

General Subjects Section
ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT
THE INFANTRY SCHOOL
Fort Benning, Georgia

ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS COURSE
1947 - 1948

THE OPERATIONS OF "B" COMPANY, 1ST BATTALION,
14TH INFANTRY (71ST INFANTRY DIVISION) IN THE VICINITY
OF REGENSBURG, GERMANY, 23 APRIL - 29 APRIL 1945
(CENTRAL EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of the Company Commander)

Type of operation described: COMPANY IN THE PURSUIT

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of Company "B", 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, 71st US Infantry Division, in the vicinity of Regensburg, Germany, 23 April - 29 April 1945.

Hitler, in September 1942, stated to the world and I quote: "Let the Allies attack again and again, and let them bleed to death." This, however, did not have any influence or convince our nation that the Atlantic Wall, Maginot and Siegfried Lines were ~~not~~ impenetrable. (1)

We find that this statement had little significance insofar as our strategical plan was concerned. The successful landings of our troops on the Normandy Beach of France on 6 June 1944, the defeat of the German Armies in the Battle of the Bulge and the memorable crossing of the Rhine River on 25 March 1945, dealt successive staggering blows to a now (assumed) disorganized fighting force. His lines of communication were badly disrupted, replacement system inadequate, and attacks and defenses now became sporadic, weak, and poorly organized. Thus, little or no success could be expected by such forces except for possibly fighting a delaying action.

From 22 March to 15 April the Western Allies had advanced eastward as far as the Mulde and Elbe Rivers. (See Map A) (2)

During the period of 1 April to 15 April 1945, on one Army front alone, approximately 500,000 German prisoners were captured or surrendered. This was an indication that we were now opposing a disorganized and disintegrating force. (3)

Intelligence estimated that approximately one hundred German Divisions still faced the Allies. This one hundred German Divisions included

(1) A-1, p. 5; (2,3) A-3, p. 49

enemy forces now opposing the Russians and in such isolated countries as Denmark, Norway and Western Holland which were almost completely out of the battle for Western Europe. (4)

On 15 April, it was the strategy of the Supreme High Command to isolate, divide and destroy all the German Forces to the north and south converging from our furthest line of advance at the Mulde and Elbe Rivers. (5)

During this same time the Russian Armies had temporarily stopped to reorganize ^{their} its divisions to make a final assault on the east front, thereby gaining contact with our forces in the west. Except for small isolated pockets of resistance on the Mulde and Elbe Rivers, the line of penetration agreed upon with the Russians had now been reached. (6)

In accordance with such agreement, SHAEF issued orders on 17 April for our Armies to continue their advances as follows:

(1) Canadian 1st Army and the British 2nd Army of the 21st Army Group to seize crossings over the Elbe River, secure Hamburg and continue the advance to the north, thereby liberating Denmark.

(2) The 9th and 1st Army of the 12th Army Group would continue to hold the line generally north and south along the Elbe and Mulde Rivers and eliminate any pockets of resistance that prevented all their fronts from being adjacent to these rivers. The 3rd Army on the right of the 12th Army Group to drive relentlessly to the south and east into Austria through the Danube Plains and gain contact with the Russian Forces.

(3) The 7th Army and the 1st French Army of the 6th Army Group to protect its right flank, continue its advance to the south and occupy that part of Austria and Germany in its zone. (7)

It was not felt by the Supreme High Command that Berlin some 50 miles to the front of the 9th Army could be considered an objective unless it became necessary. Attacks to the north and south therefore became our primary objectives. (8)

(4,5,6) A-3, p. 49; (7,8) A-3, p. 50

By the relief of as many forces as could possibly be spared in the central part of our lines without materially weakening the holding force astride the Mulde and Elbe Rivers, it was thought by the Supreme High Command that a surrender or destruction of all the German forces remaining to the north and south would be short coming. (9)

The area in southeast Germany, including Austria was now named the "National Redoubt." This area was so named due to the belief that the German High Command had in hiding and ~~was~~ ^{WAS} fighting with all of [>] its key strategists to hold this territory for a last stand. (10)

THE GENERAL SITUATION

The XX Corps, with whom ^{whom} we shall be concerned, was presently occupying a position on the left flank of the 3rd Army astride the Mulde and Elbe Rivers. The 4th and 6th Armored Divisions, ^{which} ~~who~~ had spear-headed Corps' advance, were now holding Corps' front line. (11)

The Russians who now had reorganized and captured Vienna were set to launch a full scale offensive to the north and west.

