83rd Infantry Division

First on the Rhine!

After Action Report
March 1945
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  * Under Separate Cover
DRIVE ON THE RHINE

Background
On the 23d of February the XIX Corps with the 29th and 30th Infantry Divisions attacked across the Roer River and began its historic drive to the Rhine River. This maneuver was in effect a part of the flanking movement executed by the Ninth U.S. Army which, swinging wide of the strongly situated Konz-Mindelheim area and driving against the Ruhr, split the industrial area along the west bank of the river. After the Roer River, the Germans had nothing to offer in way of a major obstacle. When on the first of March the 83d Division was committed as a unit, the drive northeast toward the Rhine River had gained such momentum that the enemy could no longer fight an effective delaying action.

Terrain
The terrain between the Roer and the Rhine Rivers, being flat and arable, offered little tactical assistance for the enemy's defense. The Eifel Canal, running parallel to the Roer, was to be used by the enemy as a line of defense. This plan was thwarted for two reasons: First, the impetus of our attack did not give him sufficient time to organize for it; and secondly, the direction of our attack was against his left flank rather than a frontal assault as he anticipated. As a result, each town became the center of resistance. Considerable trenchwork had previously been constructed by foreign laborers and civilians. These, however, were of little use to him because of his lack of sufficient personnel. In withdrawing, road blocks and mine fields had been placed at strategic places but again limited personnel prevented him from covering them with fire.

Synopsis
The Division began its drive to the Rhine at 1200 hours on 1 March. The river was reached at 0930 the following morning. The western ends of the bridges connecting Neuss with Dusseldorf were seized, but the bridges were subsequently blown by the enemy. Neuss was occupied by the 2nd of March and on the 3d the Division was engaged in mopping-up operations.

Mission
At 1200 on the 1st of March the 83d passed from reserve status to active participation in operation "Granade", assuming responsibility for the right flank of XIX Corps. The mission of the Division was to capture Neuss, advance to the Rhine River and secure intact the three bridges connecting Neuss with Dusseldorf.

Decision
After having conferred with the Corps Commander and the commander of the 2nd Armored Division, on 28 February, the commanding general assembled his unit commanders and announced a plan for the accomplishment of the Division mission. A march order for movement to assembly areas in rear of the contemplated LZ was issued. (See G-3 Journal Entry No. 46 dated 1 March 1945).
It was announced to the unit commanders and General Staff that the 32d Division would assume control of its zone at 1200 hours, 1 March, and that at 1300 the Division would resume control of the 331st Infantry Regiment, less one battalion.

It was ordered that the Division would be conducted piecemeal. This decision was based on the following facts: (1) Enemy opposition was disorganized, (2) Maximum speed was essential. (3) Extremely congested traffic conditions of all routes of advance delayed the closing of units and precluded the early launching of a coordinated attack. (4) The Curré Gendarmerie had indicated that the Division mission was to be regarded as calling for a pursuit rather than an attack.

**Screening**
In preparation for the movement to assembly areas the 43d Company, Reconnaissance Troop reconstituted to the north and cleared the road and closed the north and cleared the roads to (F1700) and Hauarden (F2001), continuing to screen the advance.

**First Day**
The 1st Battalion of the 329th Infantry had the city of Nauss as its objective. At 1300 on 1 March they attacked from an assembly area in the vicinity of Leveling (F246). The advance moved through open terrain against enemy tanks and self-propelled guns. At the outer defenses of Nauss machine gun fire frominside the city slowed the attack. After dark the enemy put up a strong perimeter defense of heavy machine guns firing through pre-arranged zones. During the night this resistance was reduced by additional automatic weapons brought up to the troops.

**Nauss Secured**
By 0430 on 2 March Nauss was secured. At 0630 the 1st Battalion had advanced through the city to its eastern outskirts. By this time civilians crowding the streets impeded military operations as large numbers of prisoners of war were evacuated to the rear.

In the meantime the remainder of the regiment had closed in its assembly area in the vicinity of Juchen (F1470), and the 2nd Battalion was held in reserve while the 3d Battalion prepared to attack to the east to seize the railroad bridge on the southwestern edge of Nauss — one of the two vital spans linking Dusseldorf with the west bank of the Rin River.

The 329th Infantry in coordination with the 329th and 330th to cross the Nieu Canal and drive on to help secure Nauss. Assembled in the vicinity of Ebenlohr (F2053), the 2nd Battalion began its advance at 1400 on the 1st of March. In two hours they had cleared the towns of Dornbach (F2407) and Ebenlohr (F2056). They were then in position to protect the left flank of the 329th's advance toward Nauss. During the night the Battalion crossed the towns of Enkel and by 0245 had advance elements in the built-up part of Nauss.
The 32nd Infantry, minus the 1st Battalion, returning to division control at 1200 continued the attack it had launched at 0400 under control of the 2nd Armored Division. The 3d Battalion, as the assault battalion, advanced steadily on Grovenbruch (F177), cleared the town and patrolled along the Erf Canal mopping up isolated resistance and protecting the left flank of the Division so that by nightfall the west side of the Erf Canal was clear of the enemy.

