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HEADQUARTERS  
38TH CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON (MECZ)  
APO 230 U. S. ARMY

AFTER/AFTER ACTION REPORT  
PERIOD  
1-31 DECEMBER 1944

*Robert E. O'Brien Jr.*  
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Lt Col, 38th Cav Ron Sq (Mecz),  
Commanding.

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REGRADED BY AUTHORITY  
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BY *J. K. rough* ON *5/2/72*

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1 December: The Squadron continued to defend in its assigned sector along the SIEGFRIED LINE in GERMANY, occupying a line of trenches, machine gun emplacements, light tank outposts, anti-tank positions and individual fighting holes. The zone included the town of MONSCHAU; the eastern portion of MUTZENICH; thence north, generally along the railroad to a point above KONZEN STATION. Constant physical contact was maintained and fires were coordinated with the 102nd Cavalry Squadron on the left (North) and 395th Infantry Regiment on the right (South). The troops were disposed from left to right: Troop A, Troop B, 3rd platoon Company F, 1st platoon Company F, Troop C, 2nd platoon Company F. The Squadron command post occupied the post office building in MONSCHAU. (940189).

The second and third Battalions of the 60th Infantry Regiment of the 9th Division moved into the area in the afternoon and prepared to dig-in secondary defensive positions in support of the Squadron.

An unbroken Main Line of Resistance was maintained employing fifty machine guns, cal. 50 and cal. 30 light, laid-in with grazing cross-fire on the final protective line and registered on range cards. These included the light tank positions using their coaxial Light Machine Guns. Daily improvement of the warning trip flare system and the wiring-in of the entire front and all positions continued satisfactorily. In addition to the line of outposts each troop maintained listening posts well forward, which were manned during darkness and poor visibility. Security and combat patrols were dispatched regularly.

The terrain in the Squadron sector consisted of a series of deep, rocky draws on the right running generally east and northeast and diminishing in depth toward the north into rolling country. The main line of resistance was devoid of woods and overlooked a country of fields bounded by hedgerows which offered concealment but little cover. The central portion of the line in the B Troop area was backed up by dense woods with thick undergrowth. Due to the muddy condition of the ground, cross-country vehicular operation was practically impossible and the established road net required constant maintenance by the attached engineer platoon.

The elaborate wire communication system, supported by radio, linked all units and outposts and tied-in with the headquarters of V Corps, 102nd Cavalry Group, supporting artillery and adjacent units. Master Sergeant George Cassateri was transferred to Squadron Headquarters as communications chief and Staff Sergeant Henry Hill went to Troop C as communication sergeant.

With its attached platoon of self-propelled Tank Destroyers from Company C, 893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion in anti-mechanization positions in vicinity of KONZEN STATION - ENTEMPEL, Troop A was disposed with its first platoon in contact with Troop B, 102nd Cavalry Squadron on the north; the third platoon in the center; and the second on the right. A night listening post was manned at (961256). The troop command post operated well forward in a house at (949235). A four man listening post patrol led by Sergeant Coombs left at 2100A hours advancing along an assigned route to (96062357), there remaining in observation of pillbox at (96062350) and returning at 2400A hours without having seen or heard any German activity.

The 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry moved in to the rear of the troop and began digging-in.

Troop B was dug-in with its 3rd platoon on the left, tying-in with Troop A; the first in the center; and the second on the right. The command post occupied a house on the MUTZ NICH-MONSCHAU highway (932201). A night listening post was maintained at (942201). A daylight reconnaissance patrol of seven men led by Corporal Borselle proceeded to investigate a pillbox at (948218). Reaching a point 15 yards to the right of their objective, they were fired on by small arms, first from the pillbox then from their front and right front. In withdrawing under this terrific cross-fire they managed to locate five enemy positions. Suffering only one slight casualty they avoided a flanking patrol and returned under supporting artillery and direct 37MM and 50 cal machine gun fire from their platoon positions at (938218). Tec 4 Ballantone distinguished himself by ably assisting the exhausted radioman and, at the risk of his

life, carried his radio and equipment to safety. Tec 5 Buchman and Pvt Chernook were each credited with killing a German.

Commencing at 1430A the 3rd Battalion, 80th Infantry moved in behind Troop B to lend support.

Overlooking the enemy held town of MENZERATH and the draw to its immediate front Troop C occupied a line of trenches on the hill above MONSCHAU with its 3rd platoon on the left, tying-in with the 1st platoon Company F; its 2nd platoon in the center; and its 1st on the right (South). The command post occupied a house in the town directly below at (942184). An ambush was maintained throughout the night of 30 November at (949190). Patrolling was limited in this sector due to the barren terrain almost devoid of concealment.

During the 24 hour period the six 75MM howitzer assault guns of Troop E fired 646 rounds from their battery emplacements in METZENICH (908187). Adjustments on their fire missions were sensed by units of the line, by their own observation posts at (931208) (947187) (943182) and by a post in charge of Sergeant Poll and a crew from Troop C with the 395th Infantry at HOFEN (945177). Attached to the 102nd Cavalry Group, the 62nd Armored F. A. Bn. continued to lend the support of its 106MM howitzers to the Squadron, in direct cooperation with Troop E. Both units laid down harrassing fires and continued to register on their defensive fire concentrations which were coordinated by the Squadron S-3. At 1220A the F. A. observation plane was fired upon without effect by small arms from the vicinity of KONZEN.

Company F continued to outpost the approaches to the town of MONSCHAU from the North, East and South, using its light tanks in mutually supporting, concealed positions. The two attached S-P tank destroyers were positioned in vicinity of the railroad station. The company headquarters operated from a house near the town hall with excellent motor maintenance accommodations nearby. One daylight patrol of 3 men under Sergeant Petrucci reconnoitered STILLBUSCH as far as (945205) and (945204) without incident. A seven man patrol under Staff Sergeant Lindquist again remained in observation of STILLBUSCH all night and examined the grounds and houses at first light without detecting signs of German occupancy.

The attached 3rd platoon of Company A, 112th Combat Engineer Bn. assisted all troops in placing and maintaining warning trip flares and in laying concertina wire along the entire front and around the outpost positions. Several dud mortar and artillery shells were removed and destroyed. It also continued to maintain the road net in the Squadron area.

The Squadron Medical Detachment continued to function in its routine duties of sick call and the care of the sick in quarters at the infirmary adjacent to the Squadron command post in MONSCHAU.

Headquarters and Service Troop (Rear Echelon) carried on with the administration, motor maintenance and supply of the Squadron from its base on the outskirts of EUPEN, BELGIUM.

2 - 15 December: The Squadron defended along the SIEGFRIED LINE, making no changes in the positions of its subordinate units except to improve emplacements for better fields of fire and to strengthen the Main Line of Resistance. Most of the work of laying concertina wire, warning flares and building up defenses had to be done under cover of darkness because of excellent visibility. All machine guns on the line were periodically test fired. Liaison with adjacent units was continual.

On the afternoon of the 3rd of December 40 to 50 enemy aircraft of the ME 109 and FW 190 type ranged throughout the squadron sector, strafing, bombing and shooting rockets, but causing absolutely no damage to personnel or materiel. It was observed that even though no enemy targets had appeared in several months, the local anti-aircraft units proved to be efficiently alert and immediately opened fire on the low-

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flying planes. This attack resulted in many losses to the enemy and was an excellent demonstration of the growing inefficiency of the LUFTWAFFE.

The 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 60th Infantry dug-in behind A and B Troops. The Troop B line was greatly strengthened by overlapping positions of the 2nd Battalion but the 3rd Battalion's support line was some distance to the rear of Troop A. On 6 December the 2nd Battalion of the 60th Infantry was relieved in position by the 2nd Battalion of the 16th Infantry of the 1st Division. Troop B reverted to its original responsibility when the 16th Infantry moved out on 13 December.

Contact was maintained with the 78th Infantry Division as well as with the 102nd Cavalry Squadron to the north and, in addition to Lt. Peterfreund from the 99th Infantry Division, Lt. Wilson reported from the 2nd Infantry Division to the south. Lt. Peterfreund was replaced on the 12th by Lt. Hare from Co. I. Captain Scott reported as liaison officer from the 5th and 7th F. A. Battalions of the 1st Division but he and their support were removed after three days. Captain Hazeltine, who remained as representative from the supporting 62nd Armored F. A. Bn, lent valuable assistance in coordinating the fire of all artillery. Lt. Dickson of Troop A remained with the 310th Infantry as radio liaison officer during the attack by the 78th Infantry Division to KESTERNICH.

