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Auth: CG 87 Div  
Init: *BW M Am*  
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HEADQUARTERS 346TH INFANTRY  
APO 448 U S Army

6 May 1945

Subject: After Action Report

To: CG, 87th Inf Div, APO 448, U S Army.

Following is After Action Report for period 1-30 April 1945:

1 April 1945

The regiment spent Easter Sunday in the vicinity of Kraftsoima, Germany. Mission of mopping up trapped German remnants was continued. Patrols were active with C Company patrol wounding 1 Jerry, taking another prisoner of a nine-man enemy patrol. A Co patrol encountered enemy stragglers, killing one officer in fire fight which followed. Many prisoners were taken but no valuable information was gained from them since they were remnants of numerous enemy divisions. Only resistance encountered was put up by SS troops although PW figures showed that even they gave up when the odds were against them.

2 April 1945

Hourly patrols were sent to comb out the woods in sector. PW supply was dwindling, only 13 taken during day. Training schedules were begun, training in basic subjects being conducted.

3 April 1945

Training and maintenance continued, range firing being conducted. Patrols returned reporting no enemy contact whatsoever. Regiment received march order to move to vicinity Kirchheim to assembly area and assume position of Div reserve, on 4 April 1945.

4 April 1945

H-Hour delayed and assembly area moved several Km forward vicinity Dippach due to difficulty in obtaining transportation for move. Colonel Curtis D Renfro, Regt1 Comdr, was awarded the Silver Star (Oak Leaf Cluster).

5 April 1945

346th CT crosses IP at 1300. Regt1 CP opened Heringen at 1900. 1st and 2d Bns assembled vicinity of Heringen. 3d Bn and Service Company were unable to move due to lack of transportation and will move 6 April. Regt in Div Reserve.

6 April 1945

3d Bn and Sv Co moved to assembly area vicinity Heringen. Regt in Div Res awaiting orders. Patrolling and mopping up operations in present area continued. No enemy resistance encountered on patrols.

7 April 1945

Regt1 CP moves to new assembly area vicinity Bad Liebenstein. Regt1

- 1 -  
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DOD Dir. 5200.9, Sept. 27, 1958  
NMW by *[Signature]* date *1-13-66*

After Action Report, 346th Inf, 6 May 45 (Contd)

OP opened at 2000 at Bad Liebenstein. 1st Bn assembled in Bairoda; 2d Bn in Brotteroda; 3d Bn in Steinbach. Mission is protection of left (N) flank of Div against enemy pocketed in zone of 89th Div. Contact between battalions maintained during night. 1st Bn took 3 PW's who were guarding road block at (H958481).

8 April 1945

Lt Col Donald C Clayman, who had been evacuated on 29 January 1945 vicinity Herresbach after being wounded in the hand, returned at 1410 and again assumed command of the Regt1 CT. Colonel Renfro, who had successfully commanded the troops for two months during the storming of the Siegfried Line and the crossing of the Mosel and Rhine Rivers left for another assignment with the satisfaction of a job well done. E Co relieved B Co of the 345 Inf at Klein--Schmalkaldin with mission of blocking roads and patrolling in that area. Enemy air activity observed in sector for first time in months -- 2 ME 109's fired upon by D Co, no hits observed.

9 April 1945

3d Bn moved vicinity (H9848) to protect North flank of division west of Tambach, at 0700. 1st Bn moved to vicinity Tambach, closing into position at 2005. Regt1 OP opened at Tambach at 1800. Security patrols continued throughout period. Division informed us that attack would jump off at 0630 hours, 10 April with objective Plaue (J2346). IPW reported a total of 133 PW's for day. 346 CT still to be in Div Res.

10 April 1945

346 CT remained in Div Res while 345 CT and 347 CT jumped off toward Div Obj. 2d Bn moved up to vicinity Tambach. 1st Bn sent force of 1 tank, 1 TD and 1 Plat of Infantry to vicinity (H995450) to reduce enemy force harrassing our supply columns. The divisions task force, TF Sundt was again organized with our K Company, now experienced infantry-tank men, comprising the mobile infantry. CO returns from Division at 2300 with mission of attack on the morning of 11 April. Lt Col Clayman, Regt1 Comdr awarded the Silver Star for action in and around Herresbach on 29 Jan 1945.

