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SECTION I

NARRATIVE
OF
OPERATIONS

NND 735017
Authority
By ED NARA Date 9/28/10

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NARRATIVE OF OPERATIONS--JANUARY 1945

The month of January began with the 410th Infantry remaining on the alert for possible enemy attack.

On the morning of 1 January 45, the foe hit the left sector of the 106th Cavalry on our left and the 44th Division on our right, but did not take any offensive action against our positions.

Company C picked up two prisoners who, when questioned, stated they were from the 80th Replacement Battalion. According to the prisoners, this battalion is composed of 5 or 6 man squads, and is dug in between Behren and Kerbach to stop our armor. A combat patrol from Company A raided the southern part of Lixing at 0630 on 2 January 45 and successfully completed its mission. Three enemy were killed and one taken prisoner. Two machine gun positions and one machine gun were destroyed. During the night, a Company G combat patrol went into the vicinity of coordinate (499582) but found no Germans. Company A, 614th TDs, was relieved from attachment, and one platoon of Company C of the same TDs attached to us on 2 January 1945.

The 44th Division met another German attack during the morning of 3 January 45, but, again, no attack was made against our positions. Regimental Operations Instructions #13, issued at 031030 January 45 ordered the 3rd Battalion to relieve the 1st Battalion by 041000 January 45. Company A was relieved by Company I by 1630 and Company B by Company L at 2000. Complete relief of the 1st Battalion was accomplished by 0950 4 January 45.

Company G relieved Company E at 1700 on 3 January 45.

Bridge guards of the 409th Infantry were relieved by the 410th Infantry on 4 January 45. At 1045 on 4 January 45, G-3 issued orders that, effective immediately, our Reserve Battalion (the 1st Bn) would not be committed except on division order.

During 5 January 45 night patrolling continued actively.

When they requested passage through our lines, eight young male civilians were picked up at Company K's CP at 0155 6 January 45. Questioning revealed they possessed knowledge of the enemy's disposition. The 3rd Battalion completed a successful raid against an enemy outpost, located in a house about 1 mile west of Lixing at 1740 6 January 45. The patrol gathered 5 prisoners. One enemy machine gun was knocked out by our artillery fire.

Early on the morning of 7 January 45, a Company G combat patrol operating in the vicinity of Rilchingen captured 3 prisoners. The patrol executed its mission so swiftly only one shot was fired during the maneuver. At 1415 on 7 January 45 the 1st Platoon, Company A, 3rd Tank Battalion, was released from assignment to the 410th Infantry.

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Seven rounds of enemy artillery fell northeast of Rouhling in Company F's sector at 1530 that day, and at 1720, 15 rounds dropped 500 yards west of Tentelingen. During the night of 7 January 45, a 2nd Battalion raiding party went into Grosbliederstroff but had to withdraw under heavy machine gun fire.

The 2nd Battalion was ordered, on 8 January 45, to investigate a report that enemy ammunition was stored in a cave at (489604) west of Rilchingen and to remove it if found. Investigation on 9 January 45 proved the report true. At 1600 that day, 6 rounds of enemy 88 fire was received at the entrance to the cave. The 2nd Battalion Commander informed the Regimental Commander that he would attempt to remove the ammunition on the night of 10 January 45.

The 410 Infantry was ordered to support by fire the attack of the 411th Infantry on 10 January 45 per plan of Division Operations Instructions #47, and to coordinate with the 411th Infantry in defense of the objective line. The Regimental Commander issued orders at 100900 10 January 45 to the 3rd and 2nd Battalions for the halting of any counterattack against the right flank of the 411th Infantry. The 2nd Battalion attempted to remove the German ammunition from the cave south of Grosbliederstroff on the night of 10 January 45, but the ammunition proved too heavy to remove. The Battalion Commander decided to place a guard by the cave to make the ammunition inaccessible to the enemy. Coordination with the 411th Infantry in defense of the objective line was completed on 10 January 45.

