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INTRODUCTION

The beginning of April found the 90th Inf Div mopping up behind the spearheading 4th Armd Div in the breakthrough up the HESSE Corridor. RCT 359 (minus its 3d Bn) was still attached to the latter. Both Divisions had driven a lancet deep toward the heart of Germany and supply lines stretched far behind them. Both flanks were exposed as the Germans reacted against units trying to exploit the drive and engaged them in stiff fighting, slowing their progress.

XII Corps was ordered to seize the communication centers vicinity ARNSTADT while XX Corps on the left would seize those at ERFURT (J37) and WEIMAR (J57).

On the 31st of March, then, XII Corps assigned 4th Armd Div the mission of capturing OHRDRUF (J1154) and GOTHA (J0965) with 90th Div following.

11th Armd Div on the right was to seize ARNSTADT and KRANICHPFELD (J4456) with 26th Inf Div following. 71st Inf Div remained in Corps Reserve.

The 4th Armd Div with forward elements approaching EISENACH (H8267) was beginning to swing E and the Division (- RCT 359) was prepared to mop up behind them. Forward elements of 357th and 358th Infs were generally six miles short of HERSFELD (H3954). The Division CP was at BERNSHAUSEN (H2730). 3d Bn 359th Inf in Division Reserve was positioned at BAD SALZSCHLIRF (H2526) with Co L at BERNSHAUSEN. 90th Rcn Tr was guarding prisoners for Corps.

* * * * *

1 April 1945

As the Division was already on the heels of the armor, the planned movement forward was halted to give rear elements of the 4th Armd Div a chance to clear. Further, 11th Armd Div, ordered to bypass FULDA (H3819), swung into the 90th Div zone before turning E at HUNFELD (H4432) and was given road priority.

The regiments were therefore directed to push forward reconnaissance within their zones. 2d Bn of 358th Inf was ordered forward to cover the Division right flank at BOENS (H418470), ROTHENKIRCHEN (H389378), and EISRERFELD (H454423), while Co G 357th Inf plus TDs moved to block the left flank at BEIERSCHAUSEN (H3549), ASBACH (H3650) and the intersection of the Autobahn SW of HERSFELD (H3954). Both units were in place by 2200.

GT 359 moved out at 0900 to follow 4th Armd Div. The forward elements traveled some 33 miles before halting behind CCA who were stopped by a blown bridge over the WERRA River near HORSCHER (H7571).

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As the rear of the lead march serial (1st Bn) passed SALLMANNSHAUSEN (H6670), fire from the town across the river was received. Some of the unit detrucked and returned the fire with small arms, 50 caliber machine guns and anti-tank guns. The town was set afire and the column moved on.

1st Bn was attached to CCA and assembled at WILLERSHAUSEN (H7174), 2d Bn assembled at WOMMEN (H6771) while the regimental CP and attached units halted at MARKERSHAUSEN (H6774).

Division Artillery air patrols were active. Two ME 109s jumped one liaison plane ~~EE~~ of HERSFELD but the plane escaped serious damage. Another Cub was hit by enemy anti-aircraft units but made its way home.

90th Rcn Tr was released from Corps prisoner guard detail and re-joined the Division.

Now came disquieting information that sizeable enemy forces had cut across the axis of communication to the rear, blocked the MSR N of HOCHSTADT (M8586) and were harassing and ambushing supply vehicles.

A convoy of four Division Quartermaster trucks was ambushed near STOCKEIM (M9193) as they took a secondary route. Two men were killed. One was wounded and captured and later abandoned. The fourth soldier was captured and held for four days until troops of the 71st Inf Div recaptured him.

Seven trucks from 712th Tk Bn Service Company left NIEDERAULA (H3246) to pick up gasoline from the gas dump. About 1900 they were ambushed near WALLERNHAUSEN (M9100). One truck turned around and escaped. In the fight which followed, one soldier was killed, two were wounded and captured (but later abandoned and recovered) and three others were taken prisoner and recaptured the next day. The rest of the 14 men escaped and returned to the unit. Two of the vehicles were recovered the following day.

In the early evening XII Corps requested a battalion to guard approaches to the Corps Forward CP at LAUTERBACH (H1728). 3d Bn 359th Inf was assigned this mission and moved out as the period closed.

2 April 1945

Starting at 0700, the Division pushed on 14 miles before orders from Corps halted the advance and changed direction to due E.

Orders and an overlay reached the troops shortly after noon and directed mop-up to the WERRA River preparatory to crossing it and continuing E. Once more the 90th was to be on its own with nothing in front.

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2 April 1945 (Cont'd)

357th Inf - Patrols from 1st Bn began immediately to work towards the river which they reached without resistance. A bridge, badly damaged but passable for foot troops, was found at DANKMARSHAUSEN (H6061). Immediate crossing was recommended and approved. Troops of Co C led the way over the rickety structure until the entire battalion was across.

Civilian reports that DIPPACH (H6260) held only three enemy troops proved thoroughly unreliable as a blast of small arms fire poured out of the town. Artillery was laid on the town and it was taken by assault of Co B and C with 2d Plat, Co C, 712th Tk Bn. This platoon forded the swift-flowing WERRA River at 1730 and moved in sections of two tanks each with infantry fanned out on either side. Marching fire of all arms was used as the attackers crossed the flat approach to DIPPACH. Road blocks at the railroad underpasses at the edge of town were reduced by direct fire and by running over them. The town was entered at 1830 and cleared shortly thereafter. The close infantry-tank coordination was illustrated by the infantryman who substituted for the assistant gunner in one tank and gave excellent performance. Following capture of DIPPACH, LEIMBACH (H6158) was occupied by Co A. The Germans now aimed high velocity fire from the vicinity of BERKA (H6463) and the E.

3d Bn moved up on the left and began crossing the WERRA River while 2d Bn and Task Force MAGER blocked to the N.

358th Inf - 2d Bn continued to secure the right flank while 1st and 3d Bns turned E toward the WERRA. At 1645 a Co K patrol captured 44 PsW at BENGENDORF (H578570) after a skirmish. The battalion then continued against scattered resistance to the River.

1st Bn seized a railroad bridge across the river late in the day. Only foot troops could cross.

174 PsW were captured by the regiment during the day.

359th Inf - Enemy fire delayed construction of a bridge at PFERSDORF (H7472) and 1st Bn crossed in assault boats, accomplishing this in late morning. The Germans opened up with self-propelled gun fire from the high ground to the NE. Artillery silenced these guns.

After a bridge was completed at PFERSDORF and the armor had crossed, 1st Bn moved to KRAUTHAUSEN (H7872) and then to MADELUNGEN (H7972). Here one tank was lost but the town was captured at 2350.

In late afternoon, 2d Bn crossed near SALMANNHAUSEN (H6670). Cos F and G found the town clear and moved on to the high ground to the SE.

90th Rcn Tr - reconnoitered on the right flank of the Division, meeting small arms fire as they reached UNTERBREIZBACH (H5848). Most of it came from the high ridge W of VACHA (H6150).

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The situation in the far rear areas remained fluid, and 71st Inf Div was put to clearing up the sector. Another Division Quartermaster convoy of 4 trucks was ambushed by Panzerfaust and small arms fire in vicinity of STOCKHEIM, Germany. The lead truck plunged ahead and escaped. The other three halted and all the occupants but one were surrounded and captured. They were turned over to the Burgomeister of STOCKHEIM who released them. The one soldier who escaped was picked up three days later by the 71st Div as they combed the woods. Four of the trucks involved in the two ambushes were subsequently recovered.

3d Bn 359th Inf reached its area at 0400 and remained under Corps control. Battalion CP and Co I were at BLITZENROD (H1726). Co K was at HARTMANSHAIN (H0909) and Co L SW of HARTMANSHAIN, blocking roads at the junction. 3d Plat, Co D, 712th Tk Bn was attached and joined the Battalion in early morning. Together with infantry riding the tanks they combed out an area about 28 Kms, moving through HERBSTEIN. This mission netted 72 prisoners.

At 1800 they returned to BLITZENROD and set up a defensive position. Other than this the Battalion had no enemy contact.

As a result of enemy harassment of supply routes, elements of the light tank company, 712th Tk Bn, elements of 773rd TD Bn, and elements of 537th AAA Bn were called upon at intervals to escort convoys to the rear for the next several weeks.

Enemy air was very active over Division units. 73 sorties were flown. 3d Bn 357th Inf, was strafed by 6 planes as they moved up on the Division left near HERSFELD. No damage resulted. A Division Artillery Headquarters vehicle was damaged by an ME 109 later in the day at the same spot. 40 enemy planes strafed and bombed 915th FA Bn causing nine casualties. 7 enemy planes were destroyed and two probably destroyed by supporting anti-aircraft.

Division CP opened at FRIEDEWALD (H4956) at 1740B.

3 April 1945

Corps orders were to attack E across the WERRA River and secure the line BERKA - VACHA. Further attack was on order.

357th Inf - 3d Bn completed its crossing of the WERRA after midnight and moved to DIPPACH without incident. Before 0730 L and K Companies attacked BERKA. Victory was easy. The town was taken by 0755.

1st Bn moved E to the ridge line. Their patrols filtered further as the advance waited additional orders. These came at 1115. The objective now was the railroad track about 15 kilometers E of the WERRA. The Division Commander shortened this objective as it was beyond effective artillery support. A bridge over which to displace artillery was still not in. Engineers began construction at WIDDERSHAUSEN (H6059).

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5 April 1945 (Cont'd)

B Co captured ABTERODA (H6359) without trouble at 0930. C Co on the right took GASTERODA (H6358) at 1030 but hit a snag in capturing VITZERODA (H6457). Accompanied by four tanks, the company moved through the woods SE of GASTERODA toward Hill 340. This bald ridge west of the town was stoutly defended by 100 SS Troops. They opened up on the attackers as they swarmed out of the woods and climbed the open slope. Machine gun and small arms bullets and Panzerfausts hit into the assaulting force. Mortar fires burst around them. Panzerfausts smashed into three of the tanks, disabling two. The crew escaped. The infantrymen were less fortunate. A number were casualties. Fighting continued until evening when resistance slackened. Artillery and flanking tank fires turned the trick. The company remained in contact throughout the night. In the morning they occupied the position.

On the left, 3d Bn moved virtually without opposition. 20mm and AA fire were encountered as Co I moved into HAUSBREITENBACH (H6663). L Co occupied GOSPERODA (H6659) while K Co took HORSCHLITT (H6661).

2nd Bn, which had been held W of the River on Division order, was released and moved from HOENEBACH (H5461) across the battered bridge at DANKMARSHAUSEN into DIPPACH. All elements were assembled by 1800.

The bridge at WIDERSHAUSEN (H6059) was completed at 1535 and command transportation and artillery were shoved across.