Extensive instruction in the 81MM mortar was conducted by the reconnaissance troops, including increasingly accurate practice firing on enemy targets which caused known casualties and damage. Lt. Dickson supervised the training in Troop A. Troop B had the added assistance of mortar platoon sergeant of the 395th Infantry also assisted Lt. O'Brien in Troop C. Personnel of the headquarters platoons were included in all of the training and manned mortars in vicinity of the troop command posts.

During the period 643 rounds of enemy artillery and mortar were reported to have fallen in the Squadron some causing few casualties or little damage. Realizing the importance for rapid submission of "Shell-Rep's", all personnel were constantly alert to pick up pertinent information. "Diver Rep's" were also submitted on Robot Bombs. Improvements in the protection of personnel, tires and other materiel was constant. On the 2nd Tee 5 Huey, the China-born Squadron draftsman, was wounded by a mortar shell in the command post and was evacuated.

Troop A remained in contact with Troop B, 102nd Cavalry Squadron on the left. One night listening post patrol went to the vicinity of (962225) on the 3rd. On the night of the 4th, Corporal Leone took a patrol of four men to the houses at (94702250) and (94952240), and without being observed determined that they were enemy occupied. Again on the 5th a patrol of 4 men under Sergeant Schulse examined the pillbox at (954225) and found it to have been demolished by a unit previously occupying the area. With the mission of reporting on the pillbox at (961236), a patrol under Sergeant Turner proceeded there under cover of darkness and, upon returning without incident, reported the pillbox was constructed with the entrance on the southwest side and gun ports on the north, south and southeast. Corporal Pace took a midnight patrol on the 8th which observed German activity in a house at (947226). A German deserter surrendered at 091900A December. Corporal Grove set up an all night forward listening post at CR (965229) on the 10th. On the night of the 11th Sergeant Abrams and 3 men established a listening post at (959230). Sergeant Schulse was credited with hitting a German with one shot as he crossed the KONZEN highway.

On the 15th Staff Sergeant Briglio went out with three men before dawn to investigate a reported anti-tank ditch across the highway at KONZEN. At first light they arrived at the designated spot and found the report to be in error. They were suddenly observed and came under aimed small arms and machine gun fire which dispersed them. Staff Sergeant Briglio returned, wounded by a hand grenade, and reported he knew nothing of the whereabouts of the other three men. Later the same night Fedak, Garcia and Lapa returned. They had been in hiding all day in the cellar of a house (952223) while Germans came and went upstairs.

On the night of the 2nd, Lt. Porterfield's 1st platoon of Troop B laid machine gun fire on a section of KONZEN known to be occupied by the enemy. This was followed shortly by a time-on-target concentration fired by both Troop E and the 62nd F. A. Bn.

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The intent was to arouse the German's curiosity and cause him to leave his shelter to investigate the machine gun fire, then to kill him with a powerful artillery blow. Due to darkness, the results were unknown except for scattered small arms fire in return.

On the 3th Tec 5 Misch and a daylight patrol found that the pillbox overprinted on the 1/25,000 map at (943206) was nothing but a large rock. On the same night a patrol under Sergeant Rusen with 7 of his own men and an engineer mine sweeping team, swept the roads up to (943207) without finding mines or meeting enemy. Due to the effect of buried shrapnel on the mine detector, the operation was quite lengthy and tedious. On 10 December Corporal Sousa took out a night listening post patrol to (947224) where enemy activity and voices were clearly heard. On December 14th a section of Tank Destroyers were attached to the 2nd platoon and put into position. On the same day Staff Sergeant Whittard was lightly wounded but not evacuated, when an artillery shell hit his house command post. The Troop B commander, Lt. Joseph R. Sain, was promoted to the rank of Captain on the 7th of December.

Troop C continued to defend from its trenches on top of MONSCHAU Hill. On the night of the 2nd a machine gun position was moved forward to (94501860) and dug-in. On December 5th three C Troopers in charge of an engineer Sergeant went out to fix warning flares on concertina wire. The Sergeant accidentally tripped a friendly booby trap wounding the entire patrol to the extent that the Sergeant, Tec 5 Jordan and Pvt Nemeth had to be evacuated. After medical treatment Pvt Dunlap was able to return to duty.

Sniper fire increased daily causing no damage until the 12th when Pvt La Fasia was wounded while entering a dugout. Listening posts continued in operation well forward of the Main Line of Resistance. On the 15th of December Tec 5 Van Order and Tec 5 Anderson volunteered to go out and get the sniper. Before dawn they departed on their mission with Tec 5 Anderson carrying an SCR 300 radio and by first light were in position at (952187). As the Germans came down a trail carrying his rifle, Tec 5 Van Order hit him at 100 yards with one shot. Both men then carried the wounded prisoner to the bottom of the steep hill into MONSCHAU but he died before receiving medical attention. They then volunteered to return to the ambush and await anyone who might come looking for the sniper. They waited all day in vain and returned under cover of darkness. The sniping, which had wounded an officer and two men, thereafter ceased.

Lt. James N. Farmer, formerly of Troop B, returned from hospital after recovery from wounds and was assigned as Executive Officer of Troop C.

From its battery positions in MUTZENICH Troop E fired 2548 rounds during the period on fire missions observed by its own forward OPs and those of the 62nd FA Bn and outposts of units on the line. Unobserved harassing missions were executed nightly. With the helpful cooperation of Captain Hazeltine, the liaison officer from the 62nd FA Bn, the service of their Piper Cub observation plane was made available to the Squadron and on several occasions it adjusted fire missions for Troop E using direct radio communication. On 5 December, at the request of Company F, fire was adjusted upon a self-propelled weapon firing NE directly at Company F positions. The gun was silenced. On the same day Staff Sergeant Zuckoff at OP 1 adjusted on Germans digging-in at (95501777) and five casualties were definitely observed. On the 7th the first close counter-battery fire was received, two rounds exploding between gun positions without causing damage or casualties. Large caliber friendly batteries began to move in and take up positions on the 12th. For artillery, they moved well forward, one battalion of 155MM howitzers setting up behind Monschau at (935188), in front of the Troop C mortars. During the 13th of December a troop OP adjusted a mission on enemy infantry west of ROUREN with air bursts followed by ground effect, completely dispersing the personnel. An estimated 20 to 25 casualties were inflicted and six latter teams were seen in operation. A battery of 155MM "Long Toms" set up behind the command post and, in supporting units to the north, broke all the windows in the area. On the 5th First Sergeant Loak and his driver narrowly escaped injury when their bantam was hit by a 160MM shell while they took cover in a ditch along the highway in MUTZENICH.

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During the period Company F kept the STILLBUSCH draw and its environs constantly under surveillance by day and night patrols, none of which contacted enemy. On the 9th Pfc Seitz led a patrol to (949199) where they discovered a pillbox to be unoccupied. Another patrol under Sergeant Petrucci, on the 15th reconnoitered beyond the winding road to (946196).

Due to the character of the terrain and the proximity of enemy occupied pillboxes and emplacements, patrolling in the MONSCHAU draw was limited to listening posts. Lt. Jack and Pvt. Douvris were wounded by a sniper on the 14th. This marksman, who had also deliberately killed a seven year old German girl, is believed to be the same sniper that was brought in by Tec 5 Van Order and Tec 5 Anderson of Troop C on the 15th. Lt. Jack had been evacuated once before during the Normandy breakthrough.

The Squadron Medical Detachment continued to operate its infirmary in MONSCHAU. During the period the battle casualties treated consisted of twelve wounded. Several civilians were also treated for wounds sustained from German shelling. On 12 December the inoculation of the entire Squadron against Typhus was accomplished.

The various sections of Headquarters and Service Troop (Rear Echelon) continued to efficiently operate in their duties of servicing the Squadron. Except for several enemy planes over their bivouac on the 3rd, no activity was reported.

On the night of 15-16 December 1944, numbers of large enemy planes were heard over the Squadron sector, and reports of paratroops being dropped in rear areas began to come in from higher headquarters. On this same night, it was decided to increase the barbed wire and flare field in the deep draw south east of Monschau (K945185), which was defended by the 2nd platoon of Company F. At 0200A Troop E placed a twenty minute concentration on MÄTZERATH Hill using 180 rounds of HE ammunition. First Lieutenant Krupnick and his engineers worked through out the night to complete task, retiring through the F Company tank positions at 0445A on the morning of 16 December 1944. There was no activity of any kind for the next forty-five minutes.

