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

AFTER/AFTER ACTION REPORT
PERIOD
1-31 JANUARY 1945

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1 - 14 January: The Squadron continued attached to the 60th Infantry Regimental Combat Team of the 9th Infantry Division and occupied a defensive zone along the SIEGFRIED LINE in Germany extending from the north end of MONSCHAU at the blown-out bridge and hairpin turn (K941196), the STIMBUSCH draw (K943199), northwest to (K934204), thence north along the slope of MUTZENICH Hill, generally west of the railroad, to the vicinity of KONZEN STATION (K944233). The troops were disposed from right to left; Troop B, in contact with the 1st Battalion of the 47th Infantry Regimental Combat Team on the MONSCHAU Hill; Company F astride the MONSCHAU-MUTZENICH Hill; then the attached Company A, 47th Armored Infantry Battalion, which was in direct wire and physical contact with Troop A of this Squadron, on its left (North). Troop A was at that time attached to the 311th Infantry Regimental Combat Team, 78th Infantry Division in the Ninth U. S. Army.

The southeastern end of the defenses covered MONSCHAU approaches in the east-west draw along the winding road from IMGENBROICH and the draw approach from the northeast. The line, crossing the Aachen railroad at (938203) and curving generally north, was situated on a forward slope which entered a parallel draw running into enemy occupied KONZEN. Observation by both enemy and friendly forces was excellent and was further enhanced by a background of snow. As a result activity was kept to a minimum during daylight and most work had to be accomplished under cover of darkness or during occasional fog. Between the 7th and 8th a heavy snowfall, reaching blizzard proportions, greatly hampered vehicular traffic and only constant plowing and shoveling prevented emplaced vehicles from becoming immobilized. On the night of the 7th the Squadron S-2, Captain Frink, lost direction in the blinding snow and was thought to have become a casualty until he staggered in the Troop B command post on the point of exhaustion.

To gain maximum efficiency and full coverage on a final protective line with available fire power, each automatic weapon was carefully sited and registered on a range card, providing crossfire with adjacent machine guns. This necessitated the plotting and adjusting of each position, finally resulting in an irregular line of emplacements capable of delivering an unbroken pattern of interlocking and grazing fires, along the entire front. To improve fields of fire trees and hedges had to be cut down. The supporting elements, with their weapons dug-in behind the main line of resistance and sited to fire upon the final protective line, also covered all avenues of approach and were ready to engage targets of opportunity. They provided the necessary depth to the line and were situated to repel counter-attack from any direction. All positions were protected by riflemen in fighting holes forming individual strong points. Each machine gun position was equipped with ammunition (including 3 boxes with all tracer removed for night firing), hand grenades and K rations. Whenever practicable armored cars were used along the MLR.

To strengthen and support the MLR at least six rolls of concertina barbed wire were staked across the whole of the front and at least three encircled each position. Concealed tin cans were attached to the concertina and hundreds of warning trip flares were placed along all possible approaches. The trip flare continued to prove its value over that of the anti-personnel mine. On several occasions they were tripped by animals which were easily identified in the illumination and would have made simple targets had they been Germans. The explosion of a booby-trap warning may get the tripper, but it reveals nothing and leaves the defender literally in the dark, causing unnecessary tension which generally results in confusion and a waste of ammunition. A disadvantage in the use of the trip wire warning system in the winter is an occasional detonation of a flare or charge with apparently nothing near the wire to disturb it. Possible reasons for this may be either that the wire, if it is long enough, may sufficiently contract from cold to draw the safety pin, or a snow laden tree to which a wire is anchored will sway enough to pull the pin. Listening posts were dug-in along a line well forward of the MLR and were manned during the hours of darkness and periods of poor visibility. Each was equipped with radio. The successful repulse by the Squadron of a two battalion thrust 16-18 December during which only one fatality was suffered, had conclusively proven to every man that this plan of defense was the soundest and that strict attention to minute details in the preparation of the MLR is imperative. Despite the terrific shelling to which all positions were subjected during that period, only four men

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were lightly wounded. Thus the necessity for the prompt completion of a tremendous amount of work upon taking over a new defensive area has been impressed upon all personnel by practical and successful experience.