**Second Day**

On the 2nd of March the 3d Battalion of the 329th Infantry was assembled for a drive east to seize the railroad bridge spanning the Nauss at Nauss. At 0045 they began a slow advance against small arms fire from dug-in positions. Company I in the lead, was stopped by heavy machine guns and 20mm anti-aircraft artillery.

By 0140 Company L occupied a position two hundred yards from the western end of the bridge at P299395. A quick follow-up secured the western approach. Earlier in the day, 0759, an explosion was observed in the vicinity of the bridge. After the western bank of the river was secured, patrols reported that the enemy had blown the eastern span. More extensive reports on the 3d of March showed that the center span was also demolished and the bridge impassable for either vehicular or foot traffic.

Leaving Nauss at 1230 on 2 March the 3d Battalion of the 330th Infantry maneuvered in a wide-swinging arc around Nauss heading for a light bridge at Oberkassel, a west bank suburb of Dusseldorf. Although supporting armored elements were temporarily delayed by a road block, the infantry advanced alone and destroyed six 75mm high velocity guns at P260923. During the night supporting engineers removed the road block and again the armor moved in support of the foot troops. By 0545 on 3 March the 3d Battalion had gone through Oberkassel and reached the bridge. Although our troops controlled the structure by fire, the Germans destroyed it at 0935. The regiment completed preparations for defense by 1200 on 3 March.

**Rhine River**

On 2 March the 2nd Battalion of the 331st Infantry launched its attack from the vicinity of the Erf Canal at 0130 in a swift drive to the Rhine River. Company E gained and held the west bank at 0930.

The 1st Battalion, 331st Infantry, was relieved from attachment to the 2nd Armored Division at 1630 and reported to Division control. The Commanding General then ordered it re-attached to the 330th Infantry in support of the attack to the north.
Enemy

Counterattack

A major threat to the success of the entire operation developed at 0700 on 2 March when an enemy build-up in the vicinity of Kapellen (F2282) threatened the right flank of the Division. The necessity for providing organic flank security while carrying on a major offensive operation made it impossible to maintain defenses in strength along the entire flank. Consequently, when the enemy launched his counteroffensive consisting of approximately three hundred infantry, supported by twenty-one tanks, the initial defenses were overrun. The situation was critical when Company I of the 331st Infantry was completely surrounded by German tanks and infantry. All available arms were utilized and the counterattack was repelled. Artillery, tank destroyers, and infantrymen with bazookas, through cooperative effort, destroyed seven tanks. The Air Corps is credited with the destruction of an additional fourteen tanks and half-tracks during the day. A great part of the Division’s success in containing this attack was due to timely and effective air support which prevented the enemy from building his counterattack and exploiting his initial success. Five squadrons of P-47’s took part in the effort and bombed, strafed, and fired rockets continuously from 0945 to 1430, when the threat had been completely eliminated.

The 103d Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop moved to Holandia (F2805) as a protective element for the Division right flank. The 3d Battalion of the 331st Infantry was relieved by the 120th Infantry, 30th Infantry Division.

Enemy Losses

During the day the enemy lost a total of seven tanks to our ground troops, six to the 3d Battalion, 331st Infantry, and one to Company G, 643d Tank Destroyer Battalion. A German fighter plane was shot down by the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon of the 330th Infantry. The Air Corps destroyed an additional fourteen tanks and half-tracks.

Third Day

On the third day the attack of the 331st Infantry developed into a mop-up operation and at the close of the day the regiment was relieved by the 327th Infantry and placed in Division reserve. On the 3d of March the Division was ordered by the XIX Corps to assist in the clearing of Neuss and begin a program of rehabilitation. In preparation for future employment, the Division Combat Foot moved from Aldenhoven (F1082) to Buttgen (F2282), Germany.
With the capture of Neuss completed and its participation in operation "Grenade" ended, the Division on the 4th of March complied with orders received from the commanding general XIX Corps and began a program of training and rehabilitation. Concurrent with this program, the Division maintained defensive positions in its sector along the Rhine from a point about two miles north of Oberkassell to the confluence of the Bifft Canal and the Rhine River.

This training program was, in effect, a continuation of the highly remunerative program conducted during February in Belgium and Holland. That period had so clearly benefited all units of the Division that the new program was approached with marked enthusiasm.

Crossing
River
On the 5th of March training in the use of assault boats was begun, and was continued throughout most of the remainder of the month. A schedule of night and day river crossing was set up and followed until the latter part of the month. In this connection it is to be noted that while this training was scheduled so as to occur at various hours, stress was laid on problems conducted during hours of darkness. Engineer companies supported the infantry regiments in their training in operation of assault boats, the use of footbridges, and supported small stream crossing problems.

Bridges
In addition, the Engineer Battalion trained with Bailey and trestle bridges, trestle and infantry support rafts. One company of engineers experimented loading vehicles and guns on DUKWs by two methods: (1) Using a crane and (2), using an improvised ramp. The ramp method was the more satisfactory.