16 December 1944; Without warning, at 0525A on 16 December 1944, the entire Squadron front was subjected to a terrific barrage of artillery, mortar and rocket fire. A series of "time on target" concentrations, starting on the main line of resistance, rolled on back to the artillery installations three thousand yards or more to the rear. An estimated two hundred (200) rounds fell in the immediate vicinity of the Squadron command post, and the main supply route (Monschau-Eupen road) received particular attention. This barrage continued, unceasing, for thirty-five minutes, and was followed, throughout the day, by severe interdiction and harassing fires as well as concentrations on our known emplacements. Obviously the enemy was attempting to isolate the Monschau area by fire, and this in itself was a tip-off for the attack which followed.

All telephone communications were thoroughly disrupted with the first hail of enemy shells, and the Squadron went on the air. Line crews, made up of volunteer radio operators and electricians, were out and working on the severed wires, long before the artillery had lifted. Technicians Grade Five Hansen and Carducci, from the headquarters platoon of Troop B, raced back from Mutsenich to the Assault Gun Battery, their vehicles torn by shell fragments, to restore vital communications with the guns. For a brief period, Troop A, five thousand (5000) yards to the north, was kept in contact by a lone operator, Technician Grade Four Ruggiere, Troop B, who stuck to his radio car to relay traffic in spite of the continuous shelling which literally rocked his vehicle.

At approximately 0600A the enemy artillery fire lessened and all units, now thoroughly alert, waited in the last remaining hours of darkness for the expected enemy attack.

At 0605A, Staff Sergeant Bielicki, commanding the 2nd platoon, Company F, reported hearing the noise of enemy movement in force on Mäzzerath Hill, and on the Rohren and Hammer Roads.

1. Extract - Military Government Periodic Report.

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At 0615A came word from Troop A of an enemy attack on positions of the 78th Division in Kesternich. Simultaneously, the 2nd platoon, Company F was attacked by three platoons of the 3rd Company, 1st Battalion, 751st Regiment of the 326th Volks Grenadier Division (P.W. Statements).<sup>1</sup> Despite the severe shelling he had just received, and the fact that all wire communication to his widely separated tank sections had gone out, Staff Sergeant Bielicki performed his mission in a superior manner. Given only a few minutes warning of the enemy's approach, he found time to report to his troop headquarters and to coordinate the following plan within his platoon: all guns and tanks were manned, but fire was to be held; the enemy was to be allowed to approach to the very outposts when, upon the signal burst from his (the Staff Sergeant's) gun, all positions would open fire. 37MM tank guns were loaded with canister and the men waited. As the leading elements of the German infantry reached the outer perimeter of the platoon's wire, a ground flare was tripped. All weapons commenced firing instantly, and illuminating shells from a 60MM mortar lit up the entire area. In the resulting light the enemy was seen to be in headlong retreat, back along the Rohren and Hammer roads. Troop C, on the left flank of this action, placed 81MM mortar fire on the routes of withdrawal and artillery defensive fires were called for and maintained until daylight. First Lieutenant Pepper, troop executive officer, brought reinforcements to the platoon from company headquarters and, at 0745A, the enemy counterattacked from the dense cover of the Menzerath Hill. Due to superior numbers and the most aggressive action, the enemy was partly successful in infiltrating between the two tank sections, following the bed of the Roor River. As the enemy build up in this wedge increased, endangering the flanks of the platoon's positions, Sergeant Messano, a tank commander, seized a light machine gun and, bravely exposing himself to the enemy fire, placed it in action to close the gap.<sup>2</sup> He was immediately reinforced, and the enemy repulsed. German casualties as a result of these two actions were severe (estimated at thirty two) but, due to the continued conflict in this area for the succeeding forty eight hours, could not be accurately counted. The nearest enemy dead, as a result of the first attack, had fallen only fifty (50) yards from the platoon outposts (18 in number, counted by Staff Sergeant Bielicki and his section sergeant<sup>3</sup>); others were seen on the roads, up to two hundred (200) yards distant, including wounded who were evacuated during the second attack. Two prisoners were taken.

At 0830A, concurrent with the above action, Troop C observed enemy, in about company strength, seven hundred (700) yards to their front<sup>4</sup>. This appeared to be an attempt to build up a line along the dragons teeth in the vicinity of (K948195). Machine gun fire, from the trenches, and supporting artillery effectively dispersed this force, inflicting several observed casualties. At the same time, enemy activity was observed about the farm known as Stillbusch (K945205). It was believed that mortars were being put into place and Lieutenant Ketz sent a patrol from the 1st platoon, Company F, to investigate. This patrol met and drove off a German patrol, capturing one prisoner from the 1st Battalion, 751st Regiment, 326th Division.

Enemy activity centered on the Company F and Troop C fronts for the balance of the day, with Troops B and A reporting small patrols operating on their fronts. Artillery continued to harass our lines, and the area east of Monschau was subjected to continual machine gun and sniper firing. Snipers became particularly dangerous in the deep ravines about Menzerath Hill, where the dense cover provided ample protection. One German rifleman was eliminated in a daring one man patrol by an F Company tank driver,<sup>5</sup> Technician Grade Four Lucero, who volunteered for the mission when all other efforts had failed. For his gallantry in this action, Technician Grade Four Lucero has been recommended for award of the British Military Medal.

At 1015A it was ascertained that retreating enemy, from the first attack of the morning, had holed up in a group of buildings on the Rohren Road. Tank Destroyers (M-10), which had been brought up to support the 2nd platoon, Company F, placed direct fire on these targets and caused an unusually large explosion, which blew out the

1. Report of Staff Sergeant Bielicki
2. Report of Staff Sergeant Bielicki
3. Affidavits of Staff Sergeant Bielicki, Sergeant Messano
4. Reports of Lt. O'Brien; Lt. Coleman
5. Report of Staff Sergeant Bielicki

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aides of the house. Results could not be ascertained but, at 1115A, a large group of enemy, estimated to be from sixty (60) to eighty (80) men were caught in the open at (K964177) and placed under effective artillery fire<sup>1</sup>. Casualties were observed, but could not be accurately counted. Later in the day, three Germans who had been thought to be dead were observed moving in front of the platoon. Technician Grade Four Steiner called upon them to surrender, but was fired upon. In the resulting fire fight, all three Germans were killed<sup>1</sup>. At 1130A, a Troop C outpost, under command of Corporal Paul J. Rijs, captured one German at (K947188)<sup>2</sup>. At 1455A an enemy patrol was observed by Troop B in the vicinity of (K950198). One of the Germans was killed and the rest withdrew before further action could be taken. Troop A repulsed several patrols, taking two NCO prisoners whom they shook out of a haystack with hand grenades<sup>3</sup>. They were members of a reconnaissance party from the 2nd Company, 751 Regiment 326 V.G. Division and were sent to headquarters of the 102nd Cavalry Group for interrogation.

Throughout the afternoon, observation and out-posts reported the enemy loading pillboxes. Prisoner of war statements indicated that the attack of the morning had been in battalion strength and, because enemy patrols were composed of officers or senior non-commissioned officers, it was believed that these were reconnaissance patrols preliminary to a large scale attack. At 1240A, immediate reinforcement was requested of the 102nd Cavalry Group.

For the night of 16-17 December 1944, our patrol activity was increased and additional listening posts were put well out in front of all troops. Two additional armored cars, with crews, were brought from the Squadron rear echelon in Eupen to supplement the command post security in Monschau. Captain Robert Marvel, C.O. Headquarters and Service Troop, was assigned as commander of a V Corps security area, with the mission of coordinating the security of certain road nets, bridges and towns in the Corps rear areas; in addition, armored car patrols were maintained on the roads west of Corps Headquarters.

Six (6) machine guns and crews, furnished by the 186th Field Artillery Battalion and attached tank destroyers, were attached to Company F. The guns were put into position at dusk in support of the 2nd platoon; two in school building at (K945133); and four between the platoon right flank and the 395th Infantry, in the vicinity of (K944181).

The Squadron suffered seven (7) casualties on this date. Six prisoners (all of the 751 Regiment, 326 Volks Grenadier Division) were taken and in excess of fifty (known) casualties inflicted. Troop B fired thirty two (32) missions and seven hundred and sixty rounds in support of the Squadron during the twenty four hour period.<sup>4</sup>

At about 1700A Captain Bail, commander of Company A, 146th Engineer Battalion, reported to the Squadron Headquarters. He was given his mission and proceeded with Captain Meyer in a radio half-track to his company which was mounted and waiting at (889202) on the WIPSEN highway. A guide was assigned from Troop B to the 2nd platoon and one from Troop C to the 3rd platoon, and both proceeded to reinforce those units. Captain Bail took his headquarters to the Squadron command post and Captain Meyer led the 1st platoon under Lt. Andersen to (938187) where they dug in on the hill to the west of MONSCHAU. The personnel and three heavy machine guns were positioned with excellent fields of fire overlooking the draw to their right flank; HOFEN Hill to their right front; the draw occupied by F Company and MONSCHAU Hill occupied by Troop C to their direct front; the dragons teeth to their left front; and the STILLBUECH draw to their left flank. To prevent detection when daylight appeared, the emplacements were camouflaged with snow and brush. Ammunition and rations were provided.