The constant activity of night and day combat patrols kept the enemy in his own front yard and frequently forced him to disclose his positions. All patrols, except those ordered out on hasty emergency missions, were carefully processed through an SOP system laid down by the Group Commander. This consisted of the preparation of (1) an order from the Squadron Commander (incl. #1) assigning the mission to the patrol leader at least 36 hours prior to the time the patrol is to set out, (2) a detailed plan of patrol (incl. #2) signed by the leader and the Troop and Squadron Commanders, and (3) a patrol report (incl. #3) of the results of interrogation of at least the patrol leader, by the S-2. When this system was inaugurated in October 1944 it was thought to be too lengthy and bothersome, but with constant use, its merits proved themselves by a thoroughness in coordinated planning that could not otherwise have been achieved. It has definitely been responsible for the successful accomplishment of numerous patrol missions with a minimum loss of personnel and equipment and a maximum gain of accurate enemy information. Members of other units accompanying our patrols were impressed by the detailed planning and the close support of artillery and mortars it provided by the use of well operated radio links. Leaders of emergency patrols in quick preparation for their mission were guided by the outline of the Detailed Plan of Patrol.

Troop A, attached to the 3rd Battalion, 311th Regimental Combat Team of the 78th Infantry Division, continued to defend in the vicinity of KONZEN STATION, GERMANY. Attached to the troop were a platoon of light tanks from Company F, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, and a platoon of self-propelled tank destroyers from Company C, 893rd TD Battalion. Adjacent units were Company A, 47th Armored Infantry Battalion attached to this squadron, on the right, and Company L, 311th Infantry on the left.

On 2 January Lt. Dickson set out in darkness with a combat patrol of 12 men and encountered an enemy outpost in the house at (K943228). They threw white phosphorous grenades through the windows and withdrew under machine gun fire from adjacent outposts while the building burned to the ground. A platoon from the 60th Regimental Combat Team supported by medium tank and TD fire, launched a diversionary attack on KONZEN through the troop and were forced back by heavy machine gun fire from the center of the town. Throughout the period normal security patrols were active without enemy contacts.

On the night of the 7th, Troop A was relieved by Company L, 311th Infantry, and at 2300A proceeded in a blinding snow storm, via ROTGEN and EUPEN, to a position in the woods off the MONSCHAU-EUPEN highway (K855230), closing in there at 0740A. The troop again reverted to Squadron control. Wire communication was established and, in the absence of shelter, four pyramidal tents were erected and work was begun on the construction of log huts. During the balance of the period the troop followed a rehabilitation program including showers and a change of clean clothing for all personnel. Shakedown inspections of vehicles and equipment were conducted at the Squadron rear echelon base at EUPEN and all clothing, equipment and ammunition in excess of authorized base loads were turned in for salvage. Assisted by Squadron service sections, a thorough maintenance check-up was completed on ordnance, signal and motor equipment. A physical inspection and instruction in first aid were conducted by the Squadron Surgeon. Enjoying a short break from contact with the enemy, the men were well rested even though living conditions were very poor in the severe cold and snow.

On the 6th, 1st Lt. Frederick H. Metcalf, a reinforcement officer, was assigned to the troop. Tec 5 Welter and Pvts Freeman and Lavato returned from hospital during the period.

Troop B tied in with the defenses of Company A, 47th Infantry Regimental Combat Team on MONSCHAU Hill on the right, and Troop C on the left. Its support consisted of Company F with a platoon of light tanks covering each reconnaissance platoon and elements of the 60th Infantry dug-in farther back. The troop command post was in the cellars of a house in MUTZENICH at (K832201).

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Unaimed rifle and machine gun harassing fire was directed almost daily on the outposts. This was evidently done to induce return fire and reveal our positions. It generally ceased when returned by single riflemen from alternate positions. On several occasions the enemy weapon had the distinctive sound of the American .30 caliber machine gun. The headquarters platoon provisional mortar squad continued to fire their battery of 81MM's with increasing development of speed and accuracy. Small caliber enemy mortars fired daily along the front without causing any damage nor disclosing his position. After a careful study of maps, terrain and sound direction, several probable positions were chosen and counter-mortar concentrations were fired. The enemy mortars then ceased fire.

Patrols from the 60th Infantry were guided by members of Troop B on the 4th and 5th to reconnoiter enemy strength in buildings at (K952208). Both nights they ran into enemy trip flares and received heavy machine gun fire from the houses. The second night the patrol attempted to ambush a German flanking patrol but their position was revealed by one of our men coughing. They were forced to withdraw under intense small arms fire and one man was wounded. During the night of the 6th and infantry squad guided by Sgt. Rusen again lay in ambush at (K946209) without results. On the 9th a patrol found and burned down a house (K953208) recently occupied by a German outpost. Other Infantry patrols operated nightly and were guided by B Troopers. Although these parties were conducted by the 3rd Battalion of the 60th Infantry, the guides operated the radios and controlled supporting artillery and mortar fires. The farthestmost point reached was (K955212) between KONZEN and IMGENBROICH.