358th Inf - Because of the enemy defense at the railroad bridge, 1st Bn crossed B and C Cos at 0600 behind 357th in their area. B Co then swung south and cleared HIRINGEN (H5857), LENGERS (H5954), HARNRODE (H573536) and PHILLIPSTHAL (H5951) in turn. Co C turned E at HIRINGEN and attacked OBERZELLA (H6251). Efforts to take the town were unsuccessful until a coordinated attack was launched with A Co at 1900. This company had crossed on the RR bridge at 1300. They started to follow C Co but ran into enemy in the woods and had to fight their way clear. After the fall of OBERZELLA, Co A continued on to the high ground beyond.

VACHA (H6150) which a captured order showed was a critical point in the German defense, offered more trouble. 3d Bn crossed the ULSTER River and eliminated UNTERBREIZBACH with artillery after the civilians there, impressed by the SS, tried to stave off the attack with small arms. The Battalion reached VACHA about noon. The town and high ground adjacent to it were defended by an estimated 500 troops, -- Wehrmacht, Volksturm and SS -- employing small arms, automatic weapons and anti-aircraft guns. Fires hot and heavy were exchanged throughout the day as the assault elements fought their way into the town under a shower of enemy mortar and 20mm fire. This came from the high ground on the left. By 1800, however, the backbone of resistance was broken. The town was cleared by dark. Over 200 prisoners were captured. Co K remained in VACHA. Co I pushed on to DORNDORF. Co L moved abreast just S of the town.

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3 April 1945 (at 'd)

The action of both 358 and 357 had ruptured the enemy's attempt to form an MLR. 90th Division now straddled the WERRA River over which no American soldier was to have passed. 2d Bn continued its blocking mission on the 358th's right flank without being engaged.

All was not milk and honey, however, as the regimental CP found itself caught in a web of encounters. First, in midafternoon a group of about 30 bypassed enemy attacked the CP at HEIMBOLDSHAUSEN (H5653) from the high ground above the RR station and yards. They were quickly rounded up by a hurriedly gathered force of tankers, truck drivers, MPs and CP personnel. Later in the day at 1830 one enemy plane roared over the area. AA engaged and hit it. The plane began a crash dive along the railroad and apparently jettisoned its bomb before plunging to the ground in flames. The bomb hit a boxcar of black powder. The resultant blast dug a 50 foot crater, leveled five houses, blew the roofs off some twenty or thirty others and broke most of the windows in the town. Several men were pinned under the debris as buildings collapsed upon them. Three died -- one officer and one enlisted man from 712th Tk Bn, and one attached medic. 29 other tankers, another medic, one TD man and 49 soldiers from 358th Inf were additional casualties. 56 of these were evacuated but the bulk were returned to duty. The regimental CP moved to ROHRIGSHOF (H5752).

359th Inf - Remained attached to the 4th Armd Div. As word came that the CP would be returned to Division control upon relief by elements of the 89th Inf Div, the regiment planned to remain in place. However at 0900, Cos C and B moved out to STREGDA (H8070) where they captured 145 prisoners. 3d Bn continued to block the road net in vicinity of G. ps CP.

Attached 537th AAA batteries were busy as the GAF flew 12 sorties. Four enemy planes were downed. AA gun positions vicinity of Division CP at ERIEDEWALD were strafed and AP bombs were dropped. One officer and four EM were wounded. One 40mm gun was damaged by enemy fire.

1055 PsW were processed during the period. 4 - 120mm mortars and 3 - 20mm multiple mount AA guns were captured or destroyed.

4 April 1945

357th Inf - 3d Battalion blocked in place on the N flank while 2d Battalion was committed on left of 1st Battalion. Both units moved against dissolving opposition until 2d Bn struck the outer ring of the EISENACH defense at MARKSUHL (H7360). Here, despite heavy artillery fire including 8" guns, the enemy force held out until the entire battalion was committed to capture the town at 2320. Co G then continued to move towards BURKHARDTRODA (H7558).

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4 April 1945 (Cont'd)

Near MOHRA (H7754) fighting flared up briefly and died again as 1st Bn knocked out two self-propelled guns with artillery and took the town.

On the left, the 89th Div, moving up to relieve 359th Inf, made unnecessary the block by 3d Bn 357th Inf moved to ETTENHAUSEN (H7456) in late afternoon.

358th Inf - Moving also at 0700 with 1st Bn on left and 3d Bn on right, 358th Inf continued its attack against scattered pockets of resistance. Among other towns, 3d Battalion captured MERKERS (H6850) in which was discovered the salt mine housing the great gold hoard and art treasure of the Reich.

Not until several days later was the enormous wealth that had been captured fully known. Subsequent investigation revealed that the subterranean chambers contained 100 tons of gold bullion (believed to be all Germany's gold), 5 billion German marks, 2 million dollars in American currency, 4 million Norwegian pounds, 100 million paper French francs, 110,000 English pounds, and a miscellany of Spanish, Italian, Turkish and Portuguese currencies.

Among the art works were 1,000 cases of paintings and statues, totalling some 2,000 paintings, including works by Raphael, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Durer and Renoir. 1,500 priceless tapestries and thousands of engravings as well as 120 cases with original GOETHE collection from WIEMAR rounded out the valuables.

Great quantities of Luftwaffe uniforms, including electrically heated equipment, were also stored here.

359th Inf - 2d Bn sent Co E SW to contact 357th 3d Bn. This was accomplished in early morning. The regiment then began assembly vicinity HONEBACH (H5562) upon relief by 89th Div. 1st Bn moved to GROSSENSEE (H5762). 2d Bn assembled at BERKA. 3d Bn, relieved by Corps, closed in at KLEINENSEE (H5761).

Division CP opened at KIESELBACH (H6852) at 1639.

5 April 1945

357th Inf - G Co occupied BURKHARTRODA (H7558) at 0600 without opposition. 2d Bn then remained in blocking position on the N flank. At 0700 the regiment pushed out with 3d Bn moving on left of 1st. All organized resistance was gone. Reports indicated the enemy had fled N and NE. The advance moved rapidly. So fast, in fact, that 3d Bn was at ETTERWILDEN (H8058) and 1st Bn 2500 yards NE of WALDFISCH (H7954) before they could be halted by Division order at 0845.

358th Inf - Attacking at 0700, 3d Bn captured BAD LIEBENSTEIN (H8450) and the high ground beyond. 2d Bn passed through 1st Bn at WITZELRODA (H8050) to take SCHWEINA (H8551) and the ridge to the E. Here Division halted the regiment.

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5 April 1945 (Cont'd)

90th Rcn Tr - The troop had been operating on the front and flank of 358th Inf, clearing towns and maintaining contact with the 26th Inf Div on the 90th's right. The troop captured 119 prisoners and recovered at STELMBACH (H8552) fifteen American soldiers who had been captured in the fighting at VACHA.

Although the Division now was halted out of enemy contact, the troop learned of an Allied Prison Camp in the vicinity of FRIEDRICHRODA (H990545). A recon car and 1/4 ton truck with a 712th light tank moved out ahead of the line to investigate. They found the camp, freed 200 British and Canadian PSW and took 30 German prisoners before returning.

359th Inf - The regiment had been directed to stage forward to vicinity VACHA in early morning. This area was advanced to LEIMBACH - LANGENFELD - KAISERODA - HERMANNESRODA. Enroute in early morning, 2d Bn was tagged as reserve for 357th Inf and shifted its course to ETTENHAUSEN where it closed at 1300. Cannon Co under Division Control was sent to SCHLITZ (H2932) to guard trains of enemy materiel in that area. 3d Bn was directed to guard trains from KAISERODA (H7050) to BAD SALZUNGEN (H7649). At 1840 Division notified the regiment that it would be attached to 26th Inf Div in the morning to relieve elements of the 11th Armd Div at ZELLA MEHLIS (J0733).

* * * * *

The Big Picture was rapidly changing. The boundary between the XII and VIII Corps, which was now on the left, was set as the WERRA River. All movements now were aimed to secure by dark, 8 April, a new line from which a coordinated thrust to the SE could be launched. For the Division this indicated an attack through the heavily wooded and hilly THURINGER WALD. This was the heart of NAZI Germany, being one of the first areas of Northern Germany to become fully dominated by the Party. Corps ordered the 90th Div at 1800 to screen until relieved by elements VIII Corps and then to assemble S of the WERRA River. One RCT (359) was to move by motor to the 26th Div on 6 April to relieve 11th Armd Div in ZELLA MEHLIS - OBERHOF area and patrol to the NE and E. Following further readjustments, it was anticipated the Division would get a new zone on the Corps left in the area held by 359th Inf.

6 April 1945

358th Inf - 358 assembled in vicinity of BAD SALZUNGEN following relief of 2d and 3d Bns by elements of the 87th Inf Div.

357th Inf - The regiment, uncovered on the N by advance of the 89th Div and passed through by the 97th Inf Div, assembled S of the WERRA in mid-afternoon. 2d Bn 357th Inf was alerted to move to SCHMAL-KALDEN (J9140) to secure the town and set up road block in preparation for the Division advance through that area. At nightfall the

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regiment was directed to take over the guard of the MERKERS salt mine using elements of the 712th Tk Bn as necessary. 1st Bn with the light tanks of 712th, was assigned this mission.

359th Inf - 359 began its motor movement to join the 26th Inf Div shortly after noon. 915th FA Bn and 345th FA Bn accompanied the CT. 2d and 3d Bns closed at OBERHOF (J1138) late in the day. 1st Bn reached ZELLA MEHLIS at 1730 and established guards on arms and munitions factories there.

Division CP opened at BAD SALZUNGEN at noon.

7 April 1945

The day was relatively quiet for the bulk of the Division. 1st Bn 357 reverted to Division Control as the MERKERS mine was discovered to be an extensive labyrinth, covering many miles with numerous entrances. 2d Bn 357 completed its move to SCHMALKALDEN by 1700 without incident. 343rd and 344th FA Bns displaced to vicinity LAUTER (J1029) and HEIDERSBACH (H1130) respectively in order to support the impending advance of the Division as well as releasing trucks to transport the infantry of the following day.

359th Inf remained attached to 26th Div and had several small encounters with defended road blocks as patrols moved out to the E. Approximately 50 Germans attacked OBERHOF shortly before midnight. This force was eliminated as 20 were killed and 30 captured. No further threats developed.

The Division plan was to assemble in vicinity ZELLA MEHLIS on the 8th, pass the 350th Inf through the right of 359 and continue the attack with these two regiments, with 359 remaining on the left flank. The regiment would revert to Division control at this time. 357 (-) was to assemble vicinity ZELLA MEHLIS as Division Reserve.

