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Title: Combat Command Action (CCA) Report of the United States Army 5th (Fifth) Armored Division

Abstract: U.S. Army 5th (Fifth) Armored Division Combat Command Action Report. These are reports of action against the enemy from 1944 to 1945 in the European Theater of Operations to include narratives, illustration, and journals.

Number of pages: 170 (some pages from the original document are not legible)

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: Auth: CG, CCA, 5th Arm'd Div:
: Init: *HPH* HPH
: Date: 30 May 1945

COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION.

REVISED ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT No 1,
MONTH OF AUGUST 1944.

105-1377

DEC 28 1945

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BRIGADIER GENERAL, EUGENE A. REGNIER, USA,
COMMANDING.

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HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO No 255
U. S. Army

: [REDACTED] :
:Auth: [REDACTED], 5th Armd Div:
:Init: HPH HPH :
:Date: 30 May 1945. :

30 May 1945.

Subject: Report of Action No. 1, Month of August 1944.

**To : Commanding General, 5th Armored Division,
APO No 255, U. S. Army.**

Attached hereto is revised Report of Action against the enemy No. 1,
month of August 1944.

For the Commanding General:

Henry P. Halsell
HENRY P. HALSELL,
Captain, C. E.,
S-3 Air.

319.1 GNNJG
(30 May 45)

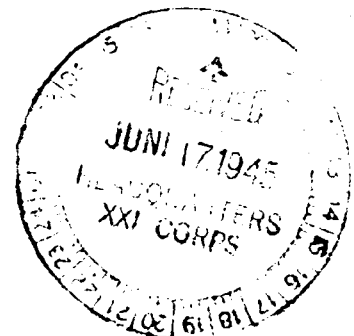
1st Ind.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMORED DIVISION, APO No 255, U. S. Army, 16 June 1945.

THRU: Commanding General, XXI Corps, APO No 101, U. S. Army.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

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C. C. D.



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314. 7 AG
HQ XXI CORPS, APO 101, U. S. Army, 17 June 1945.

2d Ind.

/vdm

TO: Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army.

Forwarded herewith is revised after action report of the Combat Command "A",
5th Armored Division for the month of August 1944.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

L. S. Silbermangel
L S SILBERMANGEL
CAPTAIN
AUG 1945

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AUGUST 1944.

1. CAMPAIGN - Normandy and Northern France.

2. COMMANDERS.

Combat Command A, 5th Armd Div - Brig Gen Eugene A. Regnier, 08295, USA.

Hq & Hq Co Combat Command A - Captain Karl W. Roth, 01010340, Inf.

34 Tk Bn - Lt Col Thomas B. Bartel, 022019, Cav (1-13 Aug);
Major Glen L. Foote, 0450438, Cav (13-31 Aug).

46 Armd Inf Bn - Major Wm. H. Burton, 0366028, Inf (1-21 Aug); (27-31 Aug);
Lt Col Scott M. Case, 023121, Cav (21 Aug);
Lt Col Kenneth P. Gilson, 0359160, Inf (21-27 Aug).

47 Armd Field Arty Bn - Lt Col John B. Rosenzweig, 0246291, FA.

A Co, 22nd Armd Engr Bn - Captain Joseph F. McCann, 0456339, CE.

A Co, 75th Med Bn - Captain Sanford M. Langsom, 0-424470, MC.

400 Armd Field Arty Bn - Lt Col John R. McLean, 023140, FA.

3. LOSSES IN ACTION - See Annexes 1, 2 and 3.

4. ESTIMATED ENEMY LOSSES - See Annexes 4 and 6.

5. NARRATIVE.

I. NEHOU - VITRE.

CCA, 5th Armored Division, assigned to the Third U. S. Army and attached to XX Corps, landed at Utah Beach and was assembled in bivouac in the vicinity of St. Sauveur Le Vicompte during the period 26-31 July 1944.

At 0840, 1 August 1944, a warning order was received from division to be prepared for movement south to the vicinity of La Feuillie and that CCA, with 47th Armored Field Artillery Bn attached for movement, would follow the 85th Cav Rcn Sq. Information was received by liaison that the division had been attached to XV Corps at 0935. At 1340 a message was received from division that the 85th Cav Rcn Sq would move at 1800. The move was started at 1810, 1 August, and

completed by 0820, 2 August. Difficulty was experienced in marching over unreconnoitered secondary roads.

At 1155, 2 August, the Commanding General was called to Division Headquarters to receive orders. The Division Commander issued an oral order as follows: "The mission of the division is to move south without stopping, cross the See ani Selune Rivers, assemble south of Selune River, seize the town of Fougères and reconnoiter vicinity of St. James, St. Martin and St. George for further action. The 85th Cav Rcn Sq will move out to reconnoiter the division zone without delay. The division will move in two columns. CCA, followed by Div Hq and division troops on the west; CCB, followed by CCR on the east."

At 1550, 2 August, CCA moved out and by 0630, 3 August, had arrived in the assigned assembly position one mile north of St. Georges. Great traffic difficulties were experienced all during the march because of the cross traffic of troops of the XX Corps, moving east into the First Army zone. The CCA column was cut and held up many times, to be again put under way by officers of the command who were continually patrolling the column to regulate traffic and pick up vehicles which had become intermingled with columns of other units.

Because of traffic difficulties the distance between CCA and Div Hq became so great that CW radio communication was lost early in the march and not reestablished until 1245, 3 August 1944. Messages were sent to division by messenger while out of radio contact.

At 1335 a radio message was received ordering CCA to await further orders in place. At 1750 the Commanding General visited the CP of the 79th Infantry Division to the south to obtain information of the general tactical situation.

At 2010, 3 August, the Division Commander visited the Commanding General at the CCA CP to inform him that the division had received orders at 0320 to halt its movement and clear the roads. He further stated that he had received orders

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that the 5th Armored Division was in Corps reserve until further orders.

The 79th Infantry Division captured Feugerès early 3 August.

Early 4 August, CCA was directed to dump loads from a portion of its trains to provide a portion of the trucks needed to motorize elements of the 79th and 90th Infantry Divisions. At 2300 a warning order was received from division to be prepared for movement early 5 August.

At 0900, 5 August, the Commanding General visited the Division CP to receive orders. The Division Commander stated that all previous missions of the IV Corps had been cancelled and a new mission assigned. The new corps mission was to secure crossings of the Mayenne River from Laval to Mayenne. The mission of the 5th Armored Division was to maintain a position echeloned to the right and rear of the 79th Infantry Division prepared (1) to support the attack of the assaulting divisions, (2), to extend the front to Chateau-Gentier, (3) to extend the corps front as far south as Angers.

At 1400, 5 August, CCA received orders to move to an assembly area north and west of Vitre. At 1600 the column moved out by a route west of Feugerès. One platoon of engineers and one platoon of infantry were sent to secure two bridges south of Vitre. No opposition was encountered during the march and the command closed in the assigned assembly area vicinity Gerard by midnight.

Throughout the day, 5 August, the 79th Infantry Division (motorized) had advanced in a southeasterly direction with the mission of seizing Laval and by nightfall had closed in on the outskirts of the city. This command still had not been committed in a definite battle mission. Radio communication with division had been lost subsequent to the day's march. The Commanding General had been maintaining close liaison with the 79th Infantry Division. During the night

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the CCA liaison officer to 79th Infantry Division returned with a copy of the XV Corps field order which stated: "The 79th Infantry Division will cross the Mayenne River at Laval; the 5th Armored Division will cross between Laval (exclusive) and Chateau Gontier (inclusive), and the divisions will attack abreast to the east and to take Le Mans. This advance is to be pursued with the utmost energy inasmuch as on its success may hinge the success of the whole campaign in Western France." The Commanding General took immediate steps to inform the Division Commander, by radio and messenger, of this order and his ability and readiness to move as early as 0400 if so desired.

II. ATTACK ON LE MANS.

At 0300, 6 August, the reconnaissance of the 34th Tank Bn and 46th Armcd Infantry Bn were dispatched to reconnoiter, mark, and report on a route to the Mayenne River in the assigned zone.

At 0500 the Commanding General attended a meeting at the XV Corps CP concerning the impending attack; and, from the Division Commander, received the mission of crossing the Mayenne River in the vicinity of Chateau Gontier, and then proceeding east on the axis Chateau Gontier-Grez en Boufre-Bouessy-Chatenay -Chemire Le Gaudin-Le Mans north of the Sarthe River, to seize and hold Le Mans and to block all exits from Le Mans to the south and east.

At 0730, 6 August 1944, CCA moved out, B Companies leading, and by 1500 was passing rapidly through Ballots against light resistance. At 1610 the advance elements entered the outskirts of Craon to encounter considerable fire from an enemy force. The bridge in Craon was blown just before our advance elements were able to seize it. The leading elements rapidly fanned out and were successful in seizing a bridge intact north of the town over which the column was routed with little delay.

By 1900 the head of the column was at Laigle and advancing rapidly.

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Resistance consisted of scattered infantry groups and anti-tank guns; these were either destroyed or neutralized by the tank and machine gun fire of the moving column.

Advance elements encountered stiff resistance on both sides of the river at Chateau Gontier and immediately took steps to clear the town as the entire command assembled one mile west of the city. Numerous snipers were encountered in the town. The bridge across the river had been partially destroyed prior to our reaching the city and was commanded by anti-tank guns, including 88-mm weapons, from the far side of the river. One medium tank was destroyed and the ration rack of the Commanding General's tank was hit by fire from these guns.

At 2100 the Commanding General sent the following message to the Division Commander. "Both sides of river at Chateau Gontier secured. Road south from Laval blocked. Will refuel at once and mop up Chateau Gontier. Engineer work required to restore bridge will commence as soon as enemy situation permits."

Fighting continued throughout the night and resulted in the Germans being driven from the town and bridgehead area. A Company, 22nd Armd Engr Bn repaired the bridge and vehicular traffic began to cross the river at 0700, 7 August. Dismounted elements had used the partially destroyed bridge in establishing the bridgehead. It was estimated that the enemy defensive force had consisted of an infantry company strongly reinforced with towed and SP AT guns, tanks and mortars.

The initial mission was changed twice prior to CCA's reaching Le Mans. It was thought that the leading combat commands would be able to stay ahead of the advancing 79th and 90th Infantry Divisions; accordingly XV Corps gave the division permission to move by any routes which would not delay the advance of the infantry divisions. CCB was ordered to march across and in front of the infantry divisions to pass west of Le Mans and secure a position north and east of Le Mans to prevent escape of the enemy in that direction. The new mission of CCA was to approach the

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city from the south and southwest and secure a position south and southeast of the city to block escape routes in that direction. The 79th and 90th Infantry Divisions were to drive into the city from the west.

At 1120, 7 August, the head of the column was approaching Bonessay and moving rapidly against scattered strong points. Sniper fire was almost continuous and was dealt with by machine gun fire of the moving column.

At 1510 a message was received from division: "Change axis from Chantenay and move via Tasse-Noyan-Lace, cross Sarthe River at Fille, attack Le Mans from the east, and block escape routes to the north and east cutting railway." By this time the column had fought through to the vicinity of Peille sur Vegre where it was fighting against a determined enemy force which apparently had the mission of keeping open the Brulon-Le Mans escape route. A force of P-47 fighter-bombers arrived over the column to join the fight and after a considerable fight the enemy resistance in that area was destroyed or neutralized by 1655.

While this action was taking place the Commanding General contacted the unit commanders and gave them the new mission. It was later determined that this change of mission had been made because a motorized column of the 79th Infantry Division had entered the 5th Armored Division zone of advance and had conflicted so badly with CCB that it was necessary to reroute completely the leading combat commands and adopt a new division plan of maneuver whereby CCA would swing in a wide arc south and east around Le Mans to reach a position to block escape route north and east from the city while CCB followed to take up a position blocking exits from the city to the south and east.

By 1730, 7 August, the command had reached Ashieres sur Vegre and captured intact the two bridges across the Vegre River at that point. A defended road block on the outskirts of the town was destroyed.

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At 1855 CGA head reached Moyon and turned north and east toward Fille, the designated crossing point. In Fille the column, by mistake, took the road to Spay, northeast of Fille. The Commanding General stopped the column, quickly ascertained that B Companies were almost clear of Fille, and ordered them to cross the Sarthe at Spay, where a bridge had been seized intact and rejoin the column on the correct route. The remainder of the column, A Companies leading, was instructed to cross the river at Fille and continue on the assigned route. Movement across the river continued throughout the night and, by dawn of the 8th, the greater part of the command was east of the Sarthe River.

One interesting development resulting from the double crossing was that a German force bivouaced east of the Sarthe between Fille and Spay was caught between A and B companies and destroyed. This force was estimated to consist of one infantry company, one company of engineers and approximately thirty vehicles.

At 0730, 8 August, badly needed fuel arrived and the Commanding General decided to refuel prior to joining the battle for escape routes from Le Mans. This was accomplished expeditiously by driving the gas trucks up the column and passing the cans directly to tank and vehicle drivers. Considerable anxiety was felt about the enemy tracer fire which was being received sporadically all along the column, but fortunately no gas truck was set afire during this critical operation, and the column moved forward.

By 1135, CCA had fought through Ruaudin and was one kilometer south of Change advancing northeast against steadily increasing resistance from enemy infantry, anti-tank guns, and scattered tanks.

At 1215 the CCA advance guard was fired on by anti-tank guns and infantry as it reached the Le Mans-Paris road and railroad one kilometer south of Villiers. The enemy force was destroyed by tank and machine gun fire and the column turned

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east toward Tvre L'Eveque against continuing resistance. Two 105-mm self propelled howitzers of the 47th Armored Field Arty Bn were knocked out by tank fire from elements of CCB in the vicinity of Raudin as they mistook the artillery pieces for enemy vehicles.

The CCA column, extending from Fille through Raudin to the eastern approaches of Tvre L'Eveque, was acting to screen and block any enemy movement east or south of Le Mans. This resulted in almost continuous action all along the column as the Germans began to withdraw eastward from Le Mans in the face of the infantry attack from the west.

Stubborn resistance was encountered in Tvre L'Eveque from dug-in enemy infantry disposed in the vicinity of the village graveyard. Our infantry dismounted and, with tank and artillery support, advanced and cleaned up the town.

At 1813 the leading elements were fighting one kilometer woutheast of Sarge Le Mans having advanced via Perance and Le Cassoir. The enemy situation continued to be confused with enemy forces or fragments of forces trying unsuccessfully to break out of Le Mans.

By 2115 CCA had forces astride the Le Mans-Ballon, Le Mans-Savigne, and Le Mans-Connerre roads and the Le Mans-Paris railway. These forces were generally disposed on a line Les Pommiers-Sarge-Le Mans Tvre L'Eveque with the 34th Tk Bn on the west and 46th Armd Inf on the east. Strong mounted patrols were operating between them and also maintaining contact with elements of CCB to the south. The assigned mission had been accomplished. Resupply and maintenance were completed as the tactical situation permitted.

The lack of adequate operational maps during the attack of Chateau Gontier and Le Mans was a great hindrance to swift and accurate movement of troops. The 1/200,000 Michelin road map in our possession contained no adequate grid and almost

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no topographic information.

By 1100, 9 August, the infantry divisions had worked through Le Mans from the west. At 1345 General Regnier was called to a conference at the Division CP. The Division Commander then went over the general tactical situation and ordered CCA to advance north and seize and hold four crossings across the Orne River between St. Jammae and Conge sur Orne for the crossing of the 2nd French Armd Div. The conference ended at 1630 and General Regnier returned to the CP at 1645 to brief the unit commanders.

III - ARGENTAN.

At 1915, 9 August, CCA's advance guard moved out. At 2015 the bridge at St. Jammae was captured intact. At 2030 three more bridges southwest of Ballon had been captured intact. At 2035 the bridge at Ballon had been captured intact after bypassing heavy resistance in Ballon. The advance north to the river had been made against moderate infantry and anti-tank resistance with the roads and fields heavily mined. Enemy tanks were roving the area, but were not used in mass.

At the Orne River there was a sharp increase in resistance, particularly in the vicinity of Ballon. For the first time artillery fire in volume was encountered. Anti-tank guns and tanks engaged our forces from the north side of the river knocking out two M-7 self-propelled howitzers of the 47th Armd Field Arty Bn. A light AT gun opened fire on the vehicles of CCA Headquarters as they were moving up the road; knocked out a half track and two light tanks.

The resistance in Ballon centered around a large chateau overlooking the town itself and the river. After several hours of heavy fighting the resistance in this vicinity was beaten down and destroyed by combined infantry and tank assault, supported by the fire of all our artillery and mortars.

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The situation at 2300, 9 August was critical. Between St. Jamme and Ballon, both inclusive, five bridge-holding forces were deployed over a total front of eleven kilometers. All of these forces were committed and engaged with the enemy disposed along the north bank of the river. This represented a commitment of two-thirds of the combat command. Heavy fighting was still in progress north of the river at Ballon when Task Force Burton was engaged. Enemy identifications of the 408th Infantry Division on the left, the 9th Panzer Division in the center, and the 130th Pz Lehr Div on the right had been obtained. There was ample indication that the enemy intended to hold our force south of the Orne River.

General Regnier contacted the Division Commander to explain the situation and to request that his forces holding the bridges be relieved by other units so as to make available an adequate force to continue the attack north of the Orne River. This request, because of the absence of troops of the 2nd French Armd Div, was not approved.

General Regnier directed that, for the remainder of the night, each force holding a bridgehead consolidate its position and operate strong patrols to maintain contact. Frequent enemy contacts south of the river indicated that remnants of a considerable enemy force were still alive to our flanks and rear. At 2335, 9 August, CCA, less forces disposed on the bridgeheads, took up a perimeter defensive position on the high ground two kilometers south of Ballon. Plans were made to continue the attack across the Orne River at daylight.

At 0430, 10 August, orders were received from division that XV Corps would attack at 0800 to seize the line Sees-Carrouges; divisions abreast, with the 5th Armored Division on the right and the 2nd French Armored Division on the left. The 2nd French Armd Div was to relieve CCA on the bridges being held for

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them in their zone.

Resistance initially was light, and the command moved rapidly along the Ballon-Maners road to the vicinity of La Pintirie. Here resistance mounted rapidly and the command was soon heavily engaged by dug-in infantry, tanks, and AT guns. Heavy artillery fire was received by the leading elements. It was obvious that the command had driven into a prepared, heavily defended position. General Regnier directed that the main effort be turned toward Nouans, to the northwest, in an effort to bypass the resistance. This was done and seemed to be succeeding until La Bigoterie was reached. Here the leading elements again ran into bitter resistance from dug-in infantry, tanks, AT guns, artillery, and mortars.

At 0942, the Division Commander informed General Regnier that CCR was heavily engaged with some enemy tanks south of Marolles and requested the Commanding General to assist him if possible. General Regnier informed him that he was heavily engaged and was quite concerned that his troops had not yet been relieved at the bridges. Consequently he did not feel that he had sufficient force available to assist CCR.

At 1100 air support arrived over our forces. With this assistance our forces advanced to a position just south of Dangeul. The effort toward Nouans was broken off as it promised no advantage over an attack straight along our axis to the north. As Task Force Burton, which had done the fighting toward Nouans, rejoined the command they discovered an enemy bivouac in which they destroyed over thirty vehicles and the greater part of an enemy company.

During the night of 10 August, the 2nd French Armd Div arrived at the river and at 2300 General Regnier visited the Commanding General of the 2nd French to orient him on the disposition of troops holding the bridges and to

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expedite their relief. During the remainder of night our forces were relieved and rejoined the main body south of Dangeul. Company A, 628th Tank Destroyer Bn was attached to CCA. A request for the attachment of a reconnaissance troop was denied. Orders were received from division to remain in position and continue the attack at 0700, 11 August, bypassing the town of Marolles.

The command reorganized during the early hours of the morning. At 0700, CCA moved out and at 0845 was one kilometer south of Courgains. By 0915 the advance guard had advanced through Saosne, and the main body was moving through Courgains. About one kilometer south of St. Remy du Plain the advance guard struck sharp resistance in the form of tanks and infantry. The advance guard, married C Companies, rapidly deployed to develop the situation. Civilians reported 23 tanks and one 88-mm AT gun in the town.

The advance guard rapidly confirmed the presence of the tanks. The 47th and 400th Field Arty Bns both went into position and opened fire on the tanks. The TD Co moved to commanding ground overlooking the town from the southwest and engaged enemy tanks as they entered or left the town. Air support arriving over the column was directed onto the tanks.

By 1700 eight tanks and considerable infantry had been destroyed and the resistance had been neutralized. By 1730 the command had reorganized and moved through this town to the north destroying several tanks deployed astride the St. Remy-Mamers Highway.

At 1325 General Regnier had requested permission to bypass the Foret de Perseigne, a dense forest north of St. Remy, since no open routes led through it and it had the appearance of being a tank trap. The request was disapproved.

Later, as our reconnaissance discovered heavy enemy activity in the forest and members of the FFI reported that it was an enemy concentration area, the

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request was made again and approved. The Division Commander directed CCA to bypass the forest to the east. By 2035 the command was at Le Bouchage pushing north against infantry, AT guns and tank resistance. At 2130 the advance guard was one kilometer north of Louzes and the main body was following one kilometer behind. Great difficulty was experienced in keeping the column intact as the night attack was being made over a veritable maze of secondary roads.

By 0200, 12 August the advance guard, consisting of C Companies, had secured a bridge intact, crossed the Sarthe River on the St. Georges-Les Menil Brout road, and established a defensive position north of the river. The main body closed up behind the advance guard. The I & R platoon of the tank battalion was sent back to bring up vehicles that had become lost or confused by the unmarked, complicated road net. This advance was pushed during the night in order to secure the bridge over the Sarthe River. The command became scattered and elements lost, but the Commanding General would not halt to reassemble his troops until the bridge had been secured.

CCA moved at first shooting light on the 12th. Although opposed by numerous road blocks defended by tanks and AT guns, progress was rapid and Sees was entered at 1000. The command, as a result of its rapid movement, enjoyed complete surprise. An entire enemy battalion was captured in column on the road. Sees was quickly mopped up but, at Mortree, heavy resistance was met. Four enemy tanks and two AT guns were destroyed, and our forces lost a number of tanks themselves. The 34th passed through the 46th at about 1400 and proceeded about 1 Km from Mortree before a mined and defended roadblock was encountered. This was reduced by about 1600 and the advance resumed. The approach to Argentan was made over gently rolling, open terrain planted largely in wheat. The assaulting echelon deployed on a wide front and, with continuous fighter cover, moved on

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Argentan at 12 MPH. Numerous tanks, infantry, and AT gun road blocks were encountered and destroyed by the massed fire of the deployed formation.

By 1900 CCA was into that portion of Argentan south of the Orne River. The Commanding General observed hostile guns in position within the town and, not wishing to become heavily engaged so late in the day, halted the advance and withdrew to the high ground overlooking the town. By 2200 all-around security had been established and the entire command gathered within it. The 34th was ordered to patrol during the night to determine if the bridge was intact and to prepare to attack on order the next morning. Patrols were sent into the town during the night. They reported the intense activity of hostile tanks and infantry. The 47th and 400th interdicted Argentan and its approaches throughout the afternoon and night and fired on the emplaced AA guns previously observed.

During the 12th and 13th August, prisoners were captured from the 2nd SS Pz Div, 6th Para Div, 9th Pz Div, 9th SS Pz Div, 10th SS Pz Div, 12th SS Pz Div, 17th SS Pz Gren Div, 130th Pz Lehr Div and scattered Service and GHQ units. A total of 35 enemy tanks were destroyed by the command or its supporting air this day.

At 0700, under cover of a ground haze, the 34th began to improve its position and move to attack positions. The haze lifted and intense tank and anti tank fire was encountered on the outskirts of the town and seven M-4 tanks were lost. The commander of the 34th Tank Battalion, Lt Col Thomas Bartel, was seriously wounded and evacuated. Major Glen L. Foote, Executive Officer of the 34th Tank Bn, assumed command. Before this happened it was planned to envelop with the 46th and make a coordinated attack with both forces.

After this damaging blow, the attacking elements reorganized and again started for an entrance into the town from the south meeting everywhere bitter

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resistance from tanks and AT guns massed at the outskirts of the city.

Supporting fighter-bombers were having little effect on this enemy resistance as the tanks and AT guns were concealed in and among buildings of the built-up area around the marshalling yard in the southern part of the city making it almost impossible to locate their positions.

At 1200 the 629th TD Bn was attached to CCA. The Combat Command reserve was sent around the right flank with a view to enveloping the resistance in the town. This force succeeded in reaching the Argentan-Laigle road, which was immediately blocked by TDs and tanks. The artillery continued to interdict all roads of the Argentan network up to 8 kilometers north of Argentan. Supporting fighter-bombers bombed and strafed enemy columns streaming toward the gap. The air and artillery of CCA had a field day on this and succeeding days as the road net west and north of Argentan was clogged with enemy personnel, vehicles, and tanks, all visible and within range.

The enemy continued to resist violently our efforts to get north of Argentan using at least thirty-five Mark V tanks and an estimated infantry division (331st). At this point orders were changed and rechanged. Orders were received to withdraw all elements from Argentan. This was done. Orders were then received to seize Argentan and push up the Argentan-Falaise road to join the Canadians. This order was cancelled after the command had moved to the attack. Orders were then received to bypass Argentan and push north to join the Canadians. This order was cancelled before it could be executed.

All this time our air and artillery were shooting targets in the vicinity of Argentan. TDs and tanks were engaging targets from their attack positions. One entire column surrendered to the fighter-bombers by means of white flags. An order was dropped by liaison plane to the column commander directing him to march his column to Rodou for surrender. This column did and surrendered with

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a strength of 17000 to the 90th Infantry Division after our relief in the area.

Orders were received at 2000 that the 2nd French would relieve CCA in its present position, CCA to move to a position vicinity Martin de Chan, some 4 kilometers south of Argentan, prepared to block any enemy movement east and south of the city. By 2130, 13 August CCA was manning its assigned position. At 2200 the 2nd French attacked Argentan from the south and west. They were repulsed with heavy losses from intense tank, AT gun, artillery, and mortar fire. Our artillery fired throughout the night, the light of burning enemy vehicles in many instances enabling us to pick out additional targets. At 0500, 14 August, orders were received to withdraw all patrols from Argentan and to notify the 2nd French Armored Division to do likewise. This was done.

At 1150, orders were received from division that CCA was relieved of the mission of blocking enemy movement south of Argentan and was to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of Alemanches without delay. The Commanding General pointed out that Corps TDs had not arrived as planned and therefore were not in position; that the 2nd French Armored Division was too weak in tanks, infantry, and artillery to do the job; that our artillery must continue to block the town, as no other artillery was in the vicinity; that any artillery left in position would have to be protected, and that the enemy infantry were constantly trying to infiltrate back into our positions, 20 having been killed or captured in the artillery area alone on the night of 13-14 August. The Division Commander then instructed General Regnier to move as soon as he felt the situation permitted, in no case to move later than 2400. CCA moved out at 1545 and by 2015, was closed in the assigned area. The 629th TD Bn was in position before CCA moved.

IV. - DREUX.

At 2330 orders were received to be prepared for distant movement to the

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east at 0700, 15 August. Later the CCA liaison officer arrived with orders that the division had been assigned the mission of seizing the line of the Seine River between Meulan and Vernon. The Division Commander directed that the division would attack with Combat Commands abreast, CCB on the right and CCR on the left. CCA was in reserve and was to follow CCR. The axis of advance was to be through and around Dreux.

During the day 15 August, the 90th Infantry Division took up positions around Argentan and, at 1530, the Division moved out in the direction of Dreux. The enemy resistance to CCB and CCR was generally light in the advance to Dreux, and by 0835, 17 August, the entire division was closed in an assembly position astride Dreux holding a bridgehead south of Dreux. CCA spent the remainder of 17 August on maintenance and rehabilitation. At 2200 a warning order was received from division to be prepared for combat operations on the 18 August.

V. - BLOCKING THE SEINE ESCAPE ROUTES 18 - 24 AUGUST.

A. The enemy.

Early in the action enemy dispositions and intentions became clear. Information came chiefly from PWs and captured documents. A rather confused picture resulted from PW identifications alone because of the many stragglers encountered. The enemy, after losing Dreux, sought to keep open his escape routes across the Seine in the area of Lisieux. To do this he disposed the 17th GAF Division (principally the 47 Infantry Regiment) along both banks of the Eure initially facing west. Eastward he deployed what was at first thought to be the 2 SS Panzer Division supported by elements of 17 GAF Division from Pacy sur Eure to Vernon. From papers and diaries captured the morning of 20 August it was learned that 2 SS Panzer Division had received tank replacements in Paris 8 days previously. It arrived at Dreux on 16 August too late to save

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the town and retreated north. Tank strength was indicated as about 100. This panzer outfit later turned out to be a provisional unit made up of elements of 1 SS, 2 SS, and 21 Panzer Divisions. The 47th Infantry Regiment, as the operation progressed, began to reorient itself to face south and then east. Principal resistance to CCA came from a combined Task Force Wahl-Franke made up of elements of 17 SS Panzer Grenadier Division, 744 Infantry Regiment of 711 Infantry Division, 1 SS, 2 SS, 4 SS, 12 SS Panzer Divisions, 7 SS Mtn Div, plus scattered AA and replacement units with a total strength of some 3500 infantry, 30 tanks, 5 AT guns, and 12 assault guns. This task force was first encountered south of La Heuniere and continued in contact throughout the operation to north of Champenard. Thereafter resistance was chiefly from battle groups of Hitler Jugend with some tanks and from flak units defending the crossings at Les Andaleys.

B. Action.

1. CCA operated under control of the 5th Armored Division.

2. Troop list with attachments:

- Hq & Hq Co, CCA
- 34 Tank Bn
- 46 Armd Inf Bn
- A Co, 22nd Armd Engr Bn
- A Co, 628 TD Bn, attached 18 Aug.
- A Tr, 85 Cav Recon Sq, Mes, attached 18-24 August
- 47 Armd FA Bn, direct support 18-20 Aug; attached 20 Aug.
- 400 Armd FA Bn, attached 20-25 August
- C Battery, 387 AAA Bn
- A Co, 75 Med Bn
- Det A Co, 127 Ord Mtn Bn
- Task Force Gianlardo - attached about 1500 23 Aug. Detached after capture of Heudebouville 24 August
- 15 Armd Inf Bn (less 1 Co)
- Plt of D Co, 81 Tk Bn
- Plt of 628 TD Bn

3. Mission.

On 18 August the 5th Armored Division, then in XV Corps with the 79th

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Infantry Division, received the mission of advancing northeast to a position west of Mantes Gassicourt to prevent enemy movement on roads east of the Seine and barge traffic on the Seine. The Division moved with two combat commands abreast, OCA on the left, into the area between the Eure and the Seine Rivers. 85th Cav Recon Sq (-) was to reconnoiter the line Pacy sur Eure to Bennieres sur Seine to protect the left flank of the division. CCR was echeloned to our left rear to protect the left flank of the Corps. CCA was halted on the 19th to remain south of a corps artillery fire line. On 20 August CCA received the mission of advancing along the ridge line between the Eure and the Seine to block crossings over the Seine from 270909 south to Les Andeleys by physical occupation of the road near vicinity Heudebeville.

4. Narrative.

CCA moved 181300 August from its assembly area southwest of Dreux in one column with advance guard, main body, and rear guard. The order of march is given in the S-3 journal for the day. The command moved through Havalu, La Haye, across the Vesgre River at Buchieres, and thence to the valley of the Eure at La Chaussée D'Ivry. First contact, light machine gun fire, was made north of this town. By 2130 the command was closed in the vicinity Villegate (4263). Some action took place in the town. The advance guard surprised the enemy here; destroyed a half track, Volkswagon, and a 150-mm howitzer; killed the occupants of the vehicles, and captured 8 enemy elsewhere in the town.

CCA remained in place on the 19th in order to stay south of a corps artillery fire line, 440735 - Heulbee Cocherie - 252723. Our counter reconnaissance screen reported considerable activity in and around Pacy sur Eure and the 47 FA fired into this town destroying occasional vehicles. At about 1900 some 18-20 tanks attacked from the north. This attack was broken up by air, artillery and tank

SECRET

REC-100

destroyers. Six tanks were knocked out by the combined fires of CCA and CCB.