In the meantime at 2000A Captain Meyer placed his half-track behind the hill near the Troop C mortar battery (934187) and the radio operators reported into the 102nd Cavalry Group and the Squadron nets, thereby establishing an alternate command post.

1. Report of Staff Sergeant Bielicki
2. Report of Lt. O'Brien
3. Journal
4. Report "Missions Fired by Troop C"

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17 December: The night of 16-17 December was marked by unusual enemy air activity, accompanied by the use of many and varied types of pyrotechnics. Artillery continued to fall in the sector and many robot bombs passed overhead. As many as five searchlights lit up the Mutsenich Hill and Ingenbroich. Several reports were received from higher headquarters of enemy paratroopers being dropped in areas both north and south of the Squadron sector. Large, low flying enemy planes passed over all troops, flying from east to west and returning; some dropped flares and others carried wing lights. The enemy did not attempt to penetrate our lines during the hours of darkness, although indications of movement beyond our listening posts were reported. Heavy interdiction and harassing fires were maintained by our artillery throughout the night.

At about 0400A, Technician Grade Five Anderson, in charge of a Troop C listening post at (K948189), reported a large body of enemy (estimated to be sixty or seventy) moving southwest into the draw from Menzerath<sup>1</sup>. In the dark, the Germans were almost on top of the listening post before they were detected. A fire fight developed and Technician Grade Five Anderson called for and adjusted artillery on the enemy which forced them to withdraw into MENZERATH. Casualties inflicted could not be counted, but cries of wounded were heard in the draw until daylight<sup>2</sup>.

At 0615A, Troop C reported the noise of considerable movement in Menzerath.

At 0650A the enemy attacked<sup>3</sup>. Accompanied by a repetition of the previous day's preparation barrages, a company of the enemy attempted to drive a wedge into Lieutenant Cullinan's 3rd platoon positions, of Company F, on the railroad cut at (K938197), in an effort to cut the Squadron main supply route at the railroad junction and thus isolate the town of Menschau. This effort proved to be the advance elements of the regimental attack which was launched on Menschau and the Mutsenich Hill. Simultaneously, all troop fronts were subjected to severe small arms fire in addition to the heavy artillery concentration. The Troop C mortar positions and the alternate command post half-track at (954187) came under a direct 60-round mortar concentration at this time, despite the fact that they were defiladed in a draw with unusually steep sides.

Between 0700A and 0715A, the 3rd platoon, Company F was engaged in a fierce fire fight<sup>4</sup>. Employing all tank weapons as well as artillery support, they finally succeeded in driving the attackers back into the ravine at (K940200) with heavy losses.<sup>4</sup> Eleven (11) enemy dead were counted at the railroad cut and in the ravine by Staff Sergeant Lindquist, as a result of this action.<sup>4</sup> Two Germans, who had been pinned down by machine gun fire at the railroad embankment, were captured and brought in by Sergeant Strubble and Private Terrell.<sup>5</sup> Upon withdrawing, the balance of the enemy split into two groups; one proceeding up the draw to the north, and the other south, towards Menschau. The second wave of the German attack had come up, however, and at about 0800A commenced the assault of Mutsenich Hill. They were engaged by the 1st and 2nd platoons of Troop B<sup>5</sup>, who defended positions along a line of over two thousand (2000) yards from (K930203) to (K938220). The 3rd platoon, Company F, continued to lend support by firing with their tanks along the line of the railroad tracks, to the north.

At 0800A, the enemy attacked from the draw at the hairpin turn (K941199) and down the "Snake road" from Ingenbroich (K946197) in company strength. Both forces were engaged by Lieutenant Ketz with the 1st platoon, Company F and the left flank of the Troop C trenches<sup>6</sup>. Simultaneously, the Troop C listening post at (K949189) manned by Technicians Grade Five Anderson and Van Order which had reported the enemy concentration at 0400A, observed about twenty five (25) Germans crossing the draw from Menzerath towards their troop front<sup>7</sup>. Artillery was placed on this latter group immediately, effectively dispersing them and inflicting a few known casualties. Meanwhile, the fight in the deep ravine, north of Menschau and along the "snake road".

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| 1. Report of Lt. O'Brien   | 2. Report of Tec 5 Anderson  |
| 3. Reports of Lt. Cullinan;<br>Tec 5 Gier; Staff Sergeant<br>Lindquist | 4. Affidavits of Staff Sergeant Lindquist;<br>Lt. Cullinan; Tec 5 Gier |
| 5. Reports of Lt. Yontz; Staff<br>Sergeant Lindquist                   | 6. Reports of Lt. Ketz; Lt. Coleman                                    |
|  | 7. Reports of Lt. O'Brien; Tec 5 Anderson.                             |

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became an enemy debacle. In addition to the artillery supporting fire, light tanks and .50 cal. machine guns from the Troop C trenches all delivered a terrific fire at the enemy advancing through this canalized approach. Company F's attached tank destroyers were employed to fire directly into the buildings along this road, denying their use to the enemy. Anti-aircraft batteries, in position on the hill north of the railroad junction (K937197), were contacted by Captain Meyer, assistant S-3, and delivered overhead fire along the dragons teeth, across the top of the Troop C trenches. An enemy build up which had commenced along the left flank of Troop C was thus driven back with heavy casualties. Also during this engagement, enemy concentrations in the vicinity of Stillbusch (K944202) and in the woods at (K940208) were taken under long range machine gun fire by the 1st and 3rd tank platoons. Troop E fired counter battery and destroyed an enemy self propelled gun which had moved forward from Imgenbroich to a position at (K954204). The 1st platoon, Company F, took seven (7) prisoners at the blown bridge (K942196) who had been pinned down by their tank fire and surrendered.<sup>3</sup>

Also at 0800A, enemy paratroopers became active behind our lines. A number of parachutes were found in troop rear areas and headquarters platoon were organized for patrols and all around defense. Although it was later learned that approximately one battalion of Colonel Von der Heydt's paratroop regiment had been dropped in the woods in the rear of the Squadron sector, only one attack in force materialized from this threat. As the large scale assault was developing on the Troop B front, an estimated platoon of paratroopers struck at the rear of the Troop's 3rd platoon positions at (K935229).<sup>5</sup> Forced to draw on his already lightly held MLR, the platoon commander organized a combat patrol under Sergeant Becker, which entered the dense forest in this area and, flanking the Germans, drove them to the south. One casualty and a prisoner taken, who confirmed the unit identification.

At 0830A, the 2nd platoon, Company F, repulsed a strong patrol which approached from the Menzerath Hill. One prisoner was taken and two battalions of the 751st Regiment were now identified on the Squadron front. Accurate enemy shelling continued to fall on the platoon positions during the balance of the day.

By 0900A, the attack had built up in full battalion strength on the Troop B front, the Troop Commander, Captain Joseph Sain requested tank support.<sup>6</sup> A section of light tanks under Sergeant Petrucci was dispatched and placed in support of the 2nd platoon. The enemy continued to maintain constant pressure on the 3rd platoon, Company F and commenced to infiltrate among the Troop B outposts from the draw at (K941208). Troop C and forward observers continued to place artillery and mortars on enemy reserve forces concentrating in the Menzerath and Imgenbroich areas at (K947193), (K951191), (K948196) and (K941205). The section of Company F tanks under Sergeant Lindquist in position at (K938197) observed an enemy mortar 900 yards to the left front, and put it out of action with 37MM fire.<sup>7</sup>

At 0930A, the situation in the Troop B sector grew critical, and the Squadron Commander left the command post, then under artillery fire, to give the threatened enemy break through his personal attention.

