1 January 1945

SUBJECT: History of the 453d Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion for the year of 1944.

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

1. The history of this Organization is as follows:

a. Original Unit.
   (2) Date of Organization: 1 August 1942.
   (3) Place of Organization: Fort Bliss, Texas.
   (4) Authority for Organization: General Orders Number 30, Headquarters Anti-aircraft Command, Richmond, Virginia, dated 12 July 1942.
   (5) Sources from which personnel were obtained:
      (a) Transfer from other units:
          1 Battery K, 509th CA (AA): 28.
          1 Battery I, 509th CA (AA): 62.
      Authority: Special Orders Number 159, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Fort Bliss, Texas, dated 25 July 1942.
      (b) Voluntary enlistment: 12.
      Authority: Special Orders Number 252, Headquarters 1624 Service Unit, Reception Center, Fort Hayes, Ohio, dated 6 October 1942; and Special Orders No. 261, Headquarters Reception Center, Fort Thomas, Kentucky, dated 8 October 1942.
      (c) Draft: 559.
      Authority: Special Orders Number 252, Headquarters 1624 Service Unit, Reception Center, Fort Hayes, Ohio, dated 6 October 1942; Special Orders Number 257, Headquarters Reception Center, Camp Perry, Ohio, dated 7 October 1942; Special Orders Number 245, Headquarters Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, dated 6 October 1942; and Special Orders Number 261, Headquarters Reception Center, Fort Thomas, Kentucky, dated 8 October 1942.

b. Changes in Organization:
   (1) Changes in designation of Unit:
      (a) 453d Coast Artillery Battalion Separate (AW)(AA).
      (b) 453d Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion, Mobile.
      Authority: General Orders Number 55, Headquarters Armored Force, Fort Knox, Kentucky, dated 27 May 1945.
(2) Transfer of Unit from one organization to another as a unit;
(a) 2nd Antiaircraft (AW) Group, Fort Bliss, Texas, 6 September 1942. Authority: Special Orders Number 211, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Fort Bliss, Texas, dated 25 September 1942.
(b) 114th Coast Artillery Group (AA), Fort Bliss, Texas, January 1943.
(c) 1st Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, Special Troops, Armored Force, Fort Knox, Kentucky, 17 February 1943. Authority: Special Orders Number 40, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Fort Bliss, Texas, dated 16 February 1943.
(d) Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Camp Stewart, Georgia, 18 June 1943.
(e) Maneuver Director Headquarters, Second United States Army, Lebanon, Tennessee, 30 August 1943. Authority: Special Orders Number 236, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Camp Stewart, Georgia, dated 24 August 1943.
(f) 26th Antiaircraft Artillery Group, Tennessee Maneuver Area, Lebanon, Tennessee, 30 August 1943. Authority: Verbal Orders.
(g) 52nd Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade, Tennessee Maneuver Area, Lebanon, Tennessee, 1 October 1943. Authority: Verbal Orders.
(h) 118th Antiaircraft Artillery Group, Tennessee Maneuver Area, Lebanon, Tennessee, 8 October 1943. Authority: Verbal Orders.
(i) 26th Antiaircraft Artillery Group, Tennessee Maneuver Area, Lebanon, Tennessee, 15 October 1943. Authority: Verbal Orders.
(j) Maneuver Director Headquarters, Second United States Army, Lebanon, Tennessee, 5 November 1943.
(k) Headquarters Antiaircraft Command, Richmond, Virginia. Authority: Special Orders Number 195, Maneuver Director Headquarters, Second United States Army, dated 29 October 1943; and Letter, Headquarters Second United States Army, File AG 370.5-16 (GRBF), Subject: Instructions Governing Domestic Troop Movements, dated 22 September 1943.
(l) 30th Antiaircraft Artillery Group, Camp Davis, North Carolina, 8 November 1943. Authority: General Orders Number 61, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Camp Davis, North Carolina, dated 8 November 1943.
(m) 124th Antiaircraft Artillery Group, Camp Davis, North Carolina, 8 November 1943. Authority: General Orders Number 61, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Camp Davis, North Carolina, dated 8 November 1943.
(o) 61st Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade, Camp Davis, North Carolina, 6 January 1944. Authority: General Orders Number 1, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Camp Davis, North Carolina, dated 6 January 1944.


(x) 85th Infantry Division, APO 83, U.S. Army, 7 July 1944 to 31 December 1944. Authority: Letter, Headquarters VII Corps, File No. 570.5, Subject: Troop Assignment No. 1, dated 7 July 1944.


(z) Third United States Army, APO 403, U.S. Army, 1 August 1944. Authority: Letter, First United States Army, File 322 (o), Subject: Troop Assignment No. 91, dated 1 August 1944.

