

714TH TANK BATTALION - NARRATIVE OF EVENTS – APRIL 1945

1 Apr 1945: At 0630 Task Force Field moved out for Wolkshausen, Germany, enroute bazooka fire was encountered and the town was by-passed, moving on toward Gaukonigshofen. One enemy tank was sighted south of Hobestadt, Germany at 0925 by the point, Company A, and was knocked out. At 1000 the point was moving in on Ochsenfurt, Germany. The bridge at the Main River was believed to be in good condition. One enemy tank was sighted on the far side of the river, fired upon and knocked out. The bridge was reported blown at 1055 by Captain Charles C Clayton, Company C, but that only the center portion. The supports were still in good condition. One Mark V tank was fired on and knocked out. At 1300 Captain Charles C Clayton, Company C, 714th Tank Battalion, called for help from the assault gun platoon as he had sighted another enemy tank. The assault gun was not able to get into position fast enough, so Captain Clayton ordered his bulldozer into position, and with the aid of two light tanks, fired on and knocked out one enemy Mark IV tank. At 1425 Company D was ordered to attack, by surprise, the town of Markbret, Germany. One platoon of Company C 56th AIB was attached to Company D for this operation. The town was found heavily occupied by the enemy. Three light tanks were lost in the operation, five infantry casualties and five Company D men were casualties in this operation. Three men from Company D were listed as missing in action, and one man was killed in action. One of the three men listed missing in action was later recaptured when an enemy hospital was captured. However, many casualties were inflicted on the enemy. The task force CP was set up in Ochsenfurt, Germany at 1600. Bridge guard was established, security outposts and patrols were set up immediately.

2 Apr 1945: At 1100 a message was received from executive officer, CC-B, stating information that there was evidence of a Panzer Grenadier Division in the general vicinity of Staldorf, Germany (Coordinate 6010). At 2005 a company commanders meeting was called. The task force was alerted to move after 2400 on 15 minutes notice. The task force commander, Lt Col Frederick P Field, then Major, cautioned all company commanders of looting by personnel. Operation instructions were issued by CC-B with overlay, and the task force was alerted to move at 1400. A meeting of all officers was called at 1120 3 Apr 1945 to discuss plans for crossing the Main River and the assault on Wurzburg, Germany.

3 Apr 1945: At 1445 orders were changed also route and objective were changed to cross the Main River and proceed to Zeubelried, Germany, going into an assembly area at that point, facing north, the unit to turn south and secure the bridge at Markbret, Germany. The entire task force except Headquarters and Task Force trains were over the bridge at 1600. Tanks were definitely canalized and unable to move over the hill due to excellent dug-in enemy positions. Time fire by artillery was called for at this point. At 1800 the task force was still unable to obtain positions on hill. The task force commander called the commanding officer, CC-B, and informed him of the situation and told him that he planned on leaving Headquarters Section on the other side of the bridge, but was ordered to move the entire unit over. At 1915 Lt McConnel with the attached platoon of Company B 119th Engineers Battalion, was clearing a dud bomb from the road. Capt Clayton reported that his company was unable to move with Lt McConnel's platoon on the road. Col Charles V Bromley, CO, CC-B, appeared in the area to discuss the situation with the task force commander at 1915. At 1941 the task force commander requested to pull

back and consolidate positions. The request met with approval. The CP was set up and also outpost security.

4 Apr 1945: At 0200 enemy patrols infiltrated in to Ochsenfurt and destroyed two peeps belonging to Company B 119th Engineers Battalion, with grenades. Company B 56th AIB was attached to the task force for the operations on Erlach, Germany. The point moved out for Erlach, Germany, meeting slight resistance. Hq and Hq trains remained in Klein Ochsenfurt, Germany, waiting orders to move forward behind the force. At 1600 the tail of the column was hit by machine gun fire, turned and went back. At this time heavy artillery was coming in from front of the column. The S-2 halftrack was hit by machine gun fire. At 1635 the assault gun platoon fired three rounds of HE time fire in woods to the right of the column. The air OP reported enemy leaving Zeubelried and Erlach at this time. Lt McConnell and one enlisted man were killed by enemy machine gun fire. Several men were injured. Three men of Reconnaissance Platoon were also wounded. The point tank received AT fire and the tube of 76mm gun was shot off. At this time the task force commander urged movement in to defilade positions to bring fire on anti-tank guns. Three enemy tanks were spotted by the air OP in the woods (Coordinate 695250) at 1725. The tanks were reported moving toward the force. One enemy AT gun was knocked out by Company A at 1810. At 2155 the force, having taken Erlach, Germany moved in to assembly area for the night. During the afternoon and early evening, five enemy tanks and three 88mm guns were knocked out by the force.