On April the 15th, 3rd Army directed XX Corps to move from its present location on Armies' left and execute the main effort for the attack towards Regensburg, thence Linz, Austria, to join forces with the Russians. (12)

III Corps, ^{which} ~~who~~ had accomplished its mission in aiding to eliminate the Rhur pocket, ^{the} was directed to occupy positions of XX Corps so that it might be shifted as ordered to the south some 120 miles. On 18 April XX Corps closed in to its new area at Pommersfeldon, Germany. The 4th and 6th Armored Divisions and the 76th Infantry Division of XX Corps were to revert to the control of III Corps. This left with the XX Corps in its move to the south, the 80th Infantry Division and the 3rd Cavalry Group. The 65th and 71st Infantry Divisions and the 13th Armored Division would replace those units left with III Corps. The 13th Armored Division, ^{which} ~~who~~ like the III Corps had participated in the Rhur pocket, had

(9) A-3, p. 50; (10) A-3, p. 49; (11,12) A-5, p. 1

to move some 250 miles to the south to join Corps. (13)

Sources of information indicated the 2nd and 11th Panzer Divisions, ^{which} ~~who~~ had previously been located in Czechoslovakia and somewhat weakened, might be shifted into the Corps zone of advance. ~~Through~~ ^{INDICATED THAT} a prisoner of war interrogation there also existed one or two Hungarian Divisions in the Corps zone. It was not felt that these forces would offer any resistance. (14)

The Corps plan of attack was to place the two newly joined divisions, the 65th and the 71st Infantry Divisions, abreast initially and until a crossing had been well secured over the Danube River. At this time the 13th Armored Division would cross, pass through the two Infantry Divisions and constitute the pursuit force for Corps. Since the 13th Armored Division was badly in need of repairs and maintenance, it was placed in Corps reserve with the 80th Infantry Division. The 71st Infantry Division on the left would continue its advance to the south while in the process of reverting to Corps control. The 65th Infantry Division would hold its present position and on the 20th of April would pass through the left flank elements of XV Corps on the right and advance toward Regensburg. (See Map B) (15)

As XX Corps was preparing to continue its attack to the south, XV Corps became engaged in a bitter fight for the city of Nurnberg. The 14th Armored Division, which was now located just to the east of Bayreuth, was ordered on 17 April to aid XV Corps in the capture of the city of Nurnberg. On the night of 17-18 April, the 71st Infantry Division took over the position immediately east of Nurnberg.

On 18 April, the 71st Infantry Division was ordered to continue its attack to the southeast providing the 14th Armored Division had been entirely relieved and cleared the area.

THE REGIMENTAL SITUATION

The Division plan of attack was for two Regimental Combat Teams, the

the 3rd Cavalry Group (reinforced) ^{which} had captured a bridge intact
? opening the Corps main supply route into Regensburg. (22)

At about 0500 hours 24 April the 14th Regimental Combat Team had closed into Burglengenfeld. At approximately 0700 hours 24 April, the 14th Regimental Combat Team Commander directed that the 2nd Battalion move by motor at once to Regenstauf with a mission of securing and seizing the bridge crossing the Regen River. ^{MAP SHOWS NAAB RIVER} All organic 2½ ton trucks, three tank destroyer vehicles with five tanks attached would constitute the battalion task force. Advance elements of the 2nd Battalion upon arriving near the bridge were immediately subjected to heavy artillery and machine gun fires. The Regimental Commander realizing that the enemy force defending was much stronger than has been estimated ordered the 1st Battalion Commander to move his battalion along the main route from Burglengenfeld to Regenstauf with the mission of clearing the woods 500 yards to the right and left respectively.

An attempt was made to move the vehicles that had transported the 2nd Battalion to Regenstauf so as to motorize the 1st Battalion but due to isolated strong points bypassed, this plan had to be given up and the vehicles were placed under cover in the woods in the rear of the 2nd Battalion.

This now confronted the Regimental Commander with a serious situation as enemy existed between the 2nd Battalion, engaged in a fire fight on the Regen River at Regenstauf, and the 1st Battalion at Burglengenfeld.