At 0939A, tank destroyers in support of Troop B right flank positions reported the enemy closing in the area (K9320). At this same time, infiltration of about sixty five men was confirmed by the 1st and 2nd platoons of Troop B,<sup>8</sup> and a message sent to headquarters 102nd Cavalry Group reporting infiltration in the south sector and requesting help.<sup>8</sup>

At 0950A the 956th Field Artillery observation post at (K93052110) reported their position surrounded and that they were destroying their equipment. The 62nd

1. Certificate of Lt. Ketz; Report of Capt Frink S-2'
2. Reports of Lt. Ketz; Lt. Cullinan; S/Sgt Lindquist
3. Report of Lt. Ketz
4. Letter, Freiherr Von der Heydt, to C.O. Military Government, Monschau
5. Extract, Statement of Lt. Shehab; report of Capt Sain
6. Reports of Lt. Yontz; Capt Sain
7. Reports of Lt. Cullinan; S/Sgt Lindquist; Tec 5 Gier
8. Journal

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Armored Field Artillery observation post at (K93052050) was also forced to abandon their position to avoid being overrun by the attacking infantry. It was later learned that the 17th Field Artillery Observation Battalion observation post at (K930219) had been taken by the Germans, who killed one of the observers and seriously wounded another before passing through the position.

The first (center) platoon of Troop B continued to hold to the front and attempted to protect their open, right flank by a combat patrol led by Sergeant Rusen, which engaged the enemy break through on their South. The second (right) platoon, finding themselves hopelessly out flanked on their left, employed their light tanks and armored cars to face the enemy on their North, between their positions and the 1st platoon. A four man (Privates, Bottini, Lewis, MacDonald and Jacobs) machine gun outpost at (K935209) was completely surrounded and forced to take cover, from flanking fire, in a nearby house.

At 0945A Major Edgerton, Squadron S-3, ordered Capt. Meyer to take the 1st platoon of the Engineers to reinforce Troop B. They were brought down from their positions on the hill (K938187) and proceeded in two trucks, using the road towards the MURZENICH church because of small arms fire heard in vicinity of the railroad crossing (K937195) along the shorter route. They turned right on the highway and as they rode through a dense cloud of black smoke given off by three vehicles burning alongside the church, they came under a heavy enemy artillery concentration which burst on the road and on both sides, but which inflicted no damage or casualties. At 1010A Capt. Meyer arrived at the Troop "B" CP with the platoon ready for action.

From 1000A to 1030A, observers caught supporting waves of enemy infantry advancing from Ingenbreich in the vicinity of (K957198) and (K952197). This advance was broken up by the fire of the 62nd Armored Field Artillery Battalion; casualties being observed at (K947198). Also at 1000A, the enemy succeeded in cutting the Monschau-Suppen road at the hairpin turn above Monschau (K941198), and a small force actually placed a machine gun in action on the high bank overlooking the road at (K94001975). This was eliminated by Sergeant Martin and a four man patrol from the 1st platoon, Company F, who assaulted it with grenades under their own covering fire, killing three and capturing two of the enemy. Eight (8) additional Germans surrendered in this immediate locality, presumably as a result of this action; making a total of ten (10) captured in this action.

At 1025A, approximately forty five (45) enemy had infiltrated among the second platoon positions of Troop B and Lieutenant Yontz, the platoon commander, prepared to counterattack with the engineer reinforcements brought up by Captain Meyer. During the fire fight which followed, Sergeant Oxenham and four men went to the aid of the isolated outpost at (K955208) with an armored car. Firing the 50 cal. machine gun from the turret himself, he directed the dismounted men to employ marching fire and, together, they advanced straight at the attacking enemy. The Germans withdrew before this determined action and a number took cover in a stone barn, which Sergeant Oxenham surrounded, forcing the surrender of eight.

As the platoon, reinforced by the engineers, counterattacked to restore their beleaguered outpost and to close the gap between themselves and the 1st platoon, Troop B, they were joined by two HQO forward observers from Troop B, Staff Sergeant Fisher and Sergeant Sullivan. These men had the mission of setting up an observation post in support of Troop B, but finding their intended location in the centre of the fire fight described above, they joined forces with the counter-attacking platoon. While engaging several enemy with their personal weapons, they observed German reinforcements coming out of the draw and across the railroad tracks at (K940208). Disengaging themselves from the fight, they immediately called for and adjusted fires by the Assault Gun Troop which inflicted what were probably the heaviest casualties of the day on an enemy reserve platoon. Actual Count determined the total of enemy dead in this area to be from fifty (50) to

1. Certificates of Lt. Comfort; 62nd FA Bn.; Major Way, S-3, 62nd FA Bn.
2. Affidavit of Pfc Piers, 17th FA Ojan Bn
3. Reports of Capt Sain; Lt Yontz
4. Reports of Lt. Metz; Lt. Coleman
5. Reports of Lt. Yontz; S/Sgt Fisher

sixty-five (65) resulting from both small arms and artillery fire. The platoon successfully restored all of its positions and, with the aid of the engineers, closed the gap and joined forces with the 1st platoon.

At the time of the above action the Troop B command post came under enemy small arms fire and found itself engaged in a fire fight among the hedgerows at (K934201). The combined efforts of all headquarters personnel, employing personal weapons and machine guns of the command post armored cars, turned this enemy attack away from the Eupen road and to the north where they were engaged by the new reinforced 2nd platoon. Technician Grade Five Harold S. Hill, a half track driver in the troop supply section was severely wounded in this action and died later, in the hospital.

At 1023A, in the midst of the above attack on Troop B, a message came from the 102nd Cavalry Group that reinforcements consisting of a company of Armored Infantry and a company of medium tanks were on the way. Twenty enemy fighters strafed the Troop B and Company F sectors, and Corporal Fitzpatrick, manning a .50 cal machine gun of Troop B headquarters set one afire which was seen to crash in enemy territory, south of Ingenbreich. Also at 1030A, the Troop C right flank outpost overlooking the draw at (K946296) was attacked by a squad of Germans who attempted to flank their position. This was repelled after a short fire fight in which Sergeant Messano and his light tanks at (K946184) assisted. Three casualties were inflicted before the enemy withdrew.

At 1100A, the 3rd platoon, Troop B, reported some enemy infiltration between their positions and the 1st platoon. At 1111A, two companies of Germans attempted to assault both of these platoons from the draw (K943208) to (K945220). Observers for the 62nd Field Artillery Battalion adjusted on this target and broke up the attack before the enemy could cross the railroad tracks in front of Troop B. Defensive fires were maintained on this dead ground for several hours after the attacking force was broken up. Shortly afterwards, friendly planes appeared over the area and the artillery marked Ingenbreich with red smoke.

From 1000A to 1100A, the attack along the "snake road", north of Menschau, was renewed and supported by heavy machine gun fire from the Stillbusch house (K945202). All artillery being employed on the Troop B front at this time, the 1st platoon of Company F and Troop C met the attack with 37MM, machine gun and mortar fire. Tank destroyers continued to shoot at houses along the road (K945196) and the tanks placed 37MM high explosive shells into the Stillbusch positions until all machine gun fire was silenced.

At 1124A, Group Headquarters informed the Squadron that the expected reinforcements should be arriving at about that time. A message was sent to Group, in return, that a battalion of Germans had penetrated to the Lutzenich Hill and that PW statements indicated the main attack was to follow that afternoon. Due to the heat of the engagement it was impossible for Squadron Headquarters to keep abreast of the situation on all troop fronts, and the fact that the fight on the Lutzenich Hill was slowly coming under control was not known until later in the afternoon. Actually the number of Germans penetrating our lines did not exceed 100, although the exact figure could not be reckoned. Company A, 47th Armored Infantry Battalion, commanded by First Lieutenant Weirama, reported to the Squadron at 1100A and were directed over the unimproved road which ran north-east from the Eupen road at (K899199), and through the woods in rear of Troop B. Here they deployed, three platoons abreast, to move to the East, through the woods and mop any enemy which had infiltrated through the Troop B lines. The Company's anti-tank platoon was given the mission of patrolling the roads in rear of the troops, and covering the main road intersections with their guns.

1. Affidavits and Certificates, Troop B; certificate of Lt. Comfort
2. Reports of Lt Yentz; Capt Sain
3. Report of Capt Sain
4. Report of Capt Frink, S-2
5. Reports of Lt. Ketz
6. Certificate of Lt Comfort, 62nd FA Bn.

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At approximately 1120A Capt. Whitley and his Company C (less 2 platoons) of medium tanks from the 10th Tank Battalion, were intercepted on the EUPEN road by Capt. Meyer at (K899199) where he was issuing instructions to Company A, 47th Armored Infantry. Capt. Whitley was given orders to take one platoon as far down the highway as the B Troop CP and, without stopping, to dispatch it under its platoon leader astride the road leading off to the left at (K981201) and to proceed in combat formation ready for action. They were to gain contact with Lt. Yantz in vicinity of (K930205) and lend him direct support. They proceeded on their mission and upon reaching the turn-off point, were met by the Squadron Commander. As the Troop B situation was now under control, he directed the tanks to disregard their assigned mission, and to take cover while awaiting further orders.