The guarding of ten bridges in the rear of our area was turned over to the 409th Infantry on 11 January 45 with relief of our 1st Battalion guards being completed by 0615. A Company I raiding party entered Kerbach at dusk on 11 January 45 but drew no fire and found no enemy. A reconnaissance patrol returned in the early morning hours of the 12th to contact civilians to ascertain when the enemy left town. The patrol heard the sound of foot troops and withdrew. A third patrol then was dispatched to the town and saw figures in the trenches in the southern part of town. A fourth patrol of 5 men, which entered Kerbach still later, was fired on when examining a house. Grenade and rifle fire met a Company L patrol in the eastern part of Lixing that same morning. A patrol from Company G met fire from a ten man enemy patrol west of Grosbliederstroff at (488614) early on 13 January 45. After a fire fight, our patrol withdrew.

The 409th Infantry bridge guards were relieved by the 1st Battalion of the 410th Infantry at 0100 on 14 January 45. At 0935 that day the Division Liaison Officer brought in Operations Instructions #49. Task Force Herren was to relieve the 103d Division by 171200 January in the 103d's zone and in turn the 103d was to relieve Task Force Herren in its zone. The 142nd Infantry was to close in the vicinity of Maxstadt (Q3150) beginning 140630 January 45 to cover the relief of the 103d. Upon relief in our zone by elements of Task Force Herren, the 410th Infantry was to assemble in the vicinity of Guebenhouse (Q4253) to prepare for motor movement to the vicinity of Reichshoffen (Q9537) in accordance with Division Movement Order #8.

Bridge guards of the 1st Battalion were relieved by the 142nd Infantry at 1700.

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G-3 called at 150100 January 45 to order the 410th Infantry's Reserve Battalion, the First, to move to the vicinity of Woerth as soon as the first battalion of relief arrived. Division's Operations Instructions #50, received at 151620 January 45, ordered the 410th Infantry upon relieving elements of Task Force Herren in their zone to be prepared to defend the assigned sector with two battalions (which were to be the 1st and 3rd). One battalion (the 2nd) was to assemble upon arrival in the new sector in the vicinity of Niederbronn (Q9439) as Division Reserve.

At 1955 the 275th Infantry's 2nd Battalion relieved our 2nd Battalion and at 2100 our 1st Battalion was relieved by the 275th's 3rd Battalion. Our 1st Battalion cleared their area at 2125 to move to the vicinity of Woerth. The 1st Battalion of the 275th Infantry relieved our 3rd Battalion by 2237. The relief of the 410th Infantry by the 275th Infantry was completed at 2345 when the command of the sector passed to the 27th's Commanding Officer.

An advance CP group left Guebenhouse for Woerth at 160130 January 45 and opened a new Regimental CP there at 0700.

At 1300 the Regimental Commander returned from Division with the following orders: the 410th Infantry, less one battalion (which was to be the 3rd) to be held in reserve. Our sector was to be held with this Battalion (the 3rd). The Regiment, less the 3rd Battalion, was to be assembled in the vicinity of Niederbronn and was to reconnoiter routes for possible counter-attacks within the Division Zone, with priority to be given to the Phillipsbourg-Dambach route. Also to be reconnoitered were routes to the east in case the 410th Infantry was employed by Corps in that direction. The Regimental Commander was to retain command of the central sector of the Division Front unless the regiment was ordered outside the Division Zone; then the command was to pass to the Battalion Commander. The 383rd Field Artillery Battalion was to remain in direct support of the central sector but would accompany the Regiment if the latter moved outside the Division Zone. The platoon of tanks now at Langensultzbach would withdraw to Division Reserve in the vicinity of Niederbronn, thus leaving 14 tanks in Division Reserve which probably would be attached to our regiment if we were employed.