In accordance with the latest Division order CCA moved north at 0830 20 August. The chosen objective was the high ground south of Heudebouville. The 47th and 400 FA Battalions were attached at 1147 and the 202nd FA Battalion (155 How), moving with and in rear of CCA, was made available to reinforce the fires of our attached artillery. The command moved in one column with an advance guard, main body, and rear guard following generally the road GC 75. Order of march is given in the S-3 journal for the day. TF Wahl-Franke was engaged from Douains to La Heuniere. By nightfall the advance guard had reached St. Vincent des Bois after enveloping La Heuniere to the west. The main body reached a position south of La Heuniere.

Action for the day was in the nature of a meeting engagement with the advance guard heavily engaged from about 1100 to nightfall. With air and artillery support the advance guard moved against mounting resistance to reach, by 1400, a position about 1 Km south of La Heuniere. Here they were stopped by well-sited tanks, AT and machine guns commanding the approaches to La Heuniere. Air, artillery, and tank destroyers were employed and by 1920 some of the enemy guns had been forced out of their commanding positions. A concentration of tanks outside of and just to the east of the town defied all our efforts to move them. In addition, the enemy was in the woods outside of La Heuniere vicinity 393698 and very aggressive in using bazookas and in infiltrating into our lines. An unsuccessful attempt was made to envelop to the east by means of a defiladed road. This attempt, however, resulted in the loss of several tanks by fire from enemy tanks concealed in the woods vicinity 405700. A route to the west was then reconnoitered and the advance guard moved to the north of La Heuniere by way of a defiladed route west of the town. They were again engaged as they came abreast

REC-100

49

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of the town, destroyed an enemy half track, and reached the main road from St. Vincent des Bois to La Heuniere. The purpose of this maneuver was to permit us to attack La Heuniere from the rear the next day. Our losses this day were 3 tanks and 3 TDs. Lt Col Hernandez, commanding the 625th TD Battalion, was killed in front of La Heuniere by fire from his own guns as he was directing it. Our air claimed 12 tanks destroyed.

At about 0600 21 August Major Burton moved north toward La Heuniere with one platoon of A Co 46th Infantry. His orders were to reestablish contact with the advance guard and continue the attack to the north. The advance guard attacked La Heuniere from the north. By 1100 Major Burton had been wounded and his force was up to the town encountering tanks and machine guns. The advance guard was into La Heuniere from the north and, under protection of the town, was able to bring its tanks close enough to effectively engage the enemy tanks and chase them away. Lt Col Case, then Executive Officer of CCA, assumed command of the 46th and moved up with the remainder of A Company. His orders were to move on La Heuniere, take command of Major Burton's force, and mop up the town and the woods to the west. By late afternoon the area was cleared and the command advanced by way of St. Vincent des Bois to Mercey. Here Lt Col Case was wounded by friendly artillery fire as he moved in to take the town. He had called for an artillery preparation but moved in before it came. Because of the time lag in communication with the medium battalion the fire could not be called off in time. Lt Col Gilson arrived during the night to command the 46th. By 2235 the advance guard was probing the defenses of Champenard and the remainder of the Combat Command was assembled just south of St. Colombe pres Vernes. The 46th had reached the outskirts of Champenard by way of a winding road through a deep defile. The enemy was active along this road and in the woods on each side. A

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number of the enemy were killed in the 46th's column and later in their bivouac. The Commanding General had halted the remainder of the command south of the RJ at 345749 and did not permit them to enter the defile. He then sent a Plt of light tanks (3 at this time) north up the main road from the RJ and then northwest into the open ground north of Champenard in an effort to find a suitable route whereby the dangerous defile could be avoided. This Plt, on returning, was fired on from near a chateau at 342762. Supporting aircraft claimed 14 enemy tanks knocked out this day.

Plans were made on the night of 21-22 August for TF Gilson to attack just before daylight to seize the high ground north of Champenard whereupon the combat command would reorganize and continue the attack to the final objective, Heudebouville.

TF Gilson moved at 0600 on the 22nd and took Champenard without opposition. Beyond Champenard, however, the enemy was dug in vicinity of an underground radar station about 1500 yards to the north. This force was protected by tanks and AT guns disposed, for the most part, in the woods to the west and north of the open ground. TF Gilson moved out of Champenard and immediately lost 2 tanks and three half tracks to enemy tank fire from the woods to the northwest. At approximately the same time the platoon of light tanks attached to Hq CCA moved to the right to reconnoiter again the route they had taken the night before. Enemy tanks concealed near the chateau opened fire and quickly knocked out 3 of our light tanks. Twelve crew members were wounded, and one medical 1/4-ton was destroyed and two medics killed trying to evacuate the wounded.

Plans were changed to send infantry dismounted to clear the fringes of the woods bordering on the open ground to the north of Champenard, the tanks to assemble south of Champenard prepared to attack across the open when the infantry had completed its job. B Company, under Captain Eland with some light and some

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medium tanks and with excellent artillery support from the 400th FA, moved north from the RJ and cleared the woods to the chateau. Infantry bazooka teams drove five enemy tanks from these woods. The tanks withdrew north across the open toward the woods vicinity 345788 engaged by every gun we could bring to bear. One of these tanks was captured intact and the other four were destroyed later in the day at the position to which they had withdrawn. Captain Eland then attacked north across the open ground, swung left and took the fortified position from the enemy. His force was engaged in mopping up enemy dug in in wheat fields north and east of the radar station when CCB attacked from the east, passing between Champenard and Captain Eland, and then swinging north to engage the populated area northeast of the fortified position. The result of this operation was that CCB lost two medium tanks and one light tank to enemy fire and fired into our CP and into C Company then moving west through the woods from Champenard. C Company halted in place about 1 Km south and west of Champenard and arrangements were made for CCB to withdraw immediately to its own zone. This was only partially done and the assault echelon of CCB remained in our zone until the next morning. Throughout the day air and artillery were used with the result that a total of 7 enemy tanks were disposed of and an estimated 100 of the enemy killed. The delay caused by CCB, together with the clever and stubborn defense offered by the enemy, accounted for the small gains registered this day. It is believed however, that all the tanks and most of the infantry remaining in TF Wable-Franke were destroyed in this action.

On the 23rd C Company continued through the woods on the west, B Company cleared the south edge of the woods to their north to the main Gaillen highway, and the remainder of the command moved across the open ground north of Champenard. At this point A/46th and D/34 reverted to control of the 34th and the 34th led moving cross country in semi-deployed formation along the ridge line toward

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HEUDEBOUVILLE

Heudebouville. CCA moved against scattered resistance until, at about 1700, it came up against an estimated battalion of infantry with tanks on line Les Quizes-Ailly-Gournay. An enemy armored column west of the Eure moving northeast toward Gaillon and a column of horse drawn artillery moving east from Heudebouville were hit by artillery and air. The horse drawn column was destroyed. On our right TF Giarlande of CCB moved from vicinity of St Pierre de Bailles toward Gaillon to clear the woods as far as the main road southwest from Gaillon. Upon reaching this objective the TF was to pass to the control of CCA for use in the attack on Heudebouville. By 1550 TF Giarlando had reached its objective and established liaison with CCA.

At about 1800 B Cos married and 1st platoon of A Company 22nd Engineers, under Captain Bland of the 46th, passed through Gournay and attacked Fontaine-Bellenger. A large enemy force was dug in in a wheat field and young orchard between the two towns. Captain Bland attacked supported by artillery time fire, overran the enemy, and took Fontain Bellenger. Six hundred enemy dead were counted in the wheat fields. Captain Bland then swung left across the open ground to the west of Fontaine Bellenger to probe enemy defenses employing AA guns along the line Gruchet-Ingremere-Vironvay. TF Bland approached this position in deployed formation; but the enemy, on signal, laid down a final protective line with AA guns of 40-mm and larger with the result that, when B Companies topped the crest line, a number of tanks and half tracks were immediately knocked out. This force was ordered back to its starting point, meaning Fontaine Bellenger. Captain Bland interpreted this starting point as having been Ailly and withdrew to there for the night. During the night our artillery fired on the AA guns we had encountered and interdicted the roads around Heudebouville.

HEUDEBOUVILLE

53

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On the next day, 24 August, CCA reached its final objective. The plan of attack as contained in the field order issued at 1100 involved a double envelopment of the forces defending Heudebouville. TF Giarlando was to advance on the left through Gruchet and Ingremer; TF Bland was to advance on the right through Gournay and Fontaine Bellenger; while a third force under Lt Col Gilson was to make a holding attack in the center. In addition a force of medium tanks of the 34th supported TF Gierlando. The weather was rainy and the resulting mud severely hampered our movements, but by 1335 Gournay and Fontaine Bellenger had been taken. Gruchet was taken by 1350. At 1400 TF Bland cut the road net leading through Heudebouville thus accomplishing CCA's mission. At 1700 Ingremer was cleared and by 1830 Captain Bland had occupied Heudebouville.

In more detail, it was planned that the attacking forces would advance close to Heudebouville and then take the town with infantry supported closely by tank fire. TF Bland, on the right, moved very rapidly and, as mentioned previously, cut the main road from Heudebouville at 1400. On the left, however, TF Gierlando was very slow and did not take Ingremer until 1700 and permitted many of the enemy to escape. This task force was delayed once when its supporting tanks fired into its ranks. TF Bland, rather than wait longer for other forces to come up, attacked and took Heudebouville at 1830. The AA guns observed the day before were found destroyed by our artillery or abandoned by the enemy.

Our losses for this operation with 66 WIA, 20 KIA.

Vehicular losses were 7 medium and 4 light tanks, 3 TDs, 4 1/4-ton trucks, and one 1-ton trailer.

This operation was marked, on the enemy side, by extremely tough, aggressive, and well directed fighting. TF Wahl-Franke fought fiercely for important terrain and had to be thoroughly beaten before it would back up. Often, however, this

54

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force, though beaten back during the day, infiltrated into our positions during the night. After the destruction of TF Wahl-Franke the specially organized Hitler Jugend units fought not as cleverly but showed no disposition to surrender and were killed in large numbers. The terrain over which CCA advanced, a narrow ridge line between two rivers, did not permit of any maneuver other than a shallow envelopment.

On the friendly side this operation was marked by two outstanding deficiencies. No definite boundaries had been prescribed between CCA and CCB with the result that there was unnecessary interference between the two commands. Throughout the entire operation medium reinforcing artillery was very poorly handled. CCA was halted on the 19th to remain south of a corps artillery fire line. This robbed us of any element of surprise and permitted the enemy 24 additional hours to build up in front. We had already been engaged and disclosed our intentions as there was but one direction in which we could go. Thereafter the artillery was geared to operations of infantry rather than armor. Medium artillery was not considered in the same class as light artillery as it should have been. The medium artillery insisted on firing only prearranged fires in accordance with a schedule submitted hours in advance. It was, therefore, not possible for CCA to use medium artillery except at night. This was because of two things; one, Division Artillery did not provide rapid and flexible communication means with supported units; and two, armor could not so accurately predict its position as could infantry. These two factors combined with the result that either our medium artillery fires were too far in advance to do much good; or, in the other case when we advanced faster than predicted, either the artillery was out of range or else we were forced to halt by fires which could not be called off.

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VI - DISENGAGEMENT.

CCA, at Heudebouville, disengaged and moved south on the night 24-25 August. Orders were received from division to be south of the Pacy-Bonnières highway by 250600Z. A Troop, 85th Cav Recon Sq was left at Heudebouville to hold until relieved. By 1100 25 August the command had closed in an assembly area northwest of Anet vicinity Oulins. CCA moved again at 1400 through Breval, Longnes, and Septeuil to an assembly area Vic St. Martin des Champs (6049).

The command remained in this area for 4 days engaged in resupply and maintenance. Tracks were replaced on light tanks and engines were replaced in medium tanks insofar as supply permitted. On the 27th we were alerted for a move through Paris on the 28th, but this was cancelled to permit continued maintenance. During this period the division was assigned to V Corps of First Army.

CCA was not in contact after disengaging at Heudebouville.

VII. SEIZING THE CROSSINGS OVER THE AISNE RIVER.

At 0600, 31 August CCA moved toward Paris with the mission of passing through the 4th Infantry Division east of the city and continuing the attack northeast to seize crossings over the Aisne River in its assigned zone. The column moved through Thoiry, Neauphile, Versailles, and thence through the southern edge of Paris. The column halted near Claye-Souilly to pick up the attached 629th TD Bn. Progress through Paris was slow as the rejoicing populace impeded our progress. East of Paris CCA divided to march by two routes and by 2330 was in bivouac; the left column near Lagny le Sec; the right column, under Major Burton was near Villers St. Genast, and the remainder of the command was in the vicinity of Nantouillet. There was no contact with the enemy on this date.

Early on the 31 August CCA resumed its march in two columns, TF Burton

SECRET

on the right and CCA(-) on the left. We passed through the 4th Infantry at 1150. The left column passed through Nanteuil, and Morienvil making first contact with the enemy infantry, artillery and AT guns just west of Morienvil at about 1700. Lead elements of the left column bivouaced in this area the night 31 August - 1 September while the remainder of CCA(-) went off the road north of Crepy.

Meanwhile TF Burton on the right advanced rapidly and reached the Aisne River vicinity Fonteney at 1430. Major Burton reconnoitered the river line for a bridge on which to cross. Light enemy resistance was met near Vic - sur - Aisne, and a bridge was taken intact at Pommiers. TF Burton crossed here unopposed at 1815 and assembled for the night 7 kilometers to the north at Epagny.

COMMENTS

The rapid advance of CCA throughout the month of August was made possible only by the magnificent support given us by fighter bombers. Up until Heudebouville aircraft were overhead constantly during daylight hours. It was normal that CCA was menaced by greatly superior forces employing tanks which we could not effectively engage. Time and time again fighter bombers engaged and destroyed tanks immediately to our front and permitted us to advance again. When not required for close support the aircraft ranged far to our front and flanks and intercepted and destroyed large forces moving to block our advance. Supporting aircraft were, at the same time, our reconnaissance, our counter-reconnaissance, and our heaviest and most powerful antitank weapon.

RESTRICTED

56

ANNEX #1
Action Against
Enemy Report #1.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5th Armored Division.

WOUNDED OR INJURED IN ACTION.

Month of August, 1944.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
34th Tk Bn	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	4	9	3	7	7	0	0	0	0	0
46th Arm'd Inf Bn	0	0	0	0	1	3	11	8	6	24	12	10	17	4	1	8	0	0
47th Arm'd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	2	1	0
A/22d Arm'd Engr Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A/75th Arm'd Med Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	0
Det/127th Ord Maint Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
85th Cav Recon Sq	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
628th TD Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
400th Arm'd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
387th AAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	5	4	21	15	10	36	15	19	26	5	2	21	2	1
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Total W.I.A. for August				
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4				
34th Tk Bn	1	5	4	10	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75				
46th Arm'd Inf Bn	2	3	11	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	120				
47th Arm'd FA Bn	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10				
A/22d Arm'd Engr Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7				
A/75th Arm'd Med Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6				
Det/127th Ord Maint Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1				
85th Cav Recon Sq	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	12				
628th TD Bn	0	7	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	15				
400th Arm'd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1				
387th AAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1				
629th TD Bn	(Replaced 628th TD Bn. August 31)												3					
TOTAL	5	15	17	14	6	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	255				

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99

ANNEX #3,
Action Against
Enemy Report #1.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

VEHICULAR LOSSES.

Month of August, 1944.

Tank, medium M-4	.	.	.	.	.	.	26
Tank, light M-5	.	.	.	.	.	.	5
AG, 105 How.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Carriage, 105-mm How, M-7	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
Car, Arm'd. M-8	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Half Track	9
Truck, 3/4-Ton	1
Truck, 1/4-Ton	10
Trailer, Ammo. M-10	2
Trailer, 1-Ton, Cargo	2

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ANNEX #2,
Action Against
Enemy Report #1.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION

KILLED IN ACTION.

Month of August, 1944.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34th Tk Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	0
46th Armd Inf Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	2	9	0	9	4	0	0	0	0	0
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	K.I.A. Total for August				
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1				
34th Tk Bn	0	1	1	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27				
46th Armd Inf Bn	0	0	4	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	21				
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3				
TOTAL	0	1	7	8	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	52				

1-2-7
69

RESTRICTED

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ANNEX #4,
Action Against
Enemy Report #1.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION

ENEMY MATERIEL DESTROYED OR CAPTURED.

Month of August, 1944.

CCA

Air Controlled or
Requested by CCA.

14 (Type unknown).

Tank, Mk IV	.	.	.	.	53
Tank, Mk V	.	.	.	.	36
Tank, Mk VI	.	.	.	.	6
Half Track	.	.	.	.	46
Trucks	.	.	.	.	55
AT Guns, Towed, 75 to 88 mm	.	.	.	.	34
AT Guns, SP	.	.	.	.	12
AR Guns, SP	.	.	.	.	29
AA Guns, Towed	.	.	.	.	16
Guns, 105 mm, towed	.	.	.	.	4
Guns, 150 mm, towed	.	.	.	.	5
Staff Cars	.	.	.	.	19
Wagons, Horsedrawn	.	.	.	.	13
Motorcycles	.	.	.	.	10
Miscellaneous Vehicles (Type unknown)	.	.	.	.	117
Machine Guns	.	.	.	.	26

450-500 (Argentan Area
of Falaise Gap,
XIX TAC)

NOTE: These figures are observed results only. It is believed that additional materiel was destroyed, particularly by air support, but no figures are available due to unobserved results.

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ANNEX #5,
Action Against
Enemy Report #1.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION
REQUESTS FOR AND RESULTS OF AIR MISSIONS

Month of August, 1944.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>TO CCA</u>	<u>FR CCA</u>	<u>INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.</u>	<u>ACTION TAKEN</u>
	FR 5 AD	TO 5 AD		
081255B			About 20 Arm'd Vehs Lec 3/4 mi NE Hwy and RR Crossing at 462618 moving SW. Friendly troops at 462618. Time limit 1500B. Estimated TOT 1320B.	
1318B			Air unable to locate your target, they bombed other targets your vicinity.	
1342B				
1528B			Request air Rcn to area on E Le Mans, reporting any enemy movement or installations.	
1625B			G-2 air Rcn reports Neg, except some tanks 20 mi. E LeMans. Air is continuing Rcn.	
091928B			Enemy tanks at V434808 defending town, alternate target enemy personnel and Vehs in town.	
2215B			Unable to contact air for your request. Do you have any for tomorrow.	
101020B			Air Rcn and attack enemy armor known to be paralleling left flank.	
1035B			Re 101020B AR Msg, give grid coordinates of known enemy positions.	No answer Recd.
1200B			Request air Rcn roads leading west and north from Mamers.	Nothing Obsvd.
1425B			From S-3 Air CCA - Targets of opportunity N of Dangeul. One tank on CR 1-3/4 mi S of Dangeul. Rcn to N entire road.	Could not Lec target.
111347B			Enemy tanks moving W out of St Remy du Plain.	
1549B			At 1200B bombed and destroyed 88mm S of St Remy. At 1400B bombed and strafed St Remy, probably destroying enemy tanks and vehicles. At 1520B bombed and strafed vehicles leaving St Remy to W. 43 vehicles definitely destroyed. At 1545B attacking enemy troops in Foret Persigne, will continue to support when available.	
2050B			Air support very successful, several more enemy Vehs destroyed. Request air cover for tomorrow as numerous as today's.	
121135B			Now believed 30 Tiger tanks in Foret De Couvers 6 mi. N Alencon. 16th Pz Regt CP in Foret at 327948.	Unable to contact planes.
1115B			Request more air support. Enemy tank column on our left flank.	

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REQUESTS FOR AND RESULTS OF AIR MISSIONS

Month of August, 1944.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>TO CCA</u>	<u>FR CCA</u>	<u>INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.</u>	<u>ACTION TAKEN</u>
	FR 5 AD	TO 5 AD		
			121130B Big bombing mission with oil bombs scheduled for Forêt de Persigne Z4507 probably can be executed on Forêt de Couvers more profitably. Air Rcn trying to determine exact locations now. German Arty known to be in position at V300945.	
1240B 1833B			Bombing mission Forêt de Persigne cancelled. You now have maximum air cover available.	
			130855B Town of Argentan U2617 containing enemy troops and guns. Known gun position at U261183.	Attacked and hit NRO.
			1100B Arty emplacement 3 guns at U2395 to U21, 90 to 100 Yds E of CR. AT gun at CR.	Planes could not locate.
			1145B From 1st CR on road S from Occagneuse fly NE along secondary road for distance of 500 Yds, bomb and strafe to a depth of 75 Yds each side of road. Target, guns and personnel.	Unable to contact planes.
			1150B Ammo dump at U238224 located 75 Yds NW of road. Strafe road to junction.	Unable to contact planes.
			1152B Light AA Btry 4 guns probably 20mm at U232216 in center of field W of woods.	Unable to contact planes.
			1300B Several tanks at 256177, alternate target Argentan and road to NW.	Couldn't see tanks, hit alternate Tgt. NRO.
1355B			Another flight coming in on same target.	Didn't see anything in Argentan. Hit T's of O to NW.
			1736B Set net working well. Request that you contact planes for Rcn on roads NW and W out of Argentan for Arty Btry.	Planes Atkd T'S of O. NRO.
			1834B Large Panzer unit headed N out of Carrouges toward Argentan, also on roads N and NW out of Argentan U267185.	See Msgs below, results for day.
1920B			From XIX Tac - Alencen, Argentan air Rcn results; 24 bombs on target, 2 motor trucks destroyed, 8 damaged at U2301, 2 tanks, 14 motor trucks, 2 busses destroyed, 9 motor trucks damaged at F1297.	
1940B			From XIX Tac - Air Rcn Argentan area results; 400 to 500 enemy Vehs burned or blown up by dive bombing and strafing. Destroyed 1 flak battery, 4 MG nests. 1 belly tank dropped on one, two trucks exploded and set fire. All enemy withdrawal heading NE. TCT 1000B.	
1940B			From XIX Tac - Air cover TOT 1125B; 23 bombs on targets. 16 bombs on Btry S of Argentan. 7 bombs on woods at Montgarault U2019, one truck and trailer destroyed.	

- 2 - **RESTRICTED**

63

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REQUESTS FOR AND RESULTS OF AIR MISSIONS.

Month of August, 1944.

TIME	TO CGA	FR CGA	INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.	ACTION TAKEN
	FR 5 AD.	TO 5 AD		
161150B			Recn and attack reliable report German CP at Picherieniere Q721349 and 50 Tks in NE section Forêt de Bonzeoulins astride improved road Vic. Q7135. Reported only remaining resistance this area. Mission on way.	
1240B			1320B Suggest as alternate or secondary target. Reported AT guns and 100 SS troops at 752419 Rairur Rile.	NRO Unable to be flown. Planes could not locate. Unable to contact planes. Air not available.
			1455B Immediate recn ready to attack enemy Arty Bn within 10000 yds due W our position 750340. Firing our Vic. 1730B 13 enemy tanks Vic Laigle Q785425, moving SE along MS18 and IC58 toward Crulai Q809360.	
			191445B Tanks moving in small groups from Pacy-sur-Eure R3666 NE on main road to Vernon. Arty firing on 2 tanks reported 1 Km SE Pacy-sur-Eure.	
			1855B 18 tanks moving S from 418678 toward area Villegats.	No air available.
			202105B Air reports 12 tanks destroyed. Liaison planes confirm 6, but not all observed. Support excellent. Relay following AR mission for us. 18 enemy tanks camouflaged in woods R375650. Friendly troops nearby with red panels. Have planes contact Fieldfare, urgent. Attack without delay.	
211352B			1405B Bluebird leader on way to your target. Will contact you. 1437B Target bombed by two flights. Bluebird leader reports several fires burning.	
1445B			Request you repeat mission. Several tanks remain.	No more planes available.
			1600B As of 1600B two missions attacked two tanks both crippled but probably not destroyed. These missions sent to CCR with unknown results.	

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COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

PARTIAL LIST OF PRISONERS OF WAR TAKEN.

ANNEX #6,
Action Against
Enemy Report #1.

Month of August, 1944.

DATE	NUMBER	UNIT IDENTIFICATIONS
03	1	91st Inf Div.
04	1	265 Inf Div.
05	18	5 Para Div.
06	9	2 Para Div. - 748 Inf Regt.
07	15	842 AA Bn. - 195 LS Regt. - 243 Inf Div.
08	50	
09	17	742 AA Bn. - 460 Inf Div. - 196 Security Regt.
10	57	10 Pz Div. - 9 Pz Div. - 116 Pz Div. - 10 SS Pz Div.
12	275	116 Pz Div. - 2 SS Pz Div. - 10 SS Pz Div.
15	14	708 Mt. Div.
18	20	243 Inf Div. - 1 SS Pz Div. - 17 SS Pz Gr Div.
22	52	17 GAF Div. - 17 SS Pz Gr Div. - 10 SS Pz Gr Div. - 3 Para Tng Regt. - 219 Inf Div. - 1 SS Pz Div. - 2 SS Pz Div. - CT Wahl-Franke, 1 Flak Div.
23	25	TF Wahl-Franke, 17 GAF Div. - 12 SS Pz Div.
24	30	12 SS Pz Div. - 1 SS Pz Div. - 9 SS Pz Div.
25	5	
26	21	
31	5	
	<u>221</u>	Date of capture and unit identifications not known.
	836	Cumulative total for month.

NOTE: In order to prevent delaying the advance, forward elements turned prisoners over to the FFI wherever possible. For this reason the total given does not give a complete picture. The FFI forces were invaluable in evacuating prisoners, securing captured villages, locating enemy groups, etc.,

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65

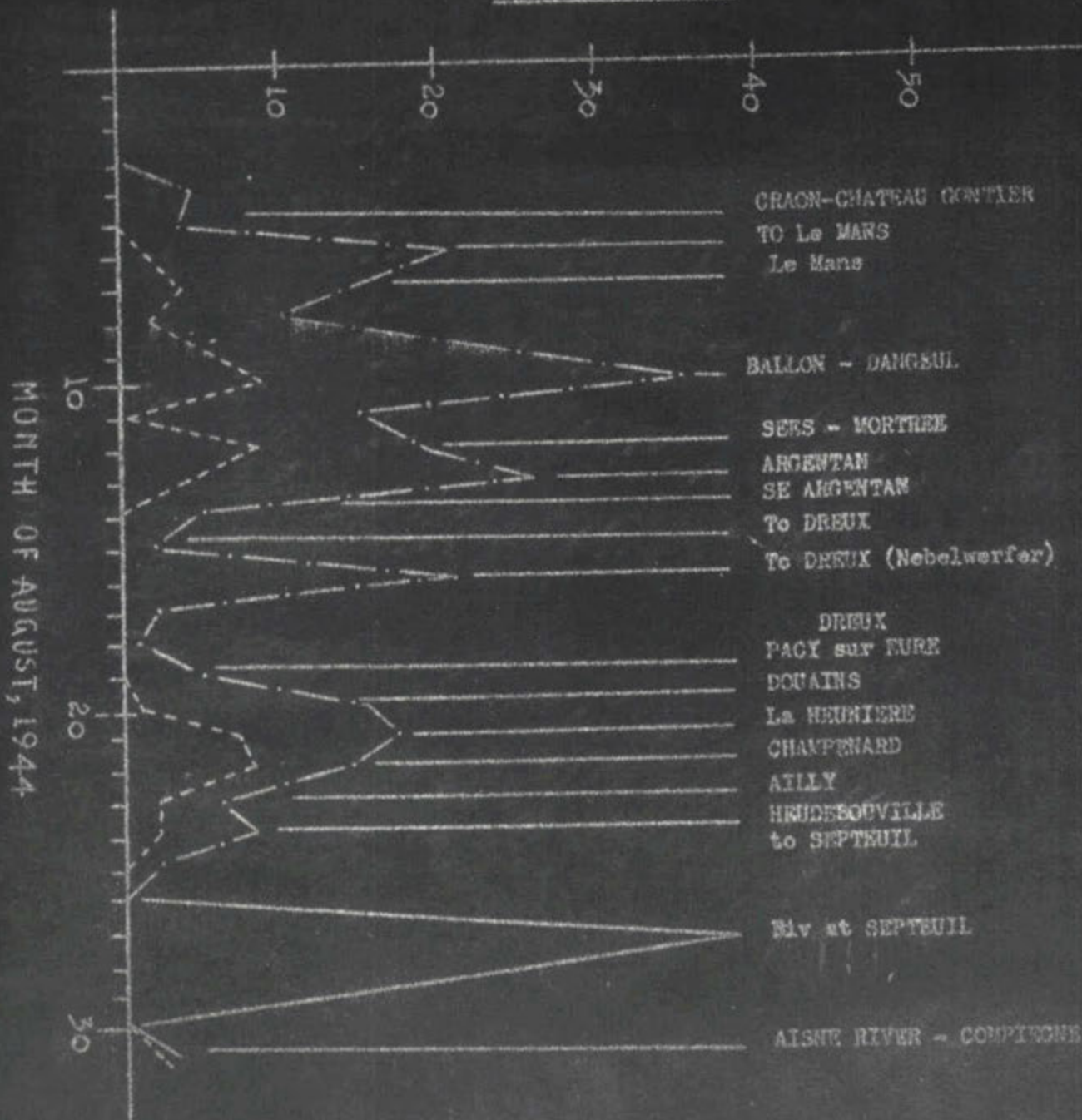
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ANNEX #7,
ACTION AGAINST
ENEMY REPORT #1.

CO BATTALION COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

Month of August, 1944.

CASUALTIES



LEGEND

..... WIA
----- KIA

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AUTH: CG, CCA, SAD
DATE: 22 Oct. 1944
REF: WGR WGR

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COMBAT COMMAND A
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION

ACTION AGAINST JAPANESE REPORT NO. 2
MONTH OF SEPTEMBER, 1944.

605-432

BRIGADIER GENERAL EUGENE M. REYNOLDS, U. S. ARMY,
COMMANDING.

9707

Incl 23

16

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**RESUME OF OPERATIONS
AND ENGAGEMENTS**

SEPTEMBER, 1944

PHASE OF OPERATIONS

- I Aisne river to Lanés**
- II across the Meuse**
- III Luxembourg**
- IV Defense of Luxembourg (South)**
- V Defense of Luxembourg (North)**

BATTLES

- Sedan**
- City Luxembourg**
- German Border Patrols**
- German Border Patrols**

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17

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REPORT OF ACTION AGAINST ENEMY

MONTH OF SEPTEMBER, 1944

I - AISNE RIVER TO ESNES.

On the last two days of the month of August IV Corps had passed through PARIS and attacked in a northeasterly direction toward the AISNE River and the FORAT de COMPIEGNE. The 4th and 28th Infantry Divisions initiated the move, attacking abreast, with the 4th on the right. On the 31st of August, the 5th Armored Division had passed through the infantry and in the evening Task Force Burton, right column of Combat Command A had crossed the AISNE River. The left column of the combat command, under Major Joseph W. Boxley, had halted at the southeast edge of the COMPIEGNE Forest, prepared to by-pass on the following morning enemy resistance on the edge of the forest.

During the night preceding the 1st of September General Regnier visited the command post of the 4th Infantry Division at NANTUIL-le-HAUDOIN, to the south to prepare plans for carrying out a new Corps order issued during the evening. The 4th Infantry Division with CCA attached was ordered to occupy the line MOU-AUZIN, a hundred miles to the north in BRUNOIE by dark 2 September. Task Force Burton which had crossed the AISNE at FOUMIENNE passed to the control of General Taylor, and with CT 22 of the 4th Infantry Division composed the right column. CCA reinforced by CT 12 formed the center force. CT 8 of the 4th Division was on the left. At 0650 the leading force of CA under Major Joseph W. Boxley, started over the open country east of the COMPIEGNE FOREST advancing toward ATTICHY on the AISNE. During the morning the column advanced against light opposition. Reaching the AISNE River at noon advance elements found only one railway bridge intact. Attempts to cross this bridge were made and some vehicles, including medium tanks, were put across.