At 1201A, Group Headquarters radioed that the 47th Regimental Combat team was advancing into the sector from Eupen and that the Squadron would become attacked to them upon their arrival.

Confirmation that the "main attack" was to be launched by the Germans that afternoon was received as a result of a prisoner of war statement sent by Troop A. At Squadron Headquarters in Monschau, all personnel had been alerted and formed into security groups against the threat of penetration from the Mutsenich Hill and at the hair-pin turn (K941198). Armored cars and crews were placed at strategic points in the town and on the hill above the command post itself. Machine guns and riflemen were stationed at the doors and windows of the post office building occupied by the command post. Prisoners, as many as thirteen (13) at one time, were sent to the rear in 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  ten trucks, being forced to lie down in the body of the vehicles. Ration and ammunition trucks, which continued to come forward from Eupen throughout the engagement, were used for this purpose, with supply and mortar maintenance personnel acting as guards. Several of the headquarters troop mechanics were pressed into service to provide additional local security, as were a number of convalescent patients from the Squadron aid station in the building next to the command post.

From 1200A to 1300A, there was a slight slackening of the pressure on the Troop B front, and heavy defensive fire were maintained on possible routes of enemy withdrawal west of Imgenbroich, from (K941203) to (K344208). Concentrations were placed on these areas by the 62nd Armored Field Artillery and Troop E of the Squadron.

At 1322A, the 1st platoon, Troop B, began to receive mere small arms fire and, at 1330A, Company F took another prisoner at the blown bridge North of Monschau (K942196).

At 1350A, five medium tanks were put in support of Troop B positions, now completely restored. Two platoons of engineers were in the line with Troop B and the infantry continued to mop up in the woods to the rear, attempting to drive the enemy penetrating force to the East.

At 1420A, artillery was placed on enemy groups forming about the bunkers and pillboxes in the vicinity of Imgenbroich. Troop E fired on enemy mortar positions near Staffelsbusch (K938210) and Laufenbuch (K942208).

From 1500A to 1700A the enemy<sup>1</sup> commenced to withdraw at (K940207). Long range tank and machine gun fire by 3rd platoon, Company F, drove a force of about thirty (30) Germans to seek cover in the woods at (K940208).<sup>2</sup> Troop E was immediately registered on the woods and inflicted heavy casualties; only a few escaping. Twenty bodies were later evacuated from this particular area.<sup>3</sup>

At 1645A, the infantry cleaned up in rear of Troop B broke from the woods and were integrated in the Troop positions for that night. The medium tanks were disposed in support of the Squadron, one platoon at (K930205); one section at (K937185);

1. Report of Sergeant West.
2. Report of Lt. Cullinan.
3. Affidavits and Certificates, Troop B; report of Capt Frink S-2.

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and the remaining section at (K936195). Defensive, interdictory and harrasing fire for the night were arranged with the 406th Artillery Group, 62nd Armored Field Artillery Battalion and Troop E.

The 47th Infantry arrived in Mutzenich at 1835A, the command post locating at (K916196). The regiment bivouaced astride the Dupen road, west of Mutzenich for the night. Liaison was immediately established using the alternate command post half track.

At dark all listening posts were put out, and as many patrols maintained throughout the night as practicable.

At 2200A, Troop C observed about twenty enemy in the vicinity of the houses and dragon's teeth to their immediate front. This report was quickly corroborated and both the 62nd Field Artillery and Troop E were called upon for fire. Illuminating mortar shells were thrown over the area and an estimated force of two hundred (200) Germans were caught advancing west from Imgenbroich with the evident intention of coming into our lines through the Stillbusch (K945202) and "snake road" (K945196) draws. Approximately one hundred (100) Germans were trapped by artillery fire on the "snake road" itself, and a larger number at (K952200). Heavy enemy casualties were caused by the artillery, with 37MM and machine guns of Company F and Troop C accounting for a number of the Germans who had reached the blown bridge at (K942196). The firing was continued for about forty five (45) minutes under the constant light of 60MM mortar illuminating shells. Shortly after 2100A, the enemy force withdrew after suffering severe losses. At 2200A, Troop E was given a mission to "walk" up the "snake road" again, employing battery fire in fifty (50) yard jumps.

Again at 2230A, Company F and Troop B outposts reported movement in the Stillbusch (K945202) draw, and the area was illuminated. An estimated one hundred (enemy) were seen advancing from Imgenbroich in the area (K946196). Troop E put over one hundred and fifty (150) rounds in this area and effectively dispersed the enemy groups with unknown casualties.

At 2300A, towed 57MM anti-tank guns from the 47th Infantry were attached and two were placed with Troop C and one with Company F. At 2320A a Troop B patrol reported that they had recovered the two vehicles (3/4 C & R car and 1/4 ton truck) abandoned by the 955th Field Artillery Battalion observation outpost at (K930211) earlier in the day; no personnel were found in the locality. Unusual enemy use of pyrotechnics and searchlights continued throughout the night.

Midnight 17 December 1944 found the Squadron literally holding its breath. Worn by the strain of the days fighting, nevertheless all personnel were fully alert and still possessed a good reserve, mental and physical, for what might come. The most remarkable feature of the entire day had been the negligible two (2) casualties received. Over two hundred (200) enemy dead were reported, by actual count, on the fronts of Troops B, C, and Company F. Troop E had fired eleven hundred and five (1105) rounds of 75MM howitzer ammunition for a total of twenty three (23) missions. The 62nd Arm. F. A. Bn had fired 1941 rounds of 105MM ammunition for a total of 73 missions in direct support of the Squadron. All of the Squadron positions were intact and strengthened by reinforcements.

The balance of the night, until 0300A, was marked only by a repetition of the previous nights pyrotechnics and searchlight activity. Numerous planes passed over the sector and there was the usual enemy harrasing artillery fire. At 0125A Lieutenant Krupnick and his engineers completed a minefield on the road at (K942207) in front of Troop B. The 3rd Battalion commander of the 395th Infantry reported that the enemy appeared to be infiltrated and digging in on the flanks of his outposts.

1. Reports of Sergeant West; S/Sgt Zuckoff; Capt. Frink S-2.
2. Certificates and affidavits Troop B; Company F; report of Capt Frink, S-2.
3. Report "missions fired by Troop E"
4. Certificate of Major Way S-3, 62nd Arm. F. A. Bn.

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18 December: At 0300A, a terrific enemy artillery and rocket barrage fell on the Monschau and Hofen areas and wire communication with the 395th Infantry went out. Contact was maintained by radio through observation post on the Hofen Hill, manned by Sergeant Joseph Pell of Troop C. Shortly after 0330A, enemy planes circled over Monschau and dropped a number of flares. Troop C called for artillery on suspected movement along the "snake road". Heavy enemy mortar and artillery fire fell on the Mutzenich Hill and Troop C reported receiving small arms fire from the draw immediately west of Menzerath (K948189) at 0440A.

At 0445A, the enemy attacked the 395th Infantry Regiment in Hofen, capturing one outpost. This was followed by a report that there had been a penetration in the infantry lines at (K951170) but that the gap had been sealed.

Troop A reported, also at 0445A, that Lieutenant Warren McCray and Privates William Dube and Robert Wynn had been killed while laying anti-tank mines in front of the troop sector.

At 0515A, the 395th Infantry again reported enemy to their front, and with the aid of mortar illuminating shells, Sergeant Pell picked up the enemy at (K953173). 99th Division was adjusted on the targets presented through this observation post.

The remaining hours of darkness passed without unusual incident. With the first light at 0746A, Troop B outposts fired on a small German patrol to their front without results; and at 0814A, Troop C placed artillery on an enemy squad at (K948196). At 0830A, the Squadron Commander left for headquarters 47th Infantry.

At 0850A, enemy artillery and rocket concentrations again fell on the area, and groups of Germans were observed in the vicinity of pillboxes to the East of Hofen. The 395th Infantry line on Hofen Hill came under heavy small arms fire and, at 0938A, reported a penetration in that town. Ten (10) enemy tanks struck at Company L, 395th Infantry, from the south-east. The 2nd platoon, Company F, began to receive some action as a result of this attack on the Squadron's right, and captured one German in the draw to their front. The Troop C observation post on the Hofen Hill at (K944177) became a vitally important contact and relay point for liaison with the 395th Infantry as telephone communications with that unit went out. Sergeant Pell, in command of this position, maintained a constant and invaluable flow of reports to Squadron Headquarters, via his radio and telephone, keeping the command post informed as to the infantry situation at all times. At about 1000A, the infantry squad in position to Sergeant Pell's immediate right was taken out to be used in a counter-attack role elsewhere. Realizing that his small observation post was, in effect, the right flank of the Squadron, Sergeant Pell effectively filled this gap, using his armored car crew and the two radio technicians who had come from the Troop headquarters to check his radio. At this critical moment the enemy attacked the Hofen Hill in force and Sergeant Pell, directing his small force, calling for and adjusting artillery fire, and himself firing a light machine gun, successfully repulsed a frontal assault on his position. For this gallant action which played an important part in the defense of Hofen, Sergeant Pell has been recommended for the Distinguished Conduct Medal (British) and appointed acting platoon sergeant.