At 0800 hours 24 April the 1st Battalion Commander issued the Battalion attack order. Companies "B" and "C" abreast, Company "B" on the right with one section of heavy machine guns attached from Company "D", would move immediately to aid the 2nd Battalion in its fire fight, clearing all the woods and towns in its zone of advance. Company "A" would be in reserve. Extra ammunition and three days rations were given to every man as it was not known how long it would be before resupply

14th and 66th, to be committed initially abreast and as the zone of advance widened, the 5th Regimental Combat Team would be committed in the center until Amberg had been taken. (16)

On 19 April the 14th Armored Division had cleared the Division zone and the 5th Regimental Combat Team was committed to action. (17)

On 20 April the three Regimental Combat Teams were committed abreast and continued their advance to the south. Little or no enemy opposition was encountered. (18)

On 21 April the 14th Regimental Combat Team encountered stiff small arms fire on the Sulzbach - Bayreuth Highway. The enemy defenses were rapidly eliminated and the regiment continued on its advance towards Amberg. (Personal)

The 5th Regimental Combat Team encountering similar enemy action and no longer able to keep up with the enemy in the pursuit, on 22 April was shuttled 17 miles to the south to Amberg. The 66th Regimental Combat Team had now cleared its zone of all enemy action and cut the Sulzbach-Nurnberg Highway. (19)

During this time the 3rd Cavalry Group, reinforced with the 5th Ranger Battalion, pressed constantly forward trying to keep contact with the enemy.

The 14th Regimental Combat Team on the 22nd and 23rd of April was left behind in Amberg to screen the city for snipers and to maintain law and order. (20)

The 3rd Cavalry Group in their advance forward were now meeting with strong resistance. Through the capture of one German officer and a Division Field Order found on his person, it was disclosed that the 416th German Infantry Division had with it elements of the 36th German Infantry Division and the 17th SS German Panzer Division. (21)

On the morning of 24 April the 14th Regimental Combat Team was ordered to move by motor to the Naab River at Burglengenfeld and relieve

(16) A-5, p. 2; (17,18,19) A-5, p. 3; (20) A-5, p. 5; (21) A-5, p. 4

of these critical items would be needed if the bridge across the Regen River should be destroyed. Extra 60mm and 81mm mortar ammunition was loaded on all company transports. Company transportation was placed under control of all companies.

The Battalion S-2 estimated at this time that no force larger than 30 or 40 enemy were left in the area between the cities of Burglengenfeld and Regenstauf. This estimate was made on a report that the Battalion S-2 had received from the Regiment stating that the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoons had engaged only sniper fire at Hagenau where a road block was set up and they had eliminated any action in that area. This, however, did not prove to be a fact as we shall later see.

TERRAIN ANALYSIS

There is only one good road throughout the entire zone of advance which will adequately support an operation. This road ran south from Burglengenfeld through Regenstauf to Regensburg. A good road did exist running north out of Regenstauf, but ran only as far as Sterling, nine miles to the north and east. The road out of Regensburg running to the southeast constituted the main line of communication to Linz, Austria. The highway from Burglengenfeld to Regensburg ran in a valley with hill masks on each side. The hills on each side of the road offered observation over every inch of the road that anyone would travel on. The hills in the area rose to a height of from 200 to 300 feet. The highest hill in the zone of advance was located adjacent and due east of Zeitlarn. This hill was about 400 feet high. From the top of this hill one could get observation all the way to the outskirts of the city of Regenstauf, west into the valley across the Regen River, and south over most of Regensburg.

Woods through the entire area were thick with undergrowth. Attempts had been made to keep most of the undergrowth cleaned out. Brush piles throughout all of the woods in the area became hiding places for the enemy. Observation in the woods at best at any one place was about 150 yards.

NAMED NAAB RIVER ON MAP C

There were two main rivers, the Regen River and the Danube River. These constituted the major barriers to motorized elements. Prevention of the destruction of the two bridges, one at Regenstauf and the other at Regensburg, became of primary importance to us.

Cover and concealment was generally good along the entire route of advance except for the area between Regenstauf and Zeitlarn which was constantly under observation from the high hill east of Zeitlarn.