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The crossing was not used however, and the combat command reassembled on the south side of the river in the afternoon on order of the 4th Division. A pontoon bridge was being thrown across the river at VIZ-sur-AISNE by CTR. At 1630 attachments to the combat command from the 4th Infantry Division reverted to the 4th Division control. At 1500 artillery fire had been received from north of the river. Requests to 5th Armored Division for bridge equipment were denied.

As the 5th Armored Division was moving up through the Bois de la Forêt to the left and Task Force Taylor had advanced ahead on the right, CCA waited in its assembly area for clearance to cross at VIC-sur-AISNE behind the 8th Combat Team. At 0330 the following morning forward elements of the command were crossing the bridge and moving north. Several buzz bombs passed over the column. At 0600 enemy machine gun fire was encountered in the vicinity of TRACY-le-MONT. Forward elements had entered LA-T-1'AYE, south of NOYON. The bridge was blown across the Oise Canal. Again a request for bridge equipment was denied by the 5th Armored Division. All bridges across the canal within our zone were reconnoitered and found to be blown or unfit for combat command load. Resistance was negligible in the vicinity.

At noon the combat command reverted to 5th Armored Division control, which had already passed in front of it, through NOYON, and which was bridging the SOMME at HAM. In the afternoon a Company, 22nd Armored Engineer Battalion commenced work on a ford across the OISE River. The work was carried on into the night and considerable difficulty was encountered. At one o'clock permission was requested by liaison officer and granted, to use the 4th Division bridge at WILLY. Immediately the route to the bridge was reconnoitered and the combat command commenced to move out to cross the OISE. By this time the country to the north had been cleared by the 5th Armored Division and 4th Infantry Division forces that had passed ahead of CCA on either side and the combat command marched north to reassemble with the division near ESNE, southeast of CAMBRAI. At 1600 the column closed in bivouac south of the ESNE. Notice was received from division to be ready to move out the following morning at 0700 to the southeast.

- 2 -

RESTRICTED

19

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Throughout the operations of the 1st and 2nd of September Task Force Burton, constituted as usual of the consolidated C Companies of the 48th Infantry Battalion and the 34th Tank Battalion and Headquarters Company, 48th Infantry Battalion, was attached to Task Force Taylor of the 4th Infantry Division. The rapid action of Major Burton's force in seizing a crossing of the AISNE River on the 31st of August was instrumental in enabling General Taylor to push rapidly to the north to his objective. From SPAGNY between the AISNE and the AISNE Canal, where the other elements caught up with Major Burton, his force spear-headed a rapid movement north. Enemy resistance was met at FOLEMBRAY at 1830 after crossing the AISNE Canal. Heavy fighting ensued and General Taylor broke his force into two columns, with Task Force Burton leading the left or west column on the axis DREUILLY-REBASTANT-QUIEVILLE-LECATEAU-VALENCIENNES. A position at FOLEMBRAY was overcome by dusk and the column moved northward, seeking a bridge over the OISE and AISNE rivers. Bridge after bridge was found blown as the column was forced to veer to the east of the proposed route, following the ~~course~~ of the SERRE. Near DREUILLY the column was shelled by enemy artillery from north of the OISE. At dawn 2 September the two columns rejoined south of CHACY. Bridges were completed at Chacy by 0830 and movement to the north was resumed. After crossing the HOCHE River the columns again split and the western force moved toward LECATEAU. Small arms fire was met at RECHAMPES, and the bridge across the AISNE Canal prepared for demolition, was secured before it could be blown. A flame gun and an armored vehicle were located north of RECHAMPES, and a Tiger tank and several vehicles, near RECHAMPES, as the advance continued. During the evening orders were received to halt the advance of the task force, and Major Burton's force assembled at RECHAMPES. During the night several vehicles and a self-propelled gun supported by infantry approached the rear blocks set up to defend the assembly area, and were destroyed. On the following afternoon 3 September the two columns assembled at RECHAMPES, and at 1700 Task Force Burton was released to Combat Command 4.

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TACTICAL DATA:

1. Enemy information: Enemy elements in contact: 18th CAS Division, elements 346th Inf. Division, artillery battalion of 12th SS Pz. Division, 147th Artillery Battalion of 47th Infantry Division. Armor: Groups of two or three tanks supported infantry rear guards.

2. Friendly information: Casualties: 20 IA, 2 L. Vehicular losses: 2 1/2 ton trucks. Air Support: Excellent. Weather: Cloudy and cool, visibility good.

II - APPROX. TIMELINE.

On the morning of 4 September the combat command received orders to move south and eastward to seize, with the division, crossings of the SAAR River. The objective for the days' march was an assembly area north of MERMONT in the A. M. Valley. Led by the I. & R. platoon of the 34th Tank Battalion, under Lt. Otto K. Georgi, the combat command column moved south to ST. MARTIN, and turned straight east. At 1130 the column reached the blown highway bridge at MONT d'ORIGNY and found a by-pass to the north. A Troop of the 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron was moving ahead of the column with the mission to reconnoiter from the assigned assembly area eastward to the SAAR River and to find and screen crossings of the SAAR. Passing through MARLEN, ROZOUY, PAINRESSY, and GIVRON, the column reached the assembly area at 2110 and halted to refuel. No enemy resistance was met on the days march. The gas dump at the assembly area could not be found and the combat command was forced to remain in place for lack of fuel, contrary to orders to push on to the SAAR. A small force consisting of engineers, a company of infantry, and a reconnaissance troop, was refueled with the small amount of gas on hand, and was held in readiness to reconnoiter SAAR River crossings. The fuel situation was critical.

- 4 -

RESTRICTED

21

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On the following morning, 5 September a force consisting of one light tank company and one infantry company moved out at 1100 toward the BAK River. At noon the remainder of the combat command followed. The bridge at CHAMBERY was found fit for use and forward elements arrived at the bridge at 1530. At 1700 the main body of the column was moving into an assembly area, vicinity of VANDRISSE, four miles from the river. Forward elements of the combat command had reached the MEUSE at PONT MAUGIS, above FUDAN and first contact with the enemy was made at 1045. Rifle and machine gun fire was encountered and artillery fire falling at PONT MAUGIS knocked out two quarter tons and personnel of A Troop, 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. At 2100 a bridgehead was secured across the river here and the engineers were on their way to construct a bridge. Wire on the far bank had made the operation difficult. Elements probing the MEUSE for other crossings were called in. The gas situation was still critical.

Construction of a pontoon bridge across the MEUSE between PONT MAUGIS and BAZIELLES was begun at midnight by A Company, 22nd Armored Engineer Battalion. At 0300 the infantry on the far bank was being forced to withdraw and work on the bridge ceased. The bridge head here had been pushed across to a wide flat and low lying river plain which lay completely exposed to enemy fire, including field pieces and mortars from the high ground around BAZIELLES. While the infantry was pinned down by this fire, Major Roote answered with artillery fire. At 0530 an infantry-artillery attack was scheduled to cross the river. Movement of the combat command was still being hampered by shortage of gas. At 0645 C Company, 49th Infantry Battalion, reinforced, was sent up to assist Task force roote and the 47th Field Artillery Battalion was moved forward. 11,000 gallons of gas had arrived at 0850. Dismounted infantry recrossed the river and advanced against strong and well-organized resistance. Field guns, mortars, automatic weapons and wire were again encountered. Work on the bridge was resumed. During the morning the work on the bridge was completed as our troops advanced into BAZIELLES, where they again met strong resistance, consisting of dismounted infantry and road blocks. Throughout the afternoon determined resistance continued.

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sporadic and ineffective artillery fire fell on the river plain close to the bridge and the advance command post of the combat command. One by one road blocks in the area were cleared. One light tank was lost in town to a German anti-tank gun. By midnight Task Force Burton, which had passed through Task Force Foote in the attack on BAREVILLES, had advanced and halted just short of DOUZY.

On 7 September Combat Command received orders to wait in place and clear all roads as the 28th Infantry Division attacked through us to the east. Elements of the 112nd crossed passing through our positions at 0615. Notice was received from division to remain in complete state of readiness to move, and later that the division would remain in place for the day. There was little contact on this date. CT 12 advanced down the CHIERS River Valley past ...

The following day the remainder of the combat command crossed the ... river on division order to follow the advance of the 112th Combat Team. During greater part of the day the combat command remained assembled in the vicinity of ... leaving the highway clear for the 28th Infantry Division traffic. In the afternoon orders were received that the combat command would pass through the 28th Division the next day and advance on the axis VIRTON-BUNINGE-LUZE-BOURG. To facilitate this operation General Regnier moved his forces to a position as close as possible behind the 112th Combat Team. The combat command assembled near THOMAS-le-THIL five miles from the Belgian border.

STATISTICAL DATA:

1. Enemy information: Units or elements contacted: 199th Security Regiment, 5th Paratroop Division, 769th AS Regiment, 195th Security Regiment, 199th Security Regiment, 2d Pz. Division, 352nd Infantry Division, 6th Observation Battalion. PW's evacuated: 45. Morale: Low. Capabilities: Continue to delay our advance by rear guard actions.

2. Friendly information: Casualties: 25 KIA, 1 MIA. Vehicular losses: 2 light tanks.

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MEMORANDUM

III - LUXEMBOURG.

On the morning of 9 September Combat Command A crossed the Belgian border and passed through the lines of the 112th Combat Team, 86th Infantry Division. The column marched rapidly south of VIRTON, through AUBANGE across the frontier into the GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG, and up the main highway leading to the Capital. Slight resistance was met along the route in the form of road-blocks, crates, blown bridges and small arms fire. At 1300 a force of bicycle troops and infantry were caught near ATHUS. 50 prisoners, a dozen vehicles and three anti-tank guns were taken. Other troops seeking cover behind a railroad train and in a village beside the highway were taken under fire. The column continued through DIPPACH and was within ten miles of the city of LUXEMBOURG at 1550. Throughout the day since the crossing of the frontier, Prince Felix of LUXEMBOURG accompanied the column. More than once the Prince shared a ditch beside the road with American soldiers seeking shelter from enemy fire.

As the column reached the outskirts of the capital in the late afternoon it met stiff resistance from an enemy rear guard action defending the city. Several Panther tanks and infantry contested our entry into LUXEMBOURG. To the north a large mechanized column was moving eastward on a nearly parallel road into the city. Air and artillery hit this column speedily and thirty vehicles and two tanks were destroyed. Elsewhere the air destroyed forty vehicles and ten tanks during the day and the column had knocked out several trucks and horse-drawn vehicles while moving up the highway.

Approaching the city the column halted on contact with the enemy tank and anti-tank fire in the open terrain on the western outskirts. Fire from a large chateau on the left side of the road was quickly answered and the building was burned. Car an armor piercing shells were coming over the column and one medium tank and one half-track were hit. The Germans started to pull back and one Panther tank was hit retreating, at close range. The column gained a small ridge where several Panther tanks were observed deployed in excellent positions. Tank destroyers were sent around on the left flank to advance in defilade up a draw that offered an excellent approach to the enemy.

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This move was slow in materializing and in the meantime air-support arrived over the head of the column. The position of the tanks was marked with artillery smoke shells and the P-47's came in on the tanks in low dives. The small bomb load proved insufficient, as several bombs fell short and close to the combat command forward observers. The planes came in again, viciously strafing. The tanks were not knocked out, but moved from their positions as they retreated closer to the city. Two enemy tanks were now maneuvering in full view of the command party which had been watching the whole operation from the head of the column. An M-7, self-propelled 105MM Howitzer was brought forward for direct fire at the tanks. One hit was scored. During this time the enemy had been returning fire intermittently and very ineffectively. Our vehicles were held in defiladed positions and the artillery was brought forward to work over the German tanks. The excellent work of the artillery forward observer Lt. Edward J. Fagan, and the tank destroyers paid dividends. Five Mark V tanks were destroyed and the remainder retired. The command assembled in front of the city on 9 September in the evening, prepared to force an entry on the following day. Heavy enemy traffic was reported within the city.

On Sunday morning, 10 September the combat command entered the city of LUXEMBOURG without opposition. The highway bridge over the railroad, on the western edge of the city, was covered with Teller mines. These were picked up and thrown aside without delay by Lt. Thomas W. Grose, Aide-de-camp to the Commanding General. Tanks of the first platoon, C Company, 34th Tank Platoon, under Lt. Thomas B. Watson, were the first Americans to enter the city. The natives were already lining the streets, dressed in their Sunday best, waiting to cheer the approaching Americans. At 1000 the remainder of the column entered the city and was mobbed by the welcoming citizens.

The combat command column halted in the city while advance elements reconnoitered for routes out to the east and for condition of bridges across the complex network of gorges and streams that cut through the capital. All of the large spans in the center of town were intact and as troops pushed to the eastern edge small arms fire was received from German infantry. Enemy spotted on the high ground east of the city were chased out of a commanding position by an artillery concentration. The Germans answered with flat trajectory fire promiscuously directed at some of the towers of the city.

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25

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The bridge in the deep defile where the highway No. 1 leaves city was reported prepared for demolition and defended. A move was made to outflank this bridge and the enemy withdrew, leaving the bridge intact. From here the highway leads up through a narrow gorge with two-hundred foot vertical cliffs on either side. A small charge could easily have rendered this route impassable and a few soldiers could have delayed the column for hours, but the Germans chose to abandon the position without action. At 1400 dismounted infantry of B Company, 46th Infantry Battalion, after crossing the bridge, moved up the gorge, without opposition. Coming up onto high ground they again met opposition of German Infantry. One of our light tanks was knocked out and an ineffective road block, already cut by the Germans, was passed. Again the artillery laid a concentration in front of the column and twenty-five enemy were killed in the woods north of HADM. The column secured a position on the high ground as the remainder of the enemy withdrew. At 1650 the column moved out again to the east up the TRIER Highway past the NEUDORF airport. Here the advance guard was surprised by a well-laid trap and the Germans hit the combat command one of the quickest, hardest blows they had received.

As the advance guard passed the NEUDORF Airport tanks and half-tracks of A Companies 34th Tank Battalion and B Company, 46th Armored Infantry Battalion were leading the combat command. Infantry were riding on the tanks. General Kegnier and Major Foote, advance guard and 34th Tank Battalion commander, were accompanying the lead tank. As the fourth tank was rolling by the air port an infantryman spotted a German gun in front of the hangar, 400 yards to the right, cleverly concealed behind a net. A few moments later a gun in front and the gun by the hangar fired in split-second coordination and the 1st and 4th tanks went up in flames. The second and third tanks in column were hit shortly after. A TIGER tank moved from the front of the hangar and our infantry, caught in the wide open terrain, sought cover hastily in the forest to the left flank.

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At the head of the column the Commanding General, Major General [redacted] 'side, Lt. Crose, sought shelter in nearby buildings with two squads of infantrymen and Lt. David S. Souther, wholly cut off from the rest of the column. An urgent call for air support and artillery was answered. Strafing, bombing and shelling raked the area about the buildings in which General [redacted] was sheltering himself from the Germans and from their air and artillery fire. Two rounds from a bazooka directed at the nearest tank caused the Germans to withdraw into the nearby woods bordering on the air field. At about an hour a platoon of infantry under Lt. Mayo J. Elliot, Company, 45th Armored Infantry Battalion, came across the open gap to reestablish connection with and reinforced the point. The German infantry began to counter-attack and the whole force withdrew to a position closer to the advance guard. An estimated fifteen to twenty German tanks were in front of the combat command, as it assembled for the night between H. and NEUDORF. The combat command went into a tight formation for the night, and the artillery, well forward, laid down a heavy concentration all along the front where the Germans had retreated our advance during the evening. The following message was sent to 5th Armored Division: "We are heavily engaged with infantry force having adequate large and small calibre, artillery and tank support". "Total tanks [redacted] still operating in front of us fifteen to twenty. There seems ample enemy infantry, young and aggressive. Our progress since crossing river has been due in most part to artillery. Enemy nature counter-attack today estimate we have now engaged main defense and that force fought earlier today was delaying action". During the day air had spotted tank concentrations in the vicinity of [redacted], 2000 yards to our right front. The tanks reached cover quickly and the air was unable to flush them. On this day and the preceding day air destroyed five troop trains and supply trains along the MOSELLE River to our front.

On the following morning, A Troop, 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, reconnoitering to the front encountered the enemy at SANDWILDER, lost an M-8 armored car and a light tank and withdrew. Dismounted infantry moved once more across the NEUDORF airport and up Highway No. 1. Tank Force Burton was ordered to move through the GROENLAND FOREST on our left flank.

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During the day a Company 46th Armored Infantry Battalion worked their way up one highway against mortar and automatic weapons fire and secured a position on the LUXEMBOURG Golf Course. From the west side of the Golf Course they laid mortar fire on the woods in front of tank, flushing a Mark V tank and an armored personnel carrier. Task Force Foote assembled on the Golf Course in the afternoon.

In the meantime Task Force Burton had worked through the town of JUMELINGEN. The 112th Combat Team of the 24th Division came up behind Task Force Burton. As the combat command prepared to remain in their positions for the night, a message came from the division with orders for Task Force Burton to form a small light task force for immediate seizure of the large radio transmitter station at JUMELINGEN. The five towers of this station, Radio Luxembourg, were visible five miles to the north. Command of this force was given to Major Jack B. Day. The radio station was captured intact during the night, without enemy opposition.

On the following morning Task Force Foote continued to move out Highway No. 1 against light resistance and road blocks. Task Force Burton continued the advance on the left flank, unopposed, into ESCH at noon, into JUMELINGEN at 1800. The right flank was halted at the junction south of JUMELINGEN to clear out a small force of Germans commanding the corner. The enemy retired. The entire command assembled on the high ground east of JUMELINGEN, ten miles from the German border.

Summary:

1. Enemy Information: Enemy units or elements contacted: 688th Engineer Battalion; 101st IS Battalion, 24th Infantry Division; 368th Infantry Replacement Battalion, 24th Infantry Division, both of 18th Infantry Division; 105th Mobile Battalion, 19th AIF Division; 1 company tanks, 1st Armored Div. 133. Capability: To make determined stand at the Esch Junction Line after continued delaying actions.

2. Friendly Information: Casualties: 55 MIA, 7 KIA. Vehicular losses: 5 medium tanks; 1 light tank; 1-2 ton truck. Weather: Cloudy and cold, with slight rainfall.

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IV - DEFENSE OF LUXEMBOURG (SOUTH)

From the 13th to the 28th of September the combat command had the mission of defending the DUCHY of LUXEMBOURG on a wide sector to the east of the capital, from the vicinity of BOLLENDORF on the SAUER River, (north) to NIEDERDONVEN on the MOSELLE (South). To accomplish this mission the combat command was held in mobile reserve, on continuous ^{status}, successively at HENSTAL, COLBERT and JUNGELSTADT, while outposts and aggressive armored patrols were pushed daily throughout the area to our front, to the SAUER and the MOSELLE. The 112th Combat Team, less one battalion, was assigned to the combat command during this period and was disposed with one battalion to protect the city of LUXEMBOURG and with one battalion to assist in the outposting of the line HERBORN, MANTERNACH, WECKER, OLINGEN, maintaining a company in reserve at REIDENHILLEN.

That the Germans were holding the west bank of the river as their main line of resistance was soon evident, and that our thinly spread forces would be unable to prevent enemy patrols penetrating the river line was also clear. The Germans made a determined and successful effort to hold bridgeheads at ECHTERNACH, ROSEBELLE, GREVENMACHER, WINCHERINGEN and WORMELDANGE, through which their patrols could filter across the river. The latter two points although south of the combat command boundary, were in a sufficiently threatening position to demand our attention. Hot spots proved to be at HERBORN, MANTERNACH and NIEDERDONVEN. Although the enemy persisted in coming back across the river our patrols, operating generally two routes from HERBORN to HERBORN to MANTERNACH and from WECKER to NIEDERDONVEN to WORMELDANGE with special attention to the bridgeheads at GREVENMACHER and WORMELDANGE, had little trouble in finding the enemy and chasing him out with considerable losses on his side. During this period the air destroyed three more troop trains and supply trains on the MOSELLE, while the 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion destroyed one train at GREVENMACHER, sank one small boat on the MOSELLE, fired counter battery missions, and supported our patrols. Four light tanks were lost in one action, entering the SAUER River defile at HINKE, to anti-tank fire, and one halftrack was lost at a mined road-block in GREVENMACHER. Although the Germans did not bring any vehicles and heavy guns across the river they held the river line with well-fortified positions and anti-tank fire.

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V - DEFENSE OF LUXEMBOURG (NORTH)

On the 27th of September the combat command moved north to take over the defense of the border from DIERKIRCH (south boundary) to the vicinity of CLERAUX (north). This zone had been held previously by the 102nd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. Again the combat command was assembled in mobile reserve between HOLZTHUM and CONSTHON and patrols and outposts were disposed on the line of Highway 16 on a high ridge paralleling the German border. On the eastern side of this ridge were numerous wooded draws through which small German patrols were able to approach our outpost line. During this period, however, there was little contact.

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SOURCE MATERIAL.

1. The sources listed below were used in the preparation of this report:

- a. Journal, G-3, COA, 5th Armored Division, (with supplement).
- b. Journal, G-2, COA, 5th Armored Division.
- c. Periodic Reports, G-2, 5th Armored Division.
- d. Journal, G-3 1r, 5th Armored Division.
- e. Statements of officers who participated in the operations.

2. Maps which cover the area of operations for September 1944 are: G.G. No. 4336, Sheets No. 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. G.G. No. 4418, Sheet No. U-1. All to scale 1:100,000.

3. This narrative was written by 1st Lt. Edward A. Little, Aide-de-camp to Brigadier General Regnier.

For the Commanding General:

W. G. REYNOLDS,
Captain, C.E.

OFFICIAL:

W. G. Reynolds
W. G. REYNOLDS,
Captain - C.E.,
-5.

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COMBAT COMMAND "A", 9TH ARMORED DIVISION.

**ANNEX #1,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2**

WOUNDED OR INJURED IN ACTION.

Month of September, 1944.

28

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
34th Tr Bn	2	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	6	8	0	1	0	1	0	5	0	0
46th Armd Inf Bn	1	16	0	2	1	17	9	1	0	9	2	6	1	4	0	1	0	2
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A/22d Armd Engr Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
A/75th Armd Med Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Det /127th Ord Maint Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
85th Cav Recon Sq	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	6	0	3	4	0	0	3	0	0	0
629th TD Bn	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
400th Armd FA Bn	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
112th Inf	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
387th AAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	4	16	0	3	1	23	5	1	14	18	5	13	1	5	3	6	0	3

	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Total	W.I.A. for September	
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
34th Tr Bn	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	32	
46th Armd Inf Bn	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	70	
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
A/22d Armd Engr Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	
A/75th Armd Med Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Det /127th Ord Maint Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
85th Cav Recon Sq	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	
629th TD Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22		
400th Armd FA Bn	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		
112th Inf	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3		
387th AAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		
TOTAL	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	0	2	141		

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33

ANNEX #2,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

KILLED IN ACTION.

Month of September, 1944.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34th Tr Bn	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
46th Armd Inf Bn	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	2	1	0	0	3	0	1	0
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	K.I.A. Total for September					
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
34th Tr Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7					
46th Armd Inf Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7					
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14					

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34

**ANNEX #3,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2.**

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

VEHICULAR LOSSES.

Month of September, 1944.

Tank, medium M-4	5
Tank, Light, M-5	7
Half Truck	1
Truck, 2 1/2-Ton Cargo	2
Truck, 1/4-Ton	2

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FORM #4,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION

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ENEMY MATERIAL DESTROYED OR CAPTURED.

Month of September, 1944.

	<u>CCA</u>	<u>Air Controlled or Requested by CCA</u>
Tank, Mk IV	1	
Tank, Mk V	2	1
Tank, Type Unknown	1	22
Wheeled Truck	1	
Trucks	16	15
Artillery, Towed, 75 to 88mm	1	
Artillery, SP	1	
Guns, 105mm, towed	2	
Weapons, Horsesdrawn	26	
Canal Boat	1	
Train Engine	1	18
Train Cars	6	80
Miscellaneous Vehicles (type unknown)..	6	140-150
Flak 20mm	0	1

INDEX #5, [REDACTED], 5TH AIRBORNE DIVISION
Action Against
Enemy Report #2. REPORTS AND RESULTS OF AIR MISSIONS.

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Month of September, 1944.

TIME	FR GJA	TO GJA	INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS, ETC.	ACTION TAKEN
------	--------	--------	-----------------------------------	--------------

- 012008B Attacked Arty. at request of GCR. Results reported good. Destroyed or dispersed enemy. If additional missions flown will report.
- 091320B Attacked Vehs. twice. Hepburn reported 10 destroyed. Torso reported AT guns and Vehs. destroyed, but no estimate. Hepburn & Plastic on run. trips found no enemy. Awaiting planes for target of Bicycle troops ahead.
- 2040B 2 squadrons on run, found nothing. 4 squadrons destroyed 50 vehs. of which at least 10 were tanks, also 1 house was demolished by bombs containing a gas position, 1 flak 20mm position destroyed. 1 squadron strafed and destroyed tank and Vehs. but gave no estimate of number.
- 102016B Four bombing and strafing missions. Approx. 60 Vehs. of which 6 were tanks, also possibly 5 more were tanks. Three Hens. found nothing.
- 111545B First mission run. from any fwd. elem. to NE & NW, enemy found. Second mission target 2 tanks. Planes unable to hit them. Run to border. Destroyed 3 trains vic. 19624. One contained camouflaged guns, all moving. Destroyed 15 to 20 vehs. on road from 9720 to 0020. Third mission run. to Trier. Destroyed 1 train moving 25 mi. NE Trier. Run from Trier to Luxembourg along rd found no enemy.
- 1730B Gasket leader on run. to NE destroyed 3 troop trains, each containing 20 cars. 5 mi. from Trier.
- 1800B W. Eng. 90 167 at 1750B. One Mark V tank knocked out by 50 cal. from plane, penetrated lower side hull at level of bogie wheels. Suggest notify air people.
- 121700B First mission on run. vic. 9720 to 9323. No enemy found. Troop train in losses with troops found vic. 1023 moving N, destroyed engine, about 20 cars, much personnel. 15 trucks moving S vic. 0820 destroyed. General run. between Luxembourg and border, no enemy found. To 10 00. Air mission made your front 11745A. Cut Gravenmacher rd in three places. Straffe toward Trier destroying 15 vehs and many personnel.

16,
at least
report #2.

MONTHLY LIST OF PRISONERS CAPTURED

Month of September, 1944.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>UNIT IDENTIFICATIONS</u>
01	2	318 Army Bn.
02	1	512 Mob. Bn.
03	7	358 Inf. Div., 510, 512 Mob. Bns.
04	1	
05	0	
06	10	199th Security Rgt., 5 Para. Div.
07	23	789 LS Rgt., 195, 199 Sec. Rgts.
08	9	2 Pz. Div., 352 Inf. Div., 199 Sec. Rgt., 4 Obs. Bn.
09	110	809 Armenian Bn.
10	7	1016 LS Bn., 148 Inf. Div.
11	8	352 Inf. Repl. Bn., 19th Inf. Div.
12	8	Pz. Brig. FRIEDENSHALLEN, 19th Inf. Div.
13	8	36th Inf. Div., 19th Inf. Div.
14	20	36th Inf. Div., 15 Pz. Gr. Div., 506 Repl. Bn., 19th Inf. Div.
15	4	19th Inf. Div.
16	5	106 Pz. Brig., 5 Para. Div.
17	1	
21	1	74 Inf. Rgt., 36 Inf. Div.
23	1	999 Tng. Rgt.
25	6	5 Para. Div., 212 LS Bn.
28	<u>2</u>	
234	-	Cumulative total for month.
1070	-	Cumulative total for campaign.

NOTE: In order to prevent delaying the advance, forward elements turned prisoners over to the FFI wherever possible. For this reason the total given does not give a complete picture. The FFI forces were invaluable in evacuating prisoners, securing captured villages, locating enemy groups, etc.,

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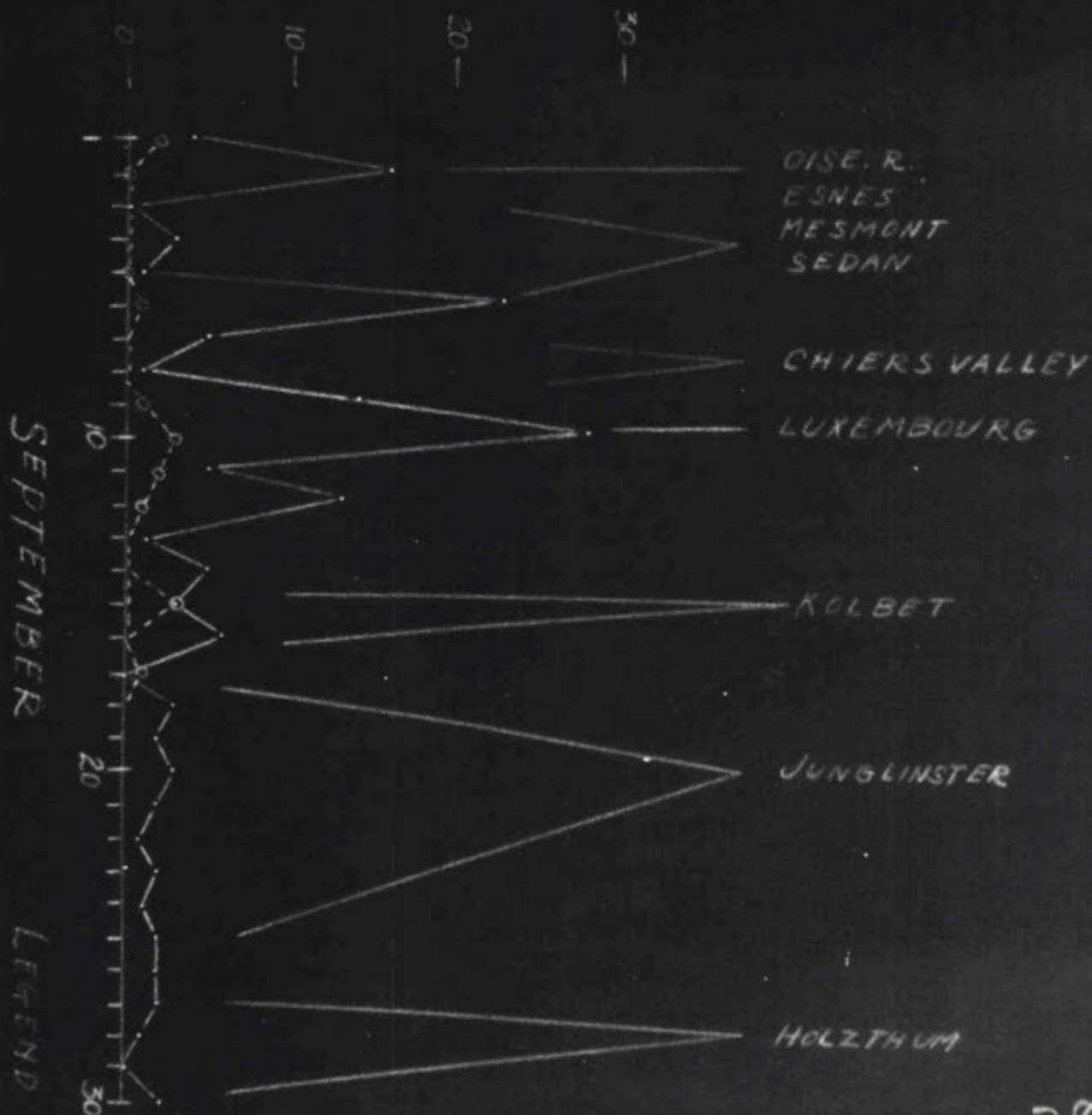
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ANNEX #7,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

CASUALTIES.

Month of September, 1944.



1-Aug-30-Sep-44

HEADQUARTERS
THEATER SERVICE FORCES
EUROPEAN THEATER

8 Dec 45

(Main) APO 757
8 December 1945

AG 319.1 His-AGO

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SUBJECT: After Action Reports

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D.C.

1. Inclosed herewith one copy each of After Action Reports of Combat Command "A", 5th Armored Division for the months of August and September 1944.

2. One copy of each report has been withdrawn by this headquarters for further study.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

Robert F. Shearer
ROBERT F. SHEARER
Captain, AGD
Assistant Adjutant General.

