunition dump in the Foret de Rennes had blown up.

At 0910, the Battalion moved out with Bain de Bretagne as objective. To do this we bypassed Rennes, moved through Mordelle, Goven, Guichen, Lobeac, Guipry, across bridge at Messac, and last to Bain de Bretagne.

No resistance was met for six (6) miles and after that only scattered groups of Jerries. These were speedily dispatched in accordance with the VOCC "Kill every God Damned one of them."

The Battalion assembled outside Bain de Bretagne and the CO reported to CCA for further instructions at 1445.

Just before we pulled out of Bain de Bretagne, Captain Dwight (S-1) while riding in a jeep was encountered by a Nazi who jumped into the road in front of him spewing lead from a Schmeiser. The Captain answered with a Tommy Gun and the Kraut was still lying in the road, minus the top of his head, when the Battalion Headquarters moved past.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 21 August, 1944 (Continued)

AUGUST 3, 1944 (CONTINUED)

The Battalion moved from Bain de Bretagne at 1715 and pulled into bivouac four (4) kilometers Northeast Janze (158398 - vicinity Amanalis) at 1925. Just before going into Janze, the Battalion shot up several trucks and destroyed several machine gun nests.

At Amanalis, "D" Company and "B" Company were sent North to cover road junctions and to prevent enemy troops from entering or leaving Rennes, which was to be assaulted by a CT of 8th Infantry Division. "D" Company covering the RJ's South of Chateaugiron met some enemy infantry at 2115B. The FFI informed Lt. Conrad Mueller of "D" Company, who commanded the outpost at RJ at 164440, that a column of about 500 infantry and 2 towed 88's were coming down the road. Lt. Mueller laid the 105mm assault gun attached to him and as the first gun rounded the corner blasted it and its crew. The Jerries - never known to be particularly bright - hesitated for several minutes and then dismounted men and cleared away the wreckage of this gun. The Germans then tried to push their second towed gun around the corner, only to have it meet the end of its predecessor.

In the meanwhile, Captain McMahon, CO of "D" Company, arrived on the scene and called for the pre-adjusted artillery concentration. (It has been reported that Major Mason, S-3 of 22nd Armored Field Artillery Battalion, fired this mission from a Michelin road map). The resultant havoc caused the few remaining live Germans to flee.

"C" Company had been ordered back to the Battalion in the meanwhile. They arrived at 0400, 4 August.

AUGUST 5, 1944

The Battalion was alerted for movement in the direction of Vannes - L'Orient at 0914. The Battalion Commander and Liaison Officer left for Headquarters Combat Command "A" to receive orders while the Battalion moved down to the junction of the Janze - Bain de Bretagne roads. The Battalion Commander joined the column there and the Battalion cleared this junction at 1445, passed through Messac at 1550, Guipy at 1600, Glacilly at 1645. The bridge at St. Martin was discovered to have been destroyed and it was necessary to have the Engineers repair it before proceeding at 1845. The Battalion passed through St. Graven at 1855. The head of the column met with some small arms fire outside of St. Graven, but this resistance was speedily reduced.

The Battalion Commander at the head of the Light Tank Company entered Vannes at 2010. The town's people were delirious with joy. Soldiers in tanks and in peeps were showered with flowers, wine, and kisses. It was almost impossible to move a vehicle through the streets. The Colonel sent "A" Company around the town to a bivouac at 2155, 2-1/2 miles Northeast of Vannes, where they were joined by the rest of the Battalion. In the meantime, the Colonel established his headquarters at the Prefecture until the arrival of Major Fassel, the Civil Affairs Officer.

AUGUST 6, 1944

At 1100, 6 August, it was reported by the FFI that a group of Germans with anti-tank guns were established at a point along Route Nationale 165, one (1) mile from Vannes. At the same time a group of 400 enemy were reported in the Champ de Tir, five (5) miles North of Vannes.

The Battalion Commander conferred with the Commandant of the FFI in Vannes, and in the meanwhile the 22nd Field Artillery Battalion adjusted fire on the position West of Vannes. C/37 plus C/53 and the Mortar Platoon set out to reduce the German position to the West. This force was under the command of Captain Dwight. A force consisting of B/37 plus 1 Platoon A/53 and the 37th Assault Gun Platoon marched North to the reported German position in the Champ de Tir. This force was commanded by Major Bautz and met no opposition.

Captain Dwight's force moved through Vannes, and upon arriving at the outskirts found that they were canalized. The force, led by the 2nd Platoon of "C" Company, 37th, made a frontal attack on the four (4) 20mm AAAT guns and destroyed them, then moving on to destroy the enemy personnel and trucks along the road almost half-way to Auray. In this action Staff Sergeant Howard L. Smith was wounded in the left eye and face but continued his work and refused to be evacuated.

Scattered enemy resistance continued during the day. At about 1700, 2nd Lt. Jonathan E. Anderson, 2nd Platoon, "C" Company Leader, was killed by machine gun fire from a German Armored Car. S/Sgt. Smith took command of this platoon and continued the mission. For these actions S/Sgt. Smith was recommended for the Silver Star and was appointed a Second Lieutenant.

The total casualties among this task force was five. Enemy personnel killed and captured amounted to over one hundred and over eighty trucks and staff cars were destroyed.

At 2200, that evening, orders were issued to the Battalion to move the next morning to the vicinity of L'Orient, with the mission of (1) seizing and holding the bridge across the Blavet River at Hennebont, (2) seizing OP's for the artillery in vicinity of L'Orient and seizing and holding positions for the Division Artillery. Bridges and roads were reported to be mined. The Germans had received an ultimatum to surrender, but chose to fight.

AUGUST 7, 1944

The Battalion moved out at 0600, order of march Bn, "D" Company, Battalion Staff Tanks, Assault Platoon, "C" Company, C/94, C/704, C/53, Platoon of A/24, 94th FA (-), Battery of 155 Howitzers, Headquarters CCA, A/53, Hq. & Hq. Co, 37th, A/24. (-), B/37, no trains.

At 0730, while passing through the town of Auray, 2nd Lt. Harris, the Reconnaissance Officer, shot two (2) enemy motorcyclists who were obviously left there as outpost. On the outskirts of the town the Reconnaissance half-track

Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 21 August, 1944 (Continued)

AUGUST 7, 1944 (CONTINUED)

developed engine trouble and was forced to stop, causing the staff tanks and some of the Assault Guns and "D" Company to halt in town. Someone spotted German soldiers and trucks and immediately action was taken. Our tanks moved to cross roads and fired at any enemy visible. Total destruction of two ammunition dumps and an uncounted number of dead was the immediate result. The indirect result was the destruction of the Hennebont - L'Orient outpost.

The Battalion moved on at 0600 and made a fast, uneventful march to Hennebont. Arriving on the outskirts of this town on RN 165, Lt. Harris surprised members of a Russian (Cst) Cavalry Squadron hurriedly placing a rail block across the road. Shooting his way through these enemy, and supported by the Light Tank Company, the Reconnaissance Platoon pushed through the town and to within ten (10) yards of the bridge across the Blavet. German soldiers, evidently surprised, were still on the bridge, firing at our forward elements, when the Reconnaissance half-track was hit by a small anti-tank shell, and the radiator penetrated. At the same time the enemy blew the bridge, with their own soldiers still on it.

Upon this happening, Colonel Abrams sent "C" Company of the 53rd Infantry down to the river to secure the West side of the river where it ran through the city. At the same time "C" and "D" Company were sent North to Lochrist, where another bridge was reported. "C" Company was recalled at 1225 and told to be ready to move by a secondary road through St. Gilles to Lochrist.

"D" Company, with A/53 in support, overcame stiff resistance in Lochrist and charged across the bridge and consolidated the other side while "C" and "B" Company fought their way through another squadron of Russian Cavalry at St. Gilles to Lochrist. While fighting through St. Gilles, Captain Dale F. Smith, Company Commander, and 1st Sergeant James E. Hagemeister of "C" Company, and Sergeant Whiteside of "B" Company was killed. In this action, also Lt. Bohn of "B" Company was wounded.

After the bridge had been crossed, the Battalion moved through Inzinac down to Caudan. The Battalion moved into an assembly area two (2) miles South of Caudan at 2040. The night was a quiet one.

AUGUST 8, 1944

The morning was spent in patrol activity. A few enemy were sighted and fired upon. At 1400, the Battalion was ordered to seize the high ground East of the Scorff River, two and one-half miles from Caudan. "B" Company, and A/53 were sent on this mission.

1st Lt. Marston, leading his platoon, which was the point platoon of this force, crashed through a hedgerow and found himself facing four (4) 128mm guns. He immediately opened fire with his 75 on the nearest gun, destroying it,

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Battalion Diary, Bn 37th Tank Battalion, 31 August, 1944 (Continued)

AUGUST 8, 1944 (CONTINUED)

and then covered the other three with machine gun fire until the rest of his platoon came up and completed the destruction of all guns. One prisoner was taken in this action and over thirty-five (35) killed. Lt. Larson was awarded the Silver Star for this action.

AUGUST 9, 1944

The Battalion received some scattered artillery fire during the morning. At 1400, "C" Company of the Battalion, plus "C" Company of the 774th Tank Destroyer Battalion, moved East and attacked the German concrete fortifications two (2) kilometers East of Caudan. This area was neutralized by fire at 1130.

At 1700, the Battalion received orders to move back to Vannes, and the Division Artillery came under the control of Combat Command "B". The Battalion moved out at 1800, just after receiving a quantity of time fire. The Battalion arrived at Vannes at 2100, and found that the 37th had been attached to Reserve Command while Combat Command "A" moved with the 35th Tank Battalion to seize Nantes.

AUGUST 10, 1944

A/37 plus a platoon of 53rd Infantry moved out at 1300 with the mission of clearing the area bounded by the Pont - Scorff - Hennebont Road and the Blavet River. This area was scoured, but no enemy were encountered or seen.

AUGUST 11, 1944

This day was spent in maintenance of vehicles and personal equipment. Several attempts were made by the Battalion Commander to secure engines and tracks for some limping tanks, but his efforts were to no avail.

AUGUST 12, 1944

A task force under the command of Major Bautz, and consisting of C/37, moved down to Ploemerel with the mission of destroying enemy forces protecting the escape routes from the Quimperon Peninsula. This force encountered enemy at Flouharnel and at Erdevan, with the result of 107 prisoners and 65 enemy dead.

AUGUST 13, 1944

A quiet day, spent in maintenance.

AUGUST 14, 1944

The Battalion moved out as the advance guard of the Reserve Command and passed through Cousquec at 1115, St. Graves at 1230, St. Martin at 1255, Floriac at 1340, Gripry at 1405, Messac at 1410, Teillay at 1545, Seudam at 1655, Pouance at 1715, Vergennes at 1730. The bivouac area was 2 miles East of Vergennes.

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Battalion Diary, HQ 37th Tank Battalion, 21 August, 1944 (Continued)

AUGUST 15, 1944

The Battalion left Vergennes at 0744. Passed through Loyant at 0815, Beire at 0830, Andigne at 0852, L'Cuion at 0918, Ladrigne at 0928, Champigne at 0940.

Reserve Command was held up for three (3) hours east of Champigne due to blown bridges over the Sarthe River. This force finally crossed north of Lacle.

The Battalion arrived at Gros Jars at 1031. At Gros Jars, a force consisting of B/37, B/38, and C/24 moved south with the mission of blowing all bridges across the Loire River between Blois and Tours, both exclusive. On arrival at the Loire, this force found all bridges already destroyed, but engaged an enemy force across the river, destroying several vehicles and field guns.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the Battalion continued east, arriving at a bivouac area one and one-half miles Southeast of St. Calais at 1754.

AUGUST 16, 1944

The Battalion left the bivouac area at 1215 and passed through La Chappel Huon at 1240, Pont au Brove at 1305, Troo at 1330, St. Quentin 1337, Lavardin 1350, Sasnieres 1405, Ambloy 1415 and arrived in a bivouac area six (6) miles Southwest of Vendome at 1430.

AUGUST 17, 1944

This day was spent in maintenance. Several engines and tracks were received.

AUGUST 18, 1944

The Battalion was attached to Combat Command "B" and moved at 1200 for vicinity of La Loupe. The Battalion passed through Epuisay at 1325, La Temple at 1335, Mondoublean at 1425, Melleray 1515, Montmirail 1520, Ceton 1620, Nogent Le Rotrou 1650 and La Loupe at 1740. Went into bivouac four (4) kilometers East of La Loupe. No enemy forces encountered or reported.

AUGUST 19, 1944 - LA LOUPE

This day was spent in maintenance. Several unsuccessful attempts were made by the Battalion Commander to have tracks and engines brought up.

AUGUST 20, 1944

The Battalion was alerted for movement to old area in vicinity of Ambloy. The head of the column was ready to move out when Combat Command "B" ordered it to move to the vicinity of Dinan, approximately thirty-five (35) kilometers Northeast of Vendome. This march was accomplished without incident

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Battalion Diary, HQ 37th Tank Battalion, 21 August, 1944 (Continued)

AUGUST 20, 1944 (CONTINUED)

except for the failure of several tanks due to the breakage of worn tracks and the last gasps of dying engines.

On arrival in Binas, the Battalion Commander reported to the Commanding General, Combat Command "B", and informed him of our maintenance situation. Thereupon, this Battalion was relieved of assignment to Combat Command "B" and attached to the Reserve Command. An effort was made to pay the troops this evening, but after traveling through driving rain to the Finance Office, some forty (40) kilometers distant, the Agent Officers were told that the Finance personnel could not work in the blackout.

AUGUST 21, 1944

CC"B" arrived and went into assembly area in vicinity of Binas. Combat Command Reserve is under direct control of XII Corps, with the mission of protecting Third Army right flank from Orleans to Tours, inclusive. One combat team of 35th Infantry Division, supported by one Battalion of 155mm Howitzers (both attached to CCR) held Orleans, while the 25th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (-) and the 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion patrolled the Loire to Tours.

Tracks and engines in sufficient quantity to greatly facilitate the operations of this unit were received and speedily installed.

The troops were paid this date.

AUGUST 22 - 24, 1944

This period was devoted to maintenance of vehicles and personnel.

AUGUST 25, 1944

This Battalion as part of the Reserve Command moved at 0700 in direction of Sens. Passed through Ouzouer La Marche 0726, Edgeville at 1547, Sens at 1725, and arrived in bivouac one (1) mile South of Pouy (near Villeneuve L'Archeueque) at 1900.

AUGUST 26, 1944

This day was spent in maintenance and preparation for a possible move to CGA to whom we hoped to be attached.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 21 August, 1944 (Continued)

AUGUST 27, 1944

Left bivouac area near Villeneuve L'Archeueque, and moved across the Seine River to an assembly area nine (9) kilometers North of Troyes, and one (1) kilometer South of Feuges, arriving there at 1235. Our Battalion relieved the 35th Tank Battalion, which was attached to Reserve Command. Several meetings were held during the day and the orders for the next day were issued. The XII Corps mission was to seize Chalons Sur Marne and Vitry Le Francois. The 80th Division was to move on CCA's left with Chalons as its objective while CCA was to seize Vitry.

CCA was split in two columns - 53rd (-C/53) plus B/37 under command of Colonel Jacques was to move in on Vitry from the West while the 37th (-B) plus C/53 and C/10 and 66th Field Artillery crossed the Marne River and cut the main roads (N382, DCL4, R395) to the East of Vitry.

AUGUST 28, 1944

The 37th column moved out at 0700, and passed through Charmont Sous Barbuise at 0812, Grandville at 0833, Ramerupt 0903, Aubigny at 0911, Vinets at 0915, Dosnon at 0947, Trouan Le Grand at 0955, Poivres at 1045 without meeting opposition.

At 1105, C. O. CCA ordered the 37th column to cross the Marne, seize the high ground between Mairy Sur Marne and Marson, and be prepared to move on Chalons.

The Battalion reached the river at Mairy Sur Marne at 1210, and found the bridges across the river and canal blown by the enemy.

D/37 and C/10 forded the river and gained contact with the enemy at St. Germain LaVille. This enemy force (6 truck loads of infantry) was destroyed by the Light Tank Company and the town outposted by the Infantry Company.

Meanwhile the remainder of the column went into position on the West side of the river, awaiting the completion of a bridge across the canal. "A" Company moved 1000 yards North of Mairy to outpost the town in that direction. Several enemy vehicles were taken under fire and destroyed by this company and five (5) enemy soldiers killed. Captain Dwight, S-3 Air, shot up an enemy truck on the outskirts of Mairy and wounded the one survivor with a quick "snap shot" from his (captured) P-38.

"D" Company moved on through the town of Marson, where the Reconnaissance Platoon met heavy small arms fire. The rest of the column forded the Marne and crossed the newly constructed bridge over the Marne Au Rhin Canal.

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Battalion Diary, Headquarters 37th Tank Battalion (Continued)

AUGUST 28, 1944 (CONTINUED)

Lt. Donahue, commanding the lead platoon of "D" Company rushed into Marson to rescue the Reconnaissance Platoon and received a head wound as the result of an exploding enemy grenade.

"D" Company and the Reconnaissance Platoon withdrew from the town and raced around it to come in from the rear. They were held up on the other side of the town while one battery of the 68th fired on the town.

The head of the column, Reconnaissance and "D" Company leading, moved out to Chalons, leaving Marson for "C" Company to attack. This was done, and the enemy was successfully routed without loss to our forces. Marson proved to be an enemy CP.

The Battalion moved into an assembly area West of L'Epine at 2050. The artillery began to shell the routes leading East from Chalons. "D" Company proceeded to cut the secondary route between Longevas and Chalons, while "A" and "C" Company cut the main routes N3 and N77. Over two (2) dozen enemy vehicles trying to escape from Chalons were destroyed by "A" Company. Prisoners taken amounted to thirty-six (36), enemy dead unknown.

AUGUST 29, 1944

"A" Company 37th plus C/53 under the Battalion Commander moved out at 1040 along route N3 into Chalons, no resistance was met.

At the same time C/37 and C/10 crossed to route N3 and moved West along this route into the city. Slight resistance was met by this force which was commanded by Major Bautz. Nine (9) enemy soldiers were killed and three (3) 150mm guns destroyed.

The 80th Division, which was deployed on the West side of the Marne, had sent a force of one Infantry Battalion, one Tank Company, and one Tank Destroyer company across the river with the intention of "assaulting" Chalons from the South. The situation was explained to the CO of this force by Captain Hays, Battalion S-2, and before they could complete this plan, the city was in our hands.

The Reconnaissance Platoon meanwhile, had discovered over 30,000 cans of German gasoline Northeast of Chalons. Although of inferior grade, this fuel later proved to be of use.

At 1400 on the 29th, a task force consisting of "D" Company, and the Assault Gun Platoon, were ordered to patrol the route L'Epine, St. Julien, Sommevesle to N394, N382 to Vitry Le Francois and return. This force was later ordered to remain with Jacques' column on arrival at Vitry. Report of this force is as follows:

"Area between I.P. (L'Epine) and Somme Vesle lightly screened by Object to CR 804430. No enemy encountered between CR 804430 and CR 874387. Enemy truck destroyed at 845407. Truck was moving NW. At CR 874387 enemy

Battalion Diary, Headquarters 37th Tank Battalion, (Continued)

AUGUST 29, 1944 (CONTINUED)

column of one (1) car and fourteen (14) trucks met and destroyed cargo, ammunition and fuel. Column was moving NW on N394. Possesse occupied by enemy personnel. Personnel killed or captured. PW rptd 800 enemy in area of vic Possesse West to N392 (Unconfirmed). Road clear to Chagny 755240 where two (2) enemy armored cars were met by 1st Lt. Klingbeil and destroyed by him, also one (1) motorcycle and rider destroyed. One (1) tank reported in vicinity (Unconfirmed). No other enemy seen. First contact with friendly troops at 715210 now assembled in vicinity of 688229, no vehicle or personnel casualties. Joining Jacques by verbal orders. Signed CC/D 2215."

At 2030, 29 August, the Battalion received orders to be ready to move from L'Epine through Vitry to the vicinity of St. Dizier. CCA will precede us with C/35, 94, Div Arty Hq, B489, 191 and C/24.

AUGUST 30, 1944

The Battalion moved out at 0852 and passed through Pogny at 0920. At 0930 the head of Jacques' column received small arms fire and artillery in vicinity of St. Dizier. "B" and "D" Company of the 37th were heading this column. "D" Company destroyed three (3) 75mm guns, and after pushing around St. Dizier overran an airfield and destroyed three (3) enemy planes on the ground.

Meanwhile, the 37th column passed uncontested through Vauclerc at 1115, Montainebleau at 1150, and arrived at St. Eulien at 1240. "D" Company rejoined the Battalion at this point.

At 1545, "D" Company plus one Platoon of C/10 went through a TODT organization camp South of St. Eulien. This camp had been vacated by the Germans a few hours before. Large stores of electrical equipment were found.

At 2200, orders were received that CCA was to move to secure a crossing over the Meuse River at Commercy in three (3) task forces. ABE Column, consisting of 37 (-3), 66, Div Arty, CCA, C/10, Engr Co, 191, C/53, C/704. Route to be taken was St. Dizier, Stainville, Ligny En Barrois, Aubin Sur Aire, Commercy.

Enemy losses for period 29 - 30 August were the following (all confirmed): Three (3) 150mm howitzers, one (1) PzKw4, sixteen (16) miscellaneous vehicles, four (4) 75mm AT guns, one (1) DC 217, two (2) ME 110 on ground, one hundred twelve (112) dead, seventeen (17) PW.

Our own losses for this period were two (2) KIA, two (2) WIA, one (1) tank destroyed by enemy AT guns.

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Battalion Diary, Headquarters 37th Tank Battalion, (Continued)

AUGUST 31, 1944

Reconnaissance Platoon and "D" Company left the bivouac area in the vicinity of St. Eulien at 0732 and passed through Stainville at 0835. D/25 which was ahead of our column reported an enemy column in Lizny En Barrois. The 37th pushed on, and a platoon of "D" Company charged across the bridge there, disregarding the fact it was mined, and secured it before the enemy could begin demolition. This enemy column retreated hurriedly and we lost contact.

The column pushed forward rapidly. C/37 and C/53 under command of Major Hunter moved North from St. Aubin to clear the route for Jacques column. This was done.

The remainder of the column reached Commercy at 1135, "D" Company again seizing the bridge (across the Meuse) in spite of the fact that four (4) 88mm guns were facing them. The personnel manning these guns were killed or scattered by .30 caliber fire.

"A" Company moved to protect the Northern entrances to the town, and in doing so ran into an enemy garrison. Two platoons of "A" Company under command of 1st Lt. Turner, entered this garrison and caught the German occupants by surprise. German soldiers were eating in one courtyard while their officers were at the mess tables inside the buildings. A full troop train was waiting at a siding waiting to pull out when a platoon of "A" Company fired it with .30 caliber and 75mm shells. The Kommandant was reported to have fled with face fully lathered and razor in hand. Over one hundred (100) prisoners were taken, the dead were unnumbered. Two (2) 88mm guns, three (3) locomotives, and seven (7) trucks were destroyed. A large quantity of good quality gasoline was captured by this force.

Meanwhile "D" Company and the Assault Gun Platoon seized the high ground six (6) kilometers East of Commercy and proceeded to bring fire on enemy columns fleeing up the valley in the direction of Pont a Mousson. Three (3) enemy trucks were destroyed (confirmed). "C" Company, after meeting up with Jacques' column at Ernecourt, crossed the river in the vicinity of Lerouville and joined the Battalion at 1600. The rest of the night was quiet.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1944

At 0815, two (2) enemy tanks emerged from the woods South of Apremont and were engaged by fire from our position. One was destroyed, the other fled. At 1045, the enemy began to shell our position. This shelling continued to 1630, and 364 live rounds of high explosive landed in the Battalion Area. At 1300, during the height of this shelling, a force of twenty-nine (29) enemy planes (identified as FW 190 and JU88) passed over our area and attacked installations in our rear. Upon their return they attacked our area with bombs and rockets, and by strafing. These planes were driven off by a steady volume of .50 caliber and small arms fire, three (3) were shot down over our area. Total casualties to our force as a result of this shelling, bombing and strafing were one (1) dead and fourteen (14) wounded, of which latter five (5) were evacuated.

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HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

15 October, 1944

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

SEPTEMBER 2 - SEPTEMBER 9, 1944

The Battalion took advantage of the lull and employed it for a period of general maintenance. Morale was greatly improved by a hot shower provided by a QM unit some miles West of Commercy. The first of four weekly bottles of cognac or wine for each man in the Battalion and Special Service movies for three nights in the old Fort de Gironville were also a source of enjoyment. Only one man fell into the moat around the Fort in the dark, but he escaped with minor abrasions and contusions. Not being in reserve the Battalion was on the alert to move each day. Some little trouble was experienced at first from intruding civilians. Two of them were turned into the CIC on suspicion.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1944

Colonel Clarke and Major Heid of Combat Command "A" presented awards to officers and enlisted men of the Battalion, and in a short speech brought out the "new type of warfare" as fought by the 37th. This consisted in hitting the enemy hard and the application of continual pressure on him, never letting him rest or reorganize. Our achievements lay not in the discovery of this new theory but in its total application, its masterful execution and the devastating results gained by it.

The formation included all officers and enlisted men of the first three grades drawn up on two sides of a square with the third side the recipients of the award, and the fourth, the band in its first appearance in France. Silver Stars were awarded to Captain McMahon, Lt. Donahue, Lt. Smith, and Staff Sergeant Vaughn. Bronze Star Medals went to Major Hunter, Major Bautz, Captain Dwight, Captain Wysocky, Captain Hays, Lt. Turner, Lt. Leach, CWO Peterson and 1st Sergeant Guffey. Purple Hearts were given to about fifteen (15) men. Captain Scotti of Combat Command "A" was called from the ranks to receive the Bronze Star Medal for his work at Hennebont.

After the presentation, the officers retired to the Fort de Gironville where the wine and cognac freely flowed.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 11, 1944

At 1630, the Battalion was given orders to move at 1900. The general situation was that the 7th Armored Division had crossed the Moselle River in the vicinity of Metz, and the 80th Infantry Division at Dieulouard. For the operations of the task force a Battalion of the 318th Infantry of the 80th Infantry Division had been attached to Combat Command "A". The 24th Engineers were to construct a bridge over the canal at darkness. The river itself was to be forded. The fording point was reported as having a firm bottom, but to insure a steady crossing all small wheeled vehicles were to be towed across.

At the moment the orders were being given the artillery was moving into position. The general order of the attack was to put the Battalion of the 318th Infantry across, then to attack through it with the 53rd and 37th. The attack of the 37th with attached units was to be delivered at 0500 the next day, 12 September. The objectives were to seize a new bridgehead over the Moselle at Pagny-sur-Moselle, assemble in the vicinity of Sillegny, securing the high ground with the 53rd, and then to move South to cut off Chateau Salins (Q101250).

The Battalion moved out at 1910 from the Fort de Gironville, passed through Rambucourt at 1943, Beaumont at 1950, Flirey at 2013, Limey at 2026, and at 2130 reached the assembly area before the crossing, one mile North of Vieville-en-Haye, four miles Southwest of Pagny-sur-Moselle.

At 2215, a few minor changes in orders were promulgated concerning chiefly the dispositions of friendly divisions. The objective, Chateau Salins, remained unchanged.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1944

At 0400, the Liaison Officer, Captain Dwight, brought a twenty-four (24) hour holdup in plans because of difficulty with the bridge, the difficulty being that the necessary equipment was not there, and also the Engineers showed a reluctance to operate under sporadic small arms fire. Beyond the canal, the ford over the river remained untested.

At 1400, it was still undecided whether the Battalion was to use the 80th Division's bridge at Dieulouard or to make its own. The composition of troops at this point was the 37th (- "C" Company attached to the 53rd Infantry) B/53, 66, one platoon/24, one battery/191.

Word was received at 1630 that it was to be the 80th Division's bridge at Dieulouard. The movement was scheduled to begin at 0400 the morning of the 13th.

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Battalion Diary, HQ 37th Tank Battalion, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 12, 1944 (CONT'D)

The order of March: Reconnaissance, "D" Company with assault guns, Battalion Staff tanks, B/37, Battery/66, B/53, Platoon C/24, 66-, Battery/191, Service/37, Hq Co/37, Battalion Maintenance. The objective was now, not Chateau Salins but Arracourt, which lay to the Southwest, (Q115145). After crossing, "D" Company and the assault guns were to provide flank protection for the main column by taking a parallel route to the South and West. The route after crossing for the main column was Ste. Genevieve, Benicourt, Manoncourt, Lemoncourt, Chateau Salins, Moyenvic, Arracourt. The second column of "D" Company with assault guns was to split off at Manoncourt and proceed through Ajoncourt, Pettoncourt, Chambrey, Salennes, Vic-sur-Seille, to Arracourt.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1944

At 0400, the task force moved out with blackout lights. There was a halt at 0530 in an assembly area just West of the crossing where by first light the force was regassed.

Captain Trover, Commanding "D" Troop of the 25th Cavalry, was first to arrive at the crossing where he was held up by the 80th Division. Captain Hays went forward to investigate, then Colonel Abrams, and finally Colonel Clarke, Combat Command "A" Commander, arrived. The 80th Division first refused to allow Combat Command "A" to cross but Major General Eddy, the Corps Commander, arrived and asked Colonel Clarke what he wanted to do. The answer was "We can't do much fighting on this side of the river" and permission to cross was granted.

At 0620, the bridgehead was under a heavy German counter-attack. Captain Trover's troop was sent across first, shooting Germans off the third bridge. (There were three bridges, the last of which had a ford beside it). By 0800, D/25 was in Ste. Genevieve where it received fire from the South, West and East. At 0820, he sent word that he was going to back out of town and not to come directly through Ste. Genevieve. The 80th Division artillery gave supporting fire throughout the crossing. At 0900, the Corps Commander was at the bridge with General Wood. At 0913, Colonel Abrams directed "D" Company to move out across the bridge with the admonition to the Assault Platoon, "dust off the shot".

The Battalion crossed under the fire of hostile artillery without casualties. The valley of the Moselle at Dieulouard is very flat and rises abruptly to Bezaumont and Ste. Genevieve. The column of vehicles sped across this plain to the slopes and crawled up through Bezaumont, past several destroyed German self-propelled anti-tank guns and a few burning pyres of the 80th Division's 702 Tank Battalion.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 13, 1944 (CONT'D)

South of Ste. Genevieve between the latter town and Bezaumont the Battalion went into assembly. The assault guns immediately went into position and began smoking suspected enemy artillery positions in suspicious woods. "D" Company secured the left flank of the assembly area aided shortly by a company of tank destroyers.

At 1129, Combat Command "A" reported that it was being held up by fire at the third bridge.

"A" and "B" Companies with "B" Company of the 53rd Infantry were sent through Ste. Genevieve and assembled East of it, all under enemy artillery fire. Meanwhile in the assembly area between Ste. Genevieve and Bezaumont shells began to fall at 1200 on the elements of the task force which had not yet advanced through Ste. Genevieve.

Combat Command "A" at 1205, sent a message exhorting everyone at the crossing to keep moving, keep moving.

When all the task force's units had reached the assembly area beyond Ste. Genevieve, the tanks swept down from the heights in formation to the vicinity of Benicourt where there was a final regrouping and pause from 1245 to 1400. While halted the allied air force pounded fleeing enemy on the roads leading North and East of Eply.

The columns split as planned, and "D" Company and the assault guns went South and West on a parallel route. "A" Company met resistance soon after the new start but sent back reassuring reports, "am taking care of them" and "all present (enemy) accounted for." At 1452, "B" Company was sent to aid "D" Company on the South-west route where a column of half-tracks and tanks were destroyed. Increasingly impossible terrain later caused "D" Company to turn for the main route, making for it through Ajoncourt. At 1830, they were in column with Service Company. At 1727, a French report that Chateau Salins was strongly held by the enemy was received. At 1900, the task force moved into an assembly area two (2) miles West of Chateau Salins. There was sporadic shelling of the area. Rain set in. Enemy casualties: Six (6) motorcycles, twenty-five (25) vehicles, four (4) SP guns, one (1) 88mm, one hundred two (102) Prisoners of War, one hundred seventy-five (175) killed.

SEPTEMBER 14, 1944

After the rain of the preceding night a dense fog reduced visibility to zero in the morning. Orders were issued at 0900, with the move planned when the fog lessened to permit adequate visibility.

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Battalion Diary, HQ 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 14, 1944 (CONT'D)

The objective now had been moved beyond Arracourt to the Marne-Rhine Canal and then to Moncourt. The route: Chambrey, Salonnnes, South to the main road, East to Vic-sur-Seille, South to Arracourt, Valhey, Einville. At Arracourt, "B" Company was to swing East and South to Bauzemont on the Marne-Rhine Canal.

Order of March: Reconnaissance, A/37, Staff/37, B/37, C/94, B/53, Plat/24, C/37, 94-, CC"A", Div Artillery, 191-, Trains, Mortar Platoon, Hq Co/37.

The fog became lighter at 1100 and therefore 1145 was set as the time for moving out. Almost immediately at 1156, "A" Company silenced an AT gun in its path, but, on the whole, opposition between the IP and Arracourt was light. At Arracourt, however, the force encountered a heavy concentration of German personnel and vehicles of such a nature as to suggest a rear echelon of some high headquarters. "A" Company, the leading medium company of the task force, with the Reconnaissance Platoon did a most effective job of destruction in Arracourt taking a large toll of German dead, destroying motor transport, and some horse drawn artillery. "B" Company was sent around the left flank to cut off the enemy fleeing the town.

The force continued down the road with "A" Company still in the lead. Valhey proved to be another enemy strong point. Air observation had reported an 88mm gun on the approaches to the town so that the Reconnaissance Platoon was not sent in ahead of the column. "A" Company was directed to attack. Some of its tanks veered to go around the town and Captain Spencer went in. An 88mm AT gun was encountered at point blank range and here it was that Sergeant Sadowski sacrificed his life in an attempt to evacuate his bow gunner. His tank had been hit and knocked out by this gun and finding that his bow gunner was missing Sergeant Sadowski returned under fire to the tank and was cut down by a machine gun.

"B" Company had proceeded to Bauzemont to secure a crossing over the Marne-Rhine Canal, only to find that the bridge was blown. However, about one hundred (100) personnel and thirteen (13) trucks were met and dealt with. In the meantime, the right column was heavily engaged at Valhey. Colonel Clarke radioed Colonel Abrams at 1600 to the effect that he wanted to get him to the East in the vicinity of Moncourt, with him leading, but that if Colonel Abrams desired to clean out opposition and to secure crossings, he was willing for him to do so. "B" Company, therefore, was ordered to investigate a crossing about a mile east of Bauzemont and found that one blown also. Meanwhile, "A" Company and the infantry company had cleaned out Valhey, and the Battalion closed into bivouac one (1) mile East of Moncourt (Q2013).

Enemy casualties: Twenty-six (26) armored vehicles, one hundred thirty-five (135) unarmored vehicles, ten (10) 88mm guns, two hundred thirty (230) killed, one hundred eighty-seven (187) Prisoners of War.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 15, 1944

"C" Company was sent on a mission to cut the road from Nancy at Xures, South of Moncourt on the Marne-Rhine Canal. This day "C" Company accounted for all the casualties dealt the enemy by the Battalion.

At 1530, the Battalion moved to the vicinity of Arracourt (Q135145) leaving A/37 at Moncourt with C/24. Colonel Abrams returned from Combat Command "A" to the new bivouac with orders for the next day's attack. This was to be delivered South to Maixe and the Marne-Rhine Canal contacting Combat Command "B" and assisting it so that a crossing could be constructed over the canal. Two columns were to attack South while Combat Command "B" would attack to the North on a parallel route.

Enemy casualties: Thirty-eight (38) killed, five (5) Prisoners of War, five (5) vehicles.

SEPTEMBER 16, 1944

Dense fog caused the commencement of operations to be delayed from 0400 to 0530. Battalion Trains and Maintenance crews were left at Arracourt. The attacking force was 37th minus "B" Company, "A" and "C" Companies of the 53rd Infantry (B/37 was with the 53rd Infantry). The mission was to attack Athieville, assemble, and then proceed in a two pronged attack, the left column to take the Valhey - Einville road, the right to drive through Serres and Maixe. No serious opposition was encountered. Drouville was also checked with C/37 and A/53. During this action fire was received from Courbesseaux. "C" Company attacked and knocked out seven (7) AT guns and about two hundred (200) Infantry. Some AT fire was received from the West flank, but since this was beyond the no fire line it was not attacked.

After the attack the force assembled in the vicinity of Lezey (Q182182), and were joined by the rest of the Battalion which had remained at Arracourt. The position at Lezey was a salient beyond a salient. The division's salient extended beyond Nancy, and Lezey was beyond the division salient. Road blocks, consisting of an infantry platoon and a section of tanks, were set up on the roads leading to the East, West, and South of Lezey. The assault guns were registered on road junctions 213163 and 167184, and the mortars at 200187.

SEPTEMBER 17, 1944

A heavy rain fell during the night and early morning hours. During the night a few Germans stumbled into the bivouac area and were cut down at the perimeter. They were remnants of troops retreating East or going on missions "behind" the German lines.

ROUTES TAKEN

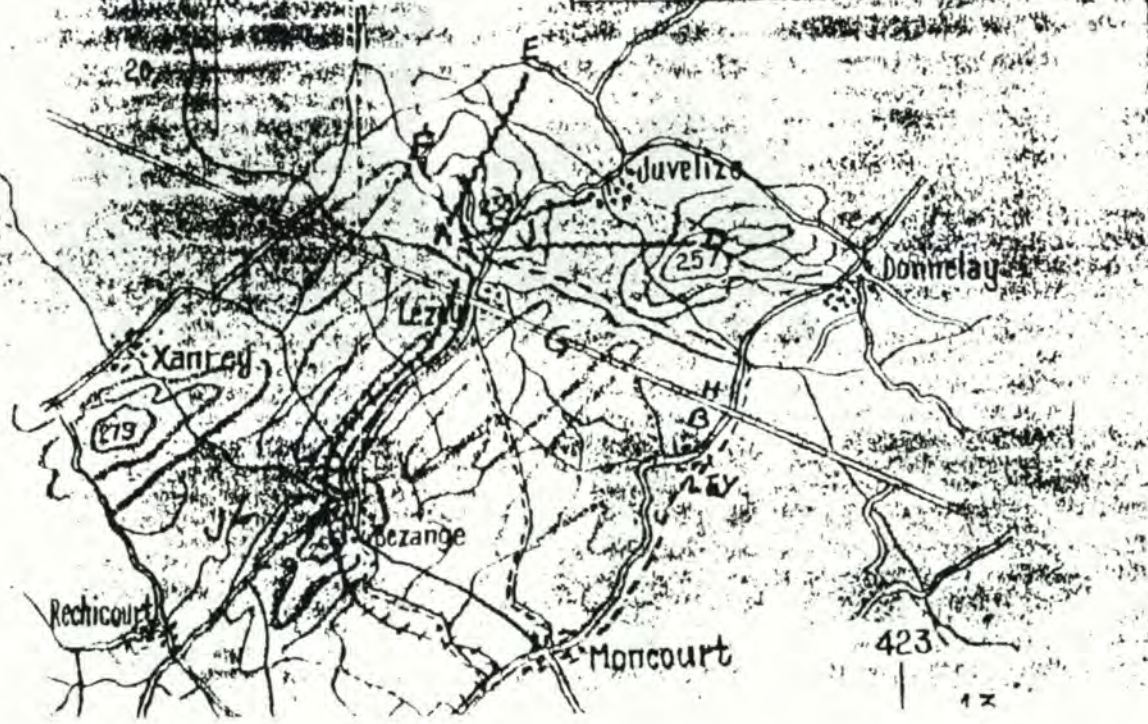
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 FOR MAP 3774, TAC
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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 17, 1944 (CONT'D)

The road blocks were also effective, knocking out several vehicles that came down the roads through Lezey.

Enemy casualties: Seven (7) vehicles, thirty (30) Prisoners of War, three (3) dead.

SEPTEMBER 18, 1944

In the Battalion area a quiet day passed. There was no enemy activity. A task force, led by Major Hunter and composed of A/37, Battery/94, B/53, went to Luneville to aid CC"R" before the 6th Armored Division arrived. "B" Company was still attached to the 53rd Infantry and the balance of the Battalion was in the area. Four (4) Prisoners of War were brought in during the day. South of the canal in the Parroy Forest G-2 reports indicated that there were many enemy.

In Luneville, Major Hunter's task force was disposed with the infantry in the town, the artillery in position, and A/37 in mobile reserve. German PzKw tanks held the Northwest corner of the town, but these were not attacked at night.

In the Battalion area at Lezey, all was quiet until 2330 when Lt. Berard's "C" Company outpost at "G" (letters refer to attached map, which covers the period 18 - 25 September. Battalion OP is at "A") reported a column moving along the road West toward Lezey and the outpost and then turning into bivouac at "B". Lt. Berard with a few men went down on foot and in the dark felt the tank tracks leading off the road. At the Battalion CP, with Captain Cook of the 94th Field Artillery Battalion in attendance to direct the artillery, plans were laid to fire on the enemy. The assault guns were laid on the crossroads (at "H" on the map), and they were to open fire if called upon. Lt. Harris with a section from the Reconnaissance Platoon went out to try and get information about the enemy who was located at "B".

Enemy casualties: Four (4) Prisoners of War.

SEPTEMBER 19, 1944

At 0130, the enemy was fired on by artillery in a five minute concentration causing him to move out of his bivouac. As the enemy column retreated, the Assault Gun Platoon, registered on the road junction North of Ley, opened up on it as he passed through this road junction. Damage was not assessed.

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Battalion Diary. Hq 37th Tank Bn. 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 19, 1944 (CONT'D)

In the morning, reports of enemy activity started to come in early. A Prisoner of War (Motorcyclist) reported twenty-one (21) PzKw V's and VI's on the road from Ley to Lezey. The enemy was strong in the vicinity of Ley and Moncourt, and he launched attacks from these points toward us in the morning.

First contact was by the Light Tank Platoon of Staff Sergeant Mallon on outpost at Moncourt. Here Sergeant Mallon was astride the roads leading Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast. He destroyed a half-track and a truck and began to receive intermittent small arms fire. When five (5) PzKw V's appeared, Sergeant Mallon began a delaying action, falling back across country to Bezange and then up the road to Lezey and the Battalion CP.

The weather was foggy and visibility poor in the morning. The enemy advancing through the fog from Bezange to Lezey had the misfortune of encountering a prepared American outpost, for the telephone outpost of Lt. Smith's "C" Company outpost made up by wire what it lacked in visibility. Warned by this telephone outpost, Lt. Smith's section of his platoon got two enemy tanks at the first crack when they loomed into view.

Another "C" Company outpost East of Lezey, had a brief fire fight with the enemy who did not press for the moment at this spot.

It is to be noted that "C" Company at this time was the only medium company at the disposition of the Battalion Commander. Captain Lamison had to assume a roving mission with one platoon. Lt. Smith's outpost was reinforced to platoon strength, and the other platoon was to the East of Lezey as mentioned above. With this roving platoon Captain Lamison inflicted, in a series of moves from Ley to Lezey, Lezey to Bezange, Ley to Moncourt, working back and forth where the enemy appeared, tremendous damage to the enemy, securing the whole Southern and Eastern front of the Battalion. His aggressive action saved the day until other elements of the Battalion arrived. "C" Company got twelve (12) enemy tanks during this period.

Further to the South of Lt. Smith's outpost, early contact with the enemy was also made by Captain Dwight who was making a routine liaison run from Combat Command "A" to the Battalion via Bezange. Before reaching Bezange, he heard the firing of Lt. Smith's outpost. He asked if it was alright to come in. The answer was no and he returned to Combat Command "A" where he was given a platoon of four (4) Tank Destroyers which Combat Command "A" offered the Battalion and which he led back toward the firing. The enemy was met on the road and almost immediately one of the Tank Destroyers was lost. Going into position at "J", Captain Dwight assumed the

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Battalion Diary, HQ 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 19, 1944 (CONT'D)

role of an observer (unarmored) with his peep radio, the only contact with the Battalion. In a heated exchange these Tank Destroyers were reduced from three (3) to one (1), but the toll of the enemy was gratifying, nine (9) tanks (not counted in the total of twenty-nine (29) for the day's score for the Battalion).

Meanwhile, during the morning in Luneville, Major Hunter's force heard of the attack upon the Battalion via an intercepted radio message in the S-1 track. At once release was requested from CC"R" and General Eddy, The XII Corps Commander, who was present granted the request. The release came at approximately 1100. Leaving B/53 at Luneville, the force now returned with all possible speed, mindful of the C. O.'s radioed words to Major Hunter to "Dust off the sights, wipe off the shot and breeze right on through."

The force, composed of A/37 and the Battery of Artillery, raced into Arracourt. The artillery left at this point and went into position. "A" Company joined "B" Company, which had been released from the 53rd Infantry, in repulsing an attack on Combat Command "A" which was in its finishing stages.

Now in a position to strike, these two companies (minus "A" Company's third platoon left at CC"A" to return the next day) were brought by Major Hunter at approximately 1400, the area near Rechicourt, where Captain Dwight's Tank Destroyers and "C" Company's section had beaten off the enemy armor and infantry.

Captain Dwight was met one (1) mile Northeast of Rechicourt. The attack was to be delivered upon the enemy, located at Q166133 on hill 297, from the South and West, so the force skirted Rechicourt on the Southwest and assembled with "A" on the left and "B" on the right and hit West. "A" Company hit head on, opening up at four hundred (400) yards. Lt. Turner's platoon swung full left, wheeled and smashed the enemy on the flank, opening at a range of two hundred fifty (250) yards. "B" Company to the right came up on the other flank and finished off the enemy. Total score was eight (8) tanks and an estimated one hundred (100) infantry. Lt. Turner claimed five (5) tanks for his own gun. Our losses, three (3) tanks.

During the day, fire directed by Captain Cook and our own mortars and assault guns were of material aid in repulsing the enemy.

At 2350, a move to the North and East was projected. The plans were to move to the vicinity of Wolfling, beyond Saarguemines near the German border. The bulk of Combat Command "A" (which included most of the division) was to move on the main roads and the

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 19, 1944 (CONT'D)

37th force on secondary roads on the Southeast flank; the general idea being to hit from the flank, obstacles to the main column on the left. The column composition and order of march was Reconnaissance "D" Company, Assault, Staff Tanks, Hq Co, C/37, 94, 10, B/37, Engineers Trains, A/37. The move was scheduled for 0830 on CC"A" order.

Enemy casualties: Twenty-nine (29) tanks, two (2) vehicles, two hundred (200) killed, three (3) Prisoners of War.

SEPTEMBER 20, 1944

The order to move out did not come. At 0900, 150 - 180 enemy tanks were reported South of the Marne-Rhine Canal with twenty (20) of them already across. Colonel Abrams reviewed the defensive positions occupied by the 37th and attached units which included C/704, the 94th Field Artillery, the 10th Infantry (-B Company), and sent the unit commanders back to wait on the alert.

At 1040, orders were once more to move out and go on to Saarguemines. Artillery Battalions and an Infantry Division were purported to be on the way to relieve the force.

The IP was crossed at 1135, and some enemy outposts were brushed aside at Blanche Eglise. At 1225, sixteen (16) enemy tanks were reported South of Arracourt, coming up on the rear of the movement. The head of the column was through Dieuze with its silent stone barracks when at 1235 came the report that the tail of the Division column was being attacked. The orders were to return immediately and counterattack. At 1240, Colonel Abrams ordered his task force back to the original assembly area and to assume its original positions. At 1245, Colonel Heid radioed "Things are in a bad state of flux." For the 37th however, the orders were clear and each unit effectively resumed its prior position. Thus at 1300, "B" Company was already in position and reporting "two (2) enemy tanks approaching our immediate front, we are waiting for them."

Major Murdock, who had been announced as S-3 of Combat Command "A" that morning, notified Colonel Abrams that he was to prepare to counterattack South and West from Lezey to the canal clearing out enemy resistance.

As soon as all elements of the force had been reassembled and the artillery fires adjusted, the counterattack was launched.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

"A", "B", and "C" Companies and two (2) companies of the 10th Infantry assembled North and East of Lezey before the attack. Heavy enemy artillery fire was encountered during the assembly. The plan was to stay in defilade until the whole force had reached a point North of Ley, when it would wheel and strike South of Ley. "A" and "B" Companies were to attack Ley head on, one company on each side of the road. "C" Company was to seize and hold the high ground to the East of Ley and protect our left flank.

"A" and "B" attacked, encountering enemy tanks and knocking them out. "A" Company then went through Ley with the Infantry. "C" Company reported that it was heavily engaged with enemy tanks and anti-tank guns. "B" Company was sent to help "C" Company, and Colonel Abrams also went to take charge. A bitter fight ended with the destruction of twelve (12) enemy tanks and three (3) anti-tank guns, while we lost twelve (12) tanks. Meanwhile Major Bautz reorganized the Infantry and "A" Company, and preparations were made to attack Moncourt.

As "C" Company's situation cleared up, night was falling, and from the Battalion CP area, the glow of burning Ley began to light up the sky.

Despite the gathering darkness the order was still "Attack." The attack against Moncourt, executed at night, was a new departure from the "book", which said that tanks could not be successfully employed in the dark.

Preceding the attack, the artillery laid down a preparatory fire on Moncourt. The attack on Moncourt was delivered from the West of the Ley-Moncourt road which was the general axis of advance.

In a tight and intermingled formation three (3) tank companies and two (2) Infantry companies approached Moncourt. The whole formation opened fire as one, presenting an awesome sight, and the storm of incendiary bullets and HE set Moncourt afire as the force moved in, grinding under the opposition outside the town. All this was in complete contradiction of the German conception (as reported by intelligence channels) that Americans never attack at night and always stick to the roads. Lt. Donnelly's "A" Company platoon then went into the town with "A" Company of the 10th Infantry. The Infantry used bayonets, grenades, sub-machine guns and rifles, slaughtering the Germans in their fox-holes where they were immobilized by fear and the shock of the assault.

A/37 and A/10 were left to secure the town, and the remainder of the force returned to Lezey and the Battalion Assembly Area as the glow of burning Moncourt was added to the glare of burning Ley, both quite visible from the CP.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 20, 1944 (CONT'D)

Enemy casualties: Four (4) vehicles, sixteen (16) tanks, fifteen (15) Prisoners of War, two hundred fifty-seven (257) killed, three (3) guns (under 75mm).

SEPTEMBER 21, 1944

Orders were issued at 1015 for an attack South to the Marne-Rhine Canal. The enemy was located in the woods South and East of Moncourt, in Coincourt, and Parroy. They held two crossings over the canal. Friendly cavalry screened us to the North and West. D/37 had the mission of securing the trail from Lezey to Moncourt, over which supplies were to be taken to "A" Company and the Infantry at Moncourt, and of screening the left flank.

At 1200, the 37th attacked moving around the West side of Bezange La Petite. The Infantry which had been left in Moncourt attacked the woods after a heavy artillery concentration, but found little opposition.

The entire force then proceeded to Coincourt and through it, again with little opposition. Bures to the West of Coincourt was attacked at the same time by the 35th Tank Battalion. Parroy was the next objective, which was successfully attained. In each case it was found that the enemy had left hastily just before our arrival.

At 2000, the force returned from the day's operations. Little opposition had been met. The next day was announced as one of rest and maintenance.

Enemy casualties: One (1) tank, one (1) SP gun, twenty (20) killed, one (1) 88mm.

SEPTEMBER 22, 1944

The day of "rest and maintenance" opened up very foggy with no visibility, and most of the morning's operations took place under these conditions. This time the direction of the enemy thrusts were from the North in the vicinity of Juvelize.

The outposts of the 25th Cavalry were driven in toward the Battalion bivouac area. As the enemy came through, the Tank Destroyers placed on the hill by Major Bautz accounted for two (2) tanks, the flames of one being in direct view of the bivouac area, six hundred (600) yards from Service Company.

S E C R E T

Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 22, 1944 (CONT'D)

This was later found to be a PzKw V.

This setback caused the enemy to pause, and as the fog lifted "A" Company was sent into the attack generally North. The artillery, still with Captain Cook directing it from the Battalion CP, and our own mortars laid heavy fire on Juvelize, and the Assault Guns fired into an orchard just to the West of Juvelize.

As "A" Company moved out, "C" Company, on the left flank, moved out further to protect "A" Company's left flank. B/37 with A/10 Infantry then attacked Juvelize itself, which was strongly occupied by enemy infantry and some tanks, cleaned it out and went on to the high ground to the Southwest of the town at "D" on the map. "C" Company was at "E" and "A" Company at "F" after the attack was over. Thus the heights to the North were secured, and the enemy attempt to break through from that direction were not only repulsed but completely routed.

The enemy of the past few days' combat was identified as the 111th Pz Brigade composed of the 1112th and 1113th Pz Gren Regiments and the 16 Pz Regiment. The latter regiment had two (2) Battalions of tanks, with forty-two (42) PzKw V's in one Battalion, and the other Battalion had PzKw IV's.

Enemy casualties: Eight (8) vehicles, sixteen (16) tanks, two hundred fifty (250) killed, eighty-five (85) Prisoners of War.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1944

Generally quiet. Before sundown P-47's did some bombing. Enemy AA increased daily and was becoming a horseshoe around the salient to the East, South, and North. Eight (8) Prisoners of War was the only score for the day.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1944

Again quiet. Again friendly bombing before sundown and increased enemy AA.

SEPTEMBER 25, 1944

At 1010, 200 - 300 Infantry were reported advancing toward Juvelize from the North at Blanche Eglise, and thirty (30) enemy tanks were reported at Marsal.

Throughout the morning the enemy advanced closer and enemy shelling, which had been sporadic during the preceding days, grew heavier. Withdrawing cavalry coming through the Battalion area was

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 25, 1944 (CONT'D)

again the indication of enemy attack. The enemy attacked a 10th Infantry outpost and "B" Company was sent in to aid them in retaking it at 1210.

At 1215, "C" Company reported more enemy, and at 1220, Colonel Abrams reported to Combat Command "A", "My position being attacked by unknown number of Infantry and five (5) tanks; will keep you informed."

"A" Company was given the mission of meeting the enemy thrust and attacked North, becoming heavily engaged against the enemy.

Enemy infantry kept boring in on "B" and "C" Companies. The Tank Destroyers West of Ley withdrew due to enemy infantry pressure.

The Battalion was now bereft of flank protection. All of the forces at its disposal were engaged. There was only one bridge (leading into Lezey) which could serve as an exit. Besides being under increasingly heavy artillery fire, the Battalion area was coming under the direct fire of tanks. Especially heavy shelling occurred at 1730.

It was decided to evacuate to the high ground to the West and establish a more secure and shorter line. The withdrawal was planned to start at 1900, at which time artillery fire was to be laid on all known or suspected enemy positions.

At 1900, "B" and "C" Companies made demonstrations as if to attack, permitting the infantry to disengage and get into their tracks and retire. Before 1900, "A" Company was sent South to outpost the Lezey-Bezange road, and "D" Company to the West of Lezey to prevent the enemy from breaking in from that direction.

The infantry moved out, then "B" and "C" Companies, "A" and "D" Companies fell into line.

The 10th Infantry took positions to the East of Rechicourt across the Rechicourt-Bezange Road.

The Battalion went into CC "A" reserve and bivouaced in the vicinity of Arracourt (Q135145) at 2035.

Enemy casualties: Six (6) tanks, twenty (20) vehicles, one hundred (100) killed.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

SEPTEMBER 26, 1944

Combat Command "B" rejoined the division and took over the Southern sector. At 1500 the Battalion started moving into its new area, checking out of CC"A" and into CC"R" at 1545. At 1700, it was closed in bivouac in the vicinity of Serres (Q065115).

SEPTEMBER 27, 1944

A period of general maintenance and rest was enjoyed.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1944

Enemy activity was reported. The Battalion was alerted to move on one (1) hour's notice, but it was not called upon.

SEPTEMBER 29, 1944

In the early hours of the day the Germans attacked and seized hill 318 in the CC"B" area of the salient, presenting a threat to the whole Arracourt Basin as it overlooked it. The 37th was to be prepared to counterattack. The hill, however, was regained from the enemy

SEPTEMBER 30, 1944

At 1600, after a day of the usual bivouac duties the Battalion was alerted to move at 1735 to cover the high ground in an arc around Sorneville, eight (8) miles to the North. The bivouac was reached at 1830 at Q035175, between Sorneville and Moncel. The trains went to the CC"A" control point with Battalion Maintenance. The enemy had created a threat to the 35th Infantry and 6th Armored Division in the Rettoncourt-Chambrey area, and the 37th was called upon to stand by behind them. "D" Company contacted both the 6th Armored Division and the 35th Infantry, established outposts North and East of Moncel, and continued liaison with these units.

For the Battalion Commander:

Martin J. White
MARTIN J. WHITE,
1st Lt., Inf.,
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

18 October, 1944

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

OCTOBER 1, 1944

The Battalion held its assigned ground behind the attacking 6th Armored Division and 35th Infantry. The 6th Armored Division attacked in two columns North and East, and the 35th consolidated behind them. The Battalion, however, was not called upon to support the action. The Platoon of "D" Company still maintained contact with the infantry and kept the Battalion informed of the situation through Captain McMahon. During the whole day a state of alert was maintained.

A number of civilians traveling between Sorneville and Moncel were stopped, questioned, and released.

During the night of 30 September-1 October and the morning of the first, a few thunderous rounds were fired by a battery of eight (8) inch guns close by the CP. Lt. Col. H. P. Heid, former S-3 of the 37th Armored Regiment and more recently of CC "A" and CO of the 704th Tank Destroyers, was announced as CO of the 8th Tank Battalion.

OCTOBER 2, 1944

The Battalion after a day of no combat activity was released from its mission of protecting the North flank and moved back to its prior bivouac area near Serres, at 1700. General Wood visited the CP today. Company messes were set up and "B" ration was fed for the first time since the launching of the break-through in Normandy.

Seven (7) replacement officers arrived in the morning, which was one more than requisitioned. The seventh officer was later assigned to the 25th Cavalry.

OCTOBER 3, 1944

For the first time in France laundry was taken to a QM laundry. It was payday and Mr. Lubrano and Technical Sergeant McGuire came down from the Administrative Center to pay the Battalion and then take its money back in PTA's. Movies were shown in the Battalion Maintenance tent by Special Service personnel. The day was, all in all, extremely beneficial to morale.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn. 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 3, 1944 (CONT'D)

Eighteen (18) replacements swelled the Battalion strength to near normal today. Seventeen (17) of the eighteen (18) had had only infantry experience.

OCTOBER 4, 1944

A quiet day of usual bivouac duties was made enjoyable in the afternoon by two showings of the USO show "Laugh Time."