Tank-Infantry Combination
Throughout the entire training period, special emphasis was placed on the infantry-tank team and the infantry-tank destroyer team. Cooperation between these teams had been, during operation "Grenade", closer than ever before and the benefits of such cooperation had been clearly demonstrated to all troops. Exercises which were conducted therefore were looked upon favorably by both officers and men.

Weapons
Additional training during the month included small arms firing, night problems, small unit problems and attacks on a village strong point over open terrain. Stress was placed on formations and movement and the correct use of supporting weapons. Troops were also given instruction in the function and firing of the Panzerfaust. Regimental tests of companies in day and night attacks were conducted. Familiarization firing of all arms was held, and unit head quarters held command post exercises. In addition, schools were conducted in the adjustment of artillery fire. Platoon leaders in the regiments were given opportunity for actual adjustment of fire from forward observation posts.

Relief
On the 21st of March the Division was relieved from its sector of defense along the Rhine River and moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Echt, Holland. There,
training in bridging and assault boat crossings was conducted. This included infantry company, battalion, and regiment assault boat crossings, infantry support bridge and raft crossings, and all footbridge crossings. For the regimental assault problems the engineers manned 75 boats, constructed a 320 foot infantry support bridge, and a 248 foot bridge. Additional training was given in village fighting and the technique of tank and tank destroyer support of an attack on a village.

On the 26th and 27th of March all troops prepared for movement east, and on the 28th of the month the Division moved to an assembly area in the general vicinity of Kuchen-Gladbach, Germany, preparatory to its movement across the Rhine River.
III

* * *

GESTPHALIA

* * *
Westphalia

On the 28th of March the Commanding General of XIX Corps issued Field Order No. 31, stating the Corps mission as follows: "Crosses Lippe Canal and River through bridgehead established by XVI Corps. Advancement east in zone and across Ludington and crossings over Dortmund-Ems Canal and continues advance to cut communication facilities of the Rhine east and southeast of Hamm." The 83d Division was ordered to be prepared to move, motorized, on order, in two columns from its assembly area near Schiefbein, Germany, behind the 2nd Armored Division to a designated assembly area vicinity Hamm (A3380). Germany, east of the Rhine River. Having reached this assembly area, the Division would then follow the 2nd Armored Division, clean up enemy bypassed by it east of the line Halveron (A6250)-Nessel (A6360). The Division was to remain motorized until further order. (See Field Order No. 31, 83d Corps, 282230)

In accordance with these instructions, the 83d Division moved from its assembly area in the vicinity of Schiefbein, Germany, on 29 March. The Rhine River was crossed north of Baden (A4128). (See Movement Order No. 26, 29 March, item 1021). By the 30th of the month, all combat elements of the Division were assembled east of the river.

During the remaining days of March, the Division continued to advance behind the 2nd Armored Division. Movement of all elements was very rapid. Traffic congestion and large numbers of refugees and displaced persons moving along the roads to the west were the only obstacles to the advance of the Division.

On the 1st of April the Corps Mission was changed to read: "Cross Dortmund-Ems Canal and secure all bridges intact across Lippe River with Dortmund Canal as right flank from Hamm to Dortmund and reconnoiter to south until hitting something." But as the month came to an end, it was apparent that there was no longer need for our troops to advance southeast of Hamm since elements of the First and Ninth Armies were joining up in the vicinity of Lippscheidt, Germany.
IV

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BATTLE LOSSES

* * *
"The timely and effective air support given to this Division during Operation 'Grenade' accounted greatly for the Division's success by preventing the enemy from building up his counterattack against the Division's right flank and exploiting his initial success in the counterattack."

(Ltr, C of S, 83d Div to CG, XIX Corps, 10 March 45)

**Enemy Attacks**

An enemy build up of tanks and infantry was thrown against the Division's right flank in the vicinity of Kapellen (F221) at 0700, 2 March. The principle strength of the 83d was concentrated in and around Neuss. Thus the extended right flank along the Erft Canal was vulnerable to counterattack. The 331st Command Post and the Division Prisoner of War Camp were near Kapellen. The Division Command Post at Aldenhoven was approximately three miles away. The situation became critical when the enemy overrun outposts of the Division's infantry beyond Kapellen. A telephone request was made to XIX Corps for air support.

**Air Support**

From 0945 to 1045 four squadrons bombed, strafed and employed rockets on enemy tanks and infantry which had penetrated into Kapellen. Further sorties in support of the Division's infantry troops in that area continued. From 1230 to 1300 two squadrons attacked enemy elements which were endeavoring to continue the counterattack. At 1340 an armed reconnaissance squadron flew along the Erft Canal, fired rockets on enemy tanks and infantry, removing a threat to the Division's main supply route. From 1400 to 1430 a squadron for the third time attacked the enemy in positions by bombing and strafing. And at 1430 another armed reconnaissance squadron along the Erft Canal strafed and bombed ground troops and tanks.

**Dusseldorf**

Air activity over Dusseldorf was affected from 15 J through 1740 by three single squadron flights. From 1555 to 1645 friendly aircraft bombed enemy gun positions emplaced on the southeastern side of the highway bridge, which had been firing direct into elements of the Division in the vicinity of Neuss.