(aa) Headquarters XV Corps, U.S. Army, 1 August 1944. Authority: Troop Assignment No. A-13, Third United States Army, dated 1 August 1944.


(dd) Third United States Army, APO 403, U.S. Army, 21 September 1944. Authority: Letter, Headquarters Twelfth Army Group, File No. 322 (AG-O), Subject: Troop Assignment No. 66, dated 21 September 1944.


(6c) Headquarters VIII Corps, APO 508, U. S. Army,
7 December 1944. Authority: Letter, Headquarters VIII Corps, File No. AG 322 (G-3), Subject: Troop Assignment Order No. 55, dated 12 December 1944.

(hh) First United States Army, APO 250, U. S. Army,
8 December 1944.


(jj) Headquarters XII Corps, APO 270, U. S. Army, 22 December 1944.

(kk) First United States Army, APO 230, U. S. Army,
26 December 1944. Authority: Troop Assignment No. 154, First United States Army, dated 30 December 1944.

(ll) Headquarters VII Corps, APO 507, U. S. Army, 26 December 1944. Authority: Troop Assignment No. 154, First United States Army, dated 30 December 1944; and Troop Assignment No. 55 (Administrative), Headquarters VII Corps, dated 31 December 1944.

(2) Changes due to changes in Tables of Organization:
(a) Table of Organization No. 4-185, dated 1 April 1942, from Semi-Mobile to Mobile. Authority: Letter, Headquarters Army Ground Forces, Army War College, Washington, D. C., File No. 320.2 (AA)(R)-ONGCT (9-16-42), Subject: Reorganization of Antiaircraft Units from Semi-Mobile to Mobile, dated 29 September 1942.

(b) Table of Organization No. 44-25. Authority: General Orders No. 53, Headquarters Armored Force, Fort Knox, Kentucky, dated 27 May 1943.

(c) Tables of Organization and Equipment Nos. 44-25, 44-26, and 44-27, dated 30 September 1943.

(d) Change No. 1 to Table of Organization No. 44-25, dated 25 November 1943.

(e) Change No. 1 to Table of Organization No. 44-26, dated 29 October 1943.

(f) Change No. 1 to Table of Organization No. 44-27, dated 30 October 1943.

(g) Change No. 2 to Table of Organization No. 44-25, dated 26 November 1943.

(h) Table of Organization and Equipment No. 44-25, dated 22 April 1944. Authority: Letter, First United States Army, File No. 320 (c), Subject: Reorganization, dated 4 November 1944.

(i) Change No. 1 to Table of Organization No. 44-25, dated 31 May 1944.

(j) Change No. 2 to Table of Organization No. 44-25, dated 16 July 1944.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted:
(1) On 1 January 1944: 917.
(2) Net Increase each month:
(a) January: 0.
(b) February: 0.
(c) March: 0.
(d) April: 0.
(e) May: 0.
(f) June: 0.
(g) July: 0.
(h) August: 0.
(i) September: 10.
(j) October: 0.
(k) November: 0.
(l) December: 0.

(3) Net decrease each month:
(a) January: 84.
(b) February: 27.
(c) March: 0.
(d) April: 4.
(e) May: 0.
(f) June: 5.
(g) July: 16.
(h) August: 4.
(i) September: 0.
(j) October: 2.
(k) November: 3.
(l) December: 0.

(4) On 31 December 1944: 792.

d. Stations (Permanent or temporary) of units or parts thereof:
(1) Fort Bliss, Texas, 1 August 1944. Authority: General Orders Number 50, Headquarters Antiaircraft Command, Richmond, Virginia, dated 12 July 1942.
(2) Fort Knox, Kentucky, 17 February 1943. Authority: Special Orders Number 40, Headquarters Fort Bliss, Texas, dated 16 February 1943.
(3) Camp Stewart, Georgia, 16 June 1943.
(4) Tennessee Maneuver Area, Lebanon, Tennessee, 30 August 1943. Authority: Special Orders Number 236, Headquarters Antiaircraft Artillery Training Center, Camp Stewart, Georgia, dated 24 August 1943.