5 Apr 1945: A company commanders meeting was held at the task force commander's tank at 0600. Ten enemy planes attacked forward elements by strafing and bombing. Observation plane was also attacked by one enemy plane. At 0830 no resistance was being encountered at Kitzengen, Germany. Capt Clayton reported roadblock at railroad underpass. The engineers were ordered to demolish it. The air OP reported the road bridge slightly damaged but the railroad bridge was blown. At 0940 the task force was moving in to Kitzengen. Capt Clayton reported one bazooka found and a number of snipers encountered. At 1200 the bridgehead at Kitzengen was secured by the task force. Combat Commander B was informed of the situation. At 1245 the 70th Tank Battalion, Company A and one battalion of the 4th Infantry Division moved into Kitzengen. The task force was ordered to turn over the bridgehead to the other force and be prepared to move in any direction. Approximately 30 PWs were taken up to 1300. Artillery and mortar firing to the east side of the river. At 1330 French laborers claimed that German soldiers had been removing uniforms for civilian clothes and were leaving their posts. At 1600 the task force was preparing to send a flying column to Westheim, Germany. One hundred thirty enemy were reported entering town from the east. White phosphorous was reported falling south of Westheim by Company A. Air OP confirmed report. The task force commander cautioned the point not to fire on friendly troops. At 1635 it was reported that CC-A was entering Rottendorf, Germany. Friendly troops were reported firing on Westheim at 1640 and at 1725 the task force moved into position outside Westheim. Groups of Russians and Poles came out of town and announced that there were no enemy in the town. The commanding officer, Combat Command B, ordered the task force to move to Biebelreid, Germany and back to Kitzengen, Germany to flush out any

enemy force in the vicinity. At 1800 the task force moved through Biebelreid toward Reppeindorf, Germany, thence back to Kitzengen. Fifty PWs were taken with no opposition. The task force was ordered to remain in Kitzengen for the night and proceed on the original plan in the morning.

6 Apr 1945: A company commanders meeting was held at 0630 in preparation for moving. The task force moved out on its mission. No enemy resistance reported up to 1000. Company A 714th Tank Battalion exploited Obrienbriet, Germany. Lt Vernon R Foster sighted one enemy tank and destroyed it. Orders received at 1200 were to go to Mainbernheim, Germany instead of moving to Hohenfeld and Markstaft, Germany to clear out any opposition the task force might encounter. At 1425 the town on Mainbernheim fell to the task force. A small task force was sent to Iphofen, Germany immediately upon arrival in Mainbernheim. The town of Iphofen unoccupied by enemy troops. Lt Col Frederick P Field, Task Force Commander, was awarded the Silver Star at 1600 by Col Charles V Bromley, Commanding Officer, CC-B, for gallantry in action. The task force remained in Mainbernheim performing maintenance on vehicles and resting of troops on 7 and 8 Apr 1945.

9 Apr 1945: At 1000 sixty one (61) reinforcements were received. At 1515 verbal orders were received alerting the unit for movement. A company commanders meeting was held at 1730 to discuss plans of movement order. The point moved out at 1830. Capt Clayton, Company C, 714th Tank Battalion, reported receiving a good deal of HE fire in the vicinity of Klein Langheim, Germany. 1st Lt Richard P LaFrance was seriously wounded by enemy artillery fire. Artillery fire on the town was called for by the task force commander. Capt Clayton reported that fire was being received from opposite side of the creek. The mortar platoon was also firing into town. At 2300 the rocket launcher of Company C, 714th Tank Battalion, fired into town at an enemy wagon column.

10 Apr 1945: One tank from Company C, 714th Tank Battalion, was hit in the gun shield by bazooka fire at 0830. Another Company C tank was hit at 0915. Same type of fire was landing in assembly area but was light and harassing. The mortar platoon was firing smoke to cover Company C withdrawal. At 1315 Task Force Norton entered Klein Langheim from the north. A PW reported location of trains of opposing force and stated that the force numbered about three hundred. At 1430 the assistant S-3 of Combat Command B called for air to attack enemy trains. At 1640 Task Force Norton moved out on new objective with this task force blocking to the north. Castel, Germany was entered at 1700 and the task force remained there for the night. Refueling and resupply were accomplished immediately. Outposts were posted and security established for the night at 1700.