Then Lt. Yontz was temporarily placed on duty with Squadron Headquarters on 7 January, 2nd Lt. William Smith, a newly assigned reinforcement, took over command of the 2nd Platoon.

Troop C continued to defend its assigned area along the MONSIEURATH Hill occupying the center portion of the Squadron line with the 3rd platoon on the right and the 1st platoon on the left. The 2nd platoon supported the troop MLR from positions in rear of the 1st and 3rd platoons. The 2nd and 3rd platoons exchanged places on the 13th. The two front line platoons were in exposed positions necessitating strict camouflage discipline and little or no daylight movement was permitted. Several substantially constructed farm houses offered excellent strong points with wide fields of fire. The support platoon, dug-in on the edge of the woods, overlooked the entire troop front as well as parts of the ground occupied by adjoining units. Behind this the troop command post was dug-in (K928208) and protected against the daily harassing mortar and artillery shelling. The provisional mortar platoon consisting of personnel from the headquarters platoon, fired in direct support of all posts on targets of opportunity as well as registered defensive concentrations. Observers used telephone and supporting radio links to contact the fire direction center at the mortar battery in a clearing behind the woods. Because of the boggy ground each mortar had to be footed with legs and barricaded with sand bags and logs.

An observation post was established at the forward edge of the woods (K921215) and commanded a wide view including the towns of KONZEN and IMGENBROICH. It was equipped with a B.C. scope and manned by Troop E officers and men. This vantage point proved valuable in picking up enemy targets and was often used by officers of higher echelons, which included on one occasion, Major Teague and W.O. Frels of the Corps Adjutant General's Office.

During the night of 2 January one platoon of medium tanks and a section of tank destroyers moved in and were concealed among the Troop C positions. The following day they supported with direct fire a diversionary attack on KONZEN by a platoon, of Company F, 60th Infantry, which started through Troop A and returned through Troop C. Their mission was successfully completed, but with several casualties.

To prevent the possibility of the enemy from securing and using the house at (K939214) as a strong point, a detachment of the attached engineers prepared it for demolition and fixed booby traps inside. Four 50 pound charges were placed around the foundation outside the building and a concealed wire was laid to an electric detonator in the 1st platoon command post (K934216).

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On the 6th, 2nd Lt. Marion F. Anderson was evacuated for medical treatment and on the 7th, 1st Lt. William H. Wilkerson, a reinforcement officer, was assigned to command the 2nd platoon. A former member of Troop B, 2nd Lt. Joseph O. McAloon returned from hospital after recuperating from wounds and was assigned to Troop C. He was placed on temporary duty with Squadron Headquarters as liaison officer. During the period Pfc Singleton and Pvts Adamson and Alvarados also rejoined the troop from the hospital.

Troop E continued to support the Squadron with its battery of six self-propelled 75mm howitzers emplaced in MUTZENICH (K908187). Offensive and defensive fire concentrations were registered and coordinated with those of the 60th F.A. Bn of the 9th. Infantry Division, as well as with the 62nd Armored F.A. Bn which was still in general support, attached to the 102nd Cavalry Group. The troop maintained three observation posts. All troops as well as the artillery observers were constantly alert to pick up enemy gun flashes and submitted "Shell Reps" and "Flash-Bang" reports. Azimuths of the direction of flight were also reported on Robot Bombs passing over the area. On the 11th observers were put to a test by the 60th Infantry commander when he ordered the 60th F.A. Bn to fire a concentration of smoke to the front to note the observers' reports. All the Squadron front line units submitted reports promptly and, in most cases, were accurately plotted with azimuths corresponding to their relative positions.

On New Years Day a Fock-Wulf 190 was shot down by a local anti-aircraft unit and crashed near the gun positions. That afternoon Lt. Allen adjusted the battery on a suspected German C.P. (K85542066) scoring eight direct hits on the house. On the 3rd the troop assisted the 60th F.A. Bn. in supporting the infantry attack on KONZEN, expending 501 rounds - 80 of which were smoke shells.

On 4 January 1st. Sgt. Eldon A. Moak was honorably discharged from the Army and reinstated with a battlefield commission as Second Lieutenant. Lt. Moak was then presented with the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action in Belgium. The double ceremony was presided over by the Squadron Commander and present were members of his staff and available officers and men of the troop. Lt. Moak remained assigned to Troop E. Sgt Hampton and S/Sgt Cochran returned from hospital to duty and the latter was made acting 1st Sgt.