THE COMPANY IN PURSUIT

At 0830 hours the battalion pushed off in the attack from Burglengenfeld, Company "B" on the right. Company "B" was disposed with the 1st and 2nd Platoons in the attacking Echelon. The 3rd platoon followed the 2nd platoon on the right. Light machine guns were attached to each forward platoon. 60 mortars would remain on vehicles until the enemy had been engaged and thereafter hand-carried. As the company entered the woods, enemy machine gun fire pinned the 1st and 2nd platoons to the ground. A fire break existed between the enemy positions and us. Mortars were immediately called for to fire upon the enemy machine gun position. The 3rd platoon, which had been sent around to the right in order to deliver flanking fire, captured 5 prisoners and stated that the enemy was seen withdrawing to the south. They estimated there was about two squads. All fire had ceased by 0850 hours. (See Map C, Point A)

By 0915 hours the attack was pressed forward with the 1st and 3rd platoons leading. The 2nd platoon being pinched out by the enveloping action of the 3rd platoon on the right. The 1st Battalion Commander, being surprised by the amount of fire in conjunction with the estimate received earlier from S-2 as to the number of enemy in the area, moved up to Company "B's" area. At this time the "B" Company Commander was notified that a platoon of tanks would be attached to the battalion as soon as gasoline was available to them in Burglengenfeld. By 0940 hours the company had reached a point due south of Winkerling when "C" Company on the left became engaged in a heavy fire fight. Most of this fire was coming from the buildings in the town of Winkerling. Company "A"

was immediately committed to action between "B" and "C" Companies. "B" Company, who had now advanced well forward of "C" Company, was ordered to hold up its advance and prevent the enemy from escaping out of the rear of Winkerling. (See Map C, Point B) The 1st Platoon on the left was immediately sent to the woods across the road with the mission of establishing a trap for the prevention of any enemy escaping out of the town of Winkerling. (See Map C, Point C) The enemy, seeing the 1st platoon of Company "B" occupying positions in the woods began to bring fire to bear on the platoon. The exchange of fire for about 10 minutes with the additional fire from "C" and "A" Companies had completely eliminated the resistance in and around the buildings. Later it was learned through one of the enemy captured that they were left there with the mission of delaying our forces as much as possible in order to allow for sufficient time to give the stronger enemy force an opportunity to make a strong defensive position on the Rhine River.

By 1015 hours the Company had reorganized and received orders from the Battalion Commander to continue pressing its advance. The 1st and 2nd platoons ^{to} lead; the 2nd platoon on the right; the 3rd platoon to follow the 2nd platoon and provide security for the companies' right flank. As the company approached the railroad tracks to the front, the leading scouts passed the message to the rear that enemy were observed around the railroad tracks and edge of woods. Only 4 or 5 of the enemy were definitely located and they believed that the main strength was in the woods. (See Map C, Point D)

The 2nd platoon on the right, who now had excellent observation from the edge of the woods to the track, was placed in firing position while the 1st and 3rd platoons, 1st platoon leading, moved through the woods to the left. No fire was delivered as the enemy at this time had not observed our movements. Company "C" on the left had advanced to the railroad tracks. Upon arriving at this position they immediately began to receive fire from the few enemy in "B" Company's front. The 1st and 3rd

platoon^s in the woods along the road now began to be in some what of a serious situation as "C" Company, not knowing that the two platoons of "B" Company were in this section of the woods, got into a somewhat semi-cross fire. The fire was not directly on the 1st and 3rd platoons but limited any further advance to the front. "B" Company Commander immediately attempted to call by radio the "C" Company Commander but radio contact could not be made. Repeated attempts failed. Through contact with "A" Company Commander now following Company "B" a runner was sent to the "C" Company Commander by Company "A". As soon as the fire had stopped the 2nd platoon of "B" Company, ^{WHICH WAS} located in the edge of the woods to be a base of fire, was ordered to hold its fire until called for by the "B" Company Commander. 60mm mortars would monitor the radio call ~~when~~ to commence firing and assist in furnishing fire support. The order to commence firing was given. The 1st platoon at this same time assaulted the position along the railroad tracks on the enemy's right. Simultaneously the 2nd platoon and mortars opened fire.

By 1040 hours all enemy fire had ceased. The surprise fires had completely destroyed all the enemy along the tracks.