At 1730, in a ceremony attended by officers and non-commissioned officers acting in the capacity of officers, awards were presented as follows: Silver Stars to Captain Dwight, Captain Spencer, Captain Lamison; Bronze Stars to Staff Sergeant Whaley, Technician Fourth Grade McHale, Technician Fifth Grade Traver, and Technician Fifth Grade Patton. Nineteen (19) Purple Hearts were given, including one cluster. Colonel Abram's Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star was also announced. The presentations were made by the Battalion Commander who concluded the ceremony with a discourse to the officers and non-commissioned officers, in which he dwelled on the importance of maintenance and how tanks and vehicles responded to affectionate treatment with eager service, reciprocating with almost human gratitude the care bestowed upon them.

The new officers and the replacements through them were thus informed of the importance attached to maintenance in this Battalion.

OCTOBER 5, 1944

The first showers in a month were available to the men. A QM shower unit in Richardmenil, and in succeeding days a civilian shower in Memereville, provided the much needed refreshment.

Classes were initiated for the new men to acquaint them with tanks which most of them had never been in before.

OCTOBER 6, 1944

Rehabilitation of vehicles and personnel continued together with crew drill and gunnery instruction for the new replacements.

The Special Order, 37th Tank Battalion, of this date assigned the new officers to companies as indicated.

1st Lt. Charles P. Boggess	Co "C"
2nd Lt. William F. Schumann	Co "C"
2nd Lt. Roy C. Rush	Hq Co
2nd Lt. John A. Whitehill	Co "A"
2nd Lt. Frederick E. Lockwood	Co "B"
2nd Lt. Harold M. Hamm	Sv Co

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 7, 1944

Instructions were issued at 1300 to the Company Commanders that the 37th would support the 26th Infantry Division which was relieving the 4th. This relief was a little deceptive because the 26th came without their Division Artillery or attached Tank Battalion. The 37th was to be in Division Reserve for the 26th Infantry Division. A move was planned to the vicinity of Arracourt, but as the group waited for the return of reconnoitering parties, Captain Hays brought word that there would be no move and that the Battalion would support from our present location.

OCTOBER 8, 1944

The plan regarding the relief of the 4th Armored Division by the 26th Infantry Division was modified by attaching an Infantry Regiment to each Combat Command, General Wood remaining in command of the sector until such time as the Commanding General, 26th Infantry Division, was fully acquainted with the situation and stated he was willing to assume command. This postponed the relief of the 4th Armored Division, already in its 83rd day of continuous combat. This Battalion reverted to Division Reserve.

Staff Sergeant Mallon of "D" Company was honored by being sent on a mission for a few days as honor guard for General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff. He was one of three (3) men, the other two (2) coming from the 6th Armored Division and 35th Infantry Division.

OCTOBER 9 - 11, 1944

The Battalion enjoyed movies at night, decent chow from the kitchens including pastry, pies, and in some companies biscuits. A Red Cross Clubmobile dispensed doughnuts and coffee one afternoon. The Battalion was still in Reserve for the 26th. The weather continued alternately rainy and cloudy, which prevented it from being too cold.

OCTOBER 12, 1944

In the afternoon, General Wood visited the assembled Battalion and gathered it around him in his usual manner, striding back and forth, and in the beginning rain thanked the Battalion for the magnificent part it had played against the Germans. "We know why we are fighting", he said, "We fight because we were attacked - they started it and we will finish it." He spoke of the efforts being made to re-equip us, from tanks to overshoes and messkits, and said we were getting everything "not tied down" at the beaches. It was "supply and not the enemy which made us stop."



Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 12, 1944 (CONT'D)

As of noon 12 October, the 26th Infantry Division relieved the 4th Armored Division in this sector, but the 4th Armored Division artillery, the 704 Tank Destroyers, 24th Engineers, and the 37th were attached to the 26th Division. The 37th was held as a mobile reserve for the 26th and CC"A" of the 4th as a general reserve in case of any large scale attack. (CC"B" supported similarly the 35th Division to the North). Plans for possible counterattacks in the event of enemy penetration were submitted to the G-3 of the 26th and discussed with the Commanding General. Administratively the 37th remained in the 4th, tactically in the 26th.

OCTOBER 13, 1944

Nothing of interest.

OCTOBER 14, 1944

In a solemn ceremony, with the sun gracing the field, with unaccustomed brightness, Colonel Abrams pinned the bars upon five (5) enlisted men of the Battalion. The new second lieutenants, who were sworn in by Lt. White and received their commissions before the assembled officers and first three graders, were: S/Sgt's. Charley Walters, "A" Company, James N. Farese, "B" Company, Roy G. Grubbs, "C" Company, Edward P. Mallon, "D" Company, and Technical Sergeant Roy W. Smith of the medical Detachment who filled the T/O vacancy of an MAC officer in the detachment. Immediately following this, decorations were also awarded as follows: Silver Stars to Captain Voltz, Staff Sergeant Vannett, Private Liscavage, and Private First Class Malinski; Bronze Stars to Technical Sergeant Shevlin, Technician Fifth Grade Lorentzen, Corporal Dickerman, Technician Fifth Grade Green, and Private Ayotte. Seven (7) Purple Hearts were awarded.

Colonel Abrams then addressed a congratulatory speech to the new officers and recipients of awards in turn.

To the officers he said that no officer in the Battalion had been an officer until the operations in France. These new lieutenants were officers by virtue of their demonstrated ability in leadership and were as one with their brother officers.

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Battalion Diary. Hq 37th Tank Bn. 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 14, 1944 (CONT'D)

To the decorated ranks upon the right, Colonel Abrams spoke of the honor awarded them by a grateful country, an honor not only earned by brave deeds and bloodshed but also by long months, even years, of training which was not always appreciated, an honor won by the sacrifice of liberties that soldiers prize, such as furloughs and free evenings.

To all, he said that our success lay not in the wholesale slaughter of men, not in the needless sacrifice of material, but in a preparedness that avoided suffering and an ability to keep our supply at a superior level.

Mr. Lubrano attended to the voluminous paper work entailed by the promotion of the new officers, having come down from the Administrative Center for the purpose.

At 2230, a message from the G-3, 26th Infantry Division, alerted the Battalion as of 0600, 15 October. No details were available.

OCTOBER 15, 1944

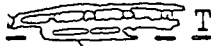
The alert was on a Corps order, due to a supposed German threat. In the morning a 26th Division order also caused the Battalion to prepare its instruments and go over the technique of indirect fire. In the evening the Assistant G-3 of the 26th informed the Colonel that this was an error, but that there was a shortage of 105mm ammunition and we may be called upon to act as artillery.

The Sunday was enlivened by the second appearance of the band. Besides lighter music for the men, the band played for Protestant religious services at 1530.

Two TUSA historians (TUSA Information & Historical Service) interviewed Captain McMahon on the Brittany campaign for close to four (4) hours, resulting in a thorough appraisal of the role played by "D" Company in that campaign.

OCTOBER 16, 1944

The two historians from TUSA Information and Historical Section interviewed the commanders of "A", "B", and "C" Companies, also Lt. Harris, Reconnaissance Platoon Commander, completing their survey of the Battalion's part in the Brittany campaign. The dismal rain continued sporadically. The condition of the ground began to become critical for the operation of tracked vehicles and well nigh impossible for wheeled vehicles.



Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 17, 1944

There was no end to the incessant rain and the ground conditions deteriorated even more. A new type floatation for tank tracks which essentially changed the conception of track traction in mud from a deep biting grouser on a narrow track to a wider traction on the same plane made its appearance today.

Briefly described this "grouser" is an end connector with an extension shaped like an upside down scoop extending about 2-1/2 inches from the track. A salient feature of this item is that the extension springing from the upperside of the end connector does not hit the hard surfaced road, but comes into play when soft ground is encountered.

The Battalion received a number of these new end connectors sufficient to equip twenty-five (25) mediums.

A memorandum from Colonel Clarke, which is appended to the end of this day, was also discussed by Colonel Abrams in a Company Commanders meeting. Colonel Abrams plans to speak to each company in turn, when the Battalion gets a rest period, about the Brittany campaign and a general coverage of the Battalion's operations

OCTOBER 18, 1944

More rain added to the mud. The new end connectors were installed by tank crews, but due to a limited supply only 75% coverage could be obtained. Twenty-five (25) medium tanks were outfitted in this manner, and more of these "grousers" are expected in the near future.

A Red Cross Clubmobile distributed coffee and doughnuts.

OCTOBER 19, 1944

More rain, intermittently, kept the ground soggy and very soft. Preliminary trials with the new "grouser" were promising. More ease of turning and better flotation resulted. Seven (7) truck loads of new straw were procured for bedding by the S-4 to replace the well used straw now about three weeks old.

The CP tent was moved to a drier spot and vehicles were instructed to stay away from it to prevent the morass which formed from the churning of the mud at the old location.

Five (5) replacements were received today, new men who had been tested for radio aptitude by the Signal Company. Basic training of all these men has been in tanks, three (3) of them having trained with the 8th Armored Division. The Battalion reached

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 19, 1944 (CONT'D)

an effective strength of 718 men, the highest it has been in France.

From 2000 to 2300 there was the constant droning of aircraft (believed to be enemy) overhead. No bombs were dropped in the Battalion area.

OCTOBER 20, 1944

Intermittent rain fell during the day. There was a demonstration of the new end connector for General Wood, General Dager, Colonel Clarke and interested officers of the division, in the afternoon. The widened track also was tested on the M-2 engineer treadway bridge with complete success. Furthermore, the new connectors supported the weight of the tank when it climbed the edge of the treadway, thereby removing some doubts as to whether they would be broken or bent by hitting rocks during a movement.

The medium tanks did very well in the mud. The lack of chevron tread tracks and grouser extensions, however, did not seem to affect the traction of the light tanks who still outmaneuvered the mediums. General Wood was delighted with them as well as pleased with the test of the grousers, which were adjudged a success.

OCTOBER 21, 1944

General Patton and General Spaatz honored the Battalion by their presence to watch "A" Company further demonstrate the new end connector. They were very pleased.

At 1100, orders were received attaching the Battalion to the 104th Infantry Regiment of the 26th Infantry Division. The Infantry was to attack at 0530, 22 October, with the objectives Bezange and Moncourt and the high ground beyond them. The enemy according to intelligence reports was not strong, possibly one Battalion in the sector of the attack. Most of the roads and avenues of tank approach were mined.

The 37th was designated as the reserve and was to be prepared to meet any enemy counterattack, more specifically the 104th was worried about enemy tanks suspected in the Bois du Haut de la Croix. It was necessary to move to the vicinity of Bures (Q1311). The non-combat installations and vehicles remained at Serres. Only tank retrievers were taken for company maintenance requirements. The head of the column moved out at 1600.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 21, 1944 (CONT'D)

In the assembly area the canal was the right flank. "D", "B", "A", "C" were in a semi-circle North and West in that order. Headquarters was in the middle.

The bridge across the road at the lower end of the Etang de Parroy was found to have M-1 treadway and a call had to be made to procure M-2 equipment to provide for the passage of the Battalion if it moved in that direction. Lt. North spent the night getting this equipment released, bringing it forward, and seeing that it was installed.

OCTOBER 22, 1944

The 26th attacked pushing a few hundred yards to the outskirts of Bezange la Petite and into the woods at Moncourt. The 42nd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mech) advanced on the Southern flank and took its objectives, the Bois de Frentiere and the Bois de Jambon, rapidly and successfully. The same could not be said of the 104th Infantry who, at nightfall, had still to take their first objective. Although the 37th was constantly on the alert it was not called upon.

At 2000, the C. O. was with General Wood when Captain Dwight reported that he was on his way back from the 104th Infantry with orders for a movement at night to be in position by daylight. Colonel Abrams was contacted and he ordered no movement as General Wood persuaded General Paul of the 26th Division that it would be a mistake. At 2200, Lt. North, Liaison officer with the 26th, radioed to the Battalion that it would revert to division reserve at daylight.

OCTOBER 23, 1944

At 0630, the Battalion moved to the vicinity of Arracourt at 0100138. Effective at daylight the Battalion went into the division reserve, being relieved from attachment to the 104th Infantry Regiment. Colonel Abrams reported to the 26th CP at 0600.

Although no major enemy threats developed constant reports of enemy tanks were received and the Battalion was held constantly on the alert.

OCTOBER 24, 1944

No change in the situation. The Battalion remained at Arracourt, the 26th still on the outskirts of Bezange and in the Bois de Moncourt.

Colonel Abrams reported to the 26th CP at 1600 to attend a meeting for orders on an attack to be delivered the 25th October,

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Battalion Diary, HQ 37th Tank Bn, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 24, 1944 (CONT'D)

to secure the high ground just North of the Boise De Moncourt.

At 2200, a meeting scheduled for 0830 on the 25th was cancelled by the 26th Division, and the attack was postponed indefinitely. A counterattack scare made the rounds and the Battalion was again alerted.

A hot evening meal was served at 1600, brought down from the base of operations at Serres, where Service Company and the remnants of the other companies with S-1 still were bivouaced.

Five (5) tanks (4 M-4's and 1 M-5) delivered to the Battalion from ordnance by our own men brought the Battalion shortage down to five (5) medium tanks.

Lt. Klingbeil, formerly of "D" Company, returned from the hospital and was made Adjutant. Lt. White was formally transferred to "A" Company where he had been for a month.

OCTOBER 25, 1944

On the 19th of September in an attack made by "A" Company in Major Hunter's task force, the bodies of six (6) men including that of Lt. DeCraene had been lost in three tanks. Today these three tanks with their dead were evacuated. The enemy had despoiled the tanks and neglected to care for the dead.

Another new tank brought the Battalion shortage down to four (4).

The kitchens moved to Arracourt to supply hot food to the bulk of the Battalion.

At 1750, a message from Lt. North stated that the 26th expected a counterattack in the morning.

OCTOBER 26, 1944

The Battalion remained in the same area. All companies had meals from the kitchens. Colonel Abrams was notified late in the evening of a meeting at the 328th Infantry of the 26th Division.

OCTOBER 27, 1944

Colonel Abrams met with the C. O. 328th Infantry, and plans were laid to attack and clean out the Moncourt Woods. However, word was received that the Battalion was being relieved

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 27, 1944 (CONT'D)

by the 8th Tank Battalion. Preparations for the movement were immediately begun. The historians from TUSA called to get a copy of the diary from 12th - 25th September, to assist them in gathering information on the Moselle River crossing, and the tank battles that ensued. They also interviewed each company commander.

OCTOBER 28, 1944

The Battalion prepared immediately for the move to the new area this morning. Service Company was the first to move, leaving at 0830. The move for the Battalion was well planned by Headquarters 26th Infantry Division as is indicated by the attached overlay. The IP was crossed as planned at 1300. The Battalion closed in bivouac at 1630.

Thirteen enlisted men and one officer left for a three day pass in Paris today at 1300. Lt. Donahue of "D" Company was the officer to go. He was the first officer in the Battalion to get a leave to Paris.

At a Third Army demonstration a new flame thrower mounted on a half-track was shown to officers. Major Bautz and Captain Hays represented the Battalion at the demonstration. General Patton too was present. In general it was agreed that this weapon was impractical.

After arriving in our clean new area (Q995155) preparations were started for showers, movies, laundry, passes to Nancy, and in general a well earned rest.

OCTOBER 29, 1944

After a frosty night the first day of our rest period was the finest in over a month. Men were transported to ~~Mass~~ in Champenoux at 1330. This was the first opportunity we've had to be inside a church since being in France.

The Battalion was able to see a movie held in a large barn at St. Jean's farm about three (3) miles from camp. Lt. Poore made the necessary arrangements.

Seventy (70) men left at 0930 for eight (8) hour passes in Nancy. Passes began at 1000 and terminated at 1800.

Laundry went in today and most men in the Battalion had a shower.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 18 October, 1944 (Cont'd)

OCTOBER 30, 1944

The usual duties were carried on today. Companies used their own trucks to transport men to showers. Trucks from Service Company transported men to the show at 1300 and 1430.

The Battalion Commander, S-3, Medium Company Commanders, and Platoon Leaders saw a mock Siegfried Line built by the 10th Infantry Battalion, and planned a mock attack to take place 31 October. The three tank forward observers from the 66th Armored Field Artillery Battalion joined the Battalion in preparation for future operations.

OCTOBER 31, 1944

This morning "B" Company left at 0645 to join "C" Company of the 10th Infantry Battalion to make the attack on the Siegfried Line model. The tanks began their systematic and scientific destruction of pillboxes and the "dry run" was concluded by a critique by Major Hunter in which tank, infantry, and tank destroyer company commanders, plus various staff members, and some platoon leaders gave their views on the problem and their suggestions for improving the technique.

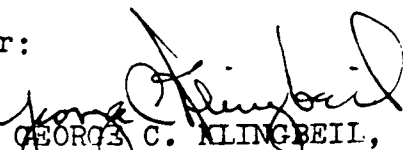
The men returned from the three (3) day pass in Paris. Everyone reported a fine time.

The duffle bags were brought to the area allowing the men to get new clothes, etc.

This afternoon "A" Company went through the Siegfried Line model as "B" Company had done.

A company commanders meeting was called for 1830. The main topic of the meeting was the general plans for the coming offensive given by Colonel Abrams and then his plan for employing the Battalion. It was announced at the meeting that Colonel Clarke was relieved and was taking a command in the Seventh Armored Division. This news was received with a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow by all who have served under him; joy because official recognition had finally been taken of his magnificent achievements; sorrow because we had lost the best Combat Commander we have served under to date.

For the Battalion Commander:


GEORGE C. KLINGBEIL,
1st Lt., Inf.,
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

15 November 1944

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

1 NOVEMBER 1944

The day began with the usual duties after one of the coldest nights we've had. Mass was held in the area at 0900. Men were taken to the showers and movies. The Officers of A and B Companies held a critique with the Officers of A Company of the 53rd Armd Inf Bn, and C Co of the 10th Armd Inf Bn, respectively on yesterday's assault on the Siegfried Line model. Today the Battalion had its greatest loss when the news came that Col. Abrams was being taken from us to assume command of Combat Command "A" - Thus Col. Clarke's departure was a double loss to this Battalion. There are no words to express the sentiments of the Officers and men of the Battalion as they realized that the man who had led them and trained them, some for over three and a half years, was parting company. Nothing more need be said because no one outside of this Battalion could understand it, anymore than those in the Battalion could fail to understand it.

2 NOVEMBER 1944

The usual bivouac duties were carried on this morning along with showers and passes to Nancy. A meeting was called for 0900 for all Officers at which Col. Abrams bid his farewell to the Battalion. At 1030 the Battalion was placed on a one hour alert prepared to repel an expected enemy counter-attack in the vicinity of the boundary between the 26th Inf Div and the 35th Inf Div and Major Hunter was called to a meeting at CCA for instructions. Upon his return the Rcn Platoon was sent out to reconnoiter various routes and assembly areas and orders were given to the Co. Comdrs. In the event we were employed, Rcn, Co D and the Assault and Mortar Platoons would proceed at once to secure the assembly areas and register in. The remainder of the force would follow in the order A, Bn Comd, C/10, Plat of A/24, B, C, A/53. Capt. McMahon and Capt Stroup reconnoit-ered the assembly areas and selected OP's. Mr. Lubrano arrived at 1000 to pay the troops, take PTA's and Allotments. Major Hunter attended a meeting at CCA Headquarters late in the evening

3 NOVEMBER 1944

Duties went on as usual and showers, movies, and passes to Nancy continued. The duffle bags were collected this morning and taken back to storage. A Company Commanders meeting was called for 1400 at which the Battalion Commander discussed routine information received from a unit commanders meeting. Preparations were completed for the Officers party and at 1730 the Officers left for Dom basle where the party was being held. Capt Voltz, Lts. Radzivila and Mueller succeeded in doing a fine job in arranging for music, food, dancing partners, etc. A fine time was had by all.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: ~~NSA~~ Project No. 735017
BY: ~~1-8~~ RAS, Date: 11-19-73

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 15 Nov 1944 Cont'd:

4 NOVEMBER 1944

Another rainy morning greeted us but duties went on as usual. Showers and passes to Nancy continued but nor movies were shown today. Thirteen men and one Officer left for a two day pass in Paris at 0730. The Battalion Commander went to a meeting this morning at CCA. At 1330 Capt Connors of the 24th Engr's demonstrated the method of putting a "snake" in position with a tank. A Company Commanders meeting was called for 1800 at which proposed routes of march and other information on the coming offensive were given. The composition of troops and order of march were also given. The order for our column is Rcn Platoon, Assault Gun Platoon, Co D, Bn Hq & Mortar Platoon. A-37, 1 Btry 66th FA, c-10, Platoon of 24th Engrs, 66th, B-37, A-53, Trains, 1 Platoon of 704th, Co C is attached to CCB. In general it is planned that the division will move out with Combat Commands in column, CCB leading. Each Combat Command is to travel in two parallel columns; The first objective assigned was Morhange and then next day to the German border.

5 NOVEMBER 1944

Major Hunter went to CCA at 0930 this morning. At 1245, Co "C" of the 24th Engrs demonstrated a method of laying two sections of steel treadway with a tank recovery vehicle. Movies were continued, church was held in the area, and a RedCross clubmobile dispensed coffee and doughnuts. The men on pass to Paris returned all reporting a fine time. Late last night a number of enemy planes droned over our area and heavy anti-aircraft fire was heard from several miles to our rear.

6 NOVEMBER 1944

The day began as usual with rain but the usual duties were carried on. Men were taken for showers and a movie was shown at 1400. The passes to Nancy were discontinued. About eighty percent of the Battalion have been on pass to this date. At 1030 the C.O., Staff, and Company Commanders went to Olympic Hq. where Gen. Patton spoke of the deed of this division and of the job ahead. Three new tanks arrived today, two for Company A, and one for Company C. A Company Commanders meeting was called for 1800 at which the Battalion Commander discussed alternate routes along with other things pertaining to the coming offensive. The "bulldozer" is now attached to Bn Hq., it arrived from Company C about 1830 in the evening. Late in the evening German planes were heard over our area again.

7 NOVEMBER 1944

Rain again was the order of the day. Vehicular maintenance was stressed and carried out to the fullest. Great stores of ammunition were being stacked alongside of the road near us, a forwarning of the coming offensive. "C" Co. of the 24th Engrs under Capt. Connors demonstrated the use of the snake, a huge tube of cased TNT used for detonating mines.

8 NOVEMBER 1944

The usual bivouac duties were carried out. The Bn. Commander made a trip to CCA. No changes were reported. Nearly all vehicles and weapons were in top shape to date, the area was getting difficult for moving wheeled vehicles due to the great amount of rain.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 15 November, 1944 (Cont'd)

9 NOVEMBER, 1944

The day began with indications that weather might favor us. At mid morning hundreds of bombers were seen overhead. These bombers bombed objectives Northeast of our position in preparation for the attack. CC"B" moved out at 0800. At 1100, the Battalion Commander was called to CC"A" and on his return we learned that we were to be prepared to move out at 0900 in the morning. Three (3) new officers joined the Battalion today, Lt. Adams, Woelfle, and Almond. They were assigned to Service, A and C Companies respectively.

10 NOVEMBER, 1944

At 0900, the Battalion moved out through Champeneux, Mazerulles, Moncel sur Seille, to Moyenvic; then North to Morville where the enemy was first encountered. The road from Morville to Hampont was cratered so "D" Company was sent to the flanks to reconnoiter for other possible routes. They destroyed several AT guns. The bulldozer was brought forward and filled the craters allowing "A" Company to pass through to Hampont, while "D" Company gave flank protection. Hampont was strongly defended but was cleaned out. Captain Spencer and Lt. White became casualties in the engagement; this left "A" Company in command of Lt. Walters; a Platoon Sergeant only a month ago. The Battalion moved on through Obreck and went into an assembly area for the night at 165285. The Battalion was shelled heavily on arrival and constantly through the night.

11 NOVEMBER, 1944

At first light the Battalion moved out after being shelled constantly through the night Northward toward Haboudange. Fierce resistance was met all the way. Three (3) light tanks, one (1) medium tank, two (2) halftracks and a peep were lost between Burlioncourt and Haboudange. Lts. Poore, Dennison, and Lockwood were killed by the shelling earlier in the morning. "D" Company and the Staff tanks got through to Conthil, and the remainder of the Battalion under Captain Leach returned to Obreck and moved North via Dedeling and Riche to Conthil. The trains were taken back to Morville after withstanding a constant shelling all morning and then under cover of darkness were brought forward to the Battalion. The Battalion assembly area was located at 230336. The Battalion was shelled constantly from the time of arrival. The score for the day was 12 AT guns, 6 light vehicles, one Mark V tank. Enemy dead were unknown and 188 prisoners were taken. The second platoon of "D" Company was credited with the majority of the enemy losses.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 15 November, 1944 (Cont'd)

12 NOVEMBER, 1944

The orders for the day were to proceed Northeast by way of Rodalbe and cut the East-West road East of Morhange. The order of march was Rcn, D plus Assault, Staff, Hq Co, B/37, A/53, Plat 24 Engrs A/66, A/37, C/10, 66-, and trains.

Two English and one French Paratrooper came to our area giving the S-2 some information. These paratroopers had been dropped September 15 to aid in the taking of Chateau Salins. One assault gun was hit by direct fire in our assembly area at 1230. Sporadic artillery fire of heavy calibre was being received and Rodalbe was shelled heavily. "D" Company's area received very heavy artillery fire.

Before the day's plans could be carried out the enemy made a strong counterattack with infantry supported by tanks and artillery. Major Hunter took "B" Company and a company of infantry to the attack, but due to the bad ground several of the tanks became bogged down. These tanks were taken under fire by several enemy tanks. A very effective smoke screen was laid and under cover of the smoke the tanks were pulled out. Two (2) tanks were destroyed by enemy fire. Captain McMahon received orders to reconnoiter and secure a new assembly area in the vicinity of Zarbeling. This task was not an easy one because it was already dark. Captain McMahon handled the situation capably, and the Battalion was moved in darkness to 235325.

13 NOVEMBER, 1944

The area was shelled intermittantly throughout the day. "D" Company moved to an area just South of Linderzingen. One platoon of "B" Company moved to the old area Northeast of Conthil for reconnaissance and to cover a truck and trailer loaded with ammunition which had been disabled by artillery fire the day previous.

At 1400, the enemy began a heavy two pronged counterattack, coming from the Northeast through Rodalbe and the other from the Southeast. Both forces had tanks but it was believed that the Northern force was the strongest. Six (6) Mark V tanks were observed just Northeast of Rodalbe along with infantry. Very effective time fire was brought down by the artillery and the counterattack was broken. The liaison planes were being fired on constantly by 20mm AA guns.

The Combat Command was ordered to regroup and reassemble so Major Bautz reconnoitered the adjacent units and decided we were in the most suitable area as we were near the adjacent units and were well defiladed from the enemy. Shelling was constant; the rain and mud were beginning to tell on both vehicles and men. Mud made any large scale maneuver impossible.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 15 November, 1944 (Cont'd)

14 NOVEMBER, 1944

Early in the morning Colonel West's plans were to attack toward Quebling. In order to support and protect his left flank "A" Company with Major Bautz were sent for the mission. Major Bautz reconnoitered his assigned area around 250320 and found it extremely difficult to get tanks in position to give the necessary protection, however, he did succeed in getting several tanks in position and along with infantry set up cossack posts for protection. West's column advanced under face of a heavy counterattack. Battalion Headquarters remained in the same area. Difficulties were beginning to arise due to men getting frozen feet.

15 NOVEMBER, 1944

At 0730, at a company Commander's meeting, the plan for the day was announced. It was to clean out Bed estroff and Bassing and to take and assemble on the high ground Northeast of Bassing. The order of march was Rcn, B, Plat C/10, Staff, C/10-, Engrs, A, D, A/53. Two plans were decided upon; the first was to move Southeast of Quebling to Bedestroff and Bassing, the second was the same as plan one, only turning North from Bedestroff and proceed to Bene-stroff and take the high ground in the vicinity of 304334. Task force Hunter was to move out on order after Task Force Oden, the plan to be executed depending on the progress of Task Force Oden. At 1130, word was received that we would remain in place and prepare defensive positions. Tanks were to be dug in at points of vantage. At 1745, "A" Company returned from attachment to Colonel Oden. It reported destroying two enemy tanks. "D" Company reported mortar fire dropping in their area and also AP fire believed to be overs. Several rounds of artillery fell throughout the area.

16 NOVEMBER, 1944

Word was received this morning that it was probable that the Battalion was to be relieved with the exception of one tank company. "A" Company with "C" Company of the 10th Infantry were designated to remain and take up new defensive positions, covering the entire sector now held by the task force. The force that was to remain would be under command of Colonel West. Upon being relieved the Battalion will move to the vicinity of Chateau Voue. Word was received that the move could be executed anytime after 1415 and at 1430. The Battalion moved out in order of Rcn, D, Staff, Hq Co, B. The Battalion arrived in the new assembly area at 1700 located at 205295. At 1730 word came that we would move to the vicinity of Verry at 0730 on the 17th. "A" Company also received word to join the Battalion and did so after dark. Major Hunter was evacuated today leaving Major Bautz in command of the Battalion.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 15 November, 1944 (Cont'd)

17 NOVEMBER, 1944

The Battalion moved out for Vaxy at 0730 under Captain Hays. Major Bautz and Captain Dwight had gone forward to reconnoiter the village for possible billets. While enroute the Battalion received word that the town of Vaxy was occupied by troops so as a result we assembled temporarily in the field at 124288. After CC"A" had been informed of the situation they sent word to reconnoiter Amelcourt and if possible to move in there. The village was found occupied but necessary steps were taken to evacuate the troops, buildings were found for Headquarters, each company, and the maintenance platoon. The Battalion arrived in the vicinity of Amelcourt at 1300. Immediate preparations were made for maintenance and cleaning of weapons and equipment, supply shortages were checked and items requisitioned, and every opportunity was taken to provide the men with facilities for drying and cleaning their clothes and their persons. That afternoon Colonel Abrams returned to the Battalion as CO, Colonel Withers having been returned to the Division and assigned as CO CC"A".

18 NOVEMBER, 1944

The morning was devoted to vehicular maintenance and cleaning of weapons. Men had an opportunity to check their personal equipment and clothing and to requisition shortages. A Company Commander's and staff meeting was called for 1700 where orders were issued for movement at 0700 the following day. Objective was to advance over the old route as far East as possible, "B" Company to be attached to the 10th Armd Infantry Battalion under Colonel West. Service Company and the Company maintenance sections were to remain and finish maintenance work. "C" Company to CC"A" reserve.

19 NOVEMBER, 1944

A force of "D" Company, the assault and mortar platoons under Captain Dwight moved out at 0700. The mission of this force was to advance until enemy contact was attained, secure an assembly area for the Battalion for the next move. "D" Troop of the 25th Cavalry was to precede the column and to afford left flank protection for the column. Ron, Bn Hq, Hq Co, A/37, B/10, A/24, B/704, 94 FA, and CC"A" Hq followed at 0730. The general route of march was Amelcourt, Vaxy, Puttigny, Hampont, Obreck, Haboudange, Conthil, Rodalbe, Bermering, Virming, and Eastward. The village of Rodalbe was reported clear but on arrival an enemy road block heavily mined was discovered. Eleven (11) teller mines were removed by the Engineers. The column proceeded on toward Bermering which was held by the 35th Infantry Division. The bridge over the railroad two kilometers South of Bermering was out but with the aid of a bulldozer a suitable bypass was made, and the Battalion advanced toward Virming. Enemy tank and AT fire was met at the approach of Virming. The village was assaulted at 1600. Four tanks and several AT guns and one mortar were destroyed and the town was left in flames. The

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 15 November, 1944 (Cont'd)

19 NOVEMBER, 1944 (CONT'D)

Battalion assembled at 245378. The village was outposted by the 35th Infantry Division. Twelve (12) prisoners were taken and ten (10) enemy dead were counted. We lost two medium tanks.

20 NOVEMBER, 1944

Colonel Abrams asked for "C" Company to join the Battalion in the morning and "D" Company went to reserve. The Battalion moved out through Virming at 0730, "A" Company leading. Enemy mortar and artillery fire was met just out of Virming, plus a blown bridge and a large anti-tank ditch screening Francaltroff. The bridge was crossed and the anti-tank ditch was crossed. Late in the afternoon Francaltroff was assaulted by "B" Company which had joined the Battalion upon release from West's column and one company of the 10th Infantry. This force met heavy direct fire from the Southeast and East plus heavy mortar and artillery fire. One assault gun and several halftracks were lost in the assault, but the town was cleared and left in flames and troops from the 320th Regiment of the 35th Division proceeded to occupy the town. A number of "B" Company tanks became mired in the mud while assembling West of the village. As a result it was late before the Battalion closed for the night. Location of the Battalion 295396.

21 NOVEMBER, 1944

The remainder of "B" Company was pulled out of the mud and plans were discussed for further movement. The Engineers were building bridges and by noon had three completed and working on the fourth South of Francaltroff. Orders were issued to continue Eastward to Insming. Company Commanders and commanders of attached units were called to the CP on the Colonel's order while at CC"A". On the Battalion Commander's return we were informed that we were being relieved and being sent back to reserve. Orders were to move back to the vicinity of Riche beginning at 0830 tomorrow. Order of march: Hq, Hq Co, C, B, D, A, Sv Co will join us at Conthil. Route of march: Virming, Bermering, Rodalbe, Conthil, and Riche.

22 NOVEMBER, 1944

The battalion arrived at Riche at 1030. Hqs and most of the company headquarters moved into buildings. At a company commanders meeting we were informed that we were still in CC"A" and would be until the next objective of the Division was known. Assault guns were returned to the companies. The day was spent in rehabilitation and maintenance. Plans were begun for a Thanksgiving turkey dinner to be served from the kitchens. A ration consisting of turkey and a full Thanksgiving menu was drawn.

Bn Diary, 37th Tk Bn, 15 November 1944 (Cont'd)

23 NOVEMBER 1944

Major Bautz and Capt. Lamison returned to duty from the hospital. A fine Thanksgiving dinner was served and was enjoyed and appreciated by all. The usual duties were carried out. Word was received that the Colonel was to attend a meeting at Division Headquarters at 0900, 24 November. The day was quiet in general with the usual rain coming down. Capt. Trover joined the battalion and took command of "C" company. Capt. Lamison became battalion A-3.

24-25 NOVEMBER 1944

The battalion remained at niche carrying out the job of rehabilitation. At a company commanders meeting at 1600 the general situation was discussed by the battalion commander.

26 NOVEMBER 1944

A company commanders meeting was called for 1130. Orders were issued to be prepared to move on order at 1230 to the vicinity of Norbach. Order of march would be Rcn, D, Hq and Hq Co, A, B, C and Service. Route of march - Conthill, Dieuze, to Norbach. A company will move forward to Mittersheim to act as an outer guard for Division Headquarters. The battalion moved out at 1230 and closed in bivouac at 1430. Hq located inside a building with companies around the town.

27 NOVEMBER 1944

Battalion in same area (345 258) vicinity of Norbach. A company remained at Mittersheim. Mass was held in the village church at 1330 and was well attended. Capt. Wright made plans and arrangements for some 30 calibre firing. The co-ax will be used to simulate the 75mm. The battalion commander made several trips to Division Headquarters and one to the 25th Cavalry's area. The Rcn platoon was working with the 25th northeast of Mittersheim. Plans were made to evacuate two 35th tanks abandoned northeast of Mittersheim.

28 NOVEMBER 1944

The day began with rain and the usual bivouac duties. Tanks from all companies left for the firing range. "A" company was to be relieved at 1300 so they could fire by "C" company. "B" company left to replace "A" Company at 0830. A company commanders meeting was called for 1030. The main topics for discussion were the Colonel's view on discipline and training of the battalion and the questionnaire sent out by Army to gather information on the design of new tanks. All company commanders and Lt. Peterson had designs for improvements of tanks.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 15 November 1944 (Cont'd)

28 NOVEMBER, 1944 (Cont'd)

Capt. Dwight had plans prepared for continued range work this time firing the 75.

29 NOVEMBER, 1944

The tank companies went out to fire the 75's on a range prepared by Capt. Dwight. The remainder of the day was spent on cleaning weapons and maintenance. Lt. Cook returned to duty from the hospital. The battalion commander was called to Div. Hq. at 1730. A Colonel from the 11th Armored Division visited our CP. He was observing methods of employment and use of a tank battalion.

30 NOVEMBER, 1944

The battalion changed its position to the vicinity of Littersheim. LP crossed at Norbach at 0800 and closed in bivouac at 0930. Position - 419 295. Company commanders meeting was called for 1100. The remainder of the day was spent on maintenance and cleaning equipment. Thirteen replacements were received and assigned to companies immediately. The day was quiet. Artillery could be heard eastward, the first we heard for several days.

For the Battalion Commander:

George C. Klingbeil
GEORGE C. KLINGBEIL,
1st Lt., Infantry,
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

11 February 1945

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

1 DECEMBER 1944

The day was spent in carrying on the usual bivouac duties. The Battalion was still in the vicinity of Mittersheim. Col. Blanchard called at the C.P. and discussed his plan for the use of the Reserve Command. The plan was in general to patrol and outpost towns and villages in the division area; to stop civilian travel and protect initial points such as depots and bridges. No extensive plans were made due to the fact that the Battalion was expected to return to CCA shortly. Mr. Lubrano and Sgt McGuire collected F.T.A's and money orders from men in the Battalion

2 DECEMBER 1944

The Battalion was notified by Capt. Lamison at 0030 that it would move on order to the vicinity of Wegen at 0800. The route being Fenetrange, Kerberge, Barendorff, Hershland to Wegen. At 0745 orders were received from CCR to stand fast. The C.O. was called to Division Headquarters and on his return the orders were issued that the Battalion would move at 1000 to an area just east of Mackwiller. The Battalion completed the move and took up positions on the high ground, location 555355. A message was received at 2400 for the Col. to take command of CCA at first light in the morning.

3 DECEMBER 1944

The Battalion commander went to CCA as C.O. Major Bautz took command of the Battalion. Major Bautz was called to CCA and on his return it was learned that Col. Abrams would return as C.O. Word was received that the infantry was being counter attacked by tanks and infantry at Sarre Union. "A" company was ordered to proceed to vicinity of Sarr Warden via Burbach. "A" left at 1400. The platoon from 704 which was to accompany Walters arrived to late so was sent back. At 1900 Lt. Harris was ordered to Fisdorff to contact C.O. 104 Inf. Regt., and also Lt. Walters and report the situation. Lt. Harris reported Walters had gone forwarded to contact C.O. 1st Bn 104 in Sarre Union, to arrange for the attack in the morning. He also reported that it was believed the enemy attack was supported by 4-6 tanks and one company of infantry. At 2300 Walters called and informed the C.O., he would attack at 0700 in the morning supported by the infantry. Col. Abrams okayed the plans. At 2400 a message came that one Co. 37, would relieve a company of the 35th in the morning. B Co was assigned the mission. Col. Abrams ordered to report to CCA at 0800 in the morning. Bn's location at 555355. A Co located at 527385.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd:

4 DECEMBER 1944

Lt. Walters moved into Sarre Union supported by infantry of the 26th Division at 0800. At 0945 he reported the town cleared with one enemy tank destroyed and one enemy sniper killed. He had no casualties. B Co relieved A/35 at hill 318 with the added mission of protecting the right flank. One platoon of C Co moved to position at 580359. At 1415 "C" Co was alerted to move on order to 560400. At 4130 "A" company returned to the Battalion area. The remainder of the day and night was comparatively quiet. A great deal of artillery was observed moving into position behind us.

5 DECEMBER 1944

"C" company was issued orders to move as soon as possible, to vicinity 555388. At 0545 the artillery to our rear fired several heavy battalion concentrations. The C.O. was ordered to Division Headquarters and issued orders at 1015 for the attack. CCA and B were to jump off and secure the high ground across the river south of Dehlingen. After this was accomplished the 37th Tk Bn would push through and continue northward with Rohrbach-les-Bitche as its objective. Three phase lines were (1st) road Dehlingen-Butten, (2nd) road Rohrling Schmidviller, (3rd) road Singling Bining. Artillery preparations were ordered by Col. Abrams and prepared and co-ordinated by Capt. Cook.

CCA and B secured their objectives vicinity 570410 and 610410 respectively and the Battalion was alerted to prepare for attack at 1115 by Col. Abrams who had gone forward to Odens position. The battalion moved out to attack and proceeded forward overcoming all resistance. The Battalion's objective was reached and the Battalion was brought into an assembly area 1000 yds south of Rohrbach. Fourteen tanks were lost in the operation.

6 DECEMBER 1944

Orders were received to assault Bining and Rohrbach while CCB took Singling. The force encountered enemy pill boxes and direct anti-tank and tank fire. Most of the enemy resistance was encountered from Singling and the high ground about the town which hit our exposed flank. CCB had not yet come up to attack Singling so it was decided to take this objective before proceeding on to our own. This was accomplished after overcoming stiff enemy resistance. In the meanwhile the 1st Bn, 328th Inf. 26th Division (which had been attached to us) was ordered to move into Bining with D/27 in support. This too was accomplished against heavy opposition and the force occupied and outposted the town that night. By the time CCB had come up and relieved the force in Singling it was too dark for further action so the Battalion (less D Co) assembled in the same positions held yesterday.

During the afternoon an enemy artillery concentration of about sixty rounds (estimated 105) fell in the vicinity of the Battalion C.P. killing three men and injuring several others. The C.P. was moved a short distance and then at 1700 was moved again to an area just south of Schmidviller. At 1930 word was received to hold present position prepared to repel any counter-attack until relieved by the 12th A. D.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd:

7 DECEMBER 1944

The Battalion remained in the same position today. Co D and the attached Inf Bn repulsed several enemy counterattacks. Capt. Lamison arrived with orders for our relief. Each company was to guide outfits of the 12th A.D. to their positions and then assemble in the vicinity of Schmidtviller.

8 DECEMBER 1944

At 0030, the Battalion moved to vicinity of P-555-355. In the morning the Battalion moved back to Mittersheim for re-organization, rest and rehabilitation. At 1100 a company commanders meeting was held. At that time the Battalion C.O. gave out the plans for the next few days.

9 DECEMBER 1944

At 0900 this morning, Lt. Col. Abrams attended a Unit Commanders meeting. This afternoon a company commanders meeting was held. At that time Lt. Col. Abrams stated that the next two days would be spent getting the personnel cleaned up. He also spoke on subjects which the companies would include in their training. Gunnery and driving were stressed and this training was to be concluded with range firing of all weapons.

10 DECEMBER 1944

A training schedule was published for the next few days and an overlay issued of the firing range. This afternoon five EM and one officer (Capt. Hays) left on furlough for U.S.A. Capt McMahon was at this time appointed Bn S-2. At 1645 we were visited by General Gaffey, C.G. of the 4th A.D. Effective today the 37th Tk Bn is in "CCR"

11 DECEMBER 1944

At 0945 Capt. Lamison returned from CCR with information that CCR is composed of the 37th, 53rd, A/704 and 489 Hq. At 1100 Maj. Churchill of CCR visited the C.P. Col Blanchard C.O. of CCR arrived at 1120 for a conference concerning training schedules and tank status. Col Blanchard remained for dinner with Lt. Col. Abrams. At 1215 General Patton arrived. He visited Service Co Mess. Later a picture was taken of Lt. Col. Abrams and Maj. Bautz conferring with General Patton. The Col. pinned 1st Lt bars on Lt. Walters, C.O. of Company A. There was no plan for movement of the battalion and it was believed we would be there for at least five more days. The Division was to be held in Corps Reserve until there was a break through. Movies were to be held daily at 1800 and 2000 while the Battalion was at Mittersheim.

12 DECEMBER 1944

This morning Lt. Col. Gillis (Ex. O. "CCR") visited the Battalion. After a talk with Lt. Col. Abrams he went to the range with Capt. Dwight to watch the firing, on which he commented favorably. The Companies continued with their training throughout the day.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd:

13 DECEMBER 1944

This morning the Companies turned in laundry and took showers. Early this afternoon Lt. Col. Abrams was interviewed by a war correspondent. A Company commanders meeting was held at 1600 at which Capt. Dwight gave the situation on the western front. Movies were shown for all by a Captain from the Air Corps, demonstrating strafing by P-47's. At 1500, a telephone message from Lt. Col. Gillis ordered one company alerted. The Battalion commander and Company commander were to report to General Gaffey at 1600. At 1745 when the Battalion C.O. returned it was learned that A Company would support the 87th Infantry Division. The Col. and Co. Commander were to go to Aachen in the morning for instructions.

14 DECEMBER 1944

Battalion was still bivouaced in and around Mittersheim. Battalion strength consisted of 25 medium tanks and 13 light tanks, plus the normal supporting vehicles. Lt. Col. Abrams and Lt. Walters, (C.O. A/37) received their orders from the C. G. 87th Infantry Division and returned. At approximately 1230 A/37 marched to an area in the vicinity of Etting, a distance of 21 miles, reaching there about 1700.

15 DECEMBER 1944

A/37 joined the 346th Infantry Regiment and were committed. The mission of the regiment was to take hill 378 (650-579), NW of Erchins. At 1000 15 December the force attacked, A/37 leading, and took the objective. During this action Lt. Walters was seriously wounded and 2nd Lt. Whitehill assumed command of the company. At dusk the 346th Infantry Regiment was relieved by the 345th Infantry Regiment. At the same time, A/37 was resupplied by sending tanks back to Service Company trucks. Gas and ammunition was carried to the company position on the rear decks of tanks. A section of Battalion Recon Platoon aided in coordinating the resupply. At about 1000 on 15 December the remainder of the Battalion was alerted. Lt. Col. Abrams together with Capt. Lamison, the liaison officer, went forward to the C.P. of the 87th Division. At 1500 Lt. Col. Abrams sent a radio message to Maj. Bautz, the executive officer, to move the Battalion forward over a prearranged route. At about 1800 leading elements of the Battalion reached an area outside and west of Fermingen where it was serviced.

16 DECEMBER 1944

The 345th moved to attack toward the woods to the north of hill 378. A Co was to support with direct fire from a position 1 kilometer north of hill 378. However, little fire was needed. A Company was thus the first company of the Division to enter Germany proper. On the morning of the 16th, the Battalion (less A/37) moved forward through Kulhausen, Achen, Hiesviller, Woelfing and to a position about 2½ kilometers east of Rimling. A/37 was then relieved by C/37 at about 1500. At about 1400, Lt. Col. Abrams was again called to the 87th Infantry Division, G-3 for orders. Upon receiving them he went to the regimental C.P. of the 347th Infantry and discussed plans for attaching B/37 to that regiment.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd:

17 DECEMBER 1944

At 0900 17 December Capt. Leach returned from the hospital and took command of B/37. During his absence the Co. had been commanded by 1st Lt. R.M. Cook. Capt. Leach reported to the regimental C.O. and arrangements were made to place direct fire on Walsheim while the infantry attacked. There was a stream between Gersheim and Walsheim which was unfordable. It was necessary to cross the stream by going through Gersheim. At about 1700, B Co moved into Gersheim. However the bridge was blown and a place was found to make a crossing. The engineers reported it clear of mines, but, when a tank attempted to cross, it ran over a mine and the suspension system was destroyed. A further check disclosed Reigal and Tellermines. The engineers then laid a treadway and B/37 proceeded into town and outposted the town of Walsheim. While outposting Walsheim they received direct anti-tank fire. Capt Leach's tank was hit but there were no casualties. During the night heavy artillery and mortar fire was received and B/37 suffered seven wounded and one killed.

C/37 during this period having relieved A/37 was supporting the 345th. C/37 attacked with the 345th into the woods, 1 kilometer N.W. of Erching with the mission of clearing the woods. It was an unsatisfactory mission for tanks. During the time that C Co was attached to the 345th their mission was confined to reducing enemy machine gun fire and evacuating wounded on tanks. C/37 was under heavy artillery fire almost constantly.

18 DECEMBER 1944

The 18th of December was much the same as the day before. The 87th Infantry Division held all the 37th Tanks nearly in their same place. During this time some artillery and mortar fire was received.

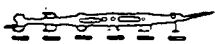
19 DECEMBER 1944

At 0800, word was received that the battalion was to be withdrawn and moved back to Mittersheim. From there it would follow the remainder of the Division which had already started moving north to participate in the 3rd Army counter-attack of the German push in Belgium. Capt. Dwight, Bn S-3, was sent to CCR, 4th A.D., to obtain the details. In the meantime Maj. Pellegroni of CCR arrived at the Battalion with necessary details. During the morning companies in combat were withdrawn, assembled, and readied for the march. Lt. Col. Abrams announced that the Battalion would move at 1300. The Battalion arrived at Mittersheim at 1530. At 1700 there was a company commanders meeting. Orders were issued for the Battalion to be ready to march at 0830, 20 December. As much of this situation as was known, enemy and friendly, was explained to the company commanders.

20 DECEMBER 1944

At 0830, 20 December, 1944, the battalion moved out. It continued to march until the head of the column reached Meix-le-Tige (N.W. of Longwy), at 2330 after having traveled 120 miles. The route generally followed: Mittersheim, Mornange, Pont-a-Mousson, Conflans, and Lonwy. The completion of the march meant that the Battalion had been in four countries in two days; namely Germany, France, Luxembourg and Belgium.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd:

21 DECEMBER 1944

The 21st of December was spent doing maintenance work. During this time the personnel of the Battalion was acquiring a better picture of the general situation.

22 DECEMBER 1944

At 0730 on 22 December 1944, the Battalion was ordered to move to an area N.E. of Wolkra (610-180). At 1230 the Battalion again moved, this time to an area 2 miles north of Arlon (609-249).

At approximately 2300 on 22 December, orders were received from CCR that the objective for the following day would be Bigonville.

23 DECEMBER 1944

The Battalion moved out at 0600. The order of march was B/37, B/53, 37-59. D/37 was to remain as command post guard for CCR. The route of march was Ferle, Holtze to Flatzbourghoff. The assault and mortar platoons established OP's and registered. The first enemy contact was gained just south of Flatzbourghoff by B Co in the form of mortar, small arms and direct A.T. fire. Enemy infantry was seen with white capes and helmets. Orders were issued by the Battalion C.O. for the attack. Tanks were to advance cross country with infantry mounted on tanks and the remainder in half tracks. Artillery preparations were laid on the woods and possible anti-tank positions. The attack was launched and the objectives were taken. Orders were then issued to proceed on toward Begonville, However, before Begonville could be reached it was too dark. The high ground north of Flatzbourghoff was posted. The losses for the day were two medium tanks destroyed, one officer and three enlisted men killed in action. The enemy losses were 2 SP, 75 MM, 1 German operated Sherman tank. The enemy dead were estimated at thirty. Orders were received from CCR to attack Bigonville at first light.

24 DECEMBER 1944

The battalion with Infantry and Artillery support was to attack Bigonville at 0800. The plan was for A Company to attack down the main road into town and B Co to enter the center of town from the west side. B Co reached town first followed by infantry in half tracks. B Co was held up by Bazooka fire and had to wait for the infantry to clear the sector. Resistance consisted of small arms, artillery, bazooka, mortar and direct A.T. fire. The infantry advanced slowly into the west edge of town and the attack continued. B Co then received orders from Battalion to leave the towns and secure the high ground at the north edge of town. A/37 with A/53 was to continue through the town and clean it out. By nightfall the high ground to the north and east of the village had been taken and outposted. Most of the town had been cleaned out. Enemy casualties were unknown dead, 428 prisoners (paratroopers, some being women). Thirty-nine American enlisted men and three officers who had been prisoners were rescued. 1700 40 MM Bolters AA Guns, one 2 1/2 ton Truck, one 1 1/2 ton truck, two 1/2 ton trucks and one water trailer were taken.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd;

24 DECEMBER 1944 CONT'D;

The Bn held defensive positions on the high ground and awaited orders. Orders were received from CCR to move at 0030 from our present position the Division's left flank.

25 DECEMBER 1944

At 0030 the Bn moved out to start a thirty mile march to the Division left flank. Co "D" proceeded to the town of Bercheuz. The remainder of the Bn went into an assembly area 1 kilometer SW of Bercheuz to await orders.

The head of the column moved out from an area SW of Bercheuz at 1230, after having completed a thirty (30) mile night march from Bigonville. The composition of the column was as follows;

D/37
B/53
1 Sqd. Eng. (Halftrack)
C/704
A/37
A/53
C/37
C/53
B/37
94th FA to support from present location.

The immediate plan of action was as follows.

According to S-2 information Vaux Les Rosieres had very few enemy in it. Petite Rosieres was known to contain more enemy. D/37, B/53, Eng, and C/704 were to continue through Vaux Les Rosieres in column, and without halt. At Petite Rosieres, D/37 would continue to march and take up a position on the high ground NE of the village. Their position to be supplemented by C/704. Captain McMahon, Bn S-2, was in command of this group. B/53 was to clear the town out, which they did, taking sixty-five (65) prisoners.

The remainder of the column was to turn E in Petite Rosiere and proceed toward Nives, and Cobreville. The first element to turn here was A/37; this company assisted by A/53 cleared Nives. As this was going on C/37 plus C/53 proceeded to Cobreville and cleared that town. This was completed by 1430. Artillery support on these towns was provided on call by the 94th FA. These fires were prearranged.

It was reported by Lt. Boggess, C.O., Company "C", that the bridge just out of Cobreville on the road to Removille had been blown, producing a large crater. The bulldozer was ordered forward and proceeded to fill the crater with a large stone wall that was nearby. The tanks of C/37 and A/37 overwatched this operation. This was completed at approximately 1515 and C/37 plus C/53 proceeded to the high ground W of Removille and overlooking the town. A/37 plus A/53 proceeded into Removille on the road, all guns firing and supported by direct fire from C/37.

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Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd;

25 DECEMBER 1944 CONT'D:

As A/37 and A/53 proceeded to clear the town, C/37 and C/53 moved down and along the W edge of town. While this was going on B/37 took up a position on high ground about one (1) kilometer NW of Cobreville, this to cover to the NE. After Removille was cleared the town was outposted and A and B/37 exchanged positions, and C/37 took up a position N of the town. There was no artillery fire on this town due to the proximity of CC'B' on the E flank. Over three hundred (300) prisoners were taken from the town. The command spent the night of 25-26 December in these positions.

26 DECEMBER 1944

At 0925, the artillery opened up on Remichampagne, and the Bois De Cohet. Simultaneously as the tanks and infantry started moving N, and the artillery was pouring it on, the P-47's started to bomb and strafe. The Bois de Cohet was given a good going over. The coordination of tanks, infantry, artillery, and air was to perfection. Planes came over tanks at antenna altitude and strafed to the front. The combination of artillery and planes took care of the Bois de Cohet, which was the unknown quantity.

In the attack on Remichampagne B/37 and B/53 paralleled the NS road from Removille to Remichampagne and swung over and into Remichampagne from the S. C/37 plus C/53 moved to the W of the town covering the town, and were ready to support with direct fire. Artillery fire was kept on the town as long as possible and then supplanted by direct fire from C/37. When Remichampagne was cleared up, B/37 and B/53 moved to a position just SW of Clochimont and overlooking that town. Artillery fire was put on Clochimont, C/37 and C/53 moved to a position about one (1) kilometer NW of Remichampagne to cover the NW flank. At the present stage the time was approximately 1430. A/37 moved to the high ground NW of Clochimont to cover in direction of Sibret and Villereux. At approximately 1500 and continuing for almost an hour, hundreds of C-47's came over and flew to Bastogne dropping supplies to the garrison there.

At 1520, Lt. Col. Abrams called up Captain Dwight, Bn S-3, and ordered him to bring C/37 and C/53 forward to B/37's position, saying "this is it."

Upon reaching B/37's position the orders were given by Colonel Abrams. They were as follows:

C/37 and C/53 will march on Assenois, go through it and continue on until contact is made with elements of the 101st Airborne Division. B/53 will follow and will clean out Assenois. C/37 and C/53 will be under command of Captain Dwight and will be supported by three (3) Battalions of 105 and one (1) Bn of 155mm artillery. Artillery to be on call from anyone in the force and to be lifted by call. The artillery will hit the town of Assenois and the edges of both woods to the N of Assenois.

Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 11 Feb 1945 Cont'd;

26 DECEMBER 1944 CONT'D

After all tank commanders and infantry platoon leaders were given the situation the force moved out at 1610, tanks leading, as is customary.

Upon coming into sight of Assenois, Lt. Boggess, called for the prepared artillery fire. The fire came like the rains, few if any rounds missing their mark. As the edge of the town was reached Lt. Boggess called for the fire to lift and proceeded into the town without waiting for the fire to cease.

Due to the heavy artillery fire two tanks were unable to find their way through town. One infantry halftrack got forward into the tank column. One half-track suffered a direct hit in the town. None of the tanks were fired upon by the enemy in the town, although there was considerable ineffective anti-tank fire as the column approached the town.

As the force left Assenois it was composed as follows: Lt. Boggess' tank, Lt. Wrolson's tank, another tank, a break in the column of approximately 300 yards, an infantry halftrack, another tank and the S-3's tank.. All went well as the force proceeded on, firing 30 calibre machine guns into the woods on both sides of the road. During the aforementioned break in the column, the enemy threw Teller-mines on the road in a bottle neck created by the woods. The infantry half-track hit one of these mines and was destroyed, catching fire immediately. After the mines were thrown into the ditches, the work being done under cover of 50 calibre fire from a tank, the two remaining tanks continued on and rejoined the leading element which by this time (1650) had contacted elements of the 326th Engineers of the 101st Airborne Division. In the meantime, B/53 started to clear out Assenois, and Colonel Abrams started forward with the remainder of C/53 and two C/37 tanks. By this time there was considerable activity in Assenois which contained an enemy Bn and Regimental CP's. Some 428 prisoners were finally taken from the town.

During this time Captain Dwight was met by Brigadier General McAuliffe, acting Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division, who came to the perimeter defenses of Bastogne.

By 1830, all of C/37 and C/53 had taken up positions on the perimeter defense. Colonel Abrams went to the 101st Airborne Division CP to make arrangements to get their trains through. C/53 lost five (5) half-tracks on the mission. One by our own artillery, one by mines, and three by bazooka fire. It was obvious, after the battle, that the force would have had considerable trouble if it had waited for the artillery to lift.

Colonel Abrams called Colonel Jacques at approximately 1930 and asked to have A/53 come up and clear the edges to the woods North of Assenois. This was done.

En Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 11 Feb., 1945 (Cont'd)

27 DECEMBER, 1944

The attack was started shortly after midnight and by 0300, 27 December, 1944, the road was safe for passage of all types of vehicles. This task was performed against strong enemy opposition and in an heavily wooded area.