2 Incls: as stated

Telephone Number: Frankfurt 33225

DEC 18 1945

comb. analysis - 1

DEC 28 1945

DEC 29 1945

9707

43-111-10-2

605-196-28 (Dec 1945)

Report of 10 Jan 46

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HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO No 255
U. S. Army

30 May 1945.

Auth: CG, CCA, 5th Armad Div:
Init: *HPH* HPH
Date: 30 May 1945

Subject: Report of Action No. 2, Month of September 1944.

To : Commanding General, 5th Armored Division,
APO No 255, U. S. Army.

Attached hereto is revised Report of Action against the enemy No. 2,
month of September 1944.

For the Commanding General:

Henry P. Halsell
HENRY P. HALSELL,
Captain, C. E.,
S-3 Air.

319.1 GNNJG
(30 May 45)

1st Ind.

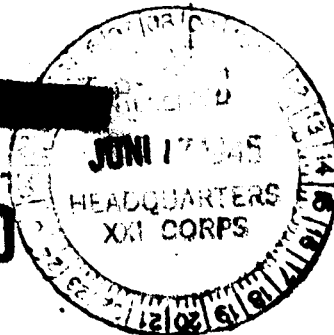
HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMORED DIVISION, APO No 255, U. S. Army, 16 June 1945.

THRU: Commanding General, XXI Corps, APO No 101, U. S. Army.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

CCD
C. C. D.

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314.7 AG

2d Ind.

/vdm

HQ XXI CORPS, APO 101, U. S. Army, 17 June 1945.

TO: Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army.

Forwarded herewith revised after action report of the Combat Command "A",
5th Armored Division for the month of September 1944.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:



L S SILBERNAGEL
CAPT AGD
ASST AG

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~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]

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: [REDACTED] :
: Authr: CG, CCA, 5th Armad Div: :
: Init: *[Signature]* HPH :
: Date: 30 May 1943. :

COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION.

REVISED ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT NO. 2
MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1944.

BRIGADIER GENERAL, EUGENE A. REGNIER, USA,
COMMANDING.

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REPORT OF ACTION AGAINST ENEMY, MONTH OF SEPTEMBER, 1944.

1. CAMPAIGN: Northern France and Germany.
2. COMMANDERS:
 - Combat Command A, 5th Armd Div - Brig Gen Eugene A Regnier, 08295, USA.
 - Hq & Hq Co, Combat Command A - Captain Karl W Roth, 01010340, Inf.
 - 34th Tk Bn - Major Glen L Foote, 0450438, Cav, (1-2 Sept); Lt Col Karl L Scherer, 018784, Cav (2-30 Sept).
 - 46th Armd Inf Bn - Major William H Burton, 0366028, Inf.
 - 47th Armd FA Bn - Lt Col John B Rosenzweig, 0246291, FA.
 - A Co, 22nd Armd Engr Bn - Capt Joseph F McCann, 0456339, CE.
 - A Co, 75th Med Bn - Capt Sanford M Langsom, 0424470, MC.
 - 400 Armd FA Bn - Lt Col John R McLean, 023140, FA.
3. LOSSES IN ACTION:
 - a. Personnel: See annexes 1 and 2.
 - b. Vehicular: See annex 3.
4. ENEMY LOSSES:

See annexes 4 and 6.
5. NARRATIVE.

I. AISNE RIVER TO ESNES.

Maps: GSGS 4336, 1/100000, Sheets 11, 15, 18 and 19.

A. The enemy.

The 348th Inf Div and the 47th Inf Div which had been defending the Aisne and Oise River crossings around Compiègne retreated northeast along the Oise and Sambre Canals covered by small delaying detachments. As the operation progressed contact was made with 18th GAF Inf Div and 12th SS Hitler Jugend Div.

Prisoners were taken from the 18th GAF, 348th Inf, and from the Arty Bns of the 12th SS and the 47th Inf Divisions.

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The enemy made clever use of the river lines blowing all bridges in our path over the Oise and Sambre Canals and Rivers.

B. Action.

On the night of 31 August CCA was attached to the 4th Inf Div. The command reverted to division control at 1200 2 September.

CCA, with the 4th Inf Div, had the mission of gaining the line Mons-Auxin, 100 miles north in Belgium, by nightfall 2 Sept. By way of orientation, on the last two days of August V Corps had passed through Paris and attacked northeast toward the Aisne River and the Foret de Compiègne. The 4th and 28th Infantry Divisions initiated the move, attacking abreast with the 4th on the right. On the 31st, the 5th Armd Div had passed through the infantry and continued the attack to the Compiègne Forest and the Aisne River at a point further east. At the time of attachment to the 4th Inf Div, CCA was disposed with two forces. Major Burton with Hq/46th and C Cos married was 7 Km north of the Aisne River from his crossing at Pommiers, just west of Soissons. The remainder of the command was southeast of the Compiègne Forest vicinity Retheuil-Morienval. The 47th and 400th FA Bns were attached to CCA for its operation with the 4th Inf Div. The 400th was given to TF Burton. The 4th Inf Div moved north in three columns; CT 22 with TFB on the right, CCA(-) with CT 12 in the center, and CT 8 on the left. The 4th Div detached from CCA the Recon troop and the air support party.

At 0650 1 Sept CCA(-), (hereafter referred to as CCA; operations of TFB will be covered separately), moved northeast intending to cross the Aisne near Attichy. Light opposition was encountered to the river. Bridges, except for the railroad bridge at Vic sur Aisne, were found blown. Observed artillery fire was received at the bridge site, but the bridge was secured and a few vehicles including tanks were crossed before we were ordered into an assembly area south of the river. CCA crossed the Aisne at Attichy beginning 0320 2 September on a

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treadway bridge built by the 4th Division. At 0600, when leading elements had entered Pont L'Eveque south of Noyon, enemy machine gun fire was received near Tracy sur Mont. At the Oise Canal all bridges in our zone were found to be blown. A request for bridging to the 5th Armored Division was denied. CCA reverted to division control at noon on the 2nd. The division had already passed in front of us through Noyon and was bridging the Somme at Hamm. Lacking bridging equipment, A/22nd began, in the afternoon, to construct a ford. This work was carried on until 0100 when permission was received to use the 4th Division's bridge at Appily. The command moved at once to cross. By this time the country to the north had been cleared by the passage of the 5th Armored and the 4th infantry divisions and we marched by way of Hamm, by-passing St. Quentin to the west, and thence to Esnes, our assigned assembly area. The column closed in bivouac at 1600 on the 3d of September. TFB was just east of Le Cateau at 1700, and guides were sent to bring his force to the assembly area. Warning orders were received from Division for a move southeast at 0700 the next day.

Throughout this operation Major Burton's force (Hq/46th, C Cos married, 1 Plat A/85th, and 400 FA) was attached to Task Force Taylor of the 4th Inf Div. The rapid action of TFB in seizing a crossing over the Aisne on 31 August was instrumental in enabling General Taylor to push rapidly north to his objective. Enemy resistance was met at Folembray at 011625 after crossing the Canal de L'Oise et L'Aisne. Heavy fighting ensued and General Taylor broke his force into two columns with TFB leading the left or west column on axis Danigy-Ribemant-Guise-Le Cateau-Valenciennes. Opposition was overcome at dusk and the column moved north seeking a bridge over the Oise and Serre Rivers. Bridges were blown and the column veered east from its intended course following the south bank of the Serre. Enemy artillery fire from north of the Oise was received at Danigy.

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At dawn 2 September the two columns of TF Taylor rejoined south of Crecy. A bridge at Crecy was completed at 0830 and movement north resumed. After crossing the Iron River south of Guise the column again split with TFB moving toward Le Cateau. Small arms fire was received at Massapes and the bridge over the Sambre Canal, though prepared for demolition, was taken intact. Moving on, an 88-mm gun and an armored vehicle were knocked out near Wassigny and a tank and several vehicles were destroyed near Ribeaupville. During the evening orders were received to halt the advance of the task force, and Major Burton bivouaced at L'Abre de Guise. That night several enemy vehicles and a SP gun supported by infantry approached his roadblocks and were destroyed. On the following afternoon, 3 September, General Taylor's two columns assembled at Pommereuil, east of Le Cateau.

II. ACROSS THE MEUSE.

Maps: GSGS 4336, 1/100000, Sheets 11, 15, 16 and 17.

A. The enemy.

The 5th Arm Div moved southeast across the rear of VII Corps to gain and cross the line of the Meuse River vicinity Sedan. No enemy resistance was met until the Meuse was reached. CCA encountered resistance at Bazeilles. The enemy resisted our crossing with small arms, machine gun, and artillery fire together with wire entanglements on the far bank. After our crossing resistance continued in the form of strong road blocks from Bazeilles to Douzy. Enemy elements in contact were chiefly the 195th and 199th Security Regiments with the 5th Par Div, 769th LS Regiment, 2nd Pz Div, 352 Inf Div, and 4th Obs Bn also represented. A total of 43 prisoners were evacuated.

B. Action.

On the morning of 4 September the combat command received orders to

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move south and east to seize, with the division, crossings over the Meuse vicinity Sedan. CCA was to contact 4th Inf Div on the left and XX Corps on the right. The command moved south to St. Quentin and then east. The objective of the day's march was Mewsmont, north of Rethel on the Aisne.

At 1130 the column reached the blown highway bridge at Mont d'Origny but found a by-pass to the north. A/85, attached to CCA, was sent ahead to reconnoiter from Mesmont east to the Bar River to find and screen crossings over the Bar. Passing through Marle, Rozy, Mainkressay, and Givron the command reached the assembly area at 2110 and halted to refuel. No enemy were encountered on the march. There was not sufficient gas available for refueling though enough for about 30 more miles remained. The command was forced to remain in place despite orders to push on to the Bar. A small task force of engineers, a Co of infantry, and a troop of Rcn was refueled with the small amount of gas available and this force held in readiness to Rcn the Bar River crossings.

On the following morning, 5 September, a task force of the light tanks from the light tank Co, moved out at 1100 and crossed the Bar River at Chemery at about 1530. At 1700 the rest of the command went into an assembly area just west of Vendresse. The forward TF contacted the enemy at Pont Maugis at about 1745. Resistance was initially light and by 2100 an infantry bridgehead had been established on the flat river plain west of Baselles. The fuel situation remained critical and the rest of the command remained near Vendresse except that the 400th FA, better off for fuel than our other units, was able to move to a position north of Bulson from which to support the crossing.

A/22 began construction of a floating treadway bridge at Pont Maugis at midnight. By 0300 machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire from Baselles and the high ground beyond had forced back our bridgehead and stopped the work of

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the engineers. A total of 11,000 gallons of gas was received at 0600, and C/46th reinforced moved at 0645 to assist at the river while the 47th moved into position vicinity Bulson.

Dismounted infantry recrossed the river against strong, well organized resistance. Artillery, mortar, automatic weapons fire, and wire were again encountered. The bridge was completed at 1220 and our troops advanced into Baseilles. Road blocks with infantry and AT guns were encountered in the town and beyond, but they were slowly reduced with the loss of one light tank. By midnight, TF Burton, which had passed through the 34th to attack Baseilles, had advanced to a point just short of Douzy.

On 7 September CCA received orders to halt in place and clear all roads for the 28th Infantry Division's attack to the east. Elements of CT 112 began passing through our positions at 0615. Notice was received from division to remain in a state of readiness to move, but later that we would remain in place for the day. There was little enemy contact of this date.

On the 8th the remainder of the command crossed the Meuse on Division order to follow the advance of CT 112. Throughout most of the day however the command remained vicinity Douzy leaving the highway clear for the 28th Infantry Division. In the afternoon orders were received for us to pass through the 28th on the 9th and to advance on axis Virton-Aubange-Luxembourg. To expedite the proposed operation General Regnier moved his forces to Thonne le Thil, immediately behind CT 112.

III. LUXEMBOURG.

Maps: GSGS 4336, 1/100000, Sheet 17; GSGS 4416, 1/100000, Sheet U1.

A. The enemy.

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On 9 September the enemy delayed our advance to Luxembourg with road blocks, some craters, and a number of blown bridges. Near Luxembourg resistance increased and tanks were encountered. A mechanized column was observed on our left retreating east. Large bodies of enemy troops were reported by civilians, mostly to the left of our line of march but were not brought to battle. Enemy units identified on the 9th were 506th Mobile Battalion of Von Fritsche Regt, elements of the 19th Inf Div, and the 809th Armenian Battalion of the 48th Inf Div.

The enemy, on the 10th, offered no real defense in the city of Luxembourg itself but resisted strongly our advance east with numerous tanks, mortars, and aggressive infantry. These troops were of the highest quality, well trained and aggressive. The same type resistance continued on the 11th but decreased materially on the 12th. The reason for this sudden decrease in resistance which had been so strong is not clear but it appears that it may have been because, on the 11th, fighter bombers working with CCA destroyed 7 trains on the railroads from Luxembourg to Trier. This railroad was quite busy on the 10th and 11th with trains moving east almost under our nose. After the destruction of 7 of these trains by our air the ground defense lost its raison d'etre and so virtually disappeared. Whether or not this explanation is correct is, of course, not known, but at nightfall on the 11th General Regnier, knowing of the 7 trains destroyed, predicted that there would be little resistance the next day.

Units identified were the 809th Armenian Bn, tanks of the 60th Pz Gr Div, elements of 19th Inf Div, and Pz Brig Feldhernhalle. A total of 110 prisoners were taken on 9th September and 23 were taken on the following three days.

Tank crews of Pz Brig Feldhernhalle were the finest ever met by CCA. Even when subjected to attacks by fighter bombers and some 12 TD's the tanks moved slowly and cautiously keeping their strong frontal armor facing our fire until

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they had reached a defiladed position. East of Luxembourg the enemy made an excellent demonstration of his tank tactics. Mark V and Mark VI tanks were employed in the open with long fields of fire available. His tanks were protected from ours by their heavy armor and by their longer range guns. In addition, we were prevented from approaching with infantry by his own infantry in the woods to the rear and flanks of his tanks.

B. Elements affecting the Action.

CCA approached Luxembourg by a narrow valley which widened as it rose to a relatively flat plateau about 10 Km west of the city. East of Luxembourg was a high plateau, 40-50 percent wooded with deeply dissected valleys. The most critical terrain features were the deep and narrow defiles by which the roads east from Luxembourg gained the high plateau.

C. Action.

On the morning of 9 September CCA crossed the Belgian border and passed through CT 112 of the 28th Infantry Division. The column marched rapidly south of Virton, through Aubange, across the frontier into the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and up the main highway leading to the capitol. Resistance was in the form of roadblocks, craters, blown bridges, AT and small arms fire. At 1300 a force of bicycle troops and infantry was caught near Athus. A dozen vehicles, 3 AT guns and 50 prisoners were taken. Other troops seeking shelter behind a railroad train and in a village beside the highway were taken under fire. Numerous large enemy concentrations were reported to the left of our axis of advance but were never brought to battle. By 1550 our column was within 10 miles of the city of Luxembourg.

As we neared the capitol resistance increased markedly and a number of Panther tanks made their appearance. To the north a large mechanized column was

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discovered moving east on a route parallel to our own. This force was engaged by our artillery and supporting aircraft with the result that 30 vehicles and 2 tanks were destroyed. Elsewhere the air destroyed 40 vehicles and 10 tanks and our column knocked out several trucks and horsedrawn vehicles while moving up the highway.

Enemy armor and AT guns were met in the open terrain near the western outskirts of Luxembourg. Fire from a large chateau on the left was silenced and the building burned. Two of our medium tanks and one of our half tracks were hit. The enemy pulled back and one Panther tank was knocked out at close range while withdrawing. Our people then gained a small ridge from which could be observed several Mk V tanks to our front deployed in excellent positions. TD's were sent to the left to take the enemy in the flank by way of a small draw. This attack was slow in materializing and fighter bombers, which had just arrived, were put on the tanks. The planes bombed and strafed and the tanks, though not destroyed, moved to positions nearer the city. One M-7, SP 105 was brought up and direct fire employed against the German tanks with the result that five were destroyed and the remainder withdrew. These were then hunted by bazooka teams of 629th TD Bn and it is believed that as many as five or six more were destroyed. CCA assembled west of Luxembourg prepared to force an entry the following morning. Interdiction fire was put on the main escape routes from the city.

CCA entered Luxembourg at 0940 10 September. The highway over RR bridge in the western edge of the city was found with roadway barred by Tellermines but these were quickly removed. Within the city the large spans in the center were found intact and our troops advanced to the eastern edge where fire was received from the high ground commanding the exit road.

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The action for the remainder of the day will be covered in great detail as it furnishes an excellent example of the defense of a defile on one hand and the attack through a defile on the other. The road which CCA was forced to take out of Luxembourg crossed the Wosen River and thence rose by way of a narrow defile to the plateau to the east. A high cliff was on the right and precipitous drop immediately on the left while further to the left across the stream rose another and higher cliff. About 2000 yards from the bridge the road turned left, crossed the railroad and joined the main highway to Trier. At this point the high ground on the right petered out in some woods and a westward pointing ridge line dropped down to approximately the level of the road. About 1 Km further east was a road junction or "Y". One route led east to Sandweiler and the other led northeast through the lower edges of Grunenwald. Just east of the "Y" and between the two roads was the airport and further east the Luxembourg Golf Course. As can be seen from the 1/100000 map, woods surrounded the airport on three sides. From about our junction with the main highway to the woods in rear of the airport the ground was flat and lacking in cover and concealment except for the woods and a few scattered buildings.

With such a dangerous defile to pass through the question might well be asked why General Regnier chose to force it on the afternoon of the 10th rather than take the time to reconnoiter to the south of the city for a safer route onto the plateau. Aside from the value of time and his desire to lose none, there were a number of reasons for his decision. CCA had an assigned assembly area for the night some 10 Km east of Luxembourg; citizens in the capitol were in a very festive mood and plying our troops with too much liquor so that the General was anxious to clear the place as quickly as possible; Luxembourg was of political importance as Prince Consort Felix had returned with our troops and

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the defense of the capital could best be served by our pushing rapidly through to regain contact with the enemy; and, in addition, the defile could not be avoided without going far to the south of the city.

The bridge over the Wosen River was reported defended and prepared for demolition, but the enemy withdrew and the bridge was taken intact. General Regnier took personal charge of the operation and, at 1400, sent dismounted infantry of B/46th up the defile with one platoon on the road and a second platoon crowning the heights on the right. Tanks and half tracks remained at the bottom. Our infantry on the heights met enemy infantry and bicycle troops, drove them back, and outflanked some AT positions. Artillery fire was put on the woods at the turn and killed a large number of enemy infantry. Our two forces of infantry came together at the turn and a light tank was brought up. This tank was immediately knocked out by an enemy gun which could not be located. General Regnier continued with the infantry to the main highway. Here he brought up five medium tanks, mounted some 40 infantrymen thereon, and moved at 1630 east to the "Y" and thence northeast to the left of the airport. With this force he intended to establish a small bridgehead and get his troops out of Luxembourg and the defile before nightfall.

As the point came abreast of the airport the lead tank was knocked out by AT fire from the front. The driver was able to back the tank off the road before it was hit four more times and burned. Shortly thereafter the remaining 4 tanks were hit by enemy tanks firing from vicinity of the airport hangers some 400 yards to the right. Our infantry sought cover in the woods to the left; but General Regnier, his aide, and 6-8 infantrymen and crew members of the knocked out tanks remained among the buildings to the right of the road. The General called for air and artillery. Fighter bombers appeared almost

RESTRICTED

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immediately and bombed and strafed enemy tanks in and about our people by the buildings. General Regnier sent a bazooka team against an enemy tank some 20-30 yards away. Two rounds missed and the tank withdrew. Simultaneously with the air, the 47th and the 400th fired battalion concentrations into the area. The 987 FA (SP 155's) came in shooting wild and forced the Commanding General and his party to withdraw. Enemy forces were estimated as 11 tanks at this time.

After about an hour a platoon of infantry from A/46th commanded by Lt. Mayo J. Elliot arrived to reinforce what remained of the point. This force moved across the airport to clear the buildings around the hanger. At this time they were counterattacked by about a company of infantry from the woods on the right. The artillery forward observer, Lt. Eagan, put artillery quickly and accurately on the enemy breaking up the attack. Our infantry began to reform but was immediately scattered by 120-mm mortar fire. The Commanding General designated a second rallying point, but again mortar fire was received, and the platoon leader was wounded. The Commanding General returned to the main body then halted west of the "Y" and directed the 34th into an assembly area just out of the defile and about 1000 yards west of the "Y". By this time the 400th FA had doubled the column and was going into position in the same area. The CP and the engineers bivouaced further south between the railroad and Hamm. The 46th remained in Luxembourg that night.¹ Our artillery laid down heavy protective fires and intermittent contact was made with the enemy throughout the night. The following message was sent to division. "We are heavily engaged with an infantry force having adequate large and small mortars, artillery and tank support. Total

¹ The 46th remained in Luxembourg on Division order and was not released until 1500 the next day.

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tanks, Mark V, still operating in front of us, 15 to 20. There seems to be ample enemy infantry, young and aggressive. Our progress since crossing the river has been due in most part to artillery. From nature of counterattack today estimate we have now engaged main defense and that force fought earlier today was delaying action".

During the day our supporting aircraft executed four bombing and strafing missions and three Armd Recces. They destroyed 60 vehicles and 6-11 tanks. A tank concentration was spotted near Sandweiler, 2000 yards to our right front. The tanks reached cover quickly and the air was unable to flush them. The 386th Fighter Sq of the 356th Fighter Gp is particularly deserving of commendation for the signal service it rendered the combat command on this date. In attacking the enemy tanks at the airport the pilots bombed and strafed within 50 yards of the Commanding General and his party giving the finest demonstration of close, accurate air support ever observed by a member of this command.

The enemy's plan of defense was, by this time, clear. He crowned the heights overlooking the road with infantry and placed AT guns so as to deny us the use of the road itself. Around the exit to the defile he deployed some 10-20 Mk V tanks so as to bring all guns to bear on the exit. These tanks were supported and protected by numerous and aggressive infantry. The only things his defense lacked were heavy artillery concentrations on the road in the defile and planes with which to bomb and strafe us. That CCA was able to force the defile is attributed to superiority in air and artillery and to the aggressive action of the point in fighting the enemy to a standstill.

On the following morning, 11 September, A/85, reconnoitering to the front, found the enemy in Sandweiler, lost a M-8 armored car and a light tank, and withdrew. Our dismounted infantry was sent across the highway and up highway #1.

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TF Burton was ordered to move on the left through Grunewald. He entered this large forest at 1530 and moved rapidly through reaching Hammeldang by about 1615. This maneuver was successful in removing pressure from the force moving up the highway. During the day A/46th moved up the highway against mortar and automatic weapons fire and secured a position on the Luxembourg Golf Course. Mortar fire on the woods to the front flushed a Mark V tank and an armored personnel carrier. The 34th reassembled in the afternoon on the golf course and reached a position near Senningerberg by nightfall. On Division order a fast, light force of one platoon each of infantry, light tanks, and engineers was sent that night to seize the large radio station at Junglinster. Major Jack B. Day of the 46th commanded this force from TF Burton and succeeded in seizing Radio Luxembourg intact. On this date supporting aircraft made 4 Armd Reces during which they destroyed 7 trains on the railroads to Trier and made one bombing and strafing attack on a Mk V tank which they destroyed.

On the 12th the 34th advanced up highway #1 against defended roadblocks. TF Burton continued on the left unopposed through Eschweiler and Elwer. The 34th was delayed at the RJ south of Weller by a small enemy force which soon withdrew. The entire command assembled for the night on the high ground just east of Hemstal.

IV. DEFENSE OF LUXEMBOURG (South).

Maps: GSGS 4416, 1/100000, Sheets U1 and T1.

A. The enemy.

During the period 13-26 September the enemy along the Luxembourg-German border was identified from prisoners as 19 Inf Div, Mobile Regt Von Fritsche, 5 Para Div, and 36 Inf Div. The enemy was initially relatively inactive but became more and more active as the period progressed. In our zone the Siegfried

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Line came down to the Sauer River, and throughout the period the line was actively manned. It soon became evident that the enemy intended to hold his bridgeheads across the Sauer and Moselle Rivers at Echternach, Wasserbillig, and Grevenmacher. The enemy became very sensitive about these points and greeted our patrols in the area with well directed artillery fire. He sent numerous strong patrols from his bridgeheads and seemed well aware of the large gap that existed on our right between the First and Third Armies.

B. The action.

From the 13-26th September the combat command had the mission of defending the Duchy of Luxembourg on a wide front to the east of the capitol from Bollendorf on the Sauer River to Ninderdoven on the Moselle. To do this the command was held in mobile reserve on continual alert status successively at Hemstal, Colbet, and Junglinster while outposts and aggressive armored patrols were pushed daily throughout the area to our front. The 112th CT less one battalion of infantry was attached to CCA during this period and was disposed with one battalion to protect the city of Luxembourg and with one battalion to assist in outposting the line Herborn, Manternach, Wecker, Olingen while maintaining a company in reserve at Beidweiler.

That the Germans were holding the river as their MIA was soon evident and that our thinly spread forces would be unable to prevent enemy patrols from infiltrating was demonstrated. The enemy made a determined and successful effort to hold bridgeheads at Echternach, Wasserbillig, Grevenmacher, Winchdringen, and Wormeldange through which their patrols could cross the river. The latter two points, although south of our sector, were dangerous enough to demand our attention. Our patrols operating generally two routes from Berdorf to Herborn to Manternach and from Wecker to Neiderdoven to Wormeldange

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with special attention to the bridgeheads at Grevenmacher and Wormeldange, were generally successful in intercepting and routing enemy patrols with considerable losses to his side. During this period the air destroyed 3 trains on the Moselle and the 47th destroyed one train, sank a small boat on the Moselle, fired counter battery missions, and supported our patrols. Four light tanks were lost in one action on the Sauer River at Hinkel. Three were lost to AT fire from across the river and one ran over a cliff while returning from the action. One half track was lost at a mined road block in Grevenmacher. We suffered casualties every day of the period.

Very early, on the 13th, our patrols went to Grevenmacher and found the town defended with road blocks on all roads. Further north our patrols could not get so close to the river and received moderate mortar and artillery fire. There appeared to be a larger bridgehead around Wasserbillig.

On the 14th a cleanup force was sent to the south of Flaxweiler and several small groups of enemy were mopped up. A patrol was able to get to the river at Morsdorf after receiving moderate artillery fire on the way. Another patrol went to within 1 Km of Grevenmacher without any enemy reaction.

On the 15th the command moved to vicinity of Colbet. Patrols were sent to the north and east and reached the river opposite Bollendorf, west of Echternach, and at Hinkel. Attempts to cross the river were unsuccessful but good OP's were established. The patrol at Hinkel was fired on by an AT gun across the river and three light tanks were lost. The enemy lines across the river, where observed, were well manned and alert.

On the 16th CCA moved to vicinity Junglinster and continued patrolling, principally to the south of Echternach. The 85(-) was attached to screen south

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and east of Luxembourg city and to make contact with friendly forces to our south.

From 17-20 patrolling continued with numerous enemy contacts and artillery fire near Echternach and Grevenmacher. On the 20th a strong patrol was sent toward Grevenmacher. This patrol cleared the woods before Grevenmacher but did not get into the town. Supporting artillery destroyed one armored car and a freight train with 6 cars in Grevenmacher.

Similar patrol activity continued for the remainder of the period except that on the 24th a strong demonstration was made against Grevenmacher. C Cos married with one battery 105s and one battery 155s in support moved at 1000 and gained the high ground about 3000 yards west of Grevenmacher. The infantry dismounted and cleared the woods before the vehicles were brought forward. As C Cos reached the crest overlooking the Moselle River they received small arms and machine gun fire but quickly neutralized this with 60-mm mortars. Artillery fired on Grevenmacher for two hours and one platoon of tanks shelled barracks across the river destroying five. C Cos withdrew at 1600 and, in so doing, received heavy artillery and mortar fire in the gap between the advance guard and the main body.

This period just covered was the most valuable period for training that CCA ever had, but this training was gained only at the cost of casualties each day. The command had suffered 420 casualties up to 12 September, these being principally in the infantry and tank battalions. There was a definite need for training replacements, especially platoon leaders. The normal patrol used was one married platoon supported by at least one battery of artillery. The platoon leader was forced to go to the target area, fight for observation, and direct the fire of artillery, mortars, and assault guns on the enemy. To further train the battalion commanders and their staffs, 2 patrols were sent out daily, 34th

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and 46th alternating. The battalion commander was required to so direct his patrols that they joined at the conclusion of their assigned independent missions and attacked a designated enemy position.

V. DEFENSE OF LUXEMBOURG (North).

On the 27th September CCA moved north to take over the defense of the Luxembourg-German border from Diekirch north to Clersaux. This zone had been held by the 102nd Cav Rcn Sq. The command was assembled as a mobile reserve between Holzthum and Consthum with patrols and outposts on the line of highway 16 which paralleled the German border. This road followed a high ridge and was exposed to observation from across the border. This was the same road which later became infamous under the name of "Red Ball Highway" or "Skyline Drive". On the eastern side of the ridge were numerous wooded draws through which enemy patrols were able to approach our outpost line. Even at this early date the Germans sent patrols to cut the Red Ball Highway and ambush our vehicles. On the 28th the enemy blew a culvert under the highway at P813611. On the same day, at 0600, a 20 man patrol was contacted east of Weiler and driven back across the border. Another patrol was contacted near Wahlhaused (P8455) and two PWs taken. This patrol had as its mission the capture of an American PW. Considerable activity took place on this date around Hosingen (P821590). The 28th Inf Div was forced out of the town in the morning. That afternoon our forces, light tanks and infantry, cleared the town and the draw running from Neidhausen and Rodershausen. Enemy patrol activity continued on the 29th and 30th. In addition to patrol activity the Germans fired artillery concentrations at the highway, the most frequent one falling near Holzthum.

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23

ANNEX #1,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2.

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

WOUNDED OR INJURED IN ACTION.

Month of September, 1944.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
34th Tk Bn	1	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	6	8	0	1	0	1	0	5	0	0
46th Armd Inf Bn	1	16	0	2	1	17	3	1	0	9	2	6	1	4	0	1	0	2
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A/22d Armd Engr Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
A/75th Armd Med Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Det/127th Ord Maint Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
85th Cav Rcn Sq	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	6	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
629th TD Bn	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
400th Armd FA Bn	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
112th Inf	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
387th AAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	4	16	0	3	1	23	5	1	14	18	5	13	1	5	3	6	0	3

	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Total WIA for September
Hq & Hq Co, CCA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
34th Tk Bn	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	32
46th Armd Inf Bn	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	70
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
A/22d Armd Engr Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
A/75th Armd Med Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Det/127th Ord Maint Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
85th Cav Rcn Sq	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
629th TD Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	22
400th Armd FA Bn	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
112th Inf	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
387th AAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
TOTAL	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	0	2	141

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24

ANNEX #2
Action Against
Enemy Report #2

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

KILLED IN ACTION.

Month of September, 1944.

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>
Hq & Hq Co, CGA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34th Tk Bn	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
46th Armd Inf Bn	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	2	1	0	0	3	0	1	0
	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>KIA Total for September</u>					
Hq & Hq Co, CGA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
34th Tk Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7					
46th Armd Inf Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7					
47th Armd FA Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14					

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COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

ANNEX #3,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2.

VEHICULAR LOSSES.

Month of September, 1944.

Tank, medium M-4	5
Tank, Light, M-5	7
Half Track	1
Truck, 2½-Ton Cargo.	1
Truck, 1¼-Ton	2

ANNEX #4,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2.

ENEMY MATERIEL DESTROYED OR CAPTURED.

Month of September, 1944.

	<u>CCA</u>
Tank, Mk IV	1
Tank, Mk V	2
Tank, Type Unknown	1
Half Track	1
Trucks	16
AT Guns, Towed, 75 to 88-mm.	1
AT Guns, SP	1
Guns, 105-mm, towed	2
Wagons, horsedrawn	26
Canal Boat	1
Train Engine	1
Train Cars	6
Miscellaneous Vehicles (type unknown).	6
Flak 20-mm	0

	<u>Air Controlled or Requested by CCA</u>
Tank, Mk V	1
Tank, Type unknown	22
Trucks	15
Train Engine	18
Train Cars	80
Miscellaneous Vehicles (type unknown)	140-150
Flak 20-mm	1

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25

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COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

ANNEX #6,
Action Against
Enemy Report #2.