(9) Maiden Newton, Dorset, England, 30 March 1944.

e. Marches:
(1) Purpose: Exercise and physical hardening and conditioning all personnel.
(2) Length of daily march: Marches not conducted daily.
(3) Points between which marched with dates:
   (a) Blackshaw Moor Camp No. 2 to Leek, Staffordshire, England, and return; 10 miles; 23 February 1944; for church formation.
   (b) Blackshaw Moor Camp No. 2 to vicinity of Burton, England, and return; 20 miles; 29 February 1944; hardening exercises.
   (c) Blackshaw Moor Camp No. 2 to Rudyard to Leek, Staffordshire, England, and return; 15 miles; 5 March 1944; hardening exercises.
   (d) Blackshaw Moor Camp No. 2 to Leek, Staffordshire, England, and return; 10 miles; 6 March 1944; hardening exercises.
   (e) Blackshaw Moor Camp No. 2 to vicinity of Burton, England, and return; 15 miles; 10 March 1944; hardening exercises.

f. Campaigns:
(1) Name of: Normandy Campaign (No. 1)
   (a) Duration: 6 June 1944 to 24 July 1944
   (b) Purpose: Liberation of Normandy and destruction of German armies in northwestern France.
   (c) Authority ordering: War Department General Orders Number 80, dated 5 October 1944.
(2) Name of: Campaign of Northern France (No. 1)
   (a) Duration: 25 July 1944 to 14 September 1944
   (b) Mopping up of all German resistance in France.
   (c) Authority ordering: War Department General Orders Number 80, dated 5 October 1944.
(3) Name of: Germany Campaign (No. 1)
   (a) Duration: 15 September 1944 to an unannounced final date
   (b) Purpose: Breaching of the German border defenses and destruction of German armies in Germany.
   (c) Authority ordering: War Department General Orders No. 80, dated 5 October 1944.

g. Battles:
(1) Name: Battle of Cherbourg.
   (a) Place: Cherbourg Peninsula.
   (b) Date: 18 June to 1 July 1944.
Campaign (No. 1).
(c) Campaign of which battle was a part; Normandy

(d) Forces engaged; VII Corps and attached units.
(e) Result; Capture of Cherbourg, France, and
destruction of the German army assigned for its defense.

(2) Battle of Periers.
(a) Place; Periers, France.
(b) Date; 2 July 1944 to 24 July 1944.
(c) Campaign of which battle was a part; Normandy

Campaign (No. 1).
(d) Forces engaged; VII Corps and attached units.
(e) Result; Breeching of the German defense lines
in the Periers sector and destruction of the German defense system in
Western Normandy.

(3) Name; Battle of St. Malo.
(a) Place; St. Malo, Brittany, France.
(b) Date; 6 August 1944 to 20 August 1944.
(c) Campaign of which battle was a part; Campaign
of Northern France (No. 1).
(d) Forces engaged; 83rd Infantry Division and
attached units.
(e) Result; Capture of St. Malo and Dinard, France,
and capture of the German garrison and defense installations.

(4) Name; Battle of Duren.
(a) Place; vicinity of Duren, Germany.
(b) Date; 4 December 1944 to 26 December 1944.
(c) Campaign of which battle was a part; Campaign
of Germany (No. 1).
(d) Forces engaged; VII Corps with attached units.
(e) Result; Front line established along the Roer
River in the immediate vicinity of Duren, Germany.

(5) Name; Counter-offensive against German attempts
to breech Allied defense lines in Northern Luxembourg and Eastern Belgium.
(a) Place; Belgium.
(b) Date; 26 December 1944 to 31 December 1944.
(c) Campaign of which battle was a part; Campaign
of Northern Germany (No. 1).

(h) Commanding Officers in important engagements.
(1) Engagement; all engagements listed in "g" above.
(2) Name; Lieutenant Colonel George W. Trousdale.
(3) CAG.

(i) Losses in action; officers and men.
(1) Engagement; Battle of Cherbourg.
(a) Names: 
1. Killed:
   - Pfc Vernon E. Gluesing, 37439945, CAC.
   - Pvt Harold E. Clifton, 32755145, CAC.
   - Missing: None.

2. Taken Prisoner: None.

(2) Engagement: Battle of Periers.
(a) Names:
1. Killed:
   - Pfc Gareth L. Shaw, 39200861, CAC.
   - Pvt Bruce K. Ross, 33752593, CAC.
   - Tec 5 Robert E. Jackson, CAC.
   - Pvt. Russell J. Ostrem, 39200129, CAC.

2. Wounded:
   - Pfc Raymond H. Arps, 35341360, CAC.
   - Tec 5 Louis W. Boluchie, 37354252, CAC.
   - Tec 5 Wallace F. Kerchner, 35396561, CAC.
   - Tec 5 Harry E. Wigton, 35420444, CAC.
   - Pfc Woodford B. Wiley, 35499744, CAC.
   - Pfc Steve Matwiju, Jr., 35340966, CAC.
   - Pvt Everett C. Rocko, 39394100, CAC.

3. Missing: None.
4. Taken Prisoner: None.

(3) Engagement: Battle of St. Malo.
(a) Names:
1. Killed:
   - Pfc Jack E. Zager, 37577701, CAC.