8 April 1945

The move to the new area began in early morning, for the most part over the bridge built at BARCHFELD by 1135th Engr Gp, and was completed without trouble in early afternoon. Division CP opened at ZELLA MEHLIS at 1000.

The new zone of the Division looked tough. It was mountain country, heavily forested, with evergreen trees towering a hundred feet in the air. In some places snow lay in patches like waste paper thrown about. The mountain roads, carved out of the steep slopes or chopped through the thick woods, offered little opportunity for by-pass and were conducive to road blocks. It was ideal terrain for delaying action and the Germans made the most of it. But it was through terrain such as this that the 90th Div gained the accolade of the Germans as the "Forest and Mountain Division".

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8 April 1945 (Cont'd)

359th Inf - Following an artillery preparation at 0640, 359th Inf launched a new attack with 3d and 1st Bns. The latter sought to occupy the high ground E of GOLDLAUTER (J1330), which it did without serious opposition. But 3d Bn, on the left, met trouble. Right from the start they had to fight their way forward. By using marching fire they were able to advance to the crossroad 2400 yards S of GEHLBERG (J1535). Here a definite strong point stalled the advance. The Germans directed mortar fire from GEHLBERG and small arms, machine gun and bazooka fire from the crossroads. Withdrawing slightly, the battalion smashed the strong point with artillery. A TOT also was laid on GEHLBERG. Following reduction of the crossroads, the 3d Bn proceeded slowly in face of small arms fire from defended road blocks. By nightfall Cos L and I were on the high ground 1500 yards W of the road running N from STUTZERBACH (J2130). K Co remained at the crossroad S of GEHLBERG.

2d Bn was instructed to block roads S and SE from OBERHOF and used their attached tanks to overcome resistance in the area.

At 1530 the 90th Div assumed responsibility for the sector and RCT 359 reverted to Division Control.

After relief at 1720, 1st Bn moved to an area near the tunnel 4000 yards NE of ZELLA MEHLIS.

AT Co 359 continued to guard small arms and office machine factories in ZELLA MEHLIS.

358th Inf - 358th Inf closed in their assembly area near GOLDLAUTER in mid-afternoon and began immediate passage through the 1st Bn 359. This movement hit a snag as enemy were encountered at the crossroads approximately 3000 yards E of GOLDLAUTER. The fight, involving principally C Co 358, lasted several hours. But finally driving off the resistance, the 1st Bn continued, swinging NE to its own zone on the regimental left. They captured STUTZERBACH where they remained for the night. Enemy resistance appeared on routes leading N and NE. Routes leading E were lightly held and defended.

2d Bn 358 had a skirmish with enemy infiltrators but advanced along the regimental right to the railroad tracks NE of SCHMIEDEFELD (J1827). Only slight resistance from small arms and automatic weapons was encountered.

3d Bn assembled at HEIDERSBACH and then sent K and L Cos forward to STUTZERBACH to tie in with 1st Bn and block the regimental N flank.

AT Co guarded 6000 DPs in 11 concentration camps in and around ZELLA MEHLIS.

357th Inf - As the regiment prepared to follow the Division, they were halted by verbal orders of the Corps Commander. The immense

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wealth of the MERKERS mine had now been appraised and the entire regiment less the 2d Bn was assigned to guard the numerous tunnels which honey-combed the area. They passed to Corps control at 1200B. Accordingly, A Co plus HMG and a section of light tanks (712th Tk Bn) occupied the factory area at MERKERS. B Co with MGs and light tanks was at DIETLAS (H6549). C Co was at DORNDORF (H6551). 3d Bn placed Co I at LEIMBACH (H7349), Co K at ALLENFORD (H7849) and Co L at KAISERODA (H7050). AT Co covered the factory area and shaft just S of STADTLINGSFELD (H6845). Cn Co took over the guard on train loads of enemy equipment between BAD SALZUNGEN and VACHA.

2d Bn of 357 moved to ZELLA MEHLIS, to outpost that town, and to become Division Reserve. They closed just before dark.

90th Rcn Tr with two platoons Co D, 712th Tk Bn remained behind to guard bridges at TIEFENORT (H7152) and BARCHFELD.

9 April 1945

As the situation now stood, the 90th occupied the desired line on its right flank abreast of the 26th Div on the S. But on the left, the 87th Div, with instructions to hold their advance, left that flank open. Accordingly, 359 was directed to push out to the required line abreast of the 358th Inf but to refuse back on the left until such time as the adjacent Division came forward.

As the chief thorn in the 90th Div side was GEHLBERG, the 2d Bn 359 was directed to take it out. They moved to the crossroads S of GEHLBERG and attacked N in column of companies, G, E, F, at 0830. Co E secured the high ground SW of GEHLBERG while Co G maneuvered for the high ground E of the town. As they approached their objective, the enemy engaged them with small arms and machine guns. Co G cleaned this up and moved on into town about noon without further resistance. F Co followed into town. 1st Bn was alerted to stage forward to GEHLBERG so the 2d Bn could continue to seize MANEBACH (J2035) and block to the N. 3d Bn, meanwhile, had resumed their advance which again met scattered resistance. They plugged on, however, and L Co crossed the MANEBACH road to occupy Hill 861. K Co turned up the main road but were stopped 1500 yards S of MANEBACH. Co I blocked the roads 1800 yards W of and paralleling the MANEBACH road.

Cos E and G motor-marched to the road junction S of MANEBACH de-trucked and moved through Co K to capture the town at 1925. Some small arms fire was received.

1st Bn closed into GEHLBERG at 2030.

358th Inf - Consolidated its positions in preparation for attack the next day.

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357th Inf - Remained on mine guard less the 2d Bn which stayed at ZELLA MEHLIS as Division Reserve.

The air force bombed ILMENAU (J2436) and destroyed many heavy duty German vehicles. A suspected ammunition depot in a woods at J3332 E of GEHREN (J3132) also was bombed and tremendous explosions resulted.

10 - 14 April 1945

Now the Division was set for the general advance which was finally scheduled for 10 April. On the left the 87th Div, though not abreast, had been given the "go" signal. On the right the 26th Div waited for jump off with the 90th.

The story of the next five days is pretty much of a pattern. There was fighting, in some instances, hard fighting as at ILMENAU and OEHRENSTOCK (J265337). But for the most part, it was scattered and locally determined. Some SS, some Hitler Youth, some Volkssturm were encountered and ground under. Countless road blocks, many undefended, were met and destroyed. But the big fighting was over, for now the towns were giving up again without resistance. As our troops advanced, mayor after mayor came out to surrender his town. By the close of day on the 11th no organized enemy line existed in the Division sector. The infantrymen mounted trucks, tanks and TDs to search out the vanishing enemy. 358th Inf rode rough-shod through GROSS BREITENBACH (J3125), GRAFENTHAL (J5219) and LOBENSTEIN (J7713) and reached the SELBITZ River on the 13th. 359th Inf swept through GEHREN, LANGE-IESEN (J2935) and KONIGSEE (J3734) to the SAALE River on the 14th. All towns in both regimental sectors were entered and cleared.

90th Rcn Tr, relieved of its bridge guard at 0600 on 10 April, re-joined the Division. In the afternoon of 11 April the troop was given the mission of reconnoitering the Division front and moved off through KONIGSEE where they captured 7 prisoners. The troop continued to scour the area in front of the Division and late on the 13th seized a bridge intact at J812040 (4 kilometers S of BLANKENSTEIN). After dark on the 13th they were driven off once, retook the bridge and held off an enemy column. Co E 358th Inf and 2 Platoons 773rd TD Bn relieved them in early morning of the 14th.

All other bridges investigated along the SELBITZ and SAALE Rivers were out. On the 14th, 358th crossed the river SE of LICHTENBERG (J8005). 2d Bn moved first. G Co captured BLANKENBURG (J8208), a jeep bridge across the SAALE and 65 prisoners. 3d Bn followed 2d and pushed E blocking to the S at the same time. By dark the regiment held a bridghead 30 kilometers square.

Following their relief, the 90th Rcn Tr pushed to the N and E and cut the BERLIN - MUNICH Autobahn at 1600 after an encounter with 50 infantrymen at BERG (J875055).

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By WDP NARA Date 11/10/0110 - 14 April 1945 (Cont'd)

During this period the Div CP kept pace with the infantry by displacing five times. The CP moved from ZELLA MEHLIS to STUTZERBACH on the 10th. It opened at noon on the 12th at GROSS BRIETENBACH. At 0900 on the 13th it set up at OBER-WEISSBACH (J4126). Here the operational maps were scarcely unwrapped when the CP moved again on that day to PROBSTZELLA (J5821) where it opened at 1700. Next day, the 14th, it shifted once more, setting up at LOBENSTEIN at 1630.

by reaching the SAALE River the Division had broken clear of the THURINGER WALD. Now the only large town remaining between the Division and the Czech border 30 Kms W, was HOF (J9600). It became the Division's next objective. Corps established a restraining line just beyond the town.

357th Inf - This regiment meanwhile was a hubbub of activity as plans were laid for removal of the gold and art treasures of which it was guardian. Many notables had visited the mine, including Generals Eisenhower, Bradley, Patton and Lear.

At 0900 on the 14th loading of the gold on 10-ton trucks began. The labor continued as the period closed. Jeeps were disassembled lowered into the mine and reassembled to assist in the work. Two crews of 50 men each alternated.

Back in the Division, 1135th Engrs were working too. Their interest was a bridge at BLANKENSTEIN. It was completed in early evening, but work on the approaches delayed its use until midnight. It was intended that 358th Inf use it first until 0645 when 359th Inf would take over.

15 April 1945

358th Inf - From midnight until 0645 vehicles and supporting weapons for 358 rumbled across the bridge at BLANKENSTEIN. The taking of HOF was assigned to the 358th's 3d Bn. After a stubborn fight at KODITZ (J9200), the Bn reached the outskirts of HOF. The attack began shortly after noon and raged until after dark when the town was rather well occupied but not wholly cleared. The Germans put up a stout fight and aggressively used small arms, machine guns and Panzerfausts, but to no avail. They were steadily compressed into a smaller and smaller area in NE HOF. K Co seized a bridge intact and pushed across the SAALLE River. More than 1000 prisoners were taken as the regiment chalked up 1192 PsW for the day. They also seized an airfield at 0935995 with 18 enemy training planes and 2 JU-88's in excellent condition as well as a parachute factory with an estimated 2000 parachutes at HOF.

90th Rcn Tr was already in HOF on the left as 3d Bn came up. Seeing white flags flying, the troops had entered the town without resistance. Then the shooting began -- small arms and Panzerfausts.

