

**After Action Reports
of
Combat Command “B”
7th Armored Division
August 1944 - August 1945**

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- Wesley Johnston, son of Walter Johnston of Company “B”, 38th Armored Infantry Battalion (August 1944-June 1945 reports)
- Beverly Kent, daughter of Eugene O'Connor, of Troop “B”, 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron

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S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
SEVENTH ARMORED DIVISION
APO 257, c/o PM N.Y., N.Y.

3 September 1944

SUBJECT: Battle Report.

TO : Commanding General, 7th Armored Division,
c/o PM New York, New York.

1. In compliance with Administrative Memorandum #31, Headquarters 7th Armored Division, 21 July 1944 paragraph 2 and request Commanding General 7th Armored Division the following "Battle Report" is submitted.

2. During the Battle of France, the Combat Command Headquarters has functioned as a tactical headquarters in much of the capacity of the Standard Brigade headquarters.

3. The Combat Command is commanded by Brigadier General JOHN P. THOMPSON, O-3741, USA.

4. The narrative history of the Combat Command during the Battle of France follows:

Combat Command "B" was initially assembled in tactical bivouac in the vicinity of LESSAY, France. The troops making the Combat Command "B" task force were landed over OMAHA and UTAH beaches and the complete Combat Command assembled to function tactically August 12, 1944 composition as follows:

Headquarters and Headquarters Company Combat Command "B"
31st Tank Battalion
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
23rd Armored Infantry Battalion
B Company 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion

Combat Command "B" as constituted moved in single march column via PERIERS - SAVSAUVIER - COUTANCES - GOUVRAY - LE HAYE PUSNEL - AVRANCHES - ST. LORIENT - ST. GEORGES - LOUVIGNE and bivouaced. Moved from bivouac and marched in single column via LAVAL - BON CHAMP - LA CHAPELLE - CHATRES - EVRON and bivouaced. The composition of the Combat Command was altered in this position in preparation for an attack to the NORTH EAST composition as follows:

Headquarters Company Combat Command "B"
31st Tank Battalion
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
23rd Armored Infantry Battalion
B Company 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
B Company 774th Tank Destroyer Battalion
Attached after passing thru 317th Combat Team 80th Infantry Division.

The attack was cancelled and the attachment of B Company 774th Tank Destroyer Battalion and 117th Combat Team 60th Infantry Division released. The Combat Command was moved from EVRON in a single column via ASSE - ROUESSE - CORMES - COURGENARD - ULPHACE - BEAUMONT - THIRON - HAPONVILLIERS - LES CORNEC - LA FERTE BERNARD - COURVILLE. Command Post was established when resistance encountered in COURVILLE. Contact with enemy made 14 August 1944. Task force commanded by Lt. Colonel Allison entered COURVILLE 15 August 1944 after enemy resistance of infantry and Anti-Tank guns was reduced. All resistance ceased at 0630 15 August 1944. Combat Command direction of movement altered to the EAST axis of advance COURVILLE, CHARTRES, ABLIS, DOURDAN, ARPAJOU. Combat Command "B" moved via above route in two (2) Forces under command of Lt. Colonel Allison and Lt. Colonel Erlenbusch. Enemy resistance encountered on the outskirts of small villages surrounding CHARTRES. Enemy defenses of CHARTRES consisted of sporadic mine fields, 3,000 troops, including one Flak Battalion a& scattered Anti-Tank strong points estimated number of Anti-Tank guns including calibres of 20mm to 80mm 50. Heavy Anti-Tank Mortar, machine gun and scattered artillery pieces and rifle fire and bazooka strong points were encountered in the 3 days battle.

The Battle of CHARTRES consisted of one coordinated night attack by 2 forces. Force I under Lt. Colonel Allison attacking EAST from NORTHWEST side of the town. Force 2 under Lt. Colonel Erlenbusch attacking NORTHEAST from the SOUTH of the town. The entire attack receiving artillery support from 434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion under Lt. Colonel Dubuisson. Force I penetrated enemy defenses with infantry and established a Command Post within the NORTHEAST quarter of the town. Force 2 encountered heavy Anti-Tank fire in small towns of LUCE and LUISANT but penetrated to CHARTRES but failed to maintain continuity of the attack due to heavy losses and inability of tanks to fight in the very narrow streets of the old town of CHARTRES. The infantry of Force I remained in the town but Force 2 withdrew to regroup. The second attack of CHARTRES took place on 17 August 1944 with same composition of troops but with additional artillery support from XX Corps Artillery. All efforts were made to spare destruction of historical buildings in the town of CHARTRES by XX Corps Commanders order. Only point targets were to be engaged under observation. The troops of the Combat Command encircled CHARTRES with troops occupying the NORTHEAST quarter of town and troops in position NORTH, NORTHEAST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTH and Main Supply Route running SOUTH of the town. CHARTRES garrison held positions facing the encirclement in depth from high ground outside CHARTRES to the buildings in the outer edges of the town. The coordinated attack was successful and apparently resistance was reduced. The fact that CHARTRES was a "report station" for disorganized and beaten units and stragglers from the surrounded and battered units on the western front caused the garrison to be reinforced by an estimated 200 - 300 men per 24 hour period. This fact accounted for the severe third attack on 18 August 1944 which annihilated the garrison in CHARTRES. The Germans lost 1800 killed, wounded and missing; 400 prisoners and all vehicles, weapons, materiel, airfield with 30 - 40 destroyed fighters, and ammunition dumps destroyed on captured. Some German troops escaped via secret routes to other "report stations".

The final composition of Combat Command "E" was as follows at the conclusion of the Battle of CHARTRES.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company Combat Command "B"
 434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
 31st Tank Battalion
 23rd Armored Infantry Battalion
 38th Armored Infantry Battalion
 179th Engineer Battalion (-1 company)
 B Company 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
 B Company 814 Tank Destroyer Battalion
 B Company 77th Medical Battalion
 Supporting XX Corps Artillery

On the night of the 18th August 1944, the Combat Command regrouped and moved in single column via CHARTRES.

Orders were received by the Combat Command to move via CHARTRES - CHATENEUF - DREUX, and there to establish bridgehead north of DREUX to protect the supply lines of the XIX Corps. Movement from the Area EAST CHARTRES began at 2350 18 August 1944 in one column with normal Combat Command plus B Company 814 Tank Destroyer Battalion. Head of column reached CHATENEUF at 0257 19 August 1944 and closed in bivouac at CHERISY at 0930 19 August 1944. 23rd Armored Infantry Battalion plus and 31st Tank Battalion plus outposted EAST and WEST flanks NORTH of DREUX. Road blocks established in all avenues of approach within our sector. Tight enemy resistance encountered and driven back of Out Post Line. 0530 20 August 1944 this command took over the bridgehead formally occupied by Combat Command "A". Command Post moved WEST CHERISY but moved back again to original position after coming under artillery fire. Combat Command "B" placed in XX Corps reserve 1620 21 August 1944. Movement to RAMBOUILLET in one column began at 2200 21 August 1944. 0700 22 August 1944 in assembly area 2 miles WEST RAMBOUILLET. 774th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached. Orders from XX Corps to move at once via LIMOURS - BREUGNY - COURCOURENNER - MELUN. Left present area at 1535 22 August by passed CORBEIL to the SOUTH and arrived BONDOUNFL 25¹ August 1944 0025. Received Division Field Order #5. Movement in one column started 2030 23 August 1944 to MENNECY via BONDOUNFL - vert-le-GRAND - vert-le-PETIT - BALLANCOURT. Head of column arrived MAZY at 1240 and closed in bivouac 1 mile NORTHWEST MENNECY at 1740. Notified by Division to follow Combat Command "A" across SIENE RIVER, proceed thru the Combat Command "A" bridgehead and attack and capture that part of MELUN NORTH of river. Reverted to 7th Armored Division at 2002. At 0200 24 August 1944 Field Order #5 Headquarters Combat Command "B" given to command. Composition of forces as follows:

Force I (ALLISON)	Force 2 (ERLENBUSCH)	Combat Command Trps	Trains
23rd A.I.B.	31st Tank Battalion	Hq Co Combat Com'd B	Trains
B Co. 33rd A.E.B.		434 (-)	B Co. 77 Med
A Co. 434 AFA Bn.		774th TD (- 1 Co)	1 Co 129 Ord

Combat Command "B" crossed SIENE into Combat Command sector, Combat Command Reserve frontal attack of MELUN 1730 24 August 1944. Combat Command "B" received orders to take MELUN by dawn. 25th August 1944 attack jumped off at 0200 held up until 0400 by hasty mine fields. Infantry assault passed through tanks and were in MELUN at 0715. 23rd Armored Infantry Battalion mopped up small pockets of resistance during most of day and outposted town of MELUN. 25 August 1944 received Division Order to move EAST in the direction of TOURS. 23rd Armored Infantry Battalion attempted to move through MELUN but were held up by 81mm fire. Attack begun at 0630 artillery concentration was laid down on enemy position EAST of MELUN.

¹ The 25 is as in the original; it probably was intended to be 23.

Force I proceed axis of advance to NANGES, Force I proceed SOUTH within our zone cleaning out all enemy before them, coordinating with Force 2. Force I ran into Anti-Tank gun fire 1 mile EAST MELUN 2 halftracks knocked out but overcame resistance pushed on to vicinity of CHATILLION-LA-BORDE from SOUTH and knocked out 4 Anti-Tank guns. Both forces pushed on to approximately 4 miles EAST of NANTIS. Combat Command "B" given order to push NORTH to REIMS splitting into 3 forces. 27 August 1944 head of column moved at dawn to 2 miles EAST VULAINES halted by Anti-Tank and machine gun fire. Proceeded to move NORTH to bypass PROVINCES.² Moved NORTH passed through town of SEZANNE and halted in march column 5 miles NORTH SEZZANE. Combat Command "B" was then divided into 3 forces and to move NORTH on parallel routes. On the 28th of August 1944 vehicles were gassed and moved out at 0730. Moved along axis of advance SOIZY AUXBOIS, LE PETIT MORIN BAYE, MONTPERTUS, MONTMORT encountering small pockets of resistance. Knocked out 4 Anti-Tank guns SOUTH OF town, entered EPERNAY at 1800 tanks leading followed by infantry commanded by Lt. Colonel ALLISON. Tanks got as far as bridge over MARNE but were halted by heavy Anti-Tank gun fire and bridge was blown by electric mines by enemy. Command held in EPERNAY until 0700 29 August moved out of EPERNAY and crossed river MARNE on pontoon bridge at PORT A BINSON. Forces were halted all along the way due to running together of different units and columns. Marched all night arriving in WARMERSVILLE where enemy resistance was encountered. Warning orders were received from Commanding General 7th Armored Division to prepare to move to VERDUN. Notified to reconstitute command less Combat Command Reserve and move to assembly area vicinity WEST of PONT-FAVERGER. 1300 Field Order #9 Headquarters 7th Armored Division notified Combat Command "B" to advance EAST in multiple columns prepared to reinforce left flank guard of Division. Seize bridgehead over MEUSE RIVER in route of its advance. Force A under Lt. Colonel ERLENBUSCH ran out of gas 6 miles WEST MONTHOIS 0600 31 August. All efforts was being made to supply gas to this force, Force B at ATREY, Force C, tail of column Force B. Force C was sent along a NORTHERN route to try to obtain crossings of ford at AISNE RIVER; successful obtaining ford at MOVRON. After crossing ford 2 blown bridges and mines were encountered EAST of MOVRON, reconnaissance was made up and down river, no bridges or fords disclosed and force was withdrawn to vicinity BOUCONVILLE. Force B after vigorous reconnaissance located bridge site EAST of AUTREY. 2 squads of engineers (B company 33rd) committed to form; bridgehead relieved by infantry at 1645 (A company 23rd) Bridge company arrived approximately 1750. Reconnaissance crossed bridge at 2030 (A/87) 1 platoon on each of 2 routes, 1 platoon reserve. 1 platoon in reserve. Reconnaissance moves quickly as possible to AIRE RIVER to reconnoiter for and secure bridges APERMONT-CHATEL. Column A (ERLENBUSCH) followed reconnaissance across bridge and moved into assembly position on NORTH route. Column C (JOHANSON) to follow. Column B (ALLISON) across bridge and go into assembly position on northern route. Reconnaissance disclosed all bridges blown across AIRE. Columns A and C moved out of respective routes ready to cross river soon as fords or bridges were located by reconnaissance.

No officers or enlisted men distinguished themselves in this command.

Technician 5th Grade EARL D. APPLEGARTH, 35375098 was killed in action 26 August 1944 1½ miles WEST NANTIS.

For the Commanding General:

(signed)
WILLIAM W. ROSEBRO, JR
Lt. Col., Infantry,
Executive Officer.

² Provins

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
7th ARMORED DIVISION
A.P.O. 257, U. S, ARMY

4 October 1944

SUBJECT : After Action Report.

TO : Commanding General, First U. S. Army. (THRU: CHANNELS).

1. In compliance with Administrative Memorandum #31, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, 21 July 1944, par. 2, and request Commanding General, 7th Armored Division, the following "Battle Report" is submitted.

2. During the period covered by this report, the Combat Command Headquarters has functioned as a tactical headquarters in much of the capacity of the Standard Brigade Headquarters.

3. Commanders of the Combat Command were as follows:
Brig, Gen. JOHN B. THOMPSON, 1-8 Sept. 44
Lt. Col. ANDREW J. ADAMS, 8-11 Sept. 44
Brig, Gen. JOHN M. DEVINE, 11-25 Sept. 44
Brig, Gen. ROBERT W. HASBROUCK, 25-30 Sept. 44

4. The narrative history of the Combat Command during period 1-30 Sept. 1944 is as follows:

On 1 Sept. 44 this Combat Command was moving East across the AIRE River vicinity of APREMONT, France in two (2) columns. Composition of the Combat Command at that time was as follows:

Headquarters & Headquarters Company, Combat Command "B"
31st Tank Battalion
23rd Armored Infantry Battalion
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
B/33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
B/814 Tank Destroyer Battalion
A/87 Reconnaissance Squadron Mechanized

Combat Command continued its move East to assembly area NW of VERDUN. Both columns moved on same route after the North column ran into heavy resistance at EXERMONT. The night of 1 September 44 CC "B" bivouac area bombed by enemy planes, two killed - five wounded. Combat Command was completely in assembly area NW VERDUN at 0100 2 September 44. At 1010 2 September Force moved N from assembly by Division order. Force consisted of: 2 Co's Tanks, 1 Co Inf., and 1 Btry F.A. At this time Combat Command gas supply was extremely low with no additional supplies available. All available gas tanks were drained to provide gas for the Force moving N generally along the W bank of the MEUSE River. Force reached a point 1 Mi N MONTFAUCON at that point went into assembly area. Status of their gasoline supply was such that they were unable to move any further N, no enemy contact reported. 4 September 44 enough gas was received at Combat Command to enable the Force to assemble vicinity MONTFAUCON and return to the Combat Command assembly area NW VERDUN. A/87 was relieved from CC B and reported to 87th Rcn Sqdn. 5 September small quantities of gasoline being received Combat Command still not completely gassed.

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6 September 44 received orders to attack from assembly area to E side of MEUSE River. 23rd A.I.B, D/31 and B/33 were left in the assembly area NW VERDUN waiting for gas with which to refuel, rest of Combat Command moved out in preparation for the attack. Attack was to be made in two columns as follows:

<u>Force 1 (Allison)</u>	<u>Force 2 (Erlenbusch)</u>	<u>Troops</u>
23 (-B)	31 (-A & D)	Hq CC B (F-1)
434 (-C)	B/23	B/814 (-)
B/33 (-1 Plat)	C/434	Trains & D/31
A/31	1st Plat B/33	
2nd Plat B/814	3rd Plat B/814	

Final orders were issued in the assembly area just E of VERDUN and forces moved out into the attack crossing LD at 1445. 23rd Inf, B/33 and D/31 had still not rejoined the Combat Column. First enemy contact made by N column at GRAVELOTTE, where the column was held up by artillery and small arms fire. The tanks of the column deployed to support the attack by the 87 Rcn Sqdn to their front. Arty supported the attack, displacing forward under enemy arty fire coming from GRAVELOTTE. At 1953, 23rd Inf rejoined CC. North column bypassed GRAVELOTTE to the Right encountering mines S of GRAVELOTTE. South column attempted to bypass GORZE where they encountered mines and booby traps and heavy arty fire. Forward elements reached MOSELLE River 7 September in face of heavy resistance by enemy dug in on both sides of river. First attempt to cross the river on 7 September in assault boats failed. Troops on W side of river receiving heavy fire from enemy mortars, automatic weapons and small arms. 8 September bridgehead was forced vicinity of DOURNOT, by 23rd A.I.B. in conjunction with troops of 5th Inf Division. All forces in bridgehead pinned down by heavy fire. 9 September there were three Co's in the bridgehead. The Force in the bridgehead was unable to enlarge it and enemy fire prevented any further reinforcing of the bridgehead. Bridgehead at DOURNOT was finally withdrawn on 11 Sept in favor of a new bridgehead at ARNAVILLE. 12 Sept CC B crossed MOSELLE River at ARNAVILLE in two forces. Mission was to outpost a line MORDIGNY - LORRY - DEVANT - MARIEULLES. The operation was successful. Resistance during the operation was light although heavy arty fire was received throughout the bridgehead. The bridgehead being formed; Combat Command attacked with two (2) forces, with the mission to enlarge the bridgehead. On the 15th the two forces jumped off. The tank column with one company of infantry progressed slowly due to heavy fog. The infantry column moving in the direction of VITTONVILLE fell behind the tanks. The two forces progressed steadily on, over difficult terrain and reached their objectives, the towns of MAIRDIGNY and VITTONVILLE, and the dominating hill 223, the fourth objective being taken by CC "R". CC B relieved by the 5th Inf Div of objectives 2 and 3 proceeded to formulate plans to attack SE generally following the high ground then E to BOUXIERES. At 1330 18 September Force 1 under Lt, Col. Erlenbusch moved out and by 1530 reported in BOUXIERES receiving heavy arty fire. F-2 reported their leading elements in BOUXIERES at 1450 but pinned down by enemy arty fire. Little ground was gained beyond that point, and at midnight the two forces dug in to hold the ground gained. 48th AIB less two Co's was attached to CC "B", moving from the southern edge of CC A area to join this command. F-2 the following day (19 Sept) jumped off at 0700 and in an hour advanced 1500 yards. F-1 jumped off soon after F-2, both forces proceeding as far as LONGUVILLE where they were held up by sniper, MG and mortar fire coming from the town. Efforts made to flank the town were unsuccessful due to heavy arty fire. At 0200 20 Sept Co. A repulsed a counterattack, a platoon of tanks being sent to their assistance. Plans were made to bomb CHEMINOT and under cover of the arty fire to rush patrols across the SEILLE River. The air mission called for was cancelled but under the cover of an arty preparation at 1745, bridging equipment was brought up but were driven back by enemy arty, mortar and automatic weapons fire.

The following day plans were made to cross under the cover of darkness. At 0145 22 September 1944, Companies A and B of the 23rd AIB crossed the river and began establishing a bridgehead. The feint at LONGUEVILLE drew heavy arty fire. Bridging equipment brought up was inadequate, so losing the element of surprise and due to the vulnerability of the position, the force withdrew. 23 September 1944 the Command received orders to cancel the Operations Instructions for a coordinated attack with the Division to cross the river and on the 24th of September 1944 the 7th Armored Division was relieved by the 5th Infantry Division. The CP moved back across the MOSELLE River to HADONVILLE on the 25th of September 1944 where orders were received to move NW into the First Army Zone through ARLON - ATTERT - MARTELENGE MARCHE - MODAVE - HUY - HANNULT, CP LEUTH, BELGIUM. A march of 198 miles which was accomplished in 24 hours, closing into the assembly area 27 0055 September 1944. The 7th Armored Division mission of moving NE, encircle through the 21st Army Group (Br) area and attack bridgehead from the North. Patrols were established in the CC B assembly area at LEUTH. Patrolling continued until the 29th of September 1944 without any contact with the enemy. 30 September 1944 the CC B CP moved to the vicinity of ST ANTHONIN, HOLLAND attacking at 1530 encountering strongest resistance vicinity SAMBEEK and VORTUM.