The company continued in its advance towards Ponholz now with the 1st and 2nd platoons leading with the 2nd platoon on the right. Upon arriving within 500 yards of the exterior buildings, machine gun and sniper fire had pinned the 1st platoon to the ground. The men were in an exposed position except for those that were along the road and took cover in the ditches. The platoon leader ordered the men to immediately run for the ^{NOT SAID WAS} woods to the south of Ponholz. One squad of the platoon under command of the platoon sergeant shifted positions to the ditches along the road and established a cover of fire for the platoon. Immediately, 81mm and 60mm mortars were put into action. The mortar fire had little or no effect on the enemy in the buildings except as a psychological factor. This did aid the remaining squads of the 2nd platoon to close in on Ponholz from the south. Upon call from the platoon leader by his SCR 536, all fire was lifted and the platoon moved into the

buildings and ditch on the south edge of town. The troops upon surrendering were found to be men estimated at 50 to 60 years of age. Through one of the men in the company who had spoken with the prisoners stated that they had also been forced to remain in this town to cover a road block located at Hagen^Aou. They also informed us that there were about 25 or 30 German Engineer troops with an 88 Anti-Tank gun in the woods to our front. (See Map C, Point E)

Immediately the Battalion Commander was given this information and a request was made to determine the whereabouts of the tanks that were to aid us. The Battalion Commander immediately ordered all companies to secure themselves and withhold any further movement as the platoon of tanks previously granted was being dispatched forward to join in eliminating the enemy engineer troops in the woods. (See Map C, Point F)

At 1230 hours the company was ordered by radio to continue its advance with the aid of three tanks. The remaining two went to "C" Company, who was engaged in a fire fight along with Company "A" to the north.

The company moved through the woods south of Ponhol^Tz and arrived about 800 yards from Hagenau when the tank platoon leader reported that his tanks were among the buildings at Ponholz and would bring them up wherever needed. The first tank pulled out across the field. An 88 located in the woods to the east of Hagenau had received its first target, blowing the track off the vehicle. The remaining two tanks still in Ponholz, upon seeing the first tank getting hit, refused to move their tanks. One stated that he was about out of gas and the other said he was having magneto trouble. The Executive Officer of the Company was immediately dispatched to the rear to learn the true details. Upon arrival the platoon leader stated that the situation was as had been previously told. Upon inspection, the tank having the broken magneto was eliminated. Further observation disclosed that both tanks were low on gas. Service elements had failed to arrive with supplies. Under the

circumstances, the "B" Company Commander considered it best to not use the tanks. This was reported to battalion. In the meantime the company closed in toward the town of Hagen^abu. The 88 gun could now be seen in the edge of the woods and artillery fire was immediately called for. All the fire of the artillery was at this time being used by the 2nd Battalion to the north of Regenstauf. The Artillery Forward Observer was informed that they would attempt to get some Corps Artillery. In the meantime direct 88 fire was fired into the buildings the men occupied. Most of the company had moved off into the woods to the north of Hagenau when all firing ceased from the 88. However, machine gun and rifle fire continued. At this time the Artillery Observer was informed that he could use some 240 mm Corps Artillery if the mission was still needed. The first round landed about 200 yards west of Hagenau, short 300 yards of the 88. Correction was immediately given and the next round landed on the roof of the building adjacent to the building which the Forward Observer and "B" Company Commander were occupying. The heavy artillery had routed the enemy and they were now seen leaving the woods going south into Diesenbach. The "B" Company Commander at this point requested that the Artillery Forward Observer call the mission completed as it looked at the time that the fire might land on our own troops. Mortar fire was placed on the retreating enemy, but proved ineffective due to the enemy being widely dispersed.

At about 1430 hours the company reorganized and continued on its way to Regenstauf. At the same time the 2nd Battalion which was in the severe fire fight north of Regenstauf had gained a crossing over the Regen River. The 1st Battalion Commander informed the company to change its direction of attack to Diesenbach in pursuit of the enemy. Upon arriving about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile out of Diesenbach, Company "B" was ordered to hold up its advance and await the arrival of the remaining part of the battalion. A reconnaissance patrol from Company "B", while awaiting the remainder of the battalion, was sent to the railroad bridge to reconnoiter for a possible crossing. (See Map C, Point G)

At about 1600 hours the patrol returned and stated that by observation from buildings on the near side of the river demolitions could be seen on the spans of the railroad bridge but it did not appear to be guarded. Also about 10 feet had been blown out of the center. This fact was immediately reported to the 1st Battalion Commander who directed that one platoon be returned to the bridge immediately to prevent it from being further destroyed. The 1st platoon was sent on this mission.