11 April 1945

Morale of the troops was high, this morning they would get their chance to be on the move again after almost two weeks in a static position. The main objective was almost a hundred miles to the East, just short of Czechoslovakia, and they felt confident that they could obtain this objective in the very near future. The plan of attack was as follows: TF Sundt was to make a 35 Km end run through the 89th Division sector, then drive South into the towns of Oberwillingen (J3146) and Niederwillingen (J3246), disrupt the enemy West of Plaue (J2246) and Ilmenau (J2436) to aid the advance of the remaining elements of the Combat Teams. 3d Bn, 346th Inf was to be motorized and prepared to move on Division order via route of TF Sundt to relieve TF Sundt for further operations. 1st and 2d Bns were to move to the East from positions in and around Tambach and pass through the 345th Inf vicinity Plaue and continue the attack in zone of action of the 345th Inf. Co B, 735th Tank Bn and Co A, 607th TD Bn (less 1 Plat) were to support the attack. The stage was set, all elements of the command were oriented

After Action Report, 346th Inf, 6 May 45 (Contd)

and the attack was to jump off at 0600.

2d and 1st Bns moved out on time and 1st Bn passed through 345 Inf vicinity Plaue at about 1200. TF Sundt reached Oberwillingen at 1140, and proceeded to move to the west. 1st Bn moved under light opposition to the outskirts of Stadtilm (J3547) where heavy opposition was encountered. 1st Bn motorized patrol of 17 men was sent into Stadtilm and was ambushed as nothing further was heard from the patrol. 2d Bn was motorized and proceeded to Oberwillingen where they were temporarily held up by enemy artillery fire. At the close of the day, the troops had reached their objective with the 1st Bn 2 Km SW of Stadtilm, 2d Bn 500 Meters SE of Oberwillingen and the 3d Bn at Griesheim (J3344). Regtl CP was mobile, keeping contact with troops by liaison and radio, until it reached Oberwillingen where it held up for the night. Total PW's for the day, 57.

12 April 1945

TF Sundt jumped off at 0515 after 5-minute TOT on Stadtilm and at 0630 was reported in the town. Heavy opposition was encountered in taking the one remaining bridge in Stadtilm where they later found two 500 pound bombs which the enemy was unable to detonate. 2d Bn followed behind TF Sundt, moving into Stadtilm at 0815, and proceeded to mop up any remaining enemy resistance. Troops continued to advance, enemy resistance encountered consisted of isolated enemy groups. Three enemy tanks encountered near Kirchenda, one knocked out. 2d Bn followed TF Sundt into Rudolstadt and by 2010 were in the center of the town. At the end of the day the 1st Bn buttoned up at Altrenda (J4446) and the 3d Bn took up positions at Sundrenda (J4544). Regtl CP located in Ehrenstein (J4245) for the night. Considerable artillery fire was received during the day which somewhat slowed up the progress, the greatest concentration falling in and around ehrenstein, during the late afternoon. 112 enemy troops gave themselves up during the day with the only determined resistance encountered in taking Ehrenstein.

An instance of resistance from a woman civilian was reported whereby the woman fired a shotgun from a second-story window, wounding one of our men riding on a tank. The man jumped off the tank and got his revenge as she paid with her life.

13 April 1945

Attack began at 0630, 3d Bn advancing toward Remda (J4645) and the town was reported clear at 0830. 2d Bn continued mopping up in Rudolstadt, meeting heavy resistance from castle in the town and receiving small arms and artillery fire from across Saale River, but had town entirely cleared by 1700. 3d Bn took Etzelbach (J6043) but bridges were blown by the retreating Germans. 1st Bn took Uhlstadt (J6344) but bridge there had also been blown. 1st Bn A & P Plat attempted to build a bridge but found that it was impossible without bridging material. Foot troops crossed river overcoming some small arms and MG fire and by midnight had the 1st and 3d Bn foot troops across. A 200 Ft Bailey Bridge was ordered expedited at Etzelbach and work was begun immediately to blast the old bridge site to enable construction of the Bailey. 2d Bn assembled vicinity Etzelbach to await

After Action Report, 346th Inf, 6 May 45 (Contd)

completion of bridge. 400 PWs were taken mostly from Rudolstadt. Regt1 CP was mobile during the day setting up in Etzelbach for the night.