On the 9th a mission was adjusted by Lt. Olson from OP#1 which accounted for a German believed to be an observer. Lt. Moak adjusted from OP#3 and destroyed a vehicle and occupants with a direct hit. On the 10th and 11th nine observed missions were fired on point targets, burning several houses at IMGENROICH and driving out enemy personnel, some of which were seen to be casualties. Lt. Slovacek, from OP#2, adjusted on two observers at (K94602132), killing one with air bursts and chasing the other who staggered and fell until he gained the safety of a pillbox. On the 14th Capt. Frink, S-2, adjusted H.E. fire, chasing personnel into a house, then flattening the building with direct hits. During the period 2872 rounds of ammunition were expended.

The light tanks of Company F remained in supporting positions behind Troop B. The 1st platoon still covered in vicinity of the hairpin turn above MONSCAU, the 2nd platoon along the railroad behind Troop B's 1st, and the 3rd backing up the left flank of Troop B. The tank and machine gun emplacements were protected against shelling by sand bags and log barricades and were camouflaged against the snow with white cloth. Alternate emplacements and individual fighting holes for local security were dug-in. Twice daily all tracked vehicles were moved to prevent their being frozen in place. The 2nd platoon continued to maintain a night listening post in the draw at (K944202).

With Company F personnel as guides, the infantry operated nightly combat patrols up the STILBESCH draw without enemy contact. During enemy shelling on the tenth, Pfc Windham was wounded when a shell burst at the 1st platoon position (K942196). On the same day a shell hit the company command post in the railroad station (K935194) without damage, although it missed the kitchen truck and crew by 3 yards. Tec 4 Edly, Tec 4 Matelski, Pvt Quealy and Pvt Zink, all former members of the company, returned from the hospital to duty.

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Company A, 47th Armored Infantry Battalion, attached to the Squadron since 17 December, remained in defensive positions on the left flank with two platoons on the line and one dug-in support. One of the 57mm guns of the anti-tank platoon was kept concealed in a barn at (K939221) where it commanded an excellent field of fire on the MLR. The other two guns were emplaced covering the roads at (K940235) and (K935229). Close contact was maintained with Troop A, attached to the 78th Division on the left and, by physical liaison and direct wire communication, constant coordination of patrols and other activities was maintained.

The attached 3rd platoon of Company A, 112th Engineer Battalion assisted the Squadron in the improvement and maintenance of the anti-personnel and mine defenses. It also kept the local road net in a good state of repair. Teams of a half squad each were attached to each line troop with a non-commissioned officer in charge. A complete set of sketches, overlays and records of all mines and explosives installed was kept up to date and periodically submitted to S-3 and higher engineer headquarters.

When this platoon, which had been attached since 21 November 1944, was released to return to its parent unit on the 4th of January the officers and men of the Squadron regretted to see it go. The platoon leader, Lt. Krupnick, and every one of his men are to be highly commended for the fine spirit of cooperation they displayed in the performance of extremely difficult tasks under trying conditions of actual combat and severe weather. Lt. Krupnick was recommended, by the Squadron Commander, for the award of the Bronze Star in recognition of his meritorious achievement during the period of his attachment to the Squadron.

The Squadron Medical Detachment operated its aid station and infirmary in a farm house at MUTZENICH (K910183) and there treated minor wounded and sick in quarters patients. A slight outbreak of trench foot occurred during the period requiring the evacuation of three men, but it was quickly arrested by the medical officers and the aid men attached to each platoon.

The close supervision of foot hygiene and regular foot inspections proved effective. Using a roster check system, each aid man examined the feet of all the men in his charge and saw to it that they were washed every other day, that their socks were changed and their shoes were alternated regularly and allowed to dry out.

Headquarters and Service Troop (Rear Echelon) operated from its base at EUPEN, BELGIUM. The trucks of the transportation platoon and the S-4 section were in constant use, hauling supplies, ammunition and rations which were eventually distributed from the truckhead at MUTZENICH (K910196). The Squadron Motor Maintenance platoon, besides performing its normal duties of repairing and checking vehicles, began work on the carriages of the self-propelled howitzers of Troop E, bringing one out of battery at a time for a thorough maintenance check-up. The troop Motor Maintenance section under S/Sgt Skardzius and the half track established a shop at the truckhead to act as a central service point for vehicles disabled on the Squadron road net and to service the forward echelon equipment. The Squadron Radio Maintenance section operated exceptionally long hours repairing and servicing. Radio break-downs had increased because of the severe weather conditions.