Division approved the Regimental Commander's following recommendations:

- a. that the relief of the 1st Battalion of the 276th Infantry, now in progress, be continued in order to expedite relief of the 276th Infantry.
- b. our 3rd Battalion would relieve our Company B (which was relieving the 2nd Battalion of the 276th) on the morning of the 17th of January 45 with the 1st Battalion moving on the afternoon of the 17th to the vicinity of Niederbronn, closing before dark.
- c. the Cannon Company was to go into position in the vicinity of Nehwiller to support the 3rd Battalion on the line.
- d. the 3rd Battalion was to be reinforced by one platoon of the AT Company.
- e. the Battalions would be rotated on the line at the discretion of the 410th Infantry Regimental Commander.

At 161400 January 45 the advance CP group left for Niederbronn (936389) and the new Regimental CP opened there at 1500.

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Company B relieved the 2nd Battalion of the 276th Infantry in the vicinity of Langensoultzbach by 1030 on 16 January 45; our 3rd Battalion relieved the 276th's 1st Battalion at 1500 in the vicinity of Jagerthal; and our 2nd Battalion closed into Niederbronn at 1415. The Regiment closed in by 1415 and the Regimental Commander assumed command of the sector at 1530.

A direct enemy artillery hit on Company E's CP at 170710 January injured two men.

At 1245 17 January 45 the marching elements of the 1st Battalion closed into Niederbronn.

At 1555 Company L had completed relief of Company B. The AT platoon was in position on the right flank at 1730. The AT Company CP was in Niederbronn. Ground reconnaissance parties of the 2nd Battalion were sent out during the day in conjunction with future counterattack plans.

Orders were received from Division at 172115 January 45 to have our 1st Battalion Commanding Officer report without delay to the Commanding General of the 79th Division at his CP in Hagenau. Our 1st Battalion now had a primary mission of being in reserve for the 79th Division, and was not to be committed except on Corps order. The Battalion was to move to the vicinity of Souffelheim (17-26), east of Hagenau. By the close of 17 January 45 the 3rd Battalion had taken over the complete front line with Company K on the left, Company I (minus one platoon) in the center, and Company L on the right.

At 180335 January 45 the 1st Battalion moved out by truck to the vicinity of Souffelheim. The 410th Infantry continued ground reconnaissance during the day in conjunction with counter-attack plans. During the night, patrolling was active.

At 180335 January, the 1st Battalion moved out of Niederbronn by truck to Schirrhoffen where it was attached to the 79th Infantry Division, further attached to Task Force Linden, and still further attached to the 242nd Infantry as TF Reserve, to be committed on Corps Order only. The battalion was billeted in Schirrhoffen and closed at 0715. Commanding Officer, 242nd Infantry, ordered the Battalion into an assembly area in the Bois de Sessenheim (1000 yards south-east of Sessenheim) and directed the Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, to prepare plans to attack and retake that town. A makeshift liaison section from a general support Corps Artillery Battalion reported to the Battalion CP about noon. A platoon of tanks from Company A, 714th Tank Battalion, was initially attached to the Battalion and later was reinforced by another platoon and Company A Headquarters.

Plans were made, orders were issued, and troops were moved to areas of departure for the attack to jump off at 1430. At 1425 a superior enemy force drove back the 3rd Battalion of the 242nd Infantry on our right flank at the southern edge of the Bois De Sessenheim. The 1st Battalion moved to stop this

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penetration. The Commanding Officer, 242nd Infantry, was informed of the enemy action on our right. He ordered the 1st Battalion to abandon its attack mission and to prepare to attack the enemy to the right to make possible an attack on Sessenheim by the 411th Infantry the following day. The new Battalion objective was a section of the Sessenheim-Herrlisheim Railroad west of Dalhunden. The attack jumped off at 1645, A and B Companies abreast, Company C on the left. Through intense artillery, mortar, automatic weapon and small arms fire of the 1st Battalion, 19th Parachute Regiment of the 7th Parachute Division, Company C moved forward to take its objective at 1735 at the cost of seven killed in action and nineteen wounded in action. Company A was pinned down in the open ground shortly after its jump off by intense fire, and at dark had not been able to move forward.