The success of these operations and the effectiveness of the air-ground teamwork was made possible by the prompt coordination of these two arms of the service. Combined ground and air operations repulsed the enemy counterattack completely, thereby preventing a possible disruption of the entire Division's operations.
83 INF DIV

ENEMY COUNTERATTACK AT KAPELLEN
2 MARCH 1945

Kapellen
Hemmerden

331

83

331

Under fire

7 ENEMY TANKS KNOCKED OUT
MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN NEUSS-OBERKASSEL

The Neuß-Oberkassel area provided the 43d with its first real experience in military government of Germany, a foretaste of what is to come.

The total civilian population of the Division area was approximately 75,000, of which 30,000 were in Neuß (normal population 60,000), and 45,000 in Oberkassel (that portion of Düsseldorf west of the Rhine). Of these about 4,000 were so-called Displaced Persons, (Russians, Poles, French, Belgians, Dutch, etc.), brought to Germany by the Nazis.

Organized: Military Government trained personnel available to the Division Commander for his military government functions consisted of the Division Military Government Staff (five officers and seven enlisted men), Military Government Detachment 1123 Spearhead Detachment remaining with Division (four officers and nine enlisted men), Military Government Detachment 1122 (assigned permanently to Neuß, three officers and six enlisted men), and Military Government Detachment FUM (assigned permanently to Düsseldorf, that portion of it in this operation consisting of three officers and six enlisted men).

The Spearhead Detachment moved into Neuß the afternoon of 2 March and immediately posted the city with military government proclamation and announcements. The Governor, Dr. Wilhelm Töpplin, and part of his staff were found to be still in the city and were authorized to continue to function temporarily. Dr. Töpplin was subsequently released from office on 6 March, for former Nazi affiliations, after investigation by GIC.

On 4 March a Military Government Detachment also moved into Oberkassel and established administration there. By this time the permanent Neuß Detachment, 1122, had arrived and entered the city.

Screening: In the initial stages of occupation the primary consideration is always public safety, hence every effort was made to rehabilitate the local police forces as rapidly as possible. At the expiration of three days of occupation approximately 75 police were on duty in Neuß and 30 in Oberkassel. Many of these were former policemen in these cities who had been evacuated to Division prisoner of war camps in the early stages of combat because they were uniforms, were subsequently screened by GIC and returned to duty. On the whole local police functioned fairly well, but their efficiency was impaired by the lack of uniforms (without which they felt a lack of authority), by unfamiliarity with their duties under military government, and by uncertainty as to the extent to which their actions would be backed up by the occupying forces, all matters which would normally be corrected by time. It is apparent that the German civilians as a whole are prepared to obey literally the will of the military government, but it must be made clear and explicit, firmly and strictly explained and enforced.
Nazis

From the standpoint of general civilian administration, the Naua-Oberkassel operation, like all others so far encountered by the Allies in Germany, showed a general willingness to cooperate with the U.S. Army. Generalization is perhaps erroneous because to date practically all ardent and active Nazis have been evacuated before our advance. Those that were left were lukewarm party members and they, with the majority of civilians found, are primarily interested in rest, blistering and continuation of the normal essentials of life.

Fortunately the area administered had no great food shortages. Supplies were adequate, the only difficulty encountered being those of distribution caused by lack of transportation. Primarily for this reason, the initially strict curfew of 1200 to 0600, was relaxed as quickly as security warranted to permit civilian circulation from 0700 to 1800. This allowed the civilians to make arrangements for their own provisioning and to resume farming operations, a matter of vital concern for the whole future occupation of Germany.

Health

General health conditions in Naua and Oberkassel were found to be good. The fact that sufficient electric power was available to operate the water systems of both cities was no small factor. Sanitary disposal was adequate. One of the first instructions issued to the new local administration, was to repair those public services as rapidly as possible and to boil all drinking water. As a result there were no serious health problems during occupation by this Division and sanitary conditions were rapidly being improved when we left.

Industry

It is not the policy of SHAEF to rehabilitate German industry except to the extent it may be specifically authorized as being necessary for Allied prosecution of the war. In any event, such rehabilitation is of secondary importance in the initial stages of any occupation, and no steps in this direction were taken other than to authorize concerns to make estimates of their condition and needed repairs. Two concerns, International Harvester and American Radiator, of American ownership were found and suitable custodians of their properties appointed under Military Government.

All monuments, fine arts, and archives listed by SHAEF as protected installations were inspected, suitable arrangements made for their protection, and report to higher headquarters rendered.

Military Government Summary Courts provided speedy trials for violation of Military Government enactments. During the 35-day period some 75 cases were tried, over 95% for infractions of curfew and circulation. Fines ranging from 25 to 100 Reichsmarks and prison sentences up to 30 days were imposed. Imprisonment was in local civilian jails, which had been set up in both Oberkassel and Naua as one of the first steps in civilian control.

Displaced Persons

By far the most thorny problem encountered by Military Government was the handling of Displaced Persons. SHAEF directives require them as well as all German civilians to
to "standfast" in the area where found. Divisions which did not enforce this policy produced many needless problems. This Division did, largely through the efforts and efficiency of the combat units.