D/37 escorted the trains of the 101st and 10th Armored into BASTOGNE. The trains consisted of some forty (40) trucks and seventy (70) ambulances. Up to this time D/37 has covered the NW flank from the same general area it took up on the 25th.

A/37 and E/37 held their positions until 0815, 29 December, 1944.

The remainder of the Battalion went into an assembly area in the Southern part of Bastogne. The day was spent in rest and maintenance. Bn. Hq., "D" Co., arrived at 0700 at the assembly area. On the march, three trucks of Service Company were destroyed due to enemy anti-tank fire.

The town of Bastogne was bombed that night. The Battalion suffered no damage at that time.

In the area between CLOCHIMONT and ASSENOIS were seven (7) anti-tank guns of 75mm or larger, one blocking the entrance to ASSENOIS. Between ASSENOIS and the perimeter defense of BASTOGNE were eight (8) more guns. In the woods on both sides of the road North of ASSENOIS were 25 - 30 assorted enemy vehicles, including full track prime movers. There was at least one bazooka to every five (5) enemy soldiers. The above weapons were ineffective due to fast, decisive movement, and accurate, well coordinated artillery fire, coupled with excellent air support.

During the above operations the strength of the line companies never exceeded the figures below:

"A" Company	11 tanks	2 Officers
"B" Company	8 tanks	1 Officer
"C" Company	9 tanks	2 Officers
"D" Company	13 tanks	1 Officer

Much of the time the operative vehicles were below those shown.

28 DECEMBER, 1944

Bombers were over again at 0500 this morning. The day broke cloudy and did not look good as far as air support for troops in Bastogne.

C/37 received small arms fire from woods to their Southeast at 1000. "B" Company was alerted to aid the 53rd in cleaning out some woods between the road up which we had advanced and the main road just North of Assenois.

En Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 11 Feb., 1945 (Cont'd)

28 DECEMBER, 1944 (CONT'D)

Fog was heavy making visibility almost nil. No enemy were found in the woods.

Reconnaissance Platoon went to Assenois in search of a suitable Battalion CP.

A platoon of the 467th AAA Battalion was attached to the 37th for support against air attack. Plans were made to open fire on enemy planes tonight.

Lt. Col. Abrams has gone to Division to see the Commanding General.

"A" and "F" Companies were still in position keeping open the supply routes.

29 DECEMBER, 1944

At 0030, a call came from the 101st Airborne to be alert for a possible push from the North and Northeast. Captain Lamison was called to the 101st Airborne Division CP at 0500. At 0530, Lt. North went to CCR as Liaison Officer. Captain Lamison returned with word that we were to move to the vicinity of Clochimont, 515522.

At 1900, Bastogne was bombed and strafed by an unknown number of enemy planes. A number of near hits were scored on our Battalion Area. Major Bantz's tank was nearly hit. A direct hit was scored on "B" Company's kitchen truck. One man was seriously injured. The Battalion cooperated with the anti-aircraft platoon in firing on the planes.

The area was bombed about six (6) times during the night. The last five attacks were lighter than the first. In the course of the night, three enemy planes were downed.

Orders were received to move to Clochimont at 0900 tomorrow morning.

30 DECEMBER, 1944

The Battalion area was again bombed heavily at 0710, but no serious damage resulted.

At 0900, the Battalion moved out for Clochimont and arrived there at 0945. The order of march was Hq Co, D, A, B, C, and Service elements.

A Company Commanders meeting was held. Counterattacks made during the night had been repulsed. We were to be ready to move at anytime in the

Sq Diary, Hq 37th Tk Bn, 11-Feb., 1945 (Cont'd)

30 DECEMBER, 1944 (CONT'D)

event of an attack on either flank. Reports indicated that enemy in U.S. uniforms are infiltrating through our lines.

Colonel Blanchard of CCR brought orders at 1545 for us to move to the vicinity of Chaumont, 518488, to be in position in case of an attack from that flank.

The Battalion moved out at 1620. The order of march was Rtn, D, Hq, Sq, A, B, and C. The Battalion arrived at the assembly area at 1700.

31 DECEMBER, 1944

For a change, the night was quiet as was this morning. Major Scotti visited the CP this morning.

This afternoon the Battalion received three (3) new tanks with a different suspension system and wider track. Five (5) officers and eleven (11) enlisted men reinforcements arrived this afternoon.

During the night enemy aircraft strafed our bivouac area. However, no damage resulted.

For the Battalion Commander:

Roy C. Moon
ROY C. MOON,
1st Lt., Inf,
Adjutant.

~~SECRET~~

HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

En 71

11 February 1945

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army

1 JANUARY 1945

The first visitor of the New Year was Major Churchill from CCR. Col. Abrams, Division Surgeon and Col. Dorado, CWS also were morning visitors at the CP. Col. Oden from the 35th Tank Bn. was an early afternoon visitor. Capt. Lamison brought word that the 53rd Inf. and 94th FA were attached to CCA and that the 37th was on the boundry of it. At 1830, Major Bautz went to CCA and returned with word that the Bn. was to be ready to move in the event of enemy activity on CCA's flank. Orders would come through CCR. At 2140, one enemy plane dropped fragmentation bombs in our area, causing eleven casualties and killing one enlisted man from D Co.

2 JANUARY 1945

The battalion was still at Chaumont. The day was spent carrying out usual bivouac duties. General Gaffey visited the CP at 1205 and discussed the bombing and enlisted replacements. A division bomb disposal man arrived to dispose of an unexploded bomb. Col. Blanchard, CO of CCR, visited the CP at 1425. Gen. Dager, the OG of CCB, visited the CP and gave the CO the general situation and plans in case of attack. At 1600, Major Bautz went to Service Company and Division Ordnance due to a message that tank and assistant drivers had not reported there. At 1857, a message was received from Major Bautz that everything was settled and he would return in the morning.

3 JANUARY 1945

At 1100, this morning, Major Parker from the 94th FA Bn. brought word (rumor) that we were in CCB with 53rd Inf, 22nd FA, and that we were to move out. Capt. Lamison reported to CCB. At 1410, Capt. Lamison returned from CCB with the following information: We are now in the 8th Corps in reserve. We will not move today. Rcn. has gone to reconnoitre routes to Bras Haut and back to Neuchateau. This is to cover an attack from the west. At 2300, we received word to be ready to move at daylight. All companies have been alerted.

4 JANUARY 1945

At 0700, everyone was preparing for movement. At 0855, Capt. Lamison arrived and reported that the situation is not clear. Gen. Gaffey is trying to get the division assembled and Corps keeps alerting us. The Col. returned from CCB at 1020 with information that the 101st Airborne Div. was being attacked by the 9th SS and 12th SS but would not need help unless the 10th SS was committed. the 4th Armored was alerted to take care of any threat with CCB leading. Plans were given out to be followed if we are ordered to move. Capt. McMahon went to 25th Cav. CP to find out about the situation. He returned with their call signs and we will check with them on CW. He also determined the location of the front lines. No further enemy activity was reported. Capt. Tiegs rejoined the Bn. today.

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Bn. Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn. 11 February 1945 cont'd:

5 JANUARY 1945

At 0900, Capt. McMahon again visited the 25 Cav. CP. He later returned with an overlay showing the disposition of front line troops. At 0945, Capt. Lamison returned from CCB with an overlay showing the front lines. He took back with him the overlay Capt. McMahon had received from the 25th Cav. Gen. Gaffey visited the CP. An Army Historical Dept. officer later arrived to interview Capt. Dwight on past operation. In the afternoon we were visited by Lt. Col. Olbun, executive officer of 90B. Capt. Lamison brought an overlay showing front as of 1330, Jan 5th.

6 JANUARY 1945

At 1030 this morning, Gen. Dager visited the battalion and gave the CO the situation. CCB called the CO this morning in regards to a new 50cal. MG that may be mounted as a co-axial MG in the tanks. The day generally passed uneventfully, with the battalion engaged in their usual bivouac duties.

7 JANUARY 1945

Lt. Col. Himelick from G-1 visited the CP this morning and discussed the after-action report. The Bn. CO returned from trying out the new fifty and thirty cal. MG. He gave them both high praise. At 1820, the 6th AD reported enemy counterattacks moving south along main road from Magaret P6059, consisting of tank and infantry. At 1920, the OP reports enemy counterattack now under control. At 1945, we received a report from a friendly CP at 575554 reporting a peculiar odor which he suspected was gas. A test of friendly elements established that it was not gas.

8 JANUARY 1945

At 0900, Lt. Col. Abrams went to another demonstration of firing with the Air Corps 50 cal. MG. We received a report at 1130 from a friendly unit's OP that enemy personnel had been observed at 588557. At 1730, the CO returned with orders to move to the vicinity of Assenois. CCB was to support the 101st Airborne who are to attack tomorrow. The order of March was: D, A, B, C, Hq, B/704. The head of the column moved out at 2015 and arrived at Assenois at 2300, after traveling a distance of approximately 3 1/2 miles.

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Bn. Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn. 11 February 1945 cont'd:

9 JANUARY 1945

At 0620, a message was received from CCB to have an officer guide from B/704 report to 101st CP (Isle Lepre) Co-ord 535-566 by 0700 this AM. White camouflage paint mixture was to be picked up today from Engr GR Supply Office at DCP. The CO visited CCB at 0930 and returned with information that the 101st did not jump off as scheduled. They are to make it at 1100 this AM. The 35th Inf. has moved over to take a small sector. The 90th Inf. has taken over the ground left by the 35th Inf. A T/Sgt from Army Historical Service came to the CP, bringing with him a report of the action at Singling for our approval. Capt. Lamison at 1400 brought the following information: The 101st has not jumped off today. We are to move North of Bastogne, the 53rd moves at 1500 and we at 1600. Order of March: D, A, C, B, Hq.; 101st and 4 AD are to attack tomorrow. The 101st will be on the far left. The head of the column moved out at 1600 and arrived at the assembly area at 1700. The assembly area was 1 mile Northeast of Bastogne P575595. At 1930 the CO returned from CCB with plans for the attack tomorrow. Everyone attacks at 0900. 101st attacks along the main road from Bastogne to Koville. The boundary line between us and the 101st is the railroad tracks. We are to attack with infantry from the 53rd. Combat Commands abreast, CCB left, CCA right. Orders were issued for the attack to be coordinated with adjacent units by the battalion commands.

10 JANUARY 1945

Plans were to move out to the attack at 0900, 10 January 1945. The battalion moved out at that time toward Oubourcy 613616. Progress was comparatively slow due to mortar and artillery fire. Bazooka teams and machine gun squads were numerous in the heavy woods through which we were compelled to work. "A" company encountered one AT gun and three SP guns. The AT gun was destroyed and two of the SPs, the other was damaged. Coordination between units was good. At 1400, an order came through CCB to infiltrate a few vehicles at a time back to the vicinity of Bois D'Hazy. The 101st Airborne was to remain and the 6th AD to move left and occupy the sector left by the 4th AD. The enemy casualties today were 2 SP guns, 1 AT gun, and fifty enemy personnel killed. The battalion infiltrated back, assembled, and moved as a unit back to the area North of Assenois.

11 JANUARY 1945

The morning was spent waiting for word to move south. At 1630, the battalion moved on order to Itzig, Luxembourg. The order of March was: Rcn, D, Hq, Hq Co, A, B, C, Sv. The march was made over very icy roads. The battalion arrived in the assembly area at 0300, 12 January 1945, after covering a distance of sixty miles.

12 JANUARY 1945

Capt. Tiegs today assumed command of "C" company. The companies spent the day in securing billets and performing maintenance on the vehicles.

13 JANUARY 1945

Word was received from CCB that we were to move to some other towns SW of Luxembourg, Rcn and billeting officers were sent to these towns to make arrangements. Seventy-four replacements, all tank men, arrived at Division Control Point for this battalion.

~~SECRET~~
Bn. Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn. 11 February 1945 cont'd:

14 JANUARY 1945

The battalion remained at Itzig, awaiting word from CCB to move to new towns. Men were sent from various companies to shower point for showers. Seventy enlisted men three officer reinforcements arrived today and were assigned to the companies.

15 JANUARY 1945

The battalion received word today to move to the new towns. The new location of the various units was: Hq, Hq Co, and D at Dippach; Service Co and A at Reckange; B Co at Limpach; and C company at Bettange. All units were moved in the afternoon. A distance of approximately thirty kilometers was traveled.

16 JANUARY 1945

General Dager visited the battalion CO. He discussed the subjects of camouflage and enemy counterattacks. General Gaffey, division CG, arrived and presented Lt. Col. Abrams with a second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star for the action which opened the road to Bastogne. We were authorized to send eighteen enlisted men and six officers to Paris on pass. One company, "D", was placed on a one-hour alert.

17 JANUARY 1945

At 0300, the six officers and eighteen enlisted men left for Paris. This morning at 1030, the entire battalion was placed on a one-hour alert. At 1300, the Battalion CO left for a unit commander's meeting.

18 JANUARY 1945

At 0845, a Company Commander's meeting was held. We had three tactical missions to perform in case of enemy counterattack: first, possible threats around the City of Luxembourg or south of Luxembourg; second, one division CC must be on a one-hour alert for twenty-four hours; third, the area must be secured against airbourne attack. Looting, handling of prisoners of war, and security were also discussed at this time. Movies will be shown daily. 5% passes to Luxembourg will be given in the near future. The second group of officers and enlisted men left today for a visit to Paris.

19 JANUARY 1945

The battalion was placed on division alert today. The companies were engaged in driving instruction and dry runs on gunnery and fire orders.

20 JANUARY 1945

General Dager, CG of CCB, visited the battalion this morning and talked with Capt. Dwight. Motion pictures were shown today to all companies.

~~SECRET~~
Bn Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn. 11 February 1945 cont'd:

21 JANUARY 1945

Today the battalion was again placed on division alert and must be ready to move on a one hour notice at any time during the twenty-four hours. The companies were to continue their practice driving and to engage in both road marches and cross-country driving.

22 JANUARY 1945

The battalion was engaged today in white-washing all vehicles for camouflage purposes. At 1600, the CO was called to see the CG of the 4th AD. Upon his return a company commanders' meeting was held. CCB would move to support the 5th Inf. Div., if necessary. We would move by one of two routes as shown. If we do not move, firing for the companies will start tomorrow. A paragraph was read from the 4th AD G-2 report giving the German opinion of the 4th AD. We are a dangerous outfit to oppose because we are a "crack" armored division.

23 JANUARY 1945

At 0800, Co "A" started firing on the range. Sgt. Gutgsell brought word from CCB at 1030 that we would move this afternoon. S-1 is to remain here and each company is to leave a detachment at town to keep it clear. Service Co. remained at Reckange. At 1500, the liaison officer brought the route and time of march. We move from Dippach at 1610 to Luxembourg, then north to guides. The head of the column moved out at 1610 and arrived at location at 1800, after traveling about 28 kilometers. The location of the companies was as follows: Bn Hq, Hq Co, and D Co at Reckange-les-Mersch, C Co at Luntingen, and A & B Co at Brouch.

24 JANUARY 1945

Lt. Col. Clbun, the Executive Officer of CCB visited the Battalion CO this morning. At 1300, one officer from each company was sent on a reconnaissance of routes, troops and bivouac areas, and bridges.

25 JANUARY 1945

Lt. Col. Abrams visited CCB this morning and upon his return held a company commanders' meeting. At this meeting he spoke about standards of discipline and cleaning of clothes. A daily formation will be held in each company to read the news and give out any pertinent information to the troops. All areas are to be kept clean and billets inspected daily by the officers. The light tanks will soon be replaced by new light tanks or mediums.

26 JANUARY 1945

Companies spent the morning on the range. At 1230, a message was received from CCB to send a reconnaissance party to their CP by 1330 to look over a situation received from Olympic. The Rcn. party was to be ready to reconnoiter an area for part of our battalion. If the 80th Division doesn't reach their objective before being relieved, the 4th AD will take over their sector. The 4th will consist of CCB (51st, 10th, 53rd, plus A/37 if needed). Further details will be available in the morning. Capt. Dwight went to CCB and then reconnoitered a possible area.

~~SECRET~~
Bn. Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn. 11 February 1945 cont'd:

27 JANUARY 1945

This morning "D" company men were given driving instruction by the "Staff Tanks" in anticipation of the arrival of new lights or mediums for "D" company. No word has as yet been received on movement. Capt. Dwight investigated the area which he had reconnoitered and found that the 80th's relief has arrived. We were visited this afternoon by Lt. Col. Parker and Capt. Cook from the 94th FA.

28 JANUARY 1945

"B" company was firing on the range this morning. A range guard from "B" company took two German prisoners from a Chapel near his post. Prisoners were turned over to battalion S-2 and then to CCB. "D" company continued driving instructions given by "Staff Tanks". This afternoon CCB phoned Capt Dwight and informed him that CCB, consisting of three infantry battalions, is to take over a sector from the 80th Division. They will be under control of the 80th. The 37th will not be used because of terrain. There was, however, a possibility that we might move.

29 JANUARY 1945

"A" company was firing on the range today while "D" company continued driving instructions. All companies engaged in re-whitewashing of vehicles. Col. Abrams visited CCB and upon his return stated there was a possibility of moving the battalion to Kersch. This possibility was further investigated and found to be undesirable, so the plan was dropped. Liaison officer reported that CCB is at Gilsdorf. We are to continue liaison with them and turn in reports to CCB.

30 JANUARY 1945

Whitewashing of the vehicles was continued again today. Driving instructions for "D" company continued while "C" company fired on the range. Col. Dorato arrived with a flame-thrower and immediate steps were taken to install it in one of "B" company's tanks.

31 JANUARY 1945

Firing on the ranges was continued by the companies. The installation of the flame thrower was completed and a test was held using both the light and heavy fuels. These preliminary tests proved satisfactory to those who reviewed them and plans were made to train the crew, modify a half-track so it could be used to supply the weapon with fuel, and prepare to demonstrate for the Division Commander and other officers of the division.

For the Battalion Commander:

Roy C Moon
ROY C. MOON,
1st Lt., Inf.,
Adjutant.

~~SECRET~~ 1673 En 72
HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

14 February, 1945

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

1 FEBRUARY, 1945

The companies were on the range today firing.

During the afternoon, a demonstration of the new flame thrower which had been installed in one of "B" Company's tanks was held for the benefit of the Company Officers. The crew at this time was given more training in the use of the flame thrower.

2 FEBRUARY, 1945

Lt. Ogden, liaison officer, returned this morning with information that G-3 had suggested that we move Service Company nearer to us. Capt. McMahon was dispatched to secure a bivouac area and billets for them.

During the morning, the Companies were on the range firing.

At 1830 in the evening, a meeting of Company Commanders and 1st Sergeants was held in which administrative matters were discussed. Particular emphasis was placed on property accounting and casualty reporting.

3 FEBRUARY, 1945

Lt. Col. Pattison, Ex. Officer of CCA, Lt. Col. Knestrick, G-4, and Lt. Col. Dorado, Div. CWS Officer, visited with Lt. Col. Abrams this morning.

Service Company moved up to an area near Mersch, closing in just before noon.

At 1745 Lt. Ogden phoned from Division Hq., notifying us that we would move back to the old area in the vicinity of Dippach on February 4th. He arrived later with orders for us to move out at 0800, route of March Reckange-les-Mersch, Brauch, Tuntingen, Kehlen, Capellen, Holyen, Dippach. This information, together with order of march, was distributed to all Companies.

(Battalion Diary, 37th Tank Bn., 14 February 1945)

4 FEBRUARY, 1945

On the 4th of February, the head of the Battalion column moved out at 0800. The order of march was Hq., Hq. Co., D, A, B, C and Serv. Companies. The head of the column arrived at Dippach at 1000. Bn. Hq. located in the same building as before. The distance traveled was 22 kilometers.

At 1400, Col. Bigby, Chief of Staff, dropped in to visit the C.O. Arrangements were completed for the demonstration of the flame thrower to be held on the 5th of February at 1400.

At 1730, Maj. Hunter returned from the hospital after an absence of almost three months.

5 FEBRUARY, 1945

At 1400, the demonstration of the flame thrower was held for officers of the Division, including Gen. Gaffey and his Staff.

Lt. Peterson was today promoted to 1st Lt.

6 FEBRUARY, 1945

Lt. Klingbeil, the Bn. Adjutant, left today for a new assignment with CCA. Lt. Moon from "B" Company became Bn. Adjutant.

This evening a dance and party was held for the Battalion Officers with Nurses from the 12th Evacuation Hospital as our guests.

7 FEBRUARY, 1945

The Companies were engaged in their usual bivouac duties.

Maj. Hunter today reassumed his duties as Bn. Ex. Officer.

The names of three EM and one Officer were submitted to be sent to the United States on a thirty day furlough.

8 FEBRUARY, 1945

At 1400 today a Company Commanders meeting was held. At that time Lt. Col. Abrams disclosed that the next mission of the 4th AD would be to take the town of Bitburg, Germany. (Coordinates 130-535) Three infantry Divisions, the 5th, 80th, and 76th who were attacking at this time, were to break the Siegfried Line and effect crossings over the Sauer, Our, Prum and Nims Rivers. The 4th AD was then to pass through, with either CCA or CCB leading and continue on to take Bitburg. The Bn. was to be ready to move on a two hour notice.

In the meantime, the Bn was to continue firing on the range. "B" Company engaged in range firing today.

9 FEBRUARY, 1945

Word was received this morning that the C.G. does not wish any more flame throwers in the Div. However B/37 was to keep the one it now has.

"C" Company was firing on the range today.

A report was received that the attack of the infantry Divisions was not progressing rapidly. Only moderate enemy resistance was being met but great difficulty was experienced with mud and swollen rivers due to recent rains.

10 FEBRUARY, 1945

Col. Olbon, Ex. Officer of CCB, called at 0930. He brought and discussed plans with Lt. Col. Abrams in regard to the employment of CCB in the attack. Three plans were discussed at this time. Plan A--The 5th, 80th, and 76th infantry Divisions were to breach a gap in the Siegfried Line--Niederweis, Meckel, Idenheim. The 4th AD was then to pass through and take the high ground north of Bitburg. Plan B--If the infantry encountered too much resistance, CCA or CCE would help clear a gap in the Siegfried Line and hold the gap for the remainder of the Division to pass through. Plan C--If CCB had to establish a bridgehead over the Nims river, all three infantry Battalions would be attached to CCB. The bridgehead was to be established by the infantry supported by A/37. After the bridgehead was secured, the 37th and the 53rd Inf. were to move on out with the same objectives as in Plan A.

In each case the initial assembly area was to be selected SW of Echternach.

Maj. Hunt S-2 of CCB arrived about noon with a man from the psychological warfare section who is now attached to the 3rd Army. He was to travel with this division in its next operation. Plans were discussed for using the loud speaker and psychological talks to the Germans.

"A" Company was firing on the range today.

11 FEBRUARY, 1945

Promotions were in order this morning, 2nd Lt. Whitehill to 1st Lt. and 1st Lt. Donahue to Capt.

Capt. H.M. DeBose Jr., of the 3rd Army G-2 section, arrived today with an army and navy ammunition expert from the United States. He spoke to Col. Abrams about our AP ammunition and compared it with the German AP. Capt. De Rose, a familiar visitor, also announced that he was about to leave and return to the United States for reassignment.

"D" Company was firing on the range today with "A" Co's tanks.

11 FEBRUARY, 1945 (CONT'D)

This afternoon Lt. Roberts and his platoon were sent out to reconnoitre possible assembly areas along the main highway SW of Echternach.

The Bn. was visited today by a Red Cross Clubmobile Unit. Coffee and doughnuts were enjoyed by all.

12 FEBRUARY, 1945

Capt. Leach and three EM left today for a thirty day furlough in the United States. Lt. Liese assumed command of "B" Company.

"B" Company was engaged in firing on the range this morning.

Maj. Scotti from CCA was an afternoon visitor.

13 FEBRUARY, 1945

At 1300 a meeting of Company Commanders was held to discuss efficiency reports which must be prepared on all officers at the present time. Lt. Col. Abrams spoke on the importance of these reports and the methods of preparing them. Mr. Lubrano from Personnel Section was present at the meeting and answered questions concerning the reports.

At 2100, six officers and eighteen EM left on a 72 hour pass to Paris.

14 FEBRUARY, 1945

Maj Bautz reconnoitred area and selected a suitable range for use by all companies for 30, 50, 75, and 76MM firing.

This morning Lt. Col. Abrams visited Division Hq.

This evening the Bn. Staff attended a party and dance held by the officers of the 53rd Armored Infantry Bn.

15 FEBRUARY, 1945

The Battalion received notice early this morning that CCB was on the alert for a 24 hour period, starting at 0800, 15 February 1945.

At 1000, notice was received that the Bn. is now in CCR.

Lt. Col. Abrams left this morning for a visit to Paris.

Headquarters Company fired the bazooka this morning at some knocked out German tanks.

(Battalion Diary, 37th Tank Bn., 14 February, 1945)

15 FEBRUARY, 1945 (CONT'D)

A training schedule was published today. Training was to include range firing, maintenance and maintenance instructions, map reading, crew drill, orientation, the non-fraternization policy, driving, gunnery, and range estimation.

16 FEBRUARY, 1945

Requiem High Mass was held this morning for the deceased of Hq Company and "D" Company.

Passes to Luxembourg were started with 10% of the company strength allowed on pass daily.

"C" Company engaged in range firing today.

17 FEBRUARY, 1945

"B" Company fired on the range today but due to the heavy fog were able to fire only small arms.

The liaison officer arrived with two overlays showing routes from our present location to Vianden and to Echternach.

One officer and 11 EM went to a rest camp in Esch for four days.

18 FEBRUARY, 1945

"A" Company fired on the range although heavy fog limited the fire during the morning.

S/Sgt Rowland today received his appointment as 2nd Lt. Maj Hunter pinned the bars on Lt. Rowland.

This evening a message was received that the 35th Tank Bn. was at present engaged in an indirect fire mission. This Bn was directed to start instruction in indirect fire in the event that we might be called on for such a mission.

19 FEBRUARY, 1945

Maj Bautz went to Gostingen to visit the 35th Tank Bn., now engaged in supporting the 2nd Cavalry with indirect fire.

A class conducted by Capt Dwight, was held this afternoon at "C" Company for all medium tank company officers on indirect fire.

Col. Withers visited the C.P. this afternoon and talked to Lt. Col. Abrams.

"D" Company was on the range firing today.

"A" Company zeroed in their carbines which have been equipped with the new adjustable sight.

~~SECRET~~
Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 14 February, 1945 (Cont'd)

20 FEBRUARY, 1945

Training was carried on today in the various companies on indirect fire. Hqs Company fired on the range with mortars, assault guns, and small arms.

This afternoon, Major Pickard, S-3 of Division Artillery, visited the CP and discussed tank indirect fire with Major Bautz.

One enlisted man of Hq Detachment left today for a 30 day furlough in the United States.

The Division "Special Services" today presented an all "GI" show which was enjoyed by all the companies of the Battalion.

This evening Lt. Col. Abrams pinned Captain bars on Lt. Marston whose promotion was received today.

A phone call was received tonight from Reserve Command stating that the Battalion was to have a Rcn. party here at 0900 tomorrow to go out and reconnoiter new areas. Representatives of Reserve Command were to be here at that time with further instructions.

21 FEBRUARY, 1945

Promotions were again in order this morning. Lt. Hellings and Lt. Hamm were notified of their promotion to 1st Lieutenant and their new bars were pinned on by Lt. Col. Abrams.

The Rcn party was sent out this morning to check on billeting in Brouch, Kepweiler, Schwebach, Geirner, and Boesendorf.

Colonel Blanchard, CO of CC"R", visited Lt. Col. Abrams this morning.

This afternoon Colonel Sears, CO of CC"A", was a visitor at the CP.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at which Lt. Col. Abrams spoke on vehicle maintenance. The Battalion was to move in a few days and orders were given that the areas must be left in good condition. Lt. Col. Abrams suggested using cloth belts in the 50 calibre coaxial machine guns to test their practicability.

Service Company fired on the range today.

22 FEBRUARY, 1945

At 0830 word was received from Reserve Command that we would move at 1300 to the area reconnoitered yesterday.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 14 February, 1945 (Cont'd)

22 FEBRUARY, 1945 (Cont'd)

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1000. The order of march was: D, Hq, Hq Co, A, C, B, and Service. The route of march was: Dahlem, Garnich, Koerich, Septfontaines, Saeul, and Brouch.

The head of the column moved out at 1300 and arrived at Brouch at 1415, covering a distance of approximately 16 miles.

23 FEBRUARY, 1945

Lt. Col. Gillis, Ex Off of CC"R", visited Lt. Col. Abrams at 0930.

Lt. Roberts and the reconnaissance platoon were sent out at 1000 to reconnoiter routes to Giechlingen via Diekirch and Vianden to be used in the event that we were employed to aid CC"B".

Col. Blanchard, CO of CC"R", arrived at about 1100 and discussed matters with Lt. Col. Abrams.

Lt. Roberts returned from his reconnaissance and reported that CC"B" had been committed. Elements of CC"B" were in Sinspell at 1130. The route reconnaissance was forwarded to CC"B" this afternoon.

Company formations were held in each company this afternoon. Lt. Col. Abrams presented awards to members of each company and spoke briefly on the future employment of the Battalion.

At about 2030, a phone call was received from Division Headquarters advising the Battalion that we are now in CC"B". Lt. Col. Abrams was to report to CC"B" at 0730 on the 24th of February.

24 FEBRUARY, 1945

Lt. Col. Abrams and Captain Dwight left for CC"B" at 0700.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 0800. The Battalion was to move to Obersgegen on Division order. The order of march was: Rcn, D, C, Bn Hq, Hq Co, A, B, and Maintenance. Service Company was to follow later on order.

A second Company Commander's meeting was held at 0905 due to a change in route. The route of march was: Mersch, Udinger, Angelsberg, Schoos, Ernzen, Fischback, Heffengen, Christnach, Waldbillig, Niedersgegen, Karpersnach, Obersgegen, Geichlingen.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 14 February, 1945 (Cont'd)

24 FEBRUARY, 1945 (Cont'd)

The head of the column left Brouch at 0930 and arrived in an assembly area 1/4 of a mile South of Obersgogen, Germany, (P967531) at 1315, having covered approximately 32 miles. The Battalion entered Germany at 1130, crossing a bridge over the Our River.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1400. Lt. Col. Abrams gave the present situation. This Battalion was to replace a Company of the 8th Tank Battalion now with the 51st Infantry.

At about 1600, enemy artillery fire fell on the edge of our assembly area and wounded two (2) enlisted men.

At 1630, "B" Company, with Major Bautz in charge, moved out to relieve the company from the 8th.

At 1810, on order from the Battalion Commander, Major Hunter moved up the remainder of the Battalion. The order of march was: A, C, D, Hq. The Battalion arrived in bivouac at 1920.

Lt. Col. Abrams visited CC"B" at 1740. Upon his return he gave out instructions. The Battalion was to attack at 0715 in the morning with the 51st Battalion to take Outscheid and the high ground N; then to proceed SE and establish a bridgehead at Hermesdorf.

25 FEBRUARY, 1945

At 0630, "A" and "C" Companies moved up to join the infantry companies on the high ground NE of Outscheid in the rear of "B" Company.

B/37 and B/51 attacked at 0715 and took the town of Neiderweidingen after artillery preparation on the town and artillery and mortar smoke on the high ground to the Northeast.

B/37 and B/51 then attacked Weidingen and cleaned out that town and outposted it to the East. A/37 in the meantime had held the high ground NW of Weidingen.

At shortly after 0900, a message was received that Lt. Col. Abrams was to assume command of CC"B". Major Hunter assumed command of the Battalion and Lt. Col. Alanis took charge of the task force.

C/37 and C/51 passed through B/37 and B/51, took the town of Altscheid, and outposted it.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 14 February, 1945 (Cont'd)

25 FEBRUARY, 1945 (Cont'd)

A/37 and A/51 passed through and proceeded toward Moosbusch. Just SE of Altscheid, they met anti-tank fire and lost one (1) tank. They then proceeded on, took Koosbusch and the high ground beyond it.

B/37 and B/51 then proceeded forward, and, after an artillery barrage, attacked and took the town of Hermesdorf. They also secured the bridge at Hermesdorf but it was weakened and not safe for heavy vehicles. B/37 located a ford and crossed over, establishing a bridgehead on the other side.

C/37 and C/51 proceeded forward and took up positions on the high ground overlooking Rittersdorf. Rittersdorf was shelled by artillery and also bombed by P-47's after which A/37 and A/51 proceeded forward and took the town. They also took the bridge and proceeded on establishing a bridgehead on the high ground NW of Bitburg.

"R" and "C" of the 37th went into position on the West side of the river on the high ground to the West of Rittersdorf covering North and South. "D" Company went into position behind "C" Company protecting the North flank.

A meeting of the Company Commanders and Battalion Staff was held at the CP of the 51st at 2300. The general plan for the following day was for the 37th, 51st, and "C" Company of 704 TD to cross the Kyll River and sieze Badem.

Enemy losses for the day were: 1 Mk 4, 1 Mk 5, 5 SP's, 3 H/T's, 4 Trucks, 5 105mm guns, 7 75's, and 6 88's. In personnel the enemy lost 200 killed and over 1,000 captured. Our losses for the day were 1 tank and 1 officer wounded.

26 FEBRUARY, 1945

It was raining this morning with visibility fair. At about 0600, "B" and "C" and "B" and "C" Companies of the 51st Infantry started to move across the Nims River at Rittersdorf to join "A" Company, 37th, and "A" Company, 51st. D/37 and C/704 had the mission of protecting the North and South flank.

After crossing the river and heading East, "B" Company received tank fire from the woods to their South and lost three (3) tanks shortly after 0800. B/37 and B/51 proceeded East toward the town of Matzen and took the high ground West of the town. "B" Company received direct anti-tank fire and lost one (1) tank at this point. At the same time C/37 and C/51 advanced East and went into

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 14 February, 1945 (Cont'd)

26 FEBRUARY, 1945 (Cont'd)

position on the high ground Northeast of BM 418. At this point C/37 came under enemy artillery fire and lost one (1) tank and had the blade knocked off the bulldozer tank.

At about 1500, C/37 and C/51 assaulted the woods (612-550). Some enemy personnel were captured and the remainder retreated toward Bitburg.

B/51 attempted to proceed into Erdorf but were repulsed and withdrew shortly after 1500.

During this time CC"A" crossed the river at Rittersdorf and took up a position to our South and Southeast. Then the 37th and 51st Infantry went into position North and Northeast of Rittersdorf with D/37 and C/704 on the North left flank, A/37 and A/51 on the Northeast, and C/37 and C/51 on the East joining the 53rd Infantry Battalion.

Resupply was made difficult due to enemy artillery and muddy terrain. In effecting their resupply, "A" Company suffered two (2) casualties.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 2300. The 37th and 51st Battalions were to proceed North at 0830, take the towns of Nattenheim and Fliessem and the high ground 431.

Enemy losses for the day were: 4 tanks, 2 personnel carriers, one (1) 88 dual purpose, 1 towed AT gun, 1 truck, 44 PW's, and 76 killed.

Our losses were three (3) tanks, seventeen (17) casualties of whom four (4) were killed.

27 FEBRUARY, 1945

It was raining this morning and the visibility was poor. The attack was late in starting due to poor visibility.

A/37 and A/51 moved out at 0840 to attack the town of Nattenheim after an artillery concentration had been delivered on that town. The town was taken by 0900 without resistance. The town was outposted.

C/37 and C/51 had meanwhile moved into position to occupy the high ground overlooking Fliessem.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 14 February, 1945 (Cont'd)

27 FEBRUARY, 1945 (Cont'd)

B/37 and B/51 moved on through "A" Company and proceeded on beyond the town of Nattenheim. They were held up temporarily by fire from the woods to their North and West. They took about twenty (20) prisoners and then went into position on the high ground North of Nattenheim.

Artillery preparation was in the meantime falling on Fliessem after which C/37 and C/51 moved in and took the town at about 1100 hours.

Bn Hqs moved from Rittersdorf to Nattenheim, arriving at about 1400.

The companies took up positions. "C" Company outposted the town of Fliessem, screening to the South and connecting with the 53rd Infantry. "A" Company took up positions on the high ground screening to the North and West of Fliessem. "B" Company connected with "A" and protected Nattenheim from the North. D/37 and C/704, and assault guns of the 37th, protected to the North, connecting with "B".

Enemy vehicle and personnel losses for the day were: 25 killed, one (1) 88, 3 H/T's, 2 Staff cars, 5 trucks. The Battalion suffered no casualties in this action.

28 FEBRUARY, 1945

There was a small amount of enemy patrol action early this morning, during the hours of darkness. "D" Company suffered one casualty.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 0830. At that time Major Hunter told the Company Commanders the general situation and announced that the day was to be spent in maintenance and the cleaning of weapons. The companies were to remain in their present position.

Major Hunter visited CC"B" at about 0930.

Word was received at 1030 that CC"B" was to take Sefferweich and Malbergweich today. A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1130. "C" Company was to be in reserve and to take B/37's position. "D" Company was to have one platoon in position and move the remainder of the company, with TD's and assault guns, to C/37's position. B/37 and A/37 with Infantry companies were to move astride the main road, clean out the woods and take the high ground overlooking Sefferweich from the East and Malbergweich from the West. B/37 would then assault Malbergweich and take the high ground Northwest of it. A/37 would

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 14 February, 1945 (Cont'd)

28 FEBRUARY, 1945 (Cont'd)

assault Malbergweich and take the high ground East of that town. The 25th Cavalry would take hill 475 and would relieve "A" and "B" Companies after they gained their position.

The companies moved out at 1330. B/37 moved up to the woods (130-609) where they were held up by fire from an anti-tank gun which controlled the trail through the woods and the main road. After some delay B/37 proceeded on up around the woods to the North-east corner of the woods to some high ground Southeast of Sefferweich.

A/37 and A/51 had in the meantime moved out and came under enemy artillery and small arms fire as they approached the woods. It was impossible to get through the woods with tanks or around the East side of the woods. It was decided to try the main North-South road. The road was mined and A/37 had three (3) tanks damaged at the crossroad. They also received some mortar and small arms fire. The damaged vehicles formed a road block holding up the company for some time. After the Engineers cleared the road, "A" Company succeeded in getting through the woods.

The day ended with A/37 and B/37 with their Infantry companies taking up positions in the vicinity of 135-620.

Enemy casualties were: 1 Mk 6 tank, 1 75 AT gun, 6 PW's, 15 killed.

Our casualties were: 3 tanks and 8 enlisted men wounded, 1 Officer.killed.

For the Battalion Commander:

Roy C. Moon
ROY C. MOON,
1st Lt., Inf,
Adjutant.

~~SECRET~~
HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

10 March, 1945

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

1 MARCH, 1945

At about 0625, enemy mortar and artillery fire began to fall on A/37, A/51, P/37, and P/51's bivouac area. Shortly thereafter, at approximately 0640, enemy tanks appeared traveling along the road east from Sefferweich toward the crossroads (143-628). The tanks were accompanied by enemy infantry. The tanks took defilade on the East-West road and across the North-South road.

Enemy tanks opened fire on A/37. Fire was returned by A/37 and P/37. Three enemy assault guns and one panther tank were destroyed. Enemy infantry started forward. Our own defensive artillery fire were brought down on them, killing many and causing their withdrawal.

Lt. Col. Abrams reassumed command of the battalion at 0810.

The 10th Infantry Battalion moved up and replaced the 51st Infantry Battalion.

At 1530, A/37 and C/10, after intense artillery preparation took Sefferweich without opposition.

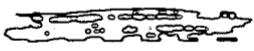
C/37 and A/10 moved up and took the high ground between Sefferweich and Walbergweich. P/37 and P/10 came up and relieved "C" company. "B" company then went on to higher grounds on the ridge (vic 145-635) and routed about 200 enemy infantry that occupied prepared positions.

C/37 and A/10 then attacked and took Walbergweich.

The companies then took up positions for the night. In the day's operations, approximately 400 prisoners were taken. Other enemy losses were: 4 tanks, 4 assault guns, 3 88's, 1 75mm, and two trucks destroyed, 65 enemy personnel were killed.

2 MARCH, 1945

Pn Hqs, Hqs Co., and Pn Maintenance moved at 0930 from Wattenheim to Pickendorf, a distance of three (3) kilometers.



Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

2 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

Major Bautz left at 1200 for duties at CC"A". Captain Dwight assumed the duties of Battalion S-3.

A plan was formulated to cross the Kyll River tonight. However, due to terrain and the fact that the Germans had demolished the bridges, the plan was not carried out.

Instead C/37, by firing at enemy positions East of the Kyll River, created a diversion in an attempt to aid the 5th Inf Division in their crossing to the South.

Ten (10) enlisted reinforcements were received today by the Battalion.

3 MARCH, 1945

Lt. Col. Abrams reported to CC"B" at 1100.

A meeting of Company Commanders was held at 1200. It was a joint meeting with the 10th Infantry. We were in CC"B" and were to cross the Kyll River, passing through the 5th Infantry Division bridgehead and head for Koblenz with the mission of securing a bridge across the Rhine. CC"B" was to attack on the left with CC"A" on the right.

CC"B" was composed of the 10th, 37th, 22nd, 66th (-), 179th, C/704th, B/24th, one Infantry Combat Team, E/46, B/126, and C/25. The order of march was to be: D/37, with assault guns from the 37th and 10th; Hqs 37th and 10th; a platoon of C/704; A/37 and C/10 with a platoon of B/24 with a bridge truck; C/37 and A/10; 22nd; B/24; Hq CC"B" with Div Arty; C/704; 66th; Hqs and Hqs Company of the 37th and 10th; B/37 and B/10; 179th FA; trains; Inf Combat Team; B/46; B/126.

The companies were to move to an assembly area on either side of the main highway North of Rittersdorf (114-575) this afternoon.

Lt. Col. Abrams was presented an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Distinguished Service Cross and Lt. Whitehill was presented the Distinguished Service Cross this afternoon at 1630 by Major General Gaffey.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 2330. Four alternate routes of march were given to the Company Commanders. All companies were to be prepared to move at 0700. Plans were made for crossing the Kyll River and passing through the 5th Infantry Division. We were to receive orders from CC"B" during the night as to whether or not we were to move in the morning.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

4 MARCH, 1945

No word was received during the night in regard to the move.

Promotions were received this morning for Lts. Mallon, Smith, and Almond to 1st Lieutenant.

The day was spent in maintenance and preparation for movement.

One officer reinforcement arrived today for the Battalion.

Lt. Col. Gail, of the 13th Armored Division, who had been spending the past four (4) days with the Battalion as an observer, left today for his own division.

At 1900, our Liaison officer arrived from CC"B" with word that the leading elements of our column were to be prepared to cross the bridge over the Kyll River at 0730 in the morning.

Company Commanders were notified of the situation.

At 2305, a phone message from CC"B" notified the Battalion that it would move in the morning as planned.

5 MARCH, 1945

At 0730, the head of the column crossed the bridge over the Kyll River.

The first enemy opposition was encountered in the vicinity of Badem. From Badem to Meisburg continuous enemy opposition was encountered in the form of tanks, anti-tank guns, SP's, artillery and enemy infantry. The fighting was continuous but the Battalion continued its advance throughout the day, taking many prisoners and causing a large number of enemy casualties.

By evening, the leading elements of the Battalion had reached the towns of Salm and Wallenborn and Meisburg. "D" Company assaulted Wallenborn without Infantry support. In the town, they caught and destroyed large wagon and gun trains. C/37 and A/10 had in the meantime assaulted the town of Salm where they destroyed three (3) 150mm guns, several 75mm guns, and many wagon trains. The Battalion CP was set up for the night in Meisburg.

The Battalion had traveled approximately twenty (20) miles after crossing the Kyll River over muddy terrain and in the face of strong enemy opposition.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

5 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

Enemy losses were: 3 Mark VI tanks, 5 Mark V tanks, 200 motor vehicles, 100 horse drawn vehicles, 3 batteries of artillery; 1,200 prisoners, and 100 killed.

Resupply was effectuated during the night. It was made difficult due to the distance which had been covered during the day, the muddy terrain and the enemy artillery and small arms fire.

6 MARCH, 1945

The day dawned cold and it was snowing hard.

The Battalion moved out at 0730. We moved through the town of Ober which had been outposted the preceding night by Troop "C" of the 25th Cavalry.

The Battalion proceeded through Daun, Darscheid, and Ulmen, meeting lessening opposition that evening. It was the headquarters for a Quartermaster outfit and large amounts of supplies were captured. The Bn CP was established in Ulmen for the night with the companies outposting the ground around the town.

Enemy losses for the day were: 100 motor vehicles, 1 Mark V tank, 15 AT guns, 200 prisoners (one a general officer), 25 killed and an unestimated number of horse drawn artillery and wagons destroyed.

7 MARCH, 1945

The Battalion moved out this morning at 0730. The weather was cold with snow falling. Due to condition of the roads, it was necessary to deviate from the prescribed route.

The Battalion proceeded to Buchel and through town to a crossroad at the Northwest of town where we turned off toward Kaisersesch. At Kaisersesch, the Battalion halted outside of town. An ultimatum was delivered over the loud speaker system for the soldiers to give up the town or it would be destroyed. They complied and it was taken without opposition. About 200 German prisoners were taken and approximately 300 PW's of the Germans were evacuated. The PW's were of various nationalities.

Dungenheim was also taken without opposition. At Kehrig, the Battalion encountered its first opposition of the day. The town was held by an AA regiment. "D" Company destroyed the light AA guns in the valley below the town. As "D" Company proceeded up to the high ground near the town, one tank was destroyed by AT fire and another by bazooka fire. An ultimatum was given over the loud speaker for the soldiers to leave town or we would destroy it.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

7 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

When they refused, artillery fire was directed on the town. It was then assaulted by A/37 and C/10, and the town was taken without further loss.

The Battalion then moved on to Polch which was taken without opposition as was Walderharfer.

At Ochtendung, two enemy trains and columns of troops were caught attempting to leave town. They were subjected to heavy fire.

The Battalion set up Headquarters for the night at Ochtendung.

In the course of the day the Battalion had advanced 26 miles. Three (3) enemy columns were destroyed consisting of from 200 to 300 vehicles of various types; 1 Mark VI tank, 3 Mark V tanks, 2 SP's, 6 105mm guns, were destroyed. A fuel and lube dump was overrun. 800 prisoners were taken, 100 enemy were killed, and 1,500 allied prisoners of war were released.

8 MARCH, 1945

This morning A/37 and C/10 attacked Plaidt and B/37 and B/10 attacked Saffig; both towns were taken with little opposition.

In the afternoon, B/37 and B/10 attacked Kettig. About 200 prisoners were taken in the woods between Saffig and Kettig. B/37 then took up a position on the high ground beyond Kettig to fire directly on the main highway from Andernach to Koblenz.

The Battalion CP was moved this afternoon from Ochtendung to Saffig.

This morning word was received that Lt. Col. Abrams was to assume command of CC"B". Major Hunter assumed command of the Battalion with Captain Dwight as Executive Officer and Captain McMahon as S-3.

Enemy losses for the day were: 3 Mark V tanks, six (6) trucks, 4 trailers, 1 bus, 2 cars, 50 vehicles and guns (of all types), and two hundred fifty (250) prisoners of war.



Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

9 MARCH, 1945

A message was received from CC"B" at 0500 to consolidate the Battalion and prepare for a new mission, possibly to the South. Further word would be received later this morning.

During the early hours of the morning, from about 0300 to 0700, "B" Company fired on an enemy column proceeding down the main road from Andernach to Koblenz. Artillery fire was also brought to bear on this road and many horse drawn and motor vehicles were destroyed.

At about noon today, the Battalion received word that we were now in CC"R". Lt. Col. Gillis, Executive Officer of CC"R", visited the CP this afternoon and discussed the situation with Major Hunter. At this time, "A" Company was in an assembly area at Plaidt, "C" Company in an assembly area at Saffig, "B" Company at Kehrig covering the main road from Andernach to Koblenz, and "D" Company cutting the roads in the vicinity of Saffig.

One officer reinforcement was received by the Battalion today. Enemy losses for the day were: One (1) Mark VI tank and 35 vehicles of various types.

10 MARCH, 1945

C/37 relieved B/37 at Kettig. "C" Company was to send a platoon to cut the road running East-West from Andernach to Weissenthurm and to reinforce a platoon of the 10th Infantry occupying Weissenthurm. "B" Company returned to an assembly area at Saffig for maintenance and rest.

Colonel Blanchard, CO of CC"R", and Major Churchill, S-3 of CC"R", visited the CP and discussed the tactical situation with Major Hunter.

The following equipment was destroyed in Weissenthurm: 15 AA guns, 16 AT guns, 16 Arty pieces, 5 Rocket guns, 6 heavy mortars, 8 half-tracks, 1 tractor, 70 trucks, 9 motorcycles, 8 peeps, 11 cars, 296 wagons, 42 kitchen wagons, 2 bazookas, 4 88's, 875 rifles, 80 machine guns, 55 machine pistols. 15 enemy were killed, 475 taken prisoner, and 500 Allied PW's released.

11 MARCH, 1945

At 1000, the Battalion received an overlay from CC"R" showing an assembly area for the Division for regrouping. Plans called for the 90th Division to take over our area. Lt. Roberts was sent to reconnoiter the proposed assembly area for the

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

11 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

Battalion Southeast of Kerben (895-745). Word was later received by phone that these plans for regrouping had been cancelled.

Lt. Col. Abrams, CO of CC"B", Lt. Col. Himelick, Div G-1, Lt. Col. Knestrick, Div G-4, and Lt. Col. Dorado, CWS Officer, visited the CP and were guests of Major Hunter at dinner.

12 MARCH, 1945

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1130. Major Hunter spoke concerning the order against fraternization with German civilians. He also discussed the uniform to be worn by our troops.

At 1430, Lt. Ogden arrived with an overlay showing our new assembly area.

A correspondent, Collie Small, from the Saturday Evening Post visited the CP this afternoon and interviewed Captain Dwight concerning past operations of the Battalion.

Lt. Col. Pattison and Major Bautz of CC"A" visited the Battalion this afternoon.

At 1630, Major Hunter went to CC"R". Upon his return he issued orders to have D/37, an Infantry Company, a Platoon of Engineers, and the Reconnaissance Platoons of the 10th and 37th leave at 0615 in the morning under Captain McMahon to make a reconnaissance of a proposed assembly area in the vicinity of Demeroth.

Mr. Lubrano arrived today from Administrative Center to pay the Battalion and to collect all French, Belgian and Luxembourg money and exchange for marks.

13 MARCH, 1945

At 0615, a task force composed of D/37 and the assault guns of the 37th and 10th, C/10, and a Platoon of B/24 moved to the vicinity of Mahren, swept the area for possible enemy, and found it occupied by friendly service forces.

At 1345, a phone call was received from CC"R" stating that we would not move. Orders were sent to Captain McMahon to return to the area. The force arrived back at Saftig at 1800.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

14 MARCH, 1945

Major Hunter was called to CC"B" at 0900. Orders were received shortly thereafter that we were in CC"B" and were alerted for movement.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1230 and orders were issued to move at 1300 to an assembly area in the vicinity of Kaisersesch. The order of march was "D" plus the assault guns, A, B, Hqs and Hqs Co., "C", and Service. The march was completed without incident.

At 1800, Major Hunter received a message to report to CC"B".

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1845. The plan was for the Battalion to move at 0700. The Division objective was to secure a bridgehead over the Nahe River.

The order of march was: A/37, C/10 and mortars of the 10th; Command Group of the 37th and 10th; C/37 and A/10; Platoon of B/24; D/37 and the assault guns of the 10th and 37th; 22nd; Hq 37 and 10; 66; Hq CC"B" and Div Arty; B/37 and B/10; 37th Mortar Platoon; 191st; A/24; "A" trains; B/46; "B" Trains. Definite word was to be received during the night as to our movement.

At 2200, Lt. Ogden, our Liaison Officer, arrived and reported that we would move after 1200 tomorrow. This word was sent to the companies.

15 MARCH, 1945

At 1030, an order was received to move at 1145 and pass through the 90th Infantry Division which held a bridgehead over the Moselle River.

There was quite a delay at the bridge due to traffic congestion. The Battalion crossed the Moselle at approximately 1300, and proceeded along the route of march. The resistance was comparatively light and many prisoners were taken.

At about sundown, we reached Simmern, moved in, outposted all roads in the area and spent the night there.

During the day the Battalion had traveled approximately 33 miles. Enemy losses for the day were 50 killed, 8 trucks, 6 light vehicles, and 1 tank destroyed. Uncounted numbers of prisoners were taken. No accurate check could be made on them as they were marched back along the route constantly.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

16 MARCH, 1945

The companies moved out at 0630 and continued on the mission. Resistance was light until we reached the town of Norheim, where we encountered 20mm AA gun positions. These were destroyed.

C/37 and A/10 proceeded on to Bad Munster where the highway bridge had been blown. They located a double track railway bridge and succeeded in crossing two platoons over it. While crossing, they were under direct fire from 20mm AA guns located on the high ground, and bombed by German aircraft. The AA guns were strafed by P-47's and taken under fire by our assault guns, thus effectually silencing them.

"A" Company in the meantime had located another bridge at Oberhausen and the remainder of the Combat Command crossed there. "D" Company remained behind to outpost that bridge.

"B" Company had in the meantime been left in the vicinity of Huffelsheim to guard CC"B" Hqs and artillery.

The remainder of the Battalion proceeded to Hockstalten. A/37 and C/10 attacked and cleared this town. C/37 and A/10 had in the meantime cleared Altembamburg and joined "A" Company at Hockstalten. C/37 and A/10 then moved to Halgarten and outposted it. The Battalion CP was set up at Hockstalten.

The Battalion had proceeded about thirty miles during the day and had destroyed 50 trucks, 6 light vehicles, 1 105mm gun, killed 35 personnel and taken large numbers of prisoners.

17 MARCH, 1945

"B" Company moved up to join the Battalion, crossing the railroad bridge and arriving at Hockstalten at about 1100.

Lt. Col. Abrams, CO of CC"B", visited the Battalion at about 1000 and left orders to assault and take the towns of Furfeld and Frei Laubersheim in the afternoon.

The Battalion attacked at about 1500 and took these towns without opposition. We then proceeded on to Bad Kreuznach where opposition was encountered in the form of sniper and bazooka fire. The enemy had to be routed from the cellars.

B/37 and B/10 then assembled in the vicinity of the railroad station and outposted the town for the night. "A" Company outposted Hockenheim and Frei Laubersheim; "C" Company outposted Furfeld and Hockstalten; the Battalion CP was set up at Hackenheim.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

18 MARCH, 1945

At about 0700, the enemy counterattacked Hockstalten with SP's and tanks. With the aid of air support, the attack was repulsed.

At 1000, Lt. Col. Abrams arrived and discussed the situation with Major Hunter.

In the afternoon the Battalion attacked Volxheim which was stubbornly defended by tanks and infantry. B/37 and B/10 took the town and outposted it. "A" Company outposted the high ground to the East of Volxheim while "C" Company outposted Frei Leibisheim. The CP remained at Hockenheim.

During the afternoon Major Bautz and Major Scotti of CC"A" visited the CP. Major Bautz discussed with Captain Dwight the location of our units and those of CC"A".

Major Hunter was called to CC"B" at 1900. He returned and called a Company Commander's meeting at 2200. At this time, the companies were told that the Division was to try for a bridgehead in the vicinity of Mainz.

19 MARCH, 1945

At 0630, the Battalion again started to attack. Volxheim was cleared up. Then A/37 and C/10 proceeded to take Wollstein and Gumbsheim in spite of stubborn resistance. B/37 and B/10 took the town of Ekelshheim while C/37 and A/10 captured Wonsheim. "A" Company siezed the town of Wendelsheim and outposted the area with the aid of "C" Company.

Word had been received during the morning that we would proceed to Worms rather than Mainz.

This morning, at about 1100, enemy planes bombed the column in the vicinity of Wolsheim with anti-personnel bombs.

The Battalion CP was established that night at Siefersheim.

20 MARCH, 1945

The companies moved out at 0700 to continue the attack. Resistance was light.

Upon arrival at Pfeddersheim, one bridge had been blown over the Pfirrm River. The second was blown upon our approach.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

20 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

"C" Company circled the town to the North and found a bridge at Leiselheim which they crossed. "C" Company encountered resistance at Pfifflicheim. While they were engaged there, "A" Company bypassed "C" to the South and proceeded into Worms.

Bridges over and underpasses under the railroad tracks dividing the town of Worms in half were destroyed upon the arrival of "A" Company.

"C" Company found one bridge over the tracks to the South of "A" Company intact and moved one platoon to the banks of the Rhine. An outpost was set up on the river which destroyed many enemy who attempted to cross at night.

During the day, two batteries of 105's had been captured. Numerous vehicles were destroyed and many prisoners taken.

21 MARCH, 1945

Word was received at 0315 that we were not to proceed with cleaning out Worms, but were to be relieved by the 10th Infantry Regiment of the 5th Infantry Division. We were to proceed North on order towards Oppenheim.

Major Hunter was called to CC"B" at 0800. A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1000. We were to cross the IP at 1115. The order of march was: C/37, A/10; Comd Group; A/37, C/10; Platoon 24 Engrs; D/37 and the assault guns of the 10th and 37th; 22nd; Hq; Ron of the 37th; MG Platoon of the 10th; B/37; B/10; Maintenance of 37th.

During the afternoon the following towns were entered: Bechtheim, Mettenheim, Alsheim, Dorn-Durkheim, Frettenheim, Hillesheim, Dolgesheim, Eimsheim, and Weinsolsheim. No resistance was encountered. Eight prisoners were taken.

The Battalion CP was set up at Mettenheim. "D" Company outposted Gimsheim, "A" Company the town of Guntersblum, "B" Company the town of Mettensheim, and "C" Company the town of Alsheim.

Two enlisted men left today on a thirty day furlough in the United States.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, APO 254, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

22 MARCH, 1945

The day was generally spent in maintenance and cleaning up. At 1045, Major Hunter went to CC"B" to secure information concerning our future operations.

At 1500, a Company Commander's meeting was held. Major Hunter explained the general plan of operations. We were to be relieved by the 5th Infantry Division either tonight or tomorrow. We were then to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of Uffhofen. The 12th Corps was to secure a bridgehead across the Rhine. An Armored Division was then to pass through with the mission of securing a bridgehead across the Main River.

At 1530, a phone call was received from CC"B" to send one tank company and one infantry company to outpost Dienheim. B/37 and B/10 moved to Dienheim and outposted the town.

23 MARCH, 1945

The liaison officer arrived at 0800 with an overlay showing our route of march to the proposed division assembly area at Uffhofen.

"B" Company was attacked by enemy planes between 0730 and 0800. Anti-personnel bombs were dropped but no casualties were suffered.