5. The following named officers and enlisted men distinguished themselves in this headquarters:

<u>SILVER STAR</u>	<u>BRONZE STAR</u>	<u>PURPLE HEART</u>
1st Lt Henry W. Hays	Capt Owen E. Woodruff Jr.	Tec 4 George E. Chandler
Sgt Forrest L. Grobe	Pfc John Lloyd	Tec 5 Jesus L. Paderez
Tec 5 Ira C. Jones	Pvt Paul Nichols	Pvt Earl N. Young
Pvt Ode J. Garner	Pvt John H. Hipsher	Tec 5 Earl D. Applegarth

(P)

6. The following named officer and enlisted men in this headquarters were evacuated as battle casualties:

1st Lt. Aaron Sosnow
 Tec 4 George E. Chandler
 Tec 5 Jesus L. Paderez

For the Commanding General:

J. F. Hart
J. F. HART
Lt. Col., Inf.,
Ex, Off .

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS
COMBAT COMMAND "B"
7TH ARMORED DIVISION
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

3 November 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO : Commanding General, 7th Armored Division, APO 257, U. S. Army.

1. In compliance with Administrative Memorandum #31, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, 21 July 1944, par. 2, and request Commanding General, 7th Armored Division, the following "Battle Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by Brigadier General ROBERT W. HASBROUCK.

3. On 1 October 44, Combat Command "B" was composed of the following troops:
31st Tank Battalion
23rd Armored Infantry Battalion
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
B Co., 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
B Co., 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion

Combat Command "B" Headquarters located vicinity ST ANTHONIS, HOLLAND and the Combat Command was in the process of attacking South from a line ST ANTHONIS - BOXMEER. The mission of the Combat Command was to clean out enemy resistance on the West side of the MAAS River; bypassing known centers of resistance, VENRAY - VENLO. Enemy resistance in that zone had previously been reported to be light and not very well organized. Combat Command "B" did not complete the mission because resistance in their zone was found to be well organized and dug in. They were stopped vicinity VORTUM by mines, AT guns, bazookas, and infantry dug in in the woods. Combat Command "B" was relieved in this sector by CC "R" and reverted to Division Reserve. Combat Command was assembled 1 Mi North of ST ANTHONIS, awaiting orders. During the period that CC "B" was in reserve, they were responsible for patrolling to the North to contact the British and to the East, BOXMEER - VORTUM. 6 Oct 44 CC "B" relieved CC "A" in their sector just North of OVERLOON, relief was accomplished during hours of darkness. The enemy counter-attacked frequently but these attacks were broken up by artillery fire. Very little change in the situation 6-7 Oct 44. On 7 Oct 44, CC "B" was relieved by Br troops, ordered to defend a line to include DEURNE - ASTEN. Combat Command was divided into two (2) forces as follow:

FORCE RHEA	FORCE ERLENBUSCH
23 (-B)	31 (-C)
C/31	B/23
B/33	A/82
A/87	B/87
C/203	B/ 203

Force RHEA occupied sector in vicinity ASTEN and Force ERLENBUSCH vicinity DEURNE. Road blocks were set up and extensive patrolling was carried out. There was little enemy activity up to the 12th of October except for artillery fire received by elements of Force RHEA which was occupying the town of MEIJEL.

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On 12 October 44 Force RHEA was relieved by the 38th Armd Inf Bn and all troops 'CC "B" were moved North of the DEURNE - AMERIKA railroad. Also on 12 October 44, CC "B" put on a diversionary demonstration to assist the attack of the British who were attempting to take VENRAY. The diversionary attack consisted of a two hour artillery preparation fired on all known or suspected enemy concentrations to our front. Included in the fire plan was indirect fire by the following units of the Combat Command:

2 Med Tk Co's 31st Tk Bn
 B/814 TD Bn
 AG Plat/31
 AG Plat/23

This was in addition to the fires of the 434th Armd FA Bn and the 774th FA Bn. For the demonstration, each AG and artillery piece fired 100 rounds per gun, and each Med Tk and TD fired 50 rounds per gun. At the same time feints were made by the 23rd Inf under cover of smoke screens at crossing the DEURNE canal in two places. On 13 Oct 44 the firing demonstration was repeated. On 16 Oct 44 the Combat Command attacked East along the DEURNE - VENRAY road to establish a bridgehead across the DEURNE canal and continue after the bridge had been built to effect a junction with the 3rd Inf Div (Br) in the area West of VENRAY. The attack was made by the 23rd Inf supported by the 434th FA Bn, and 31st Tank Bn and B/814 TD firing indirect fire. Bridgehead was established and bridge completed during the night 16-17 Oct 44. During 17 Oct 11th AD (Br) moved thru the bridgehead established by CC "B" and took over responsibility for the bridgehead, releasing the 23rd Inf to carry out a new mission which was to attack South on the East aide of the DEURNE canal, establish a bridgehead across the DEURNE canal on the DEURNE - AMERIKA road. Their attack was supported by direct fire from B/31 Tank Bn. The bridgehead was completed on 19 Oct 44. The primary delaying factor during the attack was the boggy nature of the terrain, which made it extremely difficult for the tanks to maintain close support with the Infantry. It is believed that close support of tanks during this attack had a demoralizing effect on the enemy infantry which was dug in in this sector and was in a large measure responsible for the taking of 151 prisoners during this operation. 20 Oct 44 23rd Inf was relieved in the bridgehead by the 48th Inf and CC "B" was assembled vicinity ZOMEREN in Division Reserve. 21 to 24 Oct inclusive CC "B" remained in Division Reserve. This period was utilized for intensive training to correct deficiencies which had shown up in previous operations. On 25 Oct CC "B" relieved CC "R" in the bridgehead across the DEURNE canal on the DEURNE - AMERIKA road, with the mission of holding their present positions, maintaining contact with the British 11th Armd Div on our Left. Activity during this operation was confined to extensive patrolling. On 27 October 44 CC "B" was relieved in the bridgehead by the British and ordered to attack abreast of CC "R" on division order astride the DEURNE - MEIJEL road, with the mission of retaking the town of MEIJEL and driving the Germans back across the canal. Attack was launched on 28 Oct with Combat Command split into two forces. One force consisting of one Co. Inf, one Co. Tks (Med) attacked East from LEISEL to seize the enemy held bridge across the canal at HOOGBROUG. The other Force consisting of the remainder of the Inf supported by Med Tks attacked South astride the DEURNE - MEIJEL road to take MEIJEL. Neither force reached their objective that day. At night were ordered to take up defensive positions and hold ground gained. 29 Oct enemy tanks and infantry attacked driving the force which had been moving on HOOGBROUG back to LEISEL. In the afternoon, 44th Brig, 15th Div (Sc) began relief CC "B" in this sector. Tanks were withdrawn first and the infantry broke contact during darkness and withdrew. The whole Combat Command moved to an assembly area vicinity WEERT to reorganize and await further orders. 30 October CC "B" was ordered relieve CC "A" in their sector. Composition of CC "B" for this operation was as follows: 48th AIB, 31st Tk Bn, C/814 TD Bn, C/203 AAA with 434th FA Bn in direct support. Combat Command zone was divided into two sections and the CC was divided into

two task forces, each responsible for a sector of the Combat Command Zone. Task Force CHAPPUIS, consisting of one Bn Inf minus one Co, one Plat TD, one Co Med Tks was assigned to a sector where it was believed the enemy most likely would attack. Task Force ERLENBUSCH consisting of one Tk Bn minus one Med Tk Co., one Co Inf, 1 Co TD minus 1 Plat was assigned the other sector. Combat command reserve consisted of 1 Btry 203 AAA. At about 2000 30 October B/33 was attached to CC "B". One platoon was assigned to each of the Task Forces and the company minus two platoons was added to the Combat Command Reserve. There was no change until the 31st of October when the 4th Armd Brig (Br) was ordered to take over the Combat Command "B" zone. Relief was begun on the night of 31 October 1944. During the relief, 434th Armd FA Bn remained in direct support until the relief was completed. On 2400 31st October Brig. Gen., HASBROUCK was relieved as commander of Combat Command "B" and assumed command of 7th Armored Division. Lt. Col. RICHARD D CHAPPUIS assumed command of Combat Command "B".

4. 1st Lt. AARON SOSNOW formerly a member of this command was awarded the Bronze Star for gallantry in action. The action for which this award was made took place while a member of this command.

5. Major FRANK J RYDER JR (S-3) was evacuated as a non-battle casualty on 13 October 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

(signed)
J. F. Hart
Lt. Col., Inf
Ex. 0.

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS
COMBAT COMMAND "B"
7TH ARMORED DIVISION
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

1 December 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of November, 1944.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C. (Through Channels).

1. In compliance with Memorandum No. 14, Headquarters XIII Corps, dated 17 November 1944 and Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters 7th Armored Division, dated, 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by the following officers:

Lt. Col. RICHARD D. CHAPPUIS - 1-2 Nov 44.
Colonel BRUCE C. CLARKE - 2-30 Nov. 44.

3. On 1 November 44, Combat Command "B" was composed of the following troops:
31st Tank Battalion
48th Armored Infantry Battalion
B Co., 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
C Co., 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion
C Co., 203 AAA Battalion
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion - Direct Support

At the beginning of the period Combat Command "B", with CP in the vicinity of WEERT, was in assembly areas " of WEERT in direct support of the 4th Armd Brig (Br) which was holding a line generally along the WESSEM Canal. During the afternoon of 1 November 44, the 153th Brig of the 15th Scottish Division completed relief of the 4th Armd Brig (Br) and, according to plan, Combat Command "B" was released to Division control. At 1730 48th Armd Inf Bn was relieved from attachment to Combat Command "B" and attached to Combat Command "A". At 1745 instructions were issued by Hq. 7th AD, to CC "B", to rove from its location vicinity WEERT to assembly positions in the vicinity of HEUGTEN. At 0050 2 Nov 44, verbal instructions to be confirmed later by written instructions returned C/203 AAA to parent unit control. Combat Command "B" remained in Division reserve and devoted time to maintenance and training. Colonel BRUCE C. CLARKE reported to take command of Combat Command "B", 2 November 44. At 0050 3 Nov 44, B/33 was relieved from attachment CC "B" and attached to CC "R". At 1155 4 Nov 44 the 17th Tank Bn (-D & AG) was detached from CC "R" and attached to CC "B". During the period 4-7 November 44, time was spent in the execution of problems, stressing the principles of a meeting engagement. On 6 November 44 a Memorandum Letter, subject, "Billeting Details", Hq 7th Armd Div., was received stating that the 7th Armored Division would move to an assembly area S of the Army boundary. Composition of the units of the Division in the unit areas after arrival at the Division Collecting Point gave CC "B" the 31st Tank Bn, and the 23rd Armd Inf Bn. By Operations Instructions dated 062300 Nov 44, 1/A/203 AA was attached to CC "B" for the movement South. Combat Command "B" was to be prepared to move 080700 November 44. On 7 November 44 another Tank-Infantry problem was held using troops of the 17th and 31st Tank Battalions. Co. D and AG/17 were returned to 17th Tk Bn 071700.

S-E-C-R-E-T

On 8 November 44, Combat Command "B" composed of 31st Tank Bn, 17th Tank Bn, C/814 TD Bn, and 1/A/203 AAA moved to new assembly area SE of MAASTRICHT. Head of column crossed IP 0730. Tail of column cleared IP at 0858. at /858. 17th Tank Bn, C/814 TD Bn, and 1/A/203 AAA relieved of CC "B" control upon arrival at assembly areas. During the period 9 November 44 to 20 November, CC "B", with CP in the vicinity of BRUGSTERBOSCH, carried out training, maintenance and rehabilitation. On 21 November 44, billeting parties left at 0800 to reconnoiter new assembly areas in the vicinity W of HEERLEN. of On 23 November 44, in accordance with Operations Instructions 22 Nov 44, Hq. 7th Armd Div., CC "B" moved in three serials with the 31st Tank Bn, 23rd Armd Inf Bn, B/38 Inf Bn, B/33 Engr Bn, C/33 Armd Engr Bn, C/814 TD Bn, and 1/Rcn/814 TD to Division assembly area W of HEERLEN. During the period 24-26 November 44 training was conducted by Combat Command "B". Problems stressing the cooperation of Tanks and Infantry were held. On 27 Nov 44 C/33 Armd Engr Bn and B/38 Armd Inf Bn were detached CC "B" and attached to CC "R" per verbal instructions, Headquarters 7th Armd Div. 1/C/814 TD detached per Operations instructions 271500 Nov 44. The period from 27 Nov 44 to 30 Nov 44 was devoted in training. Tank-Infantry-Engineer problems were held with the view of devising ways and means of crossing AT ditches and natural obstacles.

4. The following named officers and enlisted men were awarded the Bronze Star Medal:

Major JOHN A. WILLIAMS
Captain HENRY G. ELLETT JR
T/Sgt. Nelson Jean Jr.
Tec 5 Millard A. Quigley.

The Certificate of Merit was awarded to all enlisted men eligible for this award.

5. T/Sgt. John A. Powers was appointed Second Lieutenant by a battlefield appointment and assumed the duties of Communication Officer.

(Signed)
BRUCE C. CLARKE
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
Commanding

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS
COMBAT COMMAND "B"
7TH ARMORED DIVISION
A P.O. 257, U.S. ARMY

1 January 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of December, 1944.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C. (Through Channels).

1. In compliance with Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by Brigadier General BRUCE C. CLARKE.

On 10 December 1944 Brigadier General Clarke received word of his promotion from Colonel to Brigadier General.

3. On 1 December 1944, Combat Command "B" was composed of the following units:
23rd Armored Infantry Battalion
31st Tank Battalion
B Co., 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
B Troop, 87th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron
C Co., 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion
D Co., 203rd AAA Battalion

The command was in the vicinity of KLIMMEN, HOLLAND. At 010950 Dec 44, a telephone message from the Chief of Staff was received which instructed CC "B" to alert all troops to move on short notice. The troops of Combat Command "B" were to be used in the taking of LINNICH, GERMANY, and the high ground NW of LINNICH in the event that these objectives were not secured by the attacks being made by 102nd and 84th Infantry Divisions. On 2 Dec 44, CC "B" moved from the vicinity of KLIMMEN, HOLLAND, to the vicinity GEREONSWEILER, IMMENDORFF, PUFFENDORFF, and SETTERICH, in accordance with Operations Instructions, 7th Armd Division. CC "B" moved in three serials starting at 0700 and closing in bivouac 1040. Route followed was KLIMMEN - HEERLEN - SHAESBERG - RIMBURG - UBACH - BAESWEILER - SETTERICH, to assembly areas. Upon arrival in the assembly areas it was confirmed that troops of the 102nd Inf Division and the 84th Inf Div had taken the objectives of LINNICH and the high ground to the NE. The Combat Command was held in its assembly area in readiness to perform other missions as required.

On 3 Dec 44 two Plots of C/814 TD were placed in position on the ridge directly North of GEREONSWEILER to be ready to repel any mechanized threat. 31st Tank Battalion and 23rd Armd Inf Battalion reconnoitered for routes N of GEREONSWEILER in the event that CC "B" should be given the mission of taking BRACHELEN. Instructions were received that Combat Command "B" should be prepared for this mission the day following the blowing of the dams on the ROER River South of DUREN. On 5 Dec 44, CC "B" Hq moved from the vicinity IMMENDORFF to the vicinity of SETTERICH. On 7 December 44, unit commanders continued their reconnaissance for proposed attack on BRACHELEN.

The 38th Armd Inf Battalion less 1 Co. was attached to CC "B" effective 070600 December 44. 8 Dec 44, CC "B" moved its CP from vicinity SETTERICH to MERKSTEIN. The remaining Co. of 38th Armd Inf Bn was attached to CC "B". Preparations were continued for the attack on BRACHELEN. On 10 December 44 CP CC B moved from location MERKSTEIN to vicinity 1½ Mi E UBACH.

As the plan for the attack on BRACHELEN progressed, two plans were completed: One - BRACHELEN was to be attacked on the 2nd morning following the breaching of the Dams S of DUREN; Two - BRACHELEN was to be attacked as a part of the Corps effort to the NE. The plan of CC "B" for attack on BRACHELEN was essentially the same in either case. CC "B" plan was to use two forces: Force ERLENBUSCH consisting of the 31st Tk Bn, 23rd AIB, 1/B/33 Engrs was to advance on the Left of the zone and proceed rapidly into the objective. The infantry was to remain mounted during this operation. Force FULLER consisting of the 38th AIB less 1 Co. was to advance to the Right of our zone dismounted, take OELDREISCH and enter the town from the South. On the night before the operation Force FULLER was to move close to the Line of Departure and take up positions directly behind the front line elements of 84th and 102nd Infantry Divisions. Elements of CC "B" not in these two forces were to support the attack and be in CC reserve near GEREONSWEILER.

Higher headquarters then postponed the proposed BRACHELEN operation. On 15 Dec 44, B/87 reverted to squadron control at 1000. On 16 December D/203 AAA reverted to parent unit control. Plans were made and reconnaissance carried out to effect an exchange of areas between CC "B" in the vicinity of UBACH and CC "A" in the vicinity of SHERPENSEEL.

At 1800 16 Dec word was received that the 7th Armored Division would prepare for movement immediately to the VIII Corps, 1st Army, vicinity BASTOGNE. General Clarke and Captain Woodruff (S-3) left immediately for VIII Corps Headquarters in BASTOGNE, BELGIUM. For this move CC "B" consisted of the 31st Tank Battalion, 23rd Armored Inf Bn and B/33 Armd Engr Bn. CC "B" crossed IP at KUNRADE at 0540 and arrived in new location at VIELSALM at approximately 1100 17 December 44. In the meantime General Clarke had seen the CG VIII Corps at BASTOGNE and had been acquainted with the general situation and had been directed to proceed to 106th Inf. Div Hdqtrs at ST VITH and give that Division assistance.

At 1200 17 Dec the situation in the ST VITH area was critical. The 14th Cavalry Group on the North of 106th Inf Div had been driven back to about a N - S line thru ST VITH. Their situation was one of confusion and extremely hazy. To the East of ST VITH the 422nd and 423rd Combat Teams of the 106th Inf Div were cut off to the SE of SCHOENBERG. Communications with them was sporadic by radio. To the South of ST VITH, CC "B", 9th Armd Div was attacking to try to retake WINTERSPELT. To its South, Combat Team 424, 106 Inf Div, was holding a line. To their south the situation was hazy. There was practically no tie-in of the units mentioned with units on their flanks.

The CG, 106 Div urged an immediate attack East from ST VITH to take and hold SCHOENBERG, then turn South to provide escape corridors for the two surrounded Combat Teams. This was prepared for and plans were made which were approved by CG, 7th Armd Div by phone about 1300. However, due to the congestion on the roads caused by units and vehicles streaming to the rear, especially artillery, it was impossible to get troops of CC "B" from the vicinity of VIELSALM to ST VITH in time to launch the attack that afternoon.