Of the 4000 odd displaced persons in Division area, approximately one-third were Russian, one-third Polish, one-sixth French, and the remaining one-sixth Dutch, Belgian, Italian, Slovak, Czech, Lithuanian, Austrian, etc. The German authorities were required to house and feed all displaced persons. In the smaller communities they were cared for on farms or in small groups in towns. Some worked and were paid in addition to getting their food. In the larger cities of Oberkassel and Mannheim, it was found better to aggregate displaced persons in quarters by nationality, where they could be more easily controlled and cared for. Registration of all displaced persons was undertaken and at the time of our departure 3000 had been registered.

The relatively small total of 394 displaced persons was evacuated by regimental Division prison guards, only in the operation. All were males wearing uniforms, including usually parts of uniform knight or green uniforms, so subject troops had little choice but to handle them as prisoners of war. Military Government ultimately took these from the camp as displaced persons.

Control of Displaced Persons
It is important that all units understand, and that all displaced persons be made to understand, that all displaced persons are not to be regarded as prisoners of war. The German authorities have difficulty in controlling them. Military Government must do so. It is apparent that the collection and evacuation of displaced persons to properly staffed and equipped centers for their eventual repatriation is essential to permit rapid and efficient establishment of operation of the Division Commander's responsibility of Military Government. Until this can be arranged, "standfast" must be enforced. That it can be and the "searched earth" policy avoided was proved by the disciplined conduct of our combat units in the Mannheim-Oberkassel operation.

Lessons
Several important lessons have been learned. The Germans can and will cooperate, but they must be firmly handled, explicitly instructed, and work possible. Military Government should be established to coincide as nearly as possible with political boundaries and so is not to isolate normal local civilian food and service centers. For proper control curfew should be uniform throughout more than Division area, and as rapidly as possible relaxed to include all daylight hours permitting the civilians to take care of themselves. It is inevitable to use any Nazi-tinged people in any governmental positions. Initial efficiency can well be sacrificed for a proper foundation for the future. The German civilian as a whole is lethargic in matters political, and affirmative action by Military Government is and will be required to bring forward non-Nazis to positions of authority and to induce them to believe that they can now begin restoration of non-Nazi government under strict Military Government control. There is a feeling of neutrality until Military Government has proved that it can and will eradicate Nazism.
Above all the Nauvoo-Charkassol operation offered convincing proof of the fact that Military Government is a government of all the army. It is a responsibility which can only be properly discharged by the employment of all the forces at the disposal of the Division Commander. It is a problem which will become of ever increasing importance.
TROOP LIST
1 - 31 MARCH 1945

* * * * * * * *
ORGANIZATION FOR COMBAT
ATTACHED UNITS
SUPPORTING UNITS
CHANGES IN MISSIONS AND ATTACHMENTS
* * * * * * * *
TROOP LIST - 1-31 MARCH

FIELD ORDER #32, 83d Infantry Division, issued 262300 February 1945:

329TH INF:
Attd: 322d FA BN (for movement only)
Co A, 643d TD BN (T)
Co B (-1 Plat); 1 Plat, Co B, 1st Plat AG;
Mort Plt; 736th Tk BN
Co A, 306th Engr BN (for movement only)

333TH INF:
Attd: 323d FA BN (for movement only)
Co B, 643d TD BN (T)
Co B, 308th Engr BN (for movement only)
Co A, 2d Plat, AG; 736th Tk BN
Plt Y, 453d AAA BN (AW)

331ST INF (-1st BN, attd to 2d Arm Div):
Attd: Co C, 643d TD BN (T)
Plt Z, 453d AAA BN (AW)

308TH MG BN:
Co A in direct support of 329th Inf
Co B in direct support of 330th Inf
Co C in direct support of 331st Inf

308TH MED BN

83D CAV Rcn TR

83D DIV ARTY:
Attd: 453d AAA BN (AW) (less Plts Y & Z)
643d TD BN (T) (less Cos A, B & C)
323d FA BN in direct support of 329th Inf
323d FA BN in direct support of 330th Inf
308th FA BN in general support
324th FA BN in general support

83D DIV SP TRS:
83d Hq & Hq Co
83d QM Co
83d Sig Co
783d Ord (LM) Co
83d MP Plt

ATTACHED UNITS:

423d AAA BN (AW) (1 through 31 March)
643d TD BN (SP) (1 through 31 March)
(643d TD BN, originally a towed unit, was converted to a self-
propelled unit during month; conversion completed 13 March.)
736th Tk BN (-Co C) (1 through 31 March)
Co G, 736th Tk BN (28 through 31 March)
2 Sess, 83d Cncl Smoke Gen Co (1 and 2 March)

-20-
ATTACHED UNITS (CONT'D):