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By WDP NARA Date 11/10/0115 April 1945 (Cont'd)

Fighting was heavy. One light tank was immobilized by Panzerfaust. The infantry took over assisted by some of the light tanks. After dark Co L relieved the troop in their portion of HOF. The troop reverted to Division Reserve.

2d Bn captured HIRSCHBERG (J8908) with Co E and swept their zone N to their boundary and W to the river. It held this area while 359 passed elements through, then resumed advance to E of HIRSCHBERG.

1st Bn crossed on the SELBITZ River bridge and continued to protect the Division right flank. After moving to vicinity of KODITZ the Bn was given the mission of tying together the 3d and 2d Bns.

359th Inf - Leaving the 2d Bn to screen the regimental sector, 359 moved 1st Bn, 915th FA Bn and 3d Bn in that order across the BLANK-ENSTEIN bridge starting at 0725. Both Bns swung N and proceeded to comb out their areas. They were then directed to go E to the main road through ZOLLGRUM (J9020), TANNA (J9218) and GEFELL (J9212). This was accomplished before dark. 2d Bn was released from its screening mission and assembled in the vicinity of PROSSEN (J8612). Co E moved to BLINTENDORF (J8813) for use by 3d Bn as reserve if needed.

357th Inf - All night the movement of the gold continued until 0600 when the last of the bullion was safely stowed on the trucks. Then began removal of the art treasures.

At 1015 the attached Tks and TDs were ordered to report to Division 100 miles distant at LOBENSTEIN.

At noon Corps advised regiment that it was released to Division minus the 1st Bn. Movement would begin on the 16th. 1st Bn would remain until all of the art treasures were packed and removed from the area. Departure time for the regiment was set as 0900 on 16 April.

16 April 1945

Corps had established the HOF - PLAUEN (K1220) road as a restraining line. For better positions the units needed to secure the high ground just beyond and this became the objective.

359th Inf - On the Division left, the adjacent unit was still having trouble coming forward. 359 found it necessary to remain echeloned back to maintain contact. 2d and 3d Bns pushed out while Co G on 2d Bn's left kept pace with the 87th Div. Co F on the right stayed abreast of the 3d Bn.

1st Bn moved in zone of the 2d and blocked roads to the N until uncovered by the 87th. By end of the afternoon, both 2d and 3d Bns were holding the high ground beyond the restraining line. 1st Bn assembled in regimental reserve at 1730 as the 87th Div had come

Authority *NND 735017*

By *WDP* NARA Date *11/10/01*

SWEEPING OUT THE CORNERS

90th INFANTRY AND ARMOR
CLEAN UP RESISTANCE POCKETS IN...



...AND NEAR THE BAVARIAN TOWNS OF HOF, KODITZ AND GOTTMANNGRUN. SNIPERS ARE BLASTED OUT... PANZERFAUST-WIELDERS PICKED OFF WITH RIFLE-FIRE.

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16 April 1945 (Cont'd)

abreast of the 2d Bn. Co A went to MISSLAREUTH (J9613), Co B to ROTHEN-ACKER (J9615) and Co C to REUTH (J9916).

358th Inf - 3d Bn mopped up HOF in early morning. Then moved out to take LEIMNITZ (J0000) and the high ground to the E. 2d Bn moved up on the left. 1st Bn entered HOF to make a thorough police of the city.

357th Inf - Leaving the 1st Bn still on guard under Corps control at MERKERS, the 3d Bn and balance of the regiment motor-marched to LOBENSTEIN, then crossed the SAALE River at BLANKENBURG and moved into GORITZ (J8811). 3d Bn continued to UTTERSREUTH (J8910). 2d Bn remained at BLANKENBURG prepared to move forward the next day.

Division OP moved to HIRSCHBERG where it opened at 1430.

In line with Corps Directive No. 107, Div FM No. 77 outlined the following plan:

Div would consolidate and defend in depth the present position.

Units would send strong reconnaissance patrols to the front.

Div would be prepared for further movement S or SE.

357th Inf was directed to relieve 2d and 3d Bns 359th Inf at 1200 on the 17th. 359th Inf 1st Bn would remain in place as 357th's reserve.

17 April 1945

The day was relatively quiet as units organized their positions. Patrols to the E made enemy contact and had several fire fights. G Co 359th Inf brought back 75 Pw from LAUTERBACH (K1309). 358th Inf gathered up 774 Pw. Their I and R Platoon captured a bridge intact at VIEDERNBERG (P0798). Relief of the 359th Inf by 357th Inf went smoothly and was complete by 1915. 359th Inf assembled in the vicinity of BLINTENDORF (J9813).

Division now had new instructions. As the Army boundary was shifted to the S, the 328th Inf (26th Div) on our immediate right was to be relieved by us and we in turn would be relieved on the N by 2d Cav Gp.

To accomplish this it was decided to relieve 357th Inf with 359th's 1st Bn. 357th Inf then would relieve the 328th Inf and 2nd Cav Gp would relieve 1st Bn 359th Inf. 90th Ren Tr would establish a screen approximately 3 kilometers in front of the Div left flank.

1st Bn 357th Inf was relieved by Corps and reverted to Div control but remained at MERKERS until next day.

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18 April 1945

On this day the 90th Div became the first Allied troops to enter CZECHOSLOVAKIA and the first to cut Germany in two.

358th Inf - In preparation for advance on the 19th, the I & R Plat struck out at 0600 to gain contact with the enemy and clear any enemy from the zone. Following them at 0800 were one Co. from the 3d Bn and one from the 2d Bn both reinforced with armor. At 180955 the 3d Bn patrol crossed the border into CZECHOSLOVAKIA near PREX (P0999) against small arms resistance and captured some prisoners. 2d Bn patrol crossed the border at 181115 B April 45.

On Division left the 90th Rcn Tr pushed E at 0700 and stayed abreast of the 358th Inf patrols. They engaged in a fire fight in vicinity of POSSECK (K0802) and captured some 80 prisoners.

In the afternoon 359th Inf regrouped in preparation for the attack with 3d and 1st Bns facing SE towards REHAU (P0691). 2d Bn assembled in the vicinity of REGNITZLOSAU (P0697).

357th Inf - By 0900 relief of the 2d and 3d Bns by 1st Bn 359th Inf was complete and the regiment started for their new assembly areas near MARTINSREUTH (09493) preparatory to relieving the 328th Inf. They closed at 1130 and began the relief which was delayed only by 3d Bn 328th Inf being engaged at FORBAU (09787). By late afternoon all elements were relieved.

At 1930 the 1st Bn returned from MERKERS and closed at KONRADSREUTH (09293).

359th Inf - Continued rehabilitation of troops and maintenance of vehicles except for the 1st Bn which went on line to cover the Div left flank, relieving 357th Inf. 2d Cav completed relief of 1st Bn and 90th Rcn Tr as of 1630. 1st Bn moved to GEFELL.

The problem of guarding enemy installations was becoming a large-sized headache. Since 11th April, 773d TD Hq with various attached troops had been performing this duty as an Interior Defense Command. Now it was decided to maintain a less fluctuating organization. Cn Co 357 and 359 and AT Co 358 were turned over to the TD Commander for exclusive use as security guards which relieved the regiments of this responsibility in areas they left behind.

Now everything was in readiness for the new advance to the SE on the 19th. Division's plan was to use 358 on the left closest to the Czech Border and 357 on the right. 359 would be initially in reserve and would be staged forward. The 26th Div would be on the 90th's right. 2d Cav Gp was originally on the Division's left.

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But since the direction of advance paralleled the Czech Border the Cavalry actually was on the left rear of the Div and the Div flank for the most part was open. Here trouble could be expected and a maneuver was planned to meet it. As the assault units pushed forward, the reserve unit would establish blocks to the N and E until relieved by 2d Cav. This allowed rapid movement of the forward elements and at the same time gave the necessary protection. The week's fighting followed this scheme rather closely. In general, opposition was light but the vicinity of the Czech Border was noticeably sensitive and reacted violently to investigation. Progress in this zone was considerably slower and the Div much of the time was echeloned well back on the left. In some places the enemy fought furiously, employing mortars, machine guns, small arms and Panzerfausts. A few enemy tanks and SP guns prowled around until knocked out by Div Arty or air support. The terrain again was rugged and road blocks numerous, especially through the thick woods. 315th Engrs did yeoman service in clearing these and lost several men from heavily booby trapped and defended blocks. During the month of April the Engr Bn cleared a total of 131 road blocks.

The enemy's defense, though aggressive when contacted, was not fixed. The Germans made only one counter-attack during the entire period. Their tactics appeared to be only to harass and delay, as if to stave off the inevitable end. Blown bridges became more frequent.

Movement of the Division was controlled by Corps phase lines but averaged in general 15-25 kilometers a day. On the 20th, Corps ordered advance limited to not more than three miles a day. This brake was lifted late on the 21st, however, and the Division units drove on as fast as terrain and tired troops would allow. By the 26th they had covered over 120 kilometers.

19 April 1945

358th Inf - 1st Bn captured REHAU (P0691) at 0930 and went through hoping to reach SELB (P1484). This was not to be, however, as enemy Tks and TDs appeared short of SCHONWALD (P1086). Organic artillery fired on them and other vehicles and marked this target for fighter bombers. Three of the enemy tanks were destroyed by this action. B Co then moved on to clear REICHENBACH (P1388). C Co took SCHONWALD at 1800. The Bn halted for the night about a half mile from SELB near VIELITZ (P1285). Div Arty pounded SELB to soften it up. 3d Bn advanced through heavy woods to an area 2000 yards S of OBER WEISSENBACH (P105830) where it halted for the night. 2d Bn covered the regiment's E flank and closed for the night in vicinity of REICHENBACH.

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19 April 1945 (Cont'd)

357th Inf - The regiment found only scattered resistance and 3d Bn moved quite rapidly despite booby-trapped road blocks. By continuing after dark the Bn reached WUNSIEDEL (PO568) which it entered without opposition.

On the regimental left, 2d Bn had rougher going. Heavy woods, road blocks and the need for maintaining contact with 358 slowed the advance considerably. Near HEBANZ (PO777), supporting tanks with F Co engaged enemy half tracks which withdrew before they could be destroyed. The Co took the town without resistance. Co G was stymied by a defended road block 1500 yards out of HEIDELHEIM (PO881). Faced with approaching darkness, the Co elected to contain the block and eliminate it in the morning hours. Co E moved to GROSS WENDERN (PO580).

As the 3d Bn pulled away from the 2d a considerable gap was created. Co B moved into HABNITH (PO577) to keep this closed. As 3d Bn closed at WUNSIEDEL, 1st Bn minus B Co displaced from KIRCHENLAMITZ (PO181) to OBR ROSLAU (PO373) for the night.