PARTIAL LIST OF PRISONERS OF WAR TAKEN.

Month of September, 1944.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>UNIT IDENTIFICATIONS</u>
1	2	318 Army AA Bn.
2	1	512 Mob. Bn.
3	7	358 Inf Div, 510, 512 Mob Bns.
4	1	
5	0	
6	10	199th Security Rgt., 5 Para Div.
7	23	769 LS Regt, 195, 199 Sec Rgts.
8	9	2 Pz Div, 352 Inf Div, 199 Sec Rgt, 4 Obsn Bn.
9	110	809 Armenian Bn.
10	7	1016 LS Bn, 48 Inf Div.
11	8	352 Inf Repl Bn, 19th Inf Div.
12	8	Pz Brig Feldhernhalle, 19th Inf Div.
13	8	36th Inf Div, 19th Inf Div.
14	20	36th Inf Div, 15 Pz Gr Div, 506 Repl Bn, 19th Inf Div.
15	4	19th Inf Div.
16	5	106 Pz Brig, 5 Para Div.
17	1	
21	1	74 Inf Regt, 36 Inf Div.
23	1	999 Tng Rgt.
25	6	5 Para Div, 212 LS Bn.
28	<u>2</u>	
	234	Cumulative total for month.
	1070	Cumulative total for campaign.

NOTE: In order to prevent delaying the advance, forward elements turned prisoners over to the FFI wherever possible. For this reason the total given does not give a complete picture. The FFI forces were invaluable in evacuating prisoners, securing captured villages, locating enemy groups, etc.

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CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

Auth: CG, CCA, 5AD
Date: 5 November 1944
Int: WGR

COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION

ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT NO. 3

MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1944

BRIGADIER GENERAL EUGENE A. REGNIER, USA,
COMMANDING

- 4 Incls
- Incl 1, S-3 Journal, Oct 44
- Incl 2, S-3 Journal Supp. Oct 44.
- Incl 3, S-2 Journal, Oct 44.
- Incl 4, File of Messages.

CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"

APO # 255

U. S. Army.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS - MONTH OF OCTOBER 1944.

During the last week of the preceding month of September the Combat Command, relieved of its mission of the defense of the southern part of the Duchy of LUXEMBOURG, moved to assume the defense of the frontier in a new area between CLERVAUS and DIEKIRCH. The Combat Command remained in an assembly position, as mobile reserve on the high ground in the vicinity of KONSTHUM. Patrols and outposts were disposed to hold the high ground and Highway 16 as an OPL. This highway runs from DIEKIRCH north to CLERVAUX, parallel to and about three thousand yards west of the German frontier. German patrols were able to approach this highway from the border in the river valley through numerous wooded draws that run up to the road. On the 1st and 2nd of October several patrols approached the highway. Small actions took place. The enemy mined the road north of HOSINGEN, a six-man patrol was captured, artillery fell in the area, and other small patrols were spotted. Our OPL maintained an effective screen. German artillery fired on our vehicles moving on the highway. A billeting party under the command of Captain John J. McCafferty was hit and one man killed.

On 2 October defense of the Combat Command sector was taken over by the 28th Infantry Regiment of the 83rd Infantry Division. On 3 October radio silence was imposed, and no contact of the enemy was reported. The Combat Command had broken contact for the remainder of the month.

On 4 October the Combat Command marched north to an assembly area in the vicinity of BUTGENBACH, BELGIUM, in a position behind the 4th Infantry Division. Contact was made with Combat Command "R" to the south.

From 5 October to 10 October the command remained in position with the situation unchanged. Training, firing of weapons and re-supply operations were conducted. On 10 October the command was placed on a six-hour alert status ready for movement to AACHEN area to meet possible enemy counter-attacks there. Routes, assembly and refuelling areas were reconnoitered. A/Troop, 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and one Company of the 628th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached for the operation, on the following day, and the command was placed on a one-hour alert.

On 12 October the command moved north again at nightfall to take up a new assembly position in Army reserve behind the XIX Corps front, in the vicinity of HEERLEN, HOLLAND. The command crossed the border into the province of LIMBURG at 0300 and closed in new location at 0700, 13 October.

On 17 October the combat command shifted the position two miles to the south to the vicinity of SIMPELVELD. Units continued training in weapons and mines. Throughout this period enemy attempts to counter-attack were made almost daily, and two or more German divisions were believed to be in position behind AACHEN, but no enemy thrusts developed that required the commitment of the combat command. After closing the ring around AACHEN XIX Corps conducted operations mainly of a defensive and mopup nature. AACHEN surrendered 21 October.

On 25 October the combat command reverted to Division control and on the following day returned to the V Corps area and the 5th Division area, to assemble in the vicinity of SCHOPPEN, BELGIUM, four miles south of the former bivouac at BUTGENBACH. For the remaining five days of the month units continued assault training and commanders and staffs prepared plans and visited the area of future operations to the north, in the SIEGFRIED Line.

[REDACTED]

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

ANNEX # 1
 ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT # 3.

WOUNDED OR INJURED IN ACTION,
 MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1944.

	1	2	3	4	5	6-31 Neg.
Hq. & Hq Co. CC"A"						
34th Tk. Bn Armd.	1	3	1		1	
46th Armd. Inf. Bn.	6					
47th Armd. FA Bn.		1				
A/22nd Armd. Engr. Bn.						
A/75th Armd. Med. Bn.						
Det /A/127th Ord. Maint. Bn.						
A/85 Cav. Ren. Squadron					1	
TOTAL BY DAY	7	4	1	0	2	
TOTAL WIA FOR MONTH					14	

	KIA OCTOBER
47th Armd FA Bn	1
Other Units	0
TOTAL	1

63

[REDACTED]

COMBAT COMMAND "A" 5TH ARMORED DIVISION

VEHICULAR LOSSES AND CAPTURED OR DESTROYED,
MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1944.

ANNEX # 2
ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT # 3.

<u>UNIT LOSSES</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6-31 Neg.</u>
<u>Truck, $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton, C & R</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
<u>Trailer, 1 Ton, cargo</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	
<u>CAPTURED OR DESTROYED</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6-31 Neg</u>
<u>Field Piece, Type</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
<u>Unidentified</u>						

64

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"

APO # 255

U. S. Army.

Auth: CG, CCA, 5AD :

Date: 2 December 1944

Init: ~~WGR~~ WGR:

2 December 1944

Subject : Report of Action, Month of November, 1944.

TO : The Commanding General, 5th Armored Division,
APO # 255, U. S. Army.

Attached hereto is Report of Action against the Enemy No. 4,
month of November 1944.

For the Commanding General:

T. G. Reynolds
T. G. REYNOLDS,
Major, C. E.
S-3.

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HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. Army.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS - MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944.

Combat Command "A" was not in contact with the enemy during the month of November.

On the 1 November the Combat Command was assembled in bivouac at MODERSCHIED, BELGIUM, engaged in training. Training schedules were being planned for a replacement company. Plans were being laid in pursuance of V Corps instructions for an attack through the Siegfried Line, east of LAMMERSDORF, GERMANY, from an initial assembly area in the vicinity of NEUDORF, BELGIUM. Field Order #10 was issued directing the move to NEUDORF.

On the 2 November the Combat Command moved as planned. The Combat Command assembled 1 mile W of NEUDORF, BELGIUM. A Company 75th Medical Battalion closed in ROTGEN, GERMANY. An attack plan of two phases for the proposed operation was issued by Headquarters Combat Command A. The 2d Ranger Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Rudder, was attached to Combat Command A. The attack of the 28th Infantry Division toward SCHMIDT, GERMANY to the north of our assigned zone of action, made good headway.

The proposed attack for this Command was as follows:

A task force under Lt. Col. Scherer, A and B Companies, married, of the 34th Tank and 46th Infantry Battalions, reinforced by two companies of Rangers, were to attack from a bridgehead across the KALLBACK and through the Siegfried Line installations, held by outposts of the 4th Cavalry Squadron in front of the town of LAMMERSDORF, GERMANY, to seize the high ground to the east. The main objectives on this high ground were the towns of KESTERNICH and SIMMERATH. Included in the plan was an extensive artillery preparation by Division and Corps artillery, air support of several groups of fighter bombers and bridging operations across the KALLBACK by the 22d Armored Engineer Battalion, A Company. Pending the success of this operation, a second phase was planned in which Task Force Burton would pass through Task Force Scherer and continue the attack southward along the ridge to seize KONZEN. The entire operation was predicated on the success of the operation of the 28th Infantry Division to the north, first to seize SCHMIDT and subsequently advance southward toward STECKENBORN and STRAUCH on our left (N) flank.

On the 3 November the 28th Infantry Division captured SCHMIDT and plans were formulated for the Combat Command's attack.

On the 4 November the Germans retook SCHMIDT. The Combat Command took advantage of the delay in their jump off to disseminate further the plans for the operation.

After the 4th of November the situation of Task Force Ripple, 707th Tank Battalion, with the 28th Infantry Division forces grew steadily more difficult and the operations planned for the Combat Command were steadily postponed. Training in the units and in the provisional replacement training company was continuous.

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On the 8th November, A Company 628th TD Battalion replaced B Company of the same unit. Plans for present operations were postponed and the command was placed on two hour alert, as plans were initiated for a new operation in support of the 28th Infantry Division in the VOSSACK area. The enemy had driven attacking troops of the 28th Infantry Division back from SCHMIDT and KOMMERSCHIED and was threatening VOSSACK. Combat Command A was held in readiness to meet this threat. Two plans were published. Supreme Commander General Eisenhower visited the Combat Command this date, accompanied by Army Group, Army and Division Commanders.

On the 9 November there was no change in the situation at VOSSACK. The Combat Command was changed from a two hour alert to a six hour alert. Rain, sleet and snow fell and the bivouac area and roads became quite mucky.

On the 10 November the Combat Command was ordered to be prepared to defend against a counterattack in the LAMMERSDORF-MONSCHAU sector. The 102d Cavalry Group was relieving the 4th Cavalry Group in that area. The 28th Infantry Division situation was improved. A new plan was begun for the capture of SIMMERATH, KESTERNICH, STECKENBORN and SCHMIDT. Requirements of this plan included the attachment of two Regimental Combat Teams, one TD Battalion, two Reconnaissance Troops and two battalions of artillery in direct support with Division and Corps Artillery in general support. Plans were also completed on the following day, in conjunction with G-3, 5 A.D., for repelling counterattack in the 102d Cavalry Group sector. Instructions were also received relative to protection from friendly aircraft in coming operations on the front. Training continued.

On the 14 November the 2d Ranger Battalion passed to the control of the 28th Infantry Division.

On the 16 November all units were notified to be on the alert and close to cover because of large formations of friendly planes bombing on the Corps front.

On 17 November the Combat Command moved to a new bivouac area in the vicinity of WALHORN, BELGIUM about two miles to the west of the old area. The Command remained on six hour alert with the primary mission of repelling enemy counterattack in the 102d Cavalry Group sector. Other missions were not cancelled. Instructions were issued to units relative to drainage and maintenance of roads and bivouac areas, light, camouflage discipline and maintenance. Training continued.

On the 19 November, Division Command and Combat Command radio nets were opened for practice operation. Division plan to repulse counterattack in assigned zone was published. Engineers and a party of the 34th Tank Battalion and 628th Tank Destroyer Battalion, reconnoitered the MONSCHAU area for road nets and tank positions.

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On the 23 November plans were drawn up to repulse a possible german counterattack in the zone MONSCHAU-ROLLESBROICH in conjunction with Combat Command B.

On the 24 November the Commanding General was taken to the 4th Evacuation Hospital for treatment of minor head injuries sustained by a fall in the bivouac area during the night. Arrangements were made for training of tank crews of the 34th Tank Battalion in indirect firing with the 47th Field Artillery Battalion.

Colonel Hugh Fitzgerald assumed temporary command of the Combat Command in the absence of General Regnier on 25 November and was relieved of his duties on return of General Regnier to duty 27 November.

On the 28 November the alert status of The Command was changed from six hours to four, reverting back to six hours 0830, 29 November.

On the 29 November the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion was detached from Combat Command A and attached at 1200 to the 4th Infantry Division (VII) Corps, moving to an assembly area in the forest NW of HURTGEN, GERMANY prepared to attack the following morning to the east. Combat Command A was attached to the 4th Infantry Division 1600, 30 November and alerted to move to an assembly area in the 4th Infantry Division area on the 30th, to be prepared to follow up the attack of the 46th Infantry Battalion and seize the town of STRASS.

The Combat Command moved as ordered on the 30th, to a position in the vicinity of ZWEIFAL, GERMANY under control of the 4th Infantry Division.

Casualties for the month of November total two WIA in the 47th Field Artillery Battalion on 30 November. All other units negative.

Vehicular losses and captured material negative.

For the Commanding General:

W. G. Reynolds
W. G. REYNOLDS,
Major, CE,
S-3.

Inclosures - 3:

- Incl. #1 - S-3 Journal.
- Incl. #2 - S-3 Journal Supplement.
- Incl. #3 - S-2 Journal.

OPB

Auth: [REDACTED], 5th Army Div:
Date: 3 January 1945
Init: *MMR* GR

CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

**COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION**

ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT NO. 5
MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1944.

405-73,2

**BREKADIER GENERAL EUGENE A. REMKIE, USA,
COMMANDING.**

Paul N

CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

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[REDACTED]

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. Army.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS - MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944.

On the last day of November, 1944, Combat Command "A" moved from an assembly area one mile east of WALHEIM, BIELEFELD, to an assembly area one mile north of ZWEIFALL, GERMANY. The 46th Armored Infantry Battalion had passed to control of the 4th Infantry Division, Combat Team 22, to attack beyond Hill 401, north of KLEINHAU, GERMANY. A Company, 22d Armored Engineer Battalion, under Combat Command control, assisted with engineer work behind the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion. The infantry approached Hill 401 with the information that it was in the hands of friendly troops, only to meet intense small arms, artillery and mortar fire. Considerable losses were sustained taking the hill, the proposed line of departure for the attack to the east. An estimated 2000 rounds of artillery and mortar fire fell on our troops in a four hour period during the day. Fifty PW's and 6 MG's of the enemy were captured on the hill.

On 1 December the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion continued to hold positions gained east of KLEINHAU on the 22d Combat Team front. The remainder of the Combat Command remained in position. The Commanding General of Combat Command "A" kept close surveillance on the situation, to render all possible assistance to Major William H. Burton, 46th Armored Infantry Battalion Commander. The Combat Command aided in solving the difficulties that had been met in the bringing up of supplies and the evacuation of wounded through a difficult supply route and across open ground covered by enemy fire. This work had to be done on foot, from the edge of the Hurtgen Forest eastward past KLEINHAU to the fighting troops.

The 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion went into position west of KLEINHAU, in the forest, to support the infantry. Considerable difficulty was met adjusting fire, due to communications. There were no vehicular radios forward with the dismounted infantry. Two radios were lost while additional forward observers tried to go forward. Enemy opposition in front of the 46th Infantry included the Seventh Company, 985th Regiment, and three rifle companies and a heavy weapons company of the 353d Fusilier Battalion. The rifle companies averaged 70 men and 10 light machine guns apiece, and the heavy weapons company had six 81-mm mortars and 4 heavy machine guns, according to PW reports. The woody nature of the terrain into which the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion advanced east of KLEINHAU, favored the stubborn resistance of the enemy and his determined reinfiltration at every opportunity. The same difficulty was met by the battalions of the 22d Combat Team on the left. At 1400 a counterattack by the 941st Regiment, strength of three companies, was dispersed by our artillery fire. The 34th Tank Battalion brought forward 105-mm assault howitzers during the day to reinforce the fires of the 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. Elements of the 8th Infantry Division on the right, were to relieve the 46th Armored Infantry before midnight, to enable the 46th to seize the high ground,

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vicinity FOT3371, to advance north and east, and to gain a line of departure at the east edge of the woods for an attack on STRAS. At midnight the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion reverted to Combat Command "A" control.

During the evening of 1 December, General Regnier attended a conference at the HQ of the 22d Combat Team with its Commander, Colonel Lanham, and with Major Burton, Commander of the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion. Plans were made for a renewed attack in the morning, using B Company of the 34th Tank Battalion, one platoon of D Company of the 34th Tank Battalion (light tanks) and B Troop of the 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. The reconnaissance troop was initially to be mounted on the tanks and later to take over the defense of the southern flank as the attack progressed.

In the morning of 2 December, the tank and reconnaissance companies arrived at the assembly area west of KLEINHAU for the attack. Word was received that a German counterattack had started at dawn from the vicinity of GUY. Orders were received for the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, reinforced, to attack the first objective only, to hold there, and to await further orders. Orders were again received shortly afterward to call off the attack and hold in place. A group of P-47 fighter-bombers over the area assigned to bomb and strafe in front of the infantry, was released to the 4th Infantry Division. One platoon of A Company, 628th Tank Destroyer Battalion, was sent forward to reinforce fires of the 47th Field Artillery Battalion. The reconnaissance troop with the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion was relieved to return to the vicinity of KLEINHAU. During the afternoon General Regnier received orders to withdraw the infantry to KLEINHAU. This was accomplished during the evening, after which Major Burton led patrols through the former battle area to pick up wounded and missing men and lost equipment.

This operation was one of the first separate operations of the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion. Severe losses were incurred in all ranks in the face of concealed small arms fire and heavy artillery and mortar fire. During the operation the anti-tank platoons of the three rifle companies were committed as rifle platoons to replace the men lost. Great coolness and tenacity were demonstrated by the Battalion Commander and the officers and by the Artillery Battalion's forward observers, and great courage was displayed by the men of the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, fighting with little supporting fire in a difficult position.

On 3 December preparations were made for the Combat Command to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of KALHEIM, GERMANY. The 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion destroyed five enemy aircraft during the day and reverted to Division control later in the day. Enemy air was active over the entire Division and Corps areas.

On 4 December the Combat Command remained in place. The 46th Armored Infantry Battalion and A Company 22d Armored Engineer Battalion were still in assembly position west of KLEINHAU, not in contact with the enemy, but prepared at the request of 4th Infantry Division, to repel any counterattack on their front. The Commanding General and staff officers reconnoitered the KALHEIM area for adequate standing grounds to assemble the command.

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On 5 December the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, B Company 34th Tank Battalion and A Company 22d Armored Engineer Battalion, returned to the ZERIFALL assembly area. In the afternoon B Troop 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron reverted in place to the Squadron. Roads and unit areas were improved.

On 8 December, Colonel Lawrence K Smith reported to Combat Command "A" as Assistant Combat Commander and on 9 December the Combat Command moved to a new assembly area around HAHN, south of WALSHEIM. Considerable difficulty had been met in finding good hard standing for the Combat Command around WALSHEIM.

On 10 December instructions were received and plans were initiated relative to the next operation of the Combat Command. Billeting parties were sent to find a suitable assembly area west of GROSSHAU. A meeting of the staff and unit commanders was held in the evening to outline the situation and plans for an attack east of STRASS and GEY, in conjunction with elements of the 83d Infantry Division. Upon the seizure of these two towns by the 83d Infantry Division, the Command was given the mission to attack east across the open ground to seize the town of KUFFERATH and Hills 211 and 209 overlooking WINDEN and the ROER RIVER. On the south flank Combat Command "B" was to attack through woods to BERGHEIM and the high ground to the SE, completing the 5th Armored Division mission.

The plan of attack outlined by General Regnier was as follows: The "married" formation of the 34th Tank Battalion, which was composed of the Headquarters Company 34th Tank Battalion, A Companies and B Companies of the Tank and Infantry Battalions consolidated or "married", with approximately an infantry squad per tank, formed the assault echelon, commanded by Colonel William L Cabaniss, Tank Battalion Commander. The 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, consisting of Headquarters Company, 46th Armored Infantry Battalion and C Companies of the Tank and Infantry Battalions, married, constituted the Combat Command Reserve, under Lt Col William H Burton. Mortar and assault gun platoons of both battalions were attached to Task Force Cabaniss for supporting fires. A Company, 22d Armored Engineer Battalion, less one platoon, was to support the attack by engineer means, under Combat Command control, prepared to gap mine fields, bridge tank obstacles and repair and maintain routes. One platoon of engineers was attached to the assault echelon. Fifth Armored Division and VII Corps artillery was to support the operation. The Air Support Tank was attached to the 34th Tank Battalion. The attacking force was to proceed from HAHN through ZERIFALL and the NURTOEN FORST, through GROSSHAU and GEY, to deploy between GEY and STRASS and attack eastward toward the objective.

The Combat Command moved out early on the morning of 11 December to assemble immediately west of GROSSHAU and to await orders to attack. Roads and the assembly area were severely congested, and with the added prospect that the attack would be delayed by inability of the 83d Infantry Division to seize GEY and STRASS according to schedule, the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, Task Force Burton, returned to HAHN. During the afternoon word was received that the Combat Command would not be committed to action the following day. The 83d Infantry Division had not been able to consolidate their positions in GEY, meeting determined resistance of a small force of Germans remaining within the town. On the 11 and

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12 December, a Company 22d Engineer Battalion worked on the [REDACTED] road, the only practical route of approach up to the forward positions, four hundred yards southwest of GEY. Work here was hampered by small arms and artillery fire as the engineers assisted 83d Division engineer troops in filling craters, detecting and removing mines. A "scorpion", a medium tank with special chains for detonating mines, was knocked out by a mine and shoved to the side of the road, after attempts to remove it proved futile. At the Combat Command CP, west of GANSHAU, the Commanding General's half track and one jeep from D Company 34th Tank Battalion were blown up by mines within the area. Two officers and one enlisted man were injured. All units were ordered to button up for the night and to be prepared to resist infiltration and airborne attack.

On the 13 December two "crabs", medium tank mine exploders for clearing mines, were brought forward. Engineer work continued and the attack was again postponed, as enemy resistance in GEY continued.

On the morning of 14 December Combat Command "A" attacked, as Combat Command "B" jumped off at the south flank. At 0915 the 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion laid a smoke screen in front of the defile southwest of GEY, to screen the 34th Tank Battalion as it moved out to attack, B Companies leading. Enemy tanks were destroyed southeast of STASS, and a mine field was discovered in the vicinity of HAW, a small village east of GEY. A Company 22d Engineer Battalion sent a "crab" forward to assist clearance of this field of Teller and Lohu mines on the road surface. The attack progressed smoothly, although losses were incurred. Reaching HAW the 34th Tank Battalion met and neutralized enemy SP gun fire. Considerable artillery fire came from the east of the RUPER RIVER. B Company of the 34th Tank Battalion continued the attack after all but 3 tanks and 1 tank dozer were out of action. Led by the Company Commander, Captain Raymond Weeks, and by Lt Marvin Orgill, these remaining tanks pressed the attack on KUPFER TH. In the late afternoon A Companies passed through B Companies of the attacking force to reach the north, south and west edges of the town. Considerable fire was met from the southeast corner of BERTHIR, on the left flank, including artillery and small arms. Our aircraft hit KUPFERATH and gun positions beyond the town in support of the tank attack during the day. The attacking forces buttoned up after dark, prepared to complete the mission at daylight. A Company, 22d Engineer Battalion, buttoned up in GEY, and the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion arrived in the GANSHAU assembly area. Prisoners of war taken during the day were from the 941, 942 and 943 Regiments, the 353 Fusilier Battalion and Alarm Company.

Early the following morning the 34th Tank Battalion continued the attack with A Companies entering BERTHIR TH and B Companies seizing the final objective, Hills 209 and 211. Artillery concentrations were requested and given on SP gun positions to the south, across the river, which were firing on the attacking force. By 0700 the 34th Tank Battalion had cleared KUPFER TH, reached the final objectives and were dug in in the hills. Plans were begun immediately for relief in BERTHIR TH by the 331 Infantry Regiment (83d Division), and for taking over part of Combat Command B's positions. A Company, 22d Armored Engineer Battalion, immediately began work on the main supply route. Plans were also initiated for

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attack on WINDEN. Several artillery pieces were located on the east side of the ROER, and reinforced by heavy mortar fire, these harassed our positions and supply and communication routes continually throughout the period that our troops remained in these positions.

The 46th Armored Infantry Battalion came forward to reinforce the outpost of the position in dismounted formation, while the tanks remained in reserve and tank destroyers were placed for supporting fires at strategic points. The Combat Command sector finally included the Hills 209 and 211, with battalion CP's in BERGHEIM. The latter town still remained in Combat Command B area.

The next few days the Combat Command held the line gained overlooking the ROER RIVER, in continuous mortar and shell fire. Anti-airborne security was strengthened on instructions of higher headquarters, plans for clearing up WINDEN were extended, and continuous watch was maintained for signs of an enemy counterattack, or any build up of forces on the west side of the river. Numerous artillery and mortar concentrations were placed on the enemy bridgeheads, as well as into discovered gun positions across the river. The enemy kept the ROER bridges in his hands intact.

On 19 December the CP moved forward with the other reserve elements to a new assembly area between GROSSHAU and GRY. ~~70-mm~~ tanks of A Company, 34th Tank Battalion, replaced the tank destroyers of A Company, 628th Tank Destroyer Battalion, as the latter were relieved from Combat Command "A". The 15th Armored Infantry Battalion in front of BERGHEIM was attached from Combat Command "B" to Combat Command "A".

The following day the 15th Armored Infantry Battalion attacked the high ground east of BERGHEIM with one platoon of A Company, 34th Tank Battalion attached. The objective gained, a platoon was dispatched to fill the gap between the 15th Armored Infantry Battalion and positions of the 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, under Combat Command B, on the right flank. At the same time the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion attacked into GIBERSIDHAUSEN to the north, and was to be relieved there and on hill 211 by the 331 Infantry Regiment. A Company, 46th Armored Infantry Battalion had remained in reserve position, and C Company of the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion was ordered to withdraw to a position, providing, along with the tanks, a defense in depth against possible German counterattack. Considerable movement was observed in WINDEN, and the attack of the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion proposed for the following day was postponed. There was some delay in the relief in GIBERSIDHAUSEN, which was not completed until the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion had cleared out the town, in face of stiff opposition, mortar and small arms fire, the following day.

Plans were resumed for the attack on WINDEN by the 46th and 15th Armored Infantry Battalions on 22 December. In the morning all operations were cancelled on Division order, and the following morning, the Combat Command, relieved by the 83d Infantry Division, withdrew from contact with the enemy and assembled at Hill.

- 5 -

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Commencing on the 17 December the enemy had launched a determined attack with several panzer and infantry divisions to our south, directed mainly against the VIII Corps front, hitting at several points from DENTENACH in LUZERN to HILSHAM, GERMANY. The German attack, initially successful in securing a deep penetration into our lines, was instrumental in causing the withdrawal of the 5th armored division to a reserve position to meet further enemy thrusts.

On the 20 December the Combat Command moved to an assembly area west of HILSHAM, GERMANY, where they stood on a six hour alert and engaged in maintenance, cleaning up and restoring full battle efficiency.

The Command had the opportunity to celebrate Christmas with a quiet, clear day, although the six hour alert was changed to two hour alert and all units were notified to carry gas masks and CB equipment immediately available.

From 26 to 31 December, The Command remained in assembly area between HILSHAM and HILSHAM, GERMANY, west of HILSHAM. Plans were made for the command to take part in division action against German attacks in the First and Ninth Army zones of action. Specific plans were made for action in support of the 30th Infantry Division in front of HILSHAM, to neutralize any thrust from the German salient in the hills, directed northward toward HILSHAM and VILSHAM. Command reconnaissance was conducted in connection with these plans. Three assembly areas were selected and reconnoitered, including engineer and route reconnaissance, north and east of HILSHAM. For several hours on the 27 December The Command was alerted to meet a reported enemy airborne landing in the vicinity of HILSHAM, HOLLAND. The report proved false. The proposed movement was cancelled.

COMBAT CASUALTY REPORT, 5TH AIRBORNE DIVISION

KILLED IN ACTION AND
BATTLE CASUALTIES.

Month of December, 1944.

ANNEX #1,
Action against
Enemy Report 5.

Battle Casualties.

	KIA	W.C.	T.M.	HE	TOTAL
Hq GSA	0	1	0	0	1
34th Tr Bn	13	24	24	4	65
46th Armd Inf Bn	60	193	44	11	308
47th Armd PA Bn	0	2	5	0	7
A/22 Armd Ingr Bn	2	4	2	0	8
A/85 Cav Recon Sq	0	1	0	0	1
A/75 Armd Med Bn	0	1	0	0	1
Det A/127 Ord Maint Bn	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	75	226	75	15	391

57

[REDACTED]

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH AIRBORNE DIVISION.

ANNEX #2,
Action against
Enemy Report #5.

VEHICULAR LOSSES.

Month of September, 1944.

TYPE	DATE						TOTAL
	11	13	15	16	20	21	
Tank, medium, M-4, 75-mm.			6		1	3	10
Tank, medium, M-4, 75-mm.	1		1				2
Car, half-track.				1			1
Truck, 1/4-Ton		1					1

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COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION

ANNEX #3,
Action Against
Enemy Report #5.

ENEMY MATERIAL DESTROYED OR CAPTURED.

Month of December, 1944.

GROUND

Arty Piece, 150-mm, SP	1
Arty Piece, 75-mm, SP	1
Guns, AT, AA, 88-mm	4
Guns, SP, AT, 75-mm	5
MG, Cal. .31	6

AIR

ME 109	9
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NOTE: These figures are observed results only.



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HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. Army.

:
: Auth: [REDACTED], 5th Armd Div :
: Date: 4 February 1945 :
: Init: *MGR* WGR :

4 February 1945.

Subject: Report of Action No. 6, Month of January 1945.
To : The Commanding General, 5th Armored Division,
APO #255, U. S. Army.

Attached hereto is Report of Action against the Enemy No. 6,
month of January 1945.

For the Commanding General:

W. G. Reynolds
W. G. REYNOLDS,
Major, C.E.
S-3.

605-73.2

INCLOSURES - 3

- Incl. 1 - S-3 Journal
- Incl. 2 - S-3 Journal Supplement
- Incl. 3 - S-2 Journal

Indy

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[REDACTED]
CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

:
: Auth: CG, 5th Arm Div :
: Date: 4 February 1945 :
: Init: *WGE* WGE :

CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION

ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT NO. 6
MONTH OF JANUARY, 1945.

BRIGADIER GENERAL EUGENE A. REYNIER, USA,
COMMANDING.

44

[REDACTED]

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. Army.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS - MONTH OF JANUARY 1945.

On 1 January 1945, Combat Command A was in assembly area between BAKLEN and WELKENRAEDT, BELGIUM on four hour alert, in Army reserve, prepared to repel any new German threat on the First or Ninth Army fronts. Plans were made for operations east of STAVELOT and three assembly areas were assigned and reconnoitered north and east of AACHEN, GERMANY, for use in operations in the Ninth Army sector. In the ensuing days A Company, 22nd Armored Engineer Battalion, swept the latter three areas, removing over 800 mines of various types. Training and firing on range was conducted by all units during the month.

On the morning of New Year's Day, 6 ME 109's came over the area at extremely low altitude. Five were shot down by anti-aircraft fire of the command.

On 25 January the Division was relieved from four hour alert status. The following day the combat command was notified of a new mission in the KESTERNICH-KONZEN area, with the 78th Infantry Division. A Troop 85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, A Company 628th Tank Destroyer Battalion and the 47th and 71st Armored Field Artillery Battalions were attached to the Combat Command.

On 28 January the command moved to NEUDORF, BELGIUM and was attached to the 78th Infantry Division. The artillery battalions moved into firing positions in the vicinity of LAMMERSDORF, GERMANY.

The operation of the 78th Infantry Division, CCA attached, planned for the 29th of January, was an attack from the bridgehead through Siegfried Line defenses at SIMMERATH, GERMANY, with two combat teams and a combat command abreast. The objectives were KESTERNICH, HUPPENBROICH, EICHERSCHIED, KONZEN and IMGENBROICH. This operation was designed as the initial move to straighten out the line and push the enemy back to the ROER River, northeast of MONSCHAU, to protect the right flank of XIX Corps and Ninth Army. It was planned in conjunction with an attack of the 9th Infantry Division to the south of the ROER River, with the initial objective of ROHREN. The operation was postponed 24 hours.

