

The Anti Tank Co.

in

The Battle for the Po-Valley



88TH DIVISION

COMBAT INFANTRY COMPANY

Headquarters Platoon

1st Platoon

Capt. GEORGE W. BUSER
 1st Sgt Adouff Kirby
 S/Sgt Morbin Hayes
 T/4 Luigi Croatti
 T/4 Frank Tobis
 T/5 Robert Dixon
 Pfc Walter Davis
 Pfc Willard Berger
 Pfc Robert Gearhart
 Pfc Carl Grauer
 Pfc Anthony Siconolfi
 S/Sgt Gerald Totams
 T/5 Zeus Goodman
 Pfc Stanley Root
 Sgt Arthur Cacko
 T/4 Joseph Geraghty
 T/5 Joe Leonardo
 Pfc Carmine Fairechio
 Pfc William Merklinger
 Sgt Leo Zlotowski
 Cpl Joseph McDermott
 Cpl John Honea
 T/5 Reubin Krull
 Cpl Charles Weydig
 T/5 Kenneth McDonald
 Sgt Charles Gum
 Pfc Charles Nill
 T/4 Frank McAllister
 T/5 Victor Saviano
 Pfc Albert Thompson

T/Sgt Weldon Gossett
 Pfc Berwyn Chermiet
 Pfc Roy Stout
 S/Sgt Paul Welling
 Cpl William Kuhn
 Pfc David Nevins
 Pfc Cecil Nivens
 Pfc Alvin Miller
 Pfc Louis Miller
 Pfc Dwight Short
 Pfc Fred Zoccola
 S/Sgt Micheal Matas
 Cpl Glenn Bruton
 Pfc Frank Wilson
 Pfc William Harvey
 Pvt Robert Ryan
 Pfc Floyd Robertson
 S/Sgt J. D. Gray
 Cpl Nicholas Stranerio
 Pfc Harry Show
 Pfc Steve Walker
 Pfc J. C. Hardin
 Pfc Alan Lunak
 Pfc William Roberts
 Pfc Chester Pruchnicki
 Pfc Paul Thompson
 T/5 Virgil Bills
 Pfc Russel Griffin

Received July 23, 1945

II —

2nd Platoon

1st Lt. CARROL LITTLE
 T/Sgt John Noonan
 Pfc John Rollins
 T/5 Eugene Swisher
 S/Sgt Manuel Moniz
 Cpl David-Sleeper
 Pfc Mathew J. Connolly
 Pfc Francis Twigg
 Pfc Richmond D'Esterre
 Pfc William Lindow
 Pfc William Zweiback
 Pfc Walter Delaney
 T/5 Earl Bowman
 S/Sgt Emil Briski
 Cpl Henry Arias
 Pfc Arthur D. Posa
 Pfc John Gracela
 Pfc Leo McLaughlin
 Pfc Attilio Polli
 Pfc Robert Ainsworth
 T/5 Emmet Mills
 S/Sgt C. M. Moore
 Pfc William Peters
 Pfc Russell Duvall
 Pfc Bernard Goodkin
 Pfc Arthur Vanderhoff
 Pfc Robert Lanz
 Pfc Joseph Tierney
 Pfc Clayton Marvin
 Pfc Stanley Zwjacs
 Pfc Paul Roberts
 T/5 Bernard Wolnitz (Medics)
 Pfc John Stewart

3rd Platoon

1st Lt MAX T. HULBERT
 T/Sgt Robert Cline
 Pfc Neil O' Connor
 T/5 Charles McBride
 S/Sgt Richard Goodman
 Pfc Edward Hamot
 Pfc J. Yee Mee
 Pfc Lloyd Rayburn
 Pfc Bernie Kolman
 Pfc Peter Maryz
 Pfc Owen Oaks
 S/Sgt Raymond Hernandez
 Cpl Alfred Addonizio
 Pfc Charles Anderson
 Pfc Lloyd Busch
 Pfc Arvel Armstrong
 Pfc Lloyd Clary
 Pfc Charles Smith
 Pfc Glenn Stough
 Pfc Harold Fick
 S/Sgt Arthur Bator
 Pfc Earl Ross
 Pfc Percival Healy
 Pfc James Markell
 Pfc Hyman Ruskin
 Pfc Raymond Dries
 Pfc Charles Engel
 Pfc Clarence Whitehurst
 Pfc Kenneth Exberg
 Pfc Robert Gearhart
 Cpl Louis Almy

III

Mine Platoon

1st Lt MERRILL PYLE
 Sgt Victor Buttermore
 Pfc McCune Rose
 Pfc Harry Burns
 T/4 William Trask
 T/5 Basil Nickerson
 Sgt Benjamin Pihlak
 Pfc Francis Kirk
 Pfc Dayton Heinbaugh
 PWfc Zeb Norman
 Sgt Theodore Emerich
 Pfc Francis Nolan
 Pfc Walter Suchan
 Pfc Charles Lawson
 Pfc Louis Pirolo
 Pvt John E. Perrotta
 Pfc Robert Whitten
 Pfc Alvin Moskalik
 Pfc James Branck
 Pvt Thomas Murphy
 Pfc Charles Orr
 Pfc John Hafner
 Pfc Stanley Gryp
 Pvt William H. Ludixen
 Pfc Lloyd Frentzel
 Pfc Wallace Medlin
 Pfc Miles Cook
 Pfc Charles Zinn