By 1800 hours the remaining companies of 1st Battalion closed into Diesenbach.

At 1800 hours the 1st Battalion Commander directed that the 1st platoon now at the river railroad bridge with the aid of the Battalion Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon repair the span blown out and disarm the demolitions. By 2100 hours the mission was completed with no enemy resistance. The 1st Battalion immediately moved across the railroad bridge and took up defensive positions on the west edge of the city of Regenstauf.

Company "C" was left in the city of Diesenbach to protect the Battalion transportation until such time as the bridge across the Regen River had been put in by the Engineers in the 2nd Battalion zone.

By 0200 hours, 25 April, the Battalion vehicles crossed the river and closed into the new Battalion area in the city of Regenstauf.

"A" and "B" Companies at 0500 hours were given zones of responsibility through the south edge of the city of Regenstauf with the mission of clearing all buildings of snipers and to aid in maintaining law and order. All three of the rifle platoons of Company "B" were assigned zones of responsibility. Through previous experience it was found that radio communication with the SCR 536 was not adequate communication to maintain control. Control points were designated approximately every four blocks.

As "B" Company approached the outskirts of Regenstauf, a large prison was observed. This information was immediately dispatched to the Battalion Commander along with the fact that considerable difficulty

was being encountered in forcing the warden of the prison to open the gate.

By first observation it appeared the guards were still armed. The 1st and 2nd platoons, with the section of heavy machine guns attached to the company and the company light machine guns, were placed around the prison to cover all the guards and exits. The Battalion Commander at about 1100 hours arrived on the scene with ample supply of demolitions to blow the prison gate down. The warden, upon seeing what was to take place, immediately opened the gate.

The 3rd platoon and the remaining men of the weapons platoon were broken up in six-man groups and dispatched to all critical points throughout the prison with the mission of disarming all guards. The 1st Battalion Commander along with the "B" Company Commander after having completed the collection of approximately 150 pistols, 25 rifles and an excessive amount of ammunition, reconnoitered the interior further in the prison. In going through the prison three American and two British soldiers were found and immediately released to the American Military Government. By 0700 hours the 1st Battalion's zone had been cleared. The 1st platoon of Company "B" was ordered to remain in the prison to maintain law and order. By 0800 hours the 71st Division Provost Marshall with members of the American Military Government took control of the prison.

At 0800 hours 25 April, the 1st Battalion Commander directed that the Battalion continue its advance to the south and aid in the capture of Regensburg.

The battalion order of march was "B", "A", "D", and "C" Companies. Headquarters and Headquarters Company would remain in Regenstauf with the Regiment.

At 0945 hours enemy artillery fire from Regensburg started to fall on the forward elements of Company "B". (See Map C, Point H) The company was immediately ordered to further disperse and take up double time. An assembly point at Zeitlarn was designated as the terrain was

flat without any cover or concealment. Enemy could be observed on the high ground to the front, east of Zeitlarn which later proved to be a German Artillery Observation Post. By dispersion a smaller target and less time to adjust artillery fires was employed. The platoons of the company moved in a zig-zag fashion across the open field and had by 1015 hours reorganized and were assaulting the hill east of Zeitlarn. The 2nd platoon was ordered to go around to the south while the 1st and 3rd platoons ^{were to} attack the hill from the west. Upon reaching the top of the hill, two young boys about 14 years of age had been captured. Our artillery kept striking this hill.

At 1100 hours the 1st Battalion Commander ordered the company to move to the next ridge to the south and take up defensive positions for the night. Company "B" was disposed with three platoons on line from right to left: 2nd, 1st and 3rd. The company front was approximately 800 yards in width.

Wire lines latterly and in depth were laid from all platoon positions. Additional ammunition was furnished due to the extended frontage. Radio silence was not maintained because of the extended frontage and possible patrol action which might be intensified throughout the night.