In the meantime the enemy had approached ST VITH from the East and was only three (3) or four (4) thousand yards from the town. The 106th Infantry Division at about 1530 sent elements of Hqtrs Co, 81st Engineer Bn; 168th Engineer Bn less 1 Co; and 1 Plat of Infantry formerly used as CP guard to block the road to the East of ST VITH. The Division made available to CC "B" the 275th FA (A) in position at OBR EMMELS: and there was some Corps Artillery still in support.

The Executive Officer, CC "B" who had marched the Combat Command from the North had been informed to send forward CC "B" and some other 7th Armd Division troops as fast as he could. The first to arrive was the 87th Cav Rcn Sqdn. It less one (1) Troop was sent to the NE of ST VITH in the WALLEROODE area to contact the 14th. Cav Group and to protect and screen the left flank. The next to arrive was the 38th Armd Inf Bn less 1 Co. It was put to the East of ST VITH and Lt. Col. Fuller, 38th AIB was given command of that sector including elements of the 106th Inf Div in place. He was given also B/87 and later on that evening was reinforced with B/23 and A/31. The CG 106th Inf Div turned over the defense of the ST VITH sector to CC "B", 7th. Armd Div. The remainder of CC "B" (31st Tk Bn (-), 23rd AIB (-), B33 Engr Bn) closed in assembly area to the West of ST VITH. Before midnight 17 - 18 Dec 44, CC "B" was disposed as shown on position overlay 17 Dec 44 attached. Later that evening it was learned that the 14th Cav Group had withdrawn to RECHT and beyond, and that BORN was not held. The C.O., 14th Cav Group was directed by the CG, 106th Inf Div to reoccupy BORN, but this was not accomplished.

At 180800 Dec 44 the enemy began an attack from the NE and E towards ST VITH. Two (2) Med Tk Co's from the 14th Tk Bn, 9th Armd Div and A/811 TD Bn were sent to reinforce the 87th Cav Rcn Sqdn line. B/31 attacked HUNNINGEN from the West while C/31 attacked it from the South. Later C/31 was moved E of ST VITH to support that portion of the line. B/31 was withdrawn W of ST VITH and placed in Combat Command reserve. By 1100 this attack had been stopped and the line was restored to its original position. At 1200 A/814 was attached CC "B" and was immediately sent to Force Fuller. D/87 was detached CC "B" and attached to CC "A". At 181530 Dec 44 a second attack estimated to be a battalion of infantry, was launched against our positions E of ST VITH. This attack was repulsed. A readjustment of troops was made at approximately 1600 and two (2) Med Co's of the 14th Tk Bn, 9th Armd Div plus A/811 TD Bn were withdrawn from the area N of ST VITH and B/31 was sent to replace them. At 2130 the A/87 area (HUNNINGEN) was attacked by enemy tanks. The attack was repulsed with no casualties. Another attack on A/87 at 2230 was repulsed with no casualties. Continued noises and troop movements were heard throughout the night. At 181700 Dec 44 the CP of CC "B" was moved from ST VITH to KROMBACH.

At 190930 Dec 44 an attack developed from E to W, North of HUNNINGEN. The attack moved West and then turned South. Difficulty was experienced in firing due to haze. By 1300 the situation had quieted. At 1355 the 17th Tk Bn, reinforced, (in vicinity of RECHT) was attached to us and we were informed that we would defend a sector between the 9th Armd Div on our Right and the road between RECHT and SART LE ST VITH inclusive. At 1510 the 434th Armd FA Bn and two (2) Btrys 965th FA En were attached to CC "B" and placed in position. The only artillery support on 18 Dec 44 and 19 Dec 44 prior to the arrival of the 434th Armd FA Bn was the 275th FA Bn (A), The Corps Arty observers left during the night of 17 - 18 Dec 44. The

965th FA Bn (-) and the 275th FA Bn, and 434th FA Bn were placed under the control of C.O. 434th FA Bn. See position overlay for disposition of troops at 192000 Dec 44. In the afternoon of 19 Dec 44 a conference was held between CG, CC "B", 9th Armd Div and CG, CC "B", 7th Armd Div. At this conference it was pointed out that the combat command of the 9th was ahead of a stream and a RR South of ST VITH and its only exit was thru ST VITH. In case ST VITH should be lost, CC "B" of the 9th Armd Div would be cut off. Therefore, it was agreed that CC "B" of the 9th Armd Div would withdraw thru ST VITH the night of 19 - 20 Dec 44 and occupy its original front only in rear of the RR and stream running S of ST VITH. This withdrawal was accomplished without difficulty. Close liaison was maintained between the two (2) Combat Command during the whole period in the vicinity of ST VITH.

During the night of 19-20 Dec 44 some infiltration was reported by 17th Tk Bn at RECHT. At 208000 Dec 44 instructions were issued to the 17th Tk Bn to withdraw to RODT. They were instructed to leave a Company plus a platoon of Inf in position N and E of RODT to tie in between the 31st Tk Bn and CC "A". Enemy concentrations of tanks and Inf collected in WALLEROODE and NDR EMMELS. Heavy artillery concentrations were placed on these areas and the threat was quieted. At 1050 the 17th Tk Bn was moving into its assigned positions. At 1145 the 17th Tk Bn (-1 Med Co) plus C 38 (-) was ordered to go to BOUVIGNY to constitute a part of the Division Reserve.

During the afternoon of 20 Dec 44 enemy columns were reported moving from MEDELL to BORN. At 1650 enemy tanks into OBR EMMELS and forced out a Lt Tank Plat on outpost there, but the forces on the high ground to the South held firmly.

On the night of 20 - 21 Dec 44 approximately 68 men and 2 officers from the two (2) surrounded Regiments of the 106th Inf Div infiltrated back through our lines. Those men were assembled in the schoolhouse in ST VITH and given rations and such other supplies as they needed. They constituted a reserve to be called upon when needed. During the night of 21 - 22 Dec 44 these men were put into the line to aid in the final defense of ST VITH.

At 210400 Dec 44, outposts reported indications that a German tank and infantry attack was massing in the vicinity of NDR EMMELS. Continued noise of movement was heard in NDR EMMELS and OBR EMMELS during the remainder of the early morning. An attack on B/23 by enemy infantry at 1100 was repulsed at 1115. There was continued artillery fire during the day. At 1610 the 38th AIB received an attack from enemy infantry following an artillery preparation. This attack was repulsed at 1710. Continued pressure was exerted by the enemy on all sections of our line, with the main effort being made on the Right flank of B/23. A concerted tank - infantry drive finally penetrated the right flank of B/23 and at 1930 the enemy was behind B/23. Attacks were launched simultaneously along the SCHOENBERG - ST VITH road against B/87 and from the NE against A/38. By 2000 our lines had been penetrated in at least three (3) points. The battle continued until approximately 2200 when the Combat Commander seeing that a portion of his position was no longer tenable issued the order to withdraw the center of the line to the high ground W of ST VITH. (See overlay showing successive lines of defense attack). Those elements of the command which were cut off E of the town were ordered to attack through the town or North of it and join the forces which were establishing a new defense line. During the time this concerted drive was being exerted on our E flank the troops on the N were not heavily engaged although there was a definite West of ST VITH on this substantial North flank.

and hold there. The ^{????}³ of the defensive line (from HUNNINGEN to the ST VITH - WALLERODE road) was to swing back to the West of ST VITH and establish a line for the elements E of ST B of VITH to fall back thru. This was accomplished. All through the night of 21 - 22 December 44 stragglers were coming back from the troops which had been overrun E of ST VITH. Officer control posts had been set up on all roads to intercept these men and send them to the HINDERHAUSEN area. This was done and by early forenoon of 22 Dec 44 about 150 had been gathered up. At dark 21 Dec 44 an enemy infiltrating force had worked into HINDERHAUSEN coming from the North through the CC "A" sector West of RODT. A light tank attack drove them out into the woods in the early evening.

During the forenoon of 22 Dec 44 this force reinforced by tanks attacked RODT from the West and got in behind our left flank. This required that the left flank back to clean out this force and protect HINDERHAUSEN which was our emergency exit route to COMMANSTER and VIELSALM. This was done and the whole line was adjusted to conform. C/814 TD was attached CC "B", and was emplaced supporting the Left of the line. By dark the line was established again and was being strengthened by the addition of 17th Tk Bn (-) on our South flank to tie in to with CC "B" 9th Armd Div. Contact with CC "A" on the NW was lost. At 220700 Dec 24, the CP of CC "B" was moved to COMMANSTER but the CG, CC "B" spent the day forward with the Battalion Commanders. During this day all unessential vehicles were sent to the rear. By nightfall the line was held with C.O. 87th Rcn Sqdn (Lt. Col. Boyland) commanding on the left, C.O. 31st Tk Bn (Lt. Col. Erlenbusch) commanding in the center, and C.O. 17th Tk Bn (Lt. Col. Wemple) on the South. The boundary between Wemple and Erlenbusch was the RR line the running SW from ST VITH.

At 1845 enemy tanks and infantry attacked along the RR towards KROMBACH. Infantry broke through and occupied the town. Headquarters 31st Tk Bn and 87th Cav Rcn Sqdn which were in the town withdrew to BRAUNLAUF. Wemple was able to fight his way out the next morning saving most of his command. During the night an effort to obtain a company of Infantry from the 424th Inf, then attached to CC "B" 9th Armd Div, to counterattack KROMBACH was unsuccessful. It was used later to defend BRAUNLAUF during the withdrawal.

At 230456 Dec 44 instructions to withdraw to W of VIELSALM were received. Later, H-hour was set at 230600 Dec 44. The plan of withdrawal was to withdraw Wemple and all other troops and vehicles at KROMBACH and SW thereof thru BEHOE to VIELSALM. The Infantry Company of the 424th Inf at BROWNLAUF was to be brought out with us. This was done. North of KROMBACH all troops and vehicles were to come out thru HINDERHAUSEN to COMMANSTER thence to VIELSALM. A covering force under Boylan consisting of a tank company (Medium), a tank destroyer company and an infantry company or its equivalent was to hold HINDERHAUSEN until all other troops had left and then fall back with maximum delay. This was done. The 965 and 275 artillery battalions had pulled back the night before. The 434th FA Bn left just ahead of the covering force giving it fire support as it withdrew under heavy pressure.

Due to a frozen road between HINDERHAUSEN and COMMANSTER the withdrawal was facilitated all practically all vehicles were evacuated. So far as is known no men were left. behind. The troops of Combat Command were originally given instructions to assemble at LIERNEUX, but later other instructions were received and the assembly area was changed to the vicinity of XHORIS. The Combat Command being closed in the vicinity of XHORIS at 232300 December 1944. Units were instructed to reorganize and refuel and prepare for action in the morning.

³ This word is obliterated by a hole punch.

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At 240800 December 1944 the Commanding General reported to Division Headquarters for instructions and sent back instructions to immediately alert the command for movement to the vicinity of FAYS to take up a defensive position. The 17th Tank Bn was detached from Combat Command "B" and attached to Combat Command Reserve. The order of march was 38th AIB, 31st Tank Bn and 23rd AIB and Headquarters Combat Command "B". B/33 Engineers moved as a separate unit. 38th, AIB commenced moving at 241000 and all units closed in assembly area at 1540, with no stragglers. At 1530 the 23rd AIB was detached Combat Command "B" and attached Combat Command "A". Combat Command "B" established four (4) road blocks to supplement the defensive positions set up by Combat Command "A" and sent forces to guard three (3) bridges over the LOURTHE RIVER at BOMAL and to the East.

At 242400 December 1944 the Combat Command was notified of the breakthrough which occurred during Combat Command "A" 's withdrawal from the South of MANHAY and steps were taken to strengthen our road blocks and to alert the Command for immediate movement in the event that this attack became too serious.

On the 25th December 1944 it was decided that Combat Command "B" would attack to recapture the town of MANHAY at the same time the whole Division line would move forward. The attack was launched at 251450 and, although our tanks did not reach the town of MANHAY, due to circumstances out of our control, the attack allowed our infantry to enter it temporarily and the whole line advanced to better positions overlooking the town. On the morning of 26 December 1944 the Combat Command remained in Division Reserve.

At approximately 261200 December 1944 the Combat Commander made a visit to the front and found the West flank of the Division front to be in a disorganized state and fallen back. The Combat Commander took charge of the situation and placed one (1) Co of the 38th AIB and one (1) Trp of Rcn with a light tank platoon attached into the line. At 261500 Combat Command "B" assumed responsibility for the West half of the Division sector and the 424th (-3rd Bn) 106 Inf Div was attached to Combat Command "B". On the 27th of December, Combat Command "B" moved forward, made contact with friendly troops on the right and left and straightened the line.

Officers from the 75th Infantry Division reported to Combat Command "B" on the 28th of December to make arrangements for relief of our troops in the Combat Command "B" sector. Due to reports of strong enemy attacks this relief was postponed. On the night of 29 December the 75th Infantry Division was ordered to take over the Combat Command "B" sector, and Combat Command "B" was to move to new assembly area to the West of HARZE. The relief of our troops, except C/814 TD, was completed by 300400 December 1944 and H-hour for the movement to the new assembly area was set at 300445 December 1944. Upon withdrawal the following changes in composition of Combat Command "B" became effective: Detached from Combat Command "B": 31st Tank Bn, 38th AIB, B/33 Engr, 87th Rcn Sqdn, 424 Inf Regt (-) and the 434th FA Bn; attached Combat Command "B" 40th Tank Bn, 48th AIB, and A/33 Engr Bn. The 31st of December 1944 was devoted to reorganization and rehabilitation. The 40th Tank Bn was detached from Combat Command "B" and attached to Combat Command Reserve. The 31st Tank Bn was detached Combat Command Reserve and attached to Combat Command "B".

4. 1st Lt. FREDERICK A. POPE, assigned to this command 19 December 44 and announced as Aide-de-Camp to Brigadier General BRUCE C. CLARKE.

5. Captain ROBERT H. BARTH died of wounds received in action near the vicinity of SAMREE, BELGIUM, on 21 December 44.

6. The following named battle casualties were sustained during the month:

S/Sgt. Sammie L. Varnado
Tec 4 Fred C. Lee
Pfc Hill T. Holder

7. Tec 5 Jesus L. Paderez rejoined and reassigned from 12th Evac Hosp 6 December 44.

8. Pvt. Earl N. Young, Detch Serv to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas.

9. Sgt. Joseph J. Berg and Tec 5 Montel F. Bachert Trfd to Div Hq Co.

(signed)
BRUCE C. CLARKE
Brig. General, U. S. A.
Commanding

Incl-

1. Annex #1 w/overlay
2. Position Overlay, Hq CC "B", 17 Dec 44
3. Position Overlay, Hq CC "B", 1920000 Dec 44
4. Overlay of Defense of ST VITH by CC "B", 7 AD, 17 - 23 Dec 44.

HEADQUARTERS
COMBAT COMMAND "B"
7TH ARMORED DIVISION
A P.O. 257, U.S. ARMY

1 January 1945

Annex #1 to After Action Report, Month of December, 1944.

The following comments on the operations at ST. VITH from 17 - 23 December 44 are given to permit a clearer understanding of the action there:

- a. The sky was overcast and the weather was rainy. The nights were long and dark, visibility was generally low. Until the night 22 - 23 December the roads and fields were very muddy. Many of the vehicles lost were due to their being stuck in the fields and could not be recovered under fire.
- b. There was no air support in this sector during the period 17 - 23 December.
- c. Our Artillery liaison planes were not available to us until the morning of 23 December.
- d. Traffic congestion during 17 and 18 December was extreme. No organization to handle such a contingency was in evidence.
- e. The withdrawal of Corps Artillery on the 17 and 18 of December clogged the roads and left this command practically without support at the critical time. It blocked the getting forward of needed troops.
- f. There seemed to be confusion as to the situation in headquarters above our Division. At one time Combat Command "B", 9th Armored Division, who were without knowledge as to whom they were attached, received word to withdraw from the line to protect VIII Corps Headquarters. Such a move would have left our flank open. This was averted by the Commanding General, 7th Armored Division, stepping into the picture with positive orders to remain and hold.
- g. The situation was made critical by the lack of a suitable and reliable road net. The escape route between HINDERHAUSEN and COMMANSTER was almost impassable in wet weather. It had been previously reconnoitered and worked on by personnel from a FA Battalion. On the morning of the withdrawal, luckily it was frozen. The route thru BRAUNLAUF was threatened from the East. During the morning of the withdrawal there was fighting in the town. This route had to be kept under constant repair by Combat Command Engineer Troops.
- h. The serious threat to our supply route in the rear and the subsequent cutting off of supplies was of real concern to us. During the break-through of the night of 21 - 22 December, the artillery was ordered to fire until 400 rounds were left in each 105 Bn and 150 rounds in the 155 Bn; then to hold the rest to cover our subsequent withdrawal. Fortunately, more 105 ammunition was received the next morning.
- i. The Combat Command Supply Control Point under the Combat Command S-4 was operating with the service companies of the units of the Combat Command in the vicinity of SAMREE. It not only got up all the supplies that were available to us, but gathered up, organized, and protected all the rear elements of the Combat Command. Rear elements of other Divisions units relied upon it for information and assistance as well. This supply control point installation rendered a real service and justified its existence many times over.
- j. Up to the breakthrough of 21 - 22 December we had knocked out 21 enemy tanks, inflicted other heavy losses; all with a negligible loss to ourselves. This is a tribute to the alertness and efficiency of the units of the Combat Command. Up until that time none of our tanks or tank destroyers had been lost.

k. The withdrawal was orderly even though it was carried out under heavy pressure and was started with a bare minimum of oral instructions to unit liaison officers. Time for its final planning was short although such a possibility was envisioned for some time and disposition of non-essential vehicles made accordingly.

l. The tendency to use telephone exclusively during static situations, allowing the use of CW radio with Slidex to lapse, reduced the ability to use this latter communication agency with facility.

m. An Armored Division is not primarily suited for defense, especially a static defense. When its mobility is gone its effectiveness is greatly reduced. In making plans for its employment, great thought must be given to terrain, road net and footing conditions. If these are all unfavorable for armored use, the results cannot be satisfactory. Such was the case in trying to set up the complicated, perimeter, cordon defense as ordered by Corps, on 21 December 44. Overlay of ordered disposition of troops is attached. In studying the map of the area it will be noted that the troops were to be disposed surrounding a forest thru which there was a paucity of roads. There was practically no possibility of being able to shift forces to meet a threat at any point. How units were to be supplied in such a situation is not understood. Air supply of such a large and scattered force would have been most difficult. Without supply the force would have been through in two or three days.

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS
COMBAT COMMAND "B"
7TH ARMORED DIVISION
A.P.O. 257⁴, U. S. ARMY

1 February 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of January, 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D.C. (Through Channels).

1. In compliance with Administrative memorandum No. 44, headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted.

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by brigadier General BRUCE C. CLARKE, 016 068, U. S. A.

3. On 1 January 1945, Combat Command "B" as part of the 7th Armored Division was in XVIII Corps (Airborne) Reserve with troops billeted in the vicinity of WERBOMONT, Belgium. The Combat Command CP was located at GRIMONSTER, Belgium. Troops of CC "B" at that time consisted of the following:

31st Tank Battalion
48th Armored Infantry Battalion
Co. "A", 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion

The Combat Command organized and conducted a series of small unit problems, consisting of a tank platoon, an infantry company and an engineer platoon. This training continued until 091400 January when warning orders were received to be prepared to move to an assembly area vicinity of SPA, Belgium on two (2) hours notice, after 101000 January 45.

