ACK-ACK CREWS SUPPORTING 83rd KO 40 NAZI AIRCRAFT

SPEARHEAD Feb 24, 1945

The story of air-ground teamwork would hardly be complete without the part played by the 453rd Antiaircraft Bn., the Division's counter-air arm since Carentan.

These veteran ack-ack men have knocked down more than 30 Nazi planes in breaking up every enemy air attack against elements of the Division under their protection. And they have also served in some of the biggest battles.

Shortly after being attached to the 83rd, Btry A was called up to mission. About 75 yards from their position, enemy aircraft were spotted coming in with a barrage of 80s and sprayed the dug-in enemy for 30 minutes until Jerry finally got cessation on his call for artillery support and the 88s came buzzing in. Although two racks were hit, Sgt John Sams of Toledo, Ohio, who had been treating fire, and Lt Henry L. Johnson, platoon commander, succeeded in evacuating the wounded immediately despite a continuous shower of 88s.

LOW AMMO DUMP

The Division next made use of the 453rd's fire power by employing a number of 60 mm guns and racks of quadruple 1 cal mounts against enemy forces on the Lenke Peninsula, a key record of fire. At the same time, the 83rd's antiaircraft units at Carentan were shooting up an ammo dump, the Krauts were not being fired upon, and the Division eventually scored a win.

To the north, the Krauts were pinned down so that the Division could advance. On the peninsula, one of the Division's gunners shot down two enemy planes and damaged a third. The Krauts were forced to withdraw, and the Division continued its advance.

The dying Luftwaffe came to life from time to time during the 83rd's dramatic dash from the Rhine to the Elbe—but not for long—as this funeral pyre, vivid testimony of the accuracy of 453rd AAA guns, proves. (Signal Corps Photo)

AAA Men Get Ahead of War

THUNDERBOLT May 12, 1945

Four men listed as missing in action turned up at their company after spending five days traveling from one uncaptured German town to another. They were able to contact the company and receive word of their safe return.

In order to get moving, the men needed a vehicle, so they calmly walked to the nearest town and commandeered a German staff car. They were received by the American troops, who were friendly and accommodating.

“Thank you for your service,” they said. “We are happy to have you with us.”

They continued their journey, determined to make it home. Their story is a testament to the resilience and determination of our soldiers.