The plan of operation, perfected in detail the following day was as follows: At 0530 after a five minute artillery preparation, the 311th Infantry was to attack KESTERNICH and HUPPENBROICH; the 310th Infantry was to attack southwest from SIMMERATH along the IMGENBROICH Road to seize the network of pillboxes and prepared positions along it, and to attack KONZEN and the neighboring high ground from the north; Combat Command A, with the 1st battalion, 311th Infantry attached, was to jump off at 0730 from SIMMERATH to seize EICHERSCHIED. Combat Command A was to move southwest from SIMMERATH toward the crossroad AM GERICHT, then south-east parallel to the road across the open country to EICHERSCHIED. The 34th Tank Battalion, consisting of Headquarters and Headquarters Company 34th Tank Battalion;

[REDACTED]

A Companies of the 34th Tank Battalion and 46th Armored Infantry Battalion married; B Companies of the 34th Tank Battalion and 46th Armored Infantry Battalion married; mortar and assault gun platoons of the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, formed the attacking force. The 46th Armored Infantry Battalion formed the combat command reserve. Two platoons A Company, 22nd Engineer Battalion attached to the 34th Tank Battalion, had the mission of clearing passages through enemy mine fields immediately southwest of SIMMERATH, to enable the attack to jump off and to further assist the attacking echelon by continuous road maintenance. The engineers had six mine exploders, medium tank flails, of A Company 739th Tank Battalion attached.

In the afternoon and evening of the 29th January, Combat Command A moved to assembly areas in LAMMERSDORF and SIMMERATH, GERMANY.

At 0530, 30 January, the 78th Infantry Division units jumped off as planned. The two platoons of A Company, 22nd Engineer Battalion, commenced work behind the 310th Infantry, clearing paths through the mine fields along the SIMMERATH-IMGENBROICH Road. Lanes were cut through a friendly mine field, first by 78th Infantry Division Engineers, and following that, the flails started through the enemy mine field beyond. The weather was cold and windy. The deep snow on the ground and wind driven flurries in the air made work extremely difficult. Two flails were knocked out by mines and one by enemy fire; a fourth flail brought forward to reinforce the working party was knocked out by a mine. Advance of the engineers was held up for a while by the infantry in front of them attacking the crossroads at AM GERICHT.

A Companies of the 34th Tank Battalion and 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, came through SIMMERATH and were waiting for clearance of the mine field to proceed. At 1000 they were ordered to go forward with the attack regardless of the status of the mine field. The tanks moved down the road, and off the road to the left, where they formed up to continue the attack without casualty. The half tracks of the armored infantry were unable to operate in the deep snow fields where the snow depth varied from two to five or more feet. The half tracks were left behind as the infantry dismounted to follow the tanks on foot. A Company, 34th Tank Battalion moved around the HUPPENBROICH draw, east of the crossroads at AM GERICHT, and south parallel to the road in EICHERSCHEID. The going was hard and extreme difficulty was met crossing large hedge rows. Tanks bellied on the hedgerows and were pulled off by other tanks. The company followed a zig zag course through the fields, avoiding the natural obstacles of the hedges and drifts. Continuous assault fire on hedgerows and logical defensive positions effectively nullified all enemy resistance, with the exception of one harassing AT gun shooting ineffectually from the east. Visibility hindered enemy observation of our movements. A Company of the 34th Tank Battalion reached the line of departure for the final assault of EICHERSCHEID at 1230.

The tank company waited at the line of departure while an artillery preparation from seventeen battalions was fired on the objective and at 1300 began to assault EICHERSCHEID. Three 88-mm anti-tank guns were knocked out by fire from the tanks, again without casualties to our forces. A Company pulled up in front of the town and B Company 34th Tank Battalion came up on the right flank. Both companies kept up continuous fire into the town as they waited for the infantry on foot to come up and assist in the clearing of the town.

[REDACTED]

The infantry had a difficult and exhausting march across the deep snow fields to EICHERSCHEID. They were forced to stop at frequent intervals and short distances to rest in order to be able to go on. At 1530 the infantrymen of A and B Companies of the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion and of the 1st Battalion of the 311th Infantry had arrived in sufficient strength to commence clearing the town along with the tanks. The tanks and infantry went through the town systematically clearing the houses of the enemy. A Companies cleared the east side of town and B Companies cleared the west side. The enemy put up little resistance, although well set up to do so. The artillery and assault fire had thoroughly shocked the German troops. Over two hundred were routed from the cellars of the town. By 1800 the town was cleared and defensive positions were set up for the night.

On the following morning, 31 January, contact was made with the 311th Infantry Regiment to the northeast and with the 60th Regiment of the 9th U. S. Infantry Division to the south. The high ground south of the town was occupied without enemy opposition by A Companies of the 34th Tank Battalion and 46th Armored Infantry Battalion, and the ground west of town commanding a large draw was occupied by B Companies. The positions were consolidated and strengthened during the day, and in the evening all troops of the combat command, except the 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, were relieved by the 78th Infantry Division and returned to NEUDORF, BELGIUM. The 47th Field Artillery Battalion remained in place until the next morning to assist in the support of the infantry in case of counterattack.

The operation was completed successfully with a relatively small number of casualties to our forces. Lt Colonel William L. Cabaniss, commander of the 34th Tank Battalion, was wounded during the action on the 30th of January by a shell from a small enemy anti-tank gun. The German troops on our front of the 62nd Volks Grenadier Division and the 272nd Grenadier Division were thoroughly disorganized by the force of the attack and the preceding artillery shelling. Two hundred and thirty prisoners were taken.

[REDACTED]

COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

KILLED IN ACTION AND
BATTLE CASUALTIES.

Month of January, 1945.

ANNEX #1,
Action Against
Enemy Report #6.

<u>ORGANIC UNITS</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>BC</u>	<u>CE</u>
34th Tk Bn	0	7	0
46th Armd Inf Bn	4	24	0
A/22 Armd Engr Bn	1	5	0
<u>ATTACHED UNITS</u>			
A/387 AAA Bn	0	1	0
A/628 TD Bn	1	1	0
1 Bn 311 Inf Bn, 78 Inf Div	0	21	4
TOTAL	6	59	4

[REDACTED]

48



COMBAT COMMAND "A", 5TH ARMORED DIVISION.

ANNEX #2,
Action Against
Enemy Report #6.

VEHICULAR LOSSES.

Month of January, 1945.

All Units - Negative.

ENEMY MATERIEL DESTROYED OR CAPTURED.

Month of January, 1945.

GROUND

Gun, AT, type unknown	.	.	.	1
Guns, AT, AA, 88-mm	.	.	.	3
Mortars, 120-mm	.	.	.	3
Howitzers, Inf, 150-mm	.	.	.	1

AIR

ME 109	.	.	.	5
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[REDACTED]

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. Army.

CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

: [REDACTED] :
: Auth: CG, CCA, 5th Armd Div :
: Date: 6 March 1945 :
: Init: WGR WGR :

6 March 1945.

Subject: Report of Action No. 7, Month of February 1945.

To : The Commanding General, 5th Armored Division,
APO #255, U. S. Army.

Attached hereto is Report of Action against the Enemy No. 7,
month of February 1945.

For the Commanding General:

W. G. Reynolds
W. G. REYNOLDS,
Major, C. E.,
S-3.

INCLOSURES - 4

- Incl. 1 - S-3 Journal
- Incl. 2 - S-3 Journal Supplement
- Incl. 3 - S-2 Journal
- Incl. 4 - Letter of Commendation

9767

[REDACTED]

Incl 5
5

CLASSIFICATION REMOVED

36

: [REDACTED] :
Auth: CG, CCA, 5th Arm Div :
Date: 6 March 1945 :
Init: *WGR* WGR :

COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION

ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT NO. 7

MONTH OF FEBRUARY, 1945.

BRIGADIER GENERAL EUGENE A. REGNIER, USA,
COMMANDING.

[REDACTED]

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. ARMY:

REPORT OF ACTION AGAINST ENEMY - MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1945.

1. Campaign: Germany.

2. Commanding Officers:

Combat Command A - Brigadier General Eugene A. Regnier, 08295, USA.
Hq & Hq Co, Combat Command A - Captain Karl W. Roth, 01010340, Inf.
34th Tank Battalion - Major Glenn L. Foote, O-450438, Cav. (1-15 Feb. 1945); Lt. Col., Richard H. Jones, O238409, Cav. (15-28 Feb. 1945).
46th Armd Inf Bn - Lt. Col., William H. Burton, O366028, Inf.
47th Armd Field Artillery Bn - Lt. Col., John B. Rosenzweig, O246291, FA.
Company A, 22nd Armd Engr Bn - Captain Thomas W. Grose, O1103189, CE.
Company A, 75th Med Bn, Armd - Captain Sanford M. Langsom, O-424470, MC.
Company A, 628th Tank Destroyer Bn - Captain James H. Lloyd, O-409317, FA.
Troop A, 85th Cav Rcn Sq, Mcz - Captain Seymour B. Scott, O306958, Cav.

3. Losses in Action:

a. Personnel
None

b. Vehicular
None

4. Narrative.

On 1 February the combat command completed its assembly vicinity NEUDORF, BELGIUM following its operation at EICHERSCHEID, GERMANY and was relieved from attachment to 78th Infantry Division.

The period 1-6 February was devoted to maintenance and to reconnaissance by road and billeting parties for a proposed move north to vicinity HEERLEN, HOLLAND, the division having been attached to XIII Corps 1 February.

The move to HEERLEN, HOLLAND was made on the night 6-7 February in married formation, less the engineers, and with 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion attached for movement only. Roads were badly chewed up as a result of heavy traffic and the recent thaw. For the purpose of security all divisional and unit markings were removed from vehicles, divisional shoulder patches were taken off, and a new telephone code was adopted. These counterintelligence measures remained in effect until the 22 February.

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From 7-26 February the command remained in the vicinity of HEERLEN, HOLLAND and engaged in training, repair and maintenance of roads. The condition of roads resulted in the division being assigned to road repair in the zone of XIII Corps. This work was done by troops from 46th Armored Infantry Battalion and 34th Tank Battalion under supervision of engineers of A Company of the 22nd Armored Engineer Battalion. Work consisted of improving drainage, filling pot holes, and building up the shoulders of the roads north, east and south of UBACH, GERMANY.


The division received a commendation from General Gillem, XIII Corps Commander, for the work on roads. Copy of commendation is attached as inclosure #4.

On the 26th February, CCA moved to vicinity HOTTORF, GERMANY, east of the ROER River and received the mission for the next day of moving on order to vicinity of RATH, GERMANY to protect the right flank of the Corps. A Troop of the 85th Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and A Company of the 628th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached as of 1600.

On the 27th of February, CCB of the 5th Armored Division, attacked from a line of departure at ERKELENZ, GERMANY, north to take RHEINDAHLEN, then HEHN, GERMANY. Troops of CCA were grouped with B and C Companies, married, two platoons of A Company 22nd Engineers and two platoons of A Company 628th Tank Destroyer Bn with the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion; A Company married was with the 34th Tank Battalion; 47th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was in direct support; A/85 and A/22(-) were under combat command control and D Company 34th Tank Battalion was attached to Headquarters Combat Command A. The 46th Infantry followed Combat Command B prepared to resist enemy counterattacks from east or west while the reconnaissance screened Combat Command A's right flank. By 1500 the 46th had closed up on Combat Command B then held up by enemy resistance, and the 46th, Hq & Hq Co CCA, TDs and Engrs moved off the road into an assembly area north of ERKELENZ (FOO9782) GERMANY. Roads were crowded and the 34th Tank Battalion was not able to come up to the assembly area until after nightfall. The command received as its mission for the 28th February protection of the Corps right flank between horizontal grid lines 78 and 82. In preparation for this mission A/85 Rcn Sq outposted CCA's assigned zone generally along the line of contact. No enemy contact was made during the day.

On the 28th February, A Troop of the 85th Rcn Sq placed platoons in BECKRATH and VENRATH, GERMANY, reconnoitered to the east and established contact with the 407th Infantry of the 102nd Infantry Division attacking WICKRATH. The 34th disposed married platoons in WICKRATHHAHN, BECKRATH and HERRATH.

At 1300, Commanding General 5th Armored Division visited the CP, released the command from its present mission and gave instructions for the next day's operations. CCA moved beginning at 1910 to an assembly area in woods just south of HARDT, GERMANY. C Squadron of the First Lothians Border Yeomanry, a British unit of flail tanks, was attached at 1300, but one platoon was detached to CCR later in the day. The 695th and 557th Field Artillery Battalions were made available to reinforce the fires of the 47th Field Artillery.


At 2100, orders were issued to unit commanders for operations on 1 March. The proposed operation was for the 46th Infantry, supported by the 34th Tank Battalion, to attack from HARDT, GERMANY, northeast passing between VIERSEN and MUNCHEN-GLADBACH and cutting communications south and southeast of VIERSEN.

No enemy action other than the killing of a civilian sniper in WICKRATHHAIN occurred during the day, but five prisoners were taken.

No enemy materiel was destroyed or captured during the month.

42

[Redacted]
1944-31 Mar 45

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND
APO #255
U. S. Army.

:
: Auth: CG JCA, 5th Armd Div :
: Date: 7 April 1945 :
: Init: *VGR* WGR :

7 April 1945.

Subject: Report of Action No. 8, Month of March 1945.
To : The Commanding General, 5th Armored Division,
APO #255, U. S. Army.

Attached hereto is Report of Action against the Enemy No. 8,
month of March 1945.

For the Commanding General:

Henry P Halsell
HENRY P. HALSELL,
Captain - C. E.,
S-3 Air.

605-7312

- INCLOSURES - 5
- Incl 1 - S-3 Journal
- Incl 2 - S-3 Journal Supplement
- Incl 3 - S-2 Journal
- Incl 4 - S-3 Air Journal
- Incl 5 - Map Supplement

*not used
in 1945*

9707

RESTRICTED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
Donald Hamer
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE 13 Aug 1945

RECORDED

: ~~SECRET~~ :
: Auth: CG CCA, 5th Armd Div :
: Init: WGR :
: Date: 7 April 1945 :

COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION

ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT NO. 8

MONTH OF MARCH, 1945.

BRIGADIER GENERAL EUGENE A. PECHIER, USA,
COMMANDING.

RECORDED

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO No 255
U. S. Army

: [REDACTED]
: Auth: CG 301, 5th Armd Div
: Init: WGR
: Date: 6 Apr 45

REPORT OF ACTION AGAINST ENEMY - MONTH OF MARCH 1945.

1. CAMPAIGN: Germany.

2. LOSSES IN ACTION:

a. Personnel:

UNIT	KIA	SWA	LWA
<u>ORGANIC</u>			
34th Tk Bn			3
46th Armd Inf Bn	2	5	27
<u>ATTACHED OR IN SUPPORT</u>			
A/85 Rcn			2
A/628 TD	2		1
Hq/47 FA Bn			3
A/387 AAA			2
Total	4	5	38

b. Vehicular:

TYPE	DESTROYED or ABANDONED	RECOVERED
Aircraft, P-47		1
Carrier, H/T, M-3	1	2
Truck, 1/4-Ton, Lx4		1
Tank, Med, w/75-mm gun		1
Total	1	5

3. COMMANDERS:

Combat Command "A" - Brig Gen Eugene A. Higgins, CG295, US (010301-220700 March; 311600-312400 March). Lt Col Richard H. Jones, CG39409, Cav (29700-291300 March). Col Hugh J. Fitzgerald, 06719, Cav (291300-311600 March).
 Hq & Hq Co, Combat Command "A" - Capt Karl J. Roth, C1010240, Inf (1-12 March);
 1 Lt R. P. Whitaker, 0517645, Inf (12-31 March).
 34th Tank Bn - Lt Col Richard H. Jones, 0298409, Cav (1-22; 29-31 March);
 Major Joseph J. Borley, 0294496, Inf (22-29 March).
 46th Armd Inf Bn - Lt Col William H. Burton, 0366028, Inf (1-17; 26-31 March);
 Major Lionel R. Fuller, CG5980, Inf (17-30 March).
 47th Armd FA Bn - Lt Col John S. Rosenzweig, 0246191, FA (Not Atch'd during Mar).
 A Co, 22nd Armd Engr Bn - Capt Thomas J. Grese, C1103189, CE.
 A Tr, 85th Cav Recon Sq, Recz - Capt Seymour B. Scott, 0306958, Cav.
 A Co, 628th TD Bn - Capt James H. Lloyd, 0409317, FA. 1 Lt Pete [unclear], 01824257, TD (30-31 March).
 A Co, 75th Med Bn - Capt Sanford W. Langson, 0424470, MC.
 Commanders of attached units are shown for period of attachment only.

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4. ATTACHMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

CCA was under control of 5th Armd Div during the entire month of March 1945. The following units were attached to or detached from CCA for the period indicated:

1st Lothian Border Yeomanry - 1-3 March.
A Tr, 85th Cav Rcn Sq, Mecz - 1-10, 30-31 March.
A Co, 628th TD Bn - 1-9, 30-31 March.
A Co, 22nd Armd Engr Bn - 1-10, 30-31 March.
A Co, 34th Tk Bn and A Co, 46th Inf Bn, married - attached CCR, 5th Armd Div 041855-081300.

5. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES AND LOSSES:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Loss due to Enemy Action</u>
Cal. .30	25,000	
Cal. .45	900	
75-mm gun	625	
76-mm gun	423	

6. OPERATIONS:

a. Hardt - Niers Canal - Anrath - Fischeln

(1) Enemy divisions which had been defending the Roer River line were broken and disorganized by the rapid advance of the Ninth Army. Units were badly mixed and, where encountered, generally in a state of unpreparedness because of our rapid advance and their own lack of communication.

Enemy defenses were generally ineffective and unprepared. Natural obstacles and constructed AT ditches and barricades were rarely manned. No mines were encountered, but the bridge over the Niers Canal was blown. In general, it may be said that the only defenses encountered by CCA were in Anrath and the outskirts of Krefeld.

Enemy dispositions are shown on Map "C". A map was captured in Anrath on the night of 1 March showing the 176th Inf Div in defense of the Niers and Word Canals from Anrath east with the 15th Pz Gr Div behind defending Krefeld to the S and W. In addition the 130th Armd Rcn Bn was reported by a PW as defending with three companies the steel works South of Krefeld. These dispositions proved to be generally correct as verified by identification of prisoners; however, it is believed that the 176th Inf Div had not yet succeeded in taking up much of a position along the canal either because of lack of time or because of lack of personnel. No counterattacks were suffered by CCA during the period though small numbers of tanks were reported moving in and around Krefeld. Artillery and mortar fire was received in moderate quantities from Anrath to Fischeln on the 2nd, while on the 1st weak and inaccurate artillery fire was received, particularly around the bridge site. This relatively small amount of artillery fire received is believed to have been due to the enemy having moved the bulk of his guns East of the Rhine and to his inability to concentrate his fires. What was left of 2 batteries of artillery from the 176th Inf Div was overrun in Anrath. Enemy air made three attacks during the period. A liaison plane belonging to the 47th was shot down on the 1st and two strafing attacks were made on Anrath on the 2nd.

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On 1 March 93 prisoners were taken between Hardt and Anrath incl. The prisoners were chiefly from elements of the 176th Inf Div, the 286th Par Bn and from KG Heidtman, a battle group under control of the 8 Para Div which had defended Hardt on 28th February. Of the 93 prisoners, 61 were taken in Anrath and turned over to the 102nd Div without obtaining identifications. However, the 1176 Arty Regt of the 176th Inf Div was identified by artillery pieces in Anrath and the woods beyond. On 2 March 71 prisoners were taken coming from the 115 Pz Cr Regt, the 130th Armd Rcn Bn, and again from the 176th Inf Div.

(2) Elements affecting action.

Enemy information in the normal sense was generally lacking. Because of the tempo of the operations Rcn by leading elements was relied on entirely. Photo Intelligence information was accurate as regards physical installations; but, as noted previously, obstacles were found to be undefended and gun positions, particularly AA, unoccupied. Lack of recent cover of the Viersen area prevented our choosing before hand a crossing under the railroad.

The civilian population was neutral and did not affect the operation except that crowds of refugees behind the fighting presented a traffic and administrative problem.

The terrain was flat and alternately rolling with no natural obstacles other than the canal and some scattered woods. The soft soil prevented deployment and forced the command to fight on the road almost exclusively.

(3) Action.

For this action CCA operated under control of its parent unit, the 5th Armd Div. Throughout the period troops of the command were disposed as follows; Hq/46th controlled B and C Cos married, with two platoons of A/22nd and two platoons of A/628th attached; Hq/34th had A Cos married; A/85th, A/22nd(-) and A/628th(-) operated under Combat Command control; D/34th was attached to Hq/CCA; 47th FA was in direct support of the Combat Command and 695th and 557th FA Bns were available to reinforce the fires of the 47th; C Sq 1st Lothian Border Yeomanry, a British unit of flail tanks, was attached but not used as no mines were encountered. The 46th led throughout supported by the 34th. The command operated in the zone of the 102nd Inf Div; 84th Inf Div was on the left and 2nd Armd Div and 29th Inf Div were on the right.

By 2100 on the night of 28 Feb, CCA had completed its move North and was concentrated just South of Hardt. The command, at this time, had the mission of attacking on 1 March so as to pass between Munchen Gladbach and Viersen and cut communication with the latter town from South to Southeast. Early in the morning the mission was changed to one of taking the original axis of advance and continuing on East to the Rhine River passing South of Krefeld. At 1625 on the 1st the mission was changed to send the command North of Krefeld through Huls. While this change was cancelled on the night of the 1st, it caused the command to take Anrath rather than by-pass the town to the South as originally planned. At 1240 on the 2nd when contact had been gained with the 2nd Armd Div moving Northeast across our front the original mission was modified to cutting communications South and Southeast of Krefeld while remaining West of the 20th grid line.

During the night of 28 February, Major Fuller of the 46th Inf Bn led a patrol to the AT ditch North of Hardt. The patrol found this obstacle undefended and the road through the ditch, though blown, passable to vehicles. The patrol encountered no enemy but observed a fire fight near Winkeln. The patrol returned and a platoon of infantry was sent to outpost the town of Rasseln.

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At 0710 1 March the 46th with C Cos leading jumped off from its L/D just beyond the AT ditch through RASSELN. In order to avoid the small satellite towns of Viersen C Cos were sent East on a secondary road as shown on Map "A". By 0815 C was stopped by soft ground, and the original route of advance was abandoned. At 1035 B Cos moved North on the main road from the original L/D. C Companies returned and followed B. This delay of two hours and twenty minutes before B Cos crossed the L/D was due to a variety of factors. Lt Col Burton was reluctant to abandon his original plan and continued to fight the terrain after his chosen route was revealed as impracticable. The tail of C Cos had to be pulled off the main road to permit B to pass. Part of B took a wrong turn in Hardt and had to be retrieved. B Co commander used considerable time to assemble his platoon leaders and issue new orders. In addition an artillery Bn interrupted the movement of B causing further delay. The abortive attempt of the 46th to move East cannot, however, be considered as having been entirely useless as it provided a diversion, the entire effect of which cannot be gauged.

By 1345 the head of the column had reached the railroad by the route shown. Scattered enemy resistance of infantry and bazookas was encountered enroute. At 0830 the 47th had fired on tanks and vehicles in Bockert and the Southwest edge of Viersen. About 30 PWs were taken. The column was stopped at the railroad by a demolished underpass. By 1500 a route under the railroad had been found and the column was moving again. At 1520 the bridge over the Niers Canal was blown as the head of the column approached within about 100 yards. Only one lane of the bridge was destroyed, but the other lane was considered too damaged to pass, with the tanks. Infantry crossed over the bridge, dismounted, and established a bridgehead to protect the work of the engineers. An unexploded 50kg bomb remained in a drainage culvert on the near side. This was removed while the treadway trucks were coming up. By 1835 48 feet of treadway had been laid to strengthen the bridge and C Cos started to cross.

Viewing the operation in retrospect it appears that the 46th could, and perhaps should have, crossed the bridge immediately to take Anrath before dark. Captain Grose, commanding the engineer company, was of the opinion, and so stated, that the bridge would carry tanks in its weakened condition, but that he did not know how long it would continue to do so. It would have been possible, then, to have crossed with half-tracks and light tanks and to have taken Anrath well before dark. Such a movement would have intercepted earlier the buildup at Anrath and have permitted movement some distance East from the town before darkness forced a halt. However, the Commanding General based his decision not to cross the damaged bridge on the engineer estimate that treadway could be laid in 45 minutes, whereas it actually required some three hours.

The 46th was soon in Anrath where they encountered heavy road blocks and about a company of infantry. The enemy was surprised to find us in the town and moved into and about the town until captured or killed. There appears to have been a definite buildup from Krefeld to Anrath which was prevented by our capture of the town. This buildup continued throughout the night until as late as 1000 the next morning. Positions for the night 1-2 March are shown on Map "A". The 46th established local security and two platoons of light tanks guarded the bridge. It was intended that the 46th move beyond Anrath and outpost the R/J at 023989. It so happened that the entire night was required for the 46th to mop up the town and reorganize, and the intended outpost was never established.

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From the foregoing narrative of operations for 1 March it may appear that there was almost no resistance. While it is true that no appreciable resistance was encountered, the enemy was present prepared to resist but intimidated by our tanks, close to lie low and not fight. Whenever the column stopped prisoners could be and were taken from adjacent buildings. Unarmored vehicles which attempted to go any distance from the column were greeted by an active enemy with small arms, IG and bazooka fire. Elements of the 102nd Div never advanced forward of our lead tank. Whenever they attempted to do so they came to a precipitous halt and were actually unable to advance further.

The 46th, with C Cos leading, moved E from Anrath at 0640 the next day and by about 1200 had made contact with the 2nd Armd Div South of Krefeld. The 46th continued to Steinrath and went off the road there at 1300. The enemy reacted to our march across his front with mortar and artillery fire and propaganda leaflets. Heavy, accurate mortar and light inaccurate artillery fire came from patches of woods to the left of our axis of advance. These woods were fired on by tanks, artillery and fighter bombers, but enemy fire continued until friendly infantry had cleared the position. The woods on the left near Anrath proved particularly troublesome for succeeding elements of our column were subjected to fire as they passed. Friendly infantry attacking the position at about 1000 were repulsed, and it was not until about noon that the woods were cleared. One enemy SP assault gun in the woods was silenced by tank fire and another such gun was overrun near the steel works.

Our Rcn Plat on the right became engaged in a small fire fight with enemy infantry at 0910 vicinity 145985. Expected resistance from the 130th Armored Rcn Bn did not materialize. Our leading companies passed the steel works without receiving any fire; however, later elements of our column received direct fire from the steel works and the outskirts of Krefeld beyond.

The 46th, in order to get West of the 20th grid line moved North at 1730 to Fischeln. Although the 2nd Armd was already holding the town moderate to heavy artillery fire was received and the lead tank was knocked out by AT fire from the South edge of Krefeld. By 1900 the command was in positions shown on Map "B" for the night 2-3 March.

Again on the 2nd it appears, from a bare recital of events, that no great amount of resistance was encountered. Nevertheless, on the morning of the 2nd the command found itself in a critical position. The leading Plat moving East out of Anrath was stopped by MG, AT, artillery and mortar fire. The 46th together with casual units were jammed up with vehicles two abreast in Anrath, a tempting target for enemy air. Enough mortar and artillery fire was observed falling in the surrounding area to, if concentrated, annihilate the combat command. It was therefore essential that the command get out of Anrath. The 2nd Plat passed the 1st and 46th moved on to Steinrath with speed and with few casualties.

The enemy never concentrated his fires on our leading elements or any other portion of the column. His fires were distributed impartially along the entire column as it moved. That the enemy never concentrated his fires must be attributed to his inability to do so. Thus we have the rare example of a flank march across the front of an entire enemy division in daylight within 2-5 km of his MLR.

Throughout the operation A/85th was employed with one Plat to keep contact with friendly units on the left, one Plat with same mission on our right, and the 3d Plat protecting the rear of the column.

Losses in the command were 19 wounded.

Air support was received during the day and used to hit the woods East of Anrath and M/T in Krefeld.

b. Period 3-31 March.

On 3 Mar CCA remained in place South of Krefeld prepared to assist the 102nd Inf Div if assistance should be requested. CCA moved beginning at 1420 to St. Hubert by way of St. Tonis and Kempen. The command closed at 0110 4 March. The Sq of British flails was detached at 1845. The only enemy action during the day was one bomb dropped near our CP at Hoxhofs at 1020. Two men of A/628th TD Bn were killed and one wounded.

At 0025 4 March warning orders were issued for a proposed move to an assembly area between Vluyn and Moers North of the railroad. Troops of CCA were redispersed as follows:

<u>34TH</u>	<u>46th</u>	<u>HQ CCA</u>	<u>ARTY</u>
Hq & Hq Co/34th	Hq & Hq Co/46th	Hq & Hq Co/CCA	47 FA
A & B Cos, Md	C Cos, Md	A/22(-)	(direct support)
Plat/A/22nd	Plat A/22nd	A/85	
Plat/A/628th	Plat A/628th	A/628(-)	
Mortar Sec/46th		D/34th	
Air Support Tk			

Final orders for the move were not received so the town of St. Hubert was searched for weapons, radio transmitters, and all males who were or had been in the German military service. The CG, 5th Arm Div visited our CP at 1145. At 1215 new orders were issued to send the 34th to occupy the towns of Tonisberg, Vluyn, and Schaephuysen, search these towns, and distribute military government proclamations. The platoons of A/22nd reverted to company control; platoons of D/34th were attached one each to the 34th and the 46th, and a second platoon of TDs was attached to the 34th. A/85th was given the mission of reconnoitering and screening in front of the 34th to maintain contact with friendly units on the right and on the left. The 34th moved at 1415 and by 1545 had occupied its assigned towns. At 1710 our Rcn contacted elements of the 35th Inf Div north of Vluyn. At 1855 A Cos married were attached in place to CCR then fighting in Repellan. There was no enemy action during the day, but the 34th, in occupying its towns, took 20 prisoners and found large stocks of enemy supplies. At 2315 one Plat of A/85 was ordered to Brinkhof (198218) to maintain contact with and protect the left flank of CCR. The 34th was ordered to support this Plat by whatever action should be necessary to get them to Brinkhof. The 46th and the CP remained in place for the night.

On 5 March A/85, maintained contact with CCR, 84th and 35th Inf Divs. The 34th remained in place and the remainder of CCA moved to Huls closing at 1200. On 6 and 7 March A/85 and the 34th continued there missions while the 46th searched houses in Huls and vicinity.

On the 8th A Cos married reverted to CCA. On the 9th the CP changed its location within the town of Huls and A/628th reverted to Bn control. On the 10th A/22nd and A/85th were relieved of attachment to CCA. On 11-12 March the married formation was broken up and the 34th moved to Huls.

During the period 12-30 March CCA remained in Huls and carried on maintenance of radios, vehicles and other equipment. Training was conducted to include physical conditioning, crew drill, small unit problems, and indirect firing. In addition CCA established military government in its assigned area. Civilians were registered, males between 16 and 60 screened, and the population controlled by means of road blocks, patrols and curfews.

On the morning of 23 March an A-26 medium bomber crash landed near our CP. At 1600 on this date friendly bombers dropped approximately 180 60 lb. fragmentation bombs near the crashed bomber. One officer and 19 EM were wounded; 2 EM and 1 civilian were killed.

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At 2000 29 March warning orders were issued for a move across the Rhine River at Wesel. Billeting parties were sent on the morning of the 30th. That night orders for the march were issued. The command moved beginning at about 1700 31 March by way of Alderkerk-Neukerk-Sevelen-Issum and Alpen clearing the bridge over the Rhine River at Wesel approximately at midnight.

7. COMMENTS:

Section I - Personnel Matters.

a. Morale and discipline.