21st Fa Bn (105 How) (1 March only)
25th Fa Bn (105 How) (2 through 11, and 20 through 31 March)
751st Fa Bn (155 How) (2 through 12 March)
351st Fa Bn (155 How) (9 through 12 March)
Btry B, 8th Fa Oben Bn (for operations only - 16 through 20 March)
957th Fa Bn (155 How) (28 through 31 March)
107th Cav Gp (31 March only)
Btry A, 226th AAA Bttn Bn:
3 Secs - (2 through 9 March)
6 Secs - (10 through 12 March)
1 Plat - (13 March only)
1 Plat (-3 Sfts) - (14 through 20 March)
Air-Ground Cooperation Party (1 through 31 March)
83d CIC Det (1 through 31 March)
111 Team No. 428-G (1 through 31 March)
OD Team No. 20 (1 through 31 March)
IF/3 Team No. 48 (1 through 31 March)
IF/4 Team No. 48 (1 through 31 March)
P2 Team No. 42 (1 through 31 March)
P2 Team No. 42 (1 through 31 March)
111 Cptt Det 11212 (2 through 21 March)
111 Cptt Det F1D13 (9 through 21 March)
111 Cptt Det 11213 (2 through 31 March)
162nd Sig Photo Det (5 through 31 March)
XXIII Corps Wire Team (1 through 31 March)
XXIII Corps Radio-Link Team (1 through 31 March)

SUPPORTING UNITS:

295th Engr (C) Bn (1 through 20 March)
288th Fa Gp (2 through 17 March)
228th Fa Bn (155 How)
967th Fa Bn (155 How)
979th Fa Bn (155 How)
793d Fa Bn (155 How)
1115th Engr Gp (31 March only)

CHANGES IN MISSIONS AND ATTACHMENTS WITHIN DIVISION DURING MONTH:

011625 Mar - S-3, 331st Inf requested 1 Plat, Mod Tks - request approved.
011629 Mar - 83d Cav Jan Tr atchd to 331st Inf, off 012300 Mar 45.
021130 Mar - Mag fr Div Art - Organization of arty for combat:
Open "A" (322d & 265th Fa Bns) in direct support of 529th Inf
323d Fa Bn in direct support of 330th Inf
908th Fa Bn in direct support of 331st Inf
324th & 751st Fa Bns in general support
021530 Mar - 1st Bn, 331st Inf atchd to 330th Inf, upon returning to control of
83d Div from 2d Div at 021630A Mar.
022045 Mar - G-3 directed G-3, 331st Inf to send Co B (-1 Plat), 730th Tk Bn
to 1st Bn, 331st Inf.
CHANGES (CONT'D):

030920 Hr - G-3 directed S-3, 329th Inf to send Co B, 736th Tk Bn to 330th Inf.

031550 Mar - S-3, Div Arty advised G-3 that 25th FA Bn reverts to general support 020900.

Ph, 03 Mar - 1st Bn, 331st Inf detached from 330th Inf and reverted to control of 331st Inf.

031830 Mar - G-3 to S-3, 331st Inf - Atdch to 331st Inf:
906th P. Bn (direct support)
Co C, 300th Engr Bn
Co B, Co D (-1 Plt.), 736th Tk Bn
2 Flts. SPs, 1 Plt. Towed, 643d TD Bn

032050 Mar - G-3 to S-3, 330th Inf - 2d Plt. AG, Co J, 736th Tk Bn and 2 Flts. 643d TD Bn detached from 330th Inf and attached to 331st Inf, except Co B, Tanks which go into Div Res.

032215 Mar - G-3 notified S-3, 330th Inf that 1 Plt. Co A, 736th Tk Bn will report to 1st Bn, 331st Inf 040700 Hr.

032100 Mar - Co ordered 331st Inf to advance to North with:
300th FA Bn
Co C, 306th Engr Bn
Co J, Co D (-1 Plt.), 1 Plt. Co A, AG Plt., Hrt Plt., 736th Tk Bn
Plat Z, 453d AAA Bn (inf)
Co B (-1 Plt.), 1 Plt. SPs, Co C, 643d TD Bn

040940 Mar - G-3 notified all three regts. that all tanks would revert to 736th Tk Bn, except 1 Plt. of Lts's w/329th Inf and AG Plt. on 329th's flank.

051017 Mar - 329th & 330th Inf's will have 1 Plt. of towed TD's in position in secondary mission; 331st Inf will have 1 Plt. of towed TD's in mobile res; all SPs return to Bn control.

051720 Mar - 329th Engr Bn now in general support of the Division.

051800 Mar - 83d Cav Rcn Tr dtdch from 329th Inf effective 1800A.

051820 Mar - S-3, 736th Tk Bn notified G-3 that 2d Plt. Co D and AG Plt. had returned to control of 736th Tk Bn.

112030 Hr - Flts. X & Y, 453d AAA Bn (inf) atdch to 329th and 331st Inf's respectively, 643d destroyed as of 2000A.

112145 Hr - G-3 notified 83d Div Arty that 643d TD Bn (SP) was dtdch from Div Arty and reverted to 83d Div control as of 112100 Hr.
VI

MOSER, GEN., B.A. 1913, C. ING. 1914, A. M. 1916, B. A. 1918, M. A. 1920
M. L. A., A. M. 1922, B. S. 1924

SPECIAL STAFF

* * *
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OPILVIE, GEORGE H.
(1 March to 31 March)