At 1030A, the 395th Infantry reported enemy penetration to (K948173), almost to Kalterherberg, and at 1110A, the 406th Field Artillery Group reported a concentration of an unknown number of enemy tanks at this same location.

Troop B took four (4) prisoners at 1117A, who were driven out of a haystack in front of the 1st platoon. All stated they were members of a reconnaissance patrol, and were turned over to the 47th Infantry. Later, the Troop brought in six (6) wounded prisoners from the vicinity of Stillbusch (K946202), who had been left on the ground as a result of the previous night's action.

At 1345A, Troop C observed two high ranking enemy officers, one dressed in the Panzer uniform and the other in field gray-green, observing with field glasses and a map from a pillbox in front of Imgenbroich. These German officers appeared to be interested in the approaches to Monschau.

- 1. Report of Capt. Rogers.
- 2. Affidavit of Tec 4 Straigis

# UNCLASSIFIED

## SUMMARY OF ENEMY ACTION 16-18 DECEMBER 1944.

Enemy actions for the period 16-18 December, in the area held by the 38th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron indicate that all elements of the 751st Regiment and the 1st Battalion of the 752nd Regiment, 326th Volk Grenadier Division were employed in a full scale offensive effort to gain control of the Menschau area and with the mission to dominate the Menschau-Eupen road.

On 16 December 1944 the enemy made a frontal attack, on Menschau, in battalion strength, employing both battalion and regimental support weapons. The attack was preceded by a series of time on target concentrations which lasted from 0525A to 0600A. At 0615A, companies attacked simultaneously from (K949197), (K950190) and (K950180). All three efforts were successfully repulsed. It is interesting to note that the enemy did not commit reserves in the furtherance of the attack. Another attack was launched at 0745A from Menzerath Hill (K949186). This was also repulsed and the enemy confined his actions to heavy harrassing interdicting fires and streng patrolling for the remainder of the day. German paratroops from combat team Van der Heydte were dropped behind the Squadron line during the night.

From 0400A, 17 December 1944, it was evident that the enemy was endeavoring to mass troops at strategic points in preparation for a major effort. At 0650A the attack was made with a combat team composed of three battalions; two battalions of the 751st Regiment and one battalion of the 752nd Regiment. The third battalion of the 751st Regiment was held in reserve position in the vicinity of (K957206). Simultaneously, paratroops became active behind the Squadron lines, and a minor attack was repulsed at (K955229) at 0800A. The main attack developed into a frontal effort against Menschau, as on the previous day, and an envelopment to the North in an attempt to cut the Menschau - Eupen road from the Mutzenich Hill. Prisoners of war from all companies of the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 751st were taken in the area in front of the Mutzenich Hill from the "snake road" to the north. This fact plus the observations of the defenders of the line indicate that the entire 751st Volk Grenadier Regiment was committed for the attack on Mutzenich Hill and the Menschau - Eupen road. The assembly for this attack took place in the draw east of Mutzenich prior to daylight. At dawn the attack jumped off south towards the "hairpin turn" (K941199) and west on the hill itself. The southern attack, which was coordinated with an attack in company strength west down the "snake road" was repulsed by 0800, but the attack on the Mutzenich Hill succeeded in penetrating the B Troop line in the vicinity of Staffelleusen (K937210) before it was counter attacked and driven back. The attack was definitely stopped by 1300A after all reserves had been committed. At 1700A the enemy made another approach in strength down the road leading due west from Ingenbreich, which was broken up by the fire of the 186th Field Artillery Battalion before it could be developed into another attack.

The enemy then tried twice more during the night of 17-18 December to break through. At 2200A approximately two companies were observed massing in the area (K945202) and (K945196). These groups were dispersed by heavy artillery concentrations and small arms fire. At 2230A another enemy concentration of approximately 100 troops was observed and broken up at (K948198).

At 0300A, 18 December 1944, heavy artillery and rocket barrages were placed on the Hefen and Menschau areas. This was followed by an attack at daylight in an attempt to flank the Menschau positions from the Hefen Hill. After some penetration this attack was repulsed late in the day.

The 326th Volk Grenadier Division, after three attempts on successive days, had failed to accomplish their mission.

*George R. Frink*  
GEORGE R. FRINK  
Captain, Cavalry  
S-2.

1. Report IPW Team 1, 25 Jan 45.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Heavy enemy shelling continued to fall on Squadron positions and, at 1815A, enemy infantry commenced to build up in the ~~Rhein~~ River ravine at (K947181). The 2nd platoon, Company F, heard whistle signals and reported much movement. All available artillery was put on the target and the enemy withdrew.

Shortly before 2400A, a Troop B outpost at (K942198), manned by a squad of attached engineers, heard the noise of movement approaching down the draw from Stillbusch (945202). Their position was heavily wired in and all approaches covered by trip flares, so they alerted their gun crews and waited. Within a matter of minutes one of the flares was set off, revealing an enemy patrol and machine gun crew. All weapons were directed at the target thus exposed before the Germans could fire a shot. The element of surprise was complete: four of the enemy were killed, one of whom was an officer, and six wounded; two more were captured unharmed. The latter stated that it had been a fourteen man patrol, led by an officer sent out by the 751st Regiment. Their mission was to reconnoiter to the Konzen Railroad station to determine whether the Monschau-Eupen road was mined at this point. Mine detectors found among the equipment dropped by the enemy confirmed this point. This action served to make it clear that the use of trip flares is more profitable than the use of booby traps in an alert defense.

19 December: At 1130A Troop A, with its attached Company I, 121st Infantry, and the platoon of light tanks from Company F, 102d Cavalry Squadron, was detached from the control of this Squadron and, remaining in position, was attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 121st Infantry. Thus, Company A, 47th Armored Infantry, became the left (North) unit of the Squadron.

The platoon leaders and noncommissioned officers of Troop B reconnoitered proposed new areas to be occupied by their units on the following day. The troop now had attached (1) one platoon of medium tanks from Company C, 10th Tank Bn, positioned in vicinity of (931205) and (931208); (2) one section of M-10s from Company C, 893rd TD Bn, in vicinity of (933197); and (3) one platoon plus 2 squads of Company A, 146th Engineers; thickening the MLR positions.

When Troop C was relieved of its positions in the 500 yards of trenches on MONSCHAU HILL by Company A, 1st Bn, 47th Infantry, they began the arduous task of moving equipment down the steep hillside and prepared for a night movement to assume a portion of the Squadron front between Troop B and Company A, 47th Armored Infantry.

Troop E fired 218 rounds of ammunition during the period on observed point targets and unobserved harassing missions.

Company F, less the 1st and 3rd platoons, was relieved of its mission in the defense of MONSCHAU by the 1st Bn of the 47th Infantry, and proceeded at 2105A to the Monschau rail road station, in the basement of which the command post was set up. The 2nd platoon remained in reserve in that position. The 1st platoon continued to defend in vicinity of the blown-out bridge (941196) and at the hairpin turn (94051965), while the 3rd platoon remained at (934201). Both platoons were in support of Troop B. The commanding officer and his headquarters of Company C, 10th Tank Bn, operated from the F Company CP.

At dusk the Squadron command post moved to MUTZENICH (920199) and the headquarters of the 1st Bn, 47th Infantry, occupied the previous location in the MONSCHAU post office.

20 December: Beginning with the movement of Troop C at 0200A, the following reliefs and changes in position of platoons were effected:

- (1) 1st of Troop C relieved 1st of Troop B.
- (2) 1st of Troop B relieved 2nd of Co A (AIB).
- (3) 2nd of Co A (AIB) relieved 3rd of Troop B.
- (4) 2nd of Troop C relieved 3rd of Co A.

The Squadron Medical Detachment moved out of MONSCHAU to MUTZENICH, GERMANY, where another infirmary was set up at (910188).

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The Squadron (less Troop A) with Co A attached, was then disposed along a 4000 yard front, from right (South) to left (North): Troop B supported by two light tank platoons, a section of self-propelled tank destroyers and a medium tank platoon; Troop C; then, Co A, 47th Arm'd Infantry, in direct contact on its left with Troop A (attached to 121st Infantry Regiment).