Lt. Col. Abrams, CO of CC"B", visited the CP at 0830.

Major Hunter was called to CC"B" at 1330. A message was received from him at 1415 saying that our move to the rear had been cancelled. The companies were instead to be alerted to cross the Rhine over a bridgehead held by the 5th Infantry Division. Captain McMahon went out on a reconnaissance of the area occupied by the bridgehead.

Major Hunter was again called to CC"B" at 1900.

At 2020, the Liaison Officer arrived with the information that CC"A" would lead off in the morning and that we would follow sometime after 1100.

Lt. Col. Louis Huot, Psychological Warfare Officer, G-2 Section, 3rd Army, was an overnight visitor at the Battalion Headquarters.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

24 MARCH, 1945

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1000. The order of march within CC"B" was: C/25; C/704; A/37, C/10; Command Group 10 and 37; C/37; A/10; 22nd; Hq & Hq Co; B/37, B/10; 191; CC"B"; D/37 and assault guns of 10th and 37th; A/24; B/46; and A trains. We were to be ready to move on a one hour notice after 1200. The mission of CC"B" was to block any attacks from the South on the route of advance from Oben Romstadt to a point five kilometers North of Babenhausen.

Lt. Col. Abrams, CO of CC"B", visited the Battalion CP at 1400.

At 1545, word was received from CC"B" to move out at once. Leading elements of the column crossed the bridge over the Rhine at 1600. German aircraft made several efforts to bomb the bridge while the column was crossing.

At this time we received a new route of march taking us somewhat to the South of our original route.

The Battalion passed through the 5th Infantry Division and continued on its route against comparatively light resistance. It was determined at this time to continue the attack throughout the night. Three (3) towns were taken before midnight.

25 MARCH, 1945

During the early hours of the morning, the enemy was surprised and overrun by the attack, causing them to destroy many supply dumps. Resistance continued to be light.

Daybreak found the Battalion at Jugenheim, having covered a distance of about thirty (30) miles, where we halted briefly to resupply the vehicles. Approximately 200 prisoners were taken from that town.

The Battalion continued its rapid advance and by 1220 had reached the Main River.

"D" Company was sent to Niedernberg to attempt to secure a crossing. There was no bridge at this point. "D" Company then proceeded North to a railroad bridge across the Main River which it secured, after neutralizing demolitions on the bridge. "D" Company crossed the bridge and outposted the high ground on the East side.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

25 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

A/37 had in the meantime been sent to Aschaffenburg to try to secure the main highway bridge there. The bridge was blown when "A" Company was about 300 yards distant.

B/37, B/10, C/37, and A/10 crossed over the railroad bridge and started to attack Aschaffenburg. They were withdrawn on order and remained East of the Main River, outposting with D/37 the high ground to the East of the river.

Enemy planes made unsuccessful attempts to bomb the bridge, starting shortly before dark and continuing throughout the night.

On the 24th and 25th, the Battalion had destroyed 27 trucks, 23 AA guns, 7 SP's, 2 AT guns, 1 105 howitzer, 45 vehicles, 1 flak car, 1 motorcycle; 375 PW's were taken and 90 enemy killed.

26 MARCH, 1945

The early hours of the morning were highlighted by unsuccessful air attacks on the bridge.

At about 0120, the Battalion was alerted due to an enemy tank attack on the 25th Cavalry.

The day was dark with rain falling during the morning.

A Company Commander's meeting was held at 1500. The Battalion was to remain in its present location until relieved by elements of the 7th Army.

Major Fee, S-3 of CC"B", visited the Battalion at 1600.

Word was brought by our Liaison Officer at 1700 that we were to furnish a Medium Tank Company and a Platoon of Light Tanks as part of a task force to go on a special mission to the East. They were to attempt to rescue and bring back with them some American Prisoners of War.

Lt. Col. Abrams of CC"B", and Lt. Col. Cohen of the 10th Infantry, arrived at the CP at 1800 to discuss the mission with Major Hunter.

Plans were made for one medium tank company and one Infantry Company to make a break through at Schweinfurt to allow the task force to pass through. B/37 and B/10 were to make this break-through. The task force was composed of C/37, A/10, and a Platoon of D/37.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

26 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

B/37 and B/10 attacked Schweinfurt after a heavy artillery concentration (3 Battalions of 10 volleys). Their mission was to open one street and hold it while the task force went through. The attack was made shortly after 2100. Enemy resistance consisted of bazooka and small arms fire. B/37 and B/10 forced their way through town, overran an enemy mortar position, and held the route open until the task force passed through. One tank of B/37 was lost. Due to lack of any visible enemy, the operation was unusual. Thirty-five (35) enemy were captured and an unknown number killed.

B/37 and B/10 then returned and outposted the bridgehead.

27 MARCH, 1945

The CO of the 3rd Battalion, 104th Infantry Regiment, arrived about 0730 to make plans with Major Hunter to relieve us.

At 0800, Lt. Ogden, our Liaison Officer, arrived with word that we were to move before noon.

At 1000, word was received that we were in CC"R".

During the morning B/37 was relieved by elements of the 26th Division and crossed back over the Main River shortly after 1200.

Mr. Sommaripa, of the Psychological Warfare Bureau, left the Battalion this afternoon to join CC"B".

Word was sent to the Companies that we would go into an assembly area in the vicinity of Babenhausen. The order of march was "D" plus assault guns, A, Hq Co, B, and Service.

The Battalion moved out at about 1830 and arrived at Babenhausen at 2000; covering a distance of approximately fifteen (15) miles.

28 MARCH, 1945

The Liaison Officer arrived at 0800 with word that the Battalion was to be ready to move at 0930.

Major Hunter went to CC"R". Upon his return, a Company Commander's meeting was held. We were to be ready to move any time after 1200 and were to follow CC"B". The order of march was to be: Rcn/704, Rcn/37, D/37 and assault guns of 37; A/37; C/10; Comd Group 37 and 10; Hqs Reserve Command; Platoon of 24th Engrs; A/704; Division Forward; Hqs 37 and 10; B/37, B/10; B/24; A Trains.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Battalion, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

28 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

The head of the column moved out at 1415, covered a distance of fifty miles, and arrived at Munzenburg at 2230.

Colonel Blanchard, CO of CC"R", arrived at the CP at 2300 and discussed plans for movement of Reserve Command in the morning behind CC"A".

29 MARCH, 1945

The column moved out at 0900 but was halted after proceeding six kilometers.

Original plans were changed, CC"R", less Division Forward, was now to proceed along a separate route to the South to the town of Herstein.

The column moved out at 1230. Resistance was light. Several small towns and one large town were taken. About 300 prisoners were captured, one railroad terminal with much material was rendered useless, and a column of AA guns towed by full track prime movers were destroyed.

The Battalion arrived at Herstein at 1830 and outposted the town.

30 MARCH, 1945

"D" Company at 1000 sent a platoon to meet Division Forward and escort them to this area.

Major Churchill, S-3 of GOMP, visited the C.P. this morning and discussed the disposition of security with Major Hunter.

Col. Roberts, Assistant Divisional Commander, visited the C.P. and had dinner with Major Hunter.

Six P.V. left this morning for a 45 day furlough in the United States.

31 MARCH, 1945

Major Hunter was called to GOMP at 0800.

A company commanders meeting was held at 0900. We were to follow GOMP's route. The order of march was: "D" and Assault guns; A/37, C/10; Command Group 37 and 10; Hqs Res. Comd; C/24; A/704; Div. Fwd; 22nd; Hqs 37 and 10; B/37, B/10; B/24; A/trains; B/trains.

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Battalion Diary, Pq 37th Tank Battalion, 10 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

31 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

The Battalion moved out at 1000 and proceeded to Wersfeld, arriving at 1900, covering a distance of thirty miles. Three hours of this march was spent sitting along the road. The traffic jam was reminiscent of the 1942 Tennessee maneuvers. Several units tried to use the same road space at the same time. None succeeded.

For the Battalion Commander:

Roy C. Moon
ROY C. MOON
1st Lt. Inf.
Adjutant.

~~SECRET~~

HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

5 April, 1945

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

1 APRIL, 1945

The Liaison Officer arrived at 0800. He reported that the Division was to seize the communication centers of Ohrdruf and Gotha. Reserve Command was to follow CC"B"; to seize and hold the high ground in the vicinity of Oesterbeheingen and block the roads to the North and Northeast; to be prepared to reinforce CC"A" or CC"B".

The Battalion moved out at 1430. The Order of March was: D/37 and assault guns of 37th; A/37, C/10; Comd Group 37th and 10th; Hqs Reserve Command; C/24; A/704; 22nd; Division Forward; Hqs 37th and 10th; B/37, B/10; B/24; "A" Trains; "B" Trains.

The Battalion arrived at Nesselroden at about 1900 and set up the CP at that town.

The Battalion was notified today that the Division had been awarded the "Presidential Unit Citation" for extraordinary tactical accomplishment during the period from 22 December, 1944, to 27 March, 1945, inclusive.

2 APRIL, 1945

Major Hunter was called to a meeting at CC"R" at 1000.

A/37 moved this morning from Nesselroden to Unhausen and outposted that town.

Enemy air was active over the area throughout the day. The Battalion suffered no casualties.

Captain Hays and five (5) enlisted men rejoined the Battalion today after a thirty-seven (37) day furlough in the United States.

3 APRIL, 1945

Enemy air was again active over the area this morning but caused no casualties.

Word was received at about 1200 from CC"R" that the Battalion was alerted to move forward. The Order of March was the same as the day previous.

~~SECRET~~
Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

3 APRIL, 1945 (CONT'D)

The Battalion moved out at 1430 and proceeded 28 miles to Großenbehningen. The march was made without incident.

Mr. Lubrano and T/Sgt. McGuire arrived today from Personnel to pay the Battalion.

4 APRIL, 1945

Word was received this morning that the Battalion was alerted for movement after 1300 to Gotha. The Order of March was to be the same as the day previous.

The Battalion moved out at 1500 and arrived at Gotha at 1800, having covered a distance of twelve (12) miles over extremely congested roads.

5 APRIL, 1945

Notice was received this morning of the promotion of Lt. Ogden to 1st Lieutenant. Col. Blanchard, Commanding Officer of CC"R", visited our C.P. at 1100. Lt. Col. Abrams, Commanding Officer of CC"B", visited our C.P. this afternoon.

Word was received from Division to drop the 73 enlisted men and 4 officers who left on March 26 with the task force sent to rescue American Officer prisoners of war, as missing in action.

Twenty-two enlisted reinforcements arrived tonight for the Battalion.

6 APRIL, 1945

"A" and "B" companies alerted at 1700 to move to cut three roads south of Gotha. Have been shifted to south.

"B" company moved out at 0640 to go to town of Frederickroda to release British PW's reported in town and several important French civilians.

52 reinforcements joined the Battalion at 2100.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

7 APRIL, 1945

Six reinforcement officers and one enlisted man joined the Battalion. Six new medium tanks were also received.

The battalion received no word of any pending moves and the processing of new equipment and the training of personnel continued.

Visitors during the day were the Division Commander, Brig. General Hoge and Lt. Col. Euhler, 126th Ordnance Battalion Commander.

8 APRIL, 1945

The day was spent in training reinforcements. Plans were made to set up a firing and driving range.

All outposts were relieved at 1400 today.

Movies were shown this evening to the entire Battalion.

9 APRIL, 1945

Range firing was started today. Targets used were old German vehicles. Driving instructions were also given to the recently joined reinforcements.

Men from each company were taken to a nearby German concentration camp to see the evidence of the atrocities committed there.

10 April, 1945

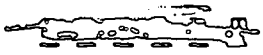
"B" Company fired on range at 0800 and "A" Company fired on range at 1300.

The Battalion was put in CC"B" at 1800 hours. Lt. Col. Sullivan, ACS, G-3, visited the CP at 1100 and talked with Captain Dwight concerning condition of Battalion for shifting to Combat Command "B". The answer was "Yes".

Lt. Col. Abrams and Lt. Col. Olbon, CC"B" CO and Executive Officer, visited the Battalion at 2000 hours and stayed until 2200 hours when a message arrived requesting them to return to their CP.

Major Hunter was called to a meeting at CC"B" at 2300 and received orders that the Battalion was to move out at 0700 the following morning in two (2) columns; CC"B" on the left, CC"A" on the right. For this operation the Division will have the 6th

~~SECRET~~



Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

10 APRIL, 1945 (Cont'd)

Armored Division and the 76th Infantry Division on its left boundary and the 89th Infantry Division will be on the South. The Division is now in the 20th Corps and the 4th will be teamed up with the 80th Infantry Division for this operation. Overlays showed that the Division would again be heading East.

A joint meeting of Company Commanders and Staff of 37th and 10th Infantry was held at the 10th Infantry CP at 2400, and these orders were put out and the operation discussed.

11 APRIL, 1945

At 0645, the companies moved out. March Order of CC"B": A/37, C/10, Comd Group 37th and 10th Infantry Battalions, B/37, A/10, B/24 (-), D/37 with Assault Guns, 22 FA, Hqs 37th and 10th, C/37, E/10, 171 FA, CC"B" Hqs, 5th Arty Group Hqs, B/24 (-), B/46, Trains, and C/489. Route of Advance: Friemar, Alach, Tiefthal, Gispersleben, Kerspleben, Niederzimmern, Ottstedt, and Grosskromsdorf.

As 22 FA went through the town of Kleinmolsen, an abandoned enemy tank was sighted which they knocked out with their M-7's. Air reported 4 - 5 more tanks in the vicinity and C/37 and B/10 were ordered to clear out the area. Air support of P-47's and the force of C/37 and B/10 destroyed 6 more enemy tanks in and around Kleinmolsen (378-750).

A/37 and C/10 continued on main route of march and encountered direct AT fire in the vicinity of Daasdorf and Haberndorf.

B/37 and A/10 took an alternate route Northeast from Ottstedt to 445758 and then East through the woods, coming out at 520765. They liberated a PW Camp with 800-1000 Russian and French Prisoners; encountered bazooka fire on East edge of woods.

A/37 and C/10 were ordered to return to Ottstedt and continue along B/37's route of advance.

After breaking out of the woods, B/37 and A/10 were momentarily stopped while D/37 and assault guns took the lead.

D/37 and assault guns ran into bazooka and small arms at Denstedt; they cleaned the town and then proceeded to Schwabsdorf which they outposted for the night.

A/37 and C/10 outposted Ulrichshalben; B/37 and A/10 outposted Sussenborn, and C/37 and B/10 cut roads leading into Grosskromsdorf from the West or rear.

Bn CP located in Grosskromsdorf for the night.

~~SECRET~~
Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

11 APRIL, 1945 (Cont'd)

Enemy casualties: Six (6) tanks, one (1) truck, two (2) Staff Cars, thirty (30) killed, fifty (50) PW's; liberated 800-1000 Russian and French Prisoners.

12 APRIL, 1945

Companies moved out at 0700 with march order of D/37 and Assault Guns, Comd Group 37th and 10th, A/37 and C/10, Flat B/24, C/37 and B/10, 22 FA, 177 FA, Hq 37 and 10, B/37 and A/10, CC"B" Hqs, 5th Arty Group Hqs, B/24 (-), B/46, A and B Trains CC"B".

Route of march: Ulrichshalben, Frankendorf, Hohlstedt, Krippendorf, Altengonna, Rodigen, town East of Kunitz, Kunitz, Laasan.

As head of column passed Vierzehn-heilige artillery and AA fire was encountered and continued until A/37 and C/10, receiving orders directly from Lt. Col. Abrams, CO CC"B", went through Lutzeroda, Closewitz, and then swung Northeast and checked the Southwest edge of woods at 687698. No artillery positions were found by them but artillery and AA fire stopped.

D/25 and Tank Destroyers working to our North flank was trying for a bridge over Saale River at Dornburg; bridge blown before taken.

D/37 and Assault Guns drove to Neuengonna to attempt to get railroad bridge over Saale River at that point; bridge was out and they worked South down main road into unnamed town (725695) West of Kunitz. D/37 reported bridge at 731629 blown.

In the meantime, A/37 and C/10 pushed East into town (725695) West of Kunitz; met bazooka and small arms fire. 1st Lieutenant Whitehill, CO of A/37, was wounded by a bazooka while dismounted outside his tank, and 2nd Lieutenant Nolan assumed command of Company.

Two companies of 10th Infantry dismounted from tanks and pushed on down to river to make bridgehead. Tanks of A/37, B/37, C/37, and D/37 deployed on high ground overlooking river to cover infantry bridgehead with direct fire.

Infantry was shuttled across river in rubber ponton boat, cleaned Kunitz, taking approximately one hundred fifty (150) PW's and then pushed on to high ground East of Kunitz.

B/24 started bridge at approximately 1700 estimating that five (5) or six (6) hours would be necessary for completion.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

12 APRIL, 1945 (Cont'd)

Orders were received that as soon as bridge was completed A/37 and C/10 would push on across River Saale on to Laasan and cut roads leading East out of the town. C/37 and B/10 would deploy to South of Kunitz and D/25 and Tank Destroyers would swing North to town of Golmsdorf and cover that sector.

Liaison sent to bridge and companies alerted to move across in accordance with orders at 1930.

Companies crossed and moved to positions at 1930. A/37 and C/10 captured thirty-six (36) PW's in Laasan.

Bn CP in town West of Kunitz (725693).

Lt Officer brought overlay from CC"B" showing tomorrow's routes, "A", "B", "C". D/25 and Tank Destroyers on route "A"; A/37 and C/10 under command of Captain Hays on route "B"; remainder of CC"B" on route "C".

Enemy casualties: One hundred fifty (15) PW's.

13 APRIL, 1945

At 0505 hours a message from CC"B" arrived informing us that the 319th Combat Team of the 80th is to attack Jena and that the 317th Combat Team of the 80th would cross behind us over the Saale River.

CC"B" moved out in three (3) columns at 0630 from their positions around the Saale River at Kunitz.

Considerable difficulties were encountered getting through trails in woods East of Laasan.

D/25 and Tank Destroyers on route "A" (Beutnitz, Merten-dorf, Grosshelmsdorf, Kleinpotewitz, Rosenthal, Gossra, Drossdorf, Kayna, Delzig) met little opposition. The bridge over the Weisse Elster River was out at Rossendorf so they swung South to Rosenthal, captured bridge, and established bridgehead.

A/37 and C/10 under Captain Hays on route "B" (Craitschen, Poxdorf, Petersburg, Konigshafen, Trebnitz, Rosenthal, Nicklesdorf, Schelbach, Wittgendorf, Brockau, Mehna) met no opposition. Crossed bridgehead over Weisse Elster River at Rosenthal and took up position East of Nicklesdorf and awaited orders of Col. Abrams to move out on axis of advance.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

13 APRIL, 1945 (Cont'd)

The remainder of CC"B" moving in order D/37 and Assault Guns, C/37 and B/10, Plat B/24, 22 and 177 FA, Comd Group, B/37 and A/10, CC"B" Hq, 5th Arty Group Hq, B/24 (-), B/46, A and B Trains CC"B" on route "C" (Wagau, Hainsplitz, Petersburg, Rosenthal, Silbitz, Heuckewalde, Hartha, Garbisdorf, Wolkenburg, Kaufungen) met small arms and sniper fire in the town of Hainsplitz where Major Hunter was wounded and evacuated. Captain Dwight assumed command of the Battalion at this point.

The three (3) columns converged South of Mehna at 719730. Air reported bridge over Zwick Mulde River at Wolkenberg intact and D/37 and Assault Guns seized bridge and established bridgehead. C/37 and B/10 moved to high ground beyond Kaufungen on hill 357; B/37 and A/10 to high ground via hill 312; A/37 and C/10 Southeast Tauscha.

B/37 and A/10 and Battalion Headquarters received sporadic artillery and rocket fire during the night.

Battalion CP in Kaufungen.

Distance travelled for the day approximately sixty-nine (69) miles.

Enemy casualties: Ten (10) killed, one hundred fifty (150) PW's, ten (10) horsedrawn vehicles, several AA and Radar positions overrun, one (1) enemy recovery vehicle destroyed, ten (10) unarmored vehicles destroyed.

14 APRIL, 1945

Liaison Officer arrived at CP with an overlay and general instructions that we are to enlarge our bridgehead in present vicinity.

Captain Dwight was called to CC"B" at 0900 for orders.

Company Commanders and Staff went to 10th Infantry CP at 0300 for joint meeting and planning.

C/37 and B/10 moved from present position at 1130 through Frohna where they met bazooka and small arms fire on to clean out Muhlau, Chursdorf, no resistance, and then through Burgstadt and Southeast to hill 350. Cleaned out portion of Taura necessary for security.

B/37 and A/10 moved from present position and cleaned out Burgstadt meeting bazooka and small arms fire and taking 200-300 Prisoners. Lt. Pielak was killed; injured by grenade and beaten to death by Germans before rescue could be made.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn., 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

14 APRIL, 1945 (Cont'd)

A/37 and B/10 moved from present position along road Southeast Hartmannsdorf through Wittgensdorf to hill 350, North of the town.

D/37 and Assault Guns moved North to hill 296 going cross country West of Burgstadt.

D/25 and Tank Destroyers moved Northwest of Zwick Mulde River and seized bridge at Fenig, then moved through Muhlau, Hartmannsdorf to hill 360, cutting the main road.

D/37 and Assault Guns encountered enemy night patrol consisting of twelve (12) men; killed four (4), captured two (2).

Battalion CP moved to Hartmannsdorf.

Enemy casualties: Four (4) killed, approximately three hundred (300) captured.

15 APRIL, 1945

Col. Abrams, CO CC"B", visited CP at 1300.

General Hoge, Division Commander, visited CP at 1600; congratulated Captain Dwight on the fine manner in which he took over the Battalion, discussed strength, vehicle status, and any problems we have.

Captain Dwight and Captain Hays attended a meeting at 10th Infantry CP at 1700 and discussed plans for taking two (2) bridges East of our present positions.

One Platoon A/37 and C/10 took bridge at 625675.

One section C/37 and one platoon B/10 took bridge at 620700; roadblock on opposite bank reduced by civilians upon request.

Received twelve (12) new reinforcements.

16 APRIL, 1945

Col. Abrams, CO CC"B", visited CP at 0915 and discussed withdrawing Companies to position Northwest of Burgstadt.

At 1300-1500, Companies were relieved by 80th Infantry and withdrew to positions Northwest of Burgstadt. Closed by 1600.

Battalion CP North edge of Burgstadt.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn, 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

17 APRIL, 1945

Companies sent men to showers and performed maintenance in AM.

At 1100, received phone call from CC"B" alerting us for movement to the South this PM to take up five (5) kilometer sector in line. Complete details by Liaison Officer later.

Liaison Officer arrived at 1300 with orders for movement. CC"B" is to relieve Companies "A", "B", "C", "L", and "K" of the 319th Regiment of the 80th Infantry Division by 1500.

Captain Hays and the Reconnaissance Platoon went with guides from 10th and contacted each company we were to relieve. As each position was picked a guide was sent back to pick up the companies and bring them to their positions.

A/37 and C/10, and B/37 and A/10 moved to high ground South of Gruna from coordinates 533570 to 580580. Companies facing South.

C/37 and B/10 moved to position Northeast Siegmars and Southeast Rabenstein from coordinates 578587 to 598608. Company facing Southeast.

D/37 and Assault Guns moved to Position North Rabenstein from coordinates 608598 to 598620 facing East.

Battalion CP located at Gruna.

18 APRIL, 1945

Captain Dwight visited CC"B" about 1000 and returned with the news that we are to be relieved today by the 76th Division. Today or tomorrow we are to move West to Division Assembly Area in the vicinity of Sommeritz (627-629), and then we are to move West to Fulda. We will be in the XVIII Corps of the 3rd Army. Other troops will be the 101st Airborne, 5th and 8th Divisions. From Fulda we will push Southeast to join the Russians.

Col. Cohen visited the CP at 1100.

Company Commander's meeting at 1500 at which time the move was discussed.

Received message from 10 saying our companies will be relieved this afternoon; will withdraw to ground vicinity 588555.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn., 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

18 APRIL, 1945 (CONT'D)

Message from Liaison Officer at 1520 ordering reconnaissance made of area to which we are moving tomorrow (627-629). Reconnaissance Platoon and 1st Sergeants from each company left to reconnoiter area at 1600.

Liaison Officer brought Mr. Davenport, Collier's War Correspondent, to CP for visit at 1430. Left at 1700.

D/37 and Assault Guns relieved at 1700.

A/37 and B/37 relieved at 1830.

C/37 relieved at 2000.

Col. Abrams, CO CC"B", made a social visit to CP at 2100; left at 2330.

Received phone call at 2335 from CC"B" saying Division would begin to move to assembly area vicinity Sommeritz (627-629) at 1200 tomorrow.

19 APRIL, 1945

Liaison Officer brought orders to move to vicinity of Sommeritz at 1200. Order of March for CCB: D/25, C/704, 37th, 10th, CCB, 22, B/24, B/46, B/126. Route of March: IP 533588, RJ 315578, Gosnitz, Schmolin to unit assembly areas.

Order of March for 37: D, Hq, A, B, C, Tns.

Company commanders meeting at 0945, order of march and route given out. D moves to IP at 1200.

Col. Roberts, CO CC"B" while Col. Abrams is on TD with 20th AD for 7 days, visited CP at 1030, left at 1105.

D crossed IP at 1213.

Bn closed in assembly area at 1630. D in vicinity of Weissbach; A vicinity Unteschen; B vicinity of 227647, C & Sv in Sommeritz. Bn CP located Weissbach for night.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn., 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

20 APRIL, 1945

No movement orders received so companies were given training schedule consisting of crew training, radio tenders instructions, first echelon maintenance of vehicles and men.

Major Spires, Assistant Adjutant General, called and took up matters of personnel.

Captain Dwight and Captain McMahon attended meeting at CC"B" at 1300.

Company Commander's meeting at 1630.

21 APRIL, 1945

Today was devoted to cleaning and maintenance of vehicles and equipment, driving instructions, and crew drill for the tank companies.

General Hoge, Division Commanding General, paid the Battalion a short visit this afternoon.

Movies were shown this evening for the first time in this area.

22 APRIL, 1945

The companies followed a training schedule of cleaning vehicles and weapons, crew drill, and gunnery instruction.

The Red Cross Clubmobile served each company between the hours of 1100 and 1300.

Colonel Roberts, acting CO of CC"B", visited this Headquarters about 1500.

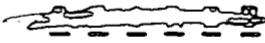
A meeting of Company Commanders was held at 1600, at which time the promotions of Lt. North to Captain, and Lt. Nolan to 1st Lieutenant, were announced.

Lt. Col. Parker, CC 94th Field Artillery Battalion, visited us at about 1630.

Movies were shown again this evening.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn., 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

23 APRIL, 1945

Training schedule today called for maintenance of vehicles, instruction in radio procedure, and general cleaning of clothing and personnel.

A message was received from CC"B" saying that we would probably move tomorrow.

Liaison Officer arrived at 1930 with details of the move. Company Commander's meeting was held at 2030.

Route of march: IP RJ157619, Autobahn West to Autobahn crossing Southwest of Hermsdorf (J9063), South on Autobahn to vicinity Bayreuth. Our bivouac party, consisting of the Reconnaissance Platoon and First Sergeants, which left at noon today will meet the Battalion North of Bayreuth.

Order of march for CC"B": D/25, C/704, 37th, 10th, CC"B", 22nd, E/24, B/46, B/126, with A/489 dispersed in the column.

Order of march for Battalion: "D", Hq, "C", "B", "A", Service. Departure time between 0900 and 1000.

Major Bautz returned this evening from CC"A" and assumed command of the Battalion, Captain Dwight Ex. Officer, Captain Hays S-3, Captain McMahon S-2.

Phone call from G-1 announced that Staff Sergeant Herman L. Walling's commission had come through.

Movies were shown again this evening.

24 APRIL, 1945

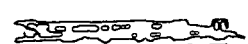
The Battalion moved today to Stockau (J683539), following prescribed route except for detour vicinity Hirschberg to avoid blown bridge. Route from Bayreuth: Atchig, Neunkirchen, Leben, Stockau. Head of column crossed IP 1220, arrived here at 2100.

During the march, a tank from the 35th Tank Battalion, just ahead of our leading vehicles, was knocked out by a bazooka fired by a civilian who escaped. First aid was administered to members of the crew by Major Bautz and Captain Hays.

"A" and "B" Company vicinity Neunkirchen, "C" vicinity Glutzdorf, Service vicinity Atchig, "D" Company vicinity Lessau.

Distance traveled 105 miles.

- 12 -



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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn., 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

25 APRIL, 1945

Companies devoted the day to maintenance and cleaning of vehicles after the long march of yesterday.

Captain Dwight and Captain Hays went out during the afternoon and selected a range site for tank firing.

Major Baum of CC"B" visited the CP and conferred with Staff Sergeant Kenneth J. Smith of Company "C", one of the men who left with the task force on March 26, and who returned yesterday with a wealth of information about the experiences of the troops taking part in the mission, and of his own escape, recapture and eventual liberation.

Highlights of Sergeant Smith's story are as follows: The task force started out the night of 26 March and met no opposition until reaching the town of Gemunden. Two tanks were knocked out there. The column by-passed the town and headed North for Hamelburg, where stiff opposition was met in the form of tanks, SP's and small arms. Hamelburg was entered at 1630 and the medium tanks held the town while the light tanks and half-tracks went on to the PW camp and released all the prisoners. It was dark by the time they were ready to return. They went back through Hessdorf, and after leaving that town, ran into bazooka fire, so the column turned back to Hessdorf to plan a new route. The men were exhausted and dropped off to sleep until 0700. Soon after starting out again they ran into direct tank fire from all sides, were overwhelmed and taken prisoner, and taken to Nurnburg. The Red Cross ordered them out of there because the city was to be bombed, so they were taken towards Munchen. On the way Sergeant Smith escaped and stayed with a German family for eight (8) days. After leaving there he was recaptured and held until released by elements of the 14th Armored Division. In Sergeant Smith's opinion, the operation would have been successful had they started out five (5) hours earlier, and if the men had been rested before jumping off.

26 APRIL, 1945

The training schedule called for maintenance of vehicles, crew drill, classes in radio maintenance, with "C" Company firing on the range this afternoon using old German vehicles as targets.

Lt. Col. Abrams, Division Surgeon, visited the CP this afternoon, also Lt. Col. Parker, CO of the 94th Field Artillery Battalion.

The Red Cross Clubmobile served all companies during the afternoon.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn., 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

27 APRIL, 1945

Companies "A", "B", and "D" fired on the range today, the time before and after firing being devoted to dry running and correcting deficiencies noted during the firing.

Major Fee, S-3 of CC"B", was a visitor today, also Major Dayton of the Historian's Office of the Third Army.

Kitchens were set up and served "B" rations today.

Monthly physical inspection was held today.

28 APRIL, 1945

Major Bautz attended a Unit Commander's meeting at Division Headquarters at 1000.

Company Commander's meeting was held at 1600, at which time Major Bautz explained the general situation. The 4th Armored Division is in 12th Army Group Reserve, earmarked for Third Army.

Other subjects discussed were discipline, morale, standards of dress, increased attention to maintenance, march discipline, and our responsibilities in the occupational police of the areas we occupy.

Orders arrived announcing the promotion to Captain of Lt. Pancake and Lt. Whitehill.

"D" Company received four (4) new M-24 light tanks.

29 APRIL, 1945

No training schedule was put out today, giving men an opportunity to attend church services, wash clothing, etc.

Major Bautz attended a Unit Commander's meeting at Division Headquarters at 1000.

30 APRIL, 1945

Schedule today called for crew drill and maintenance, but was interrupted by the fact that today is payday, and a USO show is being held in Bayreuth, to which the companies sent men for each of the three (3) shows.

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Battalion Diary, Hq 37th Tank Bn., 5 April, 1945 (Cont'd)

30 APRIL, 1945 (Cont'd)

At 1500 a message came in that the Division has been released to the XII Corps. Captain McMahon, Lt. Roberts, a Section of the Rcn Platoon, and a billeting party from each company left at 1330 to report to CC"A" at Buhl. Latest information is that we may move tomorrow afternoon.

For the Battalion Commander:

Wilbert H. Albers
WILBERT H. ALBERS,
WOJG, USA,
Adjutant.

ROUTE OF MARCH CC "B"

MAP: R7

SCALE: 1/100,000

DATE:

OVERLAY: 37 tk bn

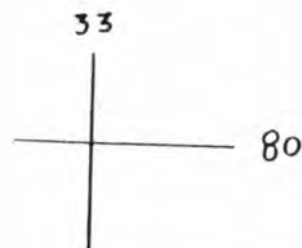
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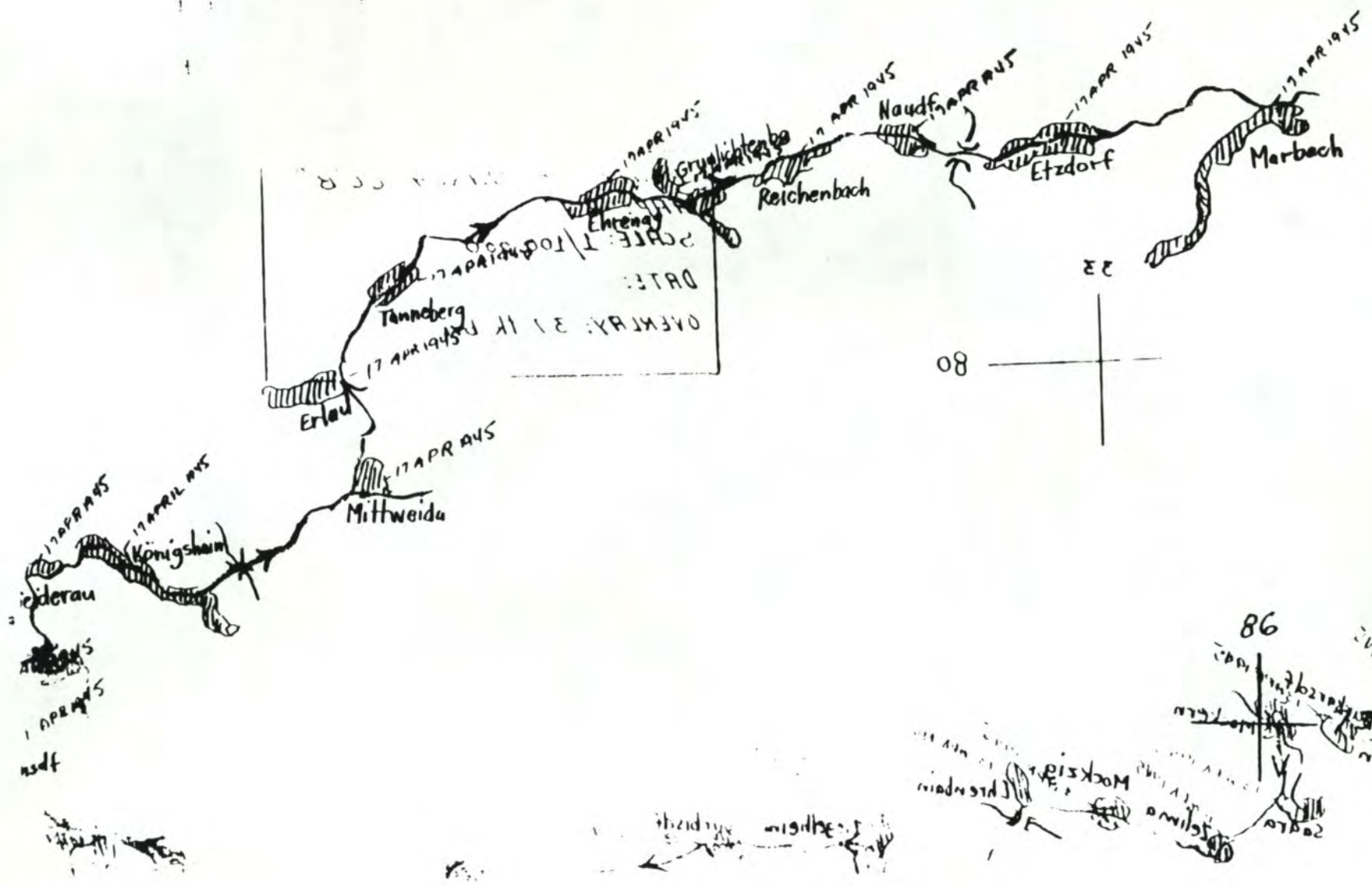
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13 APR 1945
R07951

ROUTE OF MARCH CC "B"
 MAP: R7
 SCALE: 1/100,000
 DATE:
 OVERLAY: 37 tk bn







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HEADQUARTERS THIRTY SEVENTH TANK BATTALION
APO 254, US Army

5 May, 1945

SUBJECT: Battalion Diary.

TO : The Adjutant General, 4th Armd Div, APO 254, US Army.

1 MAY, 1945

No movement orders were received today. Battalion moves tomorrow at approximately 0700. Order of march for CC"B": D/25, C/704, CC"B" Hq, B/24, B/46, 10, 94, 37, B/126, A/489 dispersed in column. Order of march for 37: "D", Hq & Hq Co., "C", "B", "A", Service. CC"B" IP, 774560; Division IP, Heinesruth, 8340.

Typhus booster shots were given this evening.

Company Commander's meeting was held at 1800, when the march order and route of march were put out.

2 MAY, 1945

Head of column moved out at 0700, crossed Division IP at 0830. Route of march: Route 85 to Regen, passing through Creussen, Kirchenthumbach, Haag, Vilseck, Hahnbach, Amberg, Schwandorf, Wackersdorf, Neubau, Roding, Cham, Miltach, Viechtach, Patersdorf, Regen, Deggendorf, Deggenau, Waltersdorf, Schwanenkirchen, Iggenbach to Schollnach (U997318). Arrived 0130, length of march, 155 miles. Hq, Service, "A", "B" and "C" in and around Schollnach, "D" Company at Engelfing, U990338.

3 MAY, 1945

Companies spent the day on maintenance work after the long road march of yesterday.

Major Bautz attended meeting at CC"B" at 1500.

Company Commander's meeting was held at 1900. The general situation was given out. 4th AD to take Prague. Two routes are available, Route 11 to Pilsen and 14 to Prague, or the Munich-Prague highway. Administrative matters taken up were march discipline, bumper markings, saluting, and smoking by drivers and tank crews.

- 1 -

~~SECRET~~

Battalion Diary, Headquarters 37th Tank Battalion, 5 May, 1945

4 MAY, 1945

Colonel Abrams, C. C. of CO"B" visited the CO of this morning, while Major Fee, S-3 of the same Headquarters, visited in this afternoon.

Companies continued maintenance work.

5 MAY, 1945

Major Bautz and Capt Hays attended a meeting at CO"B" early this morning, and brought back the following information which was given out at Company Commander's meeting at 0900. Division will move through lines of 90th and 5th Infantry Divisions and proceed to Prague in two columns. Order of march CO"B": D/28, D/37, C/704, Platoon E/10, Section R/37, Command Group, B/37 and C/10, Platoon E/24 and steel truck, 94, E/37 and A/10, Hq 37 and 10, 22, C/37 and E/10(-), CO"B" Hq, Div Arty Hq., E/24 (-), B/46, Trains, with D/28 and Assault Platoon/37 falling in rear of column for trains protection after going through pass. Radio silence until Lindelberg is reached. IP is town square in Hengersberg; head of column crosses IP at 1200, on Corps order.

Head of Battalion column moved out at 1030 to go to vic Hengersberg where Infantry Companies are to join tank Companies. D, A and B Companies had moved out when word was received that move had been called off. "I" Company vic Schwanenkirchen (U939299) Iggenbach (U982229), "D" Company vic Hengersberg (U901322). This move proved to be the greatest abortion of false pregnancy that this unit has experienced either in maneuvers or in the present war.

Telephone call at 2215 to the effect that we would move at first light.

6 MAY, 1945

Battalion Hq. left Stockau at 0500, crossed IP at Hengersberg approximately 0731. Route of march for CO"B": Hengersberg, Seelbach, Deggendorf, Regen, Schweinbatt, Zweisel, Ludwigsthal, Eisenstein, Mestys Zelagno Ruda, Glaserwald, Dobra Voda, Hartmanice, Susice, Rab, Horazdovice, Vel Bor, Soeradice, Kodor, with head of column reaching Lnare.

B-1 halftrack crossed border into Czechoslovakia at 1120. Battalion Hq. arrived Fole (379083) 1330. Hq. Company vic Hador (375073), "A" Company vic Fole (380095), "B" Company vic Fole (373083), "C" Company (295090), "D" Company Lnare (380132) and Service Company vic Horazdovice (330973).

~~SECRET~~

Battalion Diary, Headquarters 37th Tank Battalion, 5 May, 1945

6 MAY, 1945 CONT'D

Distance traveled 89 miles. No resistance was encountered. Enemy prisoners 39 men, 3 officers. In addition, "C" Company was sent out by higher Headquarters to round up an estimated 1200 prisoners.

Lnare is on the restraining line beyond which we are not to go until released by SHAEF.

During the night several messages came in from "A" and "D" Companies reporting large enemy concentrations and vehicle movements to our north and on both flanks. Most of these reports came from Czech Partisans. Higher Hq refused permission for artillery fire on the reported concentrations. The following morning patrols proved most of these reports to be greatly exaggerated.

7 MAY, 1945

"D" Company went out on patrol during the morning, going through towns of Kasejovice, Hvozdeny, Rozmital, Blatna, and several small villages, meeting no resistance. "C" Company went out on task force commanded by Col. Cohen, cleared out Kotoun, Kladrubce, Budislovice, Dozice, Radosice, Me Smolivec, taking 250 prisoners. New location of the Company is Sveradice (350033). At 1800 a message was received that patriots had reported 20 tanks and 1200 SS troops headed for Rozmital. "A" and "C" Companies moved out to take up defensive positions north of Lnare. It was found that the report was unfounded, and the Companies returned to former positions except a platoon of "B" Company, which investigated another report, found nothing, but remained at crossroads on west flank of "D" Company for the night. "A" Company remained at (375155)

Col. Parker was a visitor at the CP today, and Col. Clbon, Ex C. of CC"B" visited shortly after.

At approximately 1800 a radio message was received ordering cessation of all offensive action, and ordering defensive positions taken up. Shortly after a written message was received announcing the unconditional surrender of all German forces to the Allies, effective 0001B Hours 9 May, 1945. Copy of this message is enclosed.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HEADQUARTERS 4TH ARMORED DIVISION
APO 204, U. S. Army

7 May 1945

The following message from the Supreme Commander is repeated for the information and guidance of all concerned:

TO CG 4TH ARMD DIV

FROM SHAEF FORWARD 071030B MAY 1945

REF NO FWD-20801

CITE SHGCT BOOK MESSAGE

1. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND SIGNED THE UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER OF ALL GERMAN LAND, SEA, AND AIR FORCES IN EUROPE TO THE ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE AND SIMULTANEOUSLY TO THE SOVIET HIGH COMMAND AT 0141 HOURS CENTRAL EUROPEAN TIME, 7 MAY UNDER WHICH ALL FORCES WILL CEASE ACTIVE OPERATIONS AT 0001B HOURS 7 MAY.

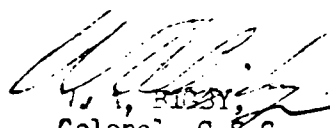
2. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY ALL OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS BY ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE WILL CEASE AND TROOPS WILL REMAIN IN PRESENT POSITIONS. MOVES INVOLVED IN OCCUPATIONAL DUTIES WILL CONTINUE. DUE TO DIFFICULTIES OF COMMUNICATION THERE MAY BE SOME ACTION. DEFENSIVE PRECAUTIONS WILL BE TAKEN.

3. ALL INFORMED DOWN TO AND INCLUDING DIVISIONS, TACTICAL AIR COMMANDS AND GROUPS, BASE SECTIONS, AND EQUIVALENT. NO RELEASE WILL BE MADE TO THE PRESS PENDING AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE HEADS OF THE THREE GOVERNMENTS.

SIGNED EISENHOWER

By command of Brigadier General HOGE:

DISTRIBUTION: "B"


Colonel, G.S.C.,
Chief of Staff.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~
Battalion Diary, Headquarters 37th Tank Battalion, 5 May, 1945

7 MAY, 1945 CONT'D

Several strange orders were received during the day, such as protecting German troops from Czech Partisans, which were carried out without the usual enthusiasm.

The news concerning the unconditional surrender was warmly welcomed by there were no demonstrations. It was a very quiet day.

8 MAY, 1945

Companies spent the day on maintenance and cleaning of clothing. Section of the Recon Platoon rounded up several hundred prisoners north of Rosmital and returned to the PW camp. The arrival of 13 gas trucks somewhat alleviated the current shortage of gasoline.

Message this evening said we will probably stay here for about a week. Billeting parties are to be ready to leave on call, to go to our occupational area and choose billets. Vehicles are to be cleaned up and preparations made for several long marches.

Colonel Parker, C. C. of 94, visited the CP this evening.

V-E Day was observed quietly.

9 MAY, 1945

Companies continued maintenance work and cleaning of clothing and vehicles. Capt Hays went to Olympic Forward and brought back overlay showing our occupational area, generally S W of Amberg. He then left for the area with a billeting party from each Company.

Lt. C. arrived at 2100 with instructions for the interception and disposition of German troops estimated at 120,000 moving toward our area. D/37 plus B/704 to establish outposts at Hvozday (3821) and Blatna (4510) including road nets. A/37 plus C/10 to establish outposts at RJ east of Neponuk (290135). Following points are from the surrender terms: (a) All weapons to be collected and stored except officers' pistols and 1 rifle with 10 rounds of ammo per 100 men. (b) All Germans including civilians to halt in place and bivouac. (c) Germans to report location and strength to nearest Allied unit, and await further orders.

Movies were shown to Companies during the day and evening.

~~SECRET~~
Battalion Diary, Headquarters 37th Tank Battalion, 5 May, 1945

10 MAY, 1945

Companies continued maintenance and cleaning, "A" and "D" moved to take up outpost positions ordered yesterday. When "D" Company arrived they found a White Russian Div. had already moved in. Capt. Donahue went up the road to contact SS troops as ordered by higher Hq. He found that Partisans had fired on the SS column in the vic of Milni. The SS returned fire, and the White Russians joined in on the side of the Partisans, resulting in a battle in which about 12 SS men were killed. However Capt Donahue, flying an American flag on his jeep, stopped the battle and brought the situation under control. A German Corps Commander with his staff was put in charge of all the enemy bevacue areas.

Movies were shown again this evening.

11 MAY, 1945

Elements of the Red Army made contact with our units. Units of the US 90th Div. have moved in on the restraining line to the West of Lnare.

The Administrative Center having been disbanded, our Personnel Section returned to the Battalion.

A U.S.C. Unit gave three shows in the Battalion Headquarters area for all Companies.

12 MAY, 1945

Having been relieved by elements of the 90th Division, Company "A" moved to vic Blatna. Other Companies continued maintenance and cleaning of vehicles.

Red Cross Clubmobiles visited each Company, and movies were shown during the afternoon and evening.

13 MAY, 1945

No change in the disposition of the Companies.

Capt. Hays returned from the billeting detail with information of the facilities available. Battalion Hq. will be in Neumarkt, with the other Companies in towns nearby.

Major Hunter returned from the hospital last night and assumed command of the Battalion. Major Bautz Ex. C., Capt Dwight S-3 and Capt. Hays S-2.

14 MAY, 1945

Companies remained in position, "D" Co. turning over 3,500 prisoners to the Russians.

~~SECRET~~

7111 207

Narrative of the Attack of the 37th Tk Bn (CCA, 4th Armd Div) from VIC RAIDS
to LORIENT, 27 July to 9 August 1944, as told by Capt McMahon (D Company)

2 2 7

(Note: Capt McMahon commanded D Company (Lt Tks) throughout the campaign. D Co habitually led the 37th Bn advance which in turn was always at the head of the combat command column. He told the story with a minimum of questioning and with a fluency (except for the first few days) which might indicate that he had been over the narrative before.)

The 4th Armd Div held a narrow front in the Cherbourg peninsula prior to the breakthrough. One infantry battalion with B company 37th Tk Bn relieved the 4th Inf Div in the sector between the 83d and 90th Inf Divs. The latter two divs attacked 28 (?) Aug to pinch out ~~of~~ the 4th Armd Div. The 4th Armd Div at 1400 29 August attacked in column of combat commands, B leading, through PERRIERS, and COUTANCES to AVRANCHES where the first serious opposition was encountered.

CCB entered AVRANCHES the evening of 30 August and the division CP was set up just east of the city. During the night Germans came back into the city from the west and south. The next morning Co D, 37th Tk Bn ~~(CCA)~~ at the head of CCA arrived at the crossroads northwest of Avranches. They had been told that they would get orders for further advance at Avranches. Capt McMahon halted his company short of the bridge across the SEE river at this point and went up to the head of column to contact the battalion command and find out where CCB was and what the orders to advance were. At that moment a building across the street caved in, another fell almost immediately afterwards. Capt McMahon thought at first of mines or delayed action bombs. Then a tank started to blaze up ahead. German AT guns located on the high ground west and south of Avranches were firing into the CR position, ~~a~~ interdictory rather than observed fire for destruction apparently. The terrain in which Co D was stopped is flat and marshy. One platoon of D Co got off the road to the right and up into an ~~xx~~ orchard. A Co of the 37th deployed behind them. The rest of Co D assembled in an area just east of the road. B and C Companies deployed on either side of the road north and the artillery got into position in the vic of LA MONERIE. In the meantime the 8th Tk Bn (CCB) was moving up to the CR from the west. Most of the casualties suffered in this brief engagement ~~xxx~~ were in A Company, 8th Tk Bn, which ran into the AT fire when they stuck their noses around the corner short of the CR. With the tanks in position and firing, a company of infantry was sent down the road and the enemy was quickly cleaned out.

To continue the advance south, CCA split into four task forces, each built around a company of tanks and each commanded by the tank company commander. A company had two companies of infantry; B company, some infantry and a battery of artillery; C company had a company of engineers and a battalion of arty; D company had a company of infantry and the Bn assault guns. D company was to advance on the right flank of the combat command with the mission of securing the dam across the SELUNE River and bridges in the vicinity. Enemy opposition from AVRANCHES down was stiff. D Company advanced in column, a platoon of tanks leading, followed by a platoon of inf, a battery of assault guns, infantry company (-), a tank platoon, the remaining tank platoon guarding the flanks of the column. Task Force D had no maintenance except one recovery vehicle and their medical support consisted of one peep and eight medics. They had no facilities for evacuating wounded or prisoners; fortunately they had ~~xxxx~~ no need for either.

The advance of D company southeast encountered a series of point battles at road blocks or with isolated motorcyclists. At the little town of LA BLANCDINIÈRE

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the column halted briefly, and the civilians came out with wine, eggs, tomatoes, flowers and crowded around the vehicles. A German column entered the town from the opposite direction. There was some firing, and the Germans, surprised backed out. Capt McMahon had his tank at a side street with the gun trained down the street, when he saw ~~was~~ a German ambulance come towards him. Not wanting to shoot he gestured at the ambulance to go back. It was some time before the German understood; then he backed down the street in a hurry.

TF D moved on. Approaching the forest in the vicinity of LES CHERIS, Lt Donahue (2d Plat) spotted two AT guns at a road block on a road crossing the route of advance and sent word to Capt McMahon. McMahon decided that it was too late in the day to go after them; it was getting dark and they were only half way to their objective. Lt Donahue said OK, then with his gunner got out of his tank and went to take a look at the guns. Back in the tank they traversed the turret at right angles to the direction of advance, put the tank in high gear. As they crossed the road, the gunner fired one round, hit one of the guns and the crew took off. The forest was apparently an artillery park; an ammunition dump was located at southern edge near LA MAUDINERE, but there was no time to clear it out. The infantry was sent in to mop up areas near the roads. In the meantime tank fire had set the ammunition dump burning and the column was afraid they might not be able to get by. Ahead of them they could see an enemy column including seven tanks fleeing south. They decided at last that if the infantry crouched low in the halftracks and the peep ~~drivers~~ drivers prayed, they could make it. They did and caught up with the German column ahead. They got one German tank which broke down in the town of LA MAUDINERE from mechanical difficulties, and machine gunned the crew which was scrambling out just as they came up. Past the town they continued to fire at what they could see. In the meantime three P47's came over ahead, and began playing the column in front of TFD. The planes disabled the ~~lines~~ vehicles and TFD disposed of the crews.

Although the map shows a road crossing the dam at the SELUNE River, it turned out to be a footpath and TFD arriving there had to backtrack northwest to the bridge at the main road south from VEZINS. Their route up along the river was a narrow road cut into the steep banks and enfiladed from German positions across the river. These held up the move briefly until the assault guns put a few rounds of smoke on the high ground from which the enemy fire was coming. The Germans, apparently, figuring this to be registration, for an artillery concentration, withdrew. TFD crossed the river. It was then dark, but the objective still had to be cleaned out and outposted. Two tank platoons and two infantry platoons were sent to sweep ~~along~~ south bank of the river, while a squad of infantry was despatched to the dam to take care of the guards there. The remaining tank platoon and infantry platoon (-) outposted the road junction just south of VEZINS. In that position the Task Force took the only substantial number of prisoners they got during the fighting, when a German company led by five officers walked into our lines thinking we must be friendly troops. Although they had heard some of the fighting, they said they thought it must be a landing of parachutists. The squad sent to the dam had no trouble with the guards there, who were captured singly, by each other's invitation. These guards were a regular guard company and although there was some evidence that plans had been made to blow the dam, it was not to have been done by the guards. They had been so completely surprised that Lt Donahue the next morning walked into the power house and found the commander ~~dying~~. Apparently thinking Donahue an escaped American prisoner, the German was sure his last days had come; he surrendered on his knees praying.

The other three task forces had all reached their objectives by night and the next morning ~~the~~ CCA reassembled in an area north of BARDET. The IP for farther advance was DUCEY; thence CCA was to proceed to ST JAMES and then by secondary roads advance on RENNES, while CCB advanced by the main roads. They reached ST JAMES

with little opposition. They ran into two machine guns on the outskirts of St James and one in a house on the main square of the town. The latter was knocked out by one round of HE shot from the midst of the welcoming throng of natives. The Maquis in the city reported that the Germans had left fifteen minutes before on bicycles. As the column moved through, however, a few German armored cars came back in time to mix with the battalion trains. The trains were able to take care of the cars themselves, and the column moved on. (Incidentally Capt McMahon said that the trains kept up with CCA throughout the campaign, that they were never short of supplies of any kind, that they were able to gas up at the end of each day's march.

The rest of the advance up to the outskirts of RENNES was marked only by minor brushes with isolated enemy armor. The reconnaissance platoon flushed one German tank which promptly retreated, went behind a building and blew itself up. D Company found three more tanks parked ~~along the road~~ in the barnyard of a house, the crews busy eating. A few rounds of 37mm disabled the tanks and the ML's coming along later finished the job.

Approaching RENNES Capt McMahon tuned in on ~~ix~~ his radio a conversation between air and some higher headquarters. Air was preparing to bomb and strafe all vehicles in the vicinity of RENNES but was concerned that they were displaying red panels. "Are there any American vehicles in the vicinity?" "No," came the answer, qualified by advice to check with Corps. Corps called division instructing vehicles to display panels in prearranged pattern. Division ordered one column to display ground signals. This was done and the air attack averted. Company commanders were ordered thereafter to report their positions exactly every ten minutes.

The advance was now proceeding ~~xx~~ against so little opposition that it was decided to speed the march on RENNES by putting CCA on the main roads. CCA got on the main road at BETION only 15 kms or so from Rennes. As the tanks advanced, civilians along the route brought out prisoners at the point of a pitchfork, but the tanks could not stop; they waved the prisoners to the rear.

It was considered inadvisable to rush headlong into as big a city as Rennes. The 37th Tk Bn (- B Co. attd to 53d Armd Inf) therefore ~~xxx~~ went into assembly area in fields north of the city while the infantry deployed in assault positions. Enemy guns then opened up on our positions which despite deployment for assault were still substantially just a narrow corridor along the north road into the city. Attack on the city was delayed.

The next morning (2 Aug) a patrol of D Company was sent out to circle the town to see what friendly troops were in the vicinity and where the enemy was. The patrol made contact with a troop of the 2d Cav Gp which had been sent out by Army to find out where the 4th Armd Div was. They found no enemy until on the way back when Lt Donahue, ~~xxxxxx~~ leading the patrol, found some Germans and the Maquis fighting in a village. He joined in the fight and when it was over, brought the Maquis officer back to headquarters. This was the first contact the division had made with the Maquis who were to prove of considerable help in the ~~gx~~ fighting on the peninsula.

On 3 August, the mission of the division was changed, and instead of attacking Rennes, CCA was ordered to move west and south. They thought at the time that this meant bypassing the city. (No elements of CCA ~~xxxx~~ entered Rennes. Capt McMahon thinks that some of CCB may have gone in.) The encirclement was a road march so completely free of enemy opposition that the column stopped at one point for a five-minute break. Occasional isolated machine guns stopped the head of the column, (composed of peeps of the Ecn Plat very briefly, but as Capt McMahon put it, we had a way of dealing with that. It was not necessary to see the machine gun. The tanks swung their turrets and put a battalion volley of HE on the general area. That was usually enough for the machine gunners.)

When the battalion had closed in their assembly area in the vicinity of ~~BAIN DE BRETAGNE~~, they received for the first time the mission of blocking the southern escape routes from Rennes. The 37th Bn was generally responsible for the CHATEAUGIRON area, and they moved at once to JANZE. In this move they had a field day with fleeing German vehicles of every kind. Capt McMahon said that even the cooks had a chance to shoot a German. Col Abrams's tank at the crossroads southwest of JANZE met a busload of retreating Jerries, who at the sight of the American piled out of the bus like paratroopers being pushed from a plane. The Germans hopped over a hedgerow and crouched behind it. Col Abrams blasted the hedgerow with HE and then through the hole machine gunned the enemy.

Each company of the 37th was assigned a blocking mission. Co D outposted the trident of roads southeast of Chateaugiron, putting a platoon on each road in the arc from VENEFFLES to ST AUBIN. Battalion headquarters were located in the vicinity of AMANDIS with one company of infantry which was later moved to St Aubin. Chateaugiron was particularly important because it was discovered from ~~pr~~ prisoners that it was a German traffic control point. German vehicles came down all three roads posted by Company D the afternoon of 3 August but nothing got through.

On 4 August it was decided to lay an artillery concentration on Chateaugiron and attack with company D and a company of infantry to establish road blocks to the northwest. Before the attack, however, a frenchman from Chateaugiron came out and reported that there were no Germans in the town and would they please spare it. (There was a large abbey there.) Co D and infantry therefore moved down the road and found the town unoccupied as the frenchman had reported and set up road blocks on the north side. Here they made another contact with the 2d Cav, finding an armored car and two peeps cruising around with no idea of where the 4th Arm'd was.