11 Apr 1945: At approximately 1030 the point moved out from Castel, Germany. At 1250 the assault gun platoon leader, Lt Jenks, sighted two 20mm anti-aircraft guns at railroad station in Schienfeld, Germany. Lt Jenks requested artillery fire on positions. One enemy tank was sighted by Company A in Markt Bibert, Germany. At 1255 two rounds of AT fire were received at this time. Many enemy were reported in town by Lt Vernon R Foster. The task force commander ordered Company C, 714th Tank Battalion, into position in an attempt to develop the situation. A PW claimed there were dug-in positions north and east of town and also two deployed enemy tanks with artillery support. The task

force commander requested air support in the south of town at 1530, but warned the air liaison officer not to bomb in town as infantry was ready to move in. Markt Bibart was entered by the task force at 1700. Security was posted and the unit prepared to spend the night. One enemy panther tank, with crew intact, was captured by Major William R Comfort, 1st Lt John G Cook, with four light tanks.

12 Apr 1945: A company commanders meeting was held at 0630 in preparation for move. The point moved out at 0745. One enemy tank was knocked out at 0830 by the point tank of Company C, 714th Tank Battalion. The task force commander reported to Combat Command B and confirmed the destruction of four (4) enemy tanks during the previous twenty-four (24) hours. The force was advancing to Krautosheim at 1000 with orders to move into assembly area at that point before jumping off to a new objective. At 1015 Company D, last tank knocked out one Mark IV tank and took five prisoners after force had passed through. Enemy tank was located near tank that Clayton had knocked out previously. Commanding Officer, CC-B instructed Task Force Commander at 1020 to pull into Krautosheim and consolidate until Task Force Norton could be moved into secure all-around protection. Also to look over terrain to be negotiated on route to new objective. At 1020 Capt Clayton knocked out staff car at the edge of Krautosheim. Air OP reported staff car, one light tank and two track vehicles at crossroads out of Krautosheim. Capt Clayton located in the center of town was unable to see these vehicles. At 1030 Company D knocked out one anti-tank gun. At 1035 was a report that a German General by the name of Von Bonn was in this area. The task force commander ordered the infantry to go through the town thoroughly and to look for staff officers. Lt Cook with Company D was ordered on a reconnaissance mission to Ingalstadt. Lt Cook reported horse-drawn vehicles leaving Rottenheim for the hills. Lt MacLaughlin stated that he could bring fire on the vehicles. Task Force Commander said to fire on them. At 1205 Capt Clayton stated he had knocked out one anti-tank gun and observed a column leaving Berolsheim. The Task Force Commander requested air OP to observe and call for time fire on the column. At 1215 Capt Clayton reported three more trucks knocked out and one Mark IV tank. Lt Cook reported that he had knocked out one vehicle and sighted friendly troops entering town of Ingalstadt. At 1300 air force attacked town of Herbolzheim on request to check enemy evacuating town. Lt Cook took 25 prisoners and killed five of the enemy, also wrecked one horse-drawn column and destroyed one anti-tank gun which was believed to be a tank before at Ingalstadt. At 1500 the task force point under command of Capt Clayton moved into Markt Nordheim, encountering no resistance. Civilians reported to Capt Clayton that both bridges were mined. Capt Clayton used prisoners to remove the mines. Approximately 35 prisoners were taken in town. The unit set up their CP in town.

13 Apr 1945: At 0800 the task force received overlays for small task forces to occupy towns in the vicinity. Lt Cook with a small task force occupied the town of Humprechtsua, reported that he had encountered no resistance but found mines in two blocks of the town. Commanding Officer of Combat Command called a meeting at 1100 and gave orders for task force formation and information for commander to work on task forces. Orders were as follows: Task Force Clayton, one platoon of tanks plus two tanks, plus one platoon of infantry, and objective was Rudisbronn 95108; Task Force MacLaughlin, Company A plus one platoon of infantry, objective was Hercteau 9210; Task Force

Trusley, one platoon of tanks plus Company C 56 AIB, objective was Mulesheim; Task Force Cook, Company D plus tanks from Company C plus one platoon of infantry, mission to hold Herbolzheim in reserve. The mission of all forces was: reconnaissance in force, if the objectives were free of enemy, to occupy, if town was held in force by enemy, to get on high ground and hold what ground they had. Task Force Comfort: Battalion Headquarters plus Mortar Platoon and Assault Guns to move to Krautosheim and set up CP. One Medic peep per force. Medical Aid Station located at CP. The infantry was broken down as follows: 2nd platoon to Task Force McLaughlin, 4th platoon to Task Force Clayton, 3rd and 1st platoons to Task Force Cook. At 1315 the Task Force moved out for their objectives. At 1415 Battalion Headquarters with Mortars and Assault Guns moved to Krautosheim and set up the CP.