On the 1st of January, EUPEN was subjected to an air raid during which a German dive bomber was shot down and crashed close to the rear echelon command post. A search revealed the dead pilot nearby whose chute had failed to open. Robot bombs passed over regularly and some struck the town. On the 12th the town received several rounds of heavy caliber enemy artillery.

15-25 January: By 152030A January Troop A had relieved Troop B from its positions on the right flank of the Squadron in MUTZENICH. Their mortars were put in the same positions and using the aiming stakes already there. Concentrations were re-registered and checked on the range cards.

In addition to nightly security patrols, guides and radio operators accompanied patrols sent out by the 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regimental Combat Team. On the 17th Sgt. Brzostowski guided one of these patrols which reached a point in vicinity of (K956210) from where they observed an enemy force of estimated company strength

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entering IINGENBROICH dismounted. As planned, they laid a hasty anti-tank minefield on the SIMMERATH-IINGENBROICH road (K956210) and drew back, adjusting artillery, on the enemy column. Again on the 20th an infantry patrol accompanied by Sgt. Kolbenheyer proceeded to (K953208) where they were detected by a 15 man enemy party and were forced to withdraw under heavy small arms fire. They called for mortar on the enemy. On the night of the 23rd a patrol was guided out by Sgt. McCauley and two men. They ran into heavy machine gun fire near (K955212) and withdrew. Cpl Jackson went with a patrol on the 24th and discovered an enemy ambush near IINGENBROICH. Without success they endeavored to flank the Germans but were forced to withdraw under fire. During the period there was no other enemy activity worthy of mention.

Capt Hull, commander of Troop C, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, with his platoon leaders inspected the positions of the 1st and 2nd platoons on the 25th and plans were completed for their relief on the following day.

During the period former members of the Troop returned from the hospital. They were Sgts. Kolbenheyer, Brzostowski, and McCauley. Pfc's Billingsley and Steil, and Pvt Stake.

When Troop B was relieved by Troop A, they proceeded to the rest area (K855230) closing in there 152135A January. Rehabilitation was immediately begun with platoons rotating daily at the showers and shelter of the Hq and Service Troop base in EUPEN. Those not engaged in showdown inspections were given courses in first aid, sand table exercises and mines and booby traps. Long accumulated excess clothing and equipment were turned into S-4 for salvage and the troop again stripped down to base loads. Vehicles, weapons and radios were given a thorough going over and restored to first class condition. Church services, movies and beer were made available and all personnel received a complete change of clean clothing.

Personal reconnaissance of a new sector to be occupied to the east of 'MONSCHAY' was made by the officers and platoon sergeants on the 25th and preparations were completed for re-entry into the line the following day.

Troop C remained in position and continued to patrol to the front with elements of the 1st Battalion, 60th Infantry, with negligible results. On the night of the 18th S/Sgt Llewellyn and Pfc Norton were injured by the accidental explosion of an uncharted anti-personnel mine while they were checking the concertina wire across the front of the 1st platoon. S/Sgt Llewellyn was evacuated but returned to duty on the 20th.

On the 25th Capt. Peterson and his officers of Troop B, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, inspected the Troop C positions in preparations for its relief the following day.

Taking advantage of generally clear visibility throughout the period, the Troop E officers and non-commissioned officers adjusted fire missions on targets observed from their OPs. The results of some missions could not be determined, but the following were definitely seen: Casualties to personnel on nine (9) different occasions; direct hits on factory in KONZEN which was known to be an enemy strongpoint; hits on a German occupied house (K95682082); killed what was believed to be a German officer inspecting outposts (K95582036); and destroyed an anti-tank gun (K954209). Using time and superquick fuses, many direct hits were scored on buildings suspected of housing enemy personnel. The normal interdiction harassing missions were fired in conjunction with the 60th FA Bn and the 62nd Armored FA Bn.

A course of instruction was begun on the 17th for personnel of Company F in anticipation of the issue of M-24 light Medium tanks to replace the light tanks M5A1. Under instructor guidance from the forward OPs, personnel were trained in calling for fire missions and adjusting indirect fire on actual targets to the front.

During the 11 day period Troop E fired 3622 rounds of ammunition from their six assault guns.

Company F continued to patrol nightly with units of the 3rd Bn, 60th Infantry, without enemy contact. In addition to instructions in indirect fire methods given

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the company by Troop A, Captain French of the 68th Armored P.A. Bn instructed in the use of the quadrant, aiming circle and azimuth indicator. Two medium tanks were borrowed from the 746th Tank Battalion (Campus Blue) for practical demonstrations in the laying of the piece.