At 1200 hours a runner from battalion delivered a message to the Company "B" Command Post which read in substance as follows: -- 2nd Battalion will make river crossing; hold present position until further orders; increase patrol activity into Regensburg.

At 1300 hours one reconnaissance patrol was sent to the south to reconnoiter that part of Regensburg north of the Danube River with the mission of determining whether the bridge across the Danube River had been blown.

At 1430 hours the patrol returned with the chief of police who stated that there ^{were} ~~was~~ approximately 350 SS troops in the city of Regensburg south of the river. He further stated that these troops would not surrender the city but desired to fight for it. This information was immediately dispatched to the 1st Battalion Command Post. The patrol also had found out that the bridge across the Danube had been blown.

For the remaining part of the night of 25 - 26 April extensive patrolling by "B" Company was performed. The night was uneventful as not even one prisoner was captured or a shot fired.

Finding that Regensburg was going to be defended, the 1st and 2nd Battalions received orders that they would bypass the city of Regensburg to the west and that the 65th Division would take the city in its zone. (23)

At about 0500 hours 26 April, the 2nd Battalion crossed the Danube River about two miles east of Regensburg. As the crossing was being made XX Corps Artillery and Air Corps bombing were in the process of softening the city. (24)

At 0730 hours Company "B" received a written order which had an attached overlay for it to move and cross the Danube River and assist the regiment in attacking the city of Regensburg from the south. By 0830 hours the company crossed and was placed in Battalion Reserve. By 1000 hours the company took up defensive positions in Barbing.

During the 27th and 28th of April, the company stayed in defensive positions.

At 0900 hours elements of the 13th Armored Division passed through the battalion area and the race to see who was going to meet the Russians first, was on.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

I believe the regimental commander used sound tactical judgement in the employment of the 2nd Battalion to the Regen River at Regenstauf. By the employment of the 1st Battalion, a serious threat was eliminated in the 2nd Battalion's rear.

The speed of movement of the 1st Battalion was greatly reduced due to the lack of armor. When the armor did show up it was not capable of performing. Poor judgment was used in sending this armor into combat. Armor should never be used to exploit an attack when it is not mechanically in operating condition.

(23) A-2, p. 420; (24) A-4, p. 49

The supply problems in this operation were negligible. This was mainly due to the reason that a sufficient amount of ammunition on all carriers was taken. The added ammunition allowed for close and continuous support. The added rations carried by the men out the supply hauls down. This in turn gave the regiment greater distances that it could leapfrog its supplies and on up the line.

The estimate made by the Battalion S-2, I believe, was made on one factor, just because one man from the Regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon had only encountered sniper fire in the forward area. In the "B" Company area approximately 50 enemy were captured, 14 killed or wounded and some 30 or 40 were known to ^{HAVE} escaped out of the zone of advance. Not having knowledge of what the rest of the 2nd Battalion had captured or killed, the estimate was far from even being a fair estimate.

The fire received by the 1st and 2nd platoons as ^{they were} ~~it was~~ maneuvering to eliminate the enemy on the railroad tracks could have been avoided had the "C" Company radio operator monitored the SCR 300 in that company.

Rapid and coordinated supporting fires during this operation can be contributed to this unit having additional SCR 536 radios. An SCR 536 was given to the Forward Observer and 3 additional radios to the mortar section. When moving the distance that this unit moved one can readily understand why wire is not a workable means of communication insofar as the 60mm mortar section is concerned.

LESSONS

1. Speed is essential in the destruction of a disorganized enemy.
2. Successful continuance of a pursuit is dependent upon the supply plan of the operation.
3. Reorganization while in pursuit must be done while on the march.
4. Extended frontages are assigned to units; therefore it is most important that contact be continuously maintained.
5. The principle of surprise should be attained. It is the essence of success in all operations.

6. Combined Tank-Infantry employment should always be used in the pursuit.

7. Radios are the primary means of contact in the pursuit. Therefore, more than one SCR 300 radio should be issued to each rifle company.

8. Additional SCR 536 radios must be given to a rifle company to facilitate the rapid employment of its mortars.

9. Engineer troops must habitually be attached to units in this type of operation.

BUILDING 10. Realistic training prior to entry into combat is the only means of a successful fighting force.