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AAR # 19-B

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AFTER ACTION REPORT

37TH TANK BATTALION

4TH ARMORED DIVISION

FEB 45 - MAY 45

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S E C R E T

Letter, Hq 37th Tank Bn, Subject: "After Action Report for Month of March, 1945", 11 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

24 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

At 1545, word was received from CC"B" to move out at once. Leading elements of the column crossed the bridge over the Rhine at 1800. German aircraft made several efforts to bomb the bridge while the column was crossing.

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

The Battalion passed through the 5th Infantry Division and continued on its route against comparatively light resistance.

It was determined at this time to continue the attack throughout the night. Three (3) towns were taken before midnight.

25 MARCH, 1945

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

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

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

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

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

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 They were withdrawn on order and remained East of the Main River, outposting with D/37 the high ground to the East of the River.

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

On the 24th and 25th, the Battalion had destroyed 27 trucks, 23 AA guns, 7 SP's, 2 AT guns, 1 105 Howitzer, 45 vehicles, 1 flak car, 1 motorcycle; 375 PW's were taken and 90 enemy killed. 70

S E C R E T

Letter, Hq 37th Tank Bn, Subject: "After Action Report for Month of March, 1945", 11 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

26 MARCH, 1945

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 MARCH, 1945

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

At 0900, Lt. Ogden, our Liaison Officer, arrived with word that we were to move before noon.

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

S E C R E T

Letter, Hq 37th Tank Bn, Subject: "After Action Report for Month of March, 1945", 11 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

27 MARCH, 1945 (Cont'd)

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

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

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

28 MARCH, 1945

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

Major Hunter went to CC"R". Upon his return, a Company Commander's meeting was held. We were to be ready to move any time after 1200 and were to follow CC"B". The order of march was to be: Rcn/704; Rcn/37; D/37 and assault guns of 37; A/37, C/10; Command Group 37 and 10; Hqs Reserve Command; Platoon of 24 Engrs; A/704; Division Forward; Hqs 37 and 10; B/37; B/10; B/24; A Trains.

The head of the column moved out at 1415, covered a distance of fifty miles, and arrived at Munzenburg at 2230.

Colonel Blanchard, CO of CC"R", arrived at the CP at 2300 and discussed plans for movement of Reserve Command in the morning behind CC"A".

29 MARCH, 1945

The column moved out at 0900 but was halted after proceeding six kilometers.

Original plans were changed. CC"R", less Division Forward, was now to proceed along a separate route to the South to the town of Herbstein.

The column moved out at 1230. Resistance was light. Several small towns and one large town were taken. About 300 prisoners were captured, one railroad terminal with much material was rendered useless, and a column of AA guns towed by full track prime movers were destroyed.

The Battalion arrived at Herbstein at 1830 and outposted the town.