Troop B had all three of its reconnaissance platoons committed on the MLR with its attachments in support. Troop C and Company A each had a platoon in dug-in supporting positions behind the two platoons on the line. The 57mm anti-tank guns of Company A were placed and sandbagged covering the road net and terrain approaches from the North.

The unit command posts were located as follows:

Co A, 47th A. I. Bn	(935231)
C Tr	(928203)
F Co	(936194)
B Tr No change	(932201)
E Tr No change	(308187)

Squadron again moved 100 yards to (920198). A 170mm dud went through the house just vacated.

Troop B and Company F coordinated fire plans and physical contacts with Company A, 47th Infantry in MONSCHAU on their right.

Daylight security patrols were dispatched by each line unit. These were followed by all-night patrols working far in front of the listening posts. All elements, including the Squadron command post group, took added measures of security against German paratroopers still known to be at large in the rear areas.

21-31 December: The Squadron continued to improve positions by digging in, sandbagging and building overhead cover against shelling and the winter elements. The placing of many bands of concertina barbed wire with pickets and fixing of warning trip flares were emphasized. By the end of the month each position was encircled with at least 3 bands and the entire front was protected by at least 6 bands. A total of 3500 rolls of wire was used between 20 and 31 December. The ever present snow covering the ground somewhat hampered operations, restricting movement to darkness and fog and forcing the personnel in most of the outlying positions to remain under concealment and to refrain from making tracks or spoil. White snow suits were provided and worn by patrols by day and night. The camouflage of vehicles and emplacements was effectively accomplished by the use of any available white cloth. The enemy, of course, were confronted with the same difficulties and offered our artillery forward observers many lucrative targets.

On 24 December the Squadron was attached to the 60th Infantry Regiment. On the 21st, Company A of the 416th Engineers was relieved of attachment to the Squadron and on the 25th and the 27th, respectively, Company C, 10th Tank Bn and the tank destroyers of the 893rd T.D. Bn reverted to control of their parent units. With their leaving, the reserve platoon of Company F and two platoons of Company I, 2nd Bn, 60th Infantry, took up positions in support of Troop B. Company I was reinforced with elements of the 57mm anti-tank company.

Officer liaison was maintained with the headquarters of the 102nd Cavalry Group and the 60th Infantry Regiment and an armored car was assigned to the 2nd Bn, 60th Infantry, in case of telephone failure. Capt Wilson reported as liaison officer from the 60th F. A. Bn and Capt Hazeltine was relieved as liaison from the 62nd Armored F. A. Bn and replaced by Lt. Gerutti. Lt. Davis reported from the 186th F.A. Bn.

Early in the morning on the 21st, Pfc Ashwell, on an armored car outpost at the Squadron CP, challenged and captured four German paratroopers.

Troop A remained detached for the period. On the 21st of December the 3rd Bn, 121st RCT, was relieved by the 3rd Bn, 311 RCT, 78th Infantry Division, and Troop A,

remaining in position, became attached to the latter. Thus, Troop A was with XIX Corps in the 9th U. S. Army while the Squadron remained under V Corps in the 1st U. S. Army.

On the 21st Lt. Sacamano and six men, all former members of the Squadron, returned from hospital and were assigned to Troop A. The troop suffered a great loss on the same day when a large caliber enemy shell made a direct hit on the command post killing Tec 5 Baxter and Pvt Wheeler and causing the evacuation from wounds of Tec 4 Diana, Cpl Scircle, Tec 5 Howe, Tec 5 Walters, Pfc Trummer, Pfc Lucivjansky, Pvt Dyer and Pvt Wickliff. Pfc Moyer, Major Rousek's driver, died of wounds and the Squadron Executive Officer narrowly escaped injury. Other members of the troop and attached units suffered minor wounds and returned to duty after medical treatment.

Company A, 47th Armored Infantry, dispatched radio equipped patrols each night which traveled along the company front, east of the railroad, and set up successive listening posts, returning at first light. Under cover of darkness on Xmas night one 57MM gun from the anti-tank platoon was man-handled into a barn at (939221) and well concealed by daylight. This gun, within 50 yards of the 2nd platoon forward positions on the MLR, commanded an excellent 90° field of fire. The other two guns were emplaced covering the roads at (940235) and (935229).

Nightly reconnaissance and security patrols were operated by Troop B with no enemy contacts and little to report. Several points were investigated, such as the vicinity of (948208); a trench reported at (947209) which proved to be a drainage ditch; and, a pillbox at (952208). On the night of the 28th, Tec 5 Buchanan and Pvt Cherneck provided the point for an infantry patrol from the 60th Infantry and set up an ambush at (948208) where a four-man German patrol was surprised. After a short fire fight they killed one and brought in three prisoners.

During the period Troop B captured 14 prisoners. From a civilian report on the 22d, the "Riot Squad" of headquarters platoon - Cpl Fitzpatrick, Tec 5 Bearmouth, and Pfc Villalba, assisted by Sgt Belcher and two men from the second platoon, captured four paratroopers. They surrounded and searched a house and barn (932199). Finding nothing they threw in four hand grenades and fired their small arms, whereupon the Germans came out from under the hay. On the same day Pvt Grossi, while straining wire between the 1st and 2nd platoons, saw 8 paratroopers. He fired his carbine at them and they all surrendered to him. On the 22nd two more paratroopers were captured by Tec 5 McCauley's outpost as they tried to return through the lines to the Germans.

Troop C continued to send out all-night security patrols without enemy contact. On the 21st Pfc Benham of the 2nd platoon captured four paratroopers attempting to pass through the lines to the east. Coincidentally, Pfc Benham was wounded by long range, harassing machine gun fire on the 22nd.

The six assault guns of Troop E fired 1915 rounds of ammunition during the period. The troop maintained three observation posts, No. 1 at (935220) and No. 2 at (930208), both of which were manned 24 hours a day. No. 3 was manned only during daylight and was used as an excellent observation post for the squadron staff and others who had reason to inspect the terrain to the front.

During the month of December, Troop E fired 8199 rounds of ammunition, which amounted to a 60.2 ton projectile weight. A detail under Sergeants Guidry and Oliver captured three German paratroopers on the 21st.

The light tanks of Company F occupied supporting positions behind Troop B with the 3rd platoon in reserve. On the 27th that platoon was also committed to fill the vacancy left by the medium tanks of the 10th Tank Bn which had reverted to V Corps control. Five paratroopers were captured on the 26th. S/Sgt Wright returned from hospital after recovery from a wound received in September at MANDERFIELD.

The attached 3rd platoon of Company A, 112th Engineers laid mine fields at (941207) and (940212), and crated the road at (94352238). The platoon continued

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to assist the troops in wire laying and setting trip flares as well as maintaining the road net.

The Squadron Medical Detachment continued to maintain its infirmary, caring for the sick in quarters and conducting daily sick call. During the month of December a total of 39 Battle Casualties and 40 Non-Battle Casualties from the Squadron were processed through the aid station. The battle casualties consisted of 5 killed in action, 34 wounded, and one battle injury.

The Rear Echelon continued to supply and service the Squadron from EUPEN, BELGIUM. A Truckhead was established at the Troop B rear command post at MUTZENICH (910196) and placed in charge of S/Sgt Gang from S-4. All supplies were distributed from this point in small vehicles.

The rear echelon bivouac escaped damage on several occasions when EUPEN was subjected to shelling and bombing. A number of enemy planes were knocked down by an efficient anti-aircraft crew 300 yards away.

In conjunction with the V Corps defense system, Capt Marvel, Hq and Service Troop Commander, was placed in charge of the area in vicinity of his bivouac and conducted bantam-armored car night patrols.

December - General: On the night of 21 December the Squadron Commander, accompanied by Major Rousek and Captain Meyer, visited Troop A at KONZEN STATION, and surrounded by the atmosphere of the typical front-line command post, presented the decoration of the Silver Star for gallantry in action to the Troop Commander, Capt Buensle, 1st Lt Tully, and Pfc Gliniski. The party then proceeded to the command post of the 2nd platoon of Troop C along the MLR and there presented the same award to 1st Lt. O'Brien.

Troop kitchens fed B rations with the exception of isolated platoons, which used 10-in-1 menus prepared by attached cooks. However, on Christmas Day all personnel were served a full course turkey dinner.

The closing of the old year marked the 111th consecutive day that the Squadron had been in direct contact with the enemy along the SIEGFRIED LINE. On New Year's Eve of 1945 the entire Squadron had been engaged in an ambitious practice firing schedule at the OKEHAMPTON Range on DARTMOOR, ENGLAND.

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