2. Wounded: None.

3. Missing: None.

4. Taken Prisoner: None.

(4) Engagement: Holding action in Luxembourg.
(a) Names:
1. Killed:
   - Cpl Vastene Bhow, 35494765, CAC.
   - Pvt Henry C. Manini, 35398351, CAC.

2. Wounded:
   - Pvt Elmer E. Churchill, 35716382, CAC.

3. Missing: None.

4. Taken Prisoner: None.

(5) Engagement: Battle of Duren, Germany.
(s) Names:
1. Killed:
   - Cpl Joseph C. McGovern, 35341081, CAC.
   - Pfc Leonard C. Bayles, 39325968, CAC.

2. Wounded:
   - Pfc Henry J. Dabrowski, 16146161, CAC.
   - Pvt Jack A. Henderson, 17160345, CAC.
   - Pvt Merrill W. Stahl, 35392700, CAC.

3. Missing: None.
4. Taken Prisoner: None.
j. Present and former members who have distinguished themselves in action:

(1) Engagement:
(a) Battle of Cherbourg:
1 Name: Sergeant Vernon A. Fowler, 35372982, GAC.
2 Act: On 18 June 1944, near Azeville, France.
Sergeant Fowler commanded and directed fire of an automatic weapons section with great courage and coolness on enemy positions, in clear observation of the enemy lines, and under heavy enemy artillery and small arms fire. Sergeant Fowler continued to direct his section in an outstanding manner until he was fatally wounded at his place of duty on 16 July 1944.

3 Reward: Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously)

(b) Battle of Periers:
1 Name: Private First Class Boris G. Adjieff, 151061
2 Act: On 7 July 1944, at Culot, France, Private F.
Class Adjieff organized a gun crew to man an anti-tank gun abandoned by the infantry under enemy pressure, and moved the weapon by hand to a location with a good field of fire, from which point he directed fire on an enemy strong. During the operation, Private First Class Adjieff was constantly under enemy observation and heavy and continuous enemy artillery and small arms fire; nevertheless, Private First Class Adjieff continued to register hits on the enemy positions, and denied the enemy opportunity to advance immediately as infantry withdrew.

3 Reward: Recommendation for the British Military

(c) Reward of Periers:
1 Name: First Lieutenant Henry C. Heeden, 01047566,
2 Act: While engaged in action with the enemy in the vicinity of Culot, France, on 7 July 1944, First Lieutenant Heeden advanced into the village of Culot in the lead vehicle of two M16 Half-tracks in close support of infantry units. As the infantry began to give ground, the two vehicles were taken under small arms and artillery fire, both were hit, and members of the crews became casualties. Observing that the rear vehicle was immobilized and had the egress of the lead vehicle blocked, First Lieutenant Heeden ran to the rear, secured another vehicle, and disregarding his own safety, returned and brought out the wounded. His heroic action was carried out under heavy and continuous enemy fire.

3 Reward: Bronze Star Medal; recommendation for the Croix de Guerre.

(d) Battle of Periers:
1 Name: Sergeant John Sams, 35341077, GAC.
2 Act: On 7 July 1944 at Culot, France, Sergeant J.
Sams located and directed fire on an enemy sniper nest. The terrain was flat with the fields broken by hedgerows and apple orchards. The enemy was located in the hedgerows and in the nearby buildings, in the village of Culot. Despite the fact that he was exposed to heavy enemy artillery fire and under direct enemy observation, Sergeant Sams led a half-track to a favorable position from which he directed fire against the enemy time after time. Later, during the same day, Sergeant Sams, with complete disregard for his own safety, and under heavy and continuous enemy fire, went to the aid of some injured men and assisted in their evacuation to safety.

3 Reward: Bronze Star Medal; recommendation for the Croix de Guerre.
(e) Battle of Duren, Germany.

Name: Private Chester Davis, 59395397, MD.

On 17 December 1944, a soldier of the 908th Field Artillery Battalion was seriously injured in the vicinity of Gressenich, Germany, by an exploding mine which destroyed one foot, a portion of the other foot, and caused additional damage to the legs, face, and one hand. The area in which the incident occurred was plainly marked as "mined" and a number of troops who witnessed the incident hesitated to render aid to the injured man. Private Chester Davies, however, with cool unconcern for his own personal safety and with the knowledge that primary responsibility for evacuation rested on the medical personnel of the 908th Field Artillery Battalion, went out to the injured man almost immediately, and after calmly rendering first aid to the individual, he directed the entry and departure of the men with a litter. Because of the calmness and judgement of Private Davies, there was no further injuries from mines in the area and the injured person was promptly evacuated for medical treatment.

k. Photographs of personnel, important scenes or events: None.

George W. Trousdale
Lt. Col., CAC
Commanding