ANTI TANK COMPANY, 350 th INFANTRY

APO 88, c/o P. M. U. S. ARMY

4 May 1945

SUBJECT: Company History from 14 April to 30 April inclusive

On 14 April 1945 the Anti Tank Company under the Command of George W. Buser had its CP set up near Anconella, Italy. From there the company was going into its position in preparation for the attack. Employment of the Company was in different capacities. The First Platoon had three Anti Tank Guns in position, and the Third Platoon had one gun in position. These positions were located to permit direct fire upon Monte Adone. The Second Platoon was manning four .50 Cal. Machine Guns in support of the Third Battalion. The remaining two squads of the Third Platoon were assigned as litter bearers to the Regimental Medics. The three squads in the

Mine Platoon were assigned one squad to each battalion with mine sweepers ready to clear mines if and when necessary.

The evening of the 15 April the Anti Tank Company CP was moved into Anconella. At H-hour, 22:30, the four Anti Tank Guns opened fire at Monte Adone using HE ammunition. Approximately 180 rounds were fired during the half hour barrage that preceded the attack.

The Second Platoon having previously zeroed in at the same time opened fire upon points on Monte Rumici. The night of 16 April they moved using mule train to carry the .50 Cal; Machine Guns and ammunition to Di Sotto near the top of Monte Rumici. One man suffered slight wounds in the hand from shrapnel.

From the beginning of the attack until Monte Rumici was completely taken, those men of the Company assigned as litter bearers, carried many of the wounded back to the Aid Stations.

Only one squad of the Mine Platoon encountered mines. Something like thirty to forty Shu Mines were lifted from trails. One other squad, though finding no mines, found and neutralized several booby-traps.

On 18 April one of the First Platoon guns was damaged by a shell that hit and exploded between the trails of the gun.

On the 19 April the Company CP, four Anti Tank Gun squads and the Mine Platoon moved from Anconella by way of Monzuno and Furcoli to the Setta River bed near Lama. There the Second Platoon and those serving as litter bearers rejoined the Company.

On 21 April a quartering party was sent out to Gesso and the Company moved to that point late in the afternoon of that day. Again in the evening of the same day the Company CP moved forward to Zola Predosa and the three Anti Tank Gun platoons were put into position, one platoon in each battalion area. There the gun platoons were assigned to the battalions for operational control, from where they later moved with the battalions.

During the day of 22 April, The Anti Tank Company CP group was moving rather steadily, keeping well up with the battalions. Late in the afternoon they arrived at Crevalcore where they rested for a few hours. At about midnight the group moved up to Caselle at the Panaro River and the rest of the night was spent there.

In the early morning of the 23 April the Company CP moved through Camposanto to San Felice. From San Felice they moved rapidly along the route of advance, arriving in Poggio Rusco a short time before dark and before firing had ceased in the town.

On the 24 April the CP moved north arriving in the bivouac area a few miles south of Revere and the Po River. Two squads of the Second Platoon crossed the Po with the Second Battalion. They were the first Anti Tank Guns and heavy vehicles of the Regiment across the river. The third squad of the platoon returned to the Company until it should be allowed to cross. The First and Third Platoons remained with their respective battalions awaiting orders for crossing the Po and all the time stayed in position.

The Mine Platoon was called out by Regiment and crossed the Po the night of 25 April. Their mission was to clear roads of mines that Partisans had reported. No mines were found. Just north of the Po members of the platoon killed two and captured five Germans. Then at noon on the 26 April the Anti Tank Company CP group along with Regimental Headquarters and the First and Third Battalions moved out and crossed the Po, afterwards advancing to the small town of Pozzo. Here the Company CP remained until the evening of 27 April, when clearance could be made across the Adige River at Verona. A few miles east of Verona the Company set up its CP for the night near San Martino.

The next move on 28 April brought the CP to Vicenza which was not yet cleared of the enemy. Extra guards were put out until it was safe to assume there were no enemy snipers or stragglers yet around. During the day the First Platoon knocked out an enemy truck and also an enemy Anti Tank Gun by firing at long range.

In the early Sunday morning hours, 29 April, during a strong counter attack striking at columns moving along the highway, all three Anti Tank platoons were involved. The First Platoon, at San Pietro in Gu, was in close contact with the enemy. One round was fired from the Anti Tank Gun at a half-track. Though the shot was a miss the half-track moved out and ceased firing.

The Second Platoon south of San Pietro in Gu, was for some time surrounded by the enemy. One Anti Tank Gun was fired and according to the report a half-track was hit. One officer prisoner being guarded by men of this platoon was shot and killed while trying to escape.

The Third Platoon, east of San Pietro in Gu, was in column on the highway when the enemy attacked with bazookas, machine guns and small arms. The men quickly scattered as there was no time for getting vehicles off the road. A thirty-caliber light machine gun was set up and using it and their small arms men of this platoon killed four enemy bazooka men, several machine gunners and all together a

total of about twenty Germans were killed and two German Medics taken prisoner. Two men of the platoon were chiefly responsible for the success of this defense. One of the platoon's Anti Tank Guns was knocked out during the fight. This action lasted a total of about five hours.

Monday, 30 April, the Company CP and Mine Platoon moved from Vicenza north to Sandrigo. The Anti Tank Gun Platoons still were attached to the battalions and moved along with the advance, leap-frogging into positions.

3 June 1945

The A. T. Company, 350th Infantry, on 1 May 1945 was quartered in Marscita, Italy. The three gun platoons were then consigned to each Battalion for operation, and had their guns in positions guarding road approaches. The Mine Platoon was then carrying out guard duty at Regiment and Company C. P.

The afternoon of 2 May a reconnaissance party of one Officer and Sgt. accompanied the Regimental Group to find quarters in the town of Arsie, and soon after their arrival in this small mountain town, located in the lower Alps, the news of the surrender of all enemy forces in Italy was joyfully, though at first doubtfully, received by members of the Company.

There at Arsie, the three gun platoons were returned to Company control, again bringing the Company together as a group.

The next few days were spent quietly, awaiting further orders, and checking and cleaning weapons and equipment. On 7 May, the Company as a group moved North of Ca-

valese. There the Company received an assignment of putting out road guards and check post in the vicinity of San Giovanni, Arabba, and Paneveggio. The duties of these posts were to stop all vehicles and soldiers, check for passès and see that any stragglers were sent to an enemy collection point. From each of these points, motor patrols were sent out daily, to check surrounding areas and roads and make a more thorough check on any possible enemy locations unreported, or movements of enemy personnel.

On about 23 May, the three gun platoons and part of Company Headquarters moved from Cavalese to take up other duties at different posts.

The First Platoon went to Salerno, where they were given posts to guard and check enemy civilian transportation. One of their duties was to help civilians get transportation when necessary in order to help many of them return to their homes. One of the details was to oversee the evacuation of enemy units, straggler personnel, and vehicle and supplies. A motor patrol was sent out each day up the mountains to the East of Salerno where contact was made with a group of partisans.

The Second Platoon was assigned posts in Egna, where their duties were similar to those of the First Platoon checking transportation and personnel for passes and rounding up stragglers. Here, one of the big problems was enforcing the curfew hours, especially with civilians. Also in Egna, the Second Platoon picked up several German soldiers in civilian clothes. And it was found that within their area a German Officer who still believed in the Nazi Party was holding classes of instructions for his men, still teaching Nazi beliefs. He was immediately removed. This Platoon had one man mortally wounded by the explosion of a grenade at an ammo dump. Though he received immediate first aid and care, he died a couple of days later. The medic of the Second Platoon also gave aid to a German who had received a shock from high-voltage wire .

The Third Platoon was stationed at Ora, where they performed the same guard duties and in addition had two warehouses containing rations of flour, sugar, lard and butter, and a gasoline dump to guard. The moving out of enemy units and placing new units coming in was one of the duties and also directing convoys to Egna at the check point. Many casual

details came up often which had to taken care of, such as making a check on the operation of a radio station just North of Ora, and the many difficulties and desires of civilians who came for information, for labor, and they often had personnel desires and want, such as asking to buy horses, automobiles or bicycles.

Awards

The entire Company was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge

Lt. Hulbert, Max T.	Purple Heart
Lt. Pyle, Merrill	Bronze Star
Addonizio, Alfred J.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Arias, Henry	Purple Heart
Bator, Arthur O.	Purple Heart
Bills, Virgil H.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Burns, Harry	Purple Heart
Cacko, Arthur A.	Purple Heart
Cline, Robert C.	Bronze, Star, Soldier's Medal, Silver Star
Fairechio, Carmine H.	Purple Heart, Motor Vehicle Drivers Badge
Fick, Harold L.	Silver Star, Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Gryp, Stanley M.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Hafner, John J.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Harvey, William T.	Bronze Star
Healy, Percival I.	Purple Heart
Heinbaugh, Dayton A.	Purple Heart
Hernandez, Raymundo	Purple Heart
Honea, John M.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Kirby, Adouf	Purple Heart
Leonardo, Joe	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Markell, James L.	Purple Heart
Marvin, Clayton L.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
McBride, Charles C.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Merklinger, William C. Jr.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Moskalik, Alvin L.	Purple Heart
Oaks, Owen C.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Smith, Charles R.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Stout, Roy S.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Swisher, Eugene D.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Thompson, Paul W.	Bronze Star
Vanderhoff, Arthur M. Jr.	Purple Heart
Weydig, Charles	Bronze Star
Whitehurst, Clarence A.	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Zlotowski, Leo C.	Bronze Star
Zoccola, Fred	Motor Vehicle Driver's Badge
Zweiback, William	Purple Heart