Plans for the next day called for 3d Bn to cross over into the left zone and take MARKTREDWITZ (P1165). 1st Bn would continue in the right zone. 2d Bn would cover the regimental left until 358 could come abreast.

359th Inf - Regiment moved by shuttle marching and closed for the night at REHAU minus the 2d Bn which was assigned the mission of blocking to the E vicinity GRUNHAID (P1188) and maintaining contact with 2d Cav Gp.

Division CP opened in KIRCHENLAMITZ at 1430B.

20 April 1945

90th Rcn Tr was pulled from Division Reserve and given the mission of reconnoitering on left of 358th Inf. Other than this there was no change in the Division lineup as the attack was resumed in early morning.

358th Inf - 1st Bn jumped off at 0630 to capture SELB (P1484). They gained entry following a smashing TOT by three Div Arty Bns -- the 915th, 344th and 345th. By 1015 1st Bn was through the town enroute to ARZBURG (P185715) which A and C Cos captured in a coordinated attack while B Co took ROTHENBACH (P1611). 80 Psw were captured at ARZBURG out of the estimated 200 defenders. Div Arty caused many enemy casualties.

3d Bn began its attack at 0730. It ploughed under some stubborn resistance to gain a position SW of ARZBURG by 1800.

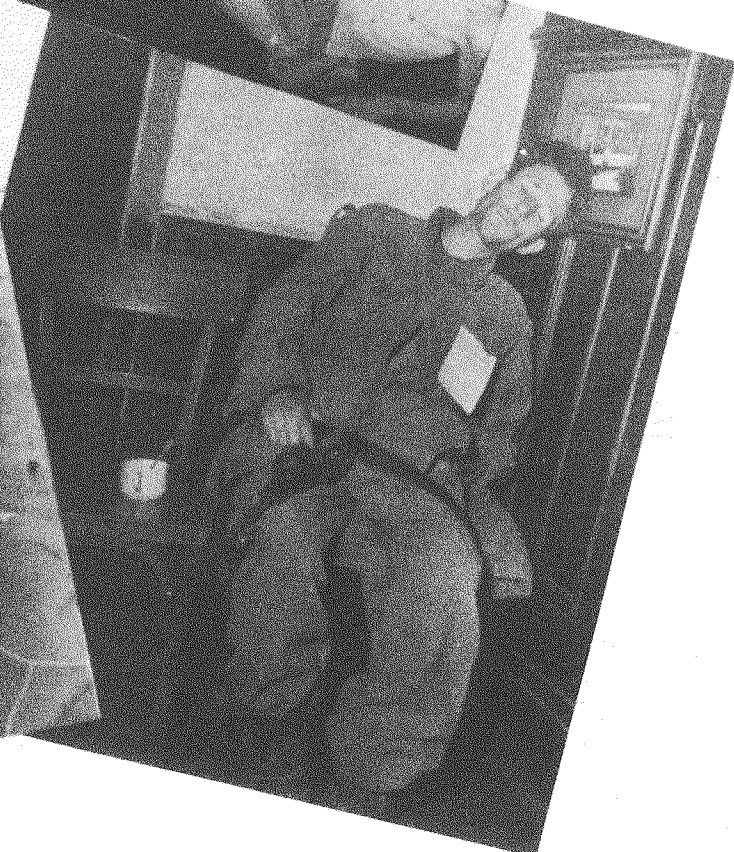
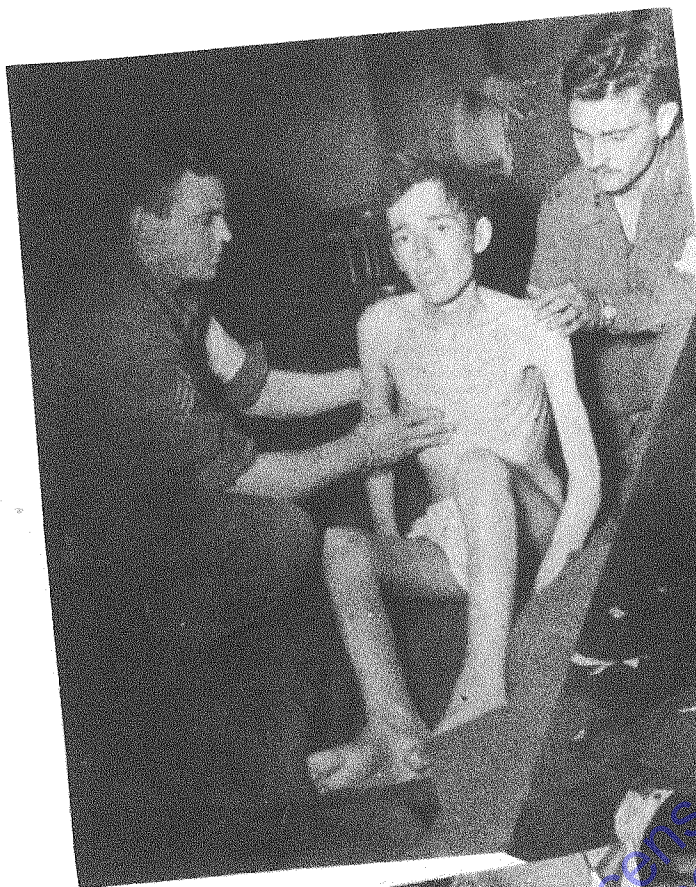
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STARVATION... FORCED LABOR... CRUELTY...

MADE LIVING SKELETONS OF THESE AMERICAN SOLDIERS... FOUND IN A NAZI P.W. HOSPITAL AT FUCHSMÜHL... CAPTURED BY ELEMENTS OF THE 90th.



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By WDP NARA Date 11/10/0120 April 1945 (Cont'd)

2d Bn motored to DIETERSGRUEN (P1974) and set up road blocks to the E.

357th Inf - 1st Bn moved uninterruptedly in column of Cos in order A, B, and C. By 1400 it reached POPPENREUTH (P1259) and two hours later was on its objective at HOHENHARD (P1057). In front was a vast wooded area. B Co dispatched to search this out. Before dark it had reached FRIEDENFELS (P1351). Since the 26th Inf Div on the right had elements W of ERBENDORF (P0946), Division gave regiment permission to reinforce Co B. Co A with tanks and TDs moved forward, closing before 2100. Co C remained at HOHENHARD. Several high-ranking German officers were captured during the move forward.

3d Bn found its entry into MARKTREDWITZ (P1165) barred by a blown bridge SE of WUNSIEDEL. This was repaired and 3d Bn pushed on against light resistance. K Co occupied the N part of MARKTREDWITZ while Cos I and L swept the town, gathering 40 Psw. MARKTREDWITZ was cleared by 1300. The battalion then continued on its phase line objective, arriving in late afternoon. Plans to halt here were laid aside when 13 American troops were picked up who reported others at FUCHSMUHL (P1655). These troops who had been prisoners of the Germans for many months, were emaciated and worn as a result of mistreatment by their SS guards. Co I with tanks and TDs formed a Task Force which descended on FUCHSMUHL where 63 other Americans were found in a hospital. All of these men were rushed back in ambulances to the Collecting Co at MARKTREDWITZ as their condition was serious.

L Co was given the job of seizing some bridges along the main road. In executing this they freed 17 more American Psw. Late at night, 90th Rcn Tr relieved Co L of this guard mission.

K Co remained about 4 kilometers N of FUCHSMUHL in the woods. 2d Bn, blocking to the E, halted for the night in vicinity of MARKTREDWITZ.

359th Inf - Continued its blocking mission, moving by shuttle march, 3d Bn went to SELB and patrolled E to LANGENAU (P1785) but found nothing. 2d Bn closed at SILBERBACH (P1679) and contacted elements 358th Inf. 1st Bn moved in just S of SELB and controlled the area between SELB and SILBERBACH.

Division CP moved to WUNSIEDEL where it opened at 1600B.

21 April 1945

358th Inf - 3d Bn relieved 90th Rcn Tr of its bridge guards so the troop could attack MITTERTEICH (P2359). They were delayed by several road blocks. These cleared, their mission was changed to holding the road into the town. Enemy were seen on the outskirts of MITTERTEICH and artillery was fired upon them. 1st Bn 358th Inf cleared the town shortly after noon.

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By WDP NARA Date 11/10/0121 April 1945 (Cont'd)

Both 3d and 1st Bns continued a rapid advance against sporadic resistance. 90th Rcn Tr captured TIRSOHENREUTH (P3052) and 1000 Hungarians including 2 Generals, in late afternoon. The town had 800 German wounded in hospitals. 1st Bn moved in to occupy the town for the night. 3d Bn cleared through FALKENBERG (P2249) before it halted.

2d Bn continued to protect the E flank with road blocks. E and F Cos settled for the night at MITTERTEICH while G Co set road blocks in the vicinity.

357th Inf - 1st and 3d Bns continued to the SE at 0730. The only hostile action encountered was Panzerfaust fire about 2000 yards S of FRIEDENFELS. This struck a TD on which some B Co men were riding, injuring eight.

By late afternoon, 3d Bn was at WINDISCHESHENBACH (P1742), 1st Bn vicinity of WILDENREUTH (P1242) and 2d Bn in vicinity of REUTH (P1547).

359th Inf - 3d Bn moved to relieve 2d Bn 358th Inf and block the area from ARZBERG to SCHIRNDING (P2174) which had not been cleared. They met resistance just beyond OSCHWITZ (P2073) but overcame this and entered SCHIRNDING at 1600 where they received small arms fire. In addition, the Germans laid down heavy mortar and machine gun fire on the troops in the town from the high ground around it. The Bn answered with AT guns using both HE and WP and finally stopped the enemy fire. SCHIRNDING was cleared by 2200.

1st Bn moved to KONNERSREUTH (P2166) after its clearance by 358th and launched an attack on WALDSASSEN (P2766). They took this town at 1500 without resistance.

2d Bn was relieved at SILBERBACH by the Cavalry and moved to KONNERSREUTH. Co F continued on to SCHOTTENHOF (P2569) to block roads to the N and E.

Fighter bombers working in front of the Division attacked and destroyed 3 enemy vehicles.

22 April 1945

358th Inf - 90th Rcn Tr was attached to block roads along the regimental E flank, starting at TIRSOHENREUTH.

1st Bn moved S out of TIRSOHENREUTH, captured LIEBE STEIN (P3047) and continued on to take FLOSSBERG (P290315). Here 3d Bn relieved it and A and B Cos assembled for the night at SCHONKIRCH (P2742). C Co remained at LIEBENSTEIN.

Authority NND 735017
By WDP NARA Date 11/10/01



INFANTRYMEN OF THE 90th LOAD UP ON TANKS IN LOBENSTEIN... ROLL THROUGH WURZBACH AS BEATEN WEHRMACHT MEMBERS LOOK ON IN WONDER AND REMINISCENCE.