14 April 1945

Co B, 312th Engrs began construction of the Bailey Bridge at Etzelbach but reported that it would probably not be finished until sometime in the afternoon. After crossing the Saale river the troops fanned out and patrolled to the east for a distance of 5 Km.

In the past three days the troops had covered a sector of 60 Km in length since they left Tambach of April 11. The men had gone most of the way on foot, lived on K rations and slept very little. The delay caused by constructing the bridge afforded the troops an opportunity for some much-needed rest and at least one good hot meal.

The bridge was completed at 1730 and 3d Bn organics and supporting armor were reported crossing at 1800. They proceeded through the north part of the Regt1 sector while the other two battalions proceeded along the southern route to Division objective vicinity Chemnitz-Plauen Autobahn. Troops proceeded against scattered small arms fire and numerous road blocks. 1st Bn was held up vicinity Friedebach due to the extreme darkness and doubtful reconnaissance of the proper routes. Total PW's taken for day, 178.

15 April 1945

At daybreak the column again began to move. 2d Bn (motorized) passed through 1st Bn at Friedebach, and proceeded toward objective. 1st Bn assembled in that area to await transportation. 2d Bn continued along route of advance toward Possneck (J7240) where they contacted elements of the 345th Inf who were advancing from the south without opposition. 2d Bn received enemy artillery fire in the vicinity of Tagau (J9135) after an advance of 18 Km without determined resistance. The 3d Bn advanced to Dittersdorf (J8835) where trucks were dispatched to pick up 1st Bn at Friedebach. 2d Bn received enemy artillery fire in vicinity of Tagau (J9135) and then advanced to Klein-Wolschendorf (J9736) where they took up positions for the night. Isolated groups of the enemy ambushed 2d Bn jeeps causing several casualties. Town of Mossbach and 42 PW's was taken by the Regt1 Hq Co without firing a shot. Regt1 CP proceeded to Dragensdorf (J8935) for the night. Total PW's for the day -- 300.

16 April 1945

The Commanding General commended the regiment on a good day's advance and ordered advance to be continued in early morning for Division Obj. A coordinated attack on Zeulenroda (J9936) with the 3d Bn attacking from the north and the 2d Bn attacking from the East was planned for 0630 after a ten-minute artillery preparation on the town; however 2d Bn was engaged in clearing out woods to the rear of their area as tanks were reported in that area, and could not assist the 3d Bn in taking the town. 3d Bn had secured the town by 1035 followed by the 2d and 1st Bns. 1st Bn

~~SECRET~~

After Action Report, 346th Inf, 6 May 45 (Contd)

advanced toward Elsterberg (K1032) meeting slight resistance until reaching the town where small arms and artillery fire was encountered. Captured the two main bridges intact at Elsterberg, one of them while the enemy was attempting to destroy it. Knocked out enemy artillery piece, personnel carrier and ammunition truck on high ground outside Elsterberg. 1st Bn proceeded to Brockau (K1632) where it held up for the night; 3d Bn took up positions 3 Km north of Elsterberg; and 2d Bn dug in vicinity Elsterberg. Regt CP Elsterberg. An all-time high of PW's were taken today with the Regts total at close of day, 537.

17 April 1945

The Regt has come to the last lap of the move with only about 12 Km between it and the Div objective. 1st Bn jumped off at 0630, completely occupying the town of Treuen by 0930. 50 American PW's were liberated en route. 2d Bn approached Lengenfeld from the East and encountered small arms fire and fire from SP gun. Three light tanks, attached to 2d Bn, were disabled and it was estimated that 5 enemy tanks were preparing to counter-attack, from the west. An air mission was flown one-half hour after it was requested, results reported very good. TD accounted for one enemy tank.