14 Apr 1945: The unit was ordered to move to Ulstadt. At 1300 the Task Forces were relieved of their missions and unit consolidated with Headquarters, to move and secure bridgehead at Dietersheim. The initial movement was to Hasenlohe. Task Force moved from assembly area at Ulstadt at 1415. Order of march: A Company 714th Tank Battalion plus one platoon of infantry, assault guns, Company C 56th AIB, Company C, 714th Tank Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, D Company 714th Tank Battalion. At 1515 the point reached the town of Dietersheim. The town was flying a white flag and both the bridges were intact and not mined. The point tank had at this time crossed the first bridge but could not cross the second bridge because it was not strong enough to hold tanks. Lt Jenks reported that he had received direct fire at 1535, one round HE hit about 10 yards from his tank. At 1600 center of column received artillery fire; the command halftrack and trains moved back to defilade. The Commanding Officer requested Air OP to try to locate enemy gun positions. Col Field, at 1615, requested Engineers to bring up two spans of treadway to bridge site as the bridge had collapsed. Col Bromley with Col Field at the bridge site at this time. Remainder of Task Force Field crossed the bridge at Dietersheim at 2000. Orders from CC-B: To establish bridgehead and post security for the night. Lt McLaughlin to hold the high ground to northeast of town with Company C 56 AIB attached and Clayton with Company B 56th AIB attached to remain southeast of town. CC-B to remain in Unter Nesselbach with Col Norton's Force. CO went to CC-B for instructions for following day's operations. At 2100 a medical peep hit two mines injuring one man of the Medical Detachment 56th AIB. Engineers to sweep roads in the morning. Mortar fire fell on force's elements on outposts at 2240. Lt Jenks observed mortars on side of a hill and adjusted artillery fire on this point. It was believed that this fire knocked out mortars as no more fire was received during the remainder of the night. At 2300 operational instructions were received for 15 April, with overlay.

15 Apr 1945: At 0400 Company A reported heavy vehicular movement to the direct front. Company C also reports enemy tanks in the vicinity to the southeast. At 0500 two PWs walked through the lines and were interned by Company A. Company commanders meeting at 0530, operations instructions given with order of march, overlay and instructions were attached.

Unit moved out toward Hermusneuses at 0630. At 0730 considerable small arms fire received from dense woods. A halftrack hit a mine killing two men of Company C, 56th AIB. Column receiving scattered and harassing artillery. At 1012 a PW reported approximately 1000 enemy troops in vicinity of Beerbach and Rossbach. Task Force Field now entering Unter Rossbach. At 1040 the point moved into Ober Rossbach. Lt McLaughlin knocked out one truck with ammunition and food, also one US model jeep. Lt McLaughlin reported the point had destroyed another truck on east side of woods at 1115. At 1300 Task Force Field was into assembly area at Hermusneuses. CO directs Lt McLaughlin to hold high ground east of town, also CO directs Reconnaissance Platoon to the main highway to await Col Norton's Force reaching the objective. A Polish PW reported that three 105mm guns are in the rear of Col Field's Force. Lt Cook with a platoon of light tanks sent to reconnoiter the woods. Lt Cook found the previous location of the guns, at the same time the rear of the column was hit by sniper and SA fire. Lt Cook held hot fire on the woods while the column clears. Lt Cook evacuated with head wound. Company C's Rocket Commander and Company A's First Sergeant also wounded. At this time intense artillery fire was being received in town of Hermusneuses. At 1600 Company and separate platoon commanders called to CP, intense artillery still was coming in. The unit was ordered to move to Mosbach at 1805, the town was reported to be cleared out by the 56 AIB at 2000. CC-B decided force should stay in Schellert as Mosbach was not large enough. The companies outposted for the night, no unusual activity during the night. Movement orders for 16 April were received at 2200.

16 Apr 1945: At 0800 the unit prepared to move out. Unit moved out at 0830. At 1000 the point sighted Markt Erlbach. CO CC-B stated not to waste any time clearing the town and to go through as quickly as possible. Air OP reported at 1025 stating the bridge at Adelsdorf was out. The engineers were directed to survey and estimate the necessary repairs. Air bursts and ground fire received on rear positions and tanks of Company A. At 1500 a patrol of Company D encountered a minefield; one tank was damaged. At 1555 bridge was completed and CO ordered Lt Trusley to move out. Capt Clayton entered Kirch Farnbach at 1720 with orders to outpost for the night. CO CC-B decided to make a dash for next objective in order to secure bridge for next day's objective. At 1800 intense artillery fire was received between Eberndorf and Kirchheimbach. Also vehicles were observed in this area. CO called artillery support to try to locate enemy guns. At 2000 the task force was ordered to spend the night at that location. Capt Clayton found and destroyed a large caliber gun, one airplane, and a number of horses and wagons which were still hitched up. Lt McLaughlin saw a hanger and supply dump and destroyed them. At 2020 Capt Clayton reported that he had destroyed two 170mm guns and a number of crated bombs at the airfield. Some machine gun fire was received by the outposts at 2300; artillery was called on this area.

17 Apr 1945: At 0245 a company commanders meeting was held and orders for the day's movement were given. The force jumped off at 0700 with Company A as the point. At 0745 Lt McLaughlin reported that he had located a tank in a shed and two more at a greater

range. At 0800 the point moved to Gross Habersdorf, located two box car, one staff car, and three trucks and destroyed them. At 1230 Capt Wilson had the bridge in condition and the column moved. A minefield was encountered at 1300; the engineers removed the mines and the column proceeded slowly. The lead tank of the point was hit by a panzerfaust. The forward observer was trying to locate the guns that were firing into bridge site and also laying time fire around column. The firing ceased but air OP continued to try to locate the guns. Lt Dethloff observed four or five enemy on apparent OP and fired on them; they dispersed but apparently were not hit. At 1315 the bridge gave way directly in front of Lt Jenks but the engineers, by reinforcing the bridge, soon moved the remainder of the force over. At 1500 the force was moving but running into considerable small arms fire and panzerfaust. At 1600 there was no change in the situation. Capt Clayton moved on to Bonhoff and stated that he could see into town but could not observe any action that might indicate the enemy in town. At 1700 the force was still moving. At 18230 Capt Clayton had high ground overlooking Heilbronn. Colonel Norton's force was emerging from the woods at 1825 approximately 2000 yards northeast of Capt Clayton's position; both forces were aware of each other's presence. The CO informed CO of CC-B of trouble in getting through, because of numerous mines that were laid and other obstacles such as craters and a blown bridge. The force went into the assembly area at 2200, no unusual activities.

18 Apr 1945: The force in Heilbronn was alerted to move at 1115. A number of 20mm guns, tank sights, periscope lenses, medical supplies and x-ray equipment were found in the schoolhouse in Heilbronn at 0930. At 1240 leading elements encountered mines in vicinity of 1286. The Engineer platoon swept the area. The forward elements knocked out one towed 75mm AT gun at 1300. At 1320 the forward element received direct AT fire and HE, one round of AP went over the command halftrack. The leading elements moved through woods toward Wustendorf at 1400, progress was slow due to road by-pass limited the number of vehicles. At 1630 the force jumped off for final drive into Ansbach. At 1700 Capt Clayton reported that he had destroyed three 88s, one 105 Howitzer, and two (illegible). Two hundred PWs were taken up to this time. A combat patrol led by Lt Trusley received some time fire at 1800. At 1830 Col Bromley ordered that the force remain in its present location until he cleared a suitable route into town.

19 Apr 1945: At 1900 (Col Bromley?) reported that he had encountered a hastily constructed road block and could remove it. The force moved into Ansbach at 2000. The CP was established for the night. The entire Division Elements moving in. An order to move to Feuchtwangen was received at 1000. Route of march on overlay. At 1600 the remainder of the force moved out. Lt McLaughlin on the point with one squad of Engineers and one platoon of infantry attached with orders to move out to objective as flying task force. The order of march for the rear elements was as follows: Company C plus one platoon infantry; Command Section with Tanks; Company C/56 AIB minus two platoons; Assault Gun Platoon; Mortar Platoon, followed by Hq and Hq Company; Engineers; Company D.

Service Company to remain in Ansbach. At 1600 the force was moving at a very fast rate. The road condition was poor. The second bridge at Herridon fell through and was by-passed. At 2040 the bridge at Ober-Schonnbronn fell through. AP fire was received in vicinity of Ober-Schonnbronn. The force turned back and by-passed to the northeast over the bridge at Bockaus. Company A on the point continue to Aichan. An apparent minefield was investigated by Company A. At 2100 the remainder of the force cleared the bridge at Bockaus. Artillery and smoke was laid at Ober-Schonnbronn to screen the by-pass. At 2120 a lucky round of artillery hit an ammunition dump in the vicinity of Ober-Schonnbronn, the dump exploded. The force closed into the assembly area at Aichen at 2140. Local security was set. Fourteen PWs were taken during the day's operation. A company commanders meeting was called at 2200 and orders were issued for next day's operations.

20 Apr 1945: The force moved to support Task Force Norton at Feuchtwangen at 0600. At 0700 the force moved to the high ground east of Feuchtwangen. Capt Clayton and Lt McLaughlin moved into position overlooking the town and observed some activity. Lt McLaughlin fired on some enemy trying to infiltrate into town at 0800. No contact was made at 0730 with CC-R who was supposed to have moved into and occupy the town. The force was ordered to fire only south of gridline 67. At 0900 permission was granted to move in and attack the town because CC-R was held up. Task Force Norton and Task Force Field ordered to take the town. Task Force Norton moved into town and Task Force Fields was to protect the south flank of town. At 1220 TFF entered town and established a CP. Outposts of tanks and infantry were set up west of the railroad. Three rounds of AP received in Company A's vicinity, no information of where the rounds came from could be obtained. A combat patrol of one platoon of light tanks plus a squad of infantry under Lt Turley encountered a roadblock and cleared same. No resistance was met. A total of 12 PWs were taken during the day's operations.

21 Apr 1945: At 0800 the force was in an assembly area in Feuchtwangen. No unusual activities. At 2100 force received orders for march to vicinity of Zobingen. At 2200 an order to extend objective to Bopfingen was received. The force was alerted to move at 220630. No PWs taken during the day's operations.

22 Apr 1945: The task force moved out at 0630 with Bopfingen, Germany as its objective. No enemy opposition was met along the route. Bopfingen was reached at 1020 and unit was ordered to move on to Ohmenheim, Germany. At 1600 Steinheim, Germany was taken and the CP established for the night with usual security outposts and patrols instituted. One hundred twenty-nine PWs were taken during the day's operations.

23 Apr 1945: At 0730 the Task Force was attached to Combat Command A and ordered to proceed immediately to Dilligen, Germany to pass through the established bridgehead to Holzheim, Germany. Enroute, Company C knocked out two enemy 88mm guns. The Task Force

closed in Holzheim at 1200. A Company C patrol released 600 Allied prisoners of war. In addition, 20 American PWs were released, 67 PWs were taken, and 11 enemy AT Guns were destroyed. Estimated 101 enemy killed during the day.

24 Apr 1945: The Task Force remained in Holzheim, Germany until 242000 April, when ordered to move to the vicinity of Aislingen, Germany and then to Gundemmingen, Germany. A patrol from Company D was sent out to reconnoiter bridges, and reported the bridge at the railroad and the autobahn south of Burgau was intact but mined. An enemy plane that had crashed was spotted by the patrol. Total PWs for the day was nine.

25 Apr 1945: A company commanders meeting was called at 0400 to issue orders for the day's operations. The Task Force moved out. At 0730 the point, Company A, reported moving into Remshart, Germany. The Company Commander of Company A, 1st Lt Charles J McLaughlin, reported the point had pushed through the town ahead and encountered a large number of enemy in a draw. At 1119, approximately 200 PWs had been taken. Nebelwerfer fire was received, believed to be coming from the vicinity of Gunzberg, Germany. The Air OP reported that the artillery had fired on guns that were believed to have fired on the rear elements of the column, and guaranteed that they had been knocked out. The bridge on the autobahn was reported to have been blown at 1200. At 1230 six explosions were observed in the vicinity of Gunzberg, Germany. It was believed to have been bridges of ammunition dumps being blown. The Task Force Commander informed Combat Command B that PWs and civilians had stated that the headquarters of two battalions and several hundred enemy were located in Offingen. At 1400 C/56 was meeting heavy small arms fire from the woods to the right while trying to work into town. The situation developed into house-to-house fighting. The infantry was withdrawn to more favorable positions at 1610, D/56 was attached to assist in attacking the town. The 494th FA fired an intense barrage into the woods before the infantry moved into town. The Assault Gun Platoon, Mortar Platoon and Company C rocket launcher also fired into town prior to the attack by the infantry. The two infantry companies, C/56 and D/56, received intense small arms fire and many hand grenades while attacking the town. Company D, 56 AIB reached the objective and called for Company C, 56 AIB to move up to protect the left flank. Colonel Charles V Bromley congratulated D Company 56th AIB on a job well done. The Force pulled back to Rettenbach for consolidation. The CP was set up at 2200 and security posted. A counter-attack was expected. Four hundred forty-one prisoners were taken during the day's operations. Around midnight unknown artillery was falling in the vicinity of town.

26 Apr 1945: At 0020 Federal (63 Inf) was fighting against stiff opposition north of G-town and in LEI. At 0200 the Force was in the assembly area in Rettenbach, unknown artillery was coming. At 0700 a patrol was sent in direction of Offingen. The civilians reported that Offingen was clear of the enemy. A patrol from Company D 56th AIB plus one platoon of Co D 714th Tank Battalion was sent to investigate. At 0830 a patrol from Co C 56th AIB plus one platoon Co D 714th was sent in the direction of Reisenberg. Two 81mm mortars were destroyed

and a number of panzerfausts. One platoon of infantry of Co C 56th plus one platoon Co C, 714th was sent to Borgau to clean out the enemy that had infiltrated. Artillery was being laid in vicinity of Borgau. At 0930 a counter-attack was developing against the 63rd Infantry Division in the vicinity of Leipheim and Gunzberg. The Force was alerted to move to Gunzberg to wipe out the counter-attack. Lt Trusley's patrol to Reisenberg was recalled. At 1003 civilians reported SS troops approaching Offingen. The patrol at Offingen reported seeing six SS troops from OP. Air OP going up to investigate. The patrol observed a few troops in the woods. At 1020 Belgians and Poles reported three batteries of small artillery and lot of 40mm ack ack in Gunzberg. It was reported that at 0700 the SS troops left Offingen to get 50 other SS troops and were to return. At 1110 orders were changed to remain in present position and clean out Offingen. The plan was to move Lt Trusley northwest to the railroad and pivot to the right and work toward Lt Blair who is going through town. Lt (Turley?) was to contact the 63rd Infantry Division at Gunzberg and maintain liaison with that unit. At 1130 Lt Blair reported that he had reached the Danube River and seen only a few enemy. At 1135 Lt Blair reported that he had cleared the town and had outposted along the railroad, also that he had 15 or 20 prisoners. At 1142 Lt Turley with patrol cleared a roadblock and reported that there was a crater on the Offingen side of the bridge leading to Gundemmingen. Major Boone on the way at 1145 to contact Lt Blair with the OI on the coordinated attack. Lt Blair was to contact both Lt Cook and Major Boone. Major Boone contacted friendly forces on high ground north of forces' position at 1200. Major Boone made arrangements to coordinate movement of both forces. The objective of the 63rd was to secure the high ground north of the railroad. One battalion was to move through the woods toward Offingen. Major Boone contacted Lt Blair and Lt Cook and notified them of the situation. At 1205 friendly troops moved in from the west. Positions were held in Offingen until the friendly troops arrived. An officer from the 63rd reported into the CP and informed the CO of his mission and relative positions and also stated that his unit had thrown the artillery that the force had received during the night, and that they had planned on laying down a heavy barrage in the town of Offingen. Col Bromley went to the CP at 1220 and gave new movement orders to proceed to Gunzberg. At 1320 Capt Clayton reported that he had cleared Gunzberg. At 1330 the CO CC-B directed the main body to halt just east of the railroad, and that the point proceed cautiously to Leipheim. Capt Clayton reported that his lead elements were in Leipheim at 1330, also reported that he had contacted friendly troops who had been counterattacked twice during the night and once during the morning. At 1500 the Force halted at Gunzberg, turned around and returned on the route as before through Rettenbach and then to Burgau. At 1630 Capt Zabroski, CC-B met resistance on west side of town as he was entering. The enemy had infiltrated patrols during the night, also a large number were in the woods south of the main highway. The CP was established in Burgau at 1800, after the artillery and tanks had cleared the enemy from the town and woods. Thirty-one PWs were taken during the day's operations.

27 Apr 1945: At 0700 an order was received from CC-B to be prepared to march at 1000, route of march on overlay. A company commanders meeting called at 0900 and the OI

and march order were given to the companies. An order to move was received at 1030. At 1050 the column halted at the tail of the 63rd Infantry Division column which was headed in the same direction. At 1130 the column was moving very slowly. CC-B informed the CO that the bridge at Zietmanshausen was out and was being repaired, and possibly this was the hold up. At 1140 the destination was changed. The unit was to proceed to Heltinfingen. The CO called the Exec Officer, Capt Clayton, Lt McLaughlin to the command tank for instructions. The unit moved into Langeringen and set up the CP at 1730. No resistance was met. At 2000 a patrol of three light tanks under Lt Pagnotta plus one squad of infantry was sent out to contact CC-A at Landsberg. Liaison was effected with 253 Infantry CP at Schwabmunchen at 2040. At 2135 Company D reported that they had no radio contact with their patrol and would report to the CP at first contact. At 2315 Company D still had not contacted the patrol. CC-B's LO called and stated that no bridgehead had been made, also that he would try to contact the patrol to CC-A if communication was available, also stated that CC-A was at Landsberg.

28 Apr 1945: At 0007 the patrol to CC-A returned and made contact. The patrol leader reported the following: 23 American PWs were released at Lamerdergen (2548), one German PW taken at Lamerdergen (2548), no enemy contacted enroute, friendly troops contacted at Buchloe (2342), 19th Engineer and 90th Reconnaissance Squadron, CC-A 12th AD contacted at Landsberg (3445). The patrol leader returned with CC-A's OI for 28 Apr 1945. A copy of the OI was made for TFF and the original sent to CC-B. The patrol leader left for CC-B at 0050 with the OI and four PWs. The American PWs were taken to C/56 for billets. An overlay and roster of the American PWs were sent to CC-B. At 0800 the unit was placed on a one-hour alert. At 0915 a combat patrol was sent out to reconnoiter the route to the bridgeheads. At 1015 S-4 reported that the mail clerk had run into nine knocked out US trucks at 0950 at the southern edge of Grossaitingen (259619). One round of HE was fired at him, the round was believed to have come from the woods at 2063. This information was released to CC-B at 1020. At 1145 25 PWs who were captured by the Company D patrol were turned over to CC-B's PW cage. At 1200 the patrol returned. At 1500 the force was alerted to move in compliance with OI issued at 1430. At 1700 no unusual activities, the force was waiting orders to move. At 1930 the CO went to CC-B for a meeting. At 2100 company commanders meeting was called and orders to move would not be issued before morning. Forty-three PWs were taken.

29 Apr 1945: The force was alerted to move at 0900; at 1100 the force moved out for the objective. The force moved at a good rate of speed. The route of march was slightly changed: the force was to continue to Weilheim. At 2000 one ME109 was shot down by Company D. The force was ordered to hold up in Weilheim for the night. At 2300 the CP was established and the force billeted. Twelve PWs were taken during the day's operations.

30 Apr 1945: At 0600 the force was still in Weilheim and awaiting orders to move. At 0800 the force was ordered to move on original route after the Engineers had cleared. The point moved out at 0830. At 0915 the rear of the column cleared Weilheim. The column halted

on the highway. A report came through that Task Force Norton had encountered light resistance at 1015. At 1100 a report came through that 5000 SS troops were stationed at the school in Bad Tols. At 1200 the force closed into the town of Habach and the CP was established. No unusual activities. At 1600 the CO went to CC-B and returned with orders to move by infiltration to the town of Durnheim and await further operation instructions. At 1800 the force moved into the town of Sindelsdorf and the CP established. The CO returned from CC-B at 2100 with the OI for 1 May. A company commanders meeting was called and the following instructions issued: CC-B was to jump off and establish a bridgehead at 778095, then move to and seize town of Kochel. Company B 119th Engineers to put in a bailey bridge. Company C 714th Tank Battalion to move to north of bridge site in the approximate vicinity of the east sweep of the river. Company C 56th AIB in an assembly position west of the river to act as reserve of Task Force Norton. Task Force Field to pass through the bridgehead to Kochel as Kochel as objective. Order of crossing: Company A plus one platoon infantry, command section C/56, assault guns, mortar, C/714, D/714. Battalion CP to remain in its present location until given an order to move. To be executed on order. At 2200 no unusual activities had occurred. Fourteen PWs were taken during the day's operations.