At 101300 Jan 45 billeting parties were sent to the vicinity of SPA, Belgium to reconnoiter and select billets. The following tentative troop list was set up with attachments to become effective upon Division Order; after arrival in the new assembly area:

31st Tank Battalion
48th Armored Infantry Battalion
509th Parachute Infantry Battalion
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
Co. "A", 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
Co. "C", 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion
1 Platoon, Company "C", 203rd AAA Battalion

Movement of troops did not begin until 11 Jan 45 and with troops coming from several areas the Combat Command was not completely closed in the new assembly area until 131300 January 45.

At a meeting of Senior CP Tactical Commanders 13 January 45 the plan for the employment of the 7th Armored Division was discussed. The 7th A.D. was given the mission of passing thru the 1st Infantry Division when the 1st Inf Div reached a line just north of the towns IVELDINGEN - EIBERTINGEN to push South to VITH and seize all ground within its zone. The 7th Armored Division was to operate with Combat Commands abreast - CC "A" on the East, CC "B" on the West. The plan of CC "B" for accomplishing its mission is attached as inclosure #1.

⁴ A crease through this page obscures several characters on the image but which are in the transcript.

On 14 Jan 45 reconnaissance of new assembly positions vicinity WEISMES was initiated. The 434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion displaced forward to the vicinity of WALK closing at 1330.

On 15 January reconnaissance was continued. C/33 was made available to CC "B" for use in clearing assembly positions of mines. C/33 moved to and began sweeping and clearing roads in the WEISMES area.

During the night of 16-17 Jan 45, 509th Parachute Infantry Bn sent patrols thru the 119th and 120th Inf Regts, to determine what was in the area to our front. This patrol report is attached as Inclosure #2. At 180800 Jan 45, A/33 moved to the new assembly area vic WEISMES closing at 1000. At 1200 certain changes in the forthcoming operation were made. These changes included the moving of the 7th A. D. boundary to the West to correspond roughly to the line FAYMONVILLE - EIBERTINGEN - AMEL. The boundary between Combat Commands was to run generally thru ONDENVAL to W of IVELDINGEN and MONTENAU. From MONTENAU the line was to swing to the S and E over the high ground in the vicinity of 867933. The first objective of CC "B" was changed to BORN and the final objective a line running from HUNNINGEN to the high ground in the vicinity of 867933. The 509th PIB sent patrols to the S and E of LIGNEUVILLE to reconnoiter possible routes for the advance of their Task Force. At 191900 Jan 45 the Combat Command moved by Task Force to the final assembly position vic WEISMES.

20 Jan 45 was the day set for the attack. At 0600 20 Jan, Task Force "C" moved from its forward assembly area, crossed the bridge at 848991 and advanced S toward BORN. At 0730 Task Force "B" was scheduled to attack BORN from vicinity 822949 advancing E astride the road. Patrols from Task Force "B" were sent out to attempt to make contact with the enemy prior to committing the Task Force. TF "B" had to pass thru the 120th Inf Regt line and last minute changes in the 120th Inf's plan together with the fact that TF "B" patrols did not return until 1130 caused a delay in launching the attack of TF "B". By 1130 however, their attack jumped off. At 0830 TF "A" was moved to an assembly area vic 819949 prepared to support TF "B" on order. At 1230 D/31 was moved to vic TF "A" and attached to them. At 1500 1/C/814 was moved to vic TF "A" and attached to them. TF "C" encountered mines and terrain which was impassable for tanks in the vic 838950 so at 1630 an assault on BORN was launched by TF "B" and the Infantry only of TF "C". Both forces encountered intense enemy S/A fire from the town, and by 1800 the attack had stopped. The Combat Commander directed that Task Forces re-organize prepared to continue the attack on order that night. From 2300 to 2345 artillery preparations were fired on the town utilizing 13 battalions of Division and Corps artillery, following which the attack was again launched. After encountering very heavy resistance which included tanks, SP guns and infantry our troops reached the outskirts of BORN at 210132.

The remainder of the night 20-21 Jan 45 was spent in re-establishing contact between our forces. The enemy still had troops in BORN. At 210545, A/48 was given the mission of clearing out that part of BORN East of the N S railroad and TF "C" was ordered to clear the area NW of the railroad. As the attack developed it was quite evident that the enemy had brought reinforcements into BORN from the E during the night. A statement from a captured PW claimed that a Battalion of Infantry had been moved into the town under cover of darkness. At 0830 the 38th AIB was attached to CC "B" and moved to an assembly area vicinity 825938. A considerable pocket of resistance was encountered W of the NS railroad which held up A/48. By 0945 TF "C" had cleared all resistance within its zone and was ordered to continue on to clear the Eastern part of BORN.

During the remainder of the day heavy fighting continued in the town and at 1700 A/38 was moved into BORN to complete mopping up by a house to house search within the town. At 1800 organized enemy resistance had ceased and defensive positions were established.

The next phase of the operation was concerned with taking the town of HUNNINGEN and the high ground to the E and W of the town. For this CC "B" was directed to organize a Task Force later designated as TF BEATTY which was to consist of C/31, B/48, 1/A/33, and 1/C/814. This TF was to move from BORN to a point 847922 where it would halt pending the arrival of troops of CC "A" which were moving from high ground E of BORN towards the S and SW. On order of the C.O. CC "A" TF BEATTY was to launch its attack on HUNNINGEN in conjunction with CC "A". Reports coming in from our forward elements during the morning of 22 Jan indicated that the enemy was withdrawing. Troops of CC "A" encountered some difficulty in passing thru the IN DER EIDT Forest and were delayed, The Division Commander directed that TF "BEATTY" move out without waiting for the order from CC "A" and this attack jumped off at 1435. At 1730 our leading elements were in HUNNINGEN. By 1900 the town was taken and our troops in conjunction with CC "A" had consolidated the position. The 38th AIB spent the day in sweeping the wooded area vic 850925. The 509th PIB swept the IN DER EIDT woods. TF "A" remained in BORN occupying defensive positions and at 221800, 38th AIB was detached CC "B" and attached to CC "A". That night it was announced that the 7th AD would attack ST VITH to capture the town. CC "B" was given the following troops for this mission:

31	1/A/33
48	1/B/33
23 (-B)	1/A/814
C/17	1/C/814
1/D/17	B/38

During the night 22-23 Jan, B/38 made a reconnaissance in force to enter ST VITH. They got to the outskirts of the town where they encountered a road block which was defended by artillery and MG fire. They were forced to withdraw. The plan for taking ST VITH involved the organization of three Task Forces as follows:

<u>TF "CHAPPUIS"</u>	<u>TF "BEATTY"</u>	<u>TF "RHEA"</u>
48 (-B)	B/48	23 (-B)
A/31	C/31	C/17
B/31	1/C/814	1/D/17
	1/A/33	1/B/33
		1/A/814

The plan for the attack was as follows: TF "CHAPPUIS" was to move parallel to the HUNNINGEN - ST VITH road and West of it to occupy the South portion of ST VITH. TF "BEATTY" was to move astride the HUNNINGEN - ST VITH road to occupy the NW portion of ST VITH. TF "RHEA" was to attack due South from the woods at 853899 to take the NE part of ST VITH. The attack jumped off at 1415, encountered fairly heavy resistance but by 1745 all Task Forces were on their objectives and tied in. Defensive positions were established around the town. During the night there was some enemy activity reported in and just WALLEROODE and just SE of ST VITH. The enemy attempted to counterattack twice during the night along the BREITFELD - ST VITH road but these attacks were broken up with artillery. TF "RHEA" established a road block vicinity 862 897 and sent a patrol along the ST VITH - MEDELL road with the mission of checking the overpass at 865902, which had previously been reported blown. This patrol was unable to accomplish its mission because of strong enemy resistance in that area.

During the night 23-21, Jan the HUNNINGEN - ST VITH road was swept for mines and repaired, but ST VITH itself had been so completely destroyed by our Air-Corps that roads could not be cleared through the town. A by-pass was established skirting the NE edge of town to establish a supply route to the troops South of the town.

S-E-C-R-E-T

At 241000 Jan 45, new orders were received from Division which gave the Combat Command the mission of seizing three objectives. These objectives were on the high ground on the S and E of ST VITH in the vicinity 845868 (WALT), 855865 (NINA), 871880 (CORKY). Those names are code names for easy reference. The composition of troops for this operation was as follows:

<u>TF "ERLENBUSCH"</u>	<u>TF "CHAPPUIS"</u>	<u>SUPPORTING TROOPS</u>
31 (-A)	48	C/814 (spt 48 by direct fir
509	A/31	A/33 (general spt)
		D/87 (protect N flank)

The plan for taking these objectives was to take WALT and NINA on the afternoon of 24 January and CORKY the morning of the 25th. The attack on WALT and NINA jumped off at 1630 and at 1910 TR ERLENBUSCH reported that WALT had been captured. This mission was accomplished by C/509 because the terrain was so bad and the snow so deep that tanks were not able to get up on the objective until much later. At 2015 NINA was reported taken but the troops of TF ERLENBUSCH on NINA reported they could not hold their position without support, and shortly before dawn withdrew to a defensive position along the RR South of ST VITH. C/87 under control of CC "R" had been patrolling in this area and was called upon to fill a gap in the line between NINA and WALT. D/87 which had been attached to the Command at 241500 was moved to a position just NE of ST VITH to protect the flank.

At 250615 TF CHAPPUIS jumped off to attack CORKY. Their plan was to have B/48 attack due E along the ST VITH - SCHONBERG road while A/48 moved S to attack CORKY from the SW. By 0900 the southern half of CORKY had been taken. A/48 was left in position to consolidate their gains while B/48 swung NE to take PRUMERBERG, and the high ground around it which apparently was the key to the defense of that area. B/48 got as far as 871883 but was unable to continue its advance due to heavy enemy resistance. In the meantime C/87 was attached to the Combat Command because it was deemed inadvisable to withdraw them from the line at that time. At 1530 B and C/509 with C/87 attacked NINA and at 1635 were on the high ground and consolidating their position. D/87 was moved S of town and relieved B and C/509. This was completed at 2053. The remainder of the night 25-26 Jan 45 was spent in organizing positions, tying in flanks of units and local patrolling. At 260700 TF "CHAPPUIS" committed his reserve (C/48) to take PRUMERBERG. The objective was taken by 0810 and at 1030 they had made contact with CC "A" on their left.

On the evening of the 26th the Combat Command was notified that it would make an attack the morning of the 27th to take the high ground in the vicinity 898878 in order that the 82nd A/B Division which was to attack to the East thru CC "A" would have right flank protection. Elements of Third Army had not yet come up for that purpose.

This attack was to be launched at 271000 using the 48th AIB with A/33 attached and the 509th PIB. It was to be preceded by a five minute artillery preparation. The 48th jumped off at 1007 from its front line in the vicinity of 873879 attacking E astride the road. 509th jumped off from PRUMERBERG at 1025. Due to heavy and artillery fire both forces progressed slowly. By 1525 the 40th had advanced to 882875 where it was held up at the edge of a clearing. At this time the 509th had advanced to 878883 where it encountered an enemy road block which was heavily defended. The Combat Commander notified Division of the situation and requested additional troops with which to continue the attack. At 1645 the 38th AIB and B/31 were attached to CC "B". By midnight of the 27th the 38th AIB had moved to forward assembly positions and attacked thru the 48th Inf lines at 280112, two companies abreast. By 0355 the 38th was on its objective, B/38 which had been in battalion reserve, was ordered to move NE to cut the main road running E from PRUMERBERG and attempt to reduce the enemy strong point in the vicinity of the road block which the 509th had encountered. When B/38 moved out they had only gone a short distance before they were pinned down by S/A and automatic weapons fire. It was believed at first that this fire was coming from friendly troops but investigation proved that there was a pocket of enemy infantry, about 40 in number between their

S-E-C-R-E-T

position and the forward positions held by A & C/38. At this time communications were particularly poor and enemy artillery was intense. It made the problem of coordination difficult when an attack was organized to clear out this enemy pocket. B/38 with a platoon of medium tanks did attack at 1645 and by 1800 had joined the other two companies on their objective. Due to the movement of 3rd Army troops from the South into our sector South of ST VITH, it was deemed unnecessary to maintain our defense line on WALT and NINA, so C/87 and D/87 were withdrawn from the line. At 1745 C/87 and D/87 were released from the Combat Command and reverted to Squadron control.

The 2nd Bn., plus one company from the 3rd Bn., 345th Infantry Regiment, 87th Inf Division relieved the troops of the Combat Command and at 290200 the relief was completed except for three artillery FO's and for 11 Medium tanks which were to remain until the tanks attached to the 87th Division arrived. These were relieved by 290815 Jan 45. The Combat Command was then ordered to move to an assembly area vicinity WEST EUPEN, Belgium, where the entire division passed from control of the XVII Corps (Airborne) to the V Corps, and was placed in Corps reserve. This move started at 290730 and by 1830 all troops had closed in new assembly areas. The remainder of the month was devoted to rehabilitation and re-equipping of the division.

4. The following named officers and enlisted men distinguished themselves from this headquarters:

Captain ROBERT E. BARTH - Silver Star (Posthumous)
Captain HENRY G. ELLETT - Silver Star (Posthumous)
1st Lt. ROY W. VALLANCE - Silver Star
Captain HENRY G. ELLETT - Oak Leaf Cluster to Bronze Star.
Major EVAN D. GAMMILL - Bronze Star
Captain JAMES C. FAHL - Bronze Star
1st Lt. FREDERICK POPE - Bronze Star
Tec 5 ROBERT H. HYATT - Bronze Star

5. Captain HENRY G. ELLETT JR., died of wounds received in action near the vicinity of HUNNINGEN, Belgium, on 22 January 1945.

6. 1st Lieutenant FREDERICK A. POPE, LWA, 27 January 45, evacuated to 45th Field Hospital.

7. The following officers of this Headquarters received promotions during the month of January 1945:

Major CHARLES F. LATIMER to Lt. Col.
Captain GEORGE L. TREECE to Major

For the Commanding General:

(signed)
CHARLES F. LATIMER
Lt. Col., Cav.,
Ex. O.

Incl-

- 1 - Outline Plan for ST VITH operation.
- 2 - Patrol Report
- 3 - Enemy Casualty Report.

SECRET
AUTH: CG CC "B", 7 AD
INIT: _____
DATE: 13 Jan 45

INCLOSURE #1

HQ CC "B", 7 AD
13 January 1945

OUTLINE PLAN FOR ST. VITH OPERATION:

1. a. Mission - The 7th Armd Div passes through the 1st Inf Div, when the 1st Inf Div reaches a line shown on overlay attached, with the mission of pushing South to ST. VITH and seizing all ground within its zone. 7th Armd Div operates with two Combat Commands abreast - CC "A" on East, CC "B" on West.
b. CC "B" operating on the Right (West) flank of the Division passes thru the 1st Inf Div to attack South, seize objectives in its zone and assists in taking ST V1TH.

2. Troops:

TF "A"	TF "B"	TF "C"	CC "B" Trps	Direct Support
Hq/48	Hq/509	Hq/31	A/33 (-)	434
A/48	A/509	C/31	C/814	(1/C/203 atchd)
B/48	B/509	C/48	D/31 (-)	
A/31	B/31	C/509	Det 994 Tdwy Br Co.	
1/A/33	3/A/33	2/A/33	(atchd to A/33)	

3. Movement:

- a. 509th Para Inf Bn moved to the vic 688112 on 13 Jan 45.
b. CC "B" moves from present assembly area to Fwd assembly area shown on overlay, on Division order. Units will move by task forces.

4. Plan (See overlay of General Plan attached).

- a. Task Force "C" will move from Fwd assembly position via route (see overlay) to atk MONTENAU from the West. Move on CC order.
b. Task Force "A" will move from Fwd assembly position via route (see overlay) to atk IVELDINGEN (ELVANGE) from the North in conjunction with TF "C"'s atk. (Movement to be coordinated with CC "A"). Move on CC order. Task Force "A" will consolidate and defend positions in the IVELDINGEN (ELVANGE) area, prepared to atk DIEDENBERG on CC order.
c. Task Force "B" - While Task Forces "A" & "C" are atking initial objectives as mentioned in par. 4a & b, Task force "B" will move thru the woods (see overlay) or over roads in the 30th Inf Div zone, to seize and hold the high ground W of BORN. Atk BORN on CC order. Task Force "C" after completing the MONTENAU atk will move on CC order to assist in taking BORN by route (see overlay). Movement in 30th Div zone will be arranged with CG, 30th Inf Div and C.O. CT 120.
d. C/814 - Disposed as conditions permit.
e. 1/A/33 - Be prepared to build bridge over AMBLEVE River vic 868958.
f. D/31 - Will furnish light tank to C.O.'s of Task Force "A" and Task Force "B" for use as command vehicles. Balance of company initially in combat command reserve.
g. 434 - Provide 3 forward observers for each Task Force, arrange for supporting artillery and prepared fires plan.
h. 1/C/203 - AAA defense of 434th FA.

- i. Each TF to make maximum use of tanks as conditions permit.
 - j. TAC Hq. CC "B" opens RUE - Time to be announced.
- 5. Supply - Through Control Point - by Task Forces - Coordinated by S-4. CC Service Park - NIVEZE - Movement to there as directed by S-4 after combat elements of units leave.
- 6.
 - a. Communications - Current S.O.I. in effect. Task Force Cmdrs, A/33 D/31, C/814 in CC Command Net, subordinate units in Command Nets of respective Task Forces.
 - b. Codes - Map lettered grid squares as issued - Current Slidex.
 - c. Red Smoke Grenades - Used only by front line troops - means "Lift Friendly Fire".

CLARKE
Comdg.

WOODRUFF
S-3

INCL:
-1 Overlay - General Plan
-2 Overlay - Plan of Fwd Assembly Area and routes to LD - To be issued.

INCLOSURE #2

C-O-P-Y

HEADQUARTERS
509TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY BATTALION
Office of the Battalion Commander

APO #464, U. S. Army
17 January 1945

PATROL REPORT

1. Information was compiled from questioning of four recon patrols from the 117th and 119th Inf. Regts., and from personal observation.

2. All reports on locations and strength of ey troops is as of 161700A Jan. 45. The RJ (823949) was never in friendly hands and is still (170300A) held by the enemy.

3. At 161700A two patrols from 3rd Bn., 119th Inf. reached point A an overlay and noted no ey.

4. The trail shown dotted in a wide, stumpless fire break that could be made passable for tracked and wheeled vehicles with difficulty. The two main fire breaks originally considered as tank routes are considered not passable for tracked vehicles.

5. Hill DILBURG (811954) is occupied by one Bn., 117th Inf., other dispositions as shown on overlay.

6. After checking all available C.P.'s and road blocks, patrol followed course outlined in blue dotted line and stopped at end of line, observation from there showed trail to be same nature for rest of length.

7. Saw no Kraut although there had been some in area patrolled during the afternoon, according to 117th Inf.

8. Heavy concentrations of artillery and 3 TOT's put on Kraut positions at (823949). Front line units believe the ey will pull out as his present position is untenable.

9. Snow on fire breaks is waist deep in places and presents very fatiguing walking conditions for foot troops.

10. Main road from LIGNEUVILLE to CR (813849) is a good one as far as I saw (about 1500 yds S of Ligneuville - friendly roadblock).

11. Attacks are planned by 117th Inf to clean up the road leading S from LIGNEUVILLE.

PRITCHETT
S-2

INCLOSURE #3

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

1 February 1945

ENEMY CASUALTY REPORT

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>PW's</u>	<u>EN DEAD</u>	<u>EN DEAD BURIED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>TANKS</u>	<u>OTHER VEH</u>	<u>ARTY or AT</u>
48th	98	59	10	19	1	6	1
31st		220		220	6	5	8 AT
38th	7	10		27			
509th	110	145		215			2
C/814	10	21		35	1		6
Total	225	455	10	516	8	11	17

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of February, 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D.C. (Through Channels).