The afternoon of 4 August the 37th Bn reassembled in the vicinity of AMANDIS and took a rest, virtually their first since the breakthrough. On the morning of the 5th, they moved out towards VANNES, the next objective of CCA. The command assembled on the march, IP at BAIN DE BRETAGNE, and reached Vannes in the afternoon after a march of 106 kilometers. On the way down, they methodically destroyed all possible means of communication which the enemy in their rear might use to warn forces ahead of them. The only thing that held them up was a destroyed bridge at ST MARTIN which the engineer company (A-24) repaired.

Vannes, they found had been taken by the Maquis although there were a few Germans outside and some firing still going on in the city. The entire population of VANNES was waiting outside the town to welcome the Americans. The 37th was sent through the city so that the people would be reassured by the sight of ~~American~~ American tanks. (The maquis had taken the town before only to have the Germans return and execute heavy reprisals.) The maquis here were well organized in the Division Bretagne and they took over the task of outposting the city for the night. Their men were armed with American carbines and British Sten and Lewis guns. Except for the 37th Tk Bn, CCA went around Vannes ~~unbothered by the German forces~~ circling to the north and then ~~renewed~~ assembling just east of the city.

Sunday morning (6 Aug) C company, a company of infantry and a group of maquis went out to get a pocket of Germans reported on the road to AURAY. In the road Y just outside Vannes they found about 75 enemy vehicles defended by about 200 infantry with 20mm AA guns - apparently an antiaircraft outfit that had been joined by a truck ~~column~~ column. The tanks with the assistance of the maquis destroyed all the vehicles and either killed or captured all the infantrymen. "The infantry did nothing." Other medium tank companies of the battalion went on other scouring missions while Company D outposted the assembly area.

The night of 6 August, all commands were briefed on the planned attack of LORIENT. Capt McMahon said it was the most serious briefing he had ever attended. Much was known of the strength of the Lorient defenses, plans of which they had,

though as it turned out there were more guns they didn't know about than guns that they did.

The key to Lorient was thought to be HENNEBONT with its one known bridge across the BLAVET River. (The second bridge is not shown on the 100,000 map and was unknown to CCA at the time.) The maquis were to hold the bridge at Hennebont and prevent its demolition. A major of the maquis at his own request accompanied CCA in one of its leading vehicles. Again CCA counted on speed of attack and surprise to gain its objective before the enemy could prepare his defenses. They moved out very early in the morning before ~~mid~~ daylight, advanced rapidly to AURAY. Although they kept getting reports of enemy ahead they did not encounter any until just in front of Auray. There at the road junction was a German outpost of infantrymen and a motorcyclist. At the approach of the recon plat of the armored column the motorcyclist made a bid to escape, but was cut down by 50 cal fire. Capt McMahon is inclined to attribute a large part of the success of the operation against Lorient to the fact that this messenger was unable to get ~~xx~~ away to warn the enemy. He pointed out that Auray was an easily defendable place since the only approach to it was a causeway about half a mile long on each side of which was either water or marsh. But CCA arrived there at about seven in the morning and the Germans were caught by surprise. Although the AT guns which ~~had been~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ were placed along the causeway and in the town were manned, the 3d platoon and recon plat spearheading the advance were able ~~xx~~ in every case to fire first and not a single round of German AT opposed the column's advance. In the town itself the narrow twisting streets made it possible for the advance elements of the column to get right up on the defending guns and fire before they were themselves recognized.

On Auray one of the leading vehicles sprung a leak in the radiator and it was decided to halt briefly. The town began immediately to erupt Germans. Every house seemed to have at least one. They ran out the back ways and tried to escape down alleys. The tanks opened fire. More Germans were routed out of ditches in the tall grass outside of town. When the column moved out of town, sections of it were burning and scores of the enemy were dead in the streets.

Advancing towards Hennebont, the 3d plat leading the column engaged in a running fight with the tail end of a Russian (white) cavalry unit (which was later engaged and wiped out by CCA just east of Hennebont.) But at the moment hedgerows hemming the road made it impossible for the column to ~~flank~~ flank the enemy and hit him in force. Just east of Hennebont the column was stopped momentarily at a road block which the enemy was just getting into position. It consisted of steel angle irons with mine fields to the front and defended by MG's. It so happened that the Frenchman who lived in the house beside the block was a ~~Ma~~ Maquis. He informed the Recon Plat of the location of the minefields and told them that the block itself was not booby trapped. The block was thus easily removed the mine fields bypassed and the advance continued.

Co D arrived in Hennebont and the advance vehicles were preparing to cross the bridge when the ~~entire~~ enemy blew it up literally in their faces. Shortly thereafter German AT guns emplaced on high ground west of the river opened fire. They scored two hits on a halftrack of the recon plat, which temporarily disabled but did not destroy it, and two grazing hits on one light tank which "scratched the paint." At the same time a hail of machine gun bullets struck the town. Leading tanks of the 3d platoon fired volleys of 37mm at the German positions and one AT gun was observed to have been hit. Capt McMahon and Lt Mueller (CO, 3d Plat) ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ dismounted to reconnoitre from high ground which a maquis pointed out to them. They found that the bridge had been blown beyond repair and was besides still under heavy enemy fire. It was decided to send infantry across the river in assault boats to establish a bridgehead. No sooner had the decision been made than the enemy opened

a violent concentration of artillery (88, 105, 150) on the town. Again it was apparently not observed fire but a concentration designed ~~to~~ either to drive our forces from the town or prevent them from entering it. Although the whole of D company was in the town, they suffered no casualties during the fire. Two peeps were destroyed and most of the tanks had their antennae ~~blown off~~ shot off. The plan of crossing infantry in assault was abandoned. From ~~maquis~~ D company learned for the first time of the second bridge across the river about two or three kilometers north of Hennebont. Under the artillery concentration Capt McMahon ~~organized~~ organized a task force of his tanks and a company of infantry to move up along the river to the bridge north. The organization was made difficult by the fact that two of his platoon leaders, Lt Donahue and Lt Mueller, were wounded ~~and~~ by ~~the~~ the shelling, though not seriously. Lt Donahue got a sliver through his cheek and was not evacuated; Lt Mueller was blown against the side of a tank by the blast of an almost direct hit, and knocked unconscious for about half an hour, but was all right on coming to.

Co B, 37th Tk Bn, with Co A, 53d Inf, moved out of town down the river road. The road wound along the side of the high river bank with a 100-foot sheer drop in places down to the ~~river~~ water. The enemy had AT guns along the road, but they held their fire until the column had passed, then fired into D company's rear. Other AT guns fired from across the river where there was a large factory, and some concrete pill boxes. The only other defensive position they could observe was a flak tower. The tanks fired a combination of HE and AP at all these positions and succeeded in silencing all the heavy fire from across the river. The AT guns to their rear, the tanks could not cope with without exposing themselves since in the terrain ~~it~~ it was impossible to get off the road which the guns were firing down. The infantry company at last was able to get into position where they could set up a 60mm mortar in a ditch from which they could see the German guns. Under the mortar fire the AT guns pulled out, got into a side street in the town (name unknown; it is not marked on the 100,000 map) and they were knocked out there by the tanks. A platoon of infantry went down the road to clean up any remaining Germans, then both tanks and infantry crossed the bridge which had apparently not been prepared for demolition.

In the meantime B and C companies leading CCA in flanking Hennebont to the north by ST GILES, ran into the Russian cavalry unit which was defending this approach to the bridge. (This was a horse cavalry unit of white Russians.) Co C apparently suffered comparatively heavy losses; (the C^o and First Sgt were killed) but the enemy was completely destroyed.

From the crossing above Hennebont D company moved north west by trail roads running into the main road south into Lorient ~~at~~ just above CAUDAN. At the main crossroads (752305) they ran into two AT guns and a battery of AA held by about 3 companies of infantry according to PW's reports. D company contained ~~the enemy~~ the enemy here while B company coming up outflanked it to the north, destroyed the AT guns and set on fire a large enemy barracks nearby. They found about 100 bicycles in the vicinity. D company then established outposts to the east while the rest of the column moved through the crossroads.

Although Caudan was under artillery fire, the entire column was able to move through and assembled in an area at the ~~large~~ large bend in the road to the south. Here the 37th Tk Bn and two companies of infantry established an allaround defensive position which was virtually an ~~island~~ island in the middle of enemy territory. The next day they attempted to set up a defensive line. B company with a company of infantry occupied the high ground to the west at about (736247), running into four 120mm guns in the process which ~~knocked out~~ were knocked out simply by virtue of the fact that the B company platoon recovered first from the surprise and got the first shots in. D company set up an OP in the vicinity of KERBEBON from which they ~~part~~ part of the enemy's permanent fortification on the other side of the

stream tributary to the BLAVET River. They could see barracks to the south, and four dug in 88mm gun positions and a battery of searchlights. They ~~fixed~~ directed two-battalion concentrations of artillery on these positions and observed at least two direct hits on guns. HE and WP were put on ~~the barracks~~ on barracks building, while the mortar platoon took ~~the~~ another under fire.

C company with a company of TD's occupied a village at (763260) and Col Abrams planned to send infantry to occupy the high ground between C and B. This was on 9 Aug, and orders came ~~at 1600~~ to withdraw the battalion to Vannes where it was to pass into reserve under CCR. The move was made at about 1600 9 August. From that time to 28 August the 37th Tk Bn remained under CCR.

Following are company officers, Co D, 37th Tk Bn:

CO, Capt John C. McMahon
1st plat, Lt Klingbeil
2d Plat, Lt Donahue
3d Plat, Lt Mueller

CO, recn plat (which continuously led the advance of CCA) 1st Lt Marion L. Harris.

Marion

Interview with Lt Harris, CO recn plt, 37th Tk Bn - Action at AURAY & HENNEBONT

Oct 16 1944

The only German outposts at Auray were two motorcyclists on high ground above the causeway leading into town. When Lt Harris in his halftrack leading the recn plt which in turn was leading the OCA column approached, the motorcyclists were not on the alert. They did not become aware of the approaching column until it was well within firing distance. They then got on their machines and tried to escape, but both were shot down by Lt Harris with cal 50 MG. Lt Harris then went on in to Auray. The garrison was not alerted. Several enemy trucks on the main road and in side alleys were fired on by Lt Harris and destroyed. (Note: standard 50 calibre ammunition was used, two rds of Ap, two rds of incendiary and one tracer in each five rounds.) The first enemy defenses that Lt Harris came to were three small calibre AT guns (either 20mm or French 25mm) near the center of town. The guns were emplaced on the ~~xx~~ sidewalks. Only one of the guns was manned; Lt Harris machine gunned the crew before they could fire. The crews of the other two guns were sleeping or at breakfast. The recn plt destroyed the guns. (Note; at this time the only armament of the platoon which had one halftrack and five peeps was the 50 calibre machine gun on the half track. Seven men armed with M1's rode in the halftrack, Lt Harris manning the MG; three men rode in each peep, two with M1's, the driver with a Thompson MG) Since that time, all jeeps have been fitted with Cal 30 MG's and the halftrack has acquired an additional Cal 50 and a Cal 30.)

The platoon proceeded through the city, firing continuously, although there was little answering fire from the enemy whose only concern seemed to be to escape from the buildings down back alleys.

~~xxxxxx~~

Note: correction of Capt McMahon's story of the road block. Mine fields had been laid on either side of the road block but the fields were still marked off with wire and posted. The ~~xx~~ road was not mined, although mines were piled by the sides evidently intended to be used for that purpose. One of the steel uprights was in position. The block had apparently been removed to allow the enemy cavalry unit to pass through, and the enemy had not had time to put it back.

In the advance from Auray to Hennebont, the plt engaged in a running fight with the Russian cavalry, who were the first enemy encountered during the march to Lorient who fought back with determination. They ran down the road and through the fields but stopped at ditches and other cover and fired back. The column did not stop but continued on into Hennebont. Lt Harris on approaching the town could see Germans on the bridge and opened fire on them. D/37 came up. Then enemy AT guns fired from the opposite side of the river. Lt Harris' halftrack was hit several times, putting holes in the radiator, and blowing both tires. After a few minutes of this fire fight, the bridge blew with an explosion that hurled huge blocks of concrete two or three blocks behind our troops. Lt Harris decided to back his halftrack out of town while there was still some water in the radiator. He got out just in time. When he reached the eastern outskirts the enemy laid down a heavy concentration of artillery which levelled the center of the town. The five jeeps of the recn plt remained in town. One was destroyed, all were damaged. Three men of the platoon were wounded as they sought shelter in building after building which caved in on them. After this action, Lt Harris was forced to withdraw from the column to make repairs and get replacements. He therefore took no part in the rest of action beyond Hennebont.

Comments concerning supply during the move from Avranches to
Vannes and then to Lorient as made by Capt. Lawrence Wysocky, S-4
37th Tank Bn.

"The rapid move south would have been impossible with the regular allowance of gasoline." The regular allowance to be carried in the train was over 5000 gallons (1059 - 5 gal. drums). Actually this amount was doubled. The kitchens were taken from the regular cargo carriers and placed in trailers or other available places so that the cargo carriers could carry more gasoline, oil, etc.

The kitchens were not used during this period because of the rapid movement. K rations and 10 in 1 rations were the order of the day.

8

7 w Wm

Action Outside of Vannes, France, on 6 August 1944 as related by Capt. William Dwight, A3 and Liaison Officer of the 37th Tank Bn., at the Bn CP located outside Serres, France, on 20 October 1944.

C 2

On the 6th of August a Task Force composed of C Company 37th Tk Bn and C Company 53rd Inf Bn was organized and ordered to go outside of Vannes and clean up some enemy which had been reported by the Maqui. Capt. Dwight commanded the Task Force. It was planned that the tanks would advance first, with the company of infantry immediately following. The 1st platoon of the infantry would deploy on and adjacent to the road used by the tanks. The other platoons would sweep the areas on both flanks of the 1st platoon. As far as the infantry was concerned, the plan was quite impossible during the early period of the operation because the houses of the city, with connecting walls and courtyards, extending almost to where the first enemy were encountered made deployment off the road almost impossible. Consequently, until after the town had been completely cleared, it was impossible for the infantry to deploy off the road.

Soon after they started to move up the road toward the enemy about 1000, the leading tank, containing among others the platoon leader, Lt. Jonathan Anderson, and Sgt Howard Smith, the tank commander, espied an enemy 20mm, dual purpose AA and AT gun about 1500 yards away. Since buildings flanked both sides of the road it was necessary to make a frontal attack on the gun, clearly visible on the shoulder of the road. As the lead tank approached the gun, it began firing with HE ammunition. The gun scored five hits upon the tank which damaged the tank's periscope but didn't otherwise inhibit its operation. Sgt Smith received eye injuries but was not treated until some time later. The gun was, however, knocked out and run over. The column proceeded up the road where two similar guns and one 37mm were knocked out. As the tanks advanced, they were fired on by Germans with small arms who took cover in bushes, ditches or other available protection. The column was also fired upon by automatic weapons mounted on trucks in nearby fields. These, too, were destroyed by the tanks.

As the tanks reached the area where most of the enemy were concentrated, the latter took flight up the road in any and all conveyances available. The 1st platoon chase these fleeing vehicles and shot many up. Then these were pushed off the road and the chase continued. So intent was Lt. Anderson on his chase that he could not be contacted by Capt. Dwight via radio even though it was operative.

Capt Dwight was attempting to recall him to have him help clean up the area. During this entire period the tanks were shooting into the woods with 30's, 50's, and 75 HE. Where possible they were leaving the road and cleaning up resistance.

The infantry were reluctant to leave the ditches adjacent to the road and consequently were slow to move up behind the tanks. In fact, the tanks went through the area occupied by the enemy once, returned through the area and turned and went through it again before the infantry would be moved through.

In the afternoon, when the area had been cleaned out, the tanks and infantry were assembled. The tank platoons were then ordered to each lead an infantry platoon to roads that were to be outposted by the latter. As Lt. Anderson was taking his platoon out, he rounded a bend. In doing so he was killed by fire from an armored car which had escaped earlier in the day. Sgt Smith took over and the armored car, with two other vehicles, was quickly taken care of. There were no further incidents during the day and the infantry outposted the area for the night.

This operation ended about 1630. The enemy encountered was an AA outfit—not in defensive positions, and offered only intermittent and sporadic resistance. They were interested mainly in escaping, and used all means possible to do so. About 150 prisoners were taken and 60 or 70 vehicles were destroyed.

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Note on Action at Vannes: Source, Lt Col Abrams, CO 37th Tk Bn

S/Sgt Howard J. Smith, tk comdr of the park which led C/37 in the assault out of Vannes, 6 Aug, received five direct hits on his tank; one round knocked out his bow gun, the second destroyed his periscope. As Sgt Smith was leaning out of his tank to see, a third shell bursting close by partially blinded him, fragments penetrating one eyeball. Although he could no longer fire, he continued to lead the assault, directing fire of the tanks behind. He ran over and destroyed four antitank guns. Lt Anderson, was killed in the fight, and Smith took over command. Despite his painful wounds he refused evacuation and commanded his platoon against the enemy cavalry near Hennebont. He stayed with his outfit until they were taken from the line, and his wounds were not treated until he returned to Vannes. Sgt Smith was commissioned a second lieutenant. He was killed in action around Nancy.

9

CCA

Interview with Capt Lamison, CO C Company, 37th Tk Bn

16 Oct 1944

(Note: Capt Lamison took over command of the company 7 August when Capt Smith was killed in the action around Hennebont. Lamison had previously been motor officer and had participated in very few of the company actions.)

~~Further~~ Capt Smith was killed just as the company moved out of assembly area prepared to follow B/37 in attack through St Gilles to the bridge at Lochrist. C company did not participate in this fight because it was impossible to get off the road and come up on B company's flanks.

From the assembly area at Caudan on 8 August C company, 37th, and one platoon of TD's attacked four concrete pillboxes located on the side of a hill east of Caudan where they could fire direct fire on the road into Lorient. The boxes which were square and mounted artillery of better than 150mm were part of the permanent defenses of Lorient. Tanks and TD's fired AP which penetrated and crumbled the thin concrete walls. The crews fled, possibly to the ~~garrison~~ barracks in a small village west of the emplacement. Artillery fire was directed at the village, but effects were not observed. C/37 suffered no casualties in the engagement and returned thereafter to the assembly area.

12

Interview with Capt Leach, CO B company, 37th Tk Bn

Oct 16 1944

(Note: Capt Leach during the action 28 July to 9 August commanded the 1st plt under Capt Tiges, Co comdr. Capt Tiges was wounded by mortar fire in the Bn assembly area north of Rennes. He was unable to get around, but continued to command from his tank. Lt Leach did his leg work and was considered second in command. Capt Tiges wounded again in the hand by the sudden closing of his tank hatch cover on 8 Aug was evacuated and turned over command to Lt Leach.)

In the advance of TF 2 from Avranches to the Selune River, the 2d plt under Lt Bohn was leading followed by the first and third. First enemy resistance was met at ST QUENTIN, where ~~they~~ small arms fire was received. Stopping outside of town, Lt Bohn took his bow gunner and went on dismounted reconnaissance through the town towards the church. He saw one enemy SP gun which saw him at the same time and opened fire hitting the gunner. Lt Bohn helped the gunner back and then continued recon. He found an enemy tank ~~in~~ parked in town. To find out if it was occupied, Lt Bohn fired his tommy gun at it. The tank replied, and Lt Bohn returned to report his findings to Capt Tiges. The C ordered him to proceed into town. The enemy tank had withdrawn. The infantry deployed on foot to clean out the town, and the tanks fired several rounds of HE into the building, setting some on fire. Just outside town Lt Bohn's tank in the lead was hit by an enemy SP from behind a hedgerow. All the crew were injured but were able to get out before the tank burned. In another tank Lt Bohn led his platoon to the east; enemy infantry were hidden behind hedgerows; though they could not be seen continuous s/a fire came from the fields. First platoon meanwhile was ordered through the town to flank the enemy opposing Bohn from the south. Reaching an orchard south of town, Lt Leach saw two German tanks in the bend of the road in the vic of FOSSE. Although they were at extreme range, Leach's tanks and assault guns which were with him engaged them and both were ~~destroyed~~ destroyed by the combined fire. One of the first platoon tanks which wandered off after the second platoon was destroyed by an enemy bazooka firing from a hedgerow right beside the tank. One man was killed and two wounded. The third platoon in the meantime was working to the left of the second through the hedgerows west of St Quentin. Col Kirkpatrick of the 10th Inf then conferred with Capt Tiges, and it was decided to break off the engagement and bring the tanks back to continue the advance on Ducey. Lt Marston, (third plat) was to lead, but his tank developed engine trouble, and Lt Leach was put in the lead. Although there was no enemy opposition, Lt Leach ordered his tanks to fire machine guns at the hedges all the way down to discourage enemy bazookas.

Ducey was clear, and the task force disposed an all around defense for the night, first platoon to the south, second to the north, third to the east, and inf with AT guns to the west. Prisoners were taken throughout the night, but the only incident when on one of the outposts Cpl Conrad Wenrich challenged an approaching motorcycle and was fatally wounded. Despite his wounds he returned fire killing one of the enemy and wounding the other. He was awarded the bronze star posthumously.

At 1030 the next morning the Task force moved out to reform for the move to Rennes. First platoon led B company which in turn led ~~the~~ the tanks of TF 1. Ahead was Lt Lyons of the 10th Inf with four recon peeps. *MAJOR WEST, 10th AIB, XO)*
Commanded Elk Adv. Guard.

Sgt.
Kidd
Pvt
Simo

10

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C C A

ACTION AT AVRANCHES AND SOUTH AS RELATED BY CAPT. THOMAS McDONALD

Order of march as the column moved into Avranches was as follows: Co. Led +ks, A/10, Co. Led +ks, B/10, C/10, Bn Hq Co., and other elements. "A" Company of the 10th and 4 MG's dismounted were taken to clean up a German pocket of resistance on a hill west of Avranches. Difficulty was encountered so Major West took B/10 and a platoon of C/10 to assist. With the trouble cleared up, Major West led a T. F., consisting of B/10, a MG pl. and A/37, south to take bridge at Pontaubault. CCB and the 53rd Inf were passed through in Avranches.

Another TF composed of C/10, D/37, and 3 assault guns (with artillery in another column available on call) passed south to seize the dam and bridge at St. Loup. At St. Loup the 1st Pl. C/10 dismounted and moved in ahead of the column to clean out some resistance. The column then continued south meeting only minor incidental resistance. The route was Marsilly-- Chalendray-- Vezins-- then south to a hill from which the bridge, dam and a power plant, which supplied the valley with power, were clearly visible. From this hill 4-P-47's were seen shooting up a German Infantry column across the river.

A platoon of tanks and the 1st Pl. of C Co. crossed the bridge and occupied some high ground on the other side. German tanks and infantry tried to dislodge them from the hill to withdraw. Then another light tank platoon and the 2nd Pl of C Co. went across the bridge under artillery fire, and both platoons of tanks and infantry moved down and held the high ground south of the power station during the night. A platoon of tanks, 3rd Pl of C Co., and the assault guns stayed north of the bridge during the night and joined the other units in the morning. Then the entire TF moved to Ducey and fell in at the rear of the CCA column proceeding south.

When the TF containing C/10 reached St. Laurient, A and B companies had already gone into position north of Rennes between the city and the German 88mm battery. By this time it was dark. To join the other companies on the line without running into the 88 fire, C company made a wide circle to the left. With it was C/35; on making contact with B/10 the 1st and 2nd platoons were put in the line on the left flank while the 3rd Platoon was held back as Bn reserve. In support of the Bn about 100 yards to the rear of the line, was B/37. There were also 17 engineers with the Bn being used as infantrymen. The Bn. was deployed in a line over country that consisted of open ground, trees and hedgerows. In this position it was subject to both mortar and artillery fire.

About 0200 the next morning our own artillery struck and fired a large ammunition dump in the city of Rennes, the artillery had obtained from a friendly Frenchman, a map with the town plan of Rennes on which was shown the ammunition dump. The firing was done from this map. Later on this same day one of the German 88's was knocked out by 91mm mortar fire.

While in this position, one unfortunate patrol was sent out. S/Sgt Carl Headman went out with four men to investigate the position of the 88's. His patrol was evidently captured because later, a sergeant from the 66th FA, who had been captured by the Germans and escaped when a column he was in was attacked by P-47's, reported that the five men of the patrol were in the German column.

CCA

Narrative of the Advance of the 37th Tk Bn (4th Armd Div) from vic RAIDS to LORIENT, 28 July to 9 August, related by Lt Col C. W. Abrams, Bn CO

16 Oct 1944

(Note: Col Abrams conducted the interview with maps and the battalion journal. All dates and times are from the journal. Orders of march are from the journal, supplemented, when incomplete, from Col Abrams' memory aided by that of Major Bantz, S-3, who was present during most of the interview.)

On 27 July prior to the breakthrough out of the Cherbourg peninsula, the 4th Armd Div had the 51st Armd Inf, ~~and~~ the 53d Armd Inf, and 2 trps of the 25th Cav Sq in a defensive line about 1500 yards long between the 83d and 90th Inf Divs. On tank company of the 37th Tk Bn was in support of the infantry. Order for the advance of the 4th Armd Div on 28 July were received by Col Abrams at the division CP late the night before. The division, moving in column of combat commands, CCB leading, was to advance through PERRIERS and COUTANCES to BREHAL where they were to seize and hold the road junctions. The order of march for CCA as originally planned was changed in three respects before the jumpoff. The 10th Armd Inf was substituted for the 51st because the latter, having been in the line, was scattered and in need of replacements in clothing and equipment. Division headquarters put forward elements with the advance column. The 94th FA Bn originally placed in the main body with only one battery forward, was all put forward. (Note: CCA records list the 66th FA Bn as attached to CCA on 28 July.) Following is the order of march as CCA moved from assembly area at 0700, 28 July: B/25 Cav, 2 Cos/10 Inf, 94th FA, C/704 TD, A/24 Eng, Fwd Div Hq, 1 btry/489 AAA, (-1 plt), D/37 Tk, CCA Hq, 37 Tk (-), 1 plt/489 AAA, 2 Cos/10 Inf, B/46 Med, A/126 Ord.

Advance to Coutances was a straight road march and CCA closed in bivouac area 2 1/2 kilometers north of Coutances without incident. Lt Harris (rcn plt) reconnoitering for a route around Coutances which was badly ~~stark~~ damaged, made contact with elements of the 2d (?) Armd Div. In fact he met a 2d Armd commander and got asseaten for being out of his division zone. (CCA in the end went through Coutances.) The command remained in bivouac the 29, receiving warning orders that day to continue the advance the 30th. Original orders were to move to assembly area vic (245530). They moved out at 0500, 30 July, with instructions to stay as close as possible to the tail of CCB. The route was COUTANCES - CR (249518) - LEGRONNE - LEGROS - LA HAYE-PESNEL - AVRANCHES. ~~Ref~~ As they were leaving, the CCA comander (Col Clarke) came forward to see Col Abrams and told him not to stop at the original assembly area, but keep going. CCB proceeded in two columns, so that in fact CCA was following the east column, commanded by Col Withers.

Only notable contact with the enemy occurred at a temporary assembly area north of LA JARBINIÈRE where the column moved off the road to regas. Two tank companies of the 37th Tk Bn were sent into the woods near the assembly area to clean out Germans reported there and came back with 158 PW's. Later enemy machine gun and mortar fire was reported by D Company but not in sufficient volume to halt the column. They closed for the night in an assembly area vic (239318).

For the advance the next day (31 July) the route was changed to have CCA follow the west column of CCB (commanded by General Daeger). New route was LEGRONNE - LOREUR - LA HAYE PESNEL - RACHEL - MESNIL - AVRANCHES. CCB had by this time run into serious opposition at Avranches. CCA was therefore attached to CCB so that General Daeger could use it as he wished for support. Order of march for the 37th Tk Bn from this point was D/37, A/10, CCA Hq. Bn Comd gp. 37 (-). At MANFREDAN (238222) about 400 Germans were taken prisoner. From that point to Avranches orders were for the leading

elements of CCA to tail CCB to the outskirts of Avranches, then hold up for further orders. At the crossroads northwest of the city they found the 8th Tk Bn (CCB) heavily engaged with enemy forces on the high ground in the city and west of it. Elements of the 8th Tk Bn were deployed in the flat ground west of the road. A Company 37th was put in to assist them. B Company was sent into the area to their rear to clean out any enemy between the road and the stream in the vicinity of MARCY. C Company was ~~given~~ deployed ~~in~~ between the railroad east of the road and the road. The 10th Inf was sent into ~~the town~~ Avranches to assist the 53d engaged in frontal assault. ~~Except for~~ CCB's artillery was to the rear of the tanks but the situation in the town was so confused that it could not do much. Much of CCB was already through the town to the east. First contact had been made at 0935 by D company, 37th Tk Bn. Orders to resume advance came at 1320. Although the 8th Tk Bn suffered casualties (4 tks destroyed), the 37th had none. Most of the trouble was caused by one enemy AT gun located in a house with direct observation of the crossroads.

Although the enemy was largely ~~x~~ silenced in Avranches by noon the 31 the situation south of the city was wholly unknown. Orders were issued for CCA to pass through the city and secure bridges and dams over the SELUNE River to south. To accomplish that mission CCA split their combat elements into four task forces, each built around one tank company and commanded by the tank commander (except C Company column which was taken over by Col Abrams). TF 1: A/37, B & C/66 FA, B/10, Bn Hqrs. (Infantry which was in the town was to be picked up on the road south. Organization of the task forces took place on the road north of Avranches.) TF 2: B/37, 66 FA (-), A/10; TF 3: C/37, 94 FA, A/24 Eng, Rcn Plt; D/37, Assault guns, C/10. (For details of the advance, see interviews with company commanders concerned.) Following points were made generally by Col Abrams. Commanders (except TF 3) had no staffs to handle attached troops; they had had no training in handling large mixed commands. Orders were to secure the river crossing at all costs, even if only a squad could be pushed through. They were to bypass any major resistance and get on their objectives before night. They had no intelligence of the enemy and no opportunity to make reconnaissance. No special tactical dispositions were made to provide additional security in form of advance or flank guards. Dependence was put on speed of advance. Support was given to all four columns by P 47's which flew overhead all the time and were exceptionally vigilant. There was no air support party. The planes found their own targets. So closely did they precede the columns that Col Abrams said at one point he was convinced that they were attacking him, and the whole column (TF 3) took cover. The planes hit an enemy ammunition truck which exploded on the road not more 300-400 yards ahead of them. The planes stayed so late overhead, that Col Abrams said they must have landed in the dark. The Trains did not accompany the task forces, but remained north of Avranches and were brought down the next morning. The TD's accompanied CCA Hqrs which moved to vic LA BLANCDINIERE. *Must note on terrain S. of Avranches.*

The morning of 1 Aug, Col Abrams went up to CCA to get orders for the farther advance. Plan was to march immediately on RENNES in three task forces in column. Rear task forces were to deploy on the flanks in case of serious resistance. All elements were to pass through DUCY then by secondary road southwest to the main road south of CROLLON, thence by direct route to Rennes, bypassing ANTRAIN. Task forces were: TF 1; 10 Inf, 66 FA, (some engineers), B/37; TF 2, 37 Tk (-), 94 FA, A/24 Eng; TF 3, 35 Tk (from CCR), some infantry and engineers. Task forces were to advance in column TF's 1-2-3. Order of march of TF 2 was: Rcn plt, D Co, Bn Comd Gp, C Co, 94 FA, Hq ~~sm~~ & Hq Co (37), A/24 Eng, C/10 (?), A/37, Tns. Col Abrams confirmed that no guards were left at the bridges or dams. He said the enemy had been entirely cleaned out of the area. He did not know about the disposition of the TD's which were apparently occupied in cleaning up the area between Avranches and the Selune River.

TF 1 ran into resistance in the vicinity of CROLLON and deployed artillery in firing positions, but the resistance evaporated before the artillery could fire.

near JUILLEY

At the crossroads ~~just south of JUILLEY~~, Col Abrams met Col Clarke and was ordered to take his force due south into ST JAMES then parallel to the main road to Rennes by means of his own choosing.

There was no resistance to ST JAMES. A company, however, which fell out of column at that point to protect the trains in the rear, destroyed some armored cars which attacked the trains. The disorganization and unpreparedness of the enemy continued to be striking. The recon platoon found two M4 IV tanks beside the road, their crews nearby, machinegunned the crews and destroyed both tanks with grenades. At St James, orders were again changed and Col Abrams was directed to rejoin the main column. He fell in behind TF 3. They reached the outskirts of Rennes without major incident and assembled in an area vic of CHARBONNIERE. (For details of enemy opposition here, see interview with Capt Leach). Aug 2, the 37th Tk Bn stayed in bivouac, moving two fields further from the road to get out of enemy mortar and artillery fire. On the 2d, CCB moved in behind CCA and CCA the following day was ordered to go around Rennes north and west. Their mission was to secure ~~the~~ the bridge and dam at MESSAC. Route was MARDELIE - GOVEN - GUICHON - LOHEAC - GUIPY - MESSAC - BAIN DE BRETAGNE. For the advance CCA organized two Task forces, TF Abrams consisting of B and B companies, 37th Tk Bn, A and C Companies, 53d Inf, 22d FA Bn. Task Force Jaques (Col Jaques, commanded the 53d Inf) consisted of A and C Companies, 37th Tk Bn, B and D Companies 53d Inf, 66th ~~armored~~ FA Bn. The 94th FA Bn was left at Rennes. TF Abrams led the column and reached MESSAC without resistance and found the bridge and dam intact. TF Jaques remained there to hold the bridge and TF Abrams advanced to Bain De Bretagne. D company fired on Bain de Bretagne and started some fires there. The task force stopped north of the town to reorganize. It was then that plans were changed, and the 13th RCT (1st Inf D) was to assault Rennes from the North. CCA was therefore ordered to cut escape routes to the south and east. Orders were received by Col Abrams at about 1310 while the battalion was regassing in assembly area. TF Abrams moved to cut roads east from JANZE to VITRE, the latter town reported to be held by the 2d Cav. TF Jaques took over the job of blocking the main roads south. (See interview with A Company commander). TF Abrams arrived at Janze at 1925. Hq and 22d FA Bn located vic (158398). D Company outposted positions as described in interview with Capt McMahon. B Company blocked the Chateaugiron - La Guerche road vic St Aubin. One inf co was put astride the Janze - Chateaugiron rd, the other company astride the Janze - Pire rd. Later on reports that D Company was heavily engaged with about 500 enemy inf at Venaffles, Col Abrams sent the nearest infantry company to reinforce D and spread the remaining co on both positions. (Note: The artillery did a job here in destroying enemy vehicles. They fired from road maps.) Late at night C company was released from TF Jaques to TF Abrams and was brought up as Bn reserve. A/25 also passed to TF Abrams.

came in

On 4 August, CCA stood fast, while reports of huge enemy tank columns moving north on Rennes. These never materialized. In the meantime the TD's brought up the ~~infantry~~ supply trains and took up position ~~guarding~~ defending to the south. ~~Subsequent~~

Orders were received at 0914, 5 August to move on VANNES. The move was to start immediately, so Col Abrams, putting his ex- Major Hunter in command, told his column to move out while he reported to CCA Hqs for detailed instructions. He was to join the column at Bain de Bretagne. Col Abrams met the head of the column at Bain de Bretagne and without stopping the march, gave orders to Capt McMahon and sent staff officers down the column to inform other commanders of the plan.

The only thing that held up the advance to Vannes was a blown bridge at ST MARTIN; this was repaired by the ~~engineers~~ engineers in an hour and a half, by putting in a section of trestle across the abutments which were still sound. (See McMahon interview for details of approach to Vannes.)

Considerable enemy opposition was built up west of Vannes. Liaison planes were meeting ~~heavy~~ heavy ack ack 6 August and the infantry in the town reported AT

guns firing into Vannes. Attempts were made to place artillery on area from which enemy fire was being received, but the planes could not get up to observe and forward observers in buildings in town could not get a clear field of vision. A task force was therefore made up of C/53 and C/37, commanded by Capt Dwight. ~~Attack was at 1304; results destroyed 12 AA guns and 75 vehicles. Original plan for the attack called for a column of interlarded platoons of tanks and infantry, the infantry to deploy off the roads when they got outside town. The tanks were unable to maneuver, but had to make a frontal attack. Col Abrams said "We were green then, and hadn't learned how to use infantry-tank teams properly." As a result the infantry dismounted too soon and took to the ditches by the side of the road, from which they could not be moved. The tanks in the meantime made several runs up and down the road overrunning AT positions. After about two sweeps, the infantry was finally extricated from the ditches and sent in to clean up, but there was little left for them to deal with. (Note: Capt Dwight will undoubtedly have a slightly different story~~

(Order of march to Vannes: Rcn plt, D/37, Bn Comd Gp, Assault guns, C/37, C/94, C/704 TD, C/53, one plt A/24, 94 (-), one btry of 155H, CCA Hq, A/53, Hq & hq Co 37, A/24 (-), B/37. Note: In all orders of march battalion maintenance vehicles traveled with battalion trains; the medical detachments were distributed in column, surgeon with Bn Comd Gp, one jeep with each company, one organic ambulance, and usually three or four more from Med Bn, all ambulances distributed in column, none in advance of Bn Comd Gp.)

By 6 August CCB had reached BAUD northeast of Lorient and ultimatum had been delivered to the Garrison in Lorient to surrender. CCA was then ordered to secure the bridges at Hennebont and Lochrist. (Note contradiction to Capt McMahon's story) CCA (minus elements left at Vannes, B/53 and A/37) under col Jaques moved out of Vannes at 0600, 7 August. No resistance was encountered until AURAY. (For details of rcn plt fight at Auray, see interview with Lt Harris). ~~Forward~~ The force then advanced to Hennebont. (See interviews with company commanders for details.) (Note: one cavalry troop of the 25th was moving on the right flank to secure the bridge at Lochrist while the bulk of the force moved on Hennebont.)

Notes on the disposition of forces at Hennebont. D company followed by A/53 ~~and B/37~~ proceeded up the river road to Lochrist. One infantry company was placed across the main road into Hennebont. The 94th FA and one btry of 155 were in position to fire on enemy batteries across the river but could not locate them. They did fire battalion concentrations on small calibre AT guns which were firing on D/37. C/37 was in town but was pulled out after D/37 reported the Lochrist bridge secured, and sent with B/37 to strike through the Russian cavalry troop holding up the 25th Cavalry in the vicinity of St Gilles.

Note: There were three bridges across three streams at Lochrist. All three had been prepared for demolition.

Details of action from Hennebont to Lorient in other interviews. Note: when CCA was pulled out of position vic CAUDAN, the infantry and artillery were placed under CCB; the 37th Tk Bn (rejoined by Co A) and C/704 Td went to CCR. The 37th returned to Vannes and spent their rest period scouring the countryside to mop up FFI reports.

In the whole move from Avranches the 37th Tk Bn lost three tanks.

H 2

ACTIVITIES OF C/37 IN THE TANK BATTLES OF 19-25 SEPTEMBER
AS RELATED BY CAPT. LAMISON, COMMANDING OFFICER OF C/37
IN THE DISCUSSION ALSO WERE 1ST SGT. THOMAS M. MCNEREY AND
S/SGT TIMOTHY JOSEPH DUNN, A TANK COMMANDER. AS THE CAPTAIN
DISCUSSED THE ACTION, HE USED A MAP. THE INTERVIEW TOOK
PLACE AT THE COMPANY AREA NEAR ARRACOURT 26 OCTOBER 1944

About 1500 on the afternoon of 18th September the 1st Section of the 2nd Platoon C/37, under 2nd Lt. William J. Berard, was sent to an outpost located approximately 3/4 of a mile east of Lezey. Besides his own tank Lt. Berard had two others in charge of S/sgt Dunn and Sgt. Earl S. Radular respectively. On the south side of the highway leading into Lezey were placed the tanks of Sgt Dunn and Lt. Berard with the former deployed somewhat in front and about 150 yards from the road. Lt. Berard had his tank near the road. Sgt. Radular's tank was placed in a small gully to the north of the road. Ahead of the tank and in the direction from which the attack was expected, S/Sgt. Dunn laid 12 mines across the road.

About 1800 some French civilians reported to the outpost that there were 6 enemy tanks east of Ley, This was the first such report the outpost had received. About 2100 motors could be heard warming up in the vicinity of the reported enemy. In the meantime the outpost had reported the developments to its company and assault guns were deployed and zeroed in on the crossroads. The Recon, Pl, under Lt. Harris, was also sent down to the outpost to investigate. The Platoon proceeded some distance beyond the outpost but did not see or make contact with the enemy. The artillery having been notified of the position of the enemy, shelled the area at 0030 and 0200 on 19th Sept. At 0630 German tanks were again heard moving around so the 2nd Section of the 2nd Platoon, that had been outposted to the west of Lezey was moved to support Lt. Berard. They took up position near Sgt. Radular on the north side of the road. Subsequently, the entire platoon moved along the south side of the road along a rim overlooking the valley. When the 2nd Section of the 2nd Platoon was moved, the 2nd Section of the 1st Platoon was sent to replace it. The 1st Section of the 1st Platoon was, in the meantime, outposted to the south of Lezey. The first real contact with the enemy occurred at this latter outpost.

About 0700 tanks were heard approaching the south outpost. It was extremely foggy, however, and the enemy could not be seen. At this particular time the section at the outpost were deployed --- one on either side of the road. The tank on the east was camouflaged under straw in a doorless barn viewing the road. The other tank was in a concealed position on the west side. The enemy was about 75 yards from the position before he was discerned, but he was immediately fired on and two tanks were knocked out. The others fled toward the south and another tank was knocked out in a small draw. Meanwhile the 1st Section of the 1st Platoon had been moved to support the section being attacked and the 2nd Section of the 3rd Platoon was dispatched to replace it.

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Capt. Lamison now had only at his disposal the 1st Section of the 3rd Platoon. With this section he proceeded into Lezey, went west and moved south cross country about 3000 yards. This move was made in order to beat the enemy south and get in a favorable flank position on the commanding ground west of Bezange---where the town might be fired into. Capt. Lamison reached the ridge line 900 yards west of Bezange about 3 minutes before 8 enemy tanks and 1 towed AT gun hove into view 200 yards to the west of Bezange. The fog had lifted by this time but the Germans evidently did not see the Americans. Having moved his tanks just above the crest of the ridge, Capt. Lamison's section brought fire on the Germans. The enemy did not return the fire until 4 or 5 tanks had been destroyed. Then Capt. Lamison moved his tank back of the ridge, went south about 300 yards, came up on the ridge again, fired, and knocked out the remainder of the German tanks. As they came up over the ridge this time, however, they drew fire from the AT guns which meanwhile had deployed and could not be immediately located. The Captain then withdrew the tanks behind the ridge and reconnoitered on foot. The AT gun was located, after which the 4 tanks came over the ridge abreast and poured fire into it, thus quieting it. The section was now moved north about 600 yards where they could still fire into Bezange from the ridge line. At approximately the same time four enemy tanks came through Ley. Just out of the town they stopped--evidently before deploying. At this time Lt. Berard's outpost opened up on them. One of the German crew members was out of his tank at the time--possibly directing the attack. He seemed much concerned. His concern must have changed to amazement because shortly the German tanks were destroyed. In the meantime a fifth tank had come out of Ley. It soon fell prey also to the American tanks. During this engagement the German tanks returned the fire and bogie wheels were knocked off Lt. Berard's tank; however it was not disabled.

About 1500 the 1st Section of the 1st Platoon under Lt. Smith was sent to assist Capt. Dewight who was fighting some German tanks south of Bezange with some T. D.'s. Though the fight was over when they arrived, they did run into over 200 German Infantrymen in a potato field on the way down and disposed of them not, however, before a bazooka was fired and knocked out one of the tanks. The Section returned to the company about 1700.

The company assembled east of Lezey on the night of 19th Sept. intending to attack Ley on the morrow. They were joined in this area by A/10 at 2100. Everything had just settled down when about 2245 a German tank came down the road at the east outpost and ran into the mines previously laid by S/Sgt Dunn. The mine knocked the track off the tank and otherwise disabled it, and it was finished off by bazooka fire and 57 mm AT fire of A/10. A short time later a German staff car came down the same road. It was stopped by WG fire. Subsequently, a motorcycle that followed met the same fate.

Movement orders were received the next day to move to Dieuze. D/37 was at the head of the column followed by C. When the head of the column reached Dieuze, the orders were changed and the companies returned to their original assembly areas.

About 1500 the Bn assembled alongside the road east of Lezey for an attack on Ley. As they assembled, the Germans shelled the area with artillery.

20th Sept

The Bn. was to attack in wedge with C company to the front and A and B to right and left rear respectively. A and B companies of the 10th Inf. were in support and were interspersed with A and B companies /37. All element were in vehicles. Before the attack jumped off Ley was shelled by our artillery. The attack party then moved forward. On reaching the branch road leading into Ley, A/37 went down the road, B company moved left of the road and C company ~~xxxxx~~left its position in the wedge, made a swing east and then went south toward Manncourt Hill. As C company moved east two enemy tanks were located in a fringe of trees and were destroyed. They swung south and in the vicinity of the road knocked out an AT gun and 2--20mm AA guns. Going forward they espied some more German tanks and knocked out three. S/Sgt Dunn accounted for two and Lt. Smith the other. C company then swung east and approached Manncourt Hill by way of a small valley. At this time, the 3rd Platoon was on line to the front while the other two platoons were echeloned to the rear---the 1st on the left, the 2nd on the right. As the 3rd Platoon reached the crest of the hill, one tank was immediately knocked out by a German tank. Shortly thereafter the other platoons moved up. In the matter of a few moments four more tanks were knocked out by German AT guns which had been in position on hill 260 and were waiting for the tanks to expose themselves. Meanwhile the American tanks were not idle. They disposed of 7 German tanks; thus exceeding their own losses by two.

Realizing that he had struck a real pocket of resistance, Capt. Lamison called for assistance. So B company, which had by this time moved through the town of Ley, came south to the right flank of C company. The latter then withdrew down the valley from whence it came and moved into an assembly area east of Ley with B company. Shortly thereafter they moved west of Ley to a Bn. assembly area. Here they were joined by A company that had moved through Ley. 2

By this time they were assembled it was dark. It was decided however, to make a night attack on Moncourt-- unusual tactics for tanks to say the least. The three tank companies were on line in a wedge formation. The infantry were mounted and interspersed between the tanks. In this formation the attacking force moved off, following a preparation by the artillery. When about 500 yards from the town, all weapons opened up making indeed a frightening spectacle. Ere long the town was in flames and the force moved in without opposition. A/37 and A/10 cleared out and outposted the town for the night. The other units remained outside and shortly thereafter returned to Lezey to the Bn. assembly area.

On the 21st, C and B/37 launched an attack to the south to take Bezange but found, when arriving there, that it had already been captured by our infantry. Therefore the woods south of Moncourt were attacked after our artillery had shelled it. A/10 and A/37, that had been outposting Moncourt moved through the woods while B and C/37 moved on to Coincourt. B company moved through the town and C flanked it to both the right and left. The attack continued south to Parroy. Here again B went through the town meeting little resistance while C flanked it on the south. As C company made this southern movement, it knocked a tank out south of the Marne Canal that was being used as a roadblock.

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The 94th F. A., located in the center of the triangle formed by Rechecourt, Moncourt and Coincourt, had, as the tanks moved south, poured artillery fire into enemy infantry within Re d'Haut dela Croix and routed them. Having cleared out the enemy to the canal, the tanks returned to Lezey and the assembly area.

The next day, 22nd Sept., the cavalry, that were screening in the Juvelize--Donnelay region, were attacked and retreated through the 37th. A/37 then moved to attack Juvelize. C/37 moved as left flank protection and in so doing got one tank. After A/37 had taken Juvelize C outposted the town to the west on hill 257 with its 9 tanks and B company outposted the town to the east. The companies remained in these positions for two days during which time they were under almost constant enemy artillery fire.

On the 25th Sept., a n infantry outpost on Hill 252 reported German infantrymen coming up the draw toward Hill 257. A bout 1430 250 Germans Inf. came up and C/37 opened up, disposing of a lot of them. Then two tanks appeared west of Hill 257 but were knocked out by S/Sgt Dunn. In the meantime the enemy had moved around to the west in force and were threatening C company's position. A /37 came in from the south and got in on the high ground to the north of Hill 257. In so doing the enemy was engaged and one tank lost. Meanwhile C company had lost a tank. A company then withdrew leaving C exposed. The enemy came in once more and got another of C's tanks, leaving the company with only seven. The attacking tank had, however, been destroyed. Two enemy tanks were reported at the salt works east of Lezey and were got by the platoon of C/37 located at the CR near Les Trois Croix. Following this action the company withdrew.

As a result of the tank action during this period the following awards were made in C Company.

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>FOR</u>
Silver Star	Capt. Lamison	His deployment and use of company on 19th Sept 1944.
Silver Star	Lt. Berard	For his action at Ley. He was wounded in the action and evacuated.
Oak Leaf Cluster for Silver Star	Lt. Smith	Awarded posthumously for the action in vicinity of Ley.
Silver Star	Pvt. Theodore T. Liscavage	Awarded for rescuing driver and S/ Sgt from knocked out tank on Wanncourt Hill east of Ley.
Bronze Star	Pvt. Loren Lorentzen	For moving tanks away from burning half-track in an assembly area amid shell fire
Bronze Star	Pfc Milton B. Dickerman	Put out fire of a burning tank and rescued occupants.

The following was the status of C Company at the beginning of tank battles:

Capt. Lamison	Commanding O.	(Was a Sgt.)
2nd Lt. Howard L. Smith Jr., Pl. L. 1st Pl		(Killed in action)
1st Lt. Wilbur F. Berard Pl L. 2nd Pl.		(Wounded & evacuated)
2nd Lt. Roy G. Grubbs	Pl L. 3rd Pl	(Was a Sgt.)

H. GA 17
Interview with Capt Lamison, CO C company, 37th Tk Bn, and S/Sgt
Timothy J. Dunn, Tk Comdr in 2d Plt - Counterattacks East of
the Moselle from 19 to 25 Sept, 1944

26 Oct 1944

(C company engaged in some of the heaviest fighting in beating back the German counterattack, and was badly decimated in five days' fighting. Sgt Dunn's tank is the only one that escaped from the second platoon which was the first to meet the enemy. Most of the following was related by Capt Lamison. Sgt Dunn supplied details of his own outpost position.)

~~Sgt Dunn~~ The first section of the second platoon (1st Lt Wilbur J. Berard) took up outpost positions 3/4 mile east of ~~Ley~~ Lezey astride the main road to Metz on the afternoon of 18 September. Two tanks, Lt Berard's and Sgt Earle S. Radlauer's were north of the road, Lt Berard's a few yards off the road concealed behind some brush. Sgt Radlauer's in advance in a gully a couple of hundred yards from the road, concealed under large trees. Sgt Dunn's tank was in the open field to the south, camouflaged with branches, and commanding high ground 800 yards to his front. The position was established ~~at~~ about 1500. Three hours later some civilians ~~came from the town~~ reported that there were six German tanks on the other side of Ley, moving up. The outpost reported the information to company and waited. Twelve mines had been laid across the road to their front, eight in a line and four staggered behind. (The outpost was about 1 1/2 miles in advance of the body of C Company.) At about 2100 Sgt Dunn said he could hear the engines turning over in the direction of Ley. The company's assault guns had been zeroed in on the crossroads north of Ley and fire was placed here, supported by some artillery. Lt Harris of the recon plt went forward of the outpost about half a mile but saw nothing. It is probably that the Germans went into assembly area near Ley.

The following morning at 0630 they could be heard moving ~~again~~ again. Capt Lamison moved the second section of the second platoon to the outpost, where the two new tanks went into support of the two on the north of the road, still leaving Sgt Dunn alone to the south. At the same time the first section of the first platoon was sent to the south of Lezey to block there and the second section took up positions to the west of the town which the second section of the second platoon had just vacated. The third platoon remained in the company assembly area. The first German attack fell on the south outpost defended by part of the first platoon under 2d Lt Howard Smith. When the attack struck, Capt Lamison sent the best of the first platoon up to Lt Smith and moved the second section of the third platoon into the outpost west of Lezey. Lt Berard's outpost also shifted their tanks to bring all guns to bear to the southeast. They had position of turret defilade on a reverse slope from the direction of enemy attack. No German tanks actually attacked Lt Berard's outpost. The morning fog was so thick that ~~though~~ though Sgt Dunn at first could not see the ~~tanks~~ tanks moving up the valley from Ley; when he could see them, he could not identify them. Three approached the south

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PANTHERS

two were
outpost and were fired on and destroyed ~~xxx~~ at very short range just before they reached the Lezey-Bezange road. When the shooting started, Sgt Dunn joined in and put three rounds of 75mm into the third German tank which was behind the other two. He hit it at a range of about 600 yards, ~~xxxx~~ and the tank burned. Some of the crew got out, and Dunn fired a round of HE, but could not observe the effect.

When these three tanks were destroyed, the rest of the German column which could not be seen was heard to turn South. Capt Lamison took the first section of the third platoon which had remained with him in the assembly area and headed south with the intention of beating the Germans to Bezange and from high ground there block their escape and destroy them. Capt Lamison's four tanks passed through Lezey then south along a ridge line about 3000 yards. They beat the Germans by about three minutes. Lamison got his tanks into position facing east while the German column of eight ~~tanks~~ was still moving south roughly parallel to his own advance and about 900 yards east of him. He fired and destroyed five Germans before they could fire. As soon as the remaining Germans swung their turrets and began ~~in~~ dropping shells on Lamison's positions, he moved, 400-500 yards further south along the same ridge, and from there finished off the remaining three tanks. None of his tanks had been scratched. Shortly afterwards a shell whistled overhead. Capt Lamison backed his tanks behind the ridge, and dismounted to investigate. He spotted a towed AT gun (about 75mm) in the vicinity of the German tanks. He informed his tanks and all four moved forward and fired at the gun, destroying it. This engagement over, Capt Lamison moved his section about 600 yards north along the ridge and left them there to outpost, while he returned to the rest of the company. AK
D

four
It was about this time that ~~five~~ more Mk V's moved west from ~~Lxxx~~ Ley down the valley which the second platoon positions overlooked. ~~Thereafter~~ The valley has two folds; it was in the northern fold that the Germans moved, only a few hundred yards below the guns of the second platoon. All five tanks opened up and knocked out 3 ~~tanks~~ of the Germans; the fourth retreated behind the wreck of an American bomber. The second platoon put HE on the plane and set it on fire. The tank was not observed to escape. (destruction of this tank is not claimed in official estimates of enemy losses.) A fifth German tank was hit when observed coming out of Ley and destroyed. (Note: this was after noon and the fog had lifted; visibility was good.). Only damage to the second platoon was a hit on Lt Berard's tank which knocked out two bogey wheels but did not disable the tank.

At about 1500 Lt Smith with the first section of the first platoon went to assist Capt Dwight who was commanding four TD's in a heavy engagement with enemy tanks west of Bezange. Smith tanks ran into 200-300 infantry in the valley on the way down, stopped to clean them out. One tank was lost to a German bazooka, the rest went on to Dwight's position but arrived there after the action was over. All tanks then returned to the company assembly area east of Lezey and plans were made to attack Ley the next day. (This atk never took place) The score for the day's fighting was 16 MkV's claimed by C company (14 officially credited) for a loss of one. At the assembly area that night they were joined by A/10 and bivouaced for the night.

That night Sgt Dunn with 3 bazooka men and one HMG out-posted in virtually the same position as the night before. Shortly before midnight a German tank came up the Lezey road, hit one of the mines and was disabled. Then everything opened fire on the tank. The 57mm AT gun of the 10th Inf is credited officially with the kill. The same night a command car and a motorcycle were destroyed by MG fire.

The morning of the 20th C company moved out as the first medium tank company on the CCA column advancing to attack Sarreguemine. C company reached Dieuze when they were turned back by news of German attacks on the rear of the column. They went back to their original assembly area ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ and at 1500 were formed for an attack on Ley. Attack jumped off the C company leading a wedge formation, B and A echeloned to the rear. Two companies of the 10th Inf mounted were interspersed with A and B companies. German artillery on the high ground near Moncourt was shelling the 37th heavily from the time of the jumpoff. The attack aimed to the left of Ley. Before Ley B and A companies turned to the right to make a frontal attack while C continued straight on with the mission of taking high ground to the east of the town and securing the right flank of the force.

(Note: Following details of the action do not tally with the general account of the action given by Col Pattison, and will have to be checked further.)

3
See Summary of the Action

Two German tanks were along the road east of the road junction above Ley. Just off the road were two 20mm AA guns. Two more tanks were just in the tree line north of the crossroads. The latter two were knocked out. Three more tanks on the forward slope of Manne court hill were also destroyed, two by the third platoon, one by the first. C company moved down the valley and attacked Manne court hill from the east in company wedge, the third platoon leading. They were going to go on down the south side, but at the top saw seven ~~Tiger~~ tanks on a reverse slope across the valley south. Five tanks were lost in destroyed these seven. Capt Lamison says one of his tanks was killed by German tank fire, the other four by AT guns on the ridge of hill 260. Capt Lamison called for help and B/37 came up from Ley to his right flank, but all was quiet by then. C company suffered 21 casualties in this action of which one was killed and 6 missing (one later turned up). C and B then moved west of Ley to battalion assembly area on high ground to the west. It was dark, but it was decided to make the ~~xxxxxx~~ planned attack on Moncourt anyway. Three medium companies of tanks with mounted infantry charged across open ground into town setting the whole town on fire with their combined shooting. The tanks held up outside the town and only A/37 with A/10 were sent in to clean out the remaining enemy. No casualties were suffered in this attack, by C company.

The next day (21 Sept) an uneventful attack was made by B and C companies to the south as far as the canal. The infantry had already taken Bezange. The tanks went cross country in wedge formation to the wood south of Moncourt which had been shelled. It was A/37 which had been outposting Moncourt that moved through the wood with infantry (presumably A/10). B and C companies went on south to Coincourt which was flanked left and right. B company moved through the town and both went on to Parroy where C destroyed a German

tank across the canal. The tank was acting as a road block just south of Parroy. Capt Lamison on the way down with a forward observe of the 94th FA Bn fired a concentration on some enemy infantry near the Bois du Haut de la Croix. Op for this fire was on the hill between Moncourt and Rechicourt. These infantrymen (estimated at between 100 and 200) and the single tank at Parroy were the only enemy encountered on the sweep south. C company returned then to the old assembly area east of Lezey.

The third of the major German counterattacks fell the next day on the cavalry screening in the vicinity of Juvelize. Elements of the cavalry retreated through the 37th's bivouac area. A/37 moved up and took Juvelize. C company came up on the left and outposted hill 257. B company was put in position east of Juvelize. And there the battalion sat off two days, receiving heavy enemy artillery fire.

On the third day in the position (25 Sept) the outpost of B/37 and infantry reported a small enemy infantry patrol advancing up the draw towards hill 257. Report estimated about 10 enemy and the infantry said they would take care of them. This was about 1300. An hour and a half later 200 infantry appeared up the hill coming to within 200 yards of C company tanks. At about the same time two German tanks moved up the slope of hill 257 to the west. Sgt Dunn killed both these tanks while the rest of the company (now reduced to nine tanks) dealt with the infantry. A little later two more enemy tanks ~~came~~ attacked from the north east. A/37 had in the meantime come from the south to the aid of C. These tanks were destroyed but not before they had accounted for one of A's and one of C's. Capt Lamison had ~~inf~~ extended his position, leaving the second platoon at hill 257 while moving the third to high ground to the west. The third knocked out one enemy tank and lost one. More enemy tanks were observed north at hill 252 and south at the salt works near Juvelize. ~~Sgt Dunn~~ Second platoon tanks knocked out two of the enemy at the salt works but the tanks on 252 could not be reached. Plans had already been made to abandon this position and at 2000 the company now down to seven tanks, was withdrawn west.

General comments: Capt Lamison said almost all his losses were to tanks or guns in emplaced positions, that unless our tanks ran directly into prepared fire, they could get four or five rounds in at the enemy before the German tanks could traverse their turrets. In the attack on Mannecourt hill, C company tanks fired on the run until they came into position on the hill. Gerry never fires while moving. Two German tanks were knocked out by Sgt Grubbs on the move. C company claims 38 German tanks knocked out during the whole fight for a loss of nine. All C company tanks at the time were 75's. Terrain was muddy, slowed tanks but did not prevent maneuver. Sgt Dunn thanks the mud for reducing casualties from German artillery, said that on a number of occasions shells landed close enough to dismounted tank crews to cause heavy casualties had the shells not sunk so deep in the mud that the fragmentation effect was largely lost. Morale of the battalion is very high. First sergeant said soberly that the 37th with the 10th Inf (which they admire wholeheartedly) and the 94th FA Bn could make up a task force that could go anywhere. C company has now been brought back up to vehicular strength.

Following are awards to C company men for the action.

Pvt Theodore T. Liscavage, bow gunner, (now T/5) was awarded the Silver Star for rescuing the driver of his tank. The tank was knocked out in the action at Manne court hill and the driver hurt. Liscavage and the tank commander escaped, then both crawled back to get the driver. They were knocked off the tank turret by enemy fire, the sergeant hurt. Liscavage went back and pulled the driver out.

Capt Lamison got the Silver Star for the whole action, which the first sergeant said in effect was holding off the whole German army with one tank company. Citation specifies action in the first day's attack.

Lt Smith who was killed in action at Ley was awarded the oak leaf cluster to his Silver Star for gallantry in that action.

Lt Berard who was a "mental casualty" was awarded the Silver Star. (no details given.)

Company platoon leaders as follows: 1st plt, Lt Howard L. Smith who was commissioned second lt on 6 Septemebr, as a result of his action in the Brittany campaign. (see accounts of that) 2d Platoon, 1st Lt Wilbur J. Berard, evacuated after Manne court hill action, Sgt Dunn, then First Sgt Thomas L. McNeirey took over the platoon. 3d plt, S/Sgt Roy G. Grubbs (now second lt. commissioned 14 Sept 44) Grubbs had taken over the platoon at Commercey 6 Sept. Note: It is not strictly accurate to say that anyone took over command of the first and second platoons after their leaders became casualties. The company was so reduced by that time that the platoon organization virtually disappeared. Only one tank, comanded by Cpl Rafael Parese, remained out of the first platoon.

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Conference Interview with Capt ~~Lawson~~, Lt Walters, Lt White and the
Tank Commanders of A Company. 37th Tk Bn - Action of the Moselle
River Crossing, 13-25 Sept 1944

27 Oct 1944

(Note: Capt Spencer lost all of his platoon leaders in the action; two were killed, one wounded. The tank commanders present at the interview were as nearly representative of all the tanks that took part in the action as was possible. In several instances, tanks were destroyed with the loss of the entire crew, either killed or wounded. The narrative was sustained by Capt Spencer but he was corrected and supplemented at a number of points and details of individual tank action were supplied by the men. See end for list of tank commanders and ~~present~~ company officers.)

Task Force Abrams was originally split in two columns for the advance east from the bridgehead at Dieulouard, 14 tanks and assault guns going south (exact route will be detailed in subsequent interview) and medium tanks along the main route St Genevieve - Nomeny - Lemoncourt. The south column could not get through because of unsuitable bridges and joined the north column at Lemoncourt. Several German infantrymen were captured in Lemoncourt and waved to the rear. It was in the approach to Lemoncourt that Lt Turner's tank was knocked out presumably by a 75mm AT gun in Fresnes-en-Saulnois, where an abandoned towed 75 was discovered during the advance. Lt Turner's crew suffered no injuries. The advance proceeded without incident to ~~St. Genevieve~~ just west of Chateau Salins where the force bivouaced for the night.

The morning of the 14th A/37 led the column south through Chambrey, east to Moyenvic and south to Arracourt where they shot up the town and overran what seemed to be the rear echelon hqrs of a German division. They went on south to Valhey, where the first serious opposition was met. Advance was in column up to the town. Then Sgt Hickey's tank pointing the advance was hit and destroyed. They then formed a line and split to encircle the town. ~~At this time Lt De Craene took two tanks north and west of the town. The tanks destroyed~~ Lt De Craene found 10 ammunition and gas trucks lined up on the road. Though the motors were running, they were not manned. De Craene destroyed them all. Lt Donnelly took his platoon down the west side of the town firing into it. The rest of the company with Lt Turner and Capt Spencer moved cross country to the east. Capt Spencer followed by Sgt ~~St. John~~ went into town along the road from the east, and met fire from an 88 in town. The shells missed his tank and hit Sgt ~~Sadowski~~ killing one man. The rest dismounted under heavy machine gun fire. Sgt ~~Sadowski~~ returned to rescue the driver and was machinegunned off the tank. The other three men in the crew were also hit and wounded. Sgt Noe's tank tried to come up the same street later got as far as the corner behind the church where ~~Sadowski~~ had been knocked out and was forced to withdraw. Capt Spencer then decided to clear out and put artillery on the town. But the plan was changed, for when the infantry came up, resistance seemed to have died down enough to make artillery unnecessary. The infantry went in and cleaned up the remaining enemy.

*WHD Kerk
war* *24 June*

The company went into a temporary assembly area in the vicinity of ~~Wixia~~ Valhey. From there they could see enemy trucks in Einville to the south. It was decided to send the company into Einville with the primary mission of securing the bridges there and incidentally destroy the German vehicles. The secondary mission was accomplished and about 100 light vehicles were destroyed. But the bridges which were in when the company got to Einville, were blown shortly thereafter. The battalion found it impossible to establish a bridgehead at Einville and returned through Arracourt to Moncourt. There was no resistance though fresh tank tracks were found at nearly every building in Moncourt. A company set up defensive positions to the east of Moncourt. The next morning the battalion minus A company went back to Arracourt and assembled in the vicinity of Riouville farm. A company of engineers remained with A company at the outpost at Moncourt.

On the 16th the battalion made an early morning attack through Athienville to Serres and ~~Wixia~~ Maixe where CCB was establishing a bridgehead. There was no resistance. The battalion reassembled at Serres and returned to Arracourt and thence northeast to Lezey where they bivouaced. Nothing happened on the 17th.

On the 18th a task force was made up under command of Maj Hunter to go to the relief of CCR at Luneville. TF consisted of B/53, A/37, btry/94, and C/704. A/37 got as far as Deuxville by night when Major Hunter heard over the radio of the threatened German attack on the 37th Bn at Lezey. They stayed there that night, and the following morning, when the attack broke on the 37th Major Hunter secured the release of A/37 from the TF and they returned to the vicinity of Arracourt where CCA had headquarters. (There had been no fighting by A/37 in the expedition to Deuxville) At CCA Col Clarke had one platoon of A/37 dropped off for headquarters guard and the rest (1st and 2d platoons) proceeded to high ground east of Riouville farm where B/37 was heavily engaged. B company had lost three tanks there, but when A came up they drew little fire. Sgt Griggs coming up on the skyline saw a muzzle flash and a shell coming at him. He fired back and backed into defilade. That was all the action A company had at that point. At about 1500 A(-) and B companies were ordered to reinforce Capt Dwight's TD's just west of Bexange. Again they arrived after the action was over. But a German tank was spotted on hill 297 to the south, its gun pointed towards Rechicourt. Lt De Craene fired on this tank and its turret swivelled and returned fire at a range of 1900 yards. In the meantime Capts Spencer and Leach made a dismounted reconnaissance (see overlay) to plan an attack in the direction of Rechicourt. They reported four tanks in the draw south and east of Rechicourt. It was decided to attack through the town and hit the enemy from the west. The attack started with companies in line, A to the left, B to the right and echeloned to the rear. (Maj Hunter was commanding the combined force.) A having the shorter turn to make came into position first, discovered that there were not four but nine tanks. Specner had two platoons in line, the first on the left with three tanks, Lt Turner's on the extreme left flank, the second platoon with two tanks on the right. Capt Spencer's tank was between the two platoons. Lt Turner was the first to engage the enemy and opened fire at a range of 250 yards. The enemy was disposed in a straggle line running roughly east and west and their guns were headed west. (Note the position had been

Expenditure

smoked by the artillery before the attack. The smoke was lifted before the companies left the assembly area south of Rechicourt.) Lt Turner's platoon came up on the enemy's right flank. Enemy fire met the first platoon head on. Capt Spencer's tank was hit and knocked out in the first few minutes. Lt De Craene's tank was hit ~~twice~~ shortly after, the first round destroying the 50 cal MG and knocking De Craene unconscious for a few seconds. When he came to, he moved down the hill into the Germans, and his tank was destroyed and he was killed with all his crew but one.

The first platoon in the meantime stayed on the brow of the hill and though Lt Turner's tank was destroyed and one of his crew killed, the other two tanks (sgt Griggs and Sgt Ellison) were not hit. Griggs' tank accounted for four of the Germans. All nine tanks were destroyed, for the loss of our three. (Note: Spencer's and De Craene's tanks had 76.2 guns; all the rest of the company tanks were ~~T52~~ 75's). B company with 13 tanks arrived on the scene later and suffered no casualties. A company's total losses were six killed and four wounded. Both companies returned to bivouac at Lezey after the action.

The next day 20 Sept was the day of the planned attack on Sarreguemines. A company (nine tanks; 6 had been lost and 1 was in ordnance) was assigned the rear guard mission and consequently had not moved out of bivouac area when the column was recalled to meet the German attack on their rear. In the afternoon it was decided to attack Ley and then Moncourt with the ~~the~~ 37th Tk Bn and the 10th Armd Inf. While C company took the left flank, A attacked to the right of the road and B to the left. A company received no fire from Ley. Sgts Ellison and Griggs shot up some infantry entrenched in a ditch along the road on the way down, and Sgt Noe knocked out a tank in Ley as it was backing out of a barn on the outskirts of town. The infantry had fired Cal 50 at it. A company then assembled with the rest of the battalion to the west of Ley. Lt Donnelly saw a German tank far to the west in the direction of Bezange. He fired one round then told Sgt Walling to take it under fire at a range of 1500 yards. Walling's first round was short. He fired three more at about 1600-yard range and destroyed the tank.

In the night attack on Moncourt all units were to the right of the road. An artillery preparation was put on the town before the attack and tanks and infantry went in firing all weapons. Tanks ceased firing just short of the town. (The nearest tank was not more than 50 yards outside.) The third platoon of A/37 with a platoon of infantry went through Moncourt from east to west. Three tanks (Lt Donnelly's, Sgt Walling's and Sgt Noe's) established an outpost to the west. Sgt Walters and Sgt Morganti's tanks outposted to the south. Sgt Griggs and Sgt Ellison were on the east edge, while Capt Spencer (who had Capt Dwight's headquarters tank) established a CP on the trail north of ~~Moncourt~~ town with A/10. A platoon of infantry was at the west outpost, a section at each of the others. Sgt Noe on the west outpost heard Germans in the woods west, voices and pounding (which he said he thought might be maintenance on armored vehicles). Artillery was put on the woods and no more activity was heard. Noe who was in the road shot up an infantry patrol. (Two German graves were found later). Other outposts had no activity.

A/37 did not take part in the attack south the following day (21 Sept). The third platoon, however, with A/10 minus the AT plt left on outpost, were ordered to clean out the woods. Plan was for a section of tanks to ~~skirt the wood on either side while the infantry went through~~ flank the wood on either side while the infantry went through. Sgt Rebovich's tank on the east drew fire ~~from the wood~~ and was knocked out, the driver killed. This was the only casualty. The first section of the third plt under Lt Donnelly went down the northwest edge of the woods, turned back at the end and went through the main road, all with the out incident. (Rebovich had been with the 2d Sect, 3d plt) Rebovich's tank was hit by an AT gun in the Bois du Haut de la Croix. The section fired HE at it at a range of 2200 yards and silenced it.

That night the company withdrew with the rest of the battalion to assembly area north of Lezey. The next day (22 Sept) was ~~heralded~~ heralded as a "day of rest and maintenance." It was on this day that the 111th Pz Brig attacked and routed the cavalry screening north and east of Juvelize, and advance elements of tanks and infantry took the town. A/37 was ordered to take hill 257 which commanded Juvelize and a good part of the surrounding country. A/37 attacked with its two remaining platoons, ~~proceeding~~ proceeding up a draw from the south west, ~~skirting~~ skirting the base of the hill to the west and climbing from the northwest. Three German tanks were on outposts at the ~~crossroads~~ crossroads at Les Trois Croix. These were facing in Donnelly's direction. Walters' tanks caught them from the flank and quickly destroyed all three. One of Donnelly's tanks was hit from fire from the direction of the Bois du Sorbier. In the valley between the Bois and Juvelize, twenty to twenty-five German tanks and vehicles and infantry were moving towards Juvelize. Vehicles at the same time were moving along the road from the north into Juvelize. An intercepted enemy radio message, revealed that the Germans had taken Juvelize and the tanks moving across the valley were the main body of the 111th Pz Brigade which was moving up to reinforce the position and continue the attack. Three German tanks and some infantry were known to be in Juvelize. Sgt Noe says that some of the trucks knocked out along the north road contained camouflage and radio equipment possibly to establish an OP on hill 257. ~~The~~ The eight tanks of A company opened fire on the enemy in the valley at ranges varying from 800 to 2000 yards. Fourteen of the enemy tanks were destroyed, including the tank of the Brigade commander (who was killed, though his body was never found*) About 8 light vehicles were also destroyed. The rest of the force retreated to the Bois de Sorbier. At the same time mortars and assault guns had been firing at Juvelize. The three tanks there presumably escaped along a defiladed road to the east. When the fight had ended, A company tanks were down to about 12 rounds of ammo per tk. Except for Lt Donnelly's tank in which one man was wounded, there were no casualties in the company. German morale was apparently low. One tank was discovered which had ~~been abandoned~~ been abandoned by its crew without firing a shot. When the Germans had retreated. Lt Donnelly's tanks established defensive positions on the hill, while Capt Spencer with Sgt Walters and Sgt Morganty went through and around the town. Sgts Griggs and Ellison went to the north, where they ~~were~~ were joined by the other three and then went on to a line astride the road to the east. Capt Spencer returned leaving four tanks at the outpost. B company relieved A at this position later in the day and C took over hill 257. A company went to assembly area below hill 238.

Interview with Capt Lamison, CO C company, 37th Tk Bn (supplementary)
Action at Ley and Juvelize 20 and 25 Sept 1944.

27 Oct 1944

(Note: This corrects and replaces incomplete information on these actions gathered 26 Oct in first interview with Capt Lamison.)

Third platoon led the company wedge formation ~~which~~ of C/37 which in turn was on the left flank of the battalion attack on Ley. The first German tanks encountered were two to the north of the main road and two along it to the east. Three of these tanks were destroyed by the third platoon. First platoon accounted for the ~~xxxxxxx~~ fourth, the furthest east of the four. Lt Grubbs' third platoon also knocked out two 20mm AA guns and an AT which were located on the road between the two tanks to the east. No casualties were suffered in this action. German infantry was fired at from beyond the crossroads as the company swept down the valley to the east of Mannecourt hill. One tank was lost at the approach to Mannecourt to a German bazooka. (This was a first platoon tank.)

4) The third platoon coming up Mannecourt spotted the seven German tanks in the valley first and opened fire from hull defilade position on the reverse slope of the southern end of the hill. One tank was lost here to enemy tank fire. The first platoon coming up behind and to the left was hit by AT fire from the hill to the south as it came up Mannecourt and lost two tanks before it got into position. The second platoon coming over the brow of the hill to the west was also hit by AT fire from enemy guns to the southwest and two tanks were knocked out. All seven German tanks were destroyed. Then C company withdrew north and west into the valley west of Mannecourt and went into battalion assembly area preparatory to the attack on Moncourt. (See attached overlay) The one remaining tank of the first platoon ~~xx~~ joined the second platoon, and Capt Lamison fought subsequent actions with two platoons each having four tanks.

AT Juvelize the second and third platoons held position as shown on the overlay. First enemy attack came from the northeast and consisted of about 100 infantry moving up the road and ~~xxxx~~ two tanks on their right. The second platoon shot up the infantry and got both tanks. Then Capt Lamison heard firing from the west on the 10th infantry position in the swamp west of hill 257. He moved the third platoon to the assistance of the infantry, drawing the second back to the third's position on hill 257. The third platoon formed a stagger line around the infantry, fired on and destroyed the two tanks on hill 264. But a German tank on hill 252 to the east put a round into one of the third platoon tanks and knocked it out. At about the same time on hill 257 a second platoon tank was destroyed by fire from the ~~xxxx~~ Bois du Sorbier (either tank or AT) Capt Lamison was with the third platoon; his tank got one of the enemy, Grubbs got the other. The second platoon sighted enemy tanks on hill 252 and opened fire but could not get them. They did however, see two more tanks at the salt works ~~xxx~~ east of Lexey moving north, fired at them and destroyed them just before they reached Juvelize. Two men were MIA in this day's action

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Conference Interview B Company, 37th Tk Bn - Action 13-25 Sept 1944

Following were present: Capt James H. Leach, CO

First Platoon: 1st Lt Preston B. Nixon (now maint O)
S/Sgt John J. Fitzpatrick
Sgt Kenneth H. Boyer
Cpl Robert J. Fitzgerald

Second Platoon: 2d Lt James N. Barese (then S/Sgt) (com 13 Oct)
S/Sgt Bernard K. Sowers
Sgt John H. Parks
Sgt Joseph Hauptman
Sgt Emil DelVecchie
Cpl Joseph Gregor
Pvt Joseph Grieb

Third Platoon: 1st Lt ~~Marston~~ Merwin Marston
Pfc Vito Cariello
Pfc Noimand Ayotte

AG Platoon: Sgt Robert S. Grimm
Motor Sgt: S/Sgt James F. Mullen
Leach's Driver: T/4 Kenneth B. Jeffries.
First Sergeant: Lewis A. Guffey

(Note: Sergeants above are tank commanders; other are representatives of vehicles whose commanders were not available. Bulk of the story was told by Capt Leach and Lt Marston; others added bits and made some corrections

B company, the last medium company in TF Abe at the Moselle crossing, encountered its first Germans in bypassing Nomeny to the South. There proceeding southeast between the railroad and hill 217, they saw a German column on their right marching in the same direction. They shot up 9 armored cars and took 10 PW's. Beyond Nomeny, B company regained the road and marched in column without incident to Fresnes-en-Saulnois and then to assembly area west of Coutures. The next morning in the drizzle about 30 German riflemen came into the bivouac area. One was a cameraman discovered fifty yards from one of the tanks. Later that morning the company moved to Chambrey then to Vic sur Seilles and thence to Arracourt. While the main column was sent to Einville, B company's mission was to secure the bridges at Bauzemont. They took a route following what is marked on the map as a trail east of the Bois de Benamont. Lt Marston leading the advance found no trail until he arrived east of Bathelemont. Near Bathelemont a convoy was sighted moving east of Bauzemont. About 30 vehicles, one AT gun and 35 PW's were taken. In the afternoon the 37th Tk Bn ~~re-assembled~~ assembled near Valhey and the went back to positions in the vicinity of hill 260 east of Monecourt.

Bridge was blown. The bridge was blown as B/37 reached the Canal. all POW's were Polish.
The next day B/37 was assigned to the 53d Armd Inf and took up outpost positions in the vicinity of Burthecourt Chateau. They had hardly established themselves there when they caught a German convoy coming around a bend in the road. They destroyed 12 vehicles. (3 staff cars)

just backing into the woods. & trucks 11/11

Later that day, the outpost fired on a column of CCB. CCA artillery opened fire and was counterbattered by CCB. In the engagement one CCB halftrack was knocked out with one killed and one wounded. CCB moved back to bivouac at last and the situation was straightened out. The following morning CCB moved through the CCA outpost and attacked Chateau Salins.

The morning of 19 Sept the 53d Armd Inf ordered B/37 to send two platoons at once to CCA Hq in the vicinity of Riouville Farm. The third and second platoons were sent and at CCA Col Clarke ordered them to take up position on high ground 600 yards to the east. A section under Sgt Morphey ~~was near~~ the Arracourt-Rechicourt road and Lt Marston moved the other section of the third platoon up on the left. They spotted tanks in Rechicourt, Morphey could see three: Marston two. They opened fire and the tanks backed into some woods north of Rechicourt. The platoon continued to fire on the woods, then the enemy got the range. One round dropped just short of Marston's tanks. The next three hit all three tanks. Only Marston's tank was penetrated, his gunner killed and his loader wounded. The other tanks were hit high, one of the turret, the other on the cupola. The latter was repaired and used again later the same day. Sgt Farese in the meantime brought the second platoon up on the right to positions in low ground south of the road. He moved later onto the road. Still later the first platoon moved in on the left flank.

There was no further action at that position. B company was joined shortly by two platoons of A/37 and B was relieved from CCA direct control to form a task force with A under Major Hunter. The TF marched east to support Capt Dwight's TD's west of Bezange. The action here was over by the time they came up, though enemy direct fire was still falling in the area. Lt Turner of A company fired at a tank on hill 297 to the south and annoyed it into returning fire. Maj Hunter then got orders to eliminate opposition in the area. It was then getting dark. Maj Hunter planned to move his companies in line west of Rechicourt, assemble south of the town and attack to ~~east~~ low ground south of hill 297. A company with 6 tanks was on the left, B with 14 on the right. B had two platoons in line, second and first; third in reserve on the left. The advance to the south was covered by smoke which perfectly screened the tanks until they had crossed the road at the base of hill 297. Wind was light and northwesterly. A company making the short turn in the attack engaged the enemy first (see A company interview). Sgt Farese's platoon was the first of B company to arrive, and took up positions on A's right, flanking the enemy. B company tanks had no cover, but attacked down hill, stopping to fire. All nine of the enemy tanks were destroyed by A and B. B then attacked towards Moncourt to clean out enemy infantry who could be seen digging in at the edge of the Moncourt wood. They reached the high ground west of Moncourt, shot up the enemy and it then being dark returned, their tanks silhouetted by the light of the burning Panther's in the valley. That night B company outposted roads to the west and south of Lezey where the battalion assembled. One casualty was suffered here from enemy artillery fire. Capt Leach said that Lezey seemed to be an enemy artillery check point.

For the Sarreguemines attack, 20 Sept, B company was in ~~reserve~~ reserve and had just moved out of assembly area when the ~~main~~ column was recalled to meet enemy threats to the rear. B company reached Juvelize and returned to Lezey. Outposts were reestablished, the bulk of the company to the south of the town. An attack to the south was planned for 1400. While the commanders were ~~in~~ meeting to discuss the plans, two German tanks fired on B company's south outpost, from the vicinity of Ley. Sgt Litherland (1st plt) destroyed one of the Germans, though his tank was hit in the ~~engine~~ suspension. (it was not disabled). Sgt Grady took the other German under fire but did not hit him. All companies of the 37th moved to battalion assembly area in the afternoon prior to the attack. (Area vicinity of the salt works)

7) In the attack on Ley B company went to the west of the town, then was ordered to support C. It came up behind C to the right. Here Capt Leach left his tank to make a dismounted reconnaissance. The tank was destroyed before Leach returned. It was hit from the south, possibly by one of the AT guns that were causing C company so much trouble. Two were killed ~~and~~ as the shell penetrated the side of the tank. Col Abrams then moved his own tank several hundred yards forward toward the enemy ~~front~~ and returned fire from hull defilade position. Col Abrams' first plan was to attack the draw east of Mannecourt hill, but it was getting late and it was decided instead to continue the attack south on Moncourt. The battalion was assembled to the west of the Ley Moncourt road. Plan was to attack with tank companies in line, but in the dark, the companies got mixed up. The attack was actually made in a mass of tanks and infantry without formation by units. Airburst artillery preceded the attack. (see other company interviews for details of the attack) B company ended up on the left flank, when units were reorganized after the attack. One man was wounded. B company returned to the original assembly area near Lezey.

The attack of the 21st which met virtually no resistance was made by B company along the following route: from south of Lezey cross country west of the road to Bezange (already taken by the cavalry) thence to assembly in the vicinity of hill 265, thence to the Moncourt woods which they screened to the west, thence to Coincourt which they passed through making no contact with the enemy, to assembly area south of the town, then on the right flank of the advance with C company on the left south to Parroy. Note the second platoon which had stuck in mud at Lezey joined the company at Parroy. Marston's platoon went as far as the Etang de Parroy, then the whole force returned to Lezey.

2) As the attack of the 21st had resulted in nothing but minor contact with an enemy apparently fleeing southward, the next day was ~~scheduled~~ scheduled as a day of "rest and maintenance." Col Abrams warned his units to stay on the alert, however. B company was at breakfast when they heard firing in the direction of Juvelize. Stray rounds began to land in their area. Cavalry vehicles retreating from the enemy attacks came through the area. Col Abrams organized a task force of A/37 and A/10 and went to the relief of the cavalry. Enemy infantry were routed and fled over the hills to the east. B company took them under fire and fired an average of 30 rds of H& and three boxes of 30 Cal per tank. B company shortly after was ordered to relieve A and moved through Juvelize to execute that mission.

An OP of the 191st FA Bn had been established on hill 252 by one squad of C/10. This was pushed back by the enemy and Lt Marston took infantry back up on the tanks of the third platoon and reestablished the post. Before he returned, an estimated eight enemy tanks moved out of the vicinity of Donnelay toward Lezey. The assault gun platoon under Sgt Grimm which had been left in the B company assembly area ~~xxxxxx~~ between Juvelize and Lezey, sighted three as they came over a rise in the ground behind the salt works on the north side of the river. It was raining hard, and Sgt Grimm could not be sure that the tanks were enemy. He could see white spots on them. He awaited orders to fire. When they came, the tanks were about 1500 yards away. Sgt Grimm fired two rounds, then moved, since his positions were entirely exposed. He thinks one crew abandoned their tank, but the tank was not destroyed. The enemy returned fire and bursts hit the area where Grimm's guns had been. Two of the tanks escaped into some woods; the third disappeared behind the salt works.. Capt Leach had been warned of those tanks, and when Lt Marston returned from hill 252, he moved around the back slope of 257, spotted a tank on the road to Donnelay. He got this tank with three rounds, left it burning. Another tank in the draw between him and the road was also killed:

The newly established OP on 252 about this time was ~~dr~~ driven back again and Col West (10th Inf) asked for a platoon of tanks to set it up and stay with it. Capt Leach could not spare a platoon but sent S/Sgt Fitzpatrick up with a section of three tanks with orders to remain at the OP. Of two German tanks observed to their front, Fitzpatrick's tanks got one.

(Note: The chronology of the above is suspect. The OP incidents apparently happened the same day and were immediately followed by the withdrawal to Arracourt, which would ~~xxxx~~ place them on 25 Sept. The AG incident was probably on the 22d when the company first came into position. The intervening two days seemed to have been without action according to other accounts.)

The whole of the 10th Inf squad were killed or wounded and evacuated on Fitzpatrick's tanks when the order was given to move out the night of 25 Sept. Incidentally Capt Leach had some trouble making Fitzpatrick understand what he was to do, since the withdrawal was to take place under cover of a feint, and radio use was consequently restricted.

Note: While B/37 occupied the road block positions in the vicinity of Burthecourt, Lt Smith took Farese's platoon ~~xxxxxx~~ into Champenoux. They found a road block, and an AT gun abandoned very recently, and tellermine tied around trees outside town. They were supposed to hold the town until relieved by the infantry, but the infantry did not show up. Meantime the platoon, three of whose tanks went into town, was receiving direct artillery fire. Lt Smith sent back word to headquarters, "We have liberated a town. Get us out of here! They got out eventually and without casualties.. The infantry never ~~sdid~~ come up.

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Interview with Lt Col Abrams, CO 37th Tk Bn, - Answers to Questions
on the tank action 19-22 Sept 1944

31 Oct 1944

Q: What were the exact assembly positions in the vicinity of Lezey?

A: (See overlay) On 19 Sept C/37 had one platoon east of Lezey, one section west and one section south. The south outpost was increased to a platoon, and the ~~remaining~~ remaining section was in Bn res.

Q: Were the positions which you occupied on 19 Sept, those that you used as assembly areas after the attacks of 20 and 21 Sept?

A: The assembly area was in general the same. The relative position of the companies varied.

Q: In the scheduled attack on Sarreguemines was B/37 rear guard for the column?

A: No; A/37 was rear guard, and probably never left the assembly area/ B/37, however, was quite far back in the column and was therefore the first sent to reinforce A. Order of march was as follows: Rcn, D/37, AG, Bn Comd Gp, Hq Co, C/37, 94, 10(-), B/37, A/24, Tns, A/37. A/24 was to cover the road east of Lezey while the infantry drew out. (Note: Col Abrams says he does not believe there was a real attack on 20 Sept.)

Q: What were battalion positions at the time of the German attack on Juvelize 22 Sept, and what was the sequence of maneuver to meet that attack.

A: (See overlay) First move was to consolidate A company position, by drawing in the tanks along the ridge as shown on overlay, and moving C/37 in to the left flank where it could guard to the west. Assault guns were moved to back slope of 233 as shown. B/37 remained in place. alerted to cut the Juvelize-Lezey road. Col Abrams then made a reconnaissance and finding that Hill 257 was apparently unoccupied, decided to move troops there. (The hilltop was an orchard, down the road were vineyards extending to the outskirts of Juvelize. Preparatory to the attack on the hill, mortars put WP and HE heavies on the town (so effectively that not a rifle shot came from town.) At the same time, the assault guns put concentrations on the vineyard (This fire was maintained during the attack.) A/37 was then moved to Hill 257 while C/37 swept to its left flank. Reports by liaison plane that German tanks were in Juvelize, caused the shift of one platoon of C/37 to the right of A/37. A TD platoon was moved to C/37's former position covering the battalion to the West. Plans had already been made with Col West to have the infantry take over hill 257 and as soon as A/37 had cleared the enemy tank opposition, A/10 was moved up. (Subsequent moves and details of the fight as previously given in various company interviews.)

Q: What happened to C/37 in the attack on Ley?

A: C/37's mission was to seize Mannecourt hill and protect the flank of the other companies attacking Ley. When the company approached the hill from the northeast, German tanks in the draw on their left hit them in the flank. They had about a three-minute slugging match with the Germans, then withdrew to the west side of the hill; then B/37 was sent to the right flank in support.

5) Q: Did you plan to attack down Mannecourt into the draw?

A: Yes, but reconnaissance revealed that the Germans there were ~~either~~ either knocked out or had withdrawn.

Q: What was the objective of the attack of 20 Sept?

A: Orders were very flexible. In general the plan was to make a sweep south through Moncourt, Coincourt, to the canal, then west and back up through Arracourt. About the same objective as the attack of 21 Sept.

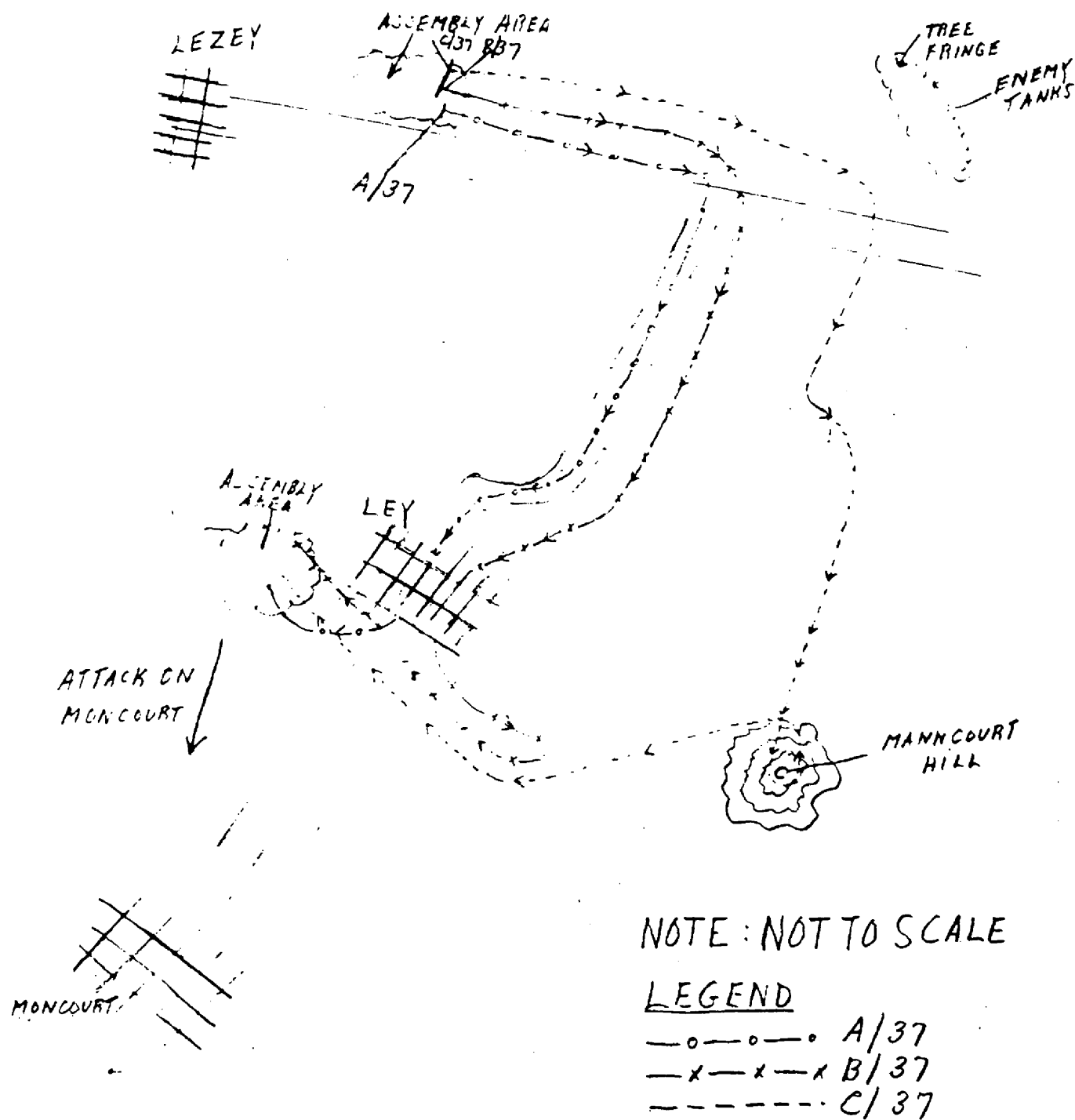
Q: What was the deployment of A/37 in the attack on Valhey?

A: De Craene's platoon went west of the town, the rest of the company east. One platoon attempted to enter the town from the east.

Q: What was the route of march of the light tanks 13 Sept at the crossing of the Moselle?

A: D company and the assault guns paralleled the main route of advance to the south, by secondary roads not shown on the 1/250,000 map. They could not get across a bridge and returned to the main road in the vicinity of Letricourt, caught up with the main body in Lemoncourt.

SKETCH OF ATTACK ON LEY



(Note: Two cavalymen came ~~links~~ to Sgt Noe's tank on the hill position said they had been pinned down by enemy fire which had killed one of their crew. They were apparently same who escaped from one of the 7 lt tanks destroyed by the German attack.

(Sgt Griggs knocked out an American light tank in the valley. His gunner didn't want to shoot at it, but Griggs said that ~~any~~ any tk in the valley was bound to be German. This tank was probably taken from the 25 Cavlry troop.

(P47's supported A company's attack bombing and strafing the enemy in the valley and in the Bois de Sorbier)

On the 23 and 24 Sept A company had no action, though enemy artillery was intermittently heavy. They suffered no casualties. The afternoon of 25 Sept C company on hill 257 reported tanks and infantry attacking from the north. Sgts Walters and Morganti were sent up to woods in the vicinity of hill 264 to observe, while the rest of the company moved into position on the left flank of C company. Lt Donnelly's tank was hit by fire from 264; Donnelly and his gunner were killed. The company moved back and Walters and Morganti were ordered to rejoin the company. Enemy fire was then drawn from the right and Morganti's tank was lost, with two men wounded. A company was withdrawn and later in the day was given the mission of protecting the battalion withdrawal to Arracourt.

Note: S/Sgt Charley "alters who took over command of the first platoon on 19th Sept was commissioned second lt on 14 Oct 1944

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVE

THOSE PRESENT AT THE INTERVIEW WERE:

Captain William L. Spencer
1st Lt. Martin J. White

2nd Lt. John A. Whitehill
2nd Lt. Charley Walters
Sgt. Stephen J. Rebovich
Pvt. Pat J. Dematteo

S/Sgt. Herman L. Walling
Sgt. Ralph E. Howland
S/Sgt. Ted W. Griggs
Sgt. Robert L. Noe
Sgt. Ernest A. Walker

Sgt. Anthony DiSanto

Sgt. Ernest A. Radtke

Sgt. James E. Allison

C. O.

Pl. L. 2nd Pl (Bn Adj. at time of action)

(not in company during action)
1st Pl (Was Sgt. during action)

3rd Pl.

1st Pl (Was gunner in Lt.

Donnelly's Tank when latter was killed)

3rd Pl.

3rd Pl.

1st Pl.

2nd Pl.

1st Pl. (Was T/4 driver for Lt. Donnelly in 3rd Pl.)

2nd Pl. (Was driver in Capt. Spencer's Tank during action)

1st Pl. (Was Cpl. gunner in Sgt. Walter's Tank during action)

1st Pl.

Note: Lt. De Craene and Lt. Donnelly were platoon leaders of the 2nd and 3rd platoons respectively and were killed in action. Lt. Turner was wounded in the action.

Activities of C/37 on the 9th November at Fontenay, France, as Related by Capt Lamison, then J. C. of C/37 now A-3 of 37th Tank Bn. The interview was conducted at the 37th Tk Bn CP at Riche, France, on the 24th of November 1944.

Capt. Dayton

Task Force Maybach of CCB left Drouville, France, at 0630 on 9th November. The first objective was Morhange; the second was Sarre Union. The advance guard was composed of a platoon of A/51, 2nd Pl. C/37, two platoons of A/51, Btry/253FA, plC/24, and a platoon of the 704th TD's. Following the advance guard was the main body with troops as follows: C/51, C/37(-2nd Pl), 253 FA(-Btry), trains of the 253rd FA, C/24(-Pl), B/51, Sect. B/46 Med, Sect. B/126 Ord, and a Sect. 489th AAA(AW). The task force proceeded via Pettoncourt-Bioncourt-Manhoue-Jallaucourt. The latter town was reached about 1100 and no resistance was encountered up to this point.

Between Jallaucourt and Oriocourt enemy AT guns and infantry were dug in along the ridge lines. There were estimated to be between 25 and 30 AT guns of from 75mm to 88mm caliber between the former town and Fonteny. As the column proceeded, the tanks deployed along the ridge line between Jallaucourt and Oriocourt where they could escape, yet neutralize enemy fire and at the same time protect the column. At the entrance to Oriocourt was a roadblock of heavy logs defended by AT and machine guns. When this resistance was eliminated the TF proceeded and a similar obstacle had to be removed at Laneuveville. At this point the tanks were again placed at the head of the column. The move east continued. Outside the town the tanks drew direct fire and three enemy AT guns were knocked out. No further opposition was encountered until the ridge line west of Fonteny was reached; however the 2nd platoon of C/37, led by Lt. Grubbs, was deployed in a platoon front to protect the column. After this platoon and the leading infantry elements in their half tracks had crossed the ridge and were moving near Fonteny, the enemy opened up from positions around the town. He had heavy AA artillery emplaced northeast of the town which fired both direct and indirect fire. Some tanks were in the same area. AT guns in the west edge of the forest of Chateau Salins were firing into the column, as were two tanks on the southwest edge of Fonteny. As a result of the enemy fire, eleven halftracks were knocked out and burned. The few remaining uninjured occupants therefrom left the vehicles and went into the town. Meanwhile, Capt Lamison, on seeing the predicament, recalled the leading tank platoon. As the platoon withdrew one tank was hit by AT fire and knocked out. Pvt. Hammann, the "bog", was killed. The clutch went out in another tank; it had to be abandoned, and the enemy permanently incapacitated it subsequently.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, Lt. Col Maybach decided to utilize a different plan to attack the town. First, the artillery would place a heavy concentration on the town and other points of opposition; the tanks, in a company front, would then move up to the crest of the ridge on the left of the road and fire direct fire into enemy positions; following this the infantry would move forward dismounted and occupy the town. The artillery didn't fire at the appointed time so Capt. Lamison called them. They would fire shortly. After waiting 20 minutes, the advance guard called the artillery again. The latter said they had fired. Capt. Lamison said, however, he had observed no fire on the town. Nevertheless, the tanks moved up to the crest of the ridge and fired. The infantry did not move forward. The tanks moved back and about 1530 another attack was planned. This time the artillery was to fire a concentration then put smoke on the woods after which the tank company would move forward in a company front to the right of the road over the crest of the ridge. The infantry would

be in direct support the tanks, dismounted. The artillery began to fire (only four (4) rounds were fired) and the tanks moved over the ridge-- the platoons abreast in line with 2nd, 1st and 3rd platoons from north to south; the infantry did not follow. Then the artillery ceased firing. By this time the tanks had reached the ~~XXXXX~~ steep forward slope of the ridge and could not return because of the mud, nor could they answer the fire of the enemy who, meanwhile, had opened up, because the steepness of the slope made it impossible to lay the tank guns effectively against the enemy. Just after crossing the ridge the final drive of Capt Lamison's tank was hit, stalling the tank (the crew escaped). Capt Lamison then, via radio, turned the company over to Lt. Walter W. Wrolson. Lt. Wrolson moved the tanks down into the valley between the two ridge lines which prohibited the enemy in the woods on his flank from firing into the tanks. Neither could they be reached by fire from the enemy tanks on the edge of town. This was not true, however, of the enemy installations to the northeast of Fonteny. They continued to fire on the tanks. C/37 answered the fire and knocked out two or three enemy tanks, but the heavy AA could not be silenced even though HE was fired into the area.

By this time it was growing dark and all destructive ammunition had been expended. Therefore the woods and town were smoked by the tanks and a withdrawal was attempted. Two more tanks were knocked out, and in attempting to withdraw the remaining tanks bogged down. The crews worked until 2100 amidst intermittent enemy fire, but the tanks could not be extricated. Finally, they were abandoned by the crews.

The next day, the 10th, elements of the 35th Division attacked Fonteny and the town was entered that night.

On the 11th the tanks which had bogged down were recovered. As a result of the action C/37 suffered three (3) men killed (Pvt Wilford Ratliff, Pvt? Schuhnicki, and Pvt Hammann). Six men were evacuated because of injuries, five of which later returned to the company. Four tanks were lost.

GAH

Interview with Capt Leach, CO, B Co, 37th Tk Bn - Champenoux to ~~Rodolphe~~ Francaltroff

24 Nov 1944

(Note: Capt Leach could not supply dates for any of the following action, except relatively. B company was well back in the CCA column, and took a leading part in the action only around Rodalbe and at Francaltroff.)

The CCA column, with B/37 the last medium tank company, moved out of assembly areas south of Champenoux on 10 Nov. Route was through Champenoux, Vic-Sur-Seille, Morville-Les-Vic. The latter had just been taken by the 26th Inf Div, and a tank battalion attached to the 26th was outposting the area. Hainpont, the next town on the route of march, was still in enemy hands. ~~There~~ The head of the column, (D/37, A/37, C/10, 66 FA) went into assembly area east of Morville. B/37 and A/53 remained on the road to the south of the town. Enemy artillery fell in the assembly area. Capt Spencer (A/37) was ordered to lead the column in attack on Hainpont, then to assemble northeast of Obreck. In the attack A/37 suffered two officer casualties; Capt Spencer was hit by a shell fragment and seriously wounded. Lt White who took over command was wounded a few minutes later, and Lt Walters assumed command. There was no other opposition but artillery. The artillery continued throughout the night in the assembly area east of Morville, and one man was wounded there. A halftrack and two peeps were destroyed by the fire. Crews stayed with their vehicles during the night, in the tanks or on guard on the rear decks.

The next morning (11 Nov) the column moved out, with no ^{assigned} objective. A route of march was given which was the main road through Conthill, Rodalbe and northeast, and orders were to ~~advance~~ advance as far as possible. Order of march: D/37, Bn Comd, Hq Co (less AG plt with D/37), B/37, C/10, plt 24 (?), A/37, B/53 (?), previously given as A/53. Which is right? (The 66th FA remained in position in the assembly ~~area~~ area near Morville) At Moutelotte Farm, D/37 destroyed an enemy AT gun and took about 30 PW's. The column then received heavy direct fire from the northwest. The head of the column ~~continued~~ continued the march and assembled near Riche. The remainder, from B/37 back were ordered (by Maj Hunter?) to hold up. B/37 deployed to the west of the road and returned the enemy fire, although they could not see what was firing. Lt Poore, whose mortar platoon, was getting particularly heavy fire, called Capt Leach and asked to have his artillery observer adjust on the enemy to the northwest. As Lt Rayrat, the 66th observer, moved up to Capt Leach's tank, two rounds of enemy AP hit him. The first ricocheted off the front of his tank; the second hit Lt Rayrat in the head. The tank, undamaged, moved back to evacuate the observer. Capt Leach ~~informed~~ informed the artillery and tried to get a new observer, but none came up. (Query: Did the 66th do any firing?) It was while B/37 was deployed in this position that ~~2d Lt Frederick Lockwood~~ 2d Lt Frederick Lockwood (plt 2) was killed by shell fragments. Maj Hunter with the head of the column one km southeast of Riche, radioed Capt Leach (time?) to reverse the column and take it around south and east of the Bois de Haboudange route through Obreck, Medeling and north to main road at Riche. Note: B/37 remained in the vicinity of the Moutelotte Farm about 1½ hours. The prisoners taken at the farm were Italians, possibly mountain troops. Tanks fired as artillery at ranges of about 4000 yards, using HE and adjusting concentrations visually on a registration burst. The second section of the second platoon was sent back to assist Lt Poore and fired successfully on an enemy direct fire weapon. On the mission Sgt Del Vicchio's tank was hit by HE and lost a track. There was no cover in the position; the whole left flank of the column was exposed for 5000 yards. The only enemy seen were some vehicles at more than 5000 yards and 6 German tanks observed moving in the vicinity of Vannecourt. These disappeared before fire could be brought on them. They were moving east.

59.

B/37 led the rear half of the column back through Obreck and Dedeling. On the trail south of Riche, they met elements of the 26th Inf Div who claimed they were pinned down by enemy fire. Capt Leach said that he went on, did not receive any enemy fire, until he ~~reached the summit of hill 269 (1/50,000)~~ came over hill 269 (1/50,000). Then he was hit by fire from the north. Two tanks got direct hits from HE but were still mobile. C/10 command halftrack on cresting the hill was hit by AP which wounded the CO and the first sergeant. C/10 then turned back and made their way along the reverse slope of the hill to rejoin the column on the route of march east of Riche.

While the B/37 column was still extended along the road south of Riche ~~the~~ the Hunter column was given the mission of moving up through Conthill past Rodalbe, assembling southeast of Rodalbe. The 66th FA neutralized enemy fire from the north and the column moved out, D/37 getting some AP fire but no hits. The route was exposed to the enemy to the north all the way, but they reached the assembly area without loss. That night B/37 performed outpost duties, third platoon (Lt Marston) on the road west of Rodalbe; first platoon (S/Sgt Fitzpatrick) the fork east of Conthill; second platoon (Lt Farese) a trail southwest of the Bois de Conthill. During the night two rifle companies of the 26th Inf Div took Rodalbe. The next morning three German tanks were observed moving into Rodalbe from the north. The tanks were firing into the town and over it. One round destroyed an assault gun of the platoon of the 37th in position just south of the town. Maj Hunter ordered B/37 to assemble in the vicinity outposted by Lt Farese's platoon preparatory to attack on Rodalbe. Maj Hunter took command of the TF which was B/37 plus the Recon platoon. The tanks moved at about 1600 along the main road. At the Bois de Conthill receiving enemy fire on their exposed left flank, the tanks reversed their direction, ~~and then moved back to the south~~ to circle behind the wood and come up on Rodalbe from the south. ((Capt Leach says he should have moved his tanks on into town.)) ~~On~~ On reaching the east edge of the wood, Maj Hunter and Capt Leach decided to turn south in the low ground rather than risk coming up on the ridge of hill ~~264~~ 264. The recon plt got through, except for one peep which stuck in the mud. ((Note: exact location of this low ground not clear)) The third platoon leading ~~got~~ also got through and engaged the enemy at Rodalbe. ((Get this from Lt Marston)) Then the tanks following began to stick in the mud. Maj Hunter's, Capt Leach's, ~~Sgt~~ Cpl Sandrocks and the ~~artillery~~ artillery observer's. Sgt Sowers tank on the main road hooked on ~~the~~ Cpl Sandrocks and tried to pull it out. Sowers at the same time was firing at the enemy in Rodalbe. He was hit and the tank disabled. Then the enemy fire began ~~moving~~ moving west. Capt Leach at once ordered Sgt Litherland (first platoon) to move around ~~the~~ to the left flank and ~~screen~~ screen the bogged down tanks with smoke to the north. While ~~the~~ Sgt Litherland carried out this mission, two rounds hit the ~~artillery~~ artillery observer's tank and destroyed it (Note: Lt Mitchell had replaced Lt Rayrat as FO; he was using the same tank Rayrat had been killed in.) Sgt Grady of the first platoon had got his tank stuck trying to pull out Sandrocks. T/4 Drew tried to rescue Sowers' tank which had been hit between the engine and the gas tank, but though he succeeded in moving it a little, the engine gave out. Sgt Litherland's smoke screen saved the day. At night all the tanks were pulled out except Sandrocks' and Brady's; these were destroyed by incendiary grenades. In ~~addition to these two~~ ^{and} Sowers and Mitchell's, two tanks of the third platoon were also lost, Sgt Cueto's and Sgt Krassner's, making six ~~tanks~~ altogether. Withdrawal to vicinity of Zarbeling was ordered that night by Maj Hunter, ~~and the tanks were~~ ~~and the tanks were~~

The next morning (13 Nov) B/37 was given the mission of scouting the Conthill-Rodalbe road, ~~and~~ cleaning out the west edge of the road, and cutting off enemy escape from Rodalbe. (Note: the first battalion of the 104th Inf was in Lidrezing. German infantry had been seen moving south from Rodalbe and into the wood. Capt Leach says that they were allowed to come quite close ~~to them~~ before our troops fired because it was thought they might be remnants of the 26th escaping from Rodalbe. When they were identified, the MG section of the 1/104 and the 66th FA took them under fire, but many got into the wood. B/37 patrolled the road, reported no enemy activity.

They were ordered back by Maj Hunter. On the return Sgt Fitzpatrick's tank was hit by enemy artillery ~~ambushed~~, wounding the driver and bog. The tank was not disabled, but the crew suffered from shock and Fitzpatrick abandoned the vehicle to evacuate the men. The next morning (14 Nov) Fitzpatrick led his platoon back to ~~retrieve~~ retrieve the tank. Note: On both days the 66th put smoke on Rodalbe to screen B/37 moves and on both days infantrymen from the 1/104 rode the decks of the tanks out to take care of any enemy infantry that might be in the Bois de Conthill. On the 14th enemy artillery in the ~~area~~ 37th Bn assembly area wounded Lt Mixon, Sgt Cueto and T/4 Chelicki. Sgt Krassner at the tank OP just north of the Assembly area ~~was~~ was killed by HE which hit in his foxhole.

The battalion moved back to rest area at Anelecourt. (Note: This took place on 17 Nov. On 16 Nov they moved to Chateau Voue. (Capt Leach said nothing about events of 15th or 16th)) When the force moved out again east (19 Nov) B/37 was attached to the 10th Armd Inf (TF West) Plan was ~~in~~ for TF West to move by southern route through Dieuze as soon as this was taken by the 26th Inf on east to secure the dam at Mittersheim. But the 26th failed to take Dieuze and CCA ordered TF West to move around by the northern route taken by the rest of the command. B/37 was ordered to rejoin the battalion. The company moved up the Bernering, assembled and regassed there. Col Abrams, (who had taken command of the battalion at ~~Leach~~ Anelecourt) ordered B/37 to move through Virming, pick up B/10 and attack Francaltroff, then clean out Lening and assemble. An artillery concentration was put on Francaltroff. B/10 vehicles were intermingled with the tanks, and the force moved into the outskirts of Francaltroff with no opposition except artillery. (Note: C/37 tanks were in position to put direct fire into the town.) ~~AT~~ Enemy AT fire (where?) knocked out Lt Cook's tank (third platoon) wounding him and his canoneer. Two infantry halftracks were also hit. At Francaltroff, Capt Leach found the bridge blown so that he could not get into the main part of the town. Reporting this to Col Abrams he was ordered to assemble west of the town.. The infantry was sent into town alone to clean it out. B/37 tanks got stuck in the mud in the assembly area; ten finally bogged down and enemy artillery falling continuously in the area killed one man and wounded four. The winch of the company's retriever broke. Capt Leach requested another retriever from battalion, and eventually all tanks were extricated; the new retriever's winch broke, however, so that when a few kilometers south in the course of withdrawal order by Col Abrams, the tanks stuck again, Leach had to request another retriever. ~~None were available~~ None were available at the moment as C/37 was also having trouble with mud. B/37 remained where they were (vic Obrick?) for the night. Retrievers arrived the next morning to pull them out and they returned to the vicinity of Riche where the battalion went into reserve. Note: Capt Leach estimates that 300 rounds of enemy artillery fell in the vicinity of Francaltroff during the afternoon and night. Casualties which were mostly due to the fact that the men were dismounted working to extricate their tanks, included besides the wounded, three combat fatigue cases. During the night the 35th Inf Div relieved B/10 in Francaltroff.)

General account of activities of the 37th Tk Bn during the period 10 - 22 November. Interview was conducted in the Bn CP at Riche, France, on 23 November 1944. Information was supplied by Lt Col Abrams, Major Bautz, Capt Dwight, and Capt Hays : CO, Actg Ex O, S-3 and S-2 respectively. Details relative to D/37 were also added by Capt MacMahon. (Map 1/50,000).

Capt. Dayton

The 37th Tk Bn left its area between Erbevillers and Champenoux on the morning of the 10th of November and reached the IP (998178) northeast of Champenoux at 0700. A Task Force, led by Major Hunter, was forming on the move in the following order: 37 (-C), 66th FA, C/10, A/53, Pl C/704, Pl C/24, and attached medics. It had been given a route of march to the east, and seizing the ground around the rail center of Benestroff was the immediate objective.

The column proceeded via Moncel-sur-Seille - Vic-sur-Seille - Morville. In the woods northeast of Morville (139256) the column was delayed by three large holes in the road which had to be filled by a tank dozer. The third hole extended completely across the road and had log obstacles on either side which prevented the column from skirting it. During the delay, D/27 reconnoitered for another route around the west edge of the woods but did not find a desirable one. They did, however, knock out two AT guns in the edge of the woods. While the column was stalled, it received some artillery fire which did not affect it seriously.

When the column was ready to proceed once again, A/37 led off toward Hampont. As the head of the column emerged from the woods, it began to receive direct fire from about Hampont. The fire was returned with unobserved results, and Capt Spencer, CO of A/37, after putting his tank in defilade, got out to reconnoiter on foot. While on this reconnaissance, he was seriously wounded by small arms fire and Lt Martin J. White took over the Captain's tank and the company. The column then proceeded forward into Hampont. Machines and miscellaneous equipment was piled in the street to block the progress. In the town, Lt White's tank was hit by a bazooka and the Lt. was seriously wounded. The loader, Pvt Walter H. Hammerschmidt, and the gunner, Cpl Jess F Dingleline, were killed. (Capt MacMahon said the bazooka was mounted on two wheels and seemed to be ~~mounted on a small towed howitzer~~ improvised on what had been a small towed howitzer.) 2d Lt Charley Walters then took over A/37. Meanwhile D/37 was now brought up and put in head of the column once again and led into an assembly area north of Obreck (165285) While there, direct fire from 75mm AT guns, located in the vicinity of Burlioncourt, was received. In the assembly area were also found, dug in, one officer and about 30 men from two companies of the 104th Inf Regt. Other elements of the 26 Div were on the flanks. During the evening and night the assembly area was heavily shelled. There were a number of casualties and several thin-skinned vehicles were knocked out.

The next morning there was more shelling. Those killed were Pvt Russell Palmer of the Recon Plat; Pvt Anthony Pelito, Hq Pl Hq Co; T/5 Robert J. Griffith, A/37; 2d Lt Edward F. Woelfle, Maintenance Co, A3 and T/5 Joe S. Smith of the Medics. Capt Carey Stroup, Capt Dwight and Major Hunter all sustained wounds and several days later Maj Hunter had to be evacuated.

Before the column left the assembly area on the morning of the 11th the assault guns knocked out an AT gun to the northwest and fired HE in the vicinity of the gun. Soon thereafter they also knocked out a halftrack towing a 75mm AT gun out of Burilloncourt. Escaping personnel were fired into with HE. The column moved north along the railroad and began crossing to the west opposite the Haut de Hesse Farme. As they did so, fire came from La Moutelotte Farm. The fire was countered and the enemy weapons were knocked out. There were 4.20mm AA guns, 2 half-tracks--one a self-propelled gun, a short barreled gun--probably a howitzer, some AT guns and a sedan. Meanwhile, the elements which had not yet left the assembly area continued to receive enemy artillery. The service company halftrack, the S-1 halftrack, and a 1½ ton 6x6 truck towing a trailer and both loaded with ammunition were hit. The ammunition exploded causing casualties in a platoon of C/704 TDs. Lt Bumpass, the platoon leader, was killed.

Having eliminated the resistance at La Moutelotte Farme, the column finished crossing the railroad and proceeded north toward Haboudange. In so doing they moved into what might be termed a defile. There were confined on the west by a creek and low, swampy ground, on the east by a railroad and banks which were impassible, with very steep ground beyond the railroad. When the head of the column neared Haboudange, it received direct fire from the north, northwest and northeast. The fire was returned but the enemy was out of range. The enemy fired both AP and HE. Some of the fire came from AA guns and, judging from the damage done, some of them must have been 88s. Three light tanks were knocked out and Capt Hay's tank, a medium near the head of the column, after being hit three times with HE, was finally knocked out and burned by AP fire. Capt Hays was slightly wounded. A jeep was also hit and Lt Lynn Dennison, motor officer of D/37, killed. With the column stalled and unable to move the tail of the column began to receive artillery fire. Other casualties resulted. Lt Max Poore, motor platoon leader, was killed while out attempting to observe from whence the fire came as was Lt Frederick Lockwood, a platoon leader of B/37. Lt Mitchell, the artillery observer from the 66th FA, met a similar fate. Lt Roy Rush, the assault gun platoon leader, was seriously wounded.

Finally D Co was able to bypass the knocked out tanks and proceed past the resistance to an assembly area to the southwest of Conthill (205327). In so doing they captured an enemy AA unit consisting of an officer and about 30 men south of Riche (193321). The unit had a SP 75mm gun and several 20mm weapons. While D/37 was waiting in the assembly area for the rest of the column, two enemy horse drawn vehicles moved south to the northwest of Conthill. As these vehicles came under the railroad they were fired on and knocked out. One was a cart--the other a bazooka improvised on a howitzer mount.

While D/37 was breaking by the enemy guns, the remainder of the column turned around with considerable difficulty and retraced its route. It returned to Obreck, crossed over to Dedeling and proceeded directly north to join D/37 in the assembly area, arriving there about 1400.

Before proceeding, Conthil was fired on with artillery. There was no return fire, and only one prisoner was taken in the town. The column moved through Conthil to an assembly area east of the town (230333) and remained there during the night. That night four (4) British paratroopers were picked up. One reported he had been there since 15 Sept. About thirty (30) men from the 26 Inf Div were also contacted in the assembly area. Other troops of the 26 were reported to be in Rodalbe. While in the assembly area, artillery fire was placed on 5 enemy tanks coming out of Morhange. One tank was observed smoking after the fire. One large gun out of Pevange was also knocked out.

The next morning, 12 Nov, an infantry company of the 26th Div in Rodalbe were having trouble. They reported that enemy tanks had come into the town and fired point blank into the buildings. To assist the infantry an attack was planned on the town. C/10 and B/37 were to move their vehicles around the east side of Rodalbe by way of a trail. A/37 deployed to the west of the Bois de Conthil and B/53 attacked, dismounted, through the woods. As C/10 moved out, the halftracks were bogged in the mud and became immobile. B/37 moved forward and had the same difficulty. Enemy tanks north of Rodalbe had, in the meantime, begun to deliver direct fire on the attacking force. Major Hunter's tank was mired down and could be extricated only by using two tanks. Three tanks were knocked out by the enemy fire as well as the mine roller tank. B/37 returned the fire of the enemy. Meanwhile B/53 had met heavy opposition in the woods. Their CO was killed and the company withdrew.

B/37 continued the attack on Rodalbe until dark and finally had to withdraw because the terrain made the tanks immobile. On withdrawing it was necessary to destroy two tanks and one jeep by our own fire to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy.

Throughout the day heavy artillery fire had been received from the enemy, which probably came from the woods of Pfaffenforst. Capt Wysocky, the S-4, had his leg broken by the fire and had to be evacuated. One of the assault guns was hit three times by direct AP fire from enemy tanks near the railroad crossing north of Rodalbe. Cpl Albert Duff and Pfc Daniel Ulivarri were killed.

Meanwhile Capt MacMahon, with D/37, had reconnoitered a new position between Zarbeling and Lidrezing (237326). By 0100 on the 13th the Task Force had closed into the new area. During the day positions occupied in darkness were improved. Some artillery fell in the area.

Task Force Oden was supposed to attack and clean out Rodalbe during the day but the attack didn't succeed. *(will contact subsequent)*.

On the 14th A/37, led by Major Bautz, was assigned the mission of supporting TF West in an attack east of Lidrezing. This TF ran into mines and were fired on from the north edge of the Forêt de Bride et de Koeckir. The remainder of Major Hunter's TF remained static. Meanwhile the 26th Div CP had moved into Lidrezing and its troops were cleaning out the

woods to the north. The 37th Tk Bn and 26th Div coordinated their activities and took up positions accordingly. A defensive line was formed running roughly from Conthil - Bois de Conthil - north of Zarbeling - to the Bois de Renardvignes.

On the 15th A/37 remained with TF West and was in position southeast of Lidrezing (252316). While there two enemy tanks were knocked out. About 1730 the company joined the rest of the Bn in the assembly area. Preparations had been made to dig the tanks in, and the digging began during the night. The 26th Inf had elements of a Bn in Bois de Renardvignes.

The next day the Bn received word that it (less A Co) was being relieved by the 10th Armd Inf Bn. By evening the Bn had closed into an assembly area to the east of Chateau Vorn (190287). A/37 joined the Bn the same night. During the day Major Hunter was evacuated because of wounds previously incurred.

On the 17th the Bn was taken over once again by Lt Col Abrams and moved to Amelécourt. The next day was spent on maintenance and repair. During the day orders were received that a task force would move out the following day. (C/37 was returned to CCA Reserve and B/37 went to TF West.)

There were some changes in the Task Force that moved out at 0700 on the 19th. In the column were D/25, D/37, A/37, B/10, A/24, B/704 (-1 Pl), 94th FA. The objective was Sarre Union; the route Conthil - Rodalbe - Bermering - Virming - Francaltroff - Lening.

The column passed through Conthil without difficulty and learned that our troops were in Rodalbe. At the entrance to the town there was a place prepared for a roadblock. Just as the head of the column reached this point a CIC jeep passed it and was blown up by two mines immediately beyond the prepared roadblock position. Investigation resulted in the discovery of 12 Teller mines across the road - 3 rows of 4 mines each. These were removed by the engineers. One assault gun went through Rodalbe; D/25 then went through. The cavalry troops got as far as the railroad bridge north of the town and found it blown. By following German tank tracks, however, a passable place across the railroad was found. The column continued with D/37 leading. Meanwhile the cavalry troop had gone ahead. They found elements of our 35th Div in Bermering. These troops were passed through and the column proceeded north of the town into an assembly area (249379). To the west elements of our 6th Armd Div could be seen moving. From the assembly area B/704 and D/25 left the road and proceeded parallel to it toward Virming. They had considerable difficulty because of the mud. D/37, with the assault guns, moved north of Virming and deployed to fire direct fire into the town. A/37 took up a position south of the road (265386) where they could also fire into Virming. B/37 and B/10 proceeded into the town mounted in their tanks and half-tracks. Virming was practically destroyed by the fire directed upon it and by the incendiary grenades utilized by the infantry when they entered the town. The lead tank of B/37 was knocked out by an AP round as it entered the town -- probably from tank fire. Two enemy AT guns were destroyed but one enemy tank in the town got away. Meanwhile, Col Abrams and Capt Dwight, CO and S-3 respectively, were in direct support to the northwest. Two enemy tanks appeared north of the town (280394). They each got one. The assault guns received direct fire and a commander of one of the guns was killed.

Following the action the Bn returned to the assembly area north of Bermering for the night. That same night a Bn of the 320th Inf Regt went into Virming.

The next morning, with A/37 leading, the TF moved out (D/37 went to CCA Reserve and C/37 returned to the TF). As it proceeded, enemy artillery was received from the high ground. West and south of Francaltroff was an old undefended AT ditch which had to be reconnoitered. A crossing place was found west of the town. In positions from the northwest and west of the town respectively C/37 and A/37 delivered fire on the town while B/37 and E/10 attempted to enter the town mounted. At the road junction (313400) the Germans knocked out an assault gun, several halftracks and a tank of B/37. They were using both direct and indirect artillery fire. When the infantry reached the town they found the bridge blown, so they dismounted, crossed the creek, and cleaned out the town. Artillery continued to fall.

They withdrew to an assembly area near @brick (283397). In so doing several halftracks and tanks were bogged down. A/37 continued to the original assembly area north of Bernering.

On the next day, the 21st, the vehicles were recovered from the mud. That night the engineers put in three bridges. The next day the TF was withdrawn to Riche, France.

SINGLING

The impromptu attack on SINGLING, 6 Dec 1944, by "B" companies of the 37th Tk Bn and the 51st Armd Inf Bn represented the farthest advance northeast of the 4th Armd Div in its slow difficult drive towards the German border which began 10 November from assembly areas just east of NANCY. From the military standpoint SINGLING is important not as a town but as a terrain feature. An agricultural village of some 50 squat stone houses, it is strung along about half a mile of the highway from ACHEN near the SAAR River east to HITCHER and the German border. Around the simple square church, the brown stone schoolhouse, the market square, cluster the houses whose concreted walls are painted white, red, yellow, blue, pink, and roofed with red tile. As in most LORRAINE villages, the stables are on the main street and the manure piled in the front yards. But the picturesque insignificance of SINGLING conceals a military reality. Some of these farm houses have three-foot reinforced concrete walls; the garden walls are high and thick; concrete pillboxes stand guard at the entrances to town east and west, on the hills and in the valley north, on the ridge south. For SINGLING is in the MAGINOT Line, and its situation along a southwest-northeast ridge is tactically important. In the MAGINOT fortification scheme, oriented north and east, SINGLING is a focal point in the secondary system of forts. For the Germans defending south and west, it was admirably placed as a fortified outpost for the defense against attack from the southwest of the cities of ROHRBACH, an important rail and road center and military barracks area, and HINING, which controls its approaches from the south.

ROHRBACH and HINING, both located in valleys, dominated on three sides by high ground, are themselves tactical liabilities. But control of the cities through occupation of the ridge to the north was especially important at this

time, both to XII Corps which ordered the attack and to SEVENTH ARMY (IV Corps) which was on the 4th Arm'd Div's right flank. The principal objective of the XII Corps was SARREBOURG, an important city on the SAAR River and the German border. Through ROERBACH pass the main railroad and one of the main highways east out of SARREBOURG to GERMANY. The 4th Arm'd Div was to seize this vital escape route while the 35th Inf Div attacked SARREBOURG. ROERBACH had an additional importance as an objective at the time, because it was a focus for roads north out of the large forest area (including the FORET DE LEVIER and FORET DE MONTEROHN) then under attack by IV Corps units. (See Map #1.)

But ROERBACH as an objective could not be separated from SINGLING. The main road into ROERBACH from the south runs between a series of hills which make it unusable for attack. The alternative is the ridge west of the VALLEE D'ALTIERCH. The east side of this ridge is, of course, enfiladed by the same hills that control the road. The west side, on the other hand, comes under direct frontal fire from SINGLING, which, by reason of a few feet additional elevation, commands this approach route for three or four kilometers to the south. Although neither route, therefore, was satisfactory, since, on both tanks would come under enemy observation before they were within range to attack, the west side of the ridge, with comparative freedom from flanking fire seemed to offer the best hope for success. To use it for attacking SINGLING, however, it was necessary first either to take or neutralize SINGLING, because the ridge configuration and the impassability in flooded terrain of the VALLEE D'ALTIERCH compelled the attacking force to come up east of the town and make a ninety degree turn southeast on the high ground into SINGLING. Assault of SINGLING was rendered difficult not only by the canalized approach, but also by the fact that the heights it occupied were themselves dominated by a ridge

1200 yds to the north which is the main defense of the MAGINOT Line.

Just how difficult the task was, was discovered on 5 Dec by the 37th Tr Bn (Lt Col ORRINGTON ABRAMS) when it attacked from SCHMITTVILLER under orders to advance as far as possible, with SINGLING as a limiting objective. In fact, the attack carried only to within 1000 yds of SINGLING and was there stopped by difficult terrain and heavy artillery and direct fire from SINGLING and beyond. Fourteen medium tanks were lost to mud and enemy guns. Five were hit almost simultaneously on topping a ridge south of town; others bogged in the sticky ground and were lost to artillery or temporarily disabled. The battalion, reduced in effective strength to 2 medium companies and unable to advance, reassembled northwest of Hill 349 (616469). That night (5-6 Dec), CCA Hq received from division the plan of attack for the next day. CCB was to advance from SCHMITTVILLER to take SINGLING and the high ground to the east. TF ABRAMS (CCA), whose principal combat elements were the 37th Tr Bn, 51st Armd Inf Bn, 94th Tr Bn (105 How) and "F" Co of the 704th TD Bn (less one Plat), was to attack SINGLING and ROHRBACH and reconnoiter the high ground to the north. TF OBER (CCA) meanwhile would push on from the MICHEL River bridgehead at DOMFESSEL to take DEHLINGEN and RAHLING, and be in a position to support ABRAMS (see maps #1 and #2).

Col ABRAMS recommended to CCA that he be allowed to attack SINGLING. CCB was still in the vicinity of VOELLERDINGEN and SCHMITTVILLER, and, though they could march as far as ABRAMS' assembly area without opposition, he knew that they would be unable to come up in time to jump off abreast with CCA in the attack. This would mean that ABRAMS would have to turn his flank to SINGLING in attacking east. If that turning had to be made, he asked CCA for the support of at least six battalions of artillery. (In fact, when he attacked the next

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

morning, all artillery battalions, except the 94th were, unknown to him, on the road.) ABRAMS sent his recommendations as to objectives and artillery support to CGA by liaison officer, along with a plan for attacking HINHNG. The latter was "apparently" approved, and called for advance north to the high ground south of SINGLING, then east to the trail fork (635498) and along the axis of the main road into HINHNG. Like lettered infantry and tank companies were to be paired off; the two platoons of Tds to be used for direct fire support. (Both tank and infantry battalions were far below strength; as a practical matter the 37th had only two medium tank companies; the 51st had about 180 combat effectives. "B" team had 14 tanks of which one was a Hq 105 assault gun attached, and 57 infantrymen.) The turning movement south of SINGLING, compelled by the terrain, was to be covered in addition to the artillery fires by the assault guns and mortars of the 37th Tk Bn firing smoke and HE into the town and adjacent high ground from positions near Hill 336 (609472). In the detailed plan, the assault team composed of "B" Cos of the 37th Tk Bn and the 51st Armd Inf Bn, was selected to make the sweep of the town of HINHNG. Capt JAMES H. LEACH, and 1st Lt DANIEL H. HELLEN, the respective COs, therefore met with their platoon leaders to study a town plan of HINHNG and map out detailed routes and dispositions for their troops. No one paid any attention to SINGLING which they were to bypass.

The 51st Armd Inf Bn (Maj DAN C. ALANIS) at 0700, 6 Dec, left bivouac areas in the vicinity of SCHMITTVILLER which they had taken without opposition on 5

Preparation
for Attack

December, to meet the tanks for the jump off at 0800. The plan, as far as it concerned "B" team, was to advance in column of alternating tanks and infantry carriers up to the outskirts of HINHNG. But the soaked ground even on the hills proved too sticky for the

trucks, and they were therefore left in the bivouac area with their drivers while the riflemen mounted the rear decks of the tanks. When they mounted, that is at 0835 (Lt BELDEN looked at his watch and was worried because they were late in starting), the plan still called for "F" team to attack HINING. They were then just west of the ROMAN HWY on the forward slopes of Hill 808, about 30 yds south of SINGLING. "A" Co of the 37th Tk Bn at the head of the column was a mile to the north and had been stopped by direct and indirect fire from SINGLING as heavy as that of the day before. At 0850, "B" and "C" Btries of the 94th Armd FA Bn began firing smoke concentrations north and east of SINGLING. On six contiguous target areas, they fired 131 rds, but although a gentle south-westerly breeze drifted the smoke perfectly across SINGLING, enemy fire continued heavy, and for the next hour or so the column made no attempt to advance. "A" Co, 37th Tk Bn, fired into the town, although targets were seldom visible. "B" shot occasionally at targets of opportunity at extreme range and without observed effect. Of the enemy ahead in SINGLING, "B" observed two tanks in the orchards west and east and a gun firing from the center of town. This gun turned out to be an JP which later engaged the attention of the assaulting companies a good part of the day.

Convinced that enemy guns in SINGLING could not be neutralized by a fire fight, Col ABRAMS decided on his own initiative to attack the town and attempt to hold it with one tank company and infantry while the remainder of his force turned east into HINING. He assigned the mission of taking the town to "F" team. There was no time to make detailed plans.

Capt LEACH was given the order to attack; he informed Lt BELDEN, but as the infantry was already mounted, Lt BELDEN could not pass the word on over to his platoon leaders. (One of them thought until that night that he had been in HINING. The tank commanders were so sure of it that they mistook WELSHCHOFF FARM

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north of SUMMERS for the barracks they had expected to find at NINE. They
then deployed his tanks, putting the 1st Plt (2d Lt JAMES M. JAMES) on the
left; the 1st Plt (1st Lt WILLIAM F. CUMMIS) on the right; and the 3d Plt (1st
Lt ROBERT M. COOK, in support). The command tank moved between the 2d and 1st
Plats in front of the 3d. As the 2d Plt tanks carried no infantry, the three
infantry platoons were mounted on the remaining armor tanks (5 in the 1st Plt,
4 in the 2d, the CO's tank and the artillery observation's). The infantry platoons
were widely dispersed; the eleven men of the 2d rode on four tanks. Before the
attack at 1005, "A" and "B" Batteries of the 94th Ia Am Bn put 107 rds of HE on
SUMMERS, of which 3 rds were time fused, the rest instant. The assault guns
of the 37th Tn Am took up the smoke mission and continued to fire north of the
town until the tanks got on their objective. A/37 turned east and throughout the
day fired on the SUMMERS-BIRMINGHAM road and to the north. One platoon of TDS
was in position to support the attack (see map #2), but actually did little ef-
fective firing during the day because heavy enemy artillery forced the guns to
keep moving back. The other platoon remained in assembly area, was moved into
NINE the next day.

"G" GO tanks advanced rapidly into town, immediately after the artillery
preparation, and fired as they moved. But the planned formation was soon broken.

Sgt JOSEPH WATKINS'S tank (2d Plt) developed engine trouble, ran
2d Tn only in first gear and so lagged behind; Sgt Wm T. MORTIMER'S (3d

Plt) radio failed and he did not bring his tank up at all. The other
three tanks of the 2d Plt crowded the first two until their firing endangered
the lead tanks and they were ordered to stop shooting. As the company ap-
proached the town, the 1st and 2d Plats swung east and west respectively and the
3d Plt moved in through the gap to come up substantially on a line. The effort

then was of an advancing line of 12 tanks on a front a little less than the length of RINGLING or about 600-700 yds. Only Lt PARKER's tank was notably in advance. Leading the tanks of S/Sgt BERNARD K. BOWERS and Sgt JOHN H. PARKS by about 50 yds, Lt PARKER moved up the hill south of RINGLING northwest into an orchard. As his tank topped the crest of a slight rise just south of a stone farmyard wall (see sketch), it was hit three times by AP and immediately set on fire. Lt PARKER and his loader, Pfc WILLIAM J. BRADLEY, were killed. (They are officially listed as KIA, as their bodies were burned and not recovered.) The gunner, Cpl HENRY C. MILLER was SWA. The rest of the crew got out. BOWERS and PARKS backed their tanks into a defile behind the nose of the hill and radioed HALLIDAY not to come up.

The shells that hit Lt PARKER were probably from a M4 tank which was parked beside a brick barn (M4's #19 on sketch), though they may have come from a towed 75mm AT gun in the same general vicinity. In any case what enemy on the east Lt PARKER had run into was a nest of enemy armor and defensive placements - a perfect defensive position which the enemy used to the fullest and against which "J" team fought and plotted all day without even minor success. Here just south of the main road and 75 yds from the thickly settled part of town are a substantial two-story stone house and stone barn and two WACHTER pillboxes. One large domed pillbox constructed to house an AT gun defending to the north is just to the west of the barn. Two concrete buttresses forming out to the northeast and southeast form a good field emplacement for an AT gun defending southeast. The towed AT gun may have been emplaced there. The orchard southeast is thin, the slope of the hill gentle so that the turrets of tanks attacking from that direction are unimpeded from the pillbox position at 150 yds. The stone pillbox is much smaller, designed probably as a no out-post to cover the main road. It juts out into the road and together with the

high walls of the farm buildings to the east provides cover from the town square for a tank parked behind it on the south side of the road. The main street of town makes a broad "M" curve which serves to conceal guns on the south side from observation of an attacking force entering town from the south, yet still permit those guns to command the full length of the street to the main square (see photo).

In this area (see sketch) at least three M V tanks, two 81 guns, one towed M1 and one M2 (German 42 or just possibly an American .50 cal) successfully blocked every attempt at direct assault or envelopment, and during the day fired at will at all movements across or along the main street and to the south and southeast. Sgts SOWERS and PARRIS found that if they moved their tanks only so far up the slope as to bare their antenna masts, they drew AP fire.

For some time, however, PARRIS and SOWERS were the only ones who suspected the strength of this thicket of enemy defensive armor. They knew that they could not advance, but they had seen only one tank and one gun. The destruction of Lt PARRIS'S tank was, of course, reported to Capt LEACH, but Capt LEACH at the moment was preoccupied by another more immediately pressing problem, an enemy SP 50 ft in front of him.

When the two tank platoons carrying the infantry reached a hedge just south of CINCINNATI, they slowed up to let the infantry dismount. Lt BALDWIN got off

ahead of his platoon leaders. First to reach him was Lt COUGILL
Infantry
Attack whose platoon assembled most rapidly because the men happened to be riding on tanks relatively close together. Lt BALDWIN told COUGILL

to take the left side of town, disregard the first three houses on the south and move in. Lt FAIR was ordered to take the right side. BALDWIN said to PARRIS, "Follow up after COUGILL." PARRIS commented drily afterwards, "I was in support." That was the plan. Neither leaders nor men had any knowledge

of the town or of the enemy. They did know their jobs. They were to clean out the houses, splitting the work as circumstances dictated. Though all the platoon leaders and a good percentage of the men were recent replacements, (*) they had all had combat experience and had fought in towns before.

(*) From 2 Nov to 6 Dec, the company had received 123 replacements, and had suffered 100 per cent officer casualties. Lt **SWANSON** took command 25 Nov, but had been in the company before; **PADGETT**, **PRICE** and **CONGALL** were all replacements who joined the company 13, 15 and 21 Nov, respectively.

The enemy they now attacked included as the principal combat element all four companies of the 1st Bn of the 111 Pz Gren Regt, (armored infantry of the 11 Pz Div) with a total strength three or four times as great as that of the attacking American infantry. They were supported by two "tanks" (probably SPs) of an unknown unit, by the 5 Btry of the 119 Arty Bn (3-4 105mm How), organic battalion of the 11 Pz Div, and by some GCR artillery. Three days before, headquarters of the 1/111 Pz Gren Regt had been in **SINGLING** while the companies were committed in the vicinity of **HINNINGEN** (Q4639). On about 4 Dec the companies moved via **SARRELABE** to **VOMELSHEDIMMERS** where they fought against elements of GCR, 4th Arm Div, and apparently retreated that day or night to the vicinity of **SINGLING**. The original mission after the withdrawal was to attack **GERBINGEN** (Q8544), but this mission was changed to the defense of **SINGLING**.

Considering its depleted strength (150-200 men) the enemy battalion was well armed. The three companies actually in contact at **SINGLING** had one towed 75mm AT gun, at least five 81mm mortars, eight to ten LMGs, one HMG, three 20mm AA guns, and a wurflugerast, an improvised rocket launcher of steel supported wooden frames capable of firing two 200-pound, 36-inch projectiles at a time.

An indication of the relative importance of **SINGLING** and **HINNING** in the enemy's defensive plan is the fact that while a battalion with tank and artillery support held **SINGLING**, the defense of **HINNING** was entrusted to a single

company (the 1st) of the 61 AF Bn (11 Pz Div). This company had about 50 men and eight old-type 75mm AF guns mounted on M IV chassis, which a PW testified could not penetrate a Sherman tank from the front at more than 600 yds. Near BINING, exact location undetermined, were one or possibly two companies of the 2/111 Pz Gren Regt, whose presence was apparently unknown to the men of the 1st Bn. Probably at least a company of tanks was in the area, though no identifications were made. Finally the enemy was employing March Bn "B" -- a miscellaneous collection of some 250 over-age, crippled, or otherwise unfit personnel -- as labor troops to dig defenses.

The enemy facing "B" tank was thus stronger and better armed (particularly in respect to heavy weapons) than the attackers. Nevertheless before the battle was joined some had been warned by their own officers that they were facing the 4th Arm Div "one of the best divisions in the American Army." This they had a chance to discover for themselves in both SINGLING and BINING as the day wore on.

At CONGILL (3d Inf Plt) with Pfc JOHN STANTON, his radio operator acting this day as runner, came into town ahead of his platoon. They made their way nearly up to the main square before spotting an enemy SP parked beside #44.

3d Inf
Plt The building, burning from shell fire, clouded the square with thick smoke. CONGILL turned and shouted back a warning to the

tanks not to come up. PADGETT with two men of his 1st Sq were nearby. He had not waited to assemble his platoon, said they were trained to watch him when they dismounted and follow. This they did, though the 2d Sq was actually held up most of the morning by some special housecleaning (see below). At CONGILL'S shouted warning, Capt LEACH dismounted and advanced along the street ahead of his tank. The SP up to this point, was apparently unaware of them, though the commander's head was out of the turret. PADGETT, LEACH, CONGILL

and the two men started firing to make him button up. Then the SF moved. It ducked across the street to the church preparatory to heading west. In the meantime more infantry had come up from the south. When Lt BELDEN approached, the street was crowded. Annoyed, he shouted at the men to clear off and fan out into the houses on either side. His shout was less effective than a burst of MG fire from the SF which followed it by a matter of seconds. The 1st Sq of the 3d Flat (Lt CONGILL), which, for the first half hour or so that it remained together, was under command of Pvt RALPH E. LAMINGTON, ducked into houses on the west side of the street. The 2d Sq (Sgt JOHN MC PHILL) retreated hastily into #45 on the east, and the street was nearly clear.

BELDEN could not see the SF. He stopped a GI to ask what they were getting ahead. The answer was simply "machine gun." "If it is a machine gun nest," said

1st Tn
1st Plt BELDEN, "we'll bring up a tank." In the "mysterious pathways of rumor, this remark traveled rearward, lost its "if", and resulted in

the ordering of the last tank, Sgt KENNETH L. SANDROCK of the 1st Tn Plt, to clean out an enemy MG nest. SANDROCK moved west from his platoon which had driven into the orchard east of town, fired pot shots at the church steeple on the chance that it might be an enemy OP, went on up the south street, found, of course, no MG nest, and then meeting Capt LEACH drove his tank in behind #8 where he remained separated from his platoon the rest of the day.

In the meantime the enemy SF at the square had completed its turning and headed west along the main street. LEACH continued to fire his tommy gun at it.

3d Tn
1st Plt But in so doing he blocked the line of fire of his own tank behind him and the SF escaped. LEACH did not attempt to follow. He had received

the report of the tank that had knocked out Lt FARESE and decided that it would be wiser to attempt to get the escaping SF from the flank by moving the 3d Plt tanks through the west end of the town. He therefore had his own

tank back between buildings #6 and #7 where he was covered from the west and could command the square, and called Lt COOK. COOK'S three tanks, his own, the one commanded by Sgt GILLES W. HAYWARD and the 100 assault gun commanded by Sgt ROBERT G. GRIM, were advancing on town between the two southern trails (see sketch). In front of them the large farm building (#11) was on fire and clouds of smoke reduced visibility to the north to a few feet. COOK led his tanks to the right of the burning farm with the idea of cutting across the main street in pursuit of the enemy SF. As they approached, Pvt CHARLES R. MC CORMER, COOK's loader, saw PARKER get hit in the orchard to his left. He may have informed COOK, or may have assumed that COOK had seen it too. In any case COOK did not absorb the information and made his next moves in ignorance of the existence of enemy tanks on his left flank. He drove his tank between the corner of the burning barn and the house north of it (#9). Between these buildings, invisible in the smoke, was a low stone retaining wall and about a two-foot drop into the walled garden in front of #11. Hitting this unseen barrier at a 45 degree angle, COOK'S tank teetered dangerously on its left tread. For a moment it threatened to overturn, then lumbered on righting itself. GRIM and HAYWARD following had little trouble as the first tank had broken down the bank. The garden in which the three tanks found themselves was inclosed on the north and west by a four-foot concreted stone wall, stepped up to six feet high around the northwest corner. Despite this inclosure, they felt, as emerging from the smoke pall, as naked as if they had suddenly come up on a skyline. In fact, their position was seriously exposed from the north, for the continuous slope of the ground northward for several hundred yards cancelled out the wall as a screen. Immediately across the street were two smaller gardens with low stone walls, and a dirt trail leading down into the valley. Originally COOK had no intention of staying there. He planned to cross the road, then work around to the west still

intent on trapping the SP which he knew only was on his left. He did not know that its gun now commanded the street, and he would have found out too late if Lt COWGILL had not appeared at that moment to warn him.

COWGILL'S platoon had set out immediately after the escape of the SP from the square to move into the west side of town. COWGILL, himself, with two men of his

3d Inf Plat
1st Sq 1st Sq (HARRINGTON and Pvt GROVER C. ALLEN) moved along the south side of the street. (The other four men of the squad stayed

behind, near #7 from which later on they undertook an independent mission to the north. (See below.) COWGILL, HARRINGTON and ALLEN made their way to #10 and from there could see two German AFs parked on either side of the street 200 yds to the west. It was then that COWGILL coming around #10 into the garden into which COOK'S tanks had just driven, found COOK and warned him of the enemy. COWGILL said, "There is a Kreut tank behind the third building down to the west." COOK got the impression that the "tank" was located behind a house which he could see on the north side of the street. He therefore had his tank and GILKIN'S 105 chop down the corner of the wall in front of them (see photo #3). This fire probably nettled the enemy into replying and a round of 75mm hit into the northwest corner of #10 not far from where COWGILL was standing. COOK dismounted and with COWGILL walked around to the east side of the building which had been hit.

In the meantime the 2d Sq of COWGILL'S platoon under Sgt MC PHAIL had moved on from #45 into which the JP'S MG at the square had driven them. Satisfied that

3d Inf Plat
2d Sq there were no enemy in #45, the seven men crossed the square and entered #20, a handsome lowlying stone house set back from the street and surrounded by a two-foot wall, surmounted by an iron railing. In this house MC PHAIL and his men discovered twelve civilians sheltering in the cellar. A few minutes were consumed in searching them, then the squad

set out to continue the sweep of the north side of the street. MC PHAIL and Pvt BEN A. TODD emerged through the front door of #23 and made a dash to the schoolhouse. A third man tried to follow but ducked back when MC bullets splattered in the front yard. #23 was then and continued all day to be under direct fire from the enemy tanks on the west. MC PHAIL and TODD reached the school; the rest of the squad stayed in #26. Lt COUGILL standing on the other side of the street, shouted across to ask MC PHAIL whether he could see the enemy SPs. He could. COUGILL ordered him to fire. Lt COOK, having seen the true location of the SPs, returned to his tank and backed it into an alley between #9 and #10, just wide enough to let him through. He told GRIMM and HAYWARD about the enemy SPs, asked GRIMM whether he thought he could get out of the garden if necessary. GRIMM thought he could. COOK then called Capt LEACH and asked whether tanks could be sent around to hit the enemy guns from the southwest. LEACH radioed orders to SOWERS (24 Tk Plat) to try to go through the burning barn (#11) and find a way to attack the SPs. SOWERS tried, but got only a few yards. Just beyond the wall, the nose of his tank, exposed through the gate to the west, was shot at. Convinced that advance was impossible, SOWERS returned to the orchard.

Every attempt to deal with the enemy so far had been made in ignorance both of the layout of the town and of the enemy position. This Lt COUGILL set out to remedy, and while COOK maneuvered his tanks, COUGILL and his two men started on a devious exploratory journey through the houses to the west.

At the same time MC PHAIL and TODD, who had fired a few rifle rounds at the SPs, discovered what seemed to them more profitable targets in enemy infantry in the valley to the north. This enemy was also occupying the attention of two other groups of men in town. The four men of COUGILL'S 1st Sq (Pvt JOE C. BRIDGES, Pvt WILLIAM CONYER, Pvt

FRANK ASPLAND, and Pvt L. (MFM) W. MCILLES) who had stayed at the square when the squad leader, HARRINGTON, had accompanied Lt COUGILL, spotted 15-18 Germans near a pillbox in the valley (see photo #1). They crossed the street, took up firing positions in the yard of #28, and shot into the Germans. They think that two were hit before the group dispersed. They continued to fire until an officer across the street by the church shouted at them to stop.

The officer was Lt PRICE (1st Plat) whose men had come last into town because they had stopped at the small pillboxes south of SIMKIND to take and disarm alive

unresisting Germans. Although PRICE's mission had been to occupy the
1st Inf
Plat east end of town, when he arrived at the square, he could see Lt

PADGETT'S (2d Plat) men already moving along the houses to the east.

Lt COUGILL'S men were on the west. PRICE decided to go north. T/Sgt LOWELL MITCHELL with four men cleaned out the houses on the southeast corner of the square while S/Sgt JOHN SAYERS and six men took over #35. PRICE with the rest of his platoon crossed the street to the back of the church, moved along the hard-surface alleyway between the church and #35. Posting Pvs RANDOLPH AJUILAR and RANDALL B. BRODERICK at the northeast corner to watch in that direction, PRICE and four men followed the alley around the north side of the church. At the corner they could see the Germans at the pillbox who had already been spotted by the four 3d Flat men. A burp gun was firing from somewhere to the northwest. The steep drop of the SIMKIND ridge to the north made it possible for PRICE'S men to return fire over the roofs of the houses back of #28.

Under cover of this Lt PRICE and Sgt ELMER WHITE planned to work their way into the valley behind the northeast row of houses. But they were checked at the outset by a heavy wire fence which, hooked to the corners of #34 and #35, inclosed the alleyway. It was at least six feet high and too exposed to enemy observation

to be sealed. It would have to be cut. The platoon wire cutters, however, had been entrusted to a man who two days before had been evacuated taking the cutters with him. WHITE went into #34 to look for tools. While he was in there, the Germans in the valley were getting ready to give up. They were encouraged in this not only by the continuing small arms fire of PRICE'S men and the four men of the 3d Platoon, but also by MD and HE from Lt COOK'S three tanks. Sgt GRIMM started it by dispatching a lone German a few hundred yds away with 100 rds of .30 cal. Minutes later, GRIMM saw six Germans jump up and run into the valley pillbox. In his own words, he "closed the door for them with HE." All three tanks also periodically fired HE at the ridge 1200 yds to the north, more to register the range of the skyline on which German tanks were likely to appear than to engage specific targets. The total effect, however, was to throw a large volume of fire in the direction of a handful of enemy, and shortly Lt PRICE saw white cloths wave from the pillbox. It was then that he ordered the men across the street to cease fire. Twelve Germans walked up the hill and surrendered to PRICE. One who spoke some English reported that there were five more in the valley who were anxious to surrender but were afraid to come out. After all the Germans had been disarmed, PRICE sent one back down the hill to corral his comrades. At that moment, however, a volley of enemy mortar and artillery struck the square. One shell hit #34 and Sgt WHITE inside was wounded in the head by fragments and wood splinters. SAYERS and Pvt RANDALL S. BROWNING outside and Cpl FRANK B. MC KENZIE in #43 were slightly wounded. PRICE and his men ducked back from the alley, and began occupying houses on the square where they were to remain all day. Although PRICE believed that enemy held the houses to the north, he decided not to attack them, because in advancing north he would move out of contact with the platoons on his flanks. No more was seen of the German messenger or the five

volunteers for capture. The eleven still in possession of the 1st Platoon were sent down the road south. Just as these started off, two more walked up the hill to the schoolhouse and surrendered to MC HALL and TODD. MC HALL escorted these two across the square to the street south. There, seeing RICHT'S eleven walking down the street, he motioned to his two to fall in with them, and, himself, returned to the school. He and TODD then climbed to the second story, and resumed the business of shooting enemy in the valley. The four men of the 1st Sq decided then to go down to the pillbox to get whatever Germans might still be in it. They found none but did draw NO fire from the direction of WILSCHOFF FARM. BATTLES was wounded in the leg and the squad was pinned in place for several hours.

From the east end of town, Lt PALMER (2d 1st Platoon) had also seen the enemy infantry in the valley, but he had seen two other things which worried him far

2d Inf
1st Platoon

more -- a rocket launcher (Wurfgranate) firing from about 800 yds west of WILSCHOFF FARM and seven enemy tanks on a ridge northeast.

PALMER was in #39 which he had reached with his 1st Sq without difficulty after going through the three small houses to the west. These houses were occupied only by a few scared civilians who were rounded up and sheltered in #39. #39 was a fine place to be. Outwardly just another farm house, it was actually a fortress, with walls of three-foot concrete reinforced with steel cylinders. Nevertheless PALMER was still worried. Protection enough from artillery and the Wurfgranate (which THURMANN decided was shooting short anyway) the house would not be of much avail against the enemy tanks. More reassuring were the four tanks of the 1st Platoon (Lt GORKE) which pulled into position in the orchard opposite #39 about the same time that PALMER arrived there. The enemy passed through the orchard, and while two fell away for various reasons, THURMANN sent his runner to report the situation to Lt HILMER and also to find the 2d Sq

of his own platoon and bring them up. When the runner failed to return in what seemed to BILLY a reasonable time, he sent out another man, Pvt LOUIS ELEVINS, on the same mission.

ELEVINS left on his run under the impression that the infantry company CP was at #3 where it had first been set up by BELDEN on entering the town. Actually BELDEN had stayed in that house less than half an hour, only long enough to set up the radio and notify the 51st Inf Bn that he was in town. He then moved to #28. ELEVINS reached #44 where he met a man of FRICK'S platoon and was warned not to cross the square which enemy guns to the west had covered. ELEVINS went around #44 and on up the road south to #3. Finding no one, he returned along the west side of the street, got as far as #5. A tank, one of SANDROCK'S or the PO's crew, waylaid ELEVINS and told him to take charge of a prisoner who had just walked up to the tank and surrendered. At #7 ELEVINS with his prisoner met BATTLES who had not yet started for the valley pillbox. BATTLES took temporary charge of the PW while ELEVINS dashed through a burst of MG fire across to #28. In a few minutes he reappeared in the door and motioned to BATTLES to send the PW over. Half his mission accomplished, ELEVINS still had to find the 2d Sq. By luck he met them near #44 and delivered his message to Pvt PHILLIP SCHERZ in charge.

SCHERZ'S squad had already with little effort accomplished one of the most notable successes of the day. Investigating the southernmost house of town which

the rest of the infantry, entering between #2 and #3, had bypassed, they found a Frenchman and asked whether there were any Germans inside. He shook his head, but SCHERZ'S men, noticing a radio antenna thrusting out of a cellar window, were suspicious. Four of them surrounded the house, and SCHERZ and Pvt LEWIS DENNIS went in. In the cellar

2d Inf Plat
2d Sq

they found 28 German EM and two officers. None offered any resistance. They were frisked and evacuated. A search of the house then revealed large stores of small arms and ammunition. When the squad emerged, they met on the road the 15 PIs sent back by Lt PRICK and MC PHAIL. Having discovered enemy in one house, they searched with slow caution the others along the street, and so arrived late at the square where ELVINS found them.

When ELVINS had completed his mission of telling OCHAM to take his squad east, the enemy artillery and mortar which had wounded four of PRICK'S men, was falling around the church. ELVINS crossed the street to #7 to "see BATTLES." With BATTLES now was 1st Sgt JAMES E. CANNON who was on his way to the CP. CANNON sprinted across to #28; ELVIN followed, and then worked east back to #39.

CANNON had not been in the CP long before a round of 75mm hit the building. Pfc JOHN E. TSIMELAKIS was scratched by dislodged plaster but there were no other casualties. The fire had quite possibly been drawn from one of the enemy SPs by the recent activity in the street. In any case the shot decided CANNON to go west to where the SPs were and "get a closer look." He invited MC PHAIL who had just come over from the school to go along. The two set out, taking almost exactly the route that Lt CONNILL, unknown to them, had already followed twice.

Sgt CHILM had started CONNILL on his first journey from the garden which the 3d Plat tanks occupied, by blasting open the door of #12 with a burst of .50 cal.

CONNILL and his two men entered and climbed to the attic. They found that although they could see the two SPs through the damaged tiling on the roof (see photo #3), they could not see beyond. They continued exploration westward. For one reason or another they were unable to reach the roofs of the next three buildings. In the last (#17),

they found their progress blocked by the lack of openings of any kind in the west wall. They backtracked through the courtyard between #10 and #15 and then walked through an opening in the south wall out into a garden-orchard walled with concrete stone like all the SIKHING gardens. They crawled up to a gap in the wall, found themselves within spitting distance of the two Sps. Beyond is an area of lime not more than 200 yds distant, they saw the outlines of three enemy tanks. They returned at once to Lt COOK's position to report. CORWILL sent word to Lt HELDER that there were "five enemy tanks on the west" and then he took Lt COOK back to the OF at the wall. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ and ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ were left at #12 which CORWILL decided was the most suitable spot he had seen for his platoon headquarters.

When Cook returned from his reconnaissance, he was impressed both with the strength of the German position and the difficulty of dislodging them. Their command of the main street and of the nose of the ridge west of town made it impossible for tanks to attack them. Artillery seemed, despite the proximity of our own troops, the most logical answer, and COOK therefore went to look for the observer, 1st Lt DONALD E. OUTILD. OUTILD was at the Infantry company CF with Lt HELDER and Capt LEACH. When COOK joined them, the four officers discussed the problem. Lt OUTILD felt that artillery could not be brought down without unduly endangering friendly troops. Mortar fire would be fine, but the Infantry had brought no mortars because they had too few men to man them and carry ammunition. The mortar squad, down to three men, were armed with a bazooka. Lt COOK suggested that the street might be smacked with grenades and the tank mortars. He hinted that screen the tanks might cross the street and attack the enemy from the northeast. Actually he felt that the smoke alone would be enough to force the Sps to withdraw. The proposal was not seriously considered because Capt LEACH preferred to try the Infantry bazookas. This was the decision and the job was

given to Lt CONNELL. He sent back to ask BELDEN for a bazooka and rifleman to protect it. His plan was to shoot at the Germans from the attic of his CP. Lt GILLO advised that it would take the CP about two minutes to elevate its gun to fire, and that was considered ample time to launch the rockets and move out. Belden sent Pfc KENNETH L. BANCHE and Pvt FRANK LE HOU down to CONNELL with the headquarters bazooka. Headquarters runner, Pfc MELVIN P. FLYNN, went over to #7 occupied by seven men of the MG and mortar squads. His message apparently was, "Lt CONNELL wants some rifleman to protect his bazookamen." What resulted was that S/sgt JOHN HERRING and the two men of his mortar squad who carried the second bazooka of the company and S/sgt PATRICK DENNIS, leader of the MG squad, went down to #12; the other three men of the MG squad remained all the rest of the day at #7 where, having no field of fire, they were unable to set up their gun.

While CONNELL'S men got ready to attack the German tanks on the west, a sequence of incidents occurred to suggest that enemy armor might be forming on the

Enemy on North
3d Lk Flat

north for a counterattack on SINKLING. Tanks to the north were observed moving east; prepared artillery concentrations

were laid on the town; the enemy on the west renewed his interest in our tanks in that sector (2d Flat); and finally tanks came into the east side of town. The enemy tanks (3-5) moving on the north apparently along a road were spotted and reported by Sgt GRIMM, but as the range was extreme, he did not fire. Furthermore GILLO'S gun was trained through the gap in the wall to the northwest against the SE threat. Sgt HAYWARD had adjusted on the north ridge and GRIMM left that zone of fire to him. Lt COCK moved his tank into the courtyard of the cluster of buildings (#8-10) where he could observe north. Suddenly just west of town a white signal flare shot upward. Almost immediately a short, intense artillery concentration rocked the town. Mixed with shells of

light or medium caliber were some rockets and some mortar. The tankers have estimated that the fire was about equivalent to a battalion concentration of five-minute duration, that at times as many as 20 shells hit simultaneously.

In the 2d Tk Plat sector the shelling followed by only a few minutes an incident to which the tankers paid little attention at the time. A dismounted

2d Tk
Plat German suddenly appeared on the rise in front of them and walked across the orchard less than 50 yds away. Before the tanks could adjust fire

on him, he had gone. The intense shelling, which started almost immediately, forced the tanks to back a few yards to a cabbage patch beside the orchard trail. When the artillery fire broke off, they stayed where they were, and there to a ~~German~~ tank Sgt HAUPTMAN a few minutes later lost his tank. A German AP shell hit the crest of the rise 100 yds in front of him, ricocheted off the ground and plowed into the right side of HAUPTMAN'S turret. His loader, Pfc WILLIAM J. MC VICAR, was killed. If the German tanks west of town aimed that shell to billiard into the tanks parked where they had been observed by the infantryman, the freakishness of the hit is still more remarkable. The reaction of the tankers at the time, however, was that they were still not defiladed from the enemy northwest. Lt COOK, to whom HAUPTMAN reported his loss in the temporary absence of Capt LAGAN, ordered COOKES and LARKS (the remaining tanks of the 2d Plat) to get their tanks into shelter. Both drove up behind the 3d Plat in the lee of hill.

They were moving when COOK casually turned his field glasses to a pillbox on the ridge 1200 yds north where he had seen a few enemy infantry minutes previously.

3d Tk
Plat He got his glasses on the spot just in time to see the long gun tube of the German tank 75 flame and fire, directly at him. The round hit nearby, and COOK had a split second to decide whether to shoot back or run for it. He figured that his 105 without power traverse could

not be laid in less than twenty seconds. That was too long. He threw his tank in gear and backed out of the garden. He had just started when a second round hit HAYWARD's tank on the sprocket, crippling it (see photo #4). In the next few seconds HAYWARD was hit four times and the tank began to burn. The gunner, Cpl ANGELO GINALI, and the bog, Pvt JOHN H. FURLOW, were killed; HAYWARD and his loader, Pvt VERN L. THOMAS, were wounded. GRIM made good his escape through the opening between #9 and #11. Outside, the tank bogged down in the heavy mud, and the crew evacuated while GRIM got ~~WHEELS~~ to pull him out.

The 2d and 3d Plats, Sgt SANDROCK of the 1st Plat, the command and the artillery observer's tanks were now all bunched and immobilized in the area southwest of the square which, covered on three sides by buildings, was the Relief only relatively safe place in town for tanks. It was becoming increasingly apparent to both infantry and tanks that with the small forces at their disposal and against an enemy who had at least equal strength and every terrain advantage, they could not hope to secure their position in town by attack. They had, instead, to make such dispositions as would complement the enemy's stalemate and wait it out. They were expecting momentarily relief by units of GSB. Col ABRAHAM, GO 37th Tr Bn, had already called Capt LEACH to tell him the relieving companies were on their way. In the meantime there was no point to incurring needless casualties. Lt PRICE, after having four men lightly wounded by artillery, gave strict orders to his platoon to stay inside unless the Germans counterattacked. Lt PADOKIT'S men haled up in the cellar of their fortress house and the lieutenant himself found a bed which, as long as there was no place to go, he made his personal headquarters.

While the enemy tanks on the north still threatened the east end of town, however, he was pretty busy trying to find ways to deal with them. He sent his runner,

BLAVINS, across the street to warn the 1st Flat tanks (Lt GOBLE) in the church.

1st Tn
Flat

(GOBLE'S vision to the northeast was obstructed by a 6-7

foot bush and apple tree hedge and by houses and brush on the north

side of the road.) Lt PADGETT, himself, then set out to find the

artillery observer to see whether a concentration could not be put on the enemy to discourage if not destroy him. He tried four times to walk down the street to the company CP; three times he was turned back by spurts of MG bullets on the west side of #37. The fourth time he got through to report to Lt HELDER, but he could not find Lt GUILD. It was late in the afternoon when PADGETT returned to his own CP.

While PADGETT had been trying to get to HELDER, Lt GUILD, the observer, had already spotted the enemy tanks himself from the roof of his CP, #33, and had informed Capt LEACH. LEACH took the warning personally to Lt GOBLE. GOBLE figuring that, if the Germans attacked, they would either come down the road or in back of the houses opposite, had Sgt ROBERT C. FITZGERALD on the right move his tank down the hill to within 15 yds of the edge of the road where he could observe better to the northeast. FITZGERALD kept his gun sights at 1400 yds, the range to the northerly ridge where the enemy was reported. The first tank to appear, however, drew up between #37 and #38 less than 150 yds away heading towards the church. The enemy Mk V and FITZGERALD saw each other at about the same time, but neither could immediately fire. While the enemy started to traverse his turret, FITZGERALD brought his gun down. He shot first and, at point blank range, put the first round into the Mk V setting it on fire. One man jumped out and ran behind one of the houses. FITZGERALD fired two more rounds into the burning tank.

Later, on warning by Lt PADGETT'S infantry that more enemy tanks were approaching from the northeast, he drove his tank through the hedge and east along

the road almost to the bend where observation north and east was clear. He saw an enemy tank, but before he could adjust his sights the German fired smoke and in a few seconds disappeared as effectively as an octopus behind its self-made cloud and escaped. Rockets then began to fall close to FITZGERALD's tank. Whether this was aimed fire from the battery near WELSCHOFF FARM or simply a part of the miscellaneous area concentration on the town, FITZGERALD did not stay to find out. He retired westward to the concealment of the hedge and there, leaving his tank, he crossed with Lt GOBLE to PADGETT'S CP. From the house they could see a Mk V in the valley northeast, apparently parked with its gun covering the road east, facing, that is, at right angles to the tankers' observation. FITZGERALD went back to try a shot at it. Again he moved his tank eastward, got a sight on the enemy between two trees. The second round was a hit; one more fired the tank. He then shot a round or two at another Mk V facing him about 800 yds away at which Sgt EMIL DEL VECCHIO on the hill behind him was also firing. Both 75mm and 76.2mm shells, however, bounced off the front armor plate of the enemy. FITZGERALD decided to move back to his hedge. Back in /59 again he saw an enemy SP moving east in the vicinity of WELSCHOFF FARM.

Rather than risk exposing his tank again by moving it out to the east, FITZGERALD decided to wait until the SP came around behind the farm and emerged into his field of fire. But the SP did not emerge. Whether, concealed among the farm buildings, it fired into the 1st Flat tanks cannot certainly be determined. But in any case a short while after it had disappeared, two rounds of AP hit Lt GOBLE's tank in quick succession. The first round set it on fire and wounded GOBLE and his gunner, Cpl THEODORE E. HALE. The second round penetrated the turret, then apparently ricocheted inside until its momentum was spent and finally landed in the lap of the driver, Tec 5 JOHN J. NELSEN. NELSEN dropped the hot

shell, scrambled out and with the loader, Pvt JOSEPH P. OOOCHIARA ran from the burning tank. In the excitement they headed the wrong way and high tailed up the main street into the center of town. There they paused long enough to ask some infantrymen where the tanks were. Directed southward they eventually came on Sgt JOWERS' tank and got inside.

As soon as Lt COHLX was hit, S/Sgt JOHN J. FITZPATRICK took command of the platoon and ordered them to back over the ridge behind them into defile from the enemy north. As they backed, a round of HE exploded in front of DEL VECCHIO's tank splattering it with fragments. The enemy continued to fire at COHLX'S tank, but the others reached the cover of the hill without loss.

On the other side of town Lt CONWILL'S bazookas in the attic of #12 were getting ready to fire at one enemy SP. (One of the two guns in the street had with-

drawn by this time.) In the garden east of #12 Sgt ~~REYNOLDS~~'S tank
2d Inf
Plat was burning. MC PHAIL, leader of the 2d Sq and Co 1st Sgt CANNON were
on their way westward to have a look at the SPs, unaware that the

reconnaissance had already been made and action taken as a result of it. They sprinted past the burning tank, picked up HARRINGTON at the Chapel and followed Lt CONWILL'S previous route to the wall beside #17. Through the same gap CONWILL had used to observe, the three men fired at Germans standing near the tanks and pillboxes. They hit one who rolled down the slope. After half a dozen rounds, they moved back. CANNON and HARRINGTON went to the basement of #12 where they found S/Sgt PATRICK DEBOLS and S/Sgt HAROLD A. HOLLANDS, both with rifles preparing to cover from the basement windows the bazookamen then getting set to fire through the roof. One of the two bazookas with old type firing mechanism failed to go off. From the other the three men in the attic launched five rounds in turn at the SP. Only the last hit, and it did no more than knock a fragment off the right side of the turret. It did, however, cause the crew to

jump out and two were shot by the four men in the basement. Hardly had this happened when a Mk V drew up alongside the damaged SP and sent a round crashing into the side of #12. At about the same time another shell from the north struck the building at its foundations, showering the men in the cellar with plaster. It was a narrow escape of both scores, but no one was hurt. COSHILL moved his men to #13, which turned out to be another of SINKLING'S thick-walled fortress-farms. Here the 3d Plat set out the second of the enemy's short sharp artillery concentrations, which scored three hits on the building but did little damage.

It was now getting late in the afternoon and still the relief scheduled to take place an hour or more earlier had not been accomplished. It was shortly past

noon that Col ABRAMS had been ordered by Gen EARLEST, CGA, to turn Relief

over SINKLING to GCS and get ready to move on his own objective,

SINKING and ROHRBACH. On information that his units were in town, Col ABRAMS told Maj ALVIN IRZIK, CO 8th Tk Bn, in the presence of Maj ALANIS, CO 51st Armd Inf Bn, that he was "ready to turn over to them their objective-- and without a fight." Despite constant fire from the direction of SINKLING, the relieving units henceforth acted on the assumption that the town was clear. Maj IRZIK decided to send "C" Co of his Bn in with "B" Co of the 10th Armd Inf Bn. The infantry had been in assembly area 3000 yds south of SINKLING for more than an hour; the tanks were moving up when orders reached the commander of "C" Co, 1st Lt WILLIAM J. MARSHALL. The orders were to pick up the infantry, go into SINKLING, contact the CO of the Tk Co in town and take over the outposting with infantry and tanks. In addition to the outposts, patrols were to be sent out north. MARSHALL was instructed to enter town "as the other unit had done." With some of the 35-40 men of "B" Co of the 10th mounted on all his tanks, MARSHALL set out to carry out these instructions exactly, as his tanks moved in at about

1400 following the tracks of B/37.

At the south edge of town the 1st Tk Plat (2d Lt GEORGE GRAY) leading, turned northwest following the approach route of Lt FARESE. FARESE's two knocked out tanks were, of course, still where they had been hit. Although Lt Relief
Tk Co GRAY remarked that the tank hatches were open and there was no sign of the crew, he did not suspect that the tanks were out of action. He continued to the corner of the wall at #14, saw ahead of him near the road a tank which he assumed to be American since he believed no enemy were in town. When, therefore, Lt MARSHALL called, to ask how he was making out, he replied, "OK, as soon as I get around this corner." Then he was hit by two rounds of AP. The gunner, Cpl TAYLOR E. ARO, was killed. GRAY, seriously wounded, was evacuated to Lt CONKILL'S CP at #13, arriving there just as MC PHAIL, GARNON and HARRINGTON returned from their reconnaissance trip to the west wall.

As soon as GRAY was hit Lt MARSHALL ordered the 2d Plat (S/Sgt EDWIN J. DE ROSIA) to move east and try to circle behind the enemy tank that had knocked out GRAY. DE ROSIA, however, had not moved far when he reported enemy direct fire from north and east which he could not exactly locate. MARSHALL then ordered all tanks to withdraw to the reverse slope of the ridge south of town. Except the men who had been riding GRAY'S tank and who dismounted when the tank was hit to assemble near #49, the infantry remained on the decks of the tanks when they withdrew. 1st Lt ROBERT F. LANGE, Inf CO, went into town to make contact with Lt HELMER. At the same time Lt MARSHALL returned with his tank to the 6th Tk Bn to consult with Maj IRWIN.

LANGE found Capt LEACH in a tank outside of town and together they went to #28 to consult with Lt HELMER. The decision agreed on by the three commanders was to relieve Lt CONKILL and Lt PARHETT in place, Lt PRICE, to be Relief
Inf Co withdrawn first from the center of town without relief. "F" Co

of the 10th Armored Inf Bn had organized its handful of men into two platoons; about 15 men in one, 18 in the other. While Lt LAMKE sent an NCO to meet his platoon leaders, inform them of the decision and guide them into town, Capt LEACH went to look for Lt MARSHALL to arrange for the relief of his tanks.

The afternoon was wearing on, and Col ABRAMS began to worry; he wanted to pull his tanks out of SINKLINE as soon as possible. He called Capt LEACH to

find out how the relief was progressing. In Capt LEACH'S absence
Report on
Enemy Lt COOK took the call and made a report which could not have been

very reassuring. He said that there were five enemy tanks to the west of town, that from three to five more had been observed moving down the ridge to their front. He said that one enemy tank had been knocked out by the 1st Platoon on the right. He detailed the disposition of his platoons and reported that they were receiving heavy enemy artillery fire and that the enemy was laying a smoke screen on the north. (Lt COOK did not know at the time that this was put down by the Mk V to cover its escape from FITZGERALD'S fire; he believed that it might herald a German counterattack.) He told Col ABRAMS that the 51st Inf was still outposting the town and that the 10th Inf was in process of relieving them. He added that he was not in contact with the infantry CO, that he had had no word from Capt LEACH who was conferring with Lt MARSHALL.

Col ABRAMS called back a little later and told COOK to organize the company of tanks, pick up the 51st Inf and move out immediately whether he found Capt

LEACH or not. COOK notified all tanks to prepare for immediate
Withdrawal

withdrawal. In fact, however, the withdrawal was delayed about half an hour to allow the relieving infantry to consolidate their positions.