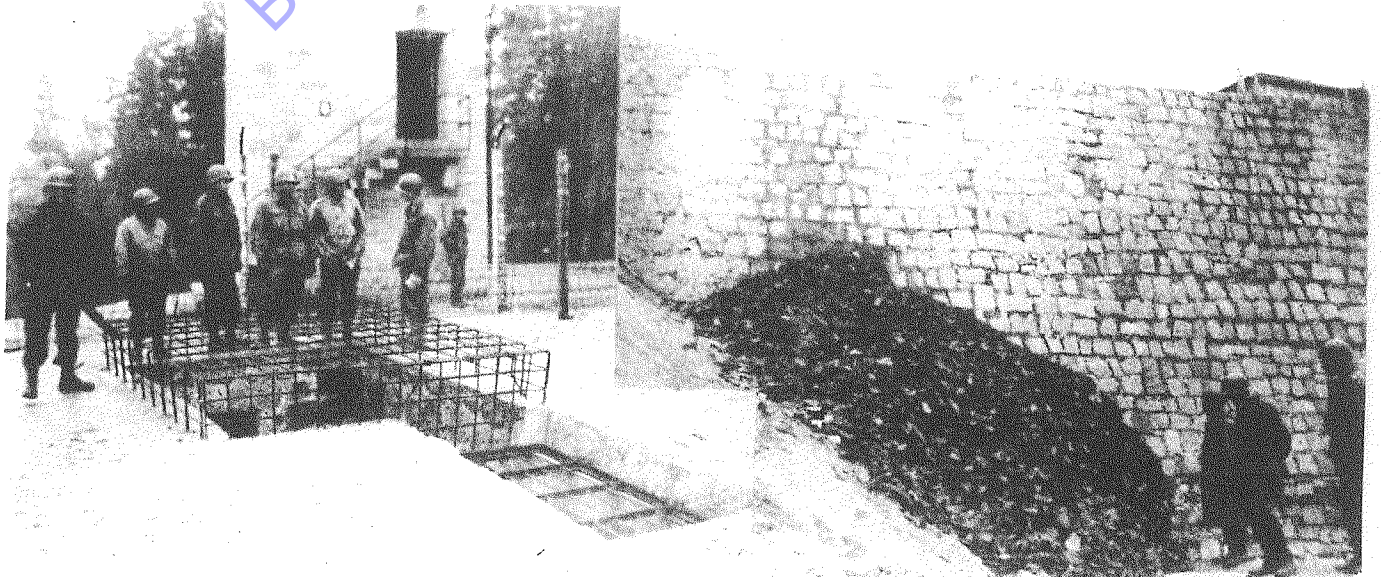
TROOPS...

TANKS

TREES

TERRORISM

SLIGHT PAUSE FOR ROADBLOCK REMOVAL IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.
BELOW: SCENES AT FLOSS, GERMANY'S CONCENTRATION CAMP. BODIES WERE PILED AT ONE POINT (left) AND SHOES OF THE VICTIMS AT ANOTHER (Shown at right).



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3d Bn after relieving 1st Bn, continued on to close for the day with Co I between FLOSSBERG, ELLENBACH (P2638) and PUCKERSREUTH (P2438) and Co K in reserve at WILDENAU (P2540). Still blocking, 2d Bn staged to TIRSCHENREUTH in the afternoon. In late afternoon the 90th Rcn Tr was ordered to FLOSS and cleared the town by 2300 without resistance. Picked up 3 prisoners there.

357th Inf - Both 1st and 3d Bns resumed the advance in column of companies and moved without interruption. 1st Bn halted about 3 kilometers NE of WEIDEN (P1929) with 3d generally W of FLOSS (P2735).

Co K observed American vehicles in FLOSS and sent a patrol to investigate. Being fired upon, the patrol captured several PsW who said 70 enemy troops with American Jeeps and 2½ ton trucks were at GRAFENREUTH (P283315). A larger patrol was sent to this area and found the vehicles abandoned in the woods NW of the town.

The day closed with Co A at THIESSEIL (P237310), B at BECHTSREITH (P229260) and C at MAZLESRIETH (P247272). The latter sent a patrol of tanks and infantry to UNTER MUGLHOF (P2427) and MUTTER HOLL (P2327) to investigate a reported large number of enemy. They were there -- 250 of them in the village square waiting patiently in formation to surrender. Their rifles were neatly stacked.

Other Germans were less anxious to give up and a contact patrol of 4 men from Co A to 3d Bn was ambushed. Three of the men were captured, the 4th seriously wounded and left for dead. The regimental I and R platoon, sent to investigate, hit the same ambush, but drove off the enemy and recovered the wounded man.

359th Inf - During the morning the Bns patrolled the woods in their areas. Regiment formed a Task Force Russell whose main elements was AT Co who relieved F Co at SCHOTTENHOF at 1420. 2d Bn remained at KONNERSREUTH as regimental reserve. 2d Cav Gp relieved the 3d Bn at SCHIRNDING. The latter assembled at MITTERTEICH at 1755.

Division CP opened at WIESAU (P1855) at 0830.

23 April 1945

358th Inf - The regiment moved now in column of Bns with 3d Bn leading. 1st and 2d followed in order, blocking to the E. Only sporadic resistance was encountered. The infamous concentration camp at FLOSSENBERG (P321361) was captured. 1160 of the 16,000 original inmates remained and were liberated. An ME-109 factory was captured here.

3d Bn halted for the day with leading elements at WALDTHURN (P3129). Co I outposted from NEUENHAMMER (P3532) to OBER BERNRIETH (P3430).

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 By WDP NARA Date 11/10/01

23 April 1945 (Cont'd)

1st Bn blocked roads in vicinity of FLOSSENBERG while 2d Bn set up for the night in vicinity of WILDENAU (P2540).

357th Inf - The rate of advance now was dictated by the speed with which other troops could take over along the Czech border as the 90th moved SE. This was a slow process due to shortage of troops and it became necessary to rein in the Division right flank although resistance there was practically nil.

At 1100 Division gave regiment the green light and advance was resumed at 1300. By mid-afternoon 1st Bn's C Co had secured MICHLDORF (P2522) and 100 PzW. Co A was in KAIMLING (P2624).

By late afternoon Co I had reached WALDAN (P300254) its objective. K Co halted in TRESSENFELD (P290273) and L Co in ALBERSREITH (P289289). Hearing of enemy in VOHENSTRAUSS (P2224), Co I sent a patrol to investigate. The patrol hit enemy in force and withdrew. Artillery was laid upon the town in preparation for attack the next day. The regimental plan for the following morning proposed to pass 2d Bn through the 3d to continue the attack.

359th Inf - 2d Cav Gp took over as far as TIRSCHENREUTH. Thus relieved, 359th Inf placed 1st Bn to block from TIRSCHENREUTH to ODSCHONLIND (P319436). 3d Bn shifted to PLOSSBERG (P290415).

2d Bn in regimental reserve assembled at LINGENFELD (P269477).

Division CP opened at NEUSTADT (P1935) at 1015B.

Corps Operational Directive No. 110 ordered the advance to continue SE to join the Russians at the German - Austrian border.

The 90th Division was specifically directed to continue the advance and block passes along the Czechoslovakia border to prevent the debouchment of enemy forces from Czechoslovakia. Particular emphasis was to be placed on the passes at HOLL (P6103), WURTH (U7691) and MESTYS (Q0074). Corps also notified Division that 5000 Germans with white flags would pass through the 90th's area from NYRSKO (U9391) to CHAM (U5880) to surrender to the 26th Inf Div in the morning.

24 April 1945

357th Inf - Using G Co to spearhead the attack, 2d Bn moved against VOHENSTRAUSS at 0730. The enemy resisted with small arms but the town was overrun by 0845. The Bn determined to seize the bridge at BURGTRESWITZ (P3621) before the enemy could blow it. A platoon of 712th tanks followed by a platoon of 773rd TDs with infantry mounted set out with all possible speed and without the usual advance patrols. The road was rough and narrow through hilly country having many natural defenses. The column was fired on several times but kept moving, returning the enemy fire with the armor's .30 caliber machine guns.

24 April 1945 (Cont'd)

About 2000 yards short of the objective, the lead tank rounded a sharp curve and faced five Panzerfaustmen at point blank range. The Germans let go their missiles and one shot hit just below the periscope and killed the assistant gunner. The driver and gunner were wounded. Nonetheless the driver backed the Tk 75 yards to the rear out of the way. The armor swung their guns into action and firing from the woods soon ceased. One TD was hit in the battle without damage. The crew of the damaged tank was evacuated and the column moved boldly on its way. As a result of this decisive action the bridge was seized intact and undefended. Apparently the enemy had relied on the ambush to stop the attack. When the infantry later searched out the woods, 25 dead SS troops were found at the point of the attack. There was no other serious opposition although the infantry picked up 100 prisoners as it moved forward. At PULLENRIED (P4112) 250 Germans surrendered to 2d Bn without a fight.

1st and 3d Bns moved without resistance, the 3d blocking in rear of the 2d.

For the night halt, 2d Bn's forward elements tied in with 1st Bn's leading company at TEUNZ (P362083).

358th Inf - Enemy efforts to hold the VOHENSTRAUSS - Waidhaus road resulted in sharp engagements by 3d Bn S of PLEYSTein (P3727), at LOHMA (P3824) and 2d Bn at Waidhaus (P433268). Some casualties resulted to the regiment but the defenders were eliminated. 3d Bn moved to ESLARN (P455205). In the vicinity of PLEYSTein, 2 American prisoners from 357th Inf, captured two nights before, were released. The third soldiers had been wounded and evacuated.

After relief by 3d Bn 359th Inf, 1st Bn 358th Inf motored 15 miles to PARENTSCH (P4324). Co A established road blocks here while B Co outposted ESLARN. Co C closed into ESLARN at 0100 on the 25th. Division now told the regiment to hold its positions until relieved by 2d Cav Gp and then to block successively behind 359th Inf who would attack through them.

359th Inf - The regiment continued its successive reliefs of 358th Inf and blocks to the E. 3d Bn took over the sector from ODSCHONLIND to FLOSSENBERG. 2d Bn relieved 358th Inf elements between FLOSSENBERG and NEUENHAMMER. 1st Bn remained at TIRSOHENREUTH until relieved by elements of 2d Cav at 1400. The Bn was then trucked to PLEYSTein from where it marched to an assembly area at BURKHARDSREITH (P4123). 3d Bn was relieved and moved to ESLARN, arriving shortly after midnight. The plan now was for 359 to pass through 358 in the morning and continue the attack to the SE towards SCHONSEE (P4712) and STADLERN (P5212). 3d Bn would be on the right, 1st Bn on the left, 2d Bn would remain in reserve at FLOSSENBERG prepared to move motorized to ESLARN at 0600. 90th Rcn Tr was attached to secure bridges at SCHONAU (P5207), SCHONSEE and TIEFENBACH (P5104).