1. In compliance with Administrative memorandum No. 44, headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted.

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by:

Brig. Gen. BRUCE C CLARKE, USA, 016068 - 1 Feb 45 to 9 Feb 45
Colonel JOSEPH F. HASKELL, Cav, 018197 - 9 Feb 45 to 28 Feb 45

3. On 1 February 1945, Combat Command "B" of the 7th Armored Division was in V Corps Reserve, with troops billeted in the vicinity of WELKENRAEDT, Belgium. Combat Command "B" CP was in HERBESTHAL, Belgium. Troops of Combat Command "B" at that time consisted of the following:

31st Tank Battalion
48th Armored Infantry Battalion
Company "A", 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion Company
Company "C", 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion
Company "C" (-1 Plat), 203rd AAA Battalion

Units of the Combat Command began a program of maintenance of vehicles, weapons and radios. Administrative details such as turning in excess clothing and equipment were complied with in accordance with Division directives. Troops began small unit training to include: radio procedure, use of flame throwers, gun crew drill, use of mine detectors and map reading.

At 041200 February 45 Combat Command "B" was put on a six (6) hour alert for employment anywhere in the V Corps sector, but was relieved from the alert at 061430.

On 4 February the film "Germany" was shown to the troops. This was preceded by a talk on the Division History.

Beginning 6 February all units conducted range firing with all weapons. 48th Armored Infantry Battalion formed assault teams within Platoons and conducted problems using these teams.

At 071630 Company "C", 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion reverted to battalion control. At 101300 Company "C", 203rd AAA Battalion was detached from Combat Command "B" and reverted to battalion control, but at 1430 it was again attached to Combat Command "B".

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S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

On 10 February 1945 Combat Command "B" was notified that it would furnish 800 men to be used for the maintenance and restoration of roads in V and XVIII Corps areas. This road maintenance continued until 271730 when men furnished by 48th Armored Infantry Battalion were relieved. Complete relief was affected when men furnished by 31st Tank, Battalion were relieved at 281730.

Beginning at 160800 the Combat Command Headquarters and staffs of attached units participated in a Division C.P.X. The general purpose of the C.P.X. was to familiarize all commanders and their staffs with terrain over which the division might operate. Field Orders and overlays were received from division. Actions and orders were disseminated to Task Force Commanders. Necessary orders and plans were submitted as required. At 181200 C.P.X. terminated.

4. Promotion during the month:

OWEN E. WOODRUFF JR. 01010796 - Captain to Major

5. Appointment during the month:

PAUL A. MACK, W2110455 - CWO to 2nd Lieutenant

6. 2nd Lt. PAUL A. MACK, 02005511, was announced as Aide-de-Camp to Brig. Gen. BRUCE C. CLARKE.

7. Transfers during the month:

JOHN A. WILLIAMS	Major	Hq Combat Command B	77th Medical Bn
JARED Y. GARBER	Capt.	77th Medical Bn	Hq. CC "B"
WILLIAM D. BROWNE	Capt.	Division Headquarters	Hq. CC "B"
FRANK J. McLAREN	2nd Lt	Hq. Co. CC "B"	31st Tank Bn
HOMER E. HILL	WO(jg)	Hq. Combat Command "B"	31st Tank Bn
Montel F. Bachert	Tec 5	Division Hq. Company	Hq. Co. CC "B"
Millard A. Quigley	Tec 5	Hq. Co. CC "B"	77th Medical Bn
Melvin J. Rassier	Pfc.	Hq. Co. CC "B"	87th Rcn Sqdn Mecz
Ode J. Garner	Pfc.	Hq. Co. CC "B"	87th Rcn Sqdn Mecz
Howard G. Leamon	Pfc.	48th Armd Inf Bn	Hq. Co. CC "B"
George J. Medash Jr	Pfc.	77th Medical Bn.	Hq. Co. CC "B"

8. Change in status in personnel:

T/Sgt, Jesse L. Phillippi, 36 313 688 - Dy to fur UK
Brig. Gen BRUCE C. CLARKE 016 068 - Dy to hosp (NBC)
Tec 4 Marion A. Lundy, 20 600 392 - Dy to hosp (NBC)
Tec 5 Lewis J Ellingsworth, 33 167 766 - Hosp to dy.
Pfc Hill T. Holder, 34 499 077 - Hosp to dy.

(signed)
JOSEPH F. HASKELL
Colonel, Cavalry,
Commanding

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

1 April 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of March, 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D.C. (Through Channels).

1. In compliance with AR 345-105 and Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by:

Colonel JOSEPH F. HASKELL, Cav., 018197

3. On 1 March 1945, Combat Command "B" had the following troops attached:

31st Tank Battalion
Co. "A", 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
1 Platoon, C/203rd AAA AW Battalion

The Combat Command Headquarters was located in HERBESTHAL with troops billeted there and in WELKENRAEDT. The Division was attached to V Corps in reserve, so our troops conducted training programs and road maintenance in the area. 48th Armored Infantry Battalion detached 010900 March 1945. 1/C/203rd AAA detached 020800 March 1945.

Combat Command moved into new assembly area in the vicinity of KESTERNICH, Germany, on 3 March 1945, closing at 2000. Company "C", 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached as of 031215, joined command in the new assembly area. The next few days were spent in rehabilitation, checking for mines, familiarization with the new light tank M-24, concurrent training, and maintenance of vehicles and weapons. This lasted through 6 March 1945, when units were alerted for movement. 48th AIB was attached at 052015.

On 7 March, 434th Armored Field Artillery attached for the march which took place on 8 March 1945, into assembly area vic MULDENAU, Germany. 40th Tank Battalion attached in place at 080700. At release point 434th AFA Bn reverted to Division Artillery control. 48th AIB detached 080700, but march in CC "B" column to their assembly area, vicinity VLATTEN, Germany. In new assembly area the command was placed on one (1) hour alert status, prepared for further movement.

Movement Eastward to assembly area vicinity DUNSTEKOVEN took place on 9 March, all units closing at 141145. Upon closing in ROTTGEN, CC "B" assumed responsibility for zone of CC "R" along the RHINE River, 48th AIB and B/814th TD Bn were attached, and 434th AFA Bn was placed in direct support. 40th Tank Bn was detached at the same time.

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S-E-C-R-E-T

Listening posts, OP's, and patrols for maintaining contact with adjacent units were established in assigned zone along West bank of RHINE River. On 11 March 1945 B and C/814 TD Bn; A, B, C Co's and AG Plat/31st Tk Bn were placed under operational control of Division Artillery and moved into indirect firing positions as reconnoitered by Division Artillery (31st Tk Bn in the vicinity IPPENDORF, C/814 vicinity PAULSHOF, B/814 vicinity FRIESDORF).

Combat Command Headquarters move to new location vicinity FRIESDORF on 13 March 1945 closing 1345. B/814 detached 142400, A/33 detached 151000. During the period 11 March to 23 March, 48th AIB maintained listening posts, defensive positions, and contact with adjacent units in assigned zone along West bank of the RHINE River. The 48th AIB was dug-in with two (2) companies abreast, one in reserve. Exact location and disposition of their troops is shown in supporting documents (Enclosure #1). C/814 and A, B, C Co's and AG Plat/31 Tk Bn remained in indirect firing positions under operational control of Division Artillery from 11 March until the 31st Tk Bn reverted to control CC "B" at 201900 and C/814 at 211200. No direct contact was made with the enemy at any time while in these positions, although light artillery and mortar fire was received by elements of the 48th AIB. Forward observers from the 434th AFA Bn remained with the front line companies until 212530 when they were withdrawn due to the expansion of the REMAGEN bridgehead on the opposite bank of the RHINE River thus masking our fire.

On 19 March and 20 March "Advance Guard" problems, involving one (1) platoon of light tanks, one (1) platoon of medium tanks and one (1) platoon of infantry, were run in the vicinity of ANNABERT. Three (3) problems were conducted in all. The light platoons were from D/31, the infantry platoons from A/48th AIB and one (1) platoon of medium tanks from A, B, C/31st Tank Bn respectively. These platoons of medium tanks were withdrawn from the indirect firing positions for the problems. The principles of fire and maneuver plus the use of a covering force were emphasized.

On 20 March 1945 the Combat Command organized assigned area for internal defense against air and ground attack as a result of a G-2 report of a threat from the Northeast. The area was divided into two (2) sectors: Sector "A" consisting of the 31st Tank Battalion, A/48th AIB and 3/C/87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (attached 201700) with Lt. Col. Erlenbusch in charge; and sector "B" consisting of the 48th AIB (-) with Lt. Col. Chappuis in charge. C/814th TD Bn was placed in Combat Command Reserve and B/203 AAA AW Bn moved into the area vicinity UKESDORF to aid in the defense. Enclosure No. 2 of supporting documents shows the disposition of troops for internal defense. This plan continued in effect while in the FRIESDORF area. During the hours of daylight the units not in the line conducted periods of maintenance. Schools were also conducted on the flame thrower, the M-24 Light Tank, and tank gunnery.

CC "B" crossed the RHINE River the night of March 24 - 25 per Operations Instructions 230800 March 1945, 7th Armored Division, and went into an assembly area vicinity LINZ, Germany. Order of march was: A/33, Hq and Hq Co CC "B", 48th AIB and B/31, C/814, 31 (-) and A/48. A/33 was attached to the Combat Command upon movement from FRIESDORF at 241800. At the same time A/48 AIB was attached to the 31st Tk Bn and B/31 Tk Bn was attached to the 48th AIB.

Task Force BEATY consisting of C/31 Tank Bn, A/48 AIB, and C/814 TD Bn (- 2 Plats) detached CC "B" and attached CC "R" 250900 March 1945.

At 262100 Combat Command alerted for further movement Eastward. Troops were divided as follows:

<u>TF CHAPPUIS</u>	<u>TR ERLENBUSCH</u>	<u>CC RESERVE</u>
48 (-A & B)	31 (-B, C, D)	A/33 (-2 Plats)
B/31	B/48	D/31 (-1 Plat w/Tns)
1/C/814	3/C/814	
1/plat/A/33	1 plat/A/33	

The move was started at 260600 March 1945 in order of march: TF Chappuis, Hq & Hq Co CC "B", CC Reserve, TF Erlenbusch, CC Trains and 87th Rcn Sqdn (attached for the march). Units closed into assembly area vicinity BONEFELD at 261200. At 261200, 434th AFA Bn was place in direct support of CC "B". The march Eastward continued at 1600 to new assembly area vicinity KRÜMMEL closing at 2350. The order of march was the same except that the 434th AFA Bn led the column. Upon closing, Combat Command was immediately alerted for further movement. Head of the column crossed the IP at 270400 in order of march: Advance Guard (I and R Plat/48, 1 Plat/B/31, 1 Plat/C/48, C/434), TF Chappuis, TAC Hq CC "B", 434th (-), TF Erlenbusch, CC Reserve, Hq Co CC "B" (-), and Trains. All units less Trains closed in assembly area vicinity ODERBERG at 271345. Trains closed at 1715. Upon movement from KRÜMMEL, 87th Rcn Sqdn deached CC "B" with mission of proceeding South to the Corps boudary to guard PW's taken by TF Brown of CC "R".

At 280200 Combat Commander returned from Division Headquarters with the following order: CC "B" was to march East, seize crossings of LAHN River North of GIESSEN, and to secure road centers beyond. One (1) Platoon 87th Rcn Sqdn attached 0200 and placed with D/31 Tk Bn. Head of column crossed I.P. at 0600 in order of march: Advance Guard, D/31, TAC Hq CC "B", TF Erlenbusch, 434th AFA Bn, TF Chappuis, Hq Co CC "B" (-), Combat Command Reserve (-D/31), and Trains. Route of march followed CC "R" through KATZENFURT - KOLCHESHAUSEN - NIEDERLEMP and to CR Northeast of GR. ALPENSTADTEN where CC "B" turned South GIESSEN. D/31 plus 1 Plat/C/87th Rcn Sqdn marched on a parallel route to the North securing left flank to a point North of GR. ALPENSTADTEN where they turned South to join the Cmbat Command Reserve. One (1) platoon/C/87th Rcn Sqadn released 1420 and reverted to Squadron control. Resistance was encountered Southeast of RODHEIM in the form of anti-tank guns. This was bypassed to the North and the column continued Eastward to WISSMAR where the advance guard was fired upon by bazooka men in the cellars. Reconnaissance to the North and South of the town revealed terrain obstacles which prevented its being bypassed. Tanks and infantry from TF Erlenbusch combined with heavy concentrations from 434th AFA Bn took the town. There after TF Erlenbusch proceeded Eastward and by 282000 had taken the bridge at G671251 (objectives 127) and WIESECK (objective 100). TF Chappuis turned North at WISSMAR and took RUTTERSHAUSEN (bjective 107), STAUFFENBERG, MAINSLAR, DAUBRINGEN, and LOLLAR by 2030; BUSECK at 2100. TF Erlenbusch passed through TF Chappuis at ALTEN BUSECK at 2300 and took GROSEN BUSECK (objective 16) at 2400. Road blocks and defensive positions were set up for the remainder of the night.

At 290700 Combat Command moved Northeast in order of march: TF Chappuis, TAC Hq CC "B", 434th AFA Bn, TF Erlenbusch, Hq Co CC "B" (-), Combat Command Reserve, CC Trains. B/300th Engineers were attached to CC "B" and in turn were attached to A/33 Engrs upon movement. All units were closed in assembly area vicinity HOINGEN at 1100. The mission of the Combat Command was to assemble within its assigned zone prepared to operate to the North and Northeast.

At 1300 CC "B" ordered to continue Northward along Division Route "C" with the mission of proceeding to assembly area vicinity HUDDINGEN, and sending a Task Force with all haste to seize the dam at G924883 (objective Adolph) and to reconnoiter across the lake. At this time, CC "R", which had been operating to our North, sent a Task Force Brown with Task Force Beaty attached, to seize the town of KIRCHHAIN. This proved to be a more difficult job than had been anticipated, because it was defended by troops just arrived from Denmark. They were ordered to defend at all costs, and offered stiff resistance.

When. CC "B" arrived at a point just South of KIRCHHAIN, the troops of TF Brown were still fighting for the city; so by verbal order of the Division Commander, TF Brown with TF Beaty was attached to the Combat Command, with the understanding that when the town had been captured, TF Brown would revert to CC "R", move West into CC "R" 's sector, leaving TF Beaty attached to CC "B", for its move to the North through KIRCHHAIN on route "C". The town was entirely in our hands by 291800, and at this time TF Brown was relieved and moved out to join CC "R". CC "B" was ordered to outpost the town for the night and continue the march at first light on 30 March 1945.

One (1) Plat/A/33 attached TF Beaty at 300600 when CC "B" continued march Northward in two (2) parallel columns, TF Chappuis on the left with remainder of Combat Command on Route "C". TF Chappuis turned East at RAUSCHENBERG and joined the Combat Command which then marched Northward in one (1) column in order of march: Advance Guard, TF Erlenbusch, TAC Hq CC "B", 434th AFA Bn, TF Chappuis, TF Beaty, Hq Co CC "B" (-), CC Reseve and Trains. At LOHBACH a Task Force made up of light tanks, infantry, and engineers of TF Erlenbusch and called "TF Lohse" was formed and given the mission of seizing the dam (Adolph) and putting reconnaissance across the lake as quickly as possible. The route was along route "C" through GELLERSHAUSEN, then Northwest to the lake, TF Erlenbusch to follow TF Lohse. TF Chappuis to take route "C" through GELLERSHAUSEN, then Northeast with the mission of seizing the railroad bridge at G919865 (objective Red), road bridge at G922866 (objective Blue) road bridge at G979862 (objective Yellow), road bridge G945861 (objective Black), road bridge G958867 and railroad bridge at G976862. Task Force Beaty attached to TF Chappuis with the mission of following TF Chappuis and securing Combat Command right flank. 434th AFA Bn went into a position vicinity GELLERSHAUSEN prepared to support either column.

TF Brown attached CC "B" from CC "R" at 1330, proceeded ahead of TF Lohse to take the dam (Adolph) at 1400. At 1900, TF Brown reverted to CC "R", TF Erlenbusch assuming responsibility for the dam. At 1500 TF Chappuis seized the RR bridge G976862, and road bridge G979862 (objective Yellow), and the road bridge at G958867. At 1530 road bridge G945861 (objective Black), railroad bridge G919865 (objective Red), and road bridge G922866 (objective Blue) were taken. AT and small arms fire were overrun in obtaining these objectives. After obtaining objectives, defensive positions were set up by TF Erlenbusch and TF Chappuis. At 1600 23rd Armored Infantry Battalion was attached to CC "B" and in turn attached to TF Erlenbusch to aid in the defense of the dam. Combat Command Headquarters was established in the vicinity of GELLERSHAUSEN at 1500. AT 1800 434th AFA Bn displaced forward to positions vicinity KLEINERN. Combat Command Trains also closed into assembly area vicinity KLEINERN at 302300 March 1945.

S-E-C-R-E-T

Units maintained defensive positions until passed through by the 9th Armored Division and the 2nd Infantry Division during the morning of 31 March 1945. Throughout the rest of the day and night units continued to round up PW's. A system of road patrolling was initiated at 311600 to collect all PW's and suspicious individuals.

23rd AIB (-) released CC "B" at 311530 and reverted to CC "A". B/300 Engrs released CC "B" at 1630.

CC "B" Hq moved Northward to HEMFURTH at 311510.

During the period 28 March through 31 March approximately 3,500 PW's were processed through Combat Command PW cage.

The following is a report of the Combat Command's Military Government activities for the month of March:

Towns	Posted - 25
Burgermeisters	screened - 32
Burgermeisters	changed - 7
Control Set-up	- 25
Displaced persons	evacuated - 570
PW's captured	- 41
Passes issued	- 67 (Emergency)
Miles travelled	- 604

4. Promotions during the month:

JOHN A. POWERS, 01 996 537 - 2nd Lieutenant to 1st Lieutenant
Vincent J. D'Angelo, 32 227 648 - Tec 5 to Tec 4
William S. Bergdoll, 35 760 339 - Pfc to Tec 5

5. Transfers during the month:

Tec 4 Marion A. Lundy, 20 600 392 - Dy to hosp (NBC)
Pfc John A. Hipsher, 34 499 337 - Dy to hosp (NBC)
Pfc Oscar S. Ray, 34 498 892 - (NBC)

6. Officer assigned during the month:

1st Lt. JOHN A. TREANORE, 0 475 892

(signed)
JOSEPH F. HASKELL
Colonel, Cavalry,
Commanding

2 Encl's

1 - Disposition of troops along West bank of RHINE River.
2 - Memorandum and diagram of Internal Defense of Area.

Encl. 1
Copy

[Map Overlay]

Hq Worse
10 Mar 45
Overlay Def. Posns.
Map-Sheet 60, 1/50,000

ENCL. 2

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

20 march 1945

MEMORANDUM TO ALL UNIT COMMANDERS:

1. It has been reported through intelligence channels that the Germans are going to attempt a counter offensive against the bridgehead area. This will involve a river crossing, large scale counter attack attempting to split the bridgehead and parachute landings on the West bank of the river in an effort to disrupt supply and communication. 7th Armd Div has been instructed to take strong defensive measures against any attempted parachute landings within the Div sector.
2. Combat Command "B" is responsible for the area as shown on attached overlay. This area, will be divided into two (2) sectors, "A" & "B". CO 31st Tk Bn will be responsible for the "A" sector, CO 48th AIB will be responsible for the "B" sector. Detailed plans for defense to include overlays will be submitted to this headquarters by 201800 March 45.
3. Defensive measures will include the following:
 - a. Establishing road blocks especially on N flank.
 - b. Patrols.
 - c. Strict enforcement of civilian curfew.
 - d. Prevention of ground signals by civilians.
 - e. Specific instructions for guards prior to posting.
 - f. Strong guard on all motor vehicles.
 - g. Establishment of radio communication between patrols, road blocks and area commander.
 - h. Main forces kept centrally located.
 - i. Additional protection for CP.