At 1800 orders were received that the 1st Battalion, 410th Infantry, was then attached to Combat Team 411. During the night of 18-19 January 45, the 1st Battalion defended from positions held at dark and prepared to complete the taking of the battalion objective on the following morning.

Company A attached 190630 January 45, and pushed forward through the woods to the right of Company C. At the same time, Company C was forced to withdraw because of an enemy encircling movement, to the Bois de Sessenheim where it passed through Company B. Company A, after a terrific fight, fought its way out of an encirclement and returned to the Bois de Sessenheim. At 191630 January 45 FO #7, CT 411, was received, placing the 1st Battalion, 410th Infantry on the right and the 1st Battalion, 411th Infantry on the left in the CT's defensive sector. The enemy artillery bombardment was wracking. In one 30 minute period 230 shells fell on A and B Company positions, but so well overhead were their holes that only two slight casualties were suffered.

During the 20th of January 45 the 1st Battalion continued to beat back relentless enemy attacks.

Meanwhile the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 410th Infantry continued ground reconnaissance in their sector during the 18th of January 45 in conjunction with counter-attack plans.

The 3rd Battalion received 8 rounds of artillery around the bridge close to their CP at 0100 on 19 January 45. During 19 January 45, the 2nd Battalion continued with reconnaissance plans and the 3rd Battalion improved its regimental front positions on 19 and 20 January 45.

In accordance with Operations Memorandum of 19 January 45, and Division OI #52, 19 January 45, the 410th Infantry sent a reconnaissance party to survey new MLR positions along the Moder River in conjunction with the withdrawal of the VI Corps from its present positions.

The OI called for the 103d Division to withdraw to and occupy the delaying positions in its sector by 210730 January 45, conforming to movements of the 45th Division on its left. The 410th, upon withdrawal from its present position on

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Division Order, was to occupy and defend the left Regimental sector of the delaying position with two Battalions, the 2nd and 3rd--occupation to be completed by 210600 January 45. A covering force not to exceed one reinforced rifle company was to remain in position until 210300 January 45, unless ordered to withdraw earlier by Division Order.

A verbal order was received from the Division Commander at 1200 on 20 January 45 calling for the withdrawal.

The 410th Infantry's withdrawal was begun with individual vehicles moving by infiltration starting at 201400 January 45.

The 2nd Battalion closed into its new area in the vicinity of Schillersdorf at 202030 January 45. The AT Company closed into Uttwiller at 210015, and the 3rd Battalion into the vicinity of Obermodern at 0515.

The new Regimental CP opened at Menchhoffen (862289) at 0630. Cannon Company closed into the same town at 0130. Company M, minus one platoon, occupied the 2nd Battalion OPL. Companies G and F were on the left and right respectively of the Battalion's MLR sector. The 35th Engineers of the 45th Division were on the 2nd Battalion's left, and the 409th Infantry was on the 3rd Battalion's right.

The 3rd Battalion, on the 2nd Battalion's right, had Company L, minus one platoon, occupying the OPL. Company K on the left and Company I on the right occupied the MLR. Both battalions started digging in defensive positions on the MLR during the day. Company E reported several artillery shells landing behind them at 2350. Company G reported that shells landed in Rothbach at 2330, 2340, and 2350.

Meanwhile, during the afternoon of 20 January 45, the 1st Battalion made plans for the withdrawal from the Schirrhoffen area. The Battalion was the covering force for the withdrawal of the 411th Infantry, the maneuver being completed during the early morning hours of 21 January 45. The 1st Battalion CP moved to Marienthal, opening there at 210415. The Battalion was now attached to the 314th Regiment of the 79th Division and took up defensive positions in the vicinity of Kaltenhause.

The 242nd Regiment relieