

## INTRODUCTION

As the month opened, the Division was holding a 50 km front along the Czech border from SCHONBACK on the right to just East of SCHONAU on the left. The 90th's role was temporarily defensive to hold the German forces in Czechoslovakia and prevent their debouchment into the Redoubt Area. Enemy forces confronting the 90th Division included the 11th Panzer Division and miscellaneous units including Hitler Youth and SS Troops.

On the left of the 90th Division was the US 97th Infantry Division. This unit was sideslipping South and preparing to take over part of the 358th Infantry area. On the 90th's right, 2nd Cavalry Group was assembling to capture the REGEN PASS.

April had closed with the 358th and 359th Infantry making a limited objective attack to pinch out a large wooded section on the left of the Division sector. This attack was not quite concluded. Fighting was not easy in the densely wooded hills which marked the Czech border. 3rd Battalion 358th Infantry was halted at CAPARTICE. 2nd Battalion 358th Infantry on the right was somewhere South of there and out of contact. Both Battalions were trying to gain the edge of the woods near KLENEC and CHODOV. 1st Battalion on the regimental left was refusing the flank while awaiting relief by the 97th Infantry Division.

359th Infantry's 3rd Battalion was halted just North of C KUBICE prepared to resume its attack to capture BABYLON and PAREZOV. The other two Battalions were holding a Northwest-Southeast line just beyond FURTH with 1st Battalion on the left and 2nd Battalion on the right.

357th Infantry had its 3rd Battalion in mobile Division Reserve at ARNSCHWANG prepared for immediate employment. 1st Battalion was holding the regimental (and Division) right flank. 2nd Battalion had Company F employed between the 1st Battalion and 359th Infantry. The rest of 2nd Battalion were located vicinity of HOHENWARTH. [Page 1]

1 May 1945

358th Infantry -- Shortly after midnight radio contact was reestablished with 2nd Battalion and their position definitely established. E and G Companies were at the edge of the woods with Company G on the right. F Company was at PEC SMOLNA.

At 0800 both 2nd and 3rd Battalions resumed the attack. Opposition was light as 3rd Battalion took KLENEC while 2nd Battalion cleared CHODOV in mid-morning. With the objective taken, 3rd Battalion relieved 2nd Battalion. The latter returned to vicinity of AST. K Company remained at KLENEC, I Company occupied CHODOV with a platoon at PEC SMOLNA. L Company went to SOFIENHUTTE.

Meanwhile 1st Battalion was being relieved by passage of the elements of the 97th Infantry Division. Following this the Battalion set out to clear the regimental left flank. By 1700 B Company had captured VALTIROV and Company A occupied N POSTREKOV.

359th Infantry -- 3rd Battalion continued its attack at 0800 with strong combat patrols. K Company reached PAREZOV at 1020. 1st Battalion designated Company C to clear the woods East of OCHSENWEID. 2nd Battalion improved their positions and patrolled to the East.

90th Reconnaissance Troop -- Maintained active patrols along the Division front.

Division FM #90 established a revised defensive zone in view of the pending relief of 358th Infantry by elements of 2nd Infantry Division, 1st Army who were to move in on the left. A new OPLR and MLR were established in 359th and 357th infantries were directed clear to and hold the new line. The intra-regimental boundary required the relief of elements of 2nd battalion 359th Infantry by 357th Infantry. 3rd Battalion 357th Infantry in Division Reserve was to be released to the regiment as soon as 358th Infantry could be assembled in Division Reserve following its release. 90th Reconnaissance Troop was ordered to maintain contact with the enemy from MAXOV to HYRSOV with no advance North of 97 grid line.

357th Infantry -- As 2nd Cavalry Squadron moved up to the Division right flank, 2nd Battalion 357th Infantry moved down the valley to the vicinity of LOHBERG to tie in. This same action freed the 1st Battalion which assembled at KOTZING after the Cavalry was disposed. Before being relieved, 1st Battalion captured a German General reported by civilians to be in the area. As 3rd Battalion was still in Division Reserve, it was decided to use AT Company and part of 1st Battalion temporarily to relieve those elements of 2nd Battalion 359th Infantry in the new zone of 357th Infantry as outlined in Division FM #90.

2 May 1945

359th Infantry -- 1st Battalion moved through the 3rd to continue the attack to the East. 3rd Battalion, combed the woods to the North after which they reverted to Division Reserve in vicinity of FURTH. 2nd Battalion on right started early and encountered heavy mortar and artillery fire as they neared VSERUBY. The Battalion Artillery Liaison Officer and his party were captured [Page 3] on Hill 505 when they moved out ahead of the infantry.

1st Battalion's progress was very slow. The woods was thick with foliage and Hitler Youth slithered like chameleons across their front, firing, disappearing, then firing again elsewhere. Finally F Company was sent to help out.

The 2nd Division unit after relieving 358th Infantry had not come abreast on the left. 3rd Battalion 359th Infantry was therefore left in place to cover the North flank.

By nightfall the regiment was on the new line in the center but both flanks tapered back. Plans were made to complete the operation in the morning. Late that night Division phoned that 2nd Infantry Division would commence to relieve the regiment on the morrow.

357th Infantry -- AT Company had relieved the South part of E Company. B Company now completed relief of the North part. Division ordered another Company sent to RITTSTSIG and Company A was assigned this mission.

3rd Battalion was released to regiment at 1730 and they immediately began to relieve 1st Battalion, finishing by 2045. 1st Battalion was assembled in vicinity of ARRACH by 2245.

358th Infantry -- During the day the regiment was relieved by the 38th Infantry, 2nd Infantry Division and assembled as Division Reserve 3 miles Northeast of CHAM.

3 May 1945

359th Infantry -- 1st Battalion pushed out to its objective at 1015. Then all offensive action ceased. The mayor of VSERUBY surrendered his town as German troops had left the previous night. 38th Infantry, 2nd Division relieved 1st and 3rd Battalions while 9th Infantry, 2nd Division prepared to relieve 2nd Battalion the following morning. E and F Companies were assembled with G holding the line until the relief could be accomplished. The regiment minus 2nd Battalion assembled in vicinity KOTZING.

357th Infantry -- Using 3rd Battalion on the right and 2nd Battalion on the left, the regiment marched across the Czech border without resistance and established on the OPLR. Division notified them to expect relief next day by elements of the 2nd Division and to assemble vicinity of VIETACH. At 1830, 30 enemy attacked elements of Company I at TRENLOVSKY and knocked out one TD with a Panzerfaust. 6 enemy were killed and 2 captured. One TD man was injured. No other casualties were suffered.

358th Infantry -- Remained in Division Reserve. 1st Battalion changed areas in mid-afternoon to vicinity KOLLNBURG closing at 1900. [Page 4]

4 May 1945

Corps had ordered the entire Division to assemble in reserve in a large goose-egg around VIETACH. Several happenings intervened to change these plans. For one, the 11th Panzer Division surrendered en masse. For another, late at night, Division was ordered to use one RCT to seize and clear REGEN PASS on 5 May for a combat command of the 4th Armored Division which was to spearhead an attack to the East towards PRAGUE.

2nd Cavalry Group was having considerable trouble moving through the thick woods. OCS students were putting up fanatical resistance. During the day one platoon of cavalry was cut off and wiped out. This incident was to have its repercussions for the 90th.

359th Infantry -- Shortly after daylight, the G-4 of 11th Panzer Division entered the lines of Company G 359th Infantry under a white flag with a view to unconditional surrender. He was blindfolded and taken to the Division CP at CHAM where the surrender was arranged.

The enemy unit would come in by two routes -- one through VSERUBY and the other through RITTSTEIG -- beginning at 1700. Preceding the troops at 1600 would be the CG and his staff who were to quarter and administer their own troops into assembly areas vicinity KOTZING.

The rest of 2nd Battalion 359th Infantry was sent back to their old location to receive the surrender. 3rd Battalion was directed to take charge of the group coming through RITTSTEIG. Both Battalions established small arms collecting points at the place of entry into our lines and posted guards on the routes to the bivouac areas. Company D 712th Tank Battalion was attached to 2nd Battalion for perimeter guard at their assembly area. 90th Reconnaissance Troop was attached to 3rd Battalion for perimeter guard. 204th Engineers established a water point at each bivouac area. CUB planes were used to sight the approach of the surrendering units. Enemy wounded were evacuated through medical channels and sent to German hospitals.

At 1600 General von Weitersheim, CG of the 11th Panzer Division, came in and was met by General Ernest, CG of the 90th Division, at VSERUBY. The terms of unconditional surrender were confirmed. The columns started coming in at 1700 and continued throughout the night.

357th Infantry -- The regiment assembled in its portion of the Division assembly area and awaited orders. These came at 2105B when Division notified regiment of the mission received from Corps: beginning at daylight one RCT to clear the way for 4th Armored through the pass at MESTYS-ZELEZNA-RUDA.

2nd Cavalry Squadron would screen on the left flank. [Page 5]

The regiment made its plans: 1st Battalion would lead off and would clear from MESTYS to the road junction approximately 7 km North of the town. They would then block this area. 3rd Battalion would follow and would sweep a zone to the East and Southeast above the Southeast road which the armor would use. 2nd Battalion on the tail would clear the road itself and the immediate vicinity.

358th Infantry -- The regiment continued in Division Reserve. The balance of the unit closed in the Division assembly area during the day.

5 May 1945

Early morning brought Corps Operational Directive #115. The full mission assigned the 90th Infantry Division was:

- a. Initiate advance to North on PRAGUE through REGEN PASS daylight 5 May with one combat team.
- b. Clear out to DOBRA VODA and cover the debouchment of elements of 4th Armored Division.
- c. Remainder of Division to follow closely Armored elements, clearing enemy along Route.
- d. Protect Corps left flank North of Cavalry screen.
- e. Reconnaissance elements only cross line "D" except on Corps order. (Phase Line D was set as the road from PILSEN, LNARE and PISEK.)

357th Infantry -- As the situation in the new area was none too clear, and was marked the previous day by heavy fighting by the Cavalry, a reconnaissance party including the regimental

CO, S3, and Battalion commanders at 0500 preceded the motor column to determine the final entrucking point.

1st Battalion moved at 0630. 3rd Battalion at 0730 and 2nd Battalion in 0815. The column went through ZWIESEL then North through EISENSTEIN and MESTYS-CELEZNA-RUDA.

1st Battalion detrucked a half-mile from the road junction Northwest of MESTYS and advanced on foot some 3000 yards on the other side. By mid-morning they had established their blocks. Company C on the right was anchored as ST BRUNST and cut the main road. B Company held the center while A Company occupied the left flank echeloned slightly behind Company B.

3rd Battalion detrucked at the junction, marched to ST BRUNST and attacked down the ridge to the Southeast. Companies I and K advanced abreast with I on the left. The reserve Company followed Company I on the open flank. At ZHURI came catastrophe. As has been pointed out, the situation was fluid, and seeing M8s and jeeps in the town, the company approached boldly. But instead of friendly Cavalry, fanatical German OCS held possession of the vehicles which had been captured from the platoon of Cavalry ambushed the day before. As [Page 6] one platoon of Company I moved into the open the two scout cars opened fire as other enemy blazed away with small arms. TEN Americans were killed and ten wounded. Embettered by this heavy loss so late in the war, the company closed on the town without benefit of artillery fire and wiped out the opposition in close-hand fighting. 24 enemy were left dead and 76 captured. In addition to the two M8s, four 1/4 ton trucks were recaptured. The Battalion moved on. Entrenched enemy at ST HUTE were disposed of by artillery. There was no further opposition as the companies closed on their objective with Company L at DOLEJSI and K and I extended to the West.

While 3rd Battalion was engaged on the left, Company G, mounted on tanks, led 2nd Battalion down the main road proper. They hit one group of 50 entrenched enemy whom they dispersed. From there on only straggler fire was encountered as the Battalion rounded the bend at DOBRA VODA, where they dropped off Company E. Companies F and G occupied positions near HARTMANICE.

At 1400 2nd Cavalry relieved 1st Battalion of its blocking mission. A Company moved to ZHURI, B Company to ST HUTE while C remained at ST BRUNST. The day's operations ended at 2100.

Plans for morning contemplated 1st and 2nd Battalions taking up the attack, which would pinch out the 3rd. This Battalion after clearing the nearby woods would assemble in reserve.

358th Infantry -- After talking to Corps in late morning, the Division Commander ordered 358th Infantry to move at once to an assembly area vicinity of GLASERWALD prepared to go through 357th Infantry or attack to the North. Corps sent a truck Company to transport the regiment which closed in its area at a 2230.

359th Infantry -- Through the night the procession of 11 Panzer Division continued. By agreement with 2nd Infantry Division, lights were allowed to expedite movement. The German

vehicles were in a sorry state. Many were in trouble or without gas and had to be towed in. By 300, however, the German foot troops were plodding down the rain-soaked roads to the assembly area along with horse-drawn vehicles.

At daylight the left column was practically closed, but in 3rd Battalion's areas troops and vehicles straggled in all day with the last element arriving about 1730.

The entire regiment was assigned the mission of handling the surrendered unit. Vehicles were categorized and pooled. Ration dumps were established from the supplies carried by the Panzer Division. Interior German guards were arranged, and a perimeter of American guards established. A count was taken of personnel and equipment. [Page 7]

The final count showed:

a. Enemy Matériel Captured

- 700 trucks
- 300 sedans
- 120 Volkswagen
- 155 motorcycles
- 85 armored halftracks
- 25 halftrack prime movers
- 15 SP guns (all types)
- 6 Mark IV Tanks
- 5 TDs (Mark IV chassis and Mark V guns)
- 1 Mark V Tank
- 24 81 mm mortars
- 6 120 mm mortars
- 4 150 mm Infantry Howitzers
- 2 150 mm Howitzers
- 5 105 mm Howitzers
- 2 75 mm AT guns
- 14 20 mm AA guns (single mount)
- 2 20 mm AA guns (multiple mount)

b. Personnel

- 110 PGR: 43 Os, 345 NCOs, 969 EM
- 119 PGR: 33 Os, 250 NCOs, 644 EM
- 15 PZR: 39 Os, 506 NCOs, 955 EM
- Rcn Bn: 18 Os, 154 NCOs, 426 EM
- Sig Bn: 10 Os, 62 NCOs, 210 EM
- Engr Bn: 14 Os, 48 NCOs, 245 EM
- Field Res Bn: 25 Os, 168 NCOs, 463 EM
- Supply Trains: 18 Os, 115 NCOs, 602 EM
- Medical Bn: 25 Os, 65 NCOs, 320 EM
- GRAND TOTAL: 9,050

Although obviously short on armor and artillery, the strength of the unit came as a surprise. Previous estimates had set the figure at 1500-3500 total.

These figures raised the Division total of prisoners captured to over 80,000, tanks captured or destroyed to 501 and SP guns captured or destroyed to 195.

At 2230 Division notified 359th Infantry to be prepared to move to the vicinity of a NYRSKO sometime the next day.

Division CP opened at ZWIESEL at 1550B. [Page 8]

In the adjacent units, 2nd Cavalry Squadron had swept up to KLATOVY where they captured 1500 PWs. 42nd Cavalry Squadron was still committed South of the 90th cleaning an extensive wooded area.

On the left 2nd Infantry Division had reached DESENICE.

On the right 5th Infantry Division were having trouble in their wooded sector and had not, come abreast of the 90th.

6 May 1945

Corps ordered 4th Armored Division to start rolling at 0600B. CCB was to pass through the 90th while CCA would debouch through the 5th Infantry Division. The objective was PRAGUE.

The day's objective for the division was a general line marked roughly by a road from STRAZOV, PICH and KASPERSKE HORY.

357th Infantry -- 1st and 3rd Battalions moved abreast at 0730. Opposition was light and both Battalions were on the phase line by 1130. At PICH 1st Battalions freed 400 British PWs. Further movement was held up until the 4th Armored had passed through as they had road priority and supporting artillery could not displace. By mid-afternoon, however, the road was clear. The artillery readjusted and the advance continued without opposition. Forward elements halted at MOKROSUKY Company B; LESISCN Company C; ZIKOV Company E; and OLSOVKA Company G., 3rd Battalion assembled at TESOV. Some 900 prisoners were gathered up. A few snipers were active in the area as Division MP was killed near DOBRA VODA.

358th Infantry -- 2nd Battalion drove East and captured bridges across the OTAVA River at REJASTEJM. 3rd Battalion circled on their right, and headed Southeast, East and Northeast to capture KASPERSKE HORY. They met some opposition at several small towns enroute. Over 1100 prisoners were taken -- mostly voluntary surrenders.

359th Infantry -- The regiment moved at 1500 by way of HAIBUHL, RITTSTEIG, NYRSKO and STRAZOV. 1st Battalion remained here while 2nd and 3rd Battalions assembled vicinity of

VITEN. Plans were laid for attack to the North and Northeast using 1st and 2nd Battalions with 3rd in reserve.

7 May 1945

Though not unexpected, the end came abruptly. Scarcely had the three regiments moved out in attack when Corps called to stop all forward movement. Later in the morning by TWX came the memorable [Page 9] message announcing the cessation of hostilities:

"A representative of the German High Command signed the unconditional surrender of all German land, sea and air forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Forces and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command at 0141B Central European Time 7 May 1945 under which all forces will cease active operations at 0001B 9 May 1945.

All offensive operations by Allied Forces will cease. Troops will remain in present positions... Due to difficulties of communication there may be some delay in similar orders reaching enemy troops so full defense if precautions will be taken... No release will be made to the press pending announcement by the three governments."

EISENHOWER  
S/0923

Following receipt of the above, a general defensive position was outlined and troops readjusted to comply. Division CP crossed the Bohemian border to open at SUSICE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA at 1610B. Units sent patrols two miles to their front. By nightfall Division was redispersed with all three regiments on line generally along the road Southeast out of KLATOVY to STRIBRNE HORY then bending from HRADESICE to RABI to Hills 739, 738 and 844. Several 357th Infantry men previously captured at BEAU COUDRAY in July were recaptured. 2nd Cavalry Group recovered the Artillery Battalion Liaison Officer recently lost by 359th Infantry.

The last shot of the war in the Division was fired this day by a BAR man in K Company, 358th Infantry. Between 1100 and 1130 he fired 40 rounds at enemy infantry in the woods at Q2779.

8 May 1945

This was a day of waiting, of accumulating PWs, and of preparations for the postwar phase of occupational duty.

9-17 May 1945

Although operations officially ceased at 0001B, units of the 90th Division remained on line for several days as rather an anti-climax. On the 10th, 358th Infantry with 344th and 345th FA Battalions were move forward to the restraining line between NEPONUUK and LANRE when it appeared that German and White Russian troops, compressed between the American and Russian forces, might try to force an exit into the American zone. By agreement of higher headquarters

the trapped German soldiers were Russian prisoners. [Page 10] the other two regiments were placed on 1 hour alert to assist if needed, but remained in place. The sizable German units approaching were kept under control and no fighting ensued although small units and individuals attempting to infiltrate caused some harassment.

Patrols from 357th Infantry and 359th Infantry ranging far out in front of the lines with orders to contact the Russians made contact in the afternoon of the 10th with elements in contact with the 4th Armored Division.

On the 14th 358th Infantry was relieved by 2nd Cavalry Group. Corps ordered Division to move to occupational area vicinity WEIDEN, GERMANY. V Corps would take over the present area. The Division Artillery began immediate move to its new area occupying the Kries of BURGLINGENFELD and NEUNBURG. On the 15th, 357th Infantry, 358th Infantry and Division CP moved to their occupational areas. The 357th Infantry with 773rd TD Battalion attached set up in the Kreis KEMNATH, TIRSCHENREUTH and NEUSTADT. 358th Infantry with 537th AAA Battalion attached, occupied Kreis NABBURG, OBERVIETACH, VOHENSTRAUSS and WALDMUNCHEN. Division CP opened as WEIDEN, which was exclusive to 357th Infantry, at 1415B.

On the 16th, 359th Infantry with 712th Tank Battalion motored to their occupational areas: Kreis AMBERG, SULZBACH-ROSENBERG and ESCHENBACH.

On the 17th May last elements of the Division were relieved by the V Corps as 90th Reconnaissance Troop which was blocking the Czech-German border on the Czech side was relieved, together with security elements of 357th and 359th Infantries. They closed in their new areas the following day.

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Now it was over. And the record of the 90th Infantry Division was a kaleidoscope of brilliant achievements: the Division had thought through every kind of weather -- choking dust, chilling rain, knee-deep mud, pounding hail, waist-deep snow; over every kind of terrain -- hedgerow, plains, forests, rivers and hills.

It battered its way free from the bloody hedgerows of Normandy and thought in hot pursuit over the plains of Northern France. It sprang a trap which shattered the German VII Army at CHAMBOIS in the FALAISE GAP. Then it raced on to the MOSELLE River; probed the METZ Forts; left them and plunged across the rain-swollen MOSELLE; overran the MAGINOT Forts including mighty KOENIGSMACHER; joined hands with the 5th Infantry Division to encircle METZ; then charged North and assaulted the flooded SAAR River at DILLINGEN. Pulled out of here to help counter Von Rundstedt's stab at the ARDENNES, the Division launched a surprise attack Southeast of BASTOGNE which sheared off an enemy salient, then flogged the retreating enemy forces relentlessly as they tore for cover behind the SEIGFRIED West Wall. The Division took no rest [Page 11] and gave none as it cracked through the West Wall before halting for a short breather. Hardly stopped, it jumped back to action to run rampant to the RHINE. There Division turned Southeast and assaulted across the MOSELLE a second

time to plummet on and capture MAINZ. It crossed the RHINE -- behind the 5th Infantry Division on a bridge -- forced a crossing of the MAIN in assault boats -- and surged on through disintegrating resistance until it cut Germany in two by being the first American Division to enter Czechoslovakia, then swept down the Czech border, captured the German 11th Panzer Division, until the War's end found the 90th across the Sudetenland inside BOHEMIA itself. In 11 months the Division had made an assault landing, fought five major campaigns. It had 318 days in action broken by three, brief so-called "rest" periods which were devoted to training. Together with its normal attachments -- 712th Tank battalion, 537th AAA Battalion and first the 607th TD Battalion and later the 773rd TD Battalion -- it had met Germany's best and Germany's worse. The record showed the result: 83,437 prisoners captured; 501 tanks, 195 SP guns and 134 airplanes captured or destroyed.

Victory was costly. The record showed, too, the price paid: 3624 EM and 247 O dead and 16,663 EM and 831 O casualties. But these sacrifices were not in vain. For on V-E Day 1945 the 90th Infantry Division like the Allied Forces could say: "Mission Accomplished".

EARNEST  
COMMANDING  
BOOTH  
G-3  
[Page 12]