4. Troops:

<u>Sector "A"</u>	<u>Sector "B"</u>	<u>CC Reserve</u>	<u>Div Trps in Area</u>
31 Tk Bn	48 AIB	C/814	A/33
1 Co/48 AIB			1 Btry/203 AAA
1 Plat/C/87			

5. There will be no movement of troops until after dark (approx. 1915).
6. All radio nets open 201900.
7. Sector commanders will inform the CO's of all units not a part of this Command but who are billeted in our area of the threat and defensive measures being taken.

HASKELL
Comdg

OFFICIAL:

WOODRUFF
S-3

ENCL. 1

[Map Overlay]

SECURITY OVERLAY
HQ. CCB, 20200 Mar '45

Map Ref.
Sheet 60
1/50,000

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

1 May 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of April, 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D.C. (Through Channels).

1. In compliance with AR 345-105 and Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by:

Colonel JOSEPH F. HASKELL, Cav., 018197

3. On 1 April 1945, Combat Command "B" of the 7th Armored Division was in an assembly area in the vicinity of the EDERSEE DAM near HEMFURTH, Germany. At that time the troops of the Combat Command consisted of the following units:

31st Tank Battalion
48th Armored Infantry Battalion
C/814th Tank Destroyer Battalion
A/33rd Armored Engineer Battalion
1/A/87th Reconnaissance Squadron
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
(in direct support)

The forces were divided into three (3) Task Forces as follows:

<u>TF ERLENBUSCH</u>	<u>TF CHAPPUIS</u>	<u>TF BEATY</u>
31 (-B,C,D)	48 (-A,B)	C/31
B/48	B/31	A/48
3/C/814	1/C/814	C/814 (- 2 plats)
1 plat/A/33	1 plat/A/33	1 plat/A/87

Combat Command Troops
Hq and Hq Co., CC "B"
A/33 (- 2 Plats)
D/31 (- 1 plat w/tns)

Task Force BFATY was a part of Task Force CHAPPUIS, having been attached for the attack upon the EDERSEE DAM. The period 1 April - 3 April was spent in patrolling the assigned area for Prisoners of War and saboteurs. Also all units conducted rehabilitation, and maintenance of vehicles and weapons. At a ceremony on the EDERSEE DAM at 031300, the American Flag was raised and awards were presented.

- 1 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

At 031600, Combat Command "B" was relieved of security of EDERSEE DAM and bridges over EDER River in assigned area by the 32nd Cavalry Squadron of 14th Cavalry Group. At 1615 the same day all units except 434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion moved South to assembly area vic REINHARDSHAUSEN closing at 1930. Task Force "Beaty" was relieved from Task Force "Chappuis" upon movement. Combat Command Trains followed closely behind closing in assembly area vic HUNSDORF at 2100 while the 434th Armd Field Arty Bn remained in place vic KLEINERN. The following day, the Command marched West in one column. Units reverted from Task Forces to Battalion control for the march. Head of column crossed I.P. (LOHLBACH) at 0900 in order of march: D/31 (-1 Plat with Trains), 434th A FA Bn, Hq. & Hq. Co., CC "B", A/33 Engrs (-3 Plats), 48th AIB (plus 1/A/33 and 1 Plat/C/814), 31st Tk Bn (-D; plus 2,3/A/33 and 1 Plat/C/814), 3/394 Inf of 99th Infantry Division, reinforced with 1 Plat of Medium Tanks and 1 Plat of TD's, attached 1100 and joined tail of column at I.P. Trains plus 1/D/31 followed tail of column by one hour. 1 Plat/A.87 Rcn was detached upon movement and reverted to Squadron control. All units (-Trains) closed in assembly area vic SOMPLAR at 1430. Trains closed in assembly area vic MUNDEN at 1700. Upon closing, 434th Armd Field Arty Bn reverted to Division Artillery control. At 1500, Infantry units of Combat Command "B" continued westward in order of march: 3/395 with 3/A/33 attached, 48th AIB with 1/B/31 attached, Hq. CC "B". These units closed in assembly area vic HOHELEYE at 2100. Plans were reviewed for accomplishing the Combat Command mission: to pass thru elements of the 9th Infantry Division at OBERKIRCHEN and drive westward into the heart of the RURH Pocket. The town of SCHMALLENBERG was designated as the first primary objective.

At 050530, 3/395 Inf moved NW thru 9th Inf Div at OBERKIRCHEN to attack astride the main road and seize WINKHAUSEN and GLEIDORF. The 48th AIB attacked SW from OBERKIRCHEN at 0630 toward ALMERT and GRAFSCHAFT. The boundary between the two units was the high ground with primary responsibility for its security going to the 48th AIB. The 31st Tk Bn (-) and C/814 TD Bn were held in readiness to be used where needed.

Both forces met stubborn resistance and by the end of the first day's fighting, 3/395th Inf was several hundred yards East of WINKHAUSEN receiving heavy arty and mortar fire. The 48th AIB took ALMERT at 1000 and maneuvered into position to attack GRAFSCHAFT from the S the following morning. The high ground to the NW of GRAFSCHAFT was taken and held by the 48th AIB in spite of heavy opposition and local counter-attacks. The 31st Tank Battalion and CC Reserve moved up into assembly area vic NEUASTENBERG, closing at 0900. At 1530, 2/B/31 was attached to 48th AIB. 38th Armored Infantry Battalion (reinforced) attached from CC "R" at 051500 and occupied defensive positions vic OBERKIRCHEN. At 2000, a counterattack from the NW against the 38th AIB was repulsed. CC Headquarters moved into OBERKIRCHEN at 1600 while Trains moved West to vic at MOLLSEIFER at 1600.

At first light the following day 6 Apr 45, our troops continued the attack to the W. During the night and early AM heavy artillery concentrations had pounded the towns and strategic points to our immediate N and W. At 0545 the 38th AIB attacked from the high ground NW of OBERKIRCHEN to secure the right flank and by 0850 had captured the town of NDR SORPE. They continued on to the high ground to the W of the town and then N to HOLTHAUSEN. This town was entered easily but was abandoned at 1400 in the face of a severe C/A by tanks and inf from the direction of FREDEBURG. 87th Rcn (-B) attached C C "B" 060700, relieved 38th AIB of security of OBERKIRCHEN and vicinity. 3/395 attacked WINKHAUSEN at 0545. The resistance was heavy and the town was not cleared until 1520. The 48th AIB attacked GRAFSCHAFT at 0600 and met light opposition in clearing the town by 0800. B/48 pushed ahead in their sector on the high ground NW of GRAFSCHAFT. Here they encountered heavy S/A and were withdrawn slightly to reorganize, L/3/395 relieving them at 1100. At 1645 the 38th AIB moved further W from the NDR SORPE area and secured the strategic high ground overlooking GLEIDORF. Immediately following, at 1815 I, K/3/395 attacked GLEIDORF astride the main road from WINKHAUSEN. K Co on the N passed thru 38th AIB and entered the town at 1900. I co followed shortly thereafter having met resistance along the S route and detouring to the N route. Resistance ceased in GLEIDORF at 2000 and our units consolidated for the night. The tanks and T.S's of the 31st and C/814 were committed as called for by the units. They were used both to aid in the attack and to secure the flanks. The night of 6 Apr 45 found C C "B" flanked by the 9th Inf Div on the right and the 99th Inf Div on the left. At that time our troops were as follows:

<u>DANUBE BLUE</u> 3/395 of 99th Div 1 Plat Tks (First Army) 1 Plat TD'S (First Army) 1 Plat/A/31 (atch'd 060900) 1 Plat/A/33 1 Plat/C/31 (atch'd 061700) 1 Sect/C/814 (atch'd 061700)	<u>WOODY</u> 38th AIB B/814 TD (-1 Plat) 1 Plat/C/33 1 Plat/A/31 (atch'd 060900) 1 Plat/C/31 (atch'd 060900)
<u>DEVILTRY</u> Hq. and Hq. Co. A/31 (-2 Plats) 3 Tks available C/31 (-2 Plats) 1 Plat/C/814 1 Plat/A/33 D/31 (-1 Plat) reverted at 1830	<u>WORSE</u> 48th A.I.B. 1 Plat/C/814 1 Plat/A/33 B/31
	<u>CC RESERVE</u> A/33 (-2 Plats) C/814 (-3 Plats & 1 Sect of 3rd)
	<u>DEADSHOT</u> (attached 060700) Squadron (-A & F)

During the night and early morning 6 - 7 April, 3/395 received heavy tank and small arms fire from the North. At one time it was questionable who held GLEIDORF, but by 070715 the town was securely in our hands. However, further movement to the high ground to the Northrest met with heavy resistance, and the battalion was forced to consolidate for the night 500 yards Northwest of the town. The woods to the Northeast of GLEIDORF was also cleared during the day.

S-E-C-R-E-T

At first light of 7 April 45, C/48 maneuvered Southwest from ALMERT and by 0800 was in position to attack SCHMALLENBERG from the South. At the same time B/48 was in position for an attack on the town from the East. This attack jumped off at 1110 following heavy artillery concentrations. At 1600 the town fell following a combined attack by dive bombers, artillery, tanks infantry. The 48th AIB pushed the attack to the high ground 1000 yards Northwest of SCHMALLENBERG where they consolidated for the night. B/87 which reverted to Squadron control at 1100 was moved into SCHMALLENBERG to secure the town. In the action of 7 April, tanks of B/31 worked with the 48th AIB while C/31 was with 3/395, A/31 reverting to Battalion control. A/87 was attached to CC "R" at 1000, while 38th AIB reverted in place to CC "R" at 1120, thus relieving Combat Command "B" of responsibility for Division's right flank. CC "B" Headquarters moved to GRAFSCHFT at 1710.

Early the next morning at 080545 the attack continued. 3/395 pushed to the North and Northwest and by 1215 was in possession of the high ground from where it was possible to support CC "R"'s attack on FREDEBURG and the attack on OBRINGHAUSEN by the 48th AIB. This attack jumped off at 1245 and required but 15 minutes to take the town. Following this, the 48th AIB was placed in CC Reserve for a 24 hour rest. The 23rd AIB was attached at 1200 and at 1400 our troops were divided as follows:

Task Force "Beaty"	Task Force "Erlenbusch"	Task Force "Rhea"
A/31	B/31	Hq & Hq Co/23
Mortar Plat/31	C/23	A/23
3 AG's/31	1 Plat/C/814	C/31
B/23	1/A/33	1 Plat/C/814
C/814 (-2 Plats)	Hq & Hq Co/31 (-)	3/A//33

CC "B" Troops	Artillery
A/33 (-3 Plats)	434 (direct support)
Hq & Hq Co CC "B"	
D/31 (-1 Plat)	
B/87	
48	
3/395 (detached 2000)	

Task Force "Beaty" moved thru 3/395 and attacked EBBINGHOF at 1830. By 1930 the troops had consolidated in the town and on the high ground 1000 yards to the West. Task Force "Rhea" assembled vicinity GLEIDORF and Task Force "Erlenbusch" vicinity WERPE. 87th Rcn Sqdn was detached at 1600, but B/87 was reattached at 1845 and moved to WORMBACH to relieve elements of 394th Infantry the security of WORMBACH. At 1730, CC Headquarters and CC Troops moved into SCHMALLENBERG. At 1900 the 434th FA Battalion was placed in direct support while the 3/395 Infantry (reinforced) was detached at 2000.

At first light 9 April 45, BERGHAUSEN was attacked from the South by Task Force "Erlenbusch" and from the Southeast by Task Force "Beaty". These two forces established contact at 0840 and by 0945, BERGHAUSEN had fallen. Meanwhile, Task Force "Rhea" had moved to vic FELECKE from where they moved North at 1100 to capture OBR BERNDORF at 1210, then West to ARPE at 1530, Northwest to OBR LAUDENBECK, HENNINGHAUSEN, and KOBENRODE where the troops consolidated at 2000.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

Task Force "Beaty" moved from BERGHAUSEN to OBR BERNDORF at 1400. From here they attacked KUKELHEIM at 1645. This was taken in 10 minutes after which Task Force "Beaty" consolidated for the night. Task Force "Erlenbusch" moved from BERGHAUSEN to FELBECKS at 1100. From here they attacked the high ground West of the town at 1345, continued West at 1700, and by 100300 had taken objectives LECKMARTH and DCHWARTMECK despite difficult terrain features.

B/87 moved from WORMBACH to relieve elements of 99th Infantry Division of security of FELBECKE and SELKENTROP at 1030 and of WERNTRUP at 1530. Headquarters Combat Command "B" moved to a position just East of FELBECKE at 0900 and into FELBECKE at 1615. CC Trains moved West to vicinity G388845 at 1030 while the 434th FA Bn displaced West to firing positions vicinity SELKENTROP at 1930. At 1800 the 23rd AIB reverted in place to Combat Command "A" and during the night 9 - 10 April the 48th AIB was removed from CC Reserve and replaced the 23rd AIB in the Task Forces, A/48 going to Task Force "Beaty", B/48 to Task Force "Erlenbusch" and C/48 to Task Force "Chappuis" which replaced Task Force "Rhea".

At 101200 Task Force "Erlenbusch" sent patrols toward OBR MARPE, and at 1315 advanced on the town in force. Resistance was overcome here at 1435 from where the Task Force continued Northwest to take DARMECKE and the high ground 1000 yards to the Northwest at 2000. Task Force "Chappuis" attacked North at 1200 from KOBLENRODE, took BOCKHAIM at 1320 and turned West toward NDR MARPE. A fierce tank battle developed in this vicinity. At 2030, the Task Force was able to move ahead to KUCKLEHEIM where they consolidated for the night.

Meanwhile Task Force "Beaty" was following up the other Task Forces securing the ground and prepared to pass thru either on Combat Command order. Task Force "Beaty" moved to vicinity BRACHT at 10130, then passed thru the 99th Infantry Division at ODDINGEN at 1530, and assembled vicinity KOBLENRODE. B/87 maintained contact with Combat Command "B" and the 99th Inf Division until the 99th had cleared ODDINGEN after which they moved to OBR MARPE to secure the Combat Commands left flank and maintain contact with Combat Command "A" who had moved a Task Force in on our left flank to take the towns of OBR VALBERT and SCHONDELT. Combat Command Trains moved to vicinity SELKENTROP at 1040. CC Headquarters moved to vicinity BRACHT at 1145 and further Northward to KOBLENRODE at 1730. Combat Command Reserve and 434th FA Bn closed vic KOBLENRODE at 1830.

The following morning at 110730, Task Force "Chappuis" continued the attack to the Northwest and captured NDR SALWEY at 1000. Task Force "Beaty" moved from KOBLENRODE at 0945, passed thru Task Force "Chappuis" at NDR SALWEY at 1100, and turned West toward OBR SALWEY. This town fell at 1400 before a coordinated attack by dive bombers, artillery, tanks, TD's and infantry. The town of SCHLIPRUTHEN was the next objective and was converged on by Task Force "Beaty" from the East and Task Force "Erlenbusch" from the West. Dive bombers and artillery hit the town. As Task Force "Erlenbusch" approached SCHLIPRUTHEN at 1700 the burgermeister came forward and surrendered the town. Task Force "Erlenbusch" secured this town for the night but maintained headquarters at DARMECKE. Task Force "Beaty" returned to OBR SALWEY to consolidate for the night while Task Force "Chappuis" remained in NDR SALWEY and sent patrols to North and Northwest.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

At 0945 Combat Command "B" Hq moved to vicinity NDR MARPE and into KUCKELHEIM at 1700. B/87 moved to OBR SALWEY at 1400, secured the town while Task Force "Beaty" attacked SCHLIPRUTHEN and sent patrols to the North toward MEINLEMB. At 1500 the 489th Armored Field Artillery Battalion which had been reinforcing the fires of the 434th Armd FA Bn was relieved, and at 1830 the 434th Armd FA Bn displaced forward to positions vic KUCKELHEIM. CC trains closed in assembly area vicinity NDR MARPE at 1600.

B/87 and 434th Armd FA Bn detached Combat Command "B" at 112230. At 121455, the Combat Command moved North in one column behind Combat Command "A" in the following order of march: Task Force "Chappuis", Hq & Hq Co., CC "B", Task Force "Beaty", Task Force "Erlenbusch" and Combat Command Reserve. All troops closed in assembly area vicinity KASBERG at 130230. Task Force "Chappuis" detached Combat Command "B" and attached Combat Command "A" at 130800. 1/C/84 TD Bn detached Task Force "Beaty" and attached 3/395 Infantry at 140800.

On 14 April 45 the Combat Command moved to assembly area vicinity HOVEL closing at 1700. Task Force "Chappuis" already in vicinity HOVEL reverted to CC "B" control at 1400. At 150800, 1/C/814 reverted to Task Force "Beaty" from 3/395 Inf Bn. The 434th Armd FA Bn was placed in direct support of Combat Command "B" at 150945. The same day at 1145, the Combat Command moved from vicinity HOVEL following 809th Armd FA Bn on Combat Command "R"'s route in the following order of march: Task Force "Erlenbusch", Hq & Hq Co CC "B", 434th Armd FA Bn, Task Force "Chappuis", Task Force "Beaty" and CC Reserve. 489th Armd FA Bn placed in direct support of CC "B" at 1300, and 434th Armd FA Bn displaced forward to vic HALINGEN to reinforce fires of Combat Command "R"'s Artillery. The remainder of the Combat Command closed into assembly area vic MENDEN at 1900. At 2000 the Combat Command alerted for movement Eastward the following day, 489th Armd FA Bn being relieved of Direct Support fire mission at the same time.

At 161000 April 45, B/87 Rcn, B/77 Medical Bn, and a detachment of the 129th Ordnance Maint Bn were attached for the march which began at 1400 the same day. All units closed in the new assembly area just South of GOTTINGEN at 170930 with Combat Command Headquarters located in DRAMFELD. All stragglers were closed by 172400. A program of maintenance of vehicles and weapons and rehabilitation of personnel was started immediately after closing. This program along with the enforcement of local security and civilian control measures and concurrent training, starting 19 April 45, was conducted by all troops of the Command from 16 April 45 thru 29 April 45. At 181900 C/814, A/33, B/87, B/77 and 434th reverted to their respective parent units.

At 300308, the head of the Combat Command's column crossed the I.P. at GOTTINGEN and moved northward along the Division route to an assembly area vic EVERSEN. C/814, A/33, 434 and Det/129 were attached upon movement. Units closed in assembly area at 1915 with all stragglers accounted for by 301200. Local security of area was initiated immediately upon closing. At 302000 Combat Command "B" was alerted for possible attachment to the 82d Airborne Division and for movement into their zone on 1 May or 2 May 45.

S E C R E T

4. Promotions during the month:

JARED Y. GARBER, 0 309 905 - Captain to Major
ROBERT M. DAVIS., 0 440 411 - 1st Lt. to Captain
ROY W. VALLANCE., 01 015 044 - 1st Lt. to Captain
James C. Layton, 36 313 893 - Sergeant to Staff Sergeant
Howard E. Leamon, 34 499 386 - Pfc to Tec 5
Frank J. Zawora, 35 142 200 - Pfc to Tec 5
Earl N. Young, 19 122 448 - Private to Pfc.

(signed)
JOSEPH F. HASKELL
Colonel, Cavalry,
Commanding

1 Encl -
1 - Operations Overlay to accompany
After Action Report month of APRIL 45.

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

1 June 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of May, 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C. (Through Channels).