Supply of movies was adequate, some thirty different movies being shown during the month. Both the 34th and 46th were able to set up theaters in Huls. The supply of Stars and Stripes, Yanks and PX supplies was regular. Red Cross doughnut wagons made periodic visits to units of CCA. Twenty-three officers and 223 EM were sent on pass to Paris, London, Heerlen, or the Riviera and one officer and 7 EM were furloughed home. One distribution of books, magazines and small games was made, and an initial shipment of athletic equipment was received. Troops, in general, obeyed exactly the non-fraternization rule.

Section II - Intelligence Matters.

a. Estimated enemy personnel and materiel losses:

1. Personnel

Killed	-	15
Captured	-	462

2. Materiel

2 - assault guns	3 - 122-mm howitzers
3 - trucks	1 - ammunition train
4 - trailers	2 - ammunition dumps
1 - searchlight battery	

In the woods North and East of Anrath the following enemy materiel was found destroyed; 6, 122-mm howitzers and 12, 20-mm AA guns. This damage should be credited to the fighter-bombers supporting CCA. In addition 3 half tracks were found abandoned in the area.

Following the action of 1-2 March units of the command discovered in their area a number of German supply dumps, 4 vehicles and scattered ammunition.

b. Counter Intelligence.

CIC personnel of CCA arrested 34 persons during the month. Three of these proved to be members of a sabotage ring. These were arrested 18 March and on 24 March, after an intensive search of the area, their hideout and base of operations was discovered. This was a carefully camouflaged dugout on a hill at Hulserberg. A total of 1253 Germans and 234 foreign workers and displaced persons were screened. Two cases were investigated; one involving the loss of a supply of radium and the other robbery of the bank in Huls.

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Section III - Operations

a. This operation was complicated by the great number of friendly troops, particularly around Krefeld where there were elements of 4-5 divisions from 3 different corps by nightfall of the 2nd. It was therefore considered, for this operation, more important or more necessary to employ the Recon troop to maintain contact with adjacent units than with the enemy. Despite this measure the 46th deployed West of Steinrath prepared to attack a column which turned out to be part of the 2nd Armd Div. Similarly CCR of the 2nd Armd Div deployed but did not attack the 34th passing South of the steel works. On the morning of the 2nd a column was observed on our right moving toward Krefeld. The column was not engaged for fear that it was friendly and escaped before it was identified as enemy. Around noon on the 2nd an enemy column was observed moving from Krefeld toward Anrath. The column was covered by assault guns from 154003 but not fired on for fear of hitting friendly infantry.

b. The requirements placed on the operations of CCA; i.e., to operate in the zone of an infantry division without interfering with them cannot normally be met without very rigid traffic control by corps. While there was little conflict between leading elements of CCA and 102nd Inf Div, behind the front traffic of the two was freely intermingled and often badly snarled particularly since it was not possible to clear roads when not moving. Though expected to clear a path for infantry, armor was given no road priority. The infantry exercised its priority and hogged the roads despite the fact that it was demonstrated time and time again in the operation that they could not advance beyond our leading elements. Priority must be given to those people most able to use it; in this operation the armor. CCA had no forward and no rear boundaries, no zone of action other than what we could find, and an objective with the restriction that we not interfere with the 2nd Armd Div. The minimum requirement is a forward zone of our own with no restriction on movement therein. The problem of CCA operating in the zone of the 102nd Inf Div could have been solved in one of two ways; either by corps representatives present to direct traffic and award road priorities in accordance with the existing tactical requirements, or by prescribing at intervals for CCA to clear forward of a stated line by a certain time.

c. FM radio channels became so crowded as to almost preclude their use. This condition resulted from the proximity of the 2nd and 8th Armd Divs and other units equipped with FM radios. This overcrowding is a very definite problem which should be considered in planning operations for armored divisions. Much can be done to help by requiring brevity and proper procedure on the FM nets, but this measure will not provide a complete solution to the problem.

d. Maps in this operation, particularly 1/50,000, were found to be difficult to read especially as regards road classification. With such maps it is not considered possible to pick routes or operate at night without prior daylight reconnaissance.

e. Refugees must not be permitted to move during or immediately following an operation. While it may be desirable to collect civilians in an open field during the mopping up of a town, they should, as soon as possible, be put back in the town and under no circumstances sent to the rear.

f. It is felt that there were never enough bridges over the Niers Canal. The single one way bridge in the zone of the 102nd and the 5th Armd Divs, though increased on the 2nd of March by another one way bridge, certainly could not be considered sufficient for two divisions greatly reinforced by artillery.

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Additional crossings over the AT ditch North of Harit were certainly indicated. B Companies /46th suffered interference from FA moving into the woods North of the AT ditch on the morning of 1 March. These people used the one way route over the AT ditch whereas additional crossings over the ditch either to the right or the left of the road would have permitted the Arty to have gone into position without having interfered with our movements.

Section IV - Supply and Maintenance Matters

No comments.

Section V - Civilian

These observations apply to CGA's experience with military government during the period.

a. Civilians did not chafe under our restrictions. They understood that the war was not far removed and that control of their actions was necessary. They were greatly relieved to be free of bombing and shelling. The only real aurliness noted was in the young boys and girls. Town officials encountered made great efforts to cooperate and follow military government directives. There were strong indications that the Catholic Church is grateful to be rid of Nazism.

b. Food supply was estimated as sufficient for three or four months. Farms were being worked, but more labor, women and children, need to be assigned to farm work to replace the "slave labor". There was a lack of seed because of distribution difficulties.

c. When a division or combat command occupies an area and carries on military government therein there must be close cooperation with adjacent divisions and corps. The occupation is never by Kreis or Geminde, hence mutual problems of administration will always arise.

For the Commanding General:

Henry P. Halsell
HENRY P. HALSELL,
Captain - C.E.,
S-3 Air.

- Incl 1 - S-3 Journal
- Incl 2 - S-3 Journal Supplement
- Incl 3 - S-2 Journal
- Incl 4 - S-3 Air Journal
- Incl 5 - Map Supplement

*Not Recd
4 June 45*

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11

Month of October - 44
44 thru April 45



HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. Army.

:
: Auth: CG CCA, 5th Armd Div:
: Date: 14 May 1945 :
: Init: *WGR* WGR :

14 May 1945.

Subject: Report of Action No. 9, Month of April 1945.

To : The Commanding General, 5th Armored Division,
APO #255, U. S. Army.

Attached hereto is Report of Action against the Enemy No. 9,
month of April 1945.

For the Commanding General:

Henry P. Halsell
HENRY P. HALSELL,
Captain - C. E.,
S-3 Air.

905-13.21

- INCLOSURES - 4
- Incl 1 - S-3 Journal
- Incl 2 - S-2 Journal
- Incl 3 - S-3 Air Journal
- Incl 4 - S-3 Journal Supplement
& Map Supplement.

CLASSIFICATION
CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
DEFENSE SECRETARY
[Signature] 15/10/15

8

AUG 9 1945

9707 1

:
:Auth: CG, CCA, 5th Armd Div:
:Date: 14 May 1945.
:Init: *WGR* WGR

COMBAT COMMAND "A"
FIFTH ARMORED DIVISION

ACTION AGAINST ENEMY REPORT NO. 9

MONTH OF APRIL, 1945.

BRIGADIER GENERAL EUGENE A. REGNIER, USA,
COMMANDING.

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HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "A"
APO #255
U. S. Army.

1. CAMPAIGN: Germany.

2. LOSSES IN ACTION:

a. Personnel:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>SWA</u>	<u>LWA</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
34th Tk Bn	7	20	12	1	40
46th Inf Bn	12	65	24	2	103
47th FA Bn		6			6
A/75 Med Bn		1			1
A/628 TD Bn		1			1
A/85 Cav Rcn Sq	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	20	94	36	3	153

b. Vehicular:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Destroyed or Abandoned</u>	<u>Evacuated</u>
Tank, Med	4	1
Carrier, H/T, M3	2	1
Truck, 1/4-ton, 4x4	4	
Aircraft, M-L-4	1	
Armd Car, M8	<u>1</u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL	12	2

3. COMMANDERS:

Combat Command "A" - Brig Gen Eugene A. Regnier, 08295, USA.

Hq & Hq Co, Combat Command "A" - 1st Lt R. B. Whitaker, 0517645, Inf.

34th Tank Bn - Lt Col Richard H. Jones, 0238409, Cav.

46th Armd Inf Bn - Lt Col William H. Burton, 0366028, Inf.

47th Armd FA Bn - Lt Col John B Rosenzweig, 0246291, FA.

A Co, 22nd Armd Engr Bn - Capt Thomas W Grose, 01103189, CE.

A Tr, 85th Cav Rcn Sq, Mcz - Capt Seymour B Scott, 0306958, Cav.

A Co, 628th TD Bn - Capt James H Lloyd, 0409317, FA.

A Co, 75th Med Bn - Capt Sanford M Langsom, 0424470, MC.

Commanders of attached units are shown for period of attachment only.

4. ATTACHMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

CCA operated under the control of 5th Armd Div for the entire month of April, 1945. The following units were attached to or detached from CCA for the period indicated.

A Co, 22nd Armd Engr Bn - 1-5; 7-14; 17-24, April.

A Co, 628th TD Bn - 1-4; 8-24, April.

A Tr, 85 Cav Rcn Sq, Mcz - 12-13 April.

695th Armd FA Bn - 2-4 April; Direct support 20 April.

47th Armd FA Bn - direct support of CCA 9-14; 15-18; 21-25 April.

71st Armd FA Bn - reinforcing fires of 47 FA Bn 9-14 April.

557th Armd FA Bn - reinforcing fires of 47 FA Bn 21-25 April.

B Cos married with one Plat A/22nd Engrs - Atchd Div Hq 010745-021915.

NOTE: As per Msg 182200, A/85 was detached from CCA effective 190600. At the time of the detachment the Rcn was engaged in screening against infiltrating Bay armor and did not move. At 190720 Div granted permission for A/85 to remain with CCA. Exactly similar Msgs were received with respect to A/628. At 182300 one married Co (B Cos) was alerted for attachment and movement to CCB on order. This order was not forthcoming.

For Apprx. a 24 hour period - 172200 to 182200 - 1st Bn, 335 Inf Regt and BCT 407 (less 3d Bn 407) was attached to CCA.

5. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES AND LOSSES:

To provide data of some value in estimating ammunition expenditures this report is broken down by operations.

Type	April	Expended				Date		Total
		2-3	9-11	12	13-16	21-24		
105-mm		287	359	355	346	391	1738	
90-mm		2				121	123	
76-mm		64	48	93	78	316	599	
75-mm		244	99	122	428	261	1154	
81-mm				100	28		128	
60-mm				125		36	161	
57-mm						40	40	
Cal. .50		1330	440	7150	9220	4155	22295	
Cal. .45		2900		6000		1657	10557	
Cal. .30, MG		37750	12500	57250	45000	98000	240500	

[REDACTED]

5. Cont'd.

<u>Type</u>			<u>Expended</u>		<u>Date</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>April</u>	<u>2-3</u>	<u>9-11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13-16</u>	<u>21-24</u>	
Cal. .30 Rifle	9600		1440	22600		12820	46460
Cal. .30 Carbine	1000			8050		800	9850
37-mm				95			95
Rocket, AT				10			10

Ammunition expenditure by Arty and Tk Destroyers is not included in the above total.

6. Movements of the command post and operational zones and boundaries are shown on maps in the map supplement.

7. NARRATIVE:

A. Outline of the month's operations.

(1) The Enemy.

In only a few scattered and important places did the enemy offer any effective resistance. For the most part he was disorganized and demoralized and showed a willingness to surrender. The enemy did, however, demonstrate that he was still capable of waging a clever and stubborn fight for a definite and important object. In the vicinity of Hiltrup and Wolbeck, to defend the bridge over the Dortmund-Ems Canal and the southern approaches to Munster, he disposed 800-1000 men, 3 to 4 flak batteries, and 5 to 6 tanks or self propelled assault guns. South of Hanover the enemy displayed concern over our nearness to that city and reacted with heavy artillery and nebelwerfer fire around the bridge at Sehnde. Further E, on the 11th, the bridge over the canal at Fallersleben was defended by AT fire and by long range, heavy caliber artillery. From Fallersleben to Tangermunde only hastily organized Volkstrom, Luftwaffe, and straggler personnel were encountered. Tangermunde itself was well defended by several battle groups totaling about 600 and employing large numbers of panzerfausts. North of Tangermunde the RR bridge was defended and blown by a company of dug-in infantry

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infantry employing chiefly small arms fire. The ferry site at Arneburg was stubbornly defended by a force of pseudo SS of about company size employing AT, artillery, machine gun, and panzerfaust fire. This force, however, partially withdrew during the night and the town was taken against light resistance the next morning. In the second attack to the Elbe, from West of Salswedal to North of Hitzacker, divisional troops were encountered for the first time. The enemy, elements of Von Clausewitz and 84th Infantry Divisions, fought clever rearguard actions with tanks, infantry, and mines; artillery, mortar and nebelwerfer fire.

Enemy air flew approximately 65 sorties against CCA during the month. These were divided with 8 to 9 on the 10th, 9 to 10 on the 11th, 12 to 15 on the 12th, 15 to 20 on the 13th, and 12 on the 20th. Nine enemy planes were reported shot down. On five occasions enemy aircraft attacked elements of the command. Two strafing attacks on the 10th resulted in 3 light casualties. A brief strafing by 6 planes on the 11th did no damage. Attacks by 15 planes at Arneburg on the 13th and by 12 planes at Hankensbittel on the 20th likewise did no damage. There was a large number of individual sorties of a reconnaissance nature resulting in part from planes escaping from the airfield near Stendal when we were at Tangermunde.

(2) Factors affecting the operations.

a. The terrain.

From 1-4 April the march was across the flat and relatively wet lower edge of the Munster Bay into the Osnabruck-Weser Bergland north of Herford. The march 9-10 April was across the Weser River through the Osnabruck-Weser and Weser-Oker Berglands, and into the Leine-Aller Lowlands. On 11-12 April CCA advanced to the Elbe through the lower edge of the North German Glacial Plain.

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This area was characterized by flat low-lying land with numerous drainage ditches and numerous large forests of plantation pines. Chief obstacles in our zone were the Weser-Elbe and Aller Canals and the numerous wooded areas. The soil was a sandy loam and permitted cross country movement even after moderate rains. The road net was adequate with useable secondary roads running in all directions. The second attack to the Elbe was made northward, again through a portion of the North German Plain. This area was almost devoid of any streams or any large settlements. It was marked by numerous forested, even-contoured hills of glacial origin. Five good roads ran eastward to the Elbe, but only secondary roads and trails were available for movement to the north. Throughout the month, main roads were found to be in good repair and capable of passing the combat command. Secondary roads, however, were not well maintained and, in several instances, became so bad that all of the command could not be passed.

b. The Weather.

The weather during the month was generally unfavorable to our operations. On the 2nd and 3d the sky was overcast with intermittent rain. No air support was received and, in one instance, mud hampered the deployment of our tanks. From 10-13 April the sky was clear over the target area, but weather at the bases prevented our receiving any air support after 1300 on the 11th. During the period 21-23 April the sky was again overcast with intermittent rain. No air support was received during this operation, but from late on the 22nd through the 24th, Spitfires patrolled our area constantly during daylight. It is not believed however, that the weather operated against us during this last period. Had the weather been good we would have required a relatively great amount of air support as protection against the enemy's artillery and nebelwerfer fire. It was learned later that XXIX Tac had virtually ceased operations and that

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any air we might have received, whatever the weather, would probably have been in scanty quantities. As it so happened on this operation, visibility was poor and the enemy was denied the advantage of observation from the many high points available to him. Also the ground was wet and our vehicles raised no dust cloud to warn of our approach.

(3) Our Operations.

From 1-4 April CCA, in division reserve, marched from Wesel to an assembly area north of Herford. During this march the command won a bridgehead over the Dortmund-Ems Canal and built a bridge at Hiltrup on the night of 2-3 April. From 4-9 April CCA remained N of Herford planning for future operations. On 9 April the command crossed the Weser River at Hameln and by nightfall the 10th had gained a suitable L/D in its assigned zone. CCA then attacked to the Elbe River reaching Tangermunde at noon on the 12th. From 13-16 April CCA cleared its area from Phase Line "D" to the River and moved back to the vicinity of Calverde. On the night of 17-18 April a portion of the command moved to Knesebeck and, with four infantry Bns attached, cleared the large Forst Knesebeck. On 21-22 April the command attacked N to the final Corps objective north of Hitzacker on the Elbe. CCA moved on the 25th to occupy an assigned zone south, east, and west of Fallersleben.

B. Wesel to Herford.

(1) General.

CCA cleared the bridge over the Rhine River at Wesel approximately at midnight 31 March. Troops of the command, at this time were grouped as follows:

<u>34th</u>	<u>46th</u>	<u>CCA TROOPS</u>	<u>TRAINS</u>	<u>RCN</u>
Hq & Hq Co, 34th	Hq & Hq Co, 46th	Hq & Hq Co, CCA	Sv Co, 34th	A/85
A & B Cos, Ml	C Cos, Ml	A/22nd (-)	Sv Co, 46th	
Plat A/22nd	Plat A/22nd	A/628 (-)	A/75	
Plat A/628	Plat A/628	D/34 (-)	Det/A/127	
Plat D/34	Plat D/34		Plat 3907 Trk Co	

[REDACTED]

In order of march Hon, 34th, CCA troops, 46th and Trains. The mission of the command at this time, as contained in Letters of Instruction, Hq 5th Armd Div, dated 301200A and 311100A March, was to follow supporting Eng units en route "A"; be prepared to pass through or around either assault combat command and continue the advance; and be prepared to advance one married Co on Div order via route "A" to clear this route of the enemy. By 0920 4 April, CCA had bridged the Dortmund-Ems Canal south of Munster and had closed in an assembly area north of Herford 100 airline miles from Wesel. During this march there was one engagement, south of Munster where the command crossed the canal.

(2) Crossing the Dortmund-Ems Canal.

a. The Enemy.

To defend the canal crossing at Hiltrup the enemy disposed approximately 600 men and an estimated 3 to 4 batteries of 105-mm flak or artillery. Troops of 2nd Co, 361 Pz Gr Regt and 348 Trng Bn comprised the bulk of this force. In addition, the enemy defended to the south of Wolbeck with approximately 200 men and 6 tanks or self propelled assault guns of an unidentified SS unit. The force Vic Hiltrup resisted our advance with small arms, machine gun, and panzerfaust fire but showed little inclination for a stubborn defense and surrendered in large numbers. Arty fire was received from one or more batteries located Vic 912682 but this fire was quickly neutralized by our own artillery. South of Wolbeck our B Cos received heavy, accurate, AT, SP or tank, MG, SA, mortar, and bazooka fire and were stopped at 000669 at 1800 on the 2nd. This force withdrew by morning of the 3d, probably to Telgate. During the night 2-3 April 695 FA fired a concentration at 983682; destroyed a gun and flak battery; killed about 200 of the enemy and caused the surrender of 85.

A total of 652 prisoners were processed through the CCA cage during the

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

the period 011800 to 041800 April. Of these 529 were taken on the 2nd, 200 from east of the canal. An estimated 200 of the enemy were killed or seriously wounded and 3 flak batteries destroyed.

b. The Action.

At noon 2 April CCA was off the road Vic Sanden waiting to follow Div Arty and supporting Engrs by way of the bridge over the canal at 871634. Despite the fact that both COB and CCR had passed S of Munster the bridge on Route "A" at Hiltrup had not yet been secured. The road south from 871634 was poor and rapidly deteriorating under the heavy traffic. In addition priority on our proposed route was given to the 84th Inf Div at this time. CCA, therefore, was ordered to secure the crossing at Hiltrup. 695 FA Bn was attached to CCA at this time.

The 34th moved at 1530 preceded by elements of A/85. Rcn located the enemy armed with bazookas, small arms, and machine guns in Hiltrup. Arty fire was placed on the bridge in an attempt to prevent the enemy from blowing it and, at 1640, the 34th penetrated the town by way of the main road. The bridge was blown at 1800 and by 1845 the town was clear and over 100 prisoners had been taken. Immediately after the bridge was blown about one and one half platoons of A/46th crossed using girders of the blown bridge and small civilian boats. This crossing was protected by heavy tank and machine gun fire which prevented the enemy, dug in on the far side, from effectively resisting. By 1900 a bridgehead had been established to protect the work of the engineers.

Meanwhile our Rcn screening to the N with mission of effecting contact with friendly units reported in Munster captured 13 bazooka men at 928686. At the CR at 892662 the 46th received artillery fire from a battery to the northeast. This battery was destroyed by the 695 FA Bn, together with a 20-mm battery and an Ammo dump.

[REDACTED]

B Cos had been attached to Div Hq at 0745 1 April. On the afternoon of the 2nd they were marching ahead of Div Hq with orders to secure the route Albersloh - Wolbeck. This force began to receive some Arty fire just N of Albersloh but no particular importance was attached to it until, a short while later, Captain Weeks, then commanding B/34th, received a report from a friendly Engr unit that there was a force of enemy tanks and SS troops south of Wolbeck. B Cos proceeded and at 1815 were stopped at 000669 by fire from SP guns or tanks concealed further up the road. Simultaneously enemy infantry in the woods on each side for a distance of about 800 yards along the column attacked with panzerfausts. Two tanks and three half tracks were lost and the force reassembled Vic 0065 under fire of 105 or 150-mm fire from the NW. The enemy infantry counterattacked shortly before dark employing small arms, machine gun, bazooka and mortar fire. This attack was beaten off and by dark a forward line had been established at 999659. Captain Weeks estimated the force opposing him as 200 SS and 4 to 6 SPs or Mark V tanks.

At 1915 Div returned B Cos to control of CCA. By 2035 command and fire direction communication channels had been reestablished with this force. Both A and B Cos were ordered to patrol aggressively during the night to maintain contact with the enemy and to attack E and N respectively on the 3d to join up at Wolbeck.

In the bridgehead A/46th was engaged in mopping up all the night and succeeded in capturing more than 200 of the enemy. B Cos sent out 2 patrols during the night. These patrols did not make physical contact but heard the enemy withdrawing to the N. Known and suspected locations were fired at throughout the night by the 695 and 557th FA Bns. Recon established a screen on our N flank and contacted friendly elements at the southern approaches to Munster at 0800 on the 3d.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

At the bridge site long approaches had to be constructed on each bank and the entire night was required to complete the required 132 feet of treadway bridge. The bridge was completed at 0615 on the 3d. Two platoons of tanks were crossed when one section of the bridge failed and had to be replaced.¹ The bridge was not prepared and useable until 1100. A Cos, however, pushed forward one married platoon and seized intact the bridge over the Nerse River at 978682 at 0915. This platoon set up defense of this bridge and did not move on to Wolbeck until the bridge had been repaired and the remainder of the company came up. B Cos attacked at 1030 with the infantry dismounted. No resistance was encountered and about 1 Km S of Wolbeck the infantry mounted and this force moved on to Wolbeck where contact was made with A Cos about noon. In the town 20 SS who had been wounded the night before were found in a hospital.

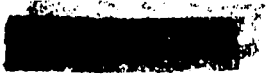
(3) March to Herford.

The remainder of the command followed across the bridge and CCA tailed supporting Engr units on Route A to an assembly area N of Herford. Combat elements of the command closed in this area at 0920 4th April. There was no enemy contact, but the march proved to be a difficult one nonetheless. Rcn was used to maintain proper direction and contact between elements of the column; but, despite these measures, numerous halts were made to permit the Cln to close up. Elements became lost and had to be brought back to the correct route. The road failed in two places and a portion of the Cln had to be detoured by other routes. Lt Col Burton employing his I and R platoon rendered valuable and timely service to the command this night in finding alternate routes and in effecting liaison with Hqs of the Cln.

¹ The failure of the bridge was not due to any defect in design. On one treadway the female end was so bent that when the bridge was used this end slipped over the connecting pin in the next treadway and the bridge failed.

[REDACTED]

12



Immediately after closing in bivouac on the 4th a small fast task force was organized to capture the city of Herford which had not yet been entered. This force was commanded by Lt Col Burton and consisted of a Plat of light tanks, a Plat of infantry, and a squad of Engrs supported by the mortar and assault gun sections in position outside the city. There was no enemy action and the city was quickly taken along with a great store of military supplies. Three Bns of the 84th Inf Div entered the town at about 1900 and CCA relinquished control to them the following day. On the 5th a similar task force was sent to Salzuflen to capture a military hospital there and remove military personnel well enough to leave. This force reached its objective without incident, found troops of 84th there, and was ordered to return.

From 4-9 April CCA remained in bivouac N of Herford and engaged in maintenance and in planning for future operations. Some prisoners were taken daily but were stragglers and administrative personnel and of no tactical significance.

C. Meser to the Elbe.

(1) The Approach.

CCA moved on the afternoon of the 9th to cross the Meser River at Hameln with the mission of moving behind CCR, then S of Hanover, and then swinging NE into the upper half of the Div zone to seize crossings over the Fusa and Iller river and canal network between Celle and Eltze. Order of march was Rcn, Hq 46th, C Cos Md, Hq CCA with CC troops, 47 FA, A Cos Md, 71 FA, 34th, and Tns. Troops were grouped as follows:

<u>46th</u>	<u>34th</u>	<u>CC Troops</u>	<u>Rcn</u>	<u>ARTY</u>	<u>TNS</u>
Hq & Hq Co, 46th	Hq & Hq Co, 34th	Hq & Hq Co, CCA	A/85	47 FA	No Change
A & C Cos, Md	B Cos, Md	A/22 (-)		(in direct support)	
Plat A/22	Plat A/22	A/628 (-)		71 FA	
Plat A/628	Plat A/628	D/34 (-)		(Reinf fires)	
Plat D/34th	Plat D/34th			47 FA)	



[REDACTED]

The march was halted after midnight and the command went into bivouac with 46th, the CP, and the artillery from Osselse to Bledel and the 34th and Tns Vic Pattensen. In anticipation of a move NE on the 10th our Rcn determined that the two bridges over the canals at Sehnde were intact at 2300 and took 12 PWs in so doing. Rcn seized the first of these bridges at 0400. 46th was ordered to secure both bridges and sent a married platoon from A Cos for this purpose. This platoon reached the 1st bridge without incident before dawn and sent two infantry Sqds to seize the second. As this force started to cross the second bridge it received heavy MG, SA, bazooka fire, and hand grenades. This force withdrew receiving artillery fire in so doing. The town of Bolzum was outposted at 0630 and this force remained there to protect our N flank until CCA moved. Orders had been received at 0200 which gave CCA the southern half of the Div zone with mission of attacking to the Elbe R; CCR to shift to the northern half of the Div zone. Rcn was recalled from Sehnde and given mission of reconnoitering to the front in our zone to establish contact with CCR and aid the command in moving forward without conflict with ELms of CCR.

Enemy reaction to our proximity to Hanover continued until past noon. Nebelwerfer and Arty fire was received Vic Sehnde early in the morning; scattered, inaccurate Arty fire was received Vic Bledel at 1145 and 1230; and Arty and direct high velocity fire was received at Pattensen about 1350 where there seemed to be an enemy buildup in progress. Our artillery fired on flak guns and troop movements N of Sehnde.

(2) Gaining a line of Departure.

The 46th, followed by the remainder of the command in the same order as on the 9th, moved out at 1240 and passed through Peine at 1630. There was no enemy contact but progress was slow as elements of the 30th infantry were using

[REDACTED]

14

[REDACTED]

the same road as we. At 1840 A/35 seized intact the bridge over the Oker River at Didderse. The enemy attempted to blow this bridge but the resulting explosion failed to destroy it.

At 1540 a report had been received from CCR that there were 20 enemy tanks at 7723, very close to our route of march and to CCR as well. This report was discounted for shortly thereafter a liaison plane of the 30th Inf Div dropped a message to CG, CCN stating that there was no enemy to the front or to the flanks of him. The CG, at this time was E of Peine ahead of the 46th. In addition CCR did not attack this reported tank concentration with fighter bombers they had under their control at the time.

At 1930 fighter bombers under our control made an Armad Recce of the main road south from Gifhorn to the Autobahn with special attention to Meine and saw nothing.

By 2040 the 46th was in Meine with A Cos. By 2310 the entire command was across the Oker in bivouac from Adenbutte to Meine and a patrol from A Cos had secured the bridge over the Weser - Elbe Canal at Medelheine. Some artillery fire fell S of Meine at 2240 but the only enemy contact during the night was at Medelheine where our roadblock captured 4 prisoners, a motorcycle, and a truck. For the first time in April CCA had an assigned zone and furthermore had secured a good L/D from which to start its drive to the Elbe.

(3) Drive to the Elbe.

Initial operation for the 11th was an early Rcn N to Gifhorn combined with an attempt to seize the bridge at Fallersleben. Crossings over the Weser - Elbe and Aller Canals were considered critical and the CG did not wish to commit the combat command in one direction until he could be assured of passage over these canals. Lt Col Burton was restrained from moving more than C Cos except on order.

13
[REDACTED]

15

[REDACTED]

Operations on the 11th began at first shooting light. The force directed on Fallersleben received long range heavy caliber artillery fire and AT fire that vicinity about 0930 but by about 1030 had seized the bridge there intact. ¹ Our Rcn reported numerous small groups of the enemy to the north and at 1000 reported that CCA could not move through Gifhorn without interfering with CCR. A squadron of fighter bombers worked under control of CCA from 0930 to 1030. This squadron reconnoitered our proposed route and reported bridges over both canals intact and roads to the north of Weyhausen free of movement. This squadron did, however, destroy about 20 trucks and half tracks near Vorsfelde.² At about 1045 the combat command was committed to the route through Fallersleben and by 1200 the 46th had crossed there, reduced a road block, engaged an enemy tank, crossed the Aller Canal, and was at the crossroad just E of Weyhausen. Our Rcn moving E from Gifhorn engaged an enemy force at 1000 Vic Dannenbittel. This force was neutralized or destroyed with the aid of the artillery of CCR.

Thereafter progress was rapid and the command reached Bismark at 2050 that night having advanced an airline distance of 80 Km during the day. During this advance no organized enemy force willing to fight for long was encountered, but small groups of Volksstrum, Luftwaffe, and hastily organized stragglers were encountered in almost every village. Over 400 prisoners were taken not counting 500 in a hospital in Klotze. A number of tanks and assault guns were observed moving in and around Parsau but they had disappeared when the 46th entered the town. Although the weather was clear the entire day no air support was received after 1300 and many enemy vehicles and tanks escaped which might have otherwise been destroyed. However, so long as the enemy avoided us we were content, at this time, to let him escape.

- 1 C Cos took a wrong turn in Fallersleben and went almost to Morse.
 - 2 This Sq also checked for Arty reported to be firing from near Morse. They could not locate it but the fire did cease while the planes were in that area.
- [REDACTED]
- 16

[REDACTED]

The chief and immediate concern of the CG on the afternoon of the 11th was to get enough gas to continue to the Elbe. At this time, however, General Regnier had not projected his operations beyond Bismark. At 1700 five truckloads of gas arrived permitting the command to push on to Bismark with enough gas remaining for a short fight should such be necessary.

The 34th remained behind to guard the bridges and critical road junctions on our route of march. By 1540 it became apparent that our Rcn could not advance with sufficient speed against the light, discontinuous resistance we were meeting. At this time the 46th passed through the Rcn, and A/85 was given the mission of maintaining contact with two platoons between the tail of the advancing column and the 34th. Request was made to Div for immediate relief of the 34th and for gas. Our gas trucks had been sent back, 5 on the night of the 9th and 14 on the night of the 10th. The 100 mile trip to the dump at Warendorf and an unusual large number of flat tires prevented their early return. The CG, 5th AD visited the command at 1700, was highly elated at the rapidity with which we were moving, and assured Gen Regnier that he would do everything possible to expedite the relief of the 34th and to get gas to us. He also promised the attachment of an additional Rcn troop.