Upon order of the Regt Comdr a task force consisting of 1 Inf Company, 1 Plat of Tanks was sent to attack Lengenfeld from SW to assist the 2d Bn which had now committed all its companies. At about 1600 a captured 89th Division jeep mounting a 30 Cal MG manned by 3 Germans moved into the 1st Bn positions causing several casualties. At 1800, 2d Bn moved armor into the town and by 2300 the high ground E of the town was occupied. 1st Bn took up defensive positions vicinity Treuen; 3d Bn occupied positions in Altmannsgrun and Unterlauterbach. Regt CP moved to Treuen. Total PW's for the day, 490.

The division objective was finally obtained after six days rapid advance. The Regt cleared a sector of 121 Km in length, clearing about 75 towns and villages including Plaue, Stadtilm, Rudolstadt, Possneck, Zeulenroda, Lengenfeld and Treuen, and taking about 2,500 German Prisoners. Total casualties for the period 11-17 April were 11 killed, 61 wounded, and 32 missing in action.

18 April 1945

Positions were consolidated along limiting line, no fire line was established, and patrols were active all along the front. Continued to clear enemy within assigned area of responsibility. Maintained contact with 89th Div on North and TF Sundt on South.

19 April 1945

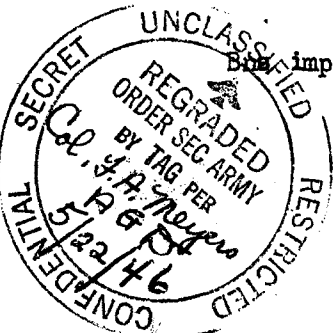
Bns improved and consolidated positions. Active patrolling continued to East. 3d Bn occupied positions in sector formerly occupied by TF Sundt. Made maximum use of available time for rehabilitation of troops and maintenance.

20 April 1945

Bns improved and consolidated positions. Aggressive patrolling continued

- 5 -

~~SECRET~~



After Action Report, 346th Inf, 6 May 45 (Contd)

to front throughout period. Made maximum use of time for maintenance of equipment and vehicles. 3d Bn patrol visited town of Falkenstein and found it occupied by enemy. Found that enemy artillery had moved to Auerbach. Co K was relieved of attachment to TF Sundt and reverted to Regtl control after a very successful week of operations.

21 April 1945

Active patrolling continued throughout period. Continued policing area of responsibility during entire period. Received message that Russians were 25 Km east of us and also various instructions in case juncture was made with our Regt. Interpreters were picked out and placed at road blocks on all roads leading to the East. Patrolling to the front was to cease immediately except to check on possibility of Russian approach.

22 April 1945

Direct fire weapon firing on positions during night and morning causing several casualties. Artillery fired counterbattery and enemy fire ceased. No change in mission.

23 April 1945

Contact patrols were operating, contacting the 89th Division on our left. No enemy contact during day. Mission unchanged.

24 April 1945

Positions along defense line were changed with the 1st Bn taking up positions on high ground around Treuen since several enemy raiding parties had been shooting up their outposts. Regtl CP moved back to Limbach. Observed artillery fire placed on enemy positions to front. Training schedules were begun and training was conducted where possible. Four fires, apparently caused by WP grenades occurred in town of Lengenfeld. Mission unchanged.

25 April 1945

Bns continued to improve and consolidate positions. Forward patrolling was again started. Mission unchanged.

26 April 1945

No change in mission. Training in basic subjects conducted where possible.

27 April 1945

Still holding positions. Awaiting further orders.

28 April 1945

Active patrolling conducted, 3d Bn patrol going into Oberlauterbach and to high ground west of Dorfstadt. Patrol to Falkenstein found the town occupied by enemy troops

29 April 1945

No change in positions. Patrolling continued. Training continued.

SECRET

After Action Report, 346th Inf, 6 May 45 (Contd)

30 April 1945

Training schedules, including range firing, continued. Aggressive patrolling continued. No change in positions, awaiting orders.

For the Regimental Commanders:

*Law A. Shields*

LEM W SHIELDS  
Major, Infantry  
S-3

RESTRICTED  
*Harrold Col TRS*  
*31 Aug*

- 7 -  
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