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24 April 1945 (Cont'd)

Division CP moved to LEUCHTENBERG (P2620) where it became operational at 1600B.

25 April 1945

359th Inf - 90th Rcn Tr fanned out in front of the attacking 3d Bn. By 1000, despite several brushes with enemy, the troop was at SCHONSEE. The bridge was intact and they captured 120 prisoners. By this time I Co had reached OBR LANGAU (P4415) without resistance and K Co was at GEMEINSREITH (P4418). K Co was motorized and pushed on to WEIDING (P4909), relieving the 90th Rcn Tr and thence on to SCHONSEE. K Co followed by I Co left WEIDING at 1400 and reached SCHONAU at 1550. The Bn pushed on to TIEFENBACH (P5104) where 2d Bn moved through to continue the attack at 1720. They met roadblocks short of TREFFELSTEIN (P5303) but went on around them. G Co pushed on to SCHAFEREI (U5799) while E Co advanced to BIBERBACH (U5499). F Co remained at TREFFELSTEIN. 1st Bn met disorganized resistance in its advance and had no trouble reaching STADLERN. Upon being relieved there by 358th Inf, the Bn moved to SCHONAU for the night.

357th Inf - 1st Bn climbed on tanks and TDs and moved off rapidly. At WINLARN (P4302) at 1000, Co C freed 3000 British prisoners of war. A and B Cos hit GRASSERSDORF (U4796) at 1015 and moved on to the phase line where they were joined shortly by Co G.

At noon Division ordered the 1st Bn to go to CHAM (U5880) and block the road net there to prevent any attempt by the enemy to move S into the "Redoubt Area". 11th Armd Div, racing toward Austria in front of the 26th Inf Div, had cleared CHAM but had moved on. 1st Bn closed into CHAM by 1700.

In view of the above, 3d Bn was dispatched to continue the attack. By mid-afternoon the Bn had reached the SCHWARZACH River just E of ROTZ (U4793) where it stayed the night.

The I and R Platoon was sent to SCHRONTHAL (U5395) to seize the bridge there and was joined later in the day by E Co. Co F stopped at KRITZENAST (U5597) on the SCHWARZACH River while G Co moved from BIBERBACH (U5499) to HILTERSREID (U5198).

358th Inf - At 1100 Co C made a foray across the Czech border to capture EISENDORF (P5020), EISENDORFSKA HUT (P5018) and FRANCINA HUT (P5017). No opposition was met as 150 Labor Service Troops surrendered en masse at EISENDORFSKA HUT.

The 42d Cav Sq relieved the 1st Bn at 1900 who then moved to ESLARN. After being passed through by 359th Inf, 3d Bn 358th Inf set up blocks at FREIDRICHSHANG (P5115) and STADLERN (P5212).

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25 April 1945 (Cont'd)

2d Bn staged to vicinity of SCHONSEE.

Division CP opened at OBERVIECHTACH (P3906) at 1515.

For several days the Division had averaged over 1000 prisoners daily. Today brought in another 1200 making almost 20,000 for the month and raising the Division total over 60,000.

26 April 1945

359th Inf - During the early morning hours a strong German patrol attacked the troops outposting vicinity SCHAFFERIE. Elements of Co G, 359th Inf, 2d Plat of 90th Rcn Tr and 2d Plat, Co D, 712th Tk Bn were involved. Two of the light tanks were knocked out by Panzerfausts before the Division Artillery dispersed the attack.

Before moving off in the morning it was necessary to comb out the woods near SPIELBERG which delayed 2d Bn somewhat. F and E Cos moved out to AST (U5698) at 0840 then drove on, meeting the usual road blocks and small delaying forces before reaching RANKHAM (U6789) where they halted for the night.

3d Bn was ordered to clear out the woods enough to protect their left flank and then to capture WALDMUNCHEN (U6098). The Germans had a different thought on the matter and opened up with machine guns and Panzerfausts when the Bn arrived at 1300. Despite artillery and constant pressure, the Germans gave ground slowly. They made each block a strong point. Five hours were required before the town was taken. And even after 3d Bn was relieved in WALDMUNCHEN by the 2d Bn, 358th Inf, the new unit picked up half a hundred prisoners from the town. 3d Bn 359th Inf assembled in HERZOGAU (U6195).

90th Rcn Tr moved initially with and behind the infantry. As they worked S of WALDMUCHEN road blocks got more numerous. Finally the troop skimmed down the regimental right boundary, captured DEGELBERG (U6589) (65 PsW), RANKHAM (29 PsW and 97 Hitler Youth). The troop with 2 platoons of light tanks then head for FURTH (U7091). Again the Germans tried to make a stand. Air and artillery pounded the town and the Rcn reinforced entered the town, clearing it in late afternoon. 70 prisoners were taken. 345th FA Bn supported this action.

1st Bn 359th Inf was motorized and moved to FURTH to reinforce the position. Patrols from the 90th Rcn Tr and tanks toward Czechoslovakia hit continuous resistance and returned. Between 1930B and 2000B, P-47s hit KLENEC (P6505). Several large fires were started in the town and 6 - 8 motor trucks destroyed.

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26 April 1945 (Cont'd)

357th Inf - As the mission of the regiment was to block roads as quickly as possible S and E of CHAM, elements were motorized. 2d Bn moved down through GEIGANT (U5992) and WEIDING (U6585) and ended up well spread out. E Co on the N was at ARNSCHWANG (U6787) with a platoon at TRETTEG (U708854). Co F was situated at BIMBACH (U745825) while Co G held the reserve position at LIEBENSTEIN (U7181).

Companies I and L, also motorized, sped through CHAM and cleared E of the REGEN River. L moved on the left, I on the right and the two companies cleared to KOTZLING (U7577) and BLAIBACH (U694754) respectively. K Co mopped up behind and took the reserve position.

1st Bn remained for the night at CHAM.

358th Inf - 3d Bn flattened the town of SCHWARZACH-SVARCAVA (P5511) after it refused to surrender. The Bn then pushed on to establish blocks at DOL HUT (P353100). 1st Bn moved to vicinity HILTERSRIED (U510985). 2d Bn relieved 359th Inf at WALDMUNCHEN and outposted that area.

Division CP opened at CHAM at 1515B. 1800 more prisoners were processed through the Division cage.

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In the large scale, the Allied Armies continued to corral the Wehrmacht into isolated areas that were being pressured into extinction. On the ELBE River American forces had contacted the Russians. Near at hand was the cheering news that the 11th Armd Div had reached the Austrian border. Juncture with the Russians there was merely a matter of days. The 90th's task now was largely defensive as Corps imposed a restraining line for further advance. All three regiments were wheeling clockwise to the Czech border and the immediate job was clearance of enemy to the border and the containing of those within Czechoslovakia. What enemy were in Czechoslovakia was not certain and 90th Rcn Tr was given the mission of finding out.

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27 April 1945

The 90th Rcn Tr, probing N and NE of FURTH encountered small arms, automatic weapons and high velocity fire. The troop returned to FURTH and took a new route to VSERUBY (U810955). Here they again received heavy fire and returned. They then attempted to reenter Czechoslovakia to go to MAXOV (U769968) but found enemy infantry in force and returned to FURTH. Obviously the enemy were along the border in some strength, confirming PW and air OP reports of an enemy build-up in the FURTH area.

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359th Inf - The regiment mopped up within its zone and made local attacks to clear to the border N and NE of FURTH. Enemy small arms, automatic weapons and Panzerfaust fire were received. Light shelling began, particularly around FURTH. Air and ground reports of enemy armor increased and gave Division Artillery many targets of opportunity. Enemy tanks and infantry were located at VSERUBY. 8 inch Howitzers of 738th FA Bn fired on them, destroying three tanks and inflicting casualties on the enemy foot troops. The same Bn smashed an enemy battery at SV KATERINA (U8789) obtaining a direct hit on one piece. Bright sunshine enabled Cub Pilots to direct Division Artillery fires on numerous enemy vehicles and other activity across the Czech border. Fighter Bombers again worked NE of FURTH and destroyed some 20 enemy vehicles.

Following the mop-up the regiment established an MLR with 1st and 2d Bns about 1000 yards SW of FURTH. 1st Bn outposted an OPLR which ran generally above the line SAUBERG (U7194) to the high ground 3000 yards NE of FURTH. 3d Bn established an RRL through GLEISSENBERG (U635916), RANKHAM (U670893), ARNSCHWANG (U690873), RIMBACH (U745825) and HOHENWARTH (U782802), setting up strong points at each of the towns.

This was in accord with Division FM # 88 issued at 271100B April which assigned the Division a temporary defensive mission and outlined the MLR and OPLR. 358th and 359th Inf were both directed to establish two Bns on line and hold one in reserve. 357th Inf minus one Bn was earmarked for Division Reserve with expected employment in zone of 359th Inf. The one Bn (reinforced) would block and hold the Division right flank. 90th Rcn Tr was to maintain an active counter-reconnaissance screen, generally in front of 359th Inf.

358th Inf - 1st Bn relieved 3d Bn in place on the regimental left in vicinity of STADLERN (P528120) and PAADORF (P563084). 3d Bn assembled after relief at 1800 in the general area around HILTERSRIED (U510985). 2d Bn remained in place improving positions.

357th Inf - The plan for the day called for 1st Bn with 343rd FA Bn in support to clear the valley SE from KOTZING to OBER and UNTER RIED (U8769). 3d Bn would clear the area to the SW and return to KOTZING. 2d Bn would improve its blocks to the E.

The operations of the two mop-up Bns resulted in some 1300 prisoners. As a result of Division FM # 88, the 1st Bn readjusted its positions by putting A Co at STEINBUHL (U785745), B Co at ARNBRUCK (U835723) and C Co at MOOSAU (U7970). AT Co was attached and assembled at PIRKA (U755690).

As reports of armor to the NE increased, Division alerted 3d Bn at 1700 on 1/2 hour call.

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Some 2000 prisoners were gathered up in the course of the day. The process of screening all civilian males was continued and accounted for many. But most were deserters, walking hospital cases, rear echelon and service troops who purposely lingered behind to be picked up. At straggler points the Germans formed numerous Kampfgruppen to stem our advance. These disintegrated upon contact.