By about 2200 the command was closed with the 46th in Bismark, the CP and Arty Vic Foritz, A Cos in Calbe, (C Cos in Bismark); A/85 (-) had gone back to Klotze to maintain communication with the 34th and guide the expected additional Rcn troop to us. OOR, operating on our left, was 25 miles to the rear, and our latest report placed the 2nd Armd Div between Braunschweig and Magdeburg - 50 miles to our south. The 34th was strung out along our route of advance from Adenbutte to Tiddische. During the night an additional 14 truckloads of gas were received and B/35 arrived at 0400. Plans for the 12th were for the 46th to move

[REDACTED]

from Bismark at 0745 to by-pass Stendal to the S and seize the bridge at Tangermunde outside our assigned zone.¹ The order of march was 46th with C Cos, 71 FA, Hq CCA with CC troops, 557 FA Bn with Plat A/628 attached, A Cos, 47 FA, Div Arty (which had followed us on the 11th with the medium 557th FA Bn to support our operation), 34th with B Cos, Rcn, and Tns.

Again our advance was rapid with only scattered resistance and Tangermunde was reached at noon. At about 0800 34th was relieved by elements of CCB, assembled at Tiddische, and moved to rejoin the remainder of the command. The 34th took over 300 prisoners during the night.

D. Tangermunde.

(1) Attack on Tangermunde.

In Tangermunde C Cos penetrated 4 blocks with no resistance when, upon signal by the sirens of the town, the enemy opened up from the buildings with very heavy small arms and bazooka fire. Two tanks and a TD were knocked out. Our infantry dismounted and began clearing the buildings one by one. Tangermunde was found to be defended by 3 or 4 battle groups totaling 600-800 men employing a great number of panzerfausts. In addition they were supported by fire of AA guns across the river. One of these battle groups came from OCS Brandenburg and had

¹ There was no risk involved in going outside our zone for it was known that there were no friendly elements on our right closer than 30-40 miles. There was the possibility of seizing intact one or both of the bridges at Tangermunde. Failing in this the enemy would be forced to blow them. It was the experience of the CG that the Germans would fight long and stubbornly to protect a bridge, but that their defence would usually collapse after the bridge was blown. To seize the bridges would serve best the tactical ends of Ninth Army, and to force their destruction, which is what happened, would greatly lessen the resistance in CCA's zone. The surrender at Stendal is to be attributed to the bridges at Tangermunde having been blown. The decision to go to Tangermunde was made by General Regnier without instructions from Division.

[REDACTED]

been personally briefed by Hitler to penetrate to our rear areas and harass our supply lines. The bulk of the enemy was disposed within the city and fought stubbornly. One group of about 120, however, was dug in on some high ground on the edge of the town and commanded the western approach. This force, despite its excellent position, did not fight and, after the fight was joined within the town, surrendered to Hq 46th.

The three Arty Bns and the assault guns went into position near the CP 3-4 Km W of the town and fired in support. Time fire was put continuously on the bridge to deter the enemy from blowing it. A Cos moved up and attacked the town from the NW employing two infantry platoons supported by tanks. This force made rapid progress and reached the center of the town where two German officers were captured who stated that the commander wished to surrender the town. The bridge was blown at approximately the same time. All firing ceased and arrangements were made for the garrison to surrender at 1745. After this time, however, a force of approximately 20-30 SS continued sniper activity and could not be persuaded to surrender. This force was in about three buildings near the western edge of the town holding several hundred American PWs and could not be attacked for fear of killing our own people. Arrangements were made for the release of our P.W.s and the evacuation of civilians by 2230 and for the cessation of hostilities until 2300.

During the afternoon B/85 threw out a screen some 10 Km to our S and took the towns of Tangerhutte and Grieben but contacted no friendly units. Enemy aircraft were overhead at very low altitude throughout the afternoon. Twelve to fourteen planes were sighted and six were shot down. There is no confirmation that any of these planes attacked us but they proved a constant source of danger as we could obtain no air support for ourselves.

[REDACTED]

(2) Railroad Bridge N of Tangermunde.

By about 1800 the 34th had reached Grobleben outside of Tangermunde. At this time they were ordered to seize the RR bridge over the Elbe N of Tangermunde. B Cos moved rapidly by the route Ostheeren-Miltern-Langensalzwedel-Staffelde-RJ 878528. First resistance was met about 1 Km E of Staffelde. From this point to the bridge and in Hamerten the 1 Co, 467 Ersatz Bn, about 120 men, was well dug in and employed a large volume of small arms together with 20-mm fire to defend the bridge. At the RJ tanks deployed behind the N-S road on each side of the railroad and the infantry dismounted. Infantry moved in to take the bridge covered by the fire of the deployed tanks and by air burst Arty on the bridge itself. When leading elements had approached within about 60 yards of the bridge it was blown. The infantry was immediately recalled and the 34th drew back to Staffelde and Langensalzwedel. The force defending the bridge was completely destroyed. An estimated 110 were killed and 24 were taken prisoner.

That night, after 2300, our artillery fired into Tangermunde and at the E bank of the Elbe to prevent the OCS force from escaping. By 2300 the formal surrender of Stendal had been received. This surrender was accepted but not relied on.

E. Operations 13-16 April.

(1) Arneburg.

Operations planned for the 13th were for the 34th, initially in reserve at the E edge of Stendal, to advance N in a 6 Km zone from Stendal to the River with mission of cleaning out resistance in this zone and stopping ferry traffic on the river as far N as CCB boundary at Altenzaun. 46th was to advance in a somewhat wider zone including the town of Stendal to clear resistance N to CCBs boundary. C Cos were to come under CC control in Stendal; 47th was to move

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

behind of and in support of the 34th; 71st was to move behind of and in support of the 46th.

The command moved N as planned on the morning of the 13th. Rcn screened to the S below the main road into Tangerhutte. 46th and 34th went into Stendal disposed to fight, but the town had actually surrendered and no resistance was met. C Cos remained in the town under CC control and the 46th with A Cos and the 34th with B Cos continued their movement N in their assigned zones. The 46th moved without incident and reached Mollendorf where they spent the night. In their advance they overran considerable enemy supplies and a large operational airfield located at Borstel.

On the right progress was slower. The 34th moved from Stendal to clear the large forest to the E. Infantry dismounted and moved through the woods, took 16 prisoners, and reached Arnim at 1500. Here B Cos split into three forces of a married platoon each. One moved to Hasel; one moved to Wischer; and the third moved by way of Staffelde to Storkau and then N on the river road toward Arneburg. No resistance was met until about 1700 when the right platoon, about 1 Km S of Arneburg, received bazooka, Arty, and 20-mm fire and lost one tank. At the same time the center platoon, then in Vic of 8760 received small arms fire from the edge of Arneburg and AT fire from Vic of 875615. The AT fire, later discovered to have been from four 150-mm RR flak guns, was silenced by our Arty. The two flank platoons assembled on the center platoon in preparation for an assault on the town. Mortars, assault guns, and tanks, deployed over a wide front, took the town under fire.

During a momentary lull in the shelling a white flag was hoisted at the edge of the town and the order to cease fire was given. At this time a German aid man with about 40 men came out of the town and stated that the remainder of the

[REDACTED]

garrison would surrender if given the opportunity. He was sent back into the town with instructions that all who would surrender must give themselves up in 30 minutes, at 1800. At 1830 he returned with about 40 more prisoners and stated that he had not had time to contact the entire garrison. Because of the late hour it was deemed inadvisable to wait longer and B Cos attacked the town at 1845 with instructions to withdraw rather than become heavily engaged. This attack was mounted with two dismounted platoons abreast covered by the fire of tanks, mortars, and assault guns. The attack was met by heavy machine gun, small arms and bazooka fire and by light artillery fire. As the tanks and infantry advanced they were strafed by 15 enemy planes. These planes remained overhead for thirty minutes but caused no casualties and lost two planes to our AA fire. The leading platoons had penetrated without loss into the middle of town when the decision was made to withdraw. The 34th reassembled in the woods near Wischer and throughout the night fired on Arneburg with tanks and with Arty of the 47th. During the afternoon A/85, replacing B/85, moved the Rcn screen N to a position generally from Staffelde along the RR to the river. At 1645 one Rcn section was pinned down near the RR bridge but was finally able to withdraw.

On the 14th the 46th, having completed its mission to the N, moved W in two Clms and by 1730 had contacted ELms of the 102nd Inf along line Deetz-Kladen. 46th assembled for the night at Schernickau. C Cos remained under CC control in Stendal and were quite busy guarding the many supply installations therein and in controlling the great number of displaced persons.

At dawn on the 14th the 34th moved to within 1000 yards of Arneburg and, after a 15 minute mortar and artillery preparation, 1 launched a coordinated

1 Some difficulty was experienced on the 14th in insuring the 34th adequate Arty support. For further information on this see Section III of "COMMENTS".

[REDACTED]

attack at 0830 with the infantry dismounted supported by the tanks. Resistance was light and the town was completely cleared by 1140. An additional 52 prisoners were taken in the town and the enemy's materiel losses amounted to 4 150-mm RR flak guns, 4 20-mm flak guns, 1 military headquarters train, 1 Ammo dump, and 10 US 2-1/2 ton trucks. Our losses were 1 KIA, 1 SWA, and 8 LWA for the entire operation at Arneburg.

After clearing Arneburg the 34th moved W and by 1650 reached the ferry site opposite Schonfeld thereby completing their assigned mission. 34th then assembled for the night at Schwechen prepared to move W on the 15th.

During the day our Rcn observed enemy activity at the W end of the RR bridge and at about 2200 outposts in Staffelde were attacked by infantry and direct mortar fire and withdrew to E edge of Stendal abandoning 2 peeps and an armored car in Staffelde. Our Rcn at Arneburg was undisturbed and patrolled as far north as Dalchau during the night. The enemy force near the RR bridge was estimated as 300 infantry, and the 34th was ordered to move early on the 15th to reduce this bridgehead. An outpost line was reestablished at 8354 at 0100 and reported no contact throughout the remainder of the night.

(2) Operations 15-16 April.

On the 15th the 46th moved to Stendal closing at 0955. The 34th moved at 0800 to the north edge of the forest E of Stendal. The 3 infantry platoons of B Cos dismounted and moved abreast through the woods meeting no resistance until Staffelde. Here 1 SS was killed and 2 taken prisoner. The 2 peeps and the M-8 abandoned by A/85 were recovered. One platoon dismounted went to the RR bridge and found no enemy there. Two platoons mounted moved to the edge of Storkau unopposed except for 20-mm and heavy caliber Arty fire from across the river. This fire landed in the town and not on our forces. It was hoped that the

[REDACTED]

150 American PWs known to be in Storkau could be evacuated but the 34th withdrew without so doing rather than draw more fire on the town. B Cos reassembled at 1800 at Staffelde, left one married platoon, the AT platoon, and the mortars of the 34th and the 46th to hold Staffelde. The remainder of the 34th moved back to Stendal. During the night the outpost received heavy mortar and artillery fire but suffered no casualties.

On the afternoon of the 16th CCA, with 47 FA attached for movement, moved some 50 Km west to an area along the Weser-Elbe Canal around Calvorde. All Elms, except for Tns which remained in Stendal, closed at 2315. The purpose of this move, as contained in Letter of Instructions, Hq 5th Armd Div, dated 161300, was to occupy an assigned area and provide security and military government therein. CCA was ordered to maintain one Md Co for employment on two hours notice. The assigned zone, its division to Elms of CCA, and disposition of troops of the command are shown by overlay in the S-3 Supplement.

F. Rear Area Security.

(1) Calvorde.

Early on the 17th A/85 moved N in its zone with mission of locating and reporting the enemy, locating friendly troops, and distributing MG notices. At 1240 this area was reported clear to our N bounday. 34th and 46th then started Ron to our S boundary with mission of locating and reducing any resistance. 46th was denied the use of A Cos and this force remained in reserve.

(2) Knesebeck.

At 1435 the 34th was halted and ordered to reassemble. Acting on new orders from Div, CCA less the 46th, Tns, and Medics, but with entire TD Co, moved by way of Oebesfelde, Vorsfelde, Weyhausen, Gifhorn, Hankensbutel to Knesebeck.

[REDACTED]

The 46th remained Vic Calvorde and continued their mission. RCT 407 with one Bn 335 Inf attached, was attached to CCA and CCA given the mission of clearing the large Forst Knesebeck while CCB blocked escape routes to the NE from Wittengen to Brome. The plan of operation was for RCT 407 to attack at 180700 with 1 Bn E and NE from Vorhop and two Bns N from Vic 0441 to clear the woods while CCA blocked escape routes to the NW from Vorhop to Wittengen. CCA was in position shortly after dawn; the infantry jumped off as planned and by 0900 had reached their objectives on the far side of the forest. The estimated enemy force of 3 tanks, 20 half tracks, 12 assault guns, and 500-600 men was not encountered. CCA reported mission accomplished at 1250 and moved at 1400 to an assembly area Vic Brome. The CP went to Steinke, 34th to Kunrau and Rcn to Mendischbrome. The command closed at 1755.

(3) Steinke.

At about 2300 CCB became engaged at Lindhof with elements of the Von Clausewitz Division and a portion of this force infiltrated SE through the large forest to our N during the early morning. From reports this force appeared to have been as many as 30 vehicles including tanks, SP guns and half tracks, and an undetermined number of troops and to have taken the route Lundalsen, CR 1952, Neufferchau, Kusey, Menze, and thence into the large forest S of Klotze. The 46th and Tns moved at 0730 to rejoin the command; their I and R platoon preceding as a billeting detail was captured at 0950 in Kobbelitz. B Cos were moved to Neufferchau and our Rcn screen to the N and E was strengthened. The day, however, passed without further incident. The 46th moved into Jahrstedt at 1200 and A Cos, passing to control of the 34th, replaced B as the alert Cos in Neufferchau.

At 1400 warning orders were issued for an attack N to the Elbe River on the 20th. At 1830 the CG, 5th Armd Div arrived at our CP, postponed the Atk

[REDACTED]

24 hours, and ordered CCA to send one married company to block the line Wittengen-Hankensbuttel. A Cos moved immediately to take up this position. During the night they had no contact, but our Rcn destroyed a Mk IV tank with mines and took 4 prisoners at Alferchau at 0310.

G. Second Attack to the Elbe.

(1) General background and plan of operation.

As early as the 15th of April the enemy became active in our rear areas employing armored elements. On the 16th this activity continued and the Von Clausewitz Div and the 39 Pz Corps were identified opposite the British Vic Uelzen. It was also established that this force had crossed the Elbe at Domitz with mission of moving S across the rear of XIII and XIX Corps to the Harz Mts. On the 17th a complete picture of the Von Clausewitz Div, its composition and intentions, was obtained. On the 18th the trap was set below Wittengen. This was the operation in which CCA participated with the CP at Knesebeck. On the 19th CCB became engaged and, using air and artillery, destroyed about 2/3 of the Von Clausewitz Division. The 47 FA captured the division staff and the composition of the 39 Pz Corps was determined as 4000-5000 men with 25-30 Mark V tanks, the entire force completely motorized and composed essentially of the 84th Inf and the Von Clausewitz Divisions. There was little activity in XIII Corps on the 20th but on the 21st a portion of the Von Clausewitz Div appeared in rear of XIX Corps having cut entirely across XIII Corps. This force was destroyed by the 2nd Armored Division. On the 21st and 22nd, XIII Corps attacked to clear the area roughly defined by the Elbe on the N and E, the 10 vertical grid line on the W, and the 80 horizontal on the S. The 5th Armd Div attacked on the left and 84th Inf Div on the right. The British

[REDACTED]

advanced E and made contact with the 5th Armd Div N of Gohrde Forest on the afternoon of the 22nd. The US 29th Inf Div advanced E and on the 22nd swung N in rear of the 5th Armd Div and on the 24th relieved the 5th Armd Div on the river.

(2) The operation.

a. The plan.

The order for the operation is contained in Letter of Instructions, Hq 5th Armd Div, dated 201800B and included in the attached S-3 Supplement. CCA and CCR were to attack at 210700B in zones as shown, CCR to make the main effort on the right. This order was later modified to exclude any mention of a main effort. Objectives were chosen designed to cut the main roads leading to the Elbe R. CCA had the mission of seizing 6 assigned objectives, protecting the left flank of CCR and outposting the river line in assigned zone. The 47 FA was assigned in direct support of CCA and the 557 FA and the 202 FA Gp in general support of the two attacking combat commands. The Arty plan was for the 557 FA Bn to support CCA primarily and 202 FA Gp to support CCR.

b. The enemy.

From about 0100 to about 0700 on the 21st our forces holding the L/D were attacked by what appears to have been two battle groups of 100-200 men, each with 9-12 Mk V tanks and/or assault guns. This force succeeded in taking Wistedt, but thereafter, particularly the tanks, appeared to have moved to the E into the woods beyond Bombeck. This force was identified as from 1, 2, 6 and 12 Cos, Pz Gr Regt Feldhernhalle under control of Von Clausewitz Div. These troops fought well and aggressively. From Grabenstedt N to about Obj 5 only Elms of 84th Inf Div were encountered. These Elms fought more cleverly but not so aggressively. Their action was essentially rearguard employing mines, AT and

[REDACTED]

nebelwerfer fire. On the 22nd and 23rd the 84th, except for one Arty and two nebelwerfer units, had disappeared from our front. On these two days we were opposed by three CT's under CT Hohmann and by CT Linde, all covering the withdrawal across the Elbe. The prisoner score was 159 on the 20th, 255 on the 21st, 325 on the 22nd, and 766 on the 23rd.

c. Factors affecting the operation.

The terrain in this operation favored the enemy. The general character of our zone was flat, but there were numerous small hills - terminal moraines - which were forested but afforded the enemy the advantage of observation. There was a relatively high, forested ridge line along our west boundary. Drainage was from this ridge line E to the Jeeze River which ran N in CCR's zone. Streams in our zone N of Bergen were small and infrequent and could not be classed as obstacles. From L/D to Bergen, however, there were 2-3 unfordable streams. There were numerous large forests predominantly on our left, but we were able to advance up a corridor between wooded areas to Obj 5. Thereafter it was necessary to pass through several large forests to reach the river. Five main roads crossed our zone from W to E, but only one main road was available for movement N and this one only to Klenze. N of this point only secondary roads and trails were available.

The weather on the 21st and 22nd was bad but favored us. Visibility was poor and the enemy was unable to make effective use of the many good observation points. In addition the ground was wet and our Gms raised a dust cloud to warn of our approach.

d. The action.

8th and 84th (with B Coe and normal attachments) moved N at 1300 on the 20th with mission of clearing the woods N of Rehrberg and seizing a line of

[REDACTED]

departure for our attack on the 21st. This operation progressed rapidly with little or no enemy contact and by 1800 a suitable line of departure had been secured. By 2100 the entire command was in position for the attack on the 21st. The CP was at Bierstedt, the 46th with C Cos was in Rohrberg, A Cos had closed at Stockheim and passed to control of the 46th; 47 FA, now in direct support, was in position Vic Ellenberg; CP of the 34th was at Wallstawe, and the line of departure was being held by A/85 and by B Cos. Dispositions on the line of departure were: B Cos had 2nd platoons married in Wistedt, 3d platoons married in Langenapel, 1st platoons married at RW 1000 Yds W of Wiersdorf, CP and AT platoon at Wiersdorf together with one Plat of D/34; the TD and Engr platoons attached to 34th were at Wallstawe; A/85 had a Rcn section just S of Bombeck, a section with one assault gun at Wistedt, CP at Langenapel, and a section at Dohre.

At 2100 our forces in Langenapel and Wistedt began reporting vehicular movement to their front. At 0230 these forces were attacked by enemy infantry, bicycle troops, and tanks or SPs. At 0250 Rcn in Wistedt withdrew into CCR's sector to the E. They were followed by enemy tanks. By 0500 enemy had infiltrated W of Wistedt across the small stream and was closing in on three sides. The 2nd Plats of B Cos withdrew to Langenapel and the fighting a severe engagement to do so. Two platoons were able to hold the position there. At dawn the enemy was in possession of Wistedt. During this fight our Arty was used in small quantities and is credited with breaking up the attack. Initially messages were relayed through 5 radios to the Arty their being no FO with B Cos or the 34th. 47 FA is to be censured for its inability to control their fires during this critical engagement when 5 Bns of Arty could have fired for us.

[REDACTED]

The 46th moved at 0530 and reached the L/D with A Cos at 0630 having taken the route Mehmke, Peckensen, Ellenberg. C Cos moved through the large forest NE of Mehmke. A Cos deployed N of Langenapel and launched a full scale assault on the town of Henningen. This town was taken by 0930¹. Before this, two platoons of B Cos were sent to retake Wistedt². This was quickly done against light resistance. In the town 171 prisoners were taken and 24 trucks, 10 trailers, 2 half tracks, 6 scout cars, 1 20-mm gun, and 2 75-mm SP assault guns were destroyed.³

After taking Henningen the 46th advanced rapidly. A mined road block was reduced at Grabenstedt and Bergen, Obj 4, was reached at 1130. During this advance a serious threat developed on our right. A number of tanks were sighted in Andorf, one of which was engaged but escaped. From reports of 3CR there seemed to be as many as 300 infantry, 9-12 tanks, and perhaps 50 vehicles in the woods along our eastern boundry. The platoon of TDs with Hq CCA blocked toward Andorf until C Cos had moved up to Henningen. The 34th was given the mission of getting behind the tanks in Andorf. They moved by way of Wistedt to Osterwohl and sent one platoon to Bombeck and return. 34th then moved to Andorf

- 1 At Langenapel Capt DeVault, commanding A/46, learned of the large enemy force which had been engaged in that Vic before dawn. He stated that he would like to stage a full scale attack on the town of Henningen without further Gen. General Regnier and Lt Col Burton, who were there at the time, were of the opinion that Henningen could be quickly taken without such an attack but permitted Captain DeVault to go ahead as he liked. A Cos deployed very quickly on about a 1200-1500 yard front and assaulted Henningen with tank fire and Arty fire.
- 2 It was necessary to retake Wistedt to restore the L/D before 46th could jump off. B Cos were ordered to make this attack immediately in order to restore their offensive spirit.
- 3 The rapid success of this operation in retaking the town from so large an enemy force was due to the great volumn of fire employed as the platoons closed in. As to the materiel claims it is not known just how much was destroyed during the night before the 2d Plat withdrew.

[REDACTED]

and sent a platoon to Rockerthin and back. N of Andorf they halted to resupply and then moved through Hestedt, removed a minefield, and rejoined the main column at Grubenstedt at about 1600. No contact was made with enemy tanks.

During the advance to Bergen the 557 and 47 FA fired on suspected and observed enemy locations with particular attention to Andorf, the woods N and E thereof, and to the woods N of Spithal. A large number of prisoners were taken but there was no effective resistance. In Bergen the 46th came under mortar and AT fire and the infantry of A Co was dismounted to deal with it. By nightfall A Cos was on Obj 5 at Gaddau; 46th CP with C Cos and the CP CCA were in Klenze; the 34th and Tns were in Bergen; 47 FA was at 175889, and 557 FA was at 187864. During the day our Rcn maintained contact with JCR on the right and screened to our left. At 1045 on the 22nd our Rcn reported contact with ROT 115 of the 29th Inf Div to our left rear.

On the 22nd the resistance was lighter than on the previous day. The 46th moved at 0800 with A Cos by the route Gaddau-Maddau-Sallahn-Fussau-Pudfipp-CR 133059-CR 133078-Metzingen-Tollendorf-Harlingen. Hq CCA with CC troops and 557 FA followed the 46th. Obj 6 was reached at 1230; Obj 7 was reached at 1420 and contact made with the British; and Obj 3 was reached 1830. At 0900 A Cos received a heavy, accurate concentration of nebelwerfer fire at 1894 and suffered some casualties. Thereafter resistance was discontinuous and chiefly from small arms to Vic of Sallahn where nebelwerfer battery was destroyed after a short firefight. Obj 6 was entered without opposition and the 46th was soon at Obj 7. Here the British pointed out an AT gun. Infantry of A Company dismounted, forced the gun out of position and continued without resistance through Tollendorf and Harlingen. Obj 3 was taken at 1830.

[REDACTED]

C Cos took the route Prieseeck-Gaddau-Zarenthien-Middefeitz-Gulden-Zernien-Riobau-Gorde-Wietzetze-Sammatz. Contact was made with the British at Zernien at 1445. Wietzetze was reached at 1750 and Obj 8 at 1830. This force reduced a mined road block at Dommatzen. There was no resistance thereafter but considerable interference from British traffic. The enemy in Sammatz surrendered and Obj 8 was taken without opposition. At 1800 our left boundary was changed to give Obj 8 to the British who were going to attack Sammetz immediately. When this was learned messages were dispatched immediately to the British by means of their liaison officer who had joined us at about 1430 and to division to the effect that our forces were entering Obj 8. The British did not attack and there was no conflict with our forces.¹

The 34th, the 47th FA, and Tns followed A Cos to Obj 6 thence to Zernien as the road N of Obj 6 was rapidly tearing up. From Zernien they followed C Cos to Gohrde and thence E to their positions for the night of 22-23 April. The 34th took prisoners but had no enemy action. During the day A/85 maintained contact on the left and the right.

Dispositions for the night 22-23 April were: The CP CCA and CP 46th in Tollendorf, A Cos at 1810 with one platoon on the main road at 184120, C Cos at Wietzetze, 34th at Metzingen, and 47 FA W of Tolleddorf. At about 2200 the platoon of A Cos at 184120 knocked out two tanks. A patrol from C Cos moving down the main road to establish contact with A Cos took a number of prisoners but was prevented by enemy action from making this contact. In order to complete our assigned mission the 46th was ordered for the 23rd to seize suitable OPs on the river line for the Rcn to outpost. Orders were also issued for A, B and C Cos to establish contact between each other so as to insure that the roadnet was open.

¹ See Section III of "COMMENTS".

[REDACTED]

On the 23rd A Cos attacked the town of Hitzacker and seized the high ground to the N where the Rcn set up an OP. Hitzacker was defended by about a company of infantry dug in on the western edge, a roadblock, a flak gun, a Mark V tank and panzerfausts. Infantry attacked the town dismounted covered by the fire of TDs and tanks. As they moved in they received fire from machine guns and the panther tank. The machine gun was neutralized by tank fire and the enemy tank was knocked out by three direct hits from our tanks. By about 1330 the town was cleared and the high ground to the N secured. A total of 200 prisoners were taken in the town.

On the north C Cos sent patrols down to the river line at several points. The 34th took over 400 prisoners in the Dannenburg forest and at Schwardau their I and R platoon received the surrender of an entire company with officer. At the oil dump, on the river E of Meudelfitz, Captain Scott, commanding A/85, obtained the surrender of another company of 170 men with officers. A total of 766 prisoners were taken on this date. One maintenance unit surrendered with its transportation and a large stock of tires and tubes. Part of this unit had crossed the Elbe when they heard that they were going to defend Berlin. The company reassembled on the W side and surrendered. Our Rcn outposted the river line and our Arty fired on enemy movements on the far side.

On the 24th RCT 115 relieved CCA on the river and on the 25th the command moved to occupy an area E, W and S of Fallersleben. The CP went to Martinsbutel. This zone and the disposition of troops therein is shown by overlay in the S-3 Supplement. On the 29th the CP moved to Hesslingen. During the period 26-30 April the command was engaged in security and military government activities in the assigned zone.

[REDACTED]

COMMENTS.

Section I - Personnel Matters.

No comments.

Section II - Intelligence.

Enemy personnel and materiel losses.

During the month of April CCA took 6674 prisoners and an additional 3128 in hospitals. Additional personnel losses were estimated as 429 killed and 175 wounded. Prisoners, with dates taken and identifications, were as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Identification</u>
April 1	11	Stragglers and deserters.
2-4	652	361 Pz Gr Regt; 348 Trng Bn.
5	20	Misc Air Force and Adm personnel.
6	13	Same as for 5th.
7	33	Stragglers and deserters.
8	69	Stragglers and deserters.
9	21	Stragglers and deserters.
10	193	CT Frike, Misc flak units and stragglers.
11	400 +	See message file. Misc AA, service, and Luftwaffe units.
12	724	Alarm Bn Gahrke, CT Mahr, CT Trappe, OCS personnel, Jaeger Commando unit, 1 Co 467 Ersatz Bn.
13-15	1812	Misc Repl, Engr, Air Force, Adm, and depot personnel.
16	10	Same as above.
17	59	Stragglers.
18	15	Stragglers.
19	20	Feldhernhalle Regt, Von Clausewitz Div (3).
20	159	Elms Von Clausewitz Div principally from Rcn Bn Strahlsdorf, CT Putlos, Rcn Plat Clausewitz, CT Benningsen, CT Grabow, Pz Rcn Bn Elbe, Div Staff Von Clausewitz Div.
21	255	Elms Von Clausewitz Div (1, 2, 6, 12 Pz Gren Regt Feldhernhalle) and Elms 84th Inf Div.
22	325	Rear guard Elms 84th Inf Div (Nebelwerfer and Arty units and CT Linde.)
23	766	CT Linde and 3 CT's controlled by CT Hohmann covering withdrawal across the Elbe.
24	166	Stragglers.
25-30	52	Stragglers.

[REDACTED] 34



The enemy's materiel losses during and immediately following action were estimated as follows:

Tanks or SP Assault Guns	-	9	Other Armd Veh.	-	46
Guns, 75-mm or larger	-	51	A/C in flight	-	9
G.P. or H/D vehicles	-	419	A/C captured	-	150

Trains - 7 locomotives and an estimated 400 cars.

In addition to the above CCA is to be credited with the capture of a great store of military materiel in our zone of operation but which was never accurately counted. Of particular importance is the town of Herford with its military barracks, the military depots there, and the RR yards; the town of Stendal with its RR yards, numerous supply installations, its military hospitals, and the large operational airfield to the N; the marshalling yards at Fallersleben, and the large underground POL dump on the Elbe River N of Hitzacker.

Section III - Operations.

On three occasions during the month division made decisions and issued orders of considerable importance to the conduct of our operations. These decisions were made and the orders issued without consulting CCA and without sufficient knowledge on which to base the decisions. On the night of 13th of April CCA requested that the 557th FA, then S of Stendal, move to a position to fire on Arneburg. The CG was advised that they would be in position to fire in the morning in time to support the intended attack of the 34th on the town. Instead Div Arty and 557th FA, who had supported our operations on the 12th and 13th, were ordered by division to move to a position far to the N of Stendal. CCA was not advised of this. The result was that the 557th was not in position to support the operation against Arneburg until after our troops had assaulted the town. At 1400 on the 14th the 47 FA and the 71 FA, assigned in direct



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[REDACTED]

support of CCA, received orders from Div Arty to move. CCA was not advised of this change in supporting units. At the time the 34th was moving N from Arneburg to cut the ferry site opposite Schonfeld. CCA, and certainly not division, did not know at this time how much Arty would be needed for the 34th to complete its mission. From 1400 until the completion of its mission at about 1700 the 34th was without artillery support.

On the 22nd, at 1800, division, in answer to a request from the British commander, sent messages to CCA and to the British agreeing to a change in boundary to permit the British to attack immediately to take Sammatz, within our Obj 8. Before this Msg could be decoded the 46th was on Obj 8. As mentioned previously in the narrative CCA immediately sent this information to the British by means of their liaison radio and no conflict with them resulted. Here again division made an important decision with regard to CCA operations without consulting CCA and without sufficient knowledge. The latest reported location from CCA was received at division 1603B, time dated 1540B, and placed CCA some 7 Km S of Sammatz. It could have happened, in this situation, that the 46th and the British would have fought each other with unnecessary casualties to each side.

Section IV - Supply and Maintenance Matters.

No Comments.

Section V - Civilian.

In Stendal and vicinity CCA found a great number of slave laborers in camps. All nationalities were very cooperative, quickly organized themselves under their own leaders, and displayed a remarkable degree of restraint in their activities.

Also in and around Stendal CCA liberated a large number of American PW's. This imposed quite an evacuation problem. During the period 12-16 April, CCA

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liberated and evacuated approximately 1100 American Prisoners of War, liberated approximately 3000 Allied Prisoners of War, of whom about 2000 were evacuated during the period, and evacuated 2500 German prisoners.

For the Commanding General:

Henry P. Halsell
HENRY P. HALSELL,
Captain - C.E.,
S-3 Air.

INCLOSURES - 4.

Incl 1 - S-3 Journal

Incl 2 - S-2 Journal

Incl 3 - S-3 Air Journal

Incl 4 - S-3 Journal Supplement
& Map Supplement.