On three occasions wire communication was disrupted by enemy shelling but was quickly restored by Sgt Ronci and his wire crew. The light tanks often proved very valuable in pulling wheeled vehicles out of deep snow drifts through the area.

Sgt Oliveri and Pvt Kerridge rejoined their company after recovery from wounds received while operating tanks during the Normandy break through in July 1944.

Company A, 47th Armored Infantry Battalion, continued to operate on the left of the Squadron front until 20 January when it was relieved in position by Company C, 60th Infantry. Due to a high rate of casualties suffered from previous engagements, a large percentage of its men were new and inexperienced reinforcements when Company A was attached to the Squadron on 17 December 1944. Under the direction of the company commander, Capt Weirsm, daily improvement in efficiency was evident. Thus, when the company reverted to control of its parent unit, it was in an excellent state of combat condition. Its officers, sub-commissioned officers and men are to be highly commended for their diligent attention to duty in accomplishing the difficult tasks and hard work assigned to them.

Company C adjusted itself and its weapons to the established positions and resumed patrolling. It was relieved by Company B of the 60th Infantry on the 25th and this unit, in turn, was relieved on the same night by Troop A, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, which was temporarily attached to this Squadron until the balance of its parent organization moved into the area.

26 - 31 January: The mission to defend the town of MONSCHAU was again assigned the Squadron which had now been detached from the 60th Infantry Regimental Combat Team and reverted to the control of the 102nd Cavalry Group. This sector has previously been included in a front of 9000 yards held by the Squadron from 10 November to 20 December 1944, and had been garrisoned by Troop C and Company F. It was now the sole responsibility of the entire Squadron on a 2200 yard front. On the night of 26-27 January, after the troops had been relieved of their sector by the 102nd Cavalry Squadron, they moved into position relieving elements of the 47th Infantry. Troop B was on the right, Troop A on the left, and the 1st and 2nd platoons of Company F remained in position in the area at the hairpin turn and along the railroad. Troop C took up supporting positions on the high ground to the west of MONSCHAU with a good command of the terrain along the entire front. The Squadron command post again moved into the MONSCHAU post office. Company C, 644th Tank Destroyer Battalion (less one platoon) was attached to the Squadron 261645A January and was placed in reserve.

The 1st and 2nd platoons of Troop A were relieved at 262055A January by Troop C, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, but the 3rd platoon remained in position to the north of the hairpin turn (K940200) and in the STILBUTCH draw, tying-in with the 102nd Cavalry Squadron and Tank outposts of the 1st platoon of Company F, on the left. The 1st and 2nd platoons relieved two platoons of Company A, 47th Infantry in the trenches on the hill east of MONSCHAU and tied-in with Troop B on the right and its own 3rd platoon and the 2nd light tank platoon of Company F covering the winding road (K944196), on the left. The Troop command post occupied a factory in MONSCHAU (K939191). Security patrols and listening posts went out nightly. The 81mm mortars, less one remaining with the 3rd platoon, were positioned on the steep hillside above the command post and were registered on close-in concentrations. The difficult task of hauling ammunition up to them was done by having the men returning from meals carry individual rounds.

A patrol led by Sgt Turner on the night of the 28th observed enemy activity around a pillbox at (K956200). On the 27th and the 29th German deserters were turned in by listening posts.

During the night of 30-31 January the mortar battery fired preparation missions for the infantry attack which was launched at 0400A. They then stood by to support and to fire upon targets of opportunity. In conjunction with a loud-

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speaker broadcasting to the Germans that they had been surrounded and to surrender, on the morning of the 31st. The mortars expended 300 rounds on harassing fire at the southern end of IMGENBROICH and KONZEN. No prisoners were taken. A radio patrol under Cpl Bowman left at 2000A to contact the 309th Regimental Combat Team at IMGENBROICH.

During the period Pvts Komora, Salimbene and Wolfe returned from hospital to duty.

Troop B entered MONSCHAU and began the relief of Company C, 47th Infantry in a sector running north from the ROER River (K947184) in the MONSCHAU draw, to the top of the hill where it linked with Troop A. Contact and the coordination of fire plan was established with Company L, 60th Infantry Regimental Combat Team across the river on the night. The troop was in position by 270100A January with the 2nd platoon on the right and the 1st on the left. One section of the 3rd platoon was in support of the 2nd and the other section remained in troop reserve. Three of the troop mortars were set up in an advanced position on the side of the steep hill at (K944186). The other three were positioned on the 30th at (K935187) when the emplacements were vacated by Troop C.