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HEADQUARTERS CO. detachment

LUNN, RAYMOND J., Lt Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-271206

325TH INFANTRY

330TH INFANTRY

333RD INFANTRY

COMMANDING OFFICER

Webb, Arthur B., Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-6769

Foster, Robert T., Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-11258

Zork, Robert L., Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-21341

73D DIVISION ARTILLERY

COMMANDING GENERAL

Hart, Robert H., Brig Gen, USA
(1 March to 31 March)

0-12861

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Hev, Robert E., Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-16212

5-1, 5-4

Soldier, Howard B., Maj
(1 March to 31 March)

0-391465

5-2

Jaxon, Alfred A., Maj
(1 March to 31 March)

0-361523

5-3

Smith, Robert B., Lt Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-111990

308TH ENGINEER SERVICE BATTALION

COMMANDING OFFICER

Dodge, Roy T., Lt Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-21148

63D CAVALRY NCO COMTESS TRUPE

COMMANDING OFFICER

Buch, Master H., Capt
(1 March to 2 March)

0-23723

Hults, Keith L., 1st Lt
(2 March to 31 March)

0-1030205

308TH MEDICAL BATTALION

COMMANDING OFFICER

Higdon, Robert E., Lt Col
(1 March to 31 March)

0-21459

DIVISION HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

COMMANDING OFFICER

Cederberg, Alfred M., Capt
(1 March to 31 March)

0-128660

783D REGIMENT (L) COMPANY

COMMANDING OFFICER

Horton, John J., 1st Lt
(1 March to 31 March)

0-728986

63D SIGNAL COMPANY

COMMANDING OFFICER

Hartley, Haxton T., Capt
(1 March to 31 March)

0-151655
332 QUARTZMASTER COMPANY

OCCUPYING OFFICER

Brauch, George F., Capt
(1 March to 31 March)

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**Attached Units:**

- 453d 2AA Bn
- 643d 59th Bn
- 730th Tr Bn
- 75th Fl Bn
- 731st Fl Bn

**TOTAL** 51 253 107 539 985 17
IX

APPENDICES
Summary of Enemy Order of Battle

Part One

The enemy Order of Battle confronting the 33d Infantry Division in its sweep to the Rhine River was as confused during this period as it was during the last. The enemy committed a host of miscellaneous units in a desperate attempt to slacken the pace of our drive. Since it was evident even to the Germans that the XIX Corps' attack could no longer be stopped west of the Rhine, an attempt was made to extricate at least units of divisional size and salvage them on the East bank of the river. In this effort, the enemy partially succeeded, for he was able to withdraw elements of the 11 Panzer, 130 Panzer Lehr, and 326 Infantry Divisions across the Rhine while he sacrificed to our advancing column the second and third rate units primarily under the control of the 476 Mobilization Division. At 0930 on 2 March 1945, the 33d Infantry Division became the first unit of Ninth US Army to reach the Rhine, thereby climaxing the lightning thrust of Allied armies across the Roer into the German Rhineland. Thereafter and for the greater part of the month units of the 23d Infantry Division patrolled the West banks of the Rhine River opposite Dusseldorf.

Among the conglomeration of AAA, Fortresses, Police, Home Guard, Volksturm, and Security Battalions contacted (for a complete list of units identified through the capture of Pils, see Part Two), the following deserve some explanatory remarks:

536 Replacement and Training Regiment: According to FW claims, this regiment with its Home Station in Dusseldorf, Wehrkreis VI, constituted an element of the 476 Mobilization Division which was charged with the defense of the Nuss - Dusseldorf area. As part of the 476 Mobilization Division, it controlled some of the hastily organized units committed to delay our push to the Rhine.

IV Fortress Regiment: This regiment, a static defense unit under control of the 476 Mobilization Division, consisted of 6 companies of men suffering from minor ailments and drafted approximately three weeks prior to commitment.

766 Volks Artillery Corps: Only the 1 Battalion of this unit was committed on our front. It consisted of a Headquarters Battery and two firing batteries, the latter equipped with 8 - 150mm Howitzers each. The battalion had left the Eiburg area on 21 February to be employed in defense of the Dusseldorf - Cologne sector.

1203 Panther Turn Company: This newly formed unit was organized to fight from detached Panther turrets dug into the ground as pillboxes. Since the turrets did not arrive, however, the men were committed as infantry.

1074 Security Battalion: This battalion with a strength of 700 men was organized into 4 companies. It was composed of older age personnel employed in trench digging and as security guards. Toward the middle of the month the battalion was attached to the 33d Infantry Division.
6 Police Home Guard Battalion: This battalion consisted of regular and auxiliary police from Wannseib Y and was charged mainly with the performance of police duties and the evacuation of civilians. During the final stages of the battle, this unit was also committed as infantry.