1. In compliance with AR 345-105 and Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by:

Colonel JOSEPH F. HASKELL, Cav., 018197

3. On 1 May 1945, Combat Command "B" of the 7th Armored Division was in an assembly area in the vicinity of EVERSEN, Germany. At that time the troops of the Combat Command consisted of the following units:

31st Tank Battalion
Company "C", 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion
Company "A", 33rd Armd Engineer Battalion
Troop "B", 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mcz)
434th Armd Field Artillery Battalion (in direct support)

The 48th Armd Infantry Battalion, which had been with the Command, was detached at 302200, while "B" Trp, 87th Rcn Sq was attached at the same time.

At 011500, CC "B" was attached to the 82nd Airborne Div and alerted for movement eastward into their area. The Combat Command moved out at 1745 that night, continued eastward across the ELBE River at BLECKEDE, and closed in assembly area vicinity SUMTE at 020515. On the march "C" Co 814th TD Bn was attached to the 325th Glider Regt and "D" Co., 31st Tk Bn was attached to the 504th Para Inf Regt. 2nd Bn, 325th Para Inf Regt was attached CC "B" at 020500 and the troops were divided into Task Forces as follows:

<u>TF ERLENBUSCH</u>	<u>TF BEATY</u>	<u>TF MAJOR</u>	<u>CC TROOPS</u>
E/2/325	G/2/325	2/325 (-)	Hq & H Co CC "B"
31 (-)	C/31	B/31	B/87 (-)
1st plat/A/33	2nd Plat/A/33	3rd Plat/A/33	A/33 (- 3 plats)
	1 sect/B/87		

CC "B"'s mission was to assemble Task Forces as quickly as possible and attack to the east - objective LUDWIGLUST. The plan was to attack in three (3) parallel columns, Task Force "E" on the Left (N), Task Force "B" in the Center, and Task Force "M" on the Right (S). "B" Trp, 87th Rcn Sq (-) moved out at 0800 to make a reconnaissance of the three (3) routes for condition of roads and possible enemy strongpoints. According to plan, Task Force "M" moved out at 0930, followed by Task Force "B" on the

- 1 -

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center route. The 434th Armd FA Bn also preceded on the center route after Task Force "E" had moved out.

The route for all Task Forces was from SUMTE to NEUHAUS then NE to CkR EAST of BROMSENBERG where Task Forces "B" and "E" turned North and Task Force "M" turned South. Task Force "B" continued North to GOLDENITZ, then SE via REDEFIN, and took LUDWIGSLUST at 1215. Task Force "M" turned East at LUBTHEEN to PROBST JESAR to LUBBENDORF to BELCH to ALT KRENZLIN and to GOBLIN at 1345. They were ordered to remain there at that time and at 1500 Task Force "M" was dissolved, the 2nd Bn 325th Para Inf Regt reverting to its parent unit while Co "B", 31st Tk Bn and 3rd plat Co "A" 33rd Engrs were placed in Combat Command Troops. From GOLDENITZ, Task Force "E" went NE to WARLITZ to KUHSTERDORF, then SE to BRESEGARD, and to PICHER where at 140 they were ordered to discontinue the attack.

The attack was executed with maximum speed. All Task Forces encountered disorganized columns of enemy infantry, cavalry, armor and miscellaneous vehicles that were retreating before the advancing Russians. The speed at which the Task Forces were advancing allowed no time for the disorganized enemy columns to establish resistance. It became necessary at 1100 to recall "B" Trp, 87th Rcn Sq from their reconnaissance mission and give them the mission of controlling the PW's pouring back so that traffic might continue to the east.

At 1500, CC "B" was relieved of the responsibility for the security of LUDWIGSLUST. Troops were withdrawn from this area and assembled vicinity BRESEGARD. Also, at 1500, "B" Trp, 87th Rcn Sq was given the mission of proceeding Eastward to make contact with the Russian Army. This mission was accomplished at 031030 near the town of REPPENTIN where Lt. William Knowlton, Commanding Officer of "B" Trp, 87th Rcn Sq, contacted elements of the Russian 191st Inf Div. Believing that strong American forces were close behind, approximately 250,000 German soldiers laid down their arms to Lt. Knowlton and the 100 officers and men of "B" Troop at LUBZ. In reality, these were the only Americans within 20 miles at the time. Enclosure No. 1 of supporting documents is Lt. Knowlton's complete report of this mission. The days of 3 and 4 May 1945 were spent in enforcing security measures in the Combat Command's area vicinity BRESEGARD and in controlling the movement West of thousands of PW's and displaced persons. A delegation of Russian Officers visited CC "B" headquarters on 4 May 1945.

Co "C", 814th TD Bn was detached from 325 Glider Regt and reverted to CC "B" control at 031030. Likewise Co "D", 31st Tk Bn was detached from 504 Para Inf Regt and reverted to CC "B" control at 031830. "B" Trp, 87th Rcn Sq returned from LUBZ and closed in CC "B" area at 040930. At 041200, the Combat Command was relieved from attachment to 82nd Airborne Div and reverted to 7th Armored Division control.

The Command moved North at 050530 and closed in assembly area vicinity WITTENBURG with no stragglers at 051150. At 051200, 48th Armd Inf Bn (-B) reverted to Combat Command control and closed in Combat Command zone at 051600. Road blocks and patrols were established in the zone of responsibility per Operations Instructions, Hq 7th Armd Div., 051300 May 1945. A PW cage was set up vicinity WASCHOW by Co "C" 814th TD Bn. This was taken over the following day, 6 May 1945, by the 434th Armd FA Bn. At 060700, on Division order B Trp, 87th Rcn Sq and Co "A", 33rd Armd Eng Bn started moving German PW's from vicinity ELBE River into

Division Troops area. This mission was completed at 2100 that night. Camps for U. S., British and Canadian liberated soldiers, for all other Allied liberated soldiers, and for displaced persons were established by the 31st Tank Bn the same day. Also, on 6 May 1945, Combat Command headquarters moved to TESSEN closing at 1330.

At 070700, Co "C", 814th TD Bn was detached from CC "B", and reverted to parent unit control, its zone of responsibility being assumed by the 31st Tank Bn. At 080800 B Trp, 87th Rcn Sq reverted to Squadron control, its zone being taken over by the 48th Armd Inf Bn. Co "B" reverted to Bn control at 080800 and closed into the 48th Armd Inf Bn area at 081030. 1 section, Troop "A", 87th Rcn Sq was detached from CC "B" Headquarters and reverted to parent unit at 081500.

During the period from 7 May 1945 to 19 May 1945 inclusive, CC "B" remained in the vicinity of TESSIN and enforced security measures, maintaining contact with adjacent units and collecting German PW's, liberated Allied soldiers, and displaced persons. At the same time a search of the area was made for all German equipment which was collected at a previously designated spot or destroyed depending upon the degree of damage. All German ammunition found was destroyed.

CC "B" zone of responsibility was changed slightly on 13 May 1945 when the 15th British Brigade assumed responsibility for the 31st Tank Bn's sector in the western part of the combat command area. The same day the 31st Tank Bn moved to their new zone of responsibility which was to the north of the combat command's original area.

All members of the Command witnessed the showing of the film "Two Down and One to Go" during the evenings of 14 - 15 May 1945.

On 18 May 1945, the Combat Command was alerted for movement to the South. Plans were initiated for the relief of the area to take place the following day. The 434th Armd FA Bn, the 48th Armd Inf Bn, and Co "A", 33rd Armd Engr Bn were to be relieved by the 13th Inf Regt of the 8th Inf Div. The 31st Tank Bn was to be relieved by Div Tns which in turn would be relieved by the 5th British Div. The relief of the 434th Armd FA Bn was completed by 191800 whereupon the 434th reverted to Div Arty control and the 814th TD Bn was attached to CC "B". By 192030, the relief was completed as planned at which time Co "A", 33rd Eng Bn reverted to Bn control.

At 200410, the Combat Command moved to the South on Div route "B" crossing the ELBE River at DARCHAU, and stopped for the night at BAHRENDORF after marching 140 miles. The following morning at 0600 the column continued Southward and closed in assembly area vicinity BITTERFELD at 1321. Mission of CC "B" was to relieve the 413th REgt (-3rd Bn) of the 104th Inf Div in its zone of responsibility. To coordinate this, advance parties had been sent ahead to contact the respective units of the 413th Regt. Relief was completed at 211520, the 31st Tank Bn relieving the 2nd Bn, 413th Inf Regt and the 329th Engr Bn at 1430, the 48th Armd Inf Bn relieving the 1st Bn, 413th Inf Regt at 1500, and the 814th TD Bn relieving the AT and Cannon Companies, 413th Inf Regt at 1520.

The mission of Combat Command "B" from the period 21 - 31 May 1945 was to maintain the internal security of its assigned zone of responsibility. Our security measures consisted of guarding installations of military value within the area and of enforcing, by a series of road blocks and patrols, civilian and military curfew and circulation. Guard Posts were established along the MULDE River to prevent unauthorized personnel crossing to or from the Russian lines on the east bank of the river. On 24 May 1945

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a Division PW enclosure was established vicinity WOLFEN by 814th TD Bn. This was maintained by Rcn Co, 814th TD Bn and at the end of the month held approximately 1400 PW's which had been collected within the Division's zone. Also on the 24th of May 1945, the Combat Command's boundary was changed to conform to the political Kries boundary. This necessitated a sljbght change in the areas of CC "B"'s units. As a result, the 48th Armd Inf Bn moved on 27 May to vicinity ROITZCH closing at 1500.

In addition, showdown inspections were held during this period, cleaning and laundry facilities were established, and the emphasis was initially placed upon getting all men turned out in the best uniform possible. Later, concurrent training was started stressing such subjects as military courtesy and discipline, interior guard duty, and close order drill. Periods of maintenance and athletics were held regularly.

On 30 May 45 at 1600 a Memorial Day service was held in the Sports Plaza in BITTERFIELD. At this ceremony General Clarke⁵, assistant Division Commander and former CC "B" Commanding Officer, the Commanding Officer, and the three unit Chaplains paid tributes to the American soldiers killed in action in this and former wars.

4. Promotions during month:

Leo Horowitz, 32 214 226 - Tec 4 to Staff Sergeant (2 May 45)
Leo Horowitz, 32 214, 226 - Staff Sergeant to Tech Sergeant (29 May 45)
Harry A. Mc Mullin, 34 138 833 - Tec 4 to Staff Sergeant
Dino Borraci, 31 091 240 - Pvt to Pfc.

5. Transfers during the month:

Edwin E. Segall 1st Lt 104th Inf Div - Hq Co. CC "B"
Albert R Anderson WO(jg) 203rd AAA AW Bn - Hq Co. CC "B"
Leroy Temby Pvt. 147th Armd Sig Co - Hq Co. CC "B"

6. Changes in personnel:

S/Sgt. Monroe O. Stabeno, 38 155 354 - Dy to hosp (NBC)
Tec 4 Kenneth L. Hefner, 33 043 711 - fr temp dy Fort Bragg N,C, to transfer
reception station Fort Bragg N.C.

(signed)
JOSEPH F. HASKELL
Colonel, Cavalry,
Commanding

2 Encl -

- 1 - Overlay to accompany After Action Report
month of May 45.
- 1 - Report of Reconnaissance by "B" Troop
to meet Russians.

⁵ This must have been Gen. Bruce Clarke, who commanded CCB in November 44 - January 45.

B TROOP
87TH CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON
APO 257, U. S. ARMY

4 May 1945

SUBJECT: Report on Reconnaissance by "B" Troop to meet Russians.

TO : Commanding Officer, Combat Command "B", 7th Armored Div., APO 257,
U. S. Army

1. On 2 May 1945, Combat Command "B" having taken the objective assigned, LUDWIGSLUST, I was called to Headquarters Combat Command "B" and given the mission of proceeding east to contact the Russian forces that were supposed to be advancing in that area. They were reported to be between LUDWIGSLUST and LUBZ. At that time the 1st and 3rd Platoons were with me, and the 2nd was still to the South evacuating a German Battalion which had surrendered to it.

2. At 1700 we moved out with two platoons and four Headquarters platoon vehicles - 2 Armored cars and 2 ½ tons - leaving instructions for the other platoon to catch up with us when they arrived in LUDWIGSLUST. We proceeded through the friendly outposts and started for NEUSTADT. The roads were jammed with German vehicles of all types in triple columns streaming down the road from the Russians. The town of NEUSTADT and the road for several kilometers beyond were so hopelessly jammed that all our officers were needed to walk at the head of the column to run vehicles off the road. I organized a German military police unit under a 1st Lieutenant of the SS troops to clear the roads. Even then it took us several hours to clear the vicinity of NEUSUADT. The roads were in similar condition all the way to PARCHIM. Many thousands of troops surrendered to us and hundreds of vehicles and guns of all types - from tank and assault gun units, heavy artillery units, and such to horse trains for supply work. Evacuation was impossible. We formed them under their commanders, and had them throw away their weapons by Battalions and Regiments under their commanders, and told all to proceed to LUDWIGSLUST. It was a picture of complete disintergration of an Army. As we rode through PARCHIM the roads through the town were lined five and six deep with cheering German soldiers and civilians, foreign slave labor and Prisoners in groups of five hundred still under armed SS guards. All the German soldiers seemed of the opinion that we were going to fight the Russians, for upon seeing us they threw away their weapons and stood by the road cheering. By PARCHIM we overran a large airfield with 35 or 40 German planes on it. Just as it was getting dark we arrived in LUBZ.

3. As we stopped along the way to ask where the Russians were, we received the same answer - "Twenty kilometers." Then we entered LUBZ I talked to several SS officers and learned that the Russians were still 50 kilometers from LUBZ. Since it was getting dark and we had not too much gas, and since the Russians seemed so far away, we started to radio for instructions, only to find that even with the special CW set we were out of contact with CC "B". LUBZ was jammed with troops of all kinds, many tanks, batteries of large FLAK guns converted to anti-tank guns. The tenor and behaviour of the German troops was different here. These were the fighting men, many SS among them, and as we moved along the streets in the traffic they seemed undecided whether to shoot or not. General Hernlein passed us with a large

SS bodyguard. The difficulties of recognition with the Russians were magnified by darkness, the German officers who came over to demand what we were doing there told us they had no orders not to shoot at Americans, and we discovered that the Germans had three divisions in and around LUBZ for defense against the Russians, with many minefields. I sent the troop out of town to the top of a hill to try and gain radio contact with CC "B" while the 1st Sergeant and I walked through the troops to find some of the other Generals in town. A German major and staff, with the Burgomeister, came up and surrendered the town to me. I set up a Headquarters in the SS Traffic control point, ordered all civilians in their houses, organized a police force of SS and parachutists from the Parachute Division HERMANN GOERING, took over the brewery as an arms collecting point, and ordered all weapons turned in there. As the soldiers streamed into town in many columns they filed past the brewery and turned in their weapons. I permitted them their tanks, assault guns, and cannon larger than 88-mm because they were riding on them and the Traffic problem was acute. Both stories of the brewery, the largest building in town, were soon completely full of weapons, so I organized three more collecting points. The telephone still worked so I called the commandant of PARCHIM to collect all weapons from troops as they passed through his town. This was made more difficult because there were no American troops within twenty miles of that town and they knew that. Also another German General had arrived in that town and was organizing the retreating troops. All night long a steady stream of German soldiers and equipment came through the town. At about 0100, 3 May 1945, the Brigade commander of the Panzer Marine Brigade defending along a line from PLAU to the south informed me that he intended to fight there and that he would not turn in his weapons. I lacked the necessary troops to disarm his Brigade by force, and finally permitted him to keep his troops east of LUBZ armed, but had all troops coming through town continue to disarm. I had the provisional division under which all those forces were working set up their G-2 section in my traffic control point so that I could keep track of the Russian forces.

4. By morning the situation was becoming critical. The German High Command had correctly guessed that no more American troops were within 50 kilometers of my position and General Froehne issued orders that all German troops would get weapons immediately and go out to fight, and to attack us if we resisted. Despite his order I froze all arms in LUBZ, but having no troops in PARCHIM, where was his headquarters, I could not control that situation. I finally made an agreement that troops going in the direction of the American lines would still continue to turn in weapons, and sent 1st Lieutenant Sullivan back to contact CC "B" and explain the situation.

5. At 0800 the Commander of the Panzer Marine Brigade informed me that the Russians were closing on PLAU from the north and south. I formed a patrol with my armored car leading and the 3rd platoon under 2nd Lieutenant Clark following. To clear the minefields we placed a German Captain and Lieutenant from the Engineers on the lead car. Our patrol went down the road to PLAU, but about one kilometer from PLAU some SS troops below a bridge ahead of us. We turned around and took a bypass to the South to REPPENTIN. Before entering REPPENTIN we found along the skyline a column of horses and horsedrawn vehicles. I took one $\frac{1}{4}$ ton and entered the town to investigate. At about 0925, 3 May 1945 we contacted elements of the Russian 191st Infantry Division in REPPENTIN. Finally a Russian Major agreed to take us up to the Colonel commanding the column. At about 1030 we reached the column commander who halted the column and set up a C.P. He

called for the Division Commander, a full Colonel, to come up and have lunch with us. The Division Commander arrived about 1145 at the C.P. which was by the canal east of SCHLEMMIN at 9346. When we were there word arrived that the commander of the Russian Tank Division had contacted the Americans near NEUSTADT. The Russian Colonel conveyed his respects to my Commanding General, and told me to have the American General under whom we were working meet him in the church at LUBZ at 1800 Moscow time. I told him that because of the traffic problem I could not get back by then, so he changed the time to 1900 Moscow time, with the additional understanding that if we were not back by then the traffic would have prevented it. I left the 1st and 2nd platoons in LUBZ, and started back with the 3rd Platoon.

6. Shortly after I left LUBZ, an SS officer surrendered two more Battalions to Lt. Harrell, one artillery battalion complete with guns and ammunition. This SS unit was the most complete unit among the several hundred thousand German troops that surrendered to my troop. The Russians attacked and entered LUBZ about a half hour after I left. Lt. Harrell met elements of both the 191st Infantry Division with whom I had made first contact, and also the 396th Infantry Division which entered from the North. A Russian tank Division was also operating in the vicinity.

7. As I proceeded back to LUDWIGSLUST with the 3rd Platoon we found that the Russian Tank elements had cut the road east of NEUSTADT. We passed through the Russian lines and out again, only to find that they had occupied NEUSTADT. I left the Third platoon in the traffic there, and proceeded to the 82nd Airborne Division where I reported the results of the mission to Major J. C. H. Lee, the Assistant G-3, before our arrival they believed that contact had first been made near LUDWIGSLUST about 1030 by other elements of the 82nd Division. I believe that the contact made at 0925 by me with the Major from the 191st Infantry Division makes "B" Troop the first element to contact the Russians in this area, and at a point 40 to 50 kilometers behind the German lines.

s/ William A. Knowlton
t/ WILLIAM A. KNOWLTON
1st Lt., Cavalry,
Commanding

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. ARMY

3 July 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of June, 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C.
(Through Channels).

1. In compliance with AR 345-105 and Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by:

Colonel JOSEPH F. HASKELL, 018 197, 1 June 45 to 26 June 45
Colonel ANDREW J. ADAMS, 018 579, 26 June to 30 June 45

3. On 1 June 1945, Combat Command "B" of the 7th Armored Division was engaged in occupational duty in the vicinity of BITTERFELD, Germany. The Combat Command Headquarters remained just outside the town of BITTERFELD while its area conformed to the political Kreis boundary of BITTERFELD. At that time Combat Command consisted of the following units:

Hq. & Hq. Co., Combat Command "B"
31st Tank Battalion
48th Armored Infantry Battalion
814th Tank Destroyer Battalion

Combat Command "B"'s primary mission during the month of June 45 was to maintain internal security and order within its assigned zone of responsibility. The security measures consisted of guarding installations of military value within the area and enforcing, by a series of road blocks and patrols, civilian and military curfew and circulation. Guard posts were maintained along the MULDE River to prevent unauthorized personnel crossing to or from the Russian lines on the East bank of the river.