A patrol led by S/Sgt McDonald on the 27th investigated the area at (K951193) without enemy contact. On the night of the 28th a patrol led by Tec 5 Wido set up a listening post at (K950189) without incident. Another patrol reached (K958183) on the 29th without contact. A deserter surrendered to a 2nd platoon outpost on the 30th.

The mortar crews supported the infantry attack with a preparation of 671 rounds of HE and 12 rounds of smoke. In conjunction with the loudspeaker broadcast on the 31st, 270 rounds of HE and 30 rounds of smoke were fired. No prisoners were taken.

A patrol led by Lt. Shenab reached WIDDOU (K981189) on the 31st and contacted American infantry there without observing enemy enroute. That night a patrol led by Lt. Porterfield reconnoitered the MONSCHAU-IMGENBROICH Road through the MENZERATH draw, reaching their objective at 0100A. Another 1st platoon patrol under S/Sgt Lubitz went to MENZERATH hill. They found a pillbox at (K951188) to be vacant but saw personnel moving in vicinity of the nearby houses. They called out in English and German but received rifle fire in return. It was possible that Americans were in the area so the patrol took up firing positions and observed for the balance of the night. Daylight investigation proved the houses of MENZERATH to be entirely empty.

Pvt Skata returned from the hospital on the 27th.

Having been relieved on the afternoon of the 26th by Troop B, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, the 2nd and 3rd platoons of Troop C immediately moved to the hill west of MONSCHAU where they took up positions in support of the Squadron at (K937187). The balance of the troop began at dark to extricate the vehicles of the 1st platoon. Because of their location at the bottom of a long slope that was heavily drifted with snow and the loss of daylight working time because of perfect enemy observation, the platoon was not out until late in the night on the 27th. This back-breaking work was assisted by a bulldozer from the 9th Division engineers.

On the night of the 27th the troop was finally assembled at the new area with the command post at (K934194). The 1st platoon and the headquarters mortar squad found conveniently dug-in huts along the west side of the hill (K935190) where elements of the 1st Bn, 47th Infantry, had been situated. The mortars were put into already prepared emplacements. Forward observation posts were set up in a castle (K940184). With the Troop A positions on the east hill and with the infantry in HOFEN (K944177).

On the 30th the troop was attached to "Task Force Rousek" for a special mission of the 102nd Cavalry Group, and remained so attached until the end of the period.

Pvts Grimmer and Grizzard rejoined their troop from the hospital during the period.

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Troop B continued to fire harassing missions with few observed targets. The gun crews stood-to waiting to support the infantry attack on the 30th, anticipating the expenditure of a large volume of ammunition. Due to the light resistance encountered by the attack only two missions were fired in support and those were saturated with fire (K956192) (K953190).

On the 31st the troop moved to a new position near MONSCHAU. The fire direction center was established in a house (K93851932) and the guns went into battery at (K93481927).

During the period the six 75mm assault guns expended 1470 rounds of ammunition bringing the total for the month of January to 7964 rounds.

On 26 January the 2nd and 3rd platoons of Company F were relieved by elements of the 102nd Cavalry Squadron and assembled with the balance of the Company at the command post.

Lt. Pepper, the motor sergeant, mechanics and tank drivers were given a short course in the maintenance of the new M-24 light tank which the company is being issued to replace the light tank M5A1. On the 30th Lt. Cullinan and the tank commanders of the 3rd platoon attended a training demonstration of these tanks at the 744th Tank Bn. On the 31st the first two M-24 tanks were received by the 2nd platoon.

Sgt. Saniuk, Pfc Boehlke and Pvt Wodzinski returned to the company after recovering from wounds received in action.

The Squadron Medical Detachment moved its infirmary aid station back to the building occupied previous to 20 December in MONSCHAU (K938187). Foot and physical inspections of all personnel were conducted. The strict foot hygiene in practice kept the number of Trench Foot cases at 28. Capt Grosboll, Tec 5 Gribbin and Pfc Skidmore with the half track ambulance, accompanied Task Force Rousek on the 30th.

During the month the detachment processed 12 Battle Casualties and 77 Non-Battle Casualties. Battle casualties consisted of 11 wounded and one injured.

The medical aid men attached to each of the line troop platoons have been outstanding for their commendable devotion to duty and the expert assistance they have rendered to all those under their care. The practice of having the aid men live with his platoon has proven very satisfactory. It has built up a sense of responsibility and close supervision that could not otherwise have been achieved.