PW identifications and statements, confirmed by air and ground observation posts, indicated that the entire 11th Panzer Division was moving into our Division zone from the EGER area. Third U. S. Army reported the strength of this unit as 1500 men and 10 tanks on 22 April with a possible increase of five hundred stragglers and 10 more tanks. This was a woeful underestimate as later events showed. It was quite clear now that a front line in Germany no longer existed but that one was being established generally parallel to the Czech border in that country. The Division's job was to contain these forces while the Russians advanced from the E. Under no circumstances were these troops to be allowed to escape into the Redoubt Area in the German-Austrian Alps.

Enemy activity around DOMAZLICE (P7606) increased.

The rapidly changing situation appeared to cause some indecision in higher level planning. Consequently, the Division was confronted with several alternatives on future employment as a result of directives and changes from Corps this day. One plan envisaged the 90th being relieved by the 97th Div for reemployment far to the S. This was abandoned and the Division was directed to stay where it was until relieved. Who the relieving force would be was still indefinite. One thing was certain: that First Army was side-slipping down from the N and some readjustment would have to be made. The day closed with information that some unit -- tentatively the 5th Inf Div would come in on the right of the 90th.

Just before midnight, 345th FA Bn near GRUB (U743755) were embroiled in a fire fight with an estimated 200 Germans who attempted to infiltrate their positions. The artillery cut their fuse and levelled their guns in direct fire into the woods harboring the enemy. They killed several and caused the surrender of 150 of the invaders.

28 April 1945

359th Inf - The regiment continued to send strong combat patrols through the area. Several brisk battles were fought with enemy infantry and Hitler Youth. 1st Bn captured FICHTENBACH (U677963) after a fight which netted 50 prisoners. A Co's patrol N of the town met 40 additional infantry in the woods most of whom were killed or captured before the patrol returned to FICHTENBACH.

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28 April 1945 (Cont'd)

A 2d Bn patrol to RITTSTEIG (U860857) brought back 40 Psw. Attempts to capture 150 Hitler Youth were frustrated by 60 SS troops located E and S of RITTSTEIG who drove back the patrol.

The regimental plan for the next day was for 1st Bn to readjust its MLR to a NW-SE line through FURTH. The OPLR held by one company would run from FICHTENBACH, over the high ground 3000 yards NE FURTH and down to ESCHLKAM (U760907). 2d Bn would remain where it was. 3d Bn would furnish one company to the 90th Rcn Tr who were attached with a platoon of light tanks. This was to make a Task Force known as TASK FORCE DYE whose mission was to move motorized to NYRSKO (U925905) clearing the woods and NYRSKO and then returning. The Task Force was to consist of two platoons 90th Rcn Tr, Co I, one platoon Co C, 773rd TD Bn, one platoon Co C, 315th Engr Bn and one platoon Co D, 712th Tk Bn.

357th Inf - The regiment (-) remained in Division Reserve. 1st Bn patrolled to the E. G Co investigated HAIBUHL (U835807), ENGELSHUTT (U853810) and LAM (U8780). Numerous prisoners were gathered through the regimental area as towns were fine-combed by screening forces.

358th Inf - Activity was limited to combat patrols. A reinforced platoon from Co C, following a route from PAADORF (P562084), FRANZBRUNNHUTTE (P578096) and NEID (P580108), ran into enemy in the woods near FRANZBRUNNHUTTE. After suffering several casualties, the platoon returned. In the afternoon Co A, reinforced, captured 82 Psw with moderate resistance as they closed on RYBNIK (P573133).

In Opn Directive # 112, Corps ordered 97th Inf Div to relieve 2d Cav Gp on our left. The Cavalry, at first scheduled for employment on the Corps right flank, was now to come in on 90th Division's right in place of the 5th Inf Div who were to assemble. Mission of the 2d Cavalry after relief was to secure the pass N of REGEN (U9455). 90th Division was given the new left boundary which involved relief of elements of 358th Inf by 97th Div. Time of the various reliefs was undetermined.

29 April 1945

359th Inf - At 0430 the Germans shelled FICHTENBACH (U6796) with Nebelwerfer and artillery. Then followed some 90 infantrymen in an increasingly rare counter-attack with small arms and Panzerfausts supported by one tank. 1st Bn readily repulsed the effort and FICHTENBACH remained in Co A's hands.

At 0730 TASK FORCE DYE left NEUKIRCHEN (U805860) and moved toward NYRSKO. The Task Force moved practically without opposition, gathering up 149 Psw on the expedition. NYRSKO was entered at 1515 without resistance, following which the Task Force returned.

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By WDP NARA Date 11/10/0129 April 1945 (Cont'd)

1st and 2d Bns continued to patrol, with the former meeting a defended road block protected by infantry, mortars, and artillery N of FOLMAVA (U7196). Co F negotiated the surrender of a German Commander, 150 troops and about 20 vehicles in vicinity of SRUBY (U829924).

Division ordered the regiment to clear out the woods and DOMAZLICE road as far as PARAZOV (P716013) and BABYLON (P716007) by attacking astride the FICHTENBACH - DOMAZLICE road in conjunction with an attack by 358th Inf on the left. Reserve Bn was released to make this attack. Purpose of the operation was to pinch out the large wooded area in front of the OPLR and give better defensive positions.

90th Recon Tr was detached and given a separate mission of blocking the Division's right flank along the VSERUBY-KDYNE road and then probing towards DOMAZLICE.

358th Inf - Patrols encountered enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire in vicinity of ARNSTEIN (P616014). Other patrols met scattered resistance.

Regiment was notified that 97th would not relieve their left flank before the day after tomorrow. Division ordered an attack on 30 April astride the HOLL (P6103) - KLENEC (P677050) road to secure the NE edge of the woods.

Reserve Bn was released for the attack. Regiment was to refuse back the left flank to the Division boundary.

The regiment planned to employ its 2d Bn on the right and 3d Bn on the left for the attack. 1st Bn would remain in reserve vicinity AST (U563986).

357th Inf - Major activity was patrolling by G Co further to SE as far as SOMERAU (U914765) which resulted in approximately 100 prisoners. 1st Bn continued to scour its area.

For its part in the next day's operation, the regiment was directed to move its 3d Bn to ARNSCHWANG ready to support 359th Inf if needed. Bn's move would be made in the morning with reconnaissance undertaken immediately.

One enemy FW-190 was shot down near CHAM in early evening by 537th AAA Bn as the pilot attempted to strafe near KATZBACH (U568822).

30 April 1945

The limited objective attack by 358th and 359th Inf met moderate to heavy opposition and the month ended with the objective unsecured.

Authority NND 735 017By WDP NARA Date 11/10/0130 April 1945

The rough terrain, heavily masked with woods, caused great trouble and the enemy used small arms, automatic weapons, mortar, tank artillery and high velocity fire to hold back Division units.

358th Inf - On the left, 358th Inf, attacking at 0800, found rough going due to both enemy and the wooded, steep terrain. Two of the 3d Bn's tanks were knocked out by enemy fire. In turn K Co knocked out one enemy tank with bazooka and captured the crew. Two enemy tanks and seven machine guns stalled the attack in vicinity of CAPARTICE (P662032) which the Bn finally took before halting for the night after a 6000 yard advance.

P-47s hit TRHANOV (P7004) and destroyed 6 - 8 enemy motor trucks.

2d Bn faced four enemy tanks with infantry, but pushed through the woods to SE of CAPARTICE, not getting quite clear by dark. Then the Bn went out of contact. As the period closed efforts were being made to reach it by radio, Regimental Staff Officers and patrols.

The regiment received definite word that the 97th Inf Div would take over from their 1st Bn in the morning. The 97th Div would attack through rather than relieve and 358th Inf asked for permission to use 1st Bn on the woods just below the Div left boundary. This was granted. Division and regiment in turn were advised that 2d Inf Div would probably relieve 358th Inf within two days when First - Third Army Boundary would probably be about where 358th - 359th Inf boundary now lay.

359th Inf - Initially, 3d Bn met no resistance as K and I Cos moved out from TICHTENBACH at 0940. Co L in reserve went to FOLMAVA. The two assault companies groped through the dense woods and finally hit machine gun and artillery fire near NEM KUBICE (U716973). From there on they remained engaged as enemy tanks and armored cars joined the fray. 915th FA Bn knocked out two enemy tanks in vicinity of C KUBICE (U715983) as the main road intersection just N of C KUBICE proved to be a strong point of MGs and armor. K Co maneuvered around the intersection and broke the resistance. K and I then moved forward toward BABYLON where they met a strong force of infantry supported by armor. As darkness was now shutting in, K and I withdrew to the Y fork in the main road N of KUBICE. Leaving one platoon here with K, Co I returned to FOLMAVA as reserve for next day. They brought back a half hundred prisoners. Also captured was a hospital train with 250 men of whom 200 were litter cases. Co L had meanwhile staged forward to vicinity of C KUBICE and NEM KUBICE, where it remained overnight prepared to take up the assault in the morning with K Co.

1st and 2d Bns patrolled to their front with C Co occupying OOHSENWEID (U7494) and KLOPFELSBURG (U742932).

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30 April 1945 (Cont'd)

357th Inf - F Co relieved G Co and 2d Bn continued to patrol the valley. Enemy infiltrations persisted and a patrol was ambushed by enemy with Panzerfauste in an area already cleared. Five casualties resulted. 1st Bn also maintained its patrols while 3d Bn waited at ARNSCHWANG.

90th Ren Tr - As the troop approached VSERUBY, it drew heavy fire from enemy AT guns and machine guns. Artillery was laid on the town, starting fires. But renewed efforts to enter were again repulsed and the troops withdrew making a new approach towards MAXOV. They met enemy again at MYBLIV (U793960), killed several and captured twelve. At MAXOV the enemy fire intensified and the troop withdrew to GROSS (U74915).

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April was over and nearly finished so it seemed was the war in Germany. The disillusionment and decay of the NAZI State was spreading like an abcess. The German people--and many soldiers--no longer willed to fight. Large towns hung out their white flags as American Troops approached and groups of soldiers readily surrendered. Now indeed was Germany's cup full and running over--but it was the hemlock of national suicide rather than the wine of victory. Their fighting now was without sound military purpose. It was like the frantic convulsions of a madman being forced into a strait-jacket. Now indeed was Germany close to confinement and laced up as the Russian Armies, having made contact at the ELBE, swept inexorably nearer to the Western forces all along the front.

The 90th Division could view with pride its part in the ultimate defeat. During April a 300 mile sweep through the dense and mountainous Thuringer Wald and down the Czech border had accounted for many German dead, some 25,000 prisoners and destruction of 13 tanks, 2 SP guns, 12 airplanes and numerous other vehicles. The 90th was the first American Division to enter Czechoslovakia, thus cutting the German State in two. Its discovery of the Nazi gold reserves in the salt mine in MERKERS resulted in uncovering and capture of more than half of the reserve wealth of the German nation.

EARNEST
 COMDG

Booth
 BOOTH
 G-3