3 Flak Corps: The 3 Flak Corps was responsible for the AA defense of the Dusseldorf - Neuss area and consisted of light and heavy anti-aircraft battalions. After our crossing of the Rhone river, the units of the 3 Flak Corps were employed in an antiaircraft capacity and, after their guns were knocked out, in an infantry role. As far as could be ascertained from captured documents and POW statements the following anti-aircraft battalions belonged to the 144 Flak Regiment, which was attached to the 3 Flak Corps: 104, 107, 124, 133, 151, and 177.

Though it was known what units escaped from the West banks of the Rhine via the Wesel Bridgehead, it was not known how those units were redistributed on the East bank. For a while enemy Order of Battle dispositions were unknown except for the Remagen Bridgehead area.

During the 334 Infantry Division's "Wacht Am Rhine" enemy Order of Battle in the Dusseldorf area was clarified to a considerable extent by careful interrogation of deserters who succeeded in getting across the river. They disclosed the interesting information that 123 Volksgrenadier Division was on the East bank of the Rhine in the vicinity of Dusseldorf. This division was composed of 330 and 351 Volksgrenadier Regiments, the 363 Volksgrenadier Regiment ostensibly having been dissolved. The 330 Volksgrenadier Regiment, in turn, consisted of two battalions and probably a 13 and 14 company. The units then composing the 330 Volksgrenadier Regiment had drawn their personnel from replacement - training and convalescent units and were thrown into the organization in the vicinity of Mottman and Walfrath, East of Dusseldorf. The personnel, formerly belonging to the two units of the 123 Volksgrenadier Division, had been wiped out on the West banks of the Rhine River while trying to maintain a bridgehead for the withdrawal of the bulk of the German forces. In short, FMS asserted that the 123 Volksgrenadier Division was composed of entirely new personnel than those which had been contacted by our forces in their drive to the West banks of the Rhine River. FMS further stated that 176 Volksgrenadier Division was South of 123 Volksgrenadier Division (in Dusseldorf) and that 338 Volksgrenadier Division was South of Dusseldorf. In addition, a captured document indicated a large group of low caliber Landesschützen and reserve replacement battalions of 406 and 476 Mobilization Divisions in the Ruhr area.

There were no indications of the presence of Panzer divisions on the East bank of the Rhine River in our sector, but it was known that 115 Panzer, 15 Panzer Grenadier and 130 Panzer Lehr Divisions were somewhere North of Dusseldorf since they had extricated themselves from the Wesel Bridgehead only a few days before.

The development of the Remagen "magnum" clarified enemy Order of Battle of the entire western front. By the middle of the period, XIX Corps was able to give the following picture of enemy dispositions, South to North, from Cologne to Remscheid: 362 Division, 59 Division, 138 Division, 176 Division, 103 Division, 2 Parachute Division, 8 Parachute Division, 105 Division, 7 Parachute Division, and 6 Parachute Division with 190 and 84 Divisions fitting into the local reserve picture between Duisburg and Remscheid. As mobile reserves for the northern front 15 Panzer Grenadier and 116 Panzer Division were listed.
The attack by Twenty-First Army Group at the end of the period verified in considerable detail the picture of enemy dispositions as given above. 33rd Infantry Division attacked along the northern banks of the Lippe Canal at the end of the period, capturing a mounting number of PNs primarily from the many units of the Wehrkreis VI replacement and training system. The divisional units, which initially faced the attack of XIX Corps along the northern banks of the Lippe Canal, were considered destroyed.

**Part Two**

**List of PNs Captured and Units to Which They Belong**

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<td>902 Pz Gren Regt</td>
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<td>11 Pz Div</td>
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<td>111 Pz Gren Regt</td>
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<tr>
<td>1203 Panther Tuna Co</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 34 -
Engineer:
125 Constr Bn
22 110th Constr Bn
26 Ingr Bn (26 Inf Div)
756 Engr Bn (121 Inf Div) 2

Anti Tank:
538 TD Bn
XIV Fortress AA Bn
CI TD Bn (11 Inf Div) 1

Signals:
32 Air Sig Regt
309 GHQ Sig Bn

Anti Aircraft:
141 Flaksturm Regt (141 z)
151 AA Bn
404 AA Bn
6 Flak Regt
31 AA Bn
230 AA Bn
277 AA Bn
307 AA Bn
401 AA Bn
503 AA Bn
600 AA Bn
826 AA Bn
941 AA Bn

Miscellaneous:
31 Jacke Co
1 Police Bn
6 Home Guard Police Bn
Grevenbroich Police
Enchelz Polizei
305 Security Guard Co
15th Army Hq Guard Co
Dusseldorf Air Raid Police
Neuss Air Raid Police
Luftwaffe Pilot
Neuss Military Hospital
Dusseldorf Med Bn (A/c)
Dusseldorf Med Bn (Army)
Customs Officials
Italians
Russians
Germans
French

- 35 -
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tr>
<td>Italians</td>
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<td>Yugoslavs</td>
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<td>Volkssturm</td>
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<td>Former Members of Wehrmacht (CIC Screening)</td>
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<td>Strugglers</td>
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</table>

**Total PWS Processed:** 1830

PWS taken last day of period and not included in above tabulation: 38

PWS through medical channels not processed: 112

**Grand Total:** 1981

*All non-Germans were members of the Wehrmacht.*