In addition, all available personnel engaged in a scheduled program of concurrent training and organized athletics. Periods of maintenance were conducted daily and command inspections were held regularly. The Division band was available to the command each Wednesday for reviews or close order drill.

During the month one line company from each of the three battalions remained in a reserve status to be used in case of emergency. In addition, one squad from the line companies not in reserve was likewise placed on a reserve status. A practice alert under Combat Command control was held for these squads and companies on 4 - 5 June 45.

- 1 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

On 7 June 45, the 48th Armored Infantry Battalion started a program of small arms firing. This program continued in effect throughout the month; small arms, machine guns, and mortars being fired during this period. The 31st Tank Battalion started a firing program of machine guns and small arms on 14 June 45 as did the 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion on 18 June 45. Both of these programs likewise continued in effect during the month of June 45.

On 8 June 45 an instruction team from the 2nd Armored Division arrived to conduct a series of classes on the new M-26 Tank. These classes continued thru 12 June 45 when the team left.

On 12 June 45 a provisional Combat Command radio net was organized and put into effect on CW. This net operated 0900 to 1200 Mondays thru Fridays for the remainder of the month and was organized so that each radio operator in the Combat Command received a minimum of three hours practice per week.

The film "On To Tokyo" was shown to all members of the Command present for duty on 13 - 14 - 15 June 45. Likewise, the film "Your Job in Germany" was shown to all personnel present for duty on 21 - 22 - 23 June 45.

A Combat Command Tank Range was organized and opened vicinity of FRIEDEBURG on 18 June 45. The companies from the 31st Tank Battalion and 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion plus the assault gun platoon from the 48th Armored Infantry Battalion were scheduled to move to FRIEDEBURG for a period of three days each to fire on this range. By 30 June 45 "C" and "D" companies of the 31st Tank Battalion; Reconnaissance Company of the 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion and the Assault Gun platoon of the 48th Armored Infantry Battalion had fired as planned.

On 20 June 45 all Prisoners of War were evacuated from the Division Cage near WOLFEN. This cage was being maintained by the Reconnaissance company of the 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion and contained approximately 3,027 German PW's. The same day Reconnaissance company moved from WOLFEN to ZORBIG.

A Combat Command parade was held near BITTERFELD at 201530 June 45 in honor of Colonel JOSEPH F. HASKELL who was the Commanding Officer of Combat Command "B" at that time. Colonel HASKELL left the Combat Command and the 7th Armored Division on 26 June 45. Colonel ANDREW J. ADAMS assumed command of Combat Command "B" on that date.

On 20 June 45 Combat Command "B" was alerted for movement from the vicinity of BITTERFELD which was in the occupational zone of Russia. Billeting parties under the command of Major Gammill left early the next morning to reconnoiter an assembly area South of BUCHEN, Germany. These parties were recalled and returned on 23 June 45. Combat Command "B"'s new assembly area was slightly changed on 27 June 45. A Combat Command reconnaissance party left the following day for the new area vicinity HARDHEIM, Germany. This party returned to BITTERFELD on 30 June 45. At 301530, Combat Command "B" was alerted for movement the following day.

Upon movement the 17th Tank Battalion; 40th Tank Battalion and the 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, Mechanized would be attached to Combat Command "B" while the 48th Armored Infantry Battalion and the 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion were to be detached. "B" Company of the 77th Armored Medical Battalion plus the assault gun platoons of the 23rd, 38th and 48th Armored Infantry Battalions; the light tank platoons from Division Headquarters, Combat Command "A" and Reserve Command; and three light tanks from the 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion were to be attached to Combat Command "B" for the march. Billeting parties reported to Headquarters Combat Command "B" at 2000 prepared to leave early the following morning. Plans were made for the head of the Combat Command column to cross the I.P. at HALLE at 011030 July 45 enroute to HARDHEIM.

4. Promotions during month:

Leo Horowitz, 32 214 226 - Tech Sergeant to Master Sergeant
Alton P. Donovan, 32 227 886 - Tec 4 to Staff Sergeant
Ira C. Jones, 33 158 320 - Tec 4 to Sergeant
Montel F. Bachert, 35 111 965 - Tec 5 to Tec 4
Louis J. Ellingsworth, 33 167 766 - Tec 5 to Tec 4
Stanley A. Hopkins, 32 249 443 - Tec 5 to Tec 4
Howard E. Leamon, 34 499 386 - Tec 5 to Tec 4
Roy D. Hatfield, 37 515 364 - Pfc to Tec 5
Leroy Temby, 36 100 229 - Private to Pfc.

5. Transfers during the month:

Major JOSEPH F. FORD, 0 423 422, from Hq CC "A" to Hq. CC "B"
Major TRECECE, GEORGE L., 01 821 934, from Hq CC "B" to Hq 4th Armd Div.
1st Lt. MACK, PAUL A., 02 005 511, from Hq CC "B" to Hq 4th Armd Div.
Cpl. Brotschel, Ambrose C., 32 304 048, from Hq Co CC "B" to 4th Armd Div.
Tec 5 McNulty, Lloyd A., 33 450 407, from Tns Hq Co to Hq Co CC "B"
Tec 5 Kennedy, William T., 32 227 413, from Tns Hq Co to Hq Co CC "B"
Pfc. Hayes, Harold W., 34 123 734, from Tns Hq Co to Hq Co CC "B"

(signed)
ANDREW J. ADAMS
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A.P.O. 257, U. S. Army

1 August 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of July 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D.C.
(Through Channels).

1. In compliance with AR 345-105 and Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by:

Colonel ANDREW J. ADAMS, 018 579

3. On 1 July 1945, Combat Command "B" was in the process of moving from the vicinity of BITTERFELD, Germany which was in the Russian occupational zone, to HARDHEIM, Germany located in the American occupational zone. The head of Combat Command "B" column crossed the I P at HALLE at 1030 in order of march: Hq & Hq Company Combat Command "B", 17th Tank Battalion, 31st Tank Battalion, 40th Tank Battalion and 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. These units were attached on movement. The 48th Armored Infantry Battalion and 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion were detached Combat Command "B" and attached Combat Command "A" upon movement. B/77 Medical Battalion, plus the assault gun platoon from the 23rd, 38th and 48th Armored Infantry Battalion's and the light tank platoons from Division Headquarters, Combat Command "A", Combat Command "R" and 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached to Combat Command "B" for the march.

The head of the column entered the intermediate assembly area vic BURGWALLBACH, Germany on the 2nd of July at 0130 closing at 0930. The Combat Command resumed the march at 1100 and closed in the following day 3 July 1945 at 0440.

All units initiated a reconnaissance of their respective areas for firing ranges, athletic facilities, theatres and classrooms for I. & E. training.

Road blocks were established per Ops Instr Hq., 7th Armored Division 041600 and units maintained guard on all critical communications installations.

On 9 July a raid in which all male citizens between 10 and 60 years old were screened was conducted on BRETZINGEN by "C" company, 40th Tank Battalion. At 0430 all unit commanders were present to witness this raid. Nothing outstanding of a subversive nature was discovered. Concurrent training was started by all units in addition to periods of maintenance and athletics.

A Battalion review was held by the 40th Tank Battalion at 1900 on 10 July 45.

40th Tank Battalion and 31st Tank Battalion raided the towns within their areas on 110430 July. On 12 July the 17th Tank Battalion and 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron raided one-half of the towns in their area and raided the

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remainder of towns on the following day 13 July at 0430.

On 14 July Battalion Commanders and their executive officers were exchanged among the units for the purpose of making inspections. A Squadron review was held by the 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron at 1300. Preceeding retreat in front of the Combat Command Headquarters at 1820, a ceremony was held for the presentation of the French Croix de Guerre to Lieutenant Colonel Boylan, 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, and Lieutenant Colonel Brown, 40th Tank Battalion, by Major Miltat, French Liaison Officer.

Tank firing was started on the 16th of July by the 17th, 31st and 40th Tank Battalions. In addition the 31st and 40th Tank Battalions started small arms firing. Units continued concurrent training and periods of maintenance and athletics. Security measures and guard on communication installations continued in effect.

On 20 July the Combat Command area was subdivided into battalion areas and unit Commanders were oriented in the plan "TALLYHO" as outlined by 7th Armored Division Operations Instructions, 1914008 July 45.

On 21 July the units moved from billets at 0300 hours blocking all roads leading into the Division area, surrounding all towns and blocking interior roads to prevent passage of civil or military traffic without proper identification and travel orders. At 0430 the process of searching all areas and screening all personnel was initiated. By 211130 July 45 the task of screening civilians and former German military personnel was complete.

Interior Division boundaries were relieved at 211630 July 45. All road blocks remained in position on outer Divisional perimeter until 230430 July 45.

23 July 45 a Command inspection was held by all units at which time a show down was held to determine the presence of any loot, contraband or black market material in the possession of the troops. The results of the inspection were negative.

Units continued firing on the ranges - firing medium and light tanks, combat firing range, smallarms and 30 and 50 caliber machine guns.

On the 24th of July the 17th Tank Battalion assumed responsibility for four road blocks in the 40th Tank Battalion areas.

Word was received on the 25th of July that the 40th Amphibian Tractor Battalion (formerly 40th Tank Battalion) was activated detached 7th Armored Division, attached 12th Army Group as of 10 July 45.

On 261500 July 45, 31st Tank Battalion and 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron held unit parades.

On 28 July 45, 17th and 31st Tank Battalions completed firing.

The week beginning 30 July the only unit firing was the 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, one troop firing on the armored car range and two troops firing on the combat course. The 707th Tank Battalion was assigned and closed in 301220 July 45 less stragglers. The Battalion completely closed in 1700. All troops witnessed the Jack Benny show held both in the afternoon and evening.

At the close of the period the Combat Command was engaged in the training

prescribed by TM #20 Headquarters 7th Armored Division, July 45, and Post Hostilities Memorandum #1 Headquarters XXI Corps, dated 20 July 45.

4. Promotions during month:

none

5. Transfers during the month;

Colonel JOSEPH F. HASKELL, 018 197, from Temp Dy (Hq ETOUSA) to trfd to Hq Pacific Ocean Area.

Major JOSEPH F. FORD, 0423 422 from Hq CC"B" to Hq Assembly Area Command, APO 752.

Major GEORGE L. TREECE 01 821 934, from Hq 4th Armored Div to Hq CC "B"
1st Lt. EDWIN E. SEGALL, 0 549 404, from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div
1st Lt. JOHN A. TREANORE, 0 475 892, From Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div
1st Lt. JOHN A. POWERS, 01 996 537, from Hq Co CC"B" to 40th Amphibian Tractor Battalion.

S/Sgt Shafer, Melvin L., 33 162 761, from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div
Tec 4 D'Angelo, Vincent J., 32 227 848, From Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div
Tec 4 Patterson, Thomas B., 34 354 876, from Hq Co CC"B" to Hq 6th Port Bn.,
APO 765

Tec 4 Sherwood, Clifford M., 32 227 370 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Tec 5 Czarnecki, John S., 32 253 249, from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Tec 5 Hansen, Egon, 39 175 826 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Tec 5 Hayes, Harold W., 34 123 734 From Hq Co CC"B" to Hq 7th Armd' Div

Tec 5 Howard, Clarence A., 34 499 223, from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Tec 5 Johnson, Mark R., 34 795 706 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Tec 5 Mathison, Glen R., 37 484 814 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Tec 5 McNulty, Lloyd A., 33 450 407 from Hq Co CC"B" to Nd Reinf. Depot

Tec 5 Medash, George J., 33 148 909 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Tec 5 Sekel, Albert J., 35 306 746 from Hq Co CC"B" to Inf Reorganization Det
K (7110)

Tec 5 Zawora, Frank J., 35 142 200 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Pfc Borracce, Dino 31 091 240 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Pfc Lovitt, Edd R., 34 138 661 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Pfc Mueller, Armond N., 36 982 709 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Pfc Paepke, Arnold H., 36 889 492 from Hq Co CC"B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Pfc Steinborn, Fred J., 32 279 924 from Hq Co CC "B" to 1st Arm'd Div

Pfc Warner, George N., 34 230 965 from Hq Co CC"B" to Inf Reorganization Det
"K" (Reception Sta Gp 7094)

(signed)

ANDREW J. ADAMS

Colonel, Infantry

Commanding

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS COMBAT COMMAND "B"
A. P. O. 257 U. S. Army

1 September 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of August 1945

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

1. In compliance with AR 345-105 and Administrative Memorandum No. 44, Headquarters, 7th Armored Division, dated 17 November 1944, the following "After Action Report" is submitted:

2. During the period covered by this report, Combat Command "B" was commanded by:

Colonel ANDREW J. ADAMS, 018 579, 1 August 45 to 6 August 45
Lt. Colonel JOHN P. WEMPLE, 0 117 564, 6 August to 31 August 45

3. On 1 August 1945, Combat Command "B" was occupying an area in Buchen Landkreis, Baden Province, Germany. The Combat Command's mission was to enforce civilian and military control measures and Military Government activities within its assigned zone of responsibility. This was accomplished by maintaining a series of road and screening blocks, and guarding installations of military significance.

A concurrent training schedule stressing I and E subjects and athletics was conducted for all troops not engaged in guard or administrative duties. A program of range firing was also in progress, the 87th Rcn Sq firing armored cars while all troops participated in small arms firing. A command inspection was scheduled by all units every week.

A thorough search of the wooded area within the assigned zone was conducted on 1 Aug 45 to find any unauthorized persons or uncover any intelligence targets not registered. The results of this search were negative except for several 20mm flak guns discovered by the 31st Tank Bn.

At 012000 Aug 45, the 707th Tank Bn relieved the 17th Tank Bn on the three road blocks and one screening block within its area. The 17th Tank Bn had been maintaining these since the departure of the 40th Amphibious Tractor Bn.

From 4 Aug 45 to 7 Aug 45, the units were engaged in turning in all combat vehicles. The only combat vehicles remaining in the Combat Command after this date were 10 half tracks drawn from CC "A". These half tracks were signed out every week to the company which was the alert company for that week. The alert company was rotated among the units each week so that one company from the Combat Command was always ready upon call in case of any emergency.

On 6 Aug 45, the units of CC "B" participated in the ceremony for the departure of Major General Hasbrouck.

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The Combat Command was relieved of the responsibility for the security of all intelligence targets within the area except target No. 47, on 11 Aug 45. Target No. 47 was a small arms assembly and repair plant in Waldurn and was guarded by the 31st Tank Bn.

All officers and men with an ASR score of 75 or more, except an essential cadre were alerted for transfer to the 69th Inf Div or the 5th Arm'd Div on 18 Aug 45. The alert company was discontinued and the Combat Command was concerned mostly with the problems of readjustment of personnel from that date on throughout the month. On 21 Aug 45 the designated officers and men left for the 69th Inf Div while those to transfer to the 5th Arm'd Div left on 24 and 25 Aug 45.

Troop "B", 81st Rcn Sq., attached to the 119th F. A. Brigade relieved the units of CC "B" on the two screening blocks and target No. 47 at 232030 Aug 45. The three road blocks were discontinued and the Combat Command was relieved of all security responsibility except interior guard of unit areas at that time.

On 25 Aug 45, concurrent training schedules for all units except the 87th Rcn Sq were discontinued as all personnel were engaged in administrative duties. The 87th Rcn Sq, which had more men than the other units, was able to continue its concurrent training schedule.

Beginning 26 Aug 45 high point officers and men were transferred into the units. On 30 Aug 45 the 31st Tank Bn had received enough personnel so that it was able to resume its concurrent training schedule. As before, the schedule stressed orientation and athletics.

The British orientation film "The United States" was shown to all units on 28 Aug 45 as was Combat Bulletin No. 51 on 31 Aug 45.

4. Promotions during month:

none

5. Transfers during the month:

Colonel Andrew J. Adams, 018 579, from Hq CC B to Hq 7th A. D.
Lt. Colonel John P. Wemple, 0 117 564, from 17th Tank Bn to Hq CC B
Maj. Owen E. Woodruff Jr, 01 010 796, from Hq CC B to Hq 7th A. D.
Tec 5 William T. Kennedy, 32 227 413, from Hq CC B to Hq Co 7th A. D.

The following enlisted men were transferred to 19th Reinf Depot:
Tec 5 Richard D. Dellheim, 13 155 183
Pfc Ross J. Myers, 35 087 342

The following officers were transferred to 14th Reinf Depot:
Lt. Col. Charles F. Latimer, 0 314 567
Lt. Col. Hal L. Bemis, 0 329 279

The following officers and enlisted men were transferred to 3rd Reinf Depot:

Maj. Evan D. Gammill, 0 450 281
Capt. Henry W. Hays, 01 011 910
Sgt. Ray A. Collins, 35 302 168
Tec 4 Louis J. Achille, 36 169 885
Tec 4 Stanley A. Hopkins, 32 249 443
Tec 5 Richard H. Harris, 36 212 533
Tec 5 Eulas L. Henry, 34 499 251
Tec 5 Willie T. Moorefield, 33 155 108
Tec 5 Jesus L. Paderez, 18 096 782
Tec 5 Steven W. Roguski, 33 179 828
Pfc Paul D. Kamoda, 35 300 118
Pfc Daniel F. Page, 39 587 573
Pfc Braudy B. Rice, 34 863 743

The following enlisted men were transferred to 81st Rcn Sq Mecz, APO 251

Tec 4 Sol Meyers, 32 249 847
Tec 5 George B. Bettle, 31 064 555
Tec 5 William S. Bergdoll, 35 760 389
Tec 5 Wallace V. Eisenstat, 13 055 007
Tec 5 George Freilich, 32 249 849
Tec 5 Joseph P. Grzemski, 32 249 796

The following officers and enlisted men were transferred to 69th Inf Div:

Capt James C. Fahl, 0 522 403
S/Sgt Herbert S. Dana, 33 003 143
S/Sgt Alton P. Donivan, 32 227 886
Sgt Forrest L. Grobe, 36 042 956
Tec 4 Bellvard L. Allen, 35 265 091
Tec 4 Chester Jondrewski, 36 176 833
Tec 5 Melvin H. Giger, 36 053 774
Tec 5 William K. Gordon, 20 227 647
Tec 5 Paul Nichols, 35 264 950
Pfc Earl N. Young, 19 122 448

The following officers and enlisted men were transferred to 5th Arm'd Div:

Capt Fernand J. B. Hamel, 0 444 516
WOJG Albert R. Anderson, W2 120 348
M/Sgt Leo Horowitz, 32 214 226
M/Sgt John J. Keenan, 36 118 577
M/Sgt Elwood H. Rheude, 36 036 947
S/Sgt James C. Layton, 36 313 839
Sgt Ira C. Jones, 33 158 320
Tec 4 Lewis J. Ellingsworth, 33 167 766
Tec 4 Howard E. Lemmon, 34 499 386
Tec 4 Jesse L. Phillippi, 36 313 688
Tec 4 Charles M. Smith, 33 138 793
Tec 5 Peter A. Gallagher, 32 257 420
Tec 5 John H. Johnson, 34 240 341
Pfc John F. Kmush, 33 148 926
Pfc Leroy Temby, 36 100 229

JOHN P. WEMPLE
Lt. Colonel, Infantry
Commanding