In conjunction with the First Army offensive, launched on the night of 29-30 January 1945, the 60th Infantry Regiment jumped off from Hofen to seize Rohren and Widdau. The 102nd Cavalry Squadron was to have followed the attack of the 60th Infantry to consolidate these towns as the advance progressed. Due to extremes in weather, and the unexpected swiftness of the advance, which met light opposition, it became impossible to pull the 102nd Squadron out of position in time to take over from the infantry. On 30 January 45 the 102nd Cavalry Group headquarters formed a provisional force of available troops from both the 38th and the 102nd Squadrons under the command of Major Charles E. Rousek Jr, executive officer of the 38th Squadron. Troop C of the 38th Cavalry Squadron was attached to "Task Force Rousek" as it was officially termed, and Capt Frink, the Squadron S-2, went with Major Rousek as Operations Officer. Under severe weather conditions, amounting to a blizzard, Troop C with other elements of the Force, proceeded into HOFEN on the night of 30 January. All available routes to ROHREN were closed by drifting snow and mines but, on 31 January 45, Troop C, 38th Cavalry Squadron made the difficult journey cross-country, on an improvised roadway cleared by engineer bulldozers. Elements of the 60th Infantry in Rohren were relieved and one platoon of Troop C made their way into WIDDAU on foot as the road from Rohren to Widdau was impossible to wheel vehicles due to the precipitous descent and increasingly bad weather conditions. The Task Force continued in effect until after midnight on 31 January 45 when it was relieved by the 102nd Cavalry Squadron.

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JANUARY - General

Presentation of Decorations: On 20 January 1945, in a beautiful setting of the dense, snow laden forests west of Mutzenich, Germany, the Group Commander, Colonel Cyrus A. Dolph presented the Bronze Star to the following men:

Major Ewart J. Edgerton, 0309175
 S/Sgt Elliott A. Engel, 6864118
 Sgt Florentius H. Becker, 37343582
 Sgt Leonard Brzostowski, 36636952
 Tec 4 Lawrence Ruggiero, 32196616
 Tec 5 John S. Frassanito, 32190146
 Tec 5 Gordon H. Hansen, 32772132
 Tec 5 Michael F. Jacobs, 32873587
 Pfc Patsy P. Santora, 32968989
 Pvt Gino Carducci, 35232279
 Pvt Victor R. Mac Donald, 14038240
 Sgt Howard J. Kolbenheyer, 32817403

Major General C. R. Huebner, the newly appointed commander of V Corps, personally decorated seven men of the Squadron on 25 January 1945 at the command post of the 102nd Cavalry Group in Eupen, Belgium. Five Silver and two Bronze Stars were presented the following named men in the first Squadron ceremony presided over by a general officer since "D" Day.

Silver Stars

Sgt John P. Cundiff, 35727092
 Sgt James B. Martin, 38241397
 Sgt Martin P. Mossano, 32295715
 Sgt Charles E. Oxenham, 33565838
 Pvt Joseph E. Bottini, 39132303

Bronze Star

Sgt Nicholas Giannuzzi, 32024614
 Sgt Charles R. West, 39127650

On 28 January 1945, the Group Commander, Colonel Cyrus A. Dolph presented nine Bronze Stars in an impressive ceremony in the town of MONSCHAU, GERMANY. The recipients were men who had earned their honors in the gallant defense of that sector on 16-17-18 December 1944, and were decorated in the presence of representatives of Troops B, C, E and Company F. Persons decorated on this occasion were as follows:

Sgt Angelo J. Ronci, 35047519
 Sgt Charles E. Sullivan, 35797135
 Sgt John C. Turbeck, 32770266
 Tec 4 Stanford E. Cates, 39276759
 Tec 4 Harold B. Wills, 35667067
 Tec 5 Justin L. Buchman, 16121610
 Tec 5 Alvin Spencer, 35667016
 Tec 5 Jack L. Van Order, 16088676
 Pvt Willie Cernoch, 38455887

The Squadron has been extremely fortunate to have regained the services of 1 officer and 31 enlisted men who have returned to duty with their organization during the period. Although it is stated in regulations that former members of units are to be returned, the 3rd Replacement Depot has been exceedingly cooperative in rendering this service.

The 31st of January marks the 142nd consecutive day that the Squadron has been in contact with the enemy on the SIEGFRIED LINE. Since the operations during this time have been all dismounted using normal infantry tactics, many new lessons have been learned by those who were trained and practiced in fast moving vehicular reconnaissance.