Lt LAMKE made few changes in Lt BELDEN'S dispositions, except to post most of his men outside the buildings to guard against enemy infiltration during the

night. He established his CP at #45 to get away from the direct
Relief fire that had been harassing #28 all day.
Inf

Capt LEACH, in the meantime had arrived at the C/E positions in the absence
of Lt MARSHALL, but was able to talk to MARSHALL over Sgt DE ROSIA'S radio.

LEACH reported the situation in SINKLING as follows: he said there
Relief
Tks were four enemy SPs in town, but he thought one had been knocked out

by a bazooka; some enemy infantry occupied the north part of town (Note
Lt LAMM, who put outposts to the north later, reported no enemy there); a Panther
tank to the northeast of town had fired on our tanks when they exposed themselves
in that direction. LEACH then asked MARSHALL how long it would be before the
latter relieved him. MARSHALL, who had just been ordered by Maj IRZIK to stay
put, replied that he would not come into town "until my orders are changed."

This change in plan was not known to the infantry in town who were completing
the relief as scheduled. Most of the wounded had already been evacuated earlier

on Sgt MORFEN'S tank which, due to radio failure, had not been in
Relief Inf
West Plat action, but was brought up expressly to take the wounded back. No

regular evacuation vehicles were available at battalion as Lt COOK
ascertained early in the afternoon when he called just after Sgt HAYWARD was hit.
Some wounded nevertheless remained to be evacuated by the withdrawing infantry.
GOWILL and PADGETT led their men to the street south to a rendezvous with the
tanks in the vicinity of #5. BRICE, who did not have to wait for relief, moved
his men out first and met the tanks outside town beside the two pillboxes that
had been cleaned out by PADGETT'S 2d Sq that morning. Here they picked up the
last prisoner of the day, a sleepy German who had to be prodded into surrender.
He was lying on the ground swathed in a belt of .50 cal ammunition and evinced
no interest in his capture.

It was already getting dark when COOK moved his tanks out. They collected the infantry as arranged, and found Capt LEACH with Lt MARSHALL about 400 yds south of town. As the 2d and 3d Plat tanks moved out together and the 1st Plat on the right headed back to join them farther south, another heavy enemy artillery concentration fell among them, but by a miracle caused only one light casualty, Pvt GEAR W. FERGUSON, 2d Inf Plat, who was hit in the leg. To cover the withdrawal, all tanks swivelled their guns north and fired back into SINGLING. The enemy tanks replied and the AP tracers streaked through the gathering darkness. Two rounds landed within a few feet of Sgt DEL VECCHIO'S tank before the fire fight was taken up by Lt MARSHALL'S tanks and the enemy shifted his attention to them.

After Capt LEACH'S tanks had pulled out, the relief infantry company in SINGLING remained more than three hours without direct tank support. During this time the enemy on the west crept up to the two destroyed tanks of Relief Inf West Plat PARKER'S platoon and started the battery chargers. It may be that they were going to attempt to drive the tanks away. When the infantry outposts at #14 heard the engines, they believed them to be the relieving tanks which they were expecting. 2d Lt ROBERT J. VICTOR, commanding the platoon which took over Lt COWGILL'S sector, went out with one of his squad leaders to investigate. He approached one of the tanks, to within 25 feet, then stopped. The silhouette of the three figures on top of the tank made him suspicious; their overcoats were too long, their helmets too sharply peaked. As VICTOR and his sergeant had only one carbine, they returned to the CP, picked up another man. Approaching the tank the second time, they were fired on by a heavy gun, which they answered with rifle fire and grenades. The enemy retreated, but later in the night, returned to set fire to the tanks.

Lt LAMKE, in the meantime, worried about his thinly outposted positions in town, had gone out to see Lt MARSHALL and, as he said, "try to move the tanks in

personally." As Lt MARSHALL had been called back to battalion
Withdrawal
from
SINGLING
by Maj IRZYK, CO, 8th Tn Bn, shortly after dark, Lt LAMKE found
Sgt DE ROSIA temporarily in command. Maj IRZYK and Capt BARK,

3-5 of the 10th Armd Inf Bn were also in the company area at the time. The question of whether to attempt to hold in the town for the night or withdraw was discussed. Although Maj IRZYK's first plan was to send one platoon of tanks in to support the infantry, he reversed his decision after talking to LAMKE. He was already doubtful, because he could see no very good reason for holding the town when the enemy occupied all the high ground north and east. LAMKE reported that with less than 50 men at his disposal he had had to outpost very thinly and that it would be easy for the enemy to probe out these outposts during the night and infiltrate through his whole position. Maj IRZYK was also impressed by an incident which LAMKE related. An hour or so earlier (it was now about 2000) the east platoon under 2d Lt JAMES W. LEACH, had shot up and captured a German kitchen truck which they waylaid at the town square. The truck was carrying hot soup, estimated to be enough to feed at least a company. Maj IRZYK, taking this to indicate that the enemy in at least that strength still held the outskirts of town, west and north, figured that the presence of our own troops in the center of town would only obstruct the use of artillery against the Germans. Maj IRZYK therefore gave the order to withdraw from SINGLING. To cover the withdrawal, Sgt DE ROSIA jockeyed his tanks back and forth on the reverse slope of the hill to make the enemy believe that they were entering town. The infantry assembled in about an hour near #47 and moved back to the tank positions 400 yds to the south. They dug in and outposted the tanks for the night. During the few hours they had been in SINGLING they suffered five light casualties from

enemy mortar fire.

Within five minutes of the infantry report that SINGLING was clear of friendly troops, Corps artillery put a heavy TOT on the town. The next day (7 Dec) tanks and infantry moved back up to just short of the crest of the SINGLING ridge, but they were ordered not to advance as they would be relieved momentarily. Relief by units of the 12th Arm Div actually took place that night.

The final reckoning of the battle for SINGLING reveals neither a big action nor a startlingly successful one. All 4th Arm Div units directly involved suffered a total of 22 casualties of which 6 were killed; they lost 5 medium tanks. Known enemy losses were two Mk V tanks; 56 prisoners.

A small action on the books, and in itself a stalemate, the battle for SINGLING was important because it permitted other elements of OOA (1st Bn, 320th Inf Regt and 1st Co, 37th Tk Bn) to pass SINGLING and capture RIMING (RIMING was not entered by OOA - see map #2), and because, by probing one of the strongest of the enemy's prepared defenses, it opened the way for later advances of the 12th Arm Div.

CCR, 4th Armd Div.

RELIEF OF BASTOGNE POCKET

Creighton W SOURCES: Lt Col Abrams, CO 37th Tk Bn; *Edward* Maj Baetz, Ex O 37th Tk Bn; *William* Capt Dwight, S-3 37th Tk Bn; 2d Lt John A Whitehill, CO Co A 37th Tk Bn. *4*

MAP REF: *Bastogne, 121, France - Belgium; 1:50,000*

CIRCUMSTANCES: Interview by Capt L B Clark at 37th Tk Bn CP, CHAUMONT, BELGIUM, 5 Jan 45. Battalion was in reserve about 3 miles behind line held by 137th Inf, 35 Div. Bn had not been engaged with enemy since 27 Dec when last elements were pulled into BASTOGNE. Bn had received no artillery fire in present location, although Bn's tanks spread out at approximately 50 yd interval throughout valley, standing out against snow, offered fair target. One EM was killed and 3 wounded by fragmentation bombs from single-plane night raid about 4 nights ago.

BACKGROUND: The 37th Tk Bn was operating during this action under control of CCR. As far as known, this was only the second time that CCR had had a tactical mission ~~(first of 1944-45)~~. In the 4th Armd Div, the commitment of CCR means that the division has committed its reserve; it is not used, as CCR of 6th Armd Div occasionally is, as a combat command with one of the letter commands in the reserve role. Except for transmission of orders from division and the prescribing of the route to be followed in shifting from the east to west flank of the division, CCR apparently had very little to do with direction of the action of 37th Tk Bn and 53d AIB. Col Blanchard, CCR Comdr, was ordering an attack north after the 37th had made contact with 101 AB Div elements. Decisions were made by Lt Cols Abrams and Jaques without consulting CCR (Maj Baetz and Capt Dwight both said this).

When the 4th Armd Div was ordered ^(8 Dec.) ~~(later)~~ from XII Corps reserve around FENETRANGE to move north to the vicinity of ARLON to meet the German counter-offensive which started 16 Dec, the 37th Tk Bn was in line, attached to 87th Inf Div. The Bn had been in ^{with 4th Armd Div.} ~~the 101st Air Div~~ reserve around MITTERSHEIM from 9 December to

On

A Co was attached to the 347th Inf near ACHEN. Around

⑤

* This rough narrative includes interview material from 53rd Armd Div, 4th Armd Div, FA Bn (Capt. Cook, Lt. O.).

noon of the following day the rest of the Bn was ordered to move up and bivouacked near ACHEN. That night, 87th Div ordered one Co attached for the 345th Inf and one to the 347th Inf. B relieved A and was attached to 347, took part in the capture of GERSHIEIM and WALSHIEIM in GERMANY. (This was the Bn's first fighting in GERMANY.) C was attached to 345. (The day before the relief of A, the company's commander, 1st Lt Charley Walters, was seriously wounded in action. D's light tanks were used during this period to haul up supplies to the other companies. During the period of attachment to 87th Div the Bn advanced about 5 kms to a point about 3 kms inside GERMANY.

At about 181300 Dec the Bn received orders to withdraw to MITTERSHEIM. It was to be relieved in line by the 762 Tk Bn (separate Bn, 7.62 guns, colored personnel), but did not wait for the relief and closed at MITTERSHEIM about 1700. The it received orders to start move at 190800 to vicinity of ARLON (?). The march began at this time and was over the "inside" (eastern) route of the two taken by the 4th Armd Div. Leading elms arrived vicinity of MIEUX-LE-TIGE (5415) about 200200 and Serv Co closed about 200730.

On 23 December, 37th moved from area around MIEUX-LE-TIGE through ARLON (6122) north on route N4 to turn-off east through PERLE (5836) to the area around the cross-roads of FLATZBOURHOF (6039) where the Bn bivouacked for the night. Enemy small arms fire was extremely heavy around the FLATZBOURHOF cross-roads during the night. Capt Trover, C/37 Comdr, was killed and B/37 lost eight tank commanders from this fire. Armored strength of the medium companies of 37 Tk Bn at this time was as follows:

A Co	9 Tks, 1 assault gun
B Co	7 Tks, 1 assault gun
C Co	5 Tks, 1 assault gun

Personnel was so short that even some of the tanks present were without bow gunner

(Insert div picture, reason for commitment of CCR at BIGONVILLE.)

CCR's objective on 22 Dec was the town of BIGONVILLE (80 41), two kms north of the FLATZBOURHOF cross-roads.

The plan was for the team A/37 and A/53 to attack north into the town, taking the eastern of the two main streets through the town. The B tank-infantry Team was to take the western street. C/37's mission was to guard the east flank against a possible attack from that direction by the 20-30 enemy tanks which had been reported by division to the east of BIGONVILLE. This threat never materialized but C/37 took up positions to meet it to the southeast of BIGONVILLE, facing the draw between two wooded hills which, in the CCR zone, was the only likely avenue of approach for the enemy tanks.

The attack started at 240800 and the A team, meeting only small arms south of town, got well into the town in the first few minutes, the tanks leading. In the town they followed their usual practice for the reduction of infantry-held towns--placing a large volume of fire, both from tank guns and machine guns, on all buildings, and shooting at barns and other inflammable buildings with the 30s and 50s in order to start fires with the tracers and incendiaries, ~~respectively~~. They received some mortar fire on the outskirts, which ceased when they got really into the town, but the volume of enemy small arms and bazooka fire remained fairly heavy. B/37, following the A Team, was unable to get into the town (?) and went around it to the west and took up positions on the high ground to the northwest. The infantry with it, however, dismounted and fought its way up the west street, clearing each house. The Germans, a Bn from the 5 Para Div, fought stubbornly and most surrendered only when they had no more ammunition. They seemed to have neither a defense nor a withdrawal planned. 482 prisoners, including the Bn Comdr, were taken in BIGONVILLE. Two tanks from A Co received bazooka hits but were able to move out under their own power, although they were not in action again before the relief of

BASTOGNE. The night before the attack on BIGONVILLE the 37 had 2 EM and 1 officer KIA and 16 wounded seriously enough to be evacuated. On the day of the attack the Bn had 3 EM and 1 officer wounded.

After the town was cleared, which was not until late in the day, the A team took positions on the high ground northeast of town. B/53 joined B/37 on the heights to the northwest and the infantry on both flanks dug in for the night. (Three officers and 39 EM from the 299 Engr Bn, a First US Army unit, who were prisoners in BIGONVILLE, were freed.)

At 242100 orders (CCR's mission) were received from CCR to move to the west. The move was to start at 250100. The route taken was BIGONVILLE, PERLE, HEINSTERT, HABAY-LA-NEUVE, LEGLISE, OFFAING, northwest to the NEUFCHATEAU-BASTOGNE road and then northeast to an assembly area southwest of HERCHEUX (4143). Leading elements arrived there about 250500. (The march route was ordered by CCR and was chosen because bridges were out on the direct route via MARTELANGE, FAUVILLERS, etc.) D/37 contacted a Co of combat Engrs in HERCHEUX, an isolated unit of the First Army, which was preparing to make a stand in the town.

At approximately 1100 the CCR column started moving north through HERCHEUX, with the light tanks leading. The vehicles passed through VAUX-LES-ROSIERES meeting only rifle fire which did not stop the column. At PETITE ROSIERE, about 2 kms north, there was more resistance. D/37's light Tks went through town firing MGs to keep the enemy down. D/37 was followed by C/704 TD and B/53. The light tanks and TDs moved up to the high ground (about 500 ft) north of the town while the infantry cleaned up the enemy in PETITE ROSIERE. This took about 2½ hours and the 53 AIB records 34 PWs taken there. After clearing the town B/53 moved up to the high ground north of town and took up positions to protect the rear and west flank of CCR as it moved toward BASTOGNE. (1) Add artillery plan and results.

While the mopping up was going on, the A team passed through the town and turned west to NIVES. One platoon went down the main street firing everything while

the other went west (?) of town. There was only sporadic rifle fire after the tank shelling and 15 PWs were taken. By 1400 (at which time PETITE ROSIERE had been cleared) the C team had passed through NIVES and was at COREVILLE, one km east of NIVES. Five PWs were taken here. The small bridge over the creek south-east of the village had been blown by the Germans (civilians told this to members of 37th Tk Bn). The battalion's bulldozer, which travels with Bn Hq, was called for by radio, and moved up quickly. It knocked down a stone wall near the bridge site and by 1515 had pushed enough rock fill into the shallow creek to enable the tanks to cross.

The C team led the column toward REMOIVILLE but stopped on the high ground - about 1000 yds west of the town, and C/37's tanks supported with direct fire the advance of the A team into the town. Under the planned artillery concentration, the fire from C/37 and the fire of all the weapons on the tanks and half-tracks of the A team as it drove into town, the enemy infantry battalion in the town lay low long enough for the attacking team to get well in before reacting with fire. A/53 cleared the center of REMOIVILLE house by house, routing the Germans from the cellars with grenades. Many buildings were burning. When the A team was in the center of town, C/37 and C/53 came down from the high ground and cleared the western edge. The speed of CCR's attack prevented the Germans from organizing an effective defense of the town, with mutually supporting strong points. There was some small arms fire and two tanks were hit by bazooka fire (one damaged but not disabled) but the enemy was never able to employ the large number of MGs and bazookas he had. By about 1700 resistance in REMOIVILLE had ceased; 35 enemy dead were found and 53 AIB records 327 PWs taken.

During the clearing of REMOIVILLE, B/37 moved up onto Hill 480, about a kilometer northwest of the town, covering the approaches from REMICHAMPAGNE, about 3 kms northeast of REMOIVILLE. A/37 ^{was} relieved ^{by} B/37 in these positions at 1800 after the fighting in the town was over and C/37 outposted on the high ground directly

north of REMOIVILLE. A crater apparently dug by the enemy in the road just north of the town where the proximity of the stream made it impossible for vehicles to get by prevented any further advance that night. The tanks and infantry of CCR stayed in position the night 25/26 Dec.

Orders for the attack 26 Dec were given to Lt Col Abrams and Lt Col Jaques at the CCR CP at at about 252000 Dec. CCR was to clear REMICHAMPAGNE, seize the high ground north of it and attack north across the NEUFCHATEAU-BASTOGNE highway to take SIBRET. (Tac R had reported that SIBRET was strongly held.) The artillery plan for the attack included concentrations on the BOIS DE COHET to the west of REMICHAMPAGNE (which CCB did not have enough infantry to clean out) and interdiction fire on the road from MORHET about 6 kms to the northeast near which artillery air observers reported enemy tanks. There was to be no artillery fire on the town of REMICHAMPAGNE because it was not known how close elements of CCB were. (Actually, they were at least 2 kms to the east.)

At 0930 CCR started moving toward REMICHAMPAGNE, with the B team moving across-country to the east of the road. (The ground was frozen and better for cross-country work than it was even last summer, staff officers of the 37th Tk Bn said.) The C team moved west of the road, prepared to support with fire the attack on the town by the B team. Just after the columns started moving, 16 P-47s (not pre-arranged) appeared and bombed and strafed the town and the woods only a few hundred yards in front of CCR's vehicles. With this unexpected support the B team moved into REMICHAMPAGNE against almost no opposition. The town was lightly held and only a handful of PWs were taken and these were dazed by the bombing.

While B/53 mopped up in the town, B/37 moved on about $1\frac{1}{2}$ kms to a position overlooking CLOCHIMONT, where B/53 soon joined it. The C team moved to commanding ground a km north of REMICHAMPAGNE, to the left rear of B, faced to meet a threat from the northwest, which might develop from the woods in that area. A/37 flanked

CLOCHIMONT to the west and went into position to cover in the direction of SIBRET and VILLEROUX.

By the time CCR's forces had been posted in their new positions it was 1500 and "hundreds" of C-47 transport planes were passing overhead with supplies to drop to the BASTOGNE garrison. This spectacle gave Lt Col Abrams and Lt Col Jaques the idea to disregard their original mission of taking SIBRET and make a dash for the BASTOGNE perimeter, which was only about 4 kms away. Another consideration was that SIBRET seemed to be strongly held and the effective medium tank strength of the 37th Tk Bn was now 20 and the 53 AIB was approximately 230 men understrength. The primary mission of CCR was to get to BASTOGNE and Lt Cols Abrams and Jaques decided to push north, disregarding the original order. (Apparently Col Blanshard, CO CCR, was not informed of this change in plan. After tanks had broken through to the BASTOGNE perimeter, Col Blanshard called his tank and infantry battalion commanders to ask about the possibility of a breakthrough into BASTOGNE that day. Command decisions were reached by Abrams and Jaques.)

The artillery support situation at this time was as follows:

(a) The 94th Armd FA Bn (105) and one Btry of 177 FA Bn (155 How) were in direct support of CCR. Two more Bns of 105's (the 22 and 253) were available for general support.

(b) On the morning of 26 Dec two firing Btries of the 94 moved into position near NIVES: the other Btry of the 94 was near COBREVILLE, where also was the one Btry of the 177.

At approximately 1520 Lt Col Abrams radioed back to Capt Dwight, his S-3, to bring C/37 and C/53 up to B/37's positions near CLOCHIMONT. He said, "This is it." A few minutes later Capt Cook, Ln O from the 94 AFA Bn to CCR, received a radio message back at the CCR CP at REMOIVILLE from Abrams telling him to have all available artillery prepared to fire on ASSENNOIS on call. Cook radioed division artillery to

have them make arrangements for the 22 and 253 to prepare to fire. The 94 was already registered on the target and firing data was transmitted to Div Arty. The artillery plan was for the three light Bns to fire battalion 10 volleys with the 155 Btry to fire on the center of the town. Of the 94's Btries, one was to hit the south edge of the town (where the enemy had at least ⁷ 75 and 88mm AT guns ~~em-~~ placed in the general area 525536-525537-526537), one was to fire on the woods on the left of the road leading north out of town (approximately 525546), and the other on the woods to the right of the road (approximately 535542). The fire of the other two light Bns was to add to the volume of fire in the town. The fire was to be lifted on call.

Capt Dwight commanded the C team which was to dash through ASSENOIS and make contact with the BASTOGNE perimeter. The cleaning of the town was to be done by B/53 and A/37, following C into town. B/37 remained on the high ground south of CLOCHIMONT covering the move toward ASSENOIS with direct fire. A/53 was in reserve.

At 1610 the assault force was assembled near CLOCHIMONT and moved toward ASSENOIS, tanks leading, half-tracks following. C/37 had a total of 7 tanks, including Dwight's. When he came in sight of the town, 1st Lt Charles Boggess, C/37 commander, in the leading tank, called for the artillery fire and continued moving. As he started down the dip into town, Boggess called for the fire to be lifted, but did not wait for this to happen and continued on into town. During this short but intense shoot on ASSENOIS approximately 360 rounds of 105 and 60 rounds of 155 were fired. One round made a ~~direct~~ ^{on war} hit on a C/53 half-track on the southern edge of town causing 3 casualties. (The artillery did not come down in a TOT since the artillery had only 30 minutes to prepare for the mission, but the 22 and 253 came in very shortly after the 94 and the Btry of 155s, and a cub from the 94 observed the fire).

A few wild rounds were fired from the enemy AT guns but the enemy infantry allowed the C team to get well into town almost without opposition. Smoke from

burning buildings and dust caused by the artillery which was still falling made the center of ASSENNOIS almost as dark as night. Two tanks took a wrong turn in the confusion and stayed in the town. The infantry of C/53 dismounted to take cover from the artillery and by the time it had ceased firing found themselves in a fire fight with the Bn of enemy infantry garrisoning the town (probably 1st Bn, 39 IR, 26 VG Div--the Bn CP was there), who were starting to emerge from the cellars. They became too heavily engaged to continue on, as planned.

With Boggess' tank leading, the column minus all but one infantry half-track, continued north toward the perimeter. The artillery continued firing on the woods on both sides of the road. In the mix-up in ASSENNOIS, a gap of about 300 yards had appeared behind the three leading tanks and the Germans in the woods recovered sufficiently to throw out about 12 Teller mines onto the road (approximately 538557). The half-track driver failed to notice them and ran over and exploded one. There were some casualties and the vehicle caught on fire.

Next in the column was another C/37 tank, followed by Capt Dwight's. With the aid of some unhurt men from the half-track and covered by the MGs from the two tanks which fired into the woods on both sides, Capt Dwight threw the rest of the mines off the road. He noticed no fire from the woods while he was doing this. The two tanks then continued up the road to where Boggess had made contact with the OPL of the 326 AB Engrs at 1650.

Capt Dwight radioed back to Col Abrams that contact had been made, and Abrams came up to the perimeter with the remaining 2 tanks of C Co and the rest of C/53. B/53 was engaged in clearing ASSENNOIS, which was completed by 2000; 428 PWs were taken. By 1830 C/37 and C/53 had taken up positions on the BASTOGNE perimeter. Abrams went on into BASTOGNE to the 101st AB Div CP to arrange for the trains to get through that night. At 1930 he radioed Col Jaques, who was handling the clearing of ASSENNOIS, to send what he could to clear the woods along the road. A/53 was sent up

and in a night fight cleared a stubborn enemy force of approximately company strength from the woods. The dense woods east of the road were particularly troublesome. There was close-in fighting with bayonet. Only 4 PWs were taken but about 35 were killed in their fox holes. Capt Frank Kutak, CO of A/53, directed the fight from his jeep although he was wounded in both legs. By 0100 on 27 Dec the road into BASTOGNE was reasonably safe, and 40 trucks and 70 ambulances went in during darkness the night of 26-27 Dec, escorted by the light tanks of D/37.

The 37th Tk Bn by the time it reached the BASTOGNE perimeter was extremely low on ammunition. B Co had nothing but 30 cal ammo left, which was why it took no part in the last stage of the battle. The other companies' tanks had only 5 or 6 rounds of AP 75 left.

The A and B teams of CCR outposted along the road into BASTOGNE until the morning of 29 Dec when the command went into reserve. This was necessary because the woods had been cleared only to a depth sufficient to protect the road from small arms fire. The remainder of CCR stayed on the perimeter until 29 Dec.

The observation of Lt Boggess and Capt Dwight was that the section of the perimeter where contact was made was very lightly held -- about 15 or 20 men to 800 yds of front -- but that German dead were piled up in front of the defenders' positions.

Neither Dwight nor Boggess remember being fired at while going through ASSENNOIS. They and Col Abrams feel that they would not have gotten through so strongly held a town if our artillery had not been falling at the time.

Battle casualties for the 37 Tk Bn for the period 23-26 Dec were KIA 1 O, 4 EM; WIA 2 Os, 20 EM; MIA 5 EM. Strength of the companies in tanks and officers never exceeded the following figures:

A	11 Tks	2 Os
B	8 Tks	1 O
C	9 Tks	2 Os
D	13 Tks	1 O

The 53 AIB received 210 casualties during the battle to reach BASTOGNE, of which 30 were KIA, 180 WIA. On 22 Dec the Bn was short 150 men; on 26 Dec, 230 men.

The 37th Tk Bn states that there were 7 AT guns, 75mm or larger, between CLOCHIMONT and ASSENOIS and 8 between ASSENOIS and the BASTOGNE perimeter. Also that there was at least one bazooka to every 5 enemy infantrymen.

7-17-42 RA-CCR

EVENTS PRECEDING ENTRY INTO BASTOGNE, DECEMBER 25, 1944.

by Capt. Smith, S-2, 37 Tk Bn

The head of the column moved out from an area SW of BIRCHEU at 1230, after having completed a thirty (30) mile night march from BIGONVILLE. The composition of the column was as follows:

D/37
B/53
1 Sgd. Eng. (Halftrack)
C/704
A/37
A/53
C/37
C/53
B/37
94th FA to support from present location

The immediate plan of action was as follows.

According to S-2 information VAUX LES ROSIERES had very few enemy in it. PETITE ROSIERES was known to contain more enemy. D/37, B/53, Eng, and C/704 were to continue through VAUX LES ROSIERES in column, and without halt. At PETITE ROSIERES, D/37 would continue to march and take up a position on the high ground NE of the village. Their position to be supplemented by C/704. Captain McMahon, Bn S-2, was in command of this group. B/53 was to clear the town out, which they did, taking sixty-five (65) prisoners.

The remainder of the column was to turn E in PETITE ROSIERE and proceed toward NIVES, and COBREVILLE. The first element to turn here was A/37; this company assisted by A/53 cleared NIVES. As this was going on C/37 plus C/53 proceeded to COBREVILLE and cleared that town. This was completed by 1430. Artillery support on these towns was provided on call by the 94th FA. These fires were prearranged.

It was reported by Lt. Boggess, C.O. Company "C", that the bridge just out of COBREVILLE on the road to REMOVILLE had been blown, producing a large crater. The bulldozer was ordered forward and proceeded to fill the crater with a large stone wall that was nearby. The tanks of C/37 and A/37 overwatched this operation. This was completed at approximately 1515 and C/37 plus C/53 proceeded to the high ground W of REMOVILLE and overlooking the town. A/37 plus A/53 proceeded into REMOVILLE on the road, all guns firing and supported by direct fire from C/37. As A/37 and A/53 proceeded to clear the town, C/37 and C/53 moved down and along the W edge of town. While this was going on B/37 took up a position on high ground about one (1) kilometer NW of COBREVILLE, this to cover to the NE. After REMOVILLE was cleared the town was outposted and A and B/37 exchanged positions, and C/37 took up a position N of the town. There was no artillery fire on this town due to the proximity of CC"B" on the E flank. Over three hundred (300) prisoners were taken from the town. The command spent the night of 25-26 December in these positions.

26 DECEMBER, 1944

At 0925, the artillery opened up on REMICHAMPAGNE, and the BOIS de COHET. Simultaneously as the tanks and infantry started moving N, and the artillery was pouring it on, the P-47's started to bomb and strafe. The BOIS de COHET was given a good going over. The coordination of tanks, infantry, artillery, and air was to perfection. Planes came over tanks at antenna altitude and strafed to the front. The combination of artillery and planes took care of the BOIS de COHET, which was the unknown quantity.

In the attack on REMICHAMPAGNE B/37 and B/53 paralleled the NS road from REMOVILLE to REMICHAMPAGNE and swung over and into REMICHAMPAGNE from the S. C/37 plus C/53 moved to the W of the town covering the town, and were ready to support with direct fire. Artillery fire was kept on the town as long as possible and then supplanted by direct fire from C/37. When REMICHAMPAGNE was cleared up, B/37 and B/53 moved to a position just SW of CLOCHIMONT and overlooking that town. Artillery fire was put on CLOCHIMONT, C/37 and C/53 moved to a position about one (1) kilometer NW of REMICHAMPAGNE to cover the NW flank. At the present stage the time was approximately 1430. A/37 moved to the high ground NW of CLOCHIMONT to cover in direction of SIBRET and VILLEROUX. At approximately 1500 and continuing for almost an hour, hundreds of C-47's came over and flew to BASTOGNE dropping supplies to the garrison there.

At 1520, Lt. Col. Abrams called up Captain Dwight, Bn S-3, and ordered him to bring C/37 and C/53 forward to B/37's position, saying "this is it."

Upon reaching B/37's position the orders were given by Colonel Abrams. They were as follows:

C/37 and C/53 will march on ASSENOIS, go through it and continue on until contact is made with elements of the 101st Airborne Division. B/53 will follow and will clean out ASSENOIS. C/37 and C/53 will be under command of Captain Dwight and will be supported by three (3) Battalions of 105 and one (1) Battalion of 155mm artillery. Artillery to be on call from anyone in the force and to be lifted by call. The artillery will hit the town of ASSENOIS and the edges of both woods to the N of ASSENOIS.

After all tank commanders and infantry platoon leaders were given the situation the force moved out at 1610, tanks leading, as is customary.

Upon coming into sight of ASSENOIS, Lt. Boggess, called for the prepared artillery fire. The fire came like the rains, few if any rounds missing their mark. As the edge of the town was reached Boggess called for the fire to lift and proceeded into the town without waiting for the fire to cease.

Due to the heavy artillery fire two tanks were unable to find their way through town. One infantry halftrack got forward into the tank column. One halftrack suffered a direct hit in the town. None of the tanks were fired upon by the enemy in the town, although there was considerable ineffective anti-tank fire as the column approached the town.

As the force left ASSENCIS it was composed as follows: Lt. Boggess' tank, Lt. Wrelson's tank, another tank, a break in the column of approximately 300 yards, an infantry halftrack, another tank and the S-3's tank. All went well as the force proceeded on, firing 30 calibre machine guns into the woods on both sides of the road. During the aforementioned break in the column, the enemy threw Teller-mines on the road in a bottle neck created by the woods. The infantry half-track hit one of these mines and was destroyed, catching fire immediately. After the mines were thrown into the ditches, the work being done under cover of 50 calibre fire from a tank, the two remaining tanks continued on and rejoined the leading element which by this time (1650) had contacted elements of the 326th Engineers of the 101st Airborne Division. In the meantime, B/50 started to clear out ASSENCIS, and Colonel Abrams started forward with the remainder of C/53 and two C/37 tanks. By this time there was considerable activity in ASSENCIS which contained an enemy Battalion and Regimental CP's. Some 428 prisoners were finally taken from the town.

During this time Captain Dwight was met by Brigadier General McAuliffe, acting Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division, who came to the perimeter defenses of BASTOGNE.

By 1830, all of C/37 and C/53 had taken up positions on the perimeter defense. Colonel Abrams went to the 101st Airborne Division CP to make arrangements to get their trains through. C/53 lost five (5) half-tracks on the mission. One by our own artillery, one by mines, and three by bazooka fire. It was obvious, after the battle, that the force would have had considerable trouble if it had waited for the artillery to lift.

Colonel Abrams called Colonel Jacques at approximately 1930 and asked to have A/53 come up and clear the edges to the woods North of ASSENCIS. This was done and by 0300, December 27, 1944, the road was safe for passage of all types of vehicles. This task was performed against strong enemy opposition and in an heavily wooded area.

D/37 escorted the trains of the 101st and 10th Armored into BASTOGNE. The trains consisted of some forty (40) trucks and seventy (70) ambulances. Up to this time D/37 has covered the NW flank from the same general area it took up on the 25th.

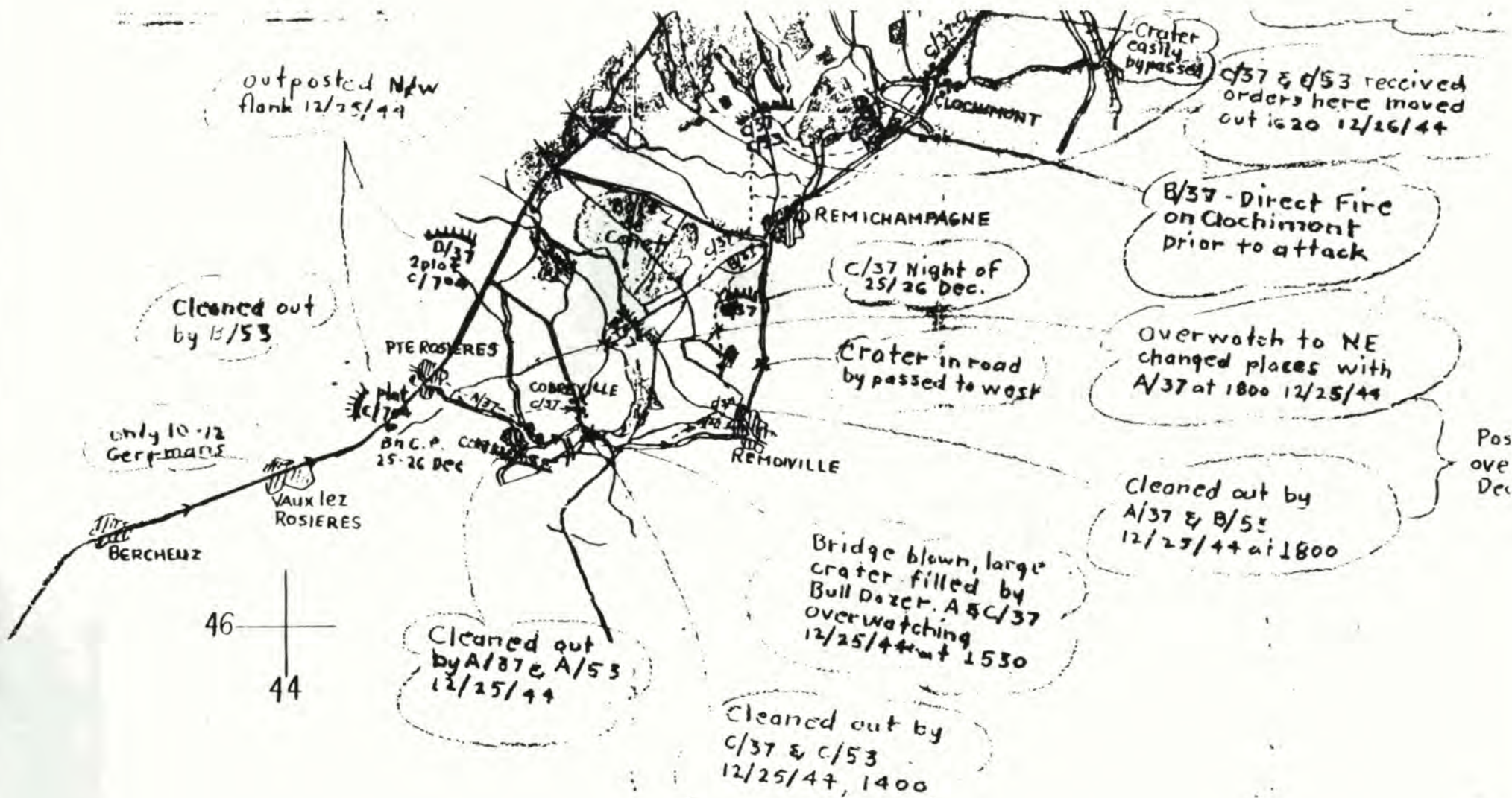
A/37 and B/37 held their positions until 0815, 29 December, 1944.

In the area between CLOCHIMONT and ASSENOIS were seven (7) anti-tank guns of 75mm or larger, one blocking the entrance to ASSENOIS. Between ASSENOIS and the perimeter defense of BASTOGNE were eight (8) more guns. In the woods on both sides of the road N of ASSENOIS were 25 - 30 assorted enemy vehicles, including full track prime movers. There was at least one bazooka to every five (5) enemy soldiers. The above weapons were ineffective due to fast, decisive movement, and accurate, well coordinated artillery fire, coupled with excellent air support.

During the above operations the strength of the line companies never exceeded the figures below:

"A" Company	11 tanks	2 Officers
"B" Company	8 tanks	1 Officer
"C" Company	9 tanks	2 Officers
"D" Company	13 tanks	1 Officer

Much of the time the operative vehicles were below those shown.



MAP: Bastogne, 121 France & Belgium

SCALE: 1:50,000

DATE: Dec/25 - Dec 27/1944

BY: 37th Tk Bn

54
59

BASTONGE

Pin C.P.
26-27 Dec.

Outer Perimeter
101st Airborne
Our leading element
arrived here 1650
26 Dec.

Teller mines thrown in
road between vehicles

Edges of woods cleared
by A/53 by 0300, 27 Dec.

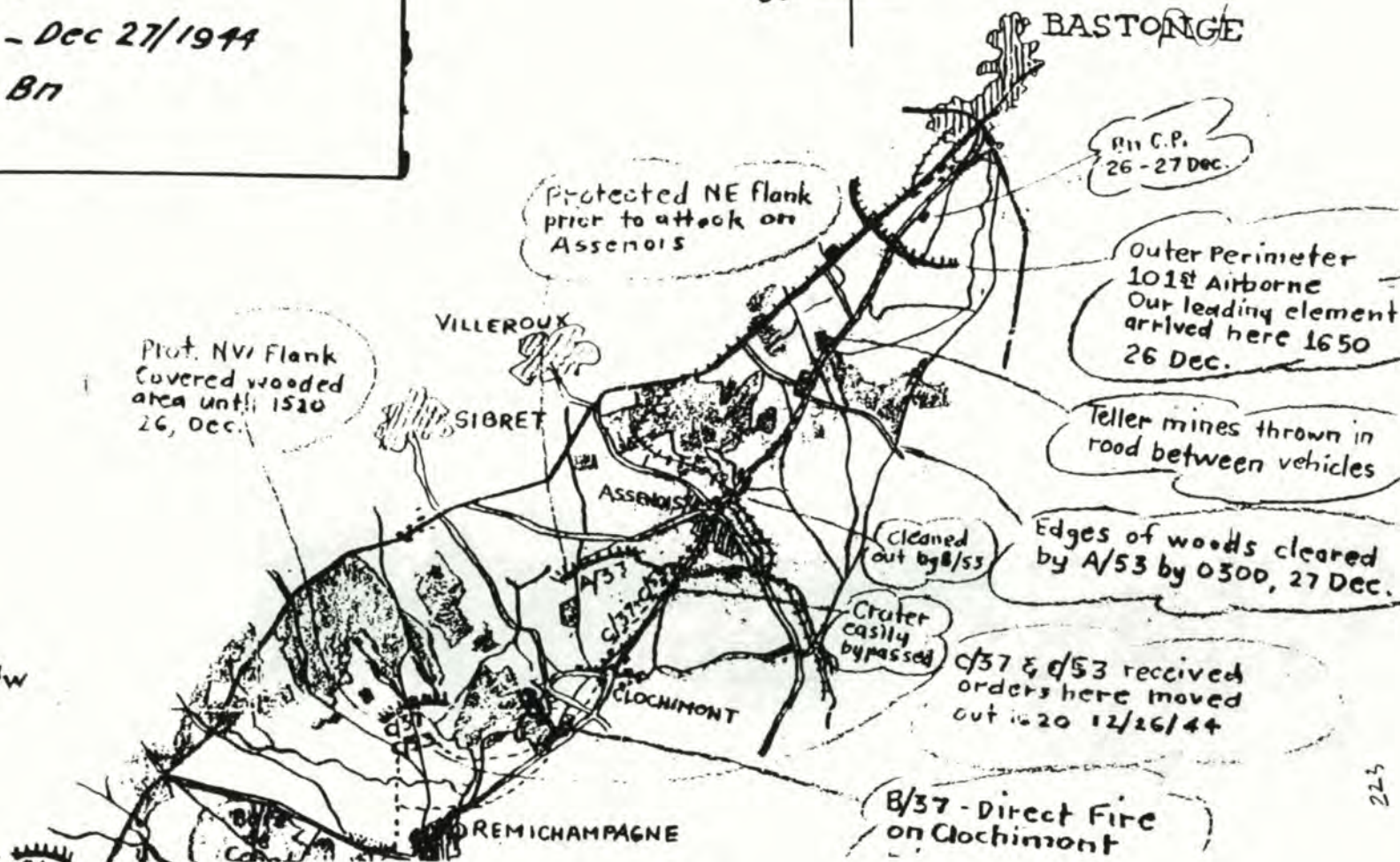
d/37 & d/53 received
orders here moved
out 1620 12/26/44

B/37 - Direct Fire
on Clochimont

Protected NE flank
prior to attack on
Assenois

Prot. NW Flank
Covered wooded
area until 1520
26 Dec.

outposted NW
flank 12/25/44



Hanson

MCMANON

Interview with Capt [REDACTED], S-2, 37th Tk Bn, 4th Armd Div, at Bn CP, ITZING,
13 Jan 1945 - Attack of 10 Jan.

The 37th received orders for the attack, (the 4th armd was attacking in conjunction with the 101st A/B), at 1900, 9 Jan while in assembly in the vicinity of CHAUMONT. Principal elements of CCB were the 37th, 53d Inf, C/704 TD, and C/25 (the latter used to contact flank units). The 37th moved at 2030 to assembly a km south of BASTOGNE, and the next morning to assembly at (578595) from which they moved to the attack [REDACTED], crossing the LD (High ground at MAURET - BLIZY - underpass, marked HALT) [REDACTED] The objective was BOURCY. [REDACTED]

The left boundary of CCB (101st A/B on the left) was the RR track; the bdry between CCB and CCA on the right was the line BLIZY - BOURCY - MICHAMPS - BOURCY (all towns inclusive to CCB. On CCB's right was the 6th Armd Div.

After the 22d FA Bn put a light concentration on woods to the north of the LD, B/37 and C/53 moved out along the trail by the RR track, while A/53 with assault guns/37 advanced on the trail to the east. Both forces ran into considerable small arms fire from the RR embankment. (The 101st was not abreast as had been planned.) A/37 was ordered to take the high ground (599594) and protect to the front and right flank and help clear the wood by fire. The company received heavy artillery fire and was fired at by an AT gun at (599595) which it destroyed. The tanks also fired at three enemy SPs at about (603608), destroyed two and damaged the third. The infantry-tank advance proceeded slowly through thick woods and against stubborn opposition. The enemy, ~~xxx~~ elements of the 340 Volks Gren Regt, was well dug in and fought determinedly. C & D/37 remained in assembly area prepared to move on order.

The attack [REDACTED] reached only the first phase line when at 1600 orders were received to move back on relief by elements of the 35th Inf and 6th Armd Divs. Tanks were within 300 yards of the edge of the wood. Relief was to take place by companies. CCB was actually relieved by a battalion of the 320th Inf Regt. The 37th moved back and closed in assembly area vicinity of ASSENOIS at [REDACTED] 2200. The next day all combat commands of the 4th Armd Div were ordered back to the vicinity of LUXEMBURG. The 37th began moving at 1630, accomplished most of the move by blackout, closing at ITZING between 0330 and 0400, 12 Jan.

Gen. A. S.

ACTION: Action of the 37th Tk Bn, as part of CC B, 4th AD, from vicinity of Gotha to vicinity of Grimnitzchau, Germany

PLACE AND DATE: 21 April 45, at Weissbach (K2261), Germany, CP of the Bn

MAPS: Central Europe, 1/100,000, R-5 (Erfurt), R-6 (Jena), R-7 (Chemnitz).

On 10 April the 80th Inf Div held positions between Gotha and Erfurt, approximately four miles west of the latter. Both of the 4th AD Combat Commands were behind the 80th Div and were ~~pld~~ to push through the Inf, straddling Erfurt. CC B was to the north, CC A to the south. The 37th Tank Bn was attached to CC B at 1800 on the night of the 10th. Company C of the Bn had just been reconstituted with 10 tanks and new personnel, following the loss of the Company in the ~~Harvest~~

~~Handwritten~~ rescue mission. On 10 April CC B was composed of the following units:

37th Tank Bn
10th Armored Inf Bn
~~22d and 177th FA Bns~~ (the latter
a Bn of 155 Hows)
24-B Engineers
704-C TDs
25-D Reconnaissance Tp
46-E Medics
489-C AAA

At approximately 2300 on the night of the 10th unit commanders met to receive orders for the continuation of the advance eastward. The Combat Command was to move out at 0645 the following morning, passing through the 80th Div and bypassing Erfurt to the north (OC A was to do likewise to the south). No specific towns or terrain features were named as objectives; the Combat Command was simply to push eastward along a prescribed axis. The Cav Troop and the TDs were to

precede the column, contact elements of the 80th Div and determine the pass-through point.

25-D and ~~24~~ 704-C first contacted elements of the 80th Div at Alach (J2470). There was supposed to be a bridge over the stream at that place, but there was not, so that the Command had to send up its own engineers to construct a trestleway. When the bridge was in the Command moved through the 80th and northward to Tiefthal (J2574) and then east to Gispersleben (J2874), in accordance with the plan to by-pass Erfurt to the north. The Command had the customary formation, as

follows:

- 25-D (Cav) and 704-C (TDS)
- 37-A (Tks) and 10-C (Inf) Some of the inf rode the tanks
- Command Gp of the 37th and 10th Bns
- 37-B and 10-A
- One platoon of 24-B (Engrs)
- 37-D and AGs of the 37th
- 22d FA (105 SPs)
- Hqs, 37th and 10th Bns
- 37-C and 10-B
- 177th FA (155 SPs)
- CC B Hq
- 5th Arty Gp Hq
- 24-B (-) (Engrs)
- 46-B (Medics)
- Trains of 37 and 10
- 489-C (AAA)

There was initially no contact with the enemy. From Gispersleben the Command proceeded via trail to Kerspleben (J3672) and then to Kleimbölsen (J3774), where the 22d FA spotted and knocked out a German tank. About the same time the air reported five or six tanks in the vicinity. TDS of 704-C were ordered to clear the area, and with the assistance of the air knocked out all of the guns, which proved to be SPs rather than tanks, and were unmanned and apparently abandoned. The Command meanwhile proceeded to Niederrimmern (J4272) and Ottstedt (J4374). From the latter town the originally designated route of the Command ran southeast and within a kilometer of the northern edge of Weimar. Since this route would take the Command dangerously close to the town and since the situation there was unknown it was decided to split the column at Ottstedt in order to determine the most feasible route of advance. The leading tank-infantry team (37-A and 10-C)

followed the original route southeast to Daasdorf (J4772). Meanwhile 37-B and 10-A peeled off in a northerly direction through the Forst Ettersburg. The southern team soon ran into direct AT fire from Daasdorf and Gabernsdorf (J4872). The northern team made good progress through the woods to a point about one mile south of "leinobringen (J5076) whence the column made a jog in its route and followed a trail to the northeast from the junction at J5074. In the woods a French and Russian PW camp of several thousand men was overrun. By the time OC B went through the PWs themselves were in control and were pretty well organized. In this trail the team received bazooka fire and a few men suffered minor injuries, but this northern route was still considered better than the other. 37-A and 10-C were therefore recalled from Daasdorf and rejoined the Command which again converged on the northern route. When the column got out of the woods at Grossbringen (J5276, 37-B was ordered to halt and 37-D (light tanks) and the Assault Guns took the lead. The road network in this area was not favorable to the desired route of advance of the column, so the Command travelled across country part of the way to Grosskromsdorf (J5473), going through the railway underpass west of the town and finally assembling in the town itself. Time was taken there for the rear units to catch up and reorganize. After about 20 minutes 37-D pushed into Danstedt (J5673) where a bridge was erroneously reported blown. Bazookas fired at the lead tank simultaneously near this place and there was a great deal of smoke and noise for a few minutes, but no damage was caused and the column continued on in to Danstedt. By this time it was getting quite dark, so the Command set up at Grosskromsdorf for the night, 37-D moving into Schwabsdorf (J5972), 37-A and 10-C to Ulrichshalben (J5874), 37-B and 10-A to Sussenbamm (J5671) and 37-C and 10-B cutting the railway crossing north of Grosskromsdorf. All roads were therefore cut on the eastern perimeter of the Command's position.

No change in orders was made for the following day. The Command was to move out at 0700 on the 12th, roughly following a route laid out by Division. There was no great change in the march formation. 37-D continued to lead with the AGs

of the Bn, followed by the Command Gp of 37 and 10, then 37-A and 10-C, a platoon of Engineers, 37-C and 10-B, FA etc. (The 10th Inf Bn had no assault guns, incidentally, having lost them on the previous special TF mission, and 37-D was also short a platoon of tanks.) The route of the Command was as follows:

Ulrichshausen - Frankendorf (J6069) - Holstedeit (J6258) - Krippendorf (J6770) - Rödigen (J7171) - then southeast toward the river - Kunitz (J7368) - Laasan (J7567)

Obviously the same tactic was to be employed as at Erfurt --- by-pass Jena to the north (CC B) and south (CC A) and seize bridges across the Saale River. CC B hoped to seize the crossing at Kunitz. The Command was the target of artillery fire for a considerable distance along the route that morning. The fire continued till advance elements were beyond Viergehn-heiligen (J6670). The fire did no damage, but it was apparent that there was opposition in the region and it was thought that the trains would not be safe. The head of the column was therefore halted short of Rödigen and one tank-infantry team (37-A and 10-C) was detached from the column and despatched to Lützeroda (J6869) and Glosewitz (J6969) to check the woods. Nothing was found by this team; but the artillery fire ceased. Its source was never discovered.

Meanwhile an opportunity seemed to present itself for a crossing of the river farther north. Planes spotted a bridge at Dornburg-Dorndorf (J7674), about six kilometers north of Kunitz, and reported it intact. Cavalry units of the 25th Bn were near by and called Lt Col Abrams, the Combat Command Commander, informing him they would check it. In the meantime 37-C was pulled into assembly near Altergönna (J6871) with a view to having it ready to dash north, follow the Cavalry across and secure a bridgehead. This plan never materialized, however. Just as the Cavalry reached the river the bridge was blown. This happened several times in the advance across Germany.

While the above was taking place another possibility was being investigated three kilometers farther south. 37-D and the AGs had proceeded to the railway bridge half way between Dorndorf and Kunitz, but found this bridge blown also.

Meanwhile an attempt to take the Kunitz bridge also failed. 37-A and its accompanying infantry moved through Rüdigen toward the bridge, drawing bazooka fire on the way. Two tanks were damaged by this fire at the town just across the river from Kunitz (the town is unnamed on the map) and the commanders of both 37-A and 10-C were injured. But the bridge there had also been blown. All three attempts to take a bridge intact over the Saale had failed.

37-A took a position overlooking the river, and was shortly followed by C and B also, so that all three companies had positions on the west bank. The intention was that these three companies should provide fire cover for a crossing by the infantry. The Saale was quite wide at this point, and fairly swift. The infantry hoped to have a footbridge for its crossing. However, even this was not available. There was no enemy fire up to the time of crossing. Visibility was very poor, however, and P-47s dropped three bombs on the American forces on the left bank. Engineers began construction of a treadway bridge, but no bridge was available for the infantry crossing. Companies Band C of the 10th Inf Bn were therefore ferried across in pontons, and reached the opposite shore without opposition. In the town of Kunitz 250 PWs were taken.

The Engineers estimated they would require five or six hours to complete a bridge across the river. However, it took considerably less time, and by 1930 a ponton bridge was ready. Two and a half hours after, the infantry entered Kunitz, therefore, 37-A moved across the Saale, picked up Co C of the 10th Bn and moved on to Laasan (J7567). The terrain in this area was hilly and wooded, but the enemy had not contested the river crossing, and in the town of Laasan an additional 36 German surrendered to 37-A without offering any resistance. Another tank-infantry team -- 37-C and 10-B -- followed and outposted south of Kunitz, and 25-D and 704-C also crossed and took positions north of the town, near Golmsdorf (J7671). By nightfall, then, the bridgehead was consolidated in a rough semi-circle along the high wooded ground north, east and south of Kunitz.

That night (it was the 12th) CC B received orders to move out the following

morning in three columns. It seems that Lt Col Abrams had been "chewed" for fighting on too narrow a front with too extended a column and thus did not cut a broad a swathe as desired. He therefore complied with Division's orders and split the Command into three separate columns.

Route A led generally to the northeast, from Beutnitz (J7670) to Mertendorf (J8473) - Grosshelmsdorf (J9076) - Kleinpöstowitz (J9875) - Rosenthal (J9772) - Gosra (K0376) - Drossdorf (K0776) - Kayna (K1575) - Dölzig (K2174), and was travelled by 25-B and 704-C, the force outposting the northern end of the bridgehead.

37-A and 10-C, under Capt Hays, took Route B, or the middle route, which led eastward from Laasan through Graitschen (J7969) - Poxdorf (J8169) - Petersberg (J8772) - Kalligshofen (J9275) (thus avoiding Eisenberg) - Trebnitz (J9774) - Rosenthal - Mickelsdorf (J9972) - Schellback (K0773) - Wittgendorf (K1273) - Bröckau (K1472) - ~~Kayna~~ Mehna (K2172).

Route C to the south was the main route and carried the bulk of the Command, led by 37-D and the AGs and followed by the two remaining tank-infantry teams (37-C and 10-E and 37-B and 10-A), the artillery units and remaining trains and attachments. The route ran generally ENE to within about two to three miles of Eisenberg and then swung sharply north around the city to join the other two columns at Rosenthal. The route ran as follows; Wogau (J7566) - Bürgel (J8267) - Hainspitz (J9970) - Petersberg (J8772) - Rosenthal - Silbitz (J9970) - Heckewalde (K1072) - Hartha (K1669) - then east to Garbisdorf (K4169) - Wolkenberg (K4667) - Kaufungen (K4766). All three routes temporarily converged at Rosenthal because of the necessity of crossing the river (the Weisse Elster) at that point.

Initially, Forces B and C had difficulty getting through the wooded areas along their routes due to the narrowness of the roads and trails. Map reconnaissance had been misleading as to the conditions of the routes.. But the opposition from the enemy was negligible. Forces A and B encountered none

whatever, simply marching through undefended towns. Force C encountered some small arms and sniper fire in Hainspitz, where the 37th Tk Bn Commander, Maj Hunter, was wounded (Capt Dwight took command at this point), but apart from this there was little to delay the three columns in their advance to the Elster. Troop D of the 28th Cav Recon Sqdn (Route A) reached the Elster first and, finding the bridge at Rosenthal intact, crossed and established a bridgehead there. Force B came up shortly thereafter and crossed behind the Cavalry, taking positions at Nickeladorf to reinforce the bridgehead. Force C was scheduled to cross and then swing south to Silbitz, but just east of the river one of the tanks fell through a small bridge spanning a canal, so that Force C instead continued east behind Force B through the Forest Zeitz. The advance east continued to be practically unopposed, and in the middle of the afternoon the three columns once more converged near the "edge of the map", beyond which no separate routes were indicated. This was in the vicinity of Mehna (K7172), whence the entire Command followed the route designated for Force G.

Since the progress of the Command was so good, Division decided to try for a crossing of the Zwick-Mulde River (which runs through Glauchau, K3857) and Lt Col Abrams received orders that afternoon to try for a bridgehead over that river. So the Command continued to roll eastward. From Mehna CC B moved rapidly east to Garbisdorf and then to Wolkenberg. As the column neared the river, air reported a bridge intact at the town of Wolkenberg. The Command was led by the light tanks of 37-D, already running low on gas. However, D kept rolling and, meeting almost no resistance, crossed the bridge at Wolkenberg and established a bridgehead alone, without support of the infantry. When the company reached the east bank of the river the tanks were so short of gas they could not even move out to take outpost positions to guard the bridgehead. The whole Command had gone farther than expected this day. That night it rained, and roads became impassable for trucks so that no resupply could be effected till the next morning. Fortunately, however, some medium tanks of the column were able to come through the bridgehead and establish

outposts to protect the foothold on the east bank. The only sign of the enemy as the Command crossed the river was a column of German vehicles to the southeast. This enemy column was taken under fire by the whole column of CC B. Then the various tank-infantry teams proceeded to establish a perimeter of defense around the bridge. 37-B and 10-B moved to the high ground at Mdr Frohna (K5165) and cut the road; 37-A and 10-A occupied Hill 312 (K5068); and 37-C and 10-C outposted Hill 334 (K4865). Thus the usual semi-circular defense was established, cutting the roads to Limbach, with the GPs of 37, 10 and the Command at Kaufungen. During the night the 37th Bn received sporadic artillery and rocket fire.

The nearly 50-mile advance of 13 May marked the near high tide of CC B's march eastward across Germany. The Command used 14 May primarily for securing its extended position by the clearance of surrounding towns. 37-B moved to Burgstadt (K5669) and after some fighting took 300 PWs; 37-C cleared Obr Frohna and then Juhlau (K5367), meeting no resistance. Tauscha (K5068) and Chursdorf (K5169) were also cleared and Hill 350 outposted (K5868), and a section of Taura (K5870) also cleared for security. 37-A cleared the area around Wittgensdorf (K5965) and secured the high ground just to the north. After clearing the northern extremity of the bridgehead at Penig (K4871) it moved to the high ground south of Wittgensdorf. The Cavalry had made visual contact with the 8th Armored Div. In clearing this area east of the Zwick-Mulde and securing the bridgehead CC B reached its latest restraining line on the 14th, which had been extended already during the day. There was some fear of overextension, for little was known about the flanks. On the 15th lines were revised once more to permit the seizure of the bridges northeast of Wittgensdorf by small task forces of 37-A and 10-C and 37-C and 10-B. On the 16th the Command was partially relieved by the 80th Div, and ~~the~~ moved to Burgstadt for cleanup and maintenance. The Command expected to be there for several days, but on the following day (17th) elements of the Command in ~~turn~~ turn temporarily relieved 80th Div units at Grina (K5658) and Sigmar (K5958), just outside Chemnitz. On the 18th the Command was informed it was to be relieved

by the 76th Div. This was effected on the 19th, and on 20 April CC B moved to Weissbach (K2261).

These 10 days of operation had been little more than road marches for CC B. Main difficulty of the command, as far as resistance was concerned, was river crossings, and even these were uncontested and only delayed the advance occasionally by blown bridges. The enemy had not even had time to construct road blocks in these last days.

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