

CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
DOWNLOADING COMBAT OPERATIONS AUGUST

11 September 1944.

Period 1 August - 17 August

The month opened with the Regiment in a bivouac area near Valterra (Q528343). For two weeks regular training continued. On 15 August the Regiment was alerted to relieve the front line elements of the 91st American Infantry Division. This division defended the line with one regiment, the 363d Infantry. On the morning of 15 August an advance party contacted the 363d Infantry to make detailed arrangements for the relief. After dark that night, the Combat Team, with Company "A", 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Company "A", 762nd Tank Battalion, and the 85th Reconnaissance Troop attached, moved by meter to an assembly area near Strada (Q4652). During the day the troops remained under cover, and the necessary orders were issued. The plan in general was to take over the sector as held by the 363d Infantry, platoon per platoon. All three battalions were ordered to accomplish the relief during the darkness of 16 - 17 August. The 2nd Battalion was furnished trucks as they had the greatest distance to travel to the front line. Cannon Company, Antitank Company, and the 328th Field Artillery Battalion moved into firing positions, and the 85th Reconnaissance Troop moved near the center of the sector, in reserve. The Regimental CP was established in a castle on Monte Bicchieri (Q413568). By 170445 August the relief was completed without incident, and control of the sector passed to the Commanding Officer, 337th Infantry.

Period 18 August - 26 August

The defensive sector taken over stretched for 13,000 yards along the railroad track on the south bank of the Arno River from the Elsa River on the right to a point 1,000 yards west of Castelfrance on the left. The battalions were disposed on line from left to right: 2nd Battalion, 3d Battalion, 1st Battalion. Because of the extremely wide zone each battalion was required to defend, the greater majority of the troops were placed on the line with few troops in reserve. We were opposed by elements of the 1069th Infantry Regiment, the Lehrbrigade, and the 67th Panzer Grenadier Division. The enemy lightly manned an outpost line along the north bank of the Arno River and had some strongpoints and observation posts in buildings south of the river in the 1st and 3d Battalion sectors. He patrolled aggressively and many times made small unit raids against our front line and in general was quite active. It was not considered probable, however, that the Germans could do any more than launch a raid in force. His lack of reserves precluded an attack in any strength larger than a battalion.

The unit the Regiment relieved had pushed out isolated platoons to positions between the front line and the river to act as an outpost line. These positions were not mutually supporting, and the day before the relief one of these lone platoons had been surrounded by the enemy and eleven men had been captured. Several hours after the relief, the same thing happened to a Company "L" platoon with a loss of one officer and seventeen enlisted men. It was decided that the whole line needed strengthening and improving. This was accomplished by moving many of the defensive areas forward of the railroad bed, by pulling back in line the isolated outposts, by placing troops in gaps that were formerly covered by patrols, by tying in all positions with their adjacent units. Telephone communication was improved by the laying of over one hundred additional miles of wire.

The night of 17 - 18 August was spent in making most of the contemplated changes to strengthen the line, and the tank and tank destroyer companies moved into firing positions from which they could fire as artillery. This night our first patrols were sent out - ambush patrols to cover the front. Almost every patrol ran into a fire-fight before dawn but in each case the enemy was repulsed. After dark on 18 August the Reconnaissance Troop was detached and moved to the area of the 339th Infantry.

These first few days of the occupation of the new position were spent preparing defensive fires, shifting weapons to more advantageous positions, establishing observation posts to cover the entire zone, formulating counterattack plans.

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After completion the Germans had a difficult time breaching our improved position, and his numerous attempts were thrown back with losses in dead and wounded.

Then began a program of gradually pushing the enemy across the river. This was done by concentrating artillery fires on known enemy strongpoints. A platoon of tank destroyers was moved forward so that they could bring direct fire on enemy-held buildings south of the Arno. After a particularly heavy "sheet" in the 3d Battalion sector on 21 August, civilians reported that eighty German soldiers had been killed. Day and night patrols were used extensively to ambush enemy patrols approaching our lines, to neutralize enemy groups and gun emplacements, and to reconnoiter routes to the river bank. Patrols given the mission of crossing the river were stopped in each case on the near bank by enemy fire.

German artillery and mortar fire was particularly heavy on the front line in our sector and losses sustained, while not heavy, were significant. In one 24 hour period nearly one thousand rounds fell in the 2nd Battalion area. Our guns returned this fire many times over and continually harassed road junctions, highways, and known gun positions in enemy territory. The enemy had liberally strewed the area with mines and beebie traps before he withdrew and they caused some casualties and necessitated extreme caution when moving around in front of our position.

The large number of Italian civilians living within the Regimental boundaries caused little trouble and were efficiently controlled by their own native police, the Carabinieri. The few cases of suspected espionage were processed by the division CIC detachment.

The 1st Battalion was relieved the night of 24 - 25 August by a battalion of the 24th Guards Brigade (6th South African Armored Division) without incident and moved to an intermediate assembly area near Strada.

At 0500 on 26 August the Regiment less the 1st Battalion came under control of the 1st American Armored Division for operations only and the advance party of Combat Command "B" reported to the sector for orientation. Company "A", 752nd Tank Battalion reverted to control of its parent unit.

In the late afternoon of 26 August, 1st Lieutenant Tom F. Smeary led his platoon in a raid to a group of buildings near the river bank. The raid was made to further the Corps plan of indicating a build-up in the Fuceocchie area and was supported by all the artillery, cannon, mortar, and automatic weapons fire under our control. The reaction of the enemy was not as violent as expected but the raid did accomplish its purpose - to concentrate enemy attention on this sector. The raiding party killed four of the enemy, captured one prisoner, and inflicted other unestimated casualties.

Period 27 August - 31 August

The night of 26 - 27 August the 14th Armored Battalion relieved the 2nd Battalion, and Company "A", 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion was released from our control. The next night the 11th Armored Battalion relieved the 3d Battalion. By 290130 August the entire Regiment had closed into a bivouac area north of Certaldo. In the afternoon Major General John B. Coulter presented awards to 25 officers and men at a Regimental assembly.

During the period the Regiment was on the line a detachment from the 92nd American Division stayed with us to gain combat experience.

General Zenebia and a party of officers and enlisted men from the Brazilian Expeditionary Force spent several days with the Regiment to orient themselves prior to going into the line.

The Regiment captured eight prisoners of war while on the line - two from the 1059th Infantry, the rest from the Lehrbrigade.

During the month the following men were commissioned 2nd Lieutenants as a result of meritorious service during combat:

2nd Lieutenant Milton P. Fewks, MAC

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Decorations awarded this month:

Distinguished Service Cross - 1st Lieutenant Glenn E. Summers (missing in action)
Sergeant George L. Maxwell
Private First Class Marvin M. Deelin
Oak Leaf Cluster to Silver Star Medal - Staff Sergeant James M. Newman.
15 Silver Star Medals.
2 Oak Leaf Clusters to Bronze Star Medals.
30 Bronze Star Medals (1 posthumously).
41 Purple Hearts.
97 Combat Infantryman Badges.

Our battle casualties for the month were as follows:

	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED MEN</u>
Killed in action	1	16
Wounded in action	4	72
Missing in action	1	25
	<u>6</u>	<u>113</u>

Total casualties - 119

Strength of the assigned command at the period closed: 179 officers, 5 warrant officers, and 3,400 enlisted men. Attached were 246 enlisted men.

For the Regimental Commander:

Henry C. Triessler, Jr.
HENRY C. TRIESSLER, JR.
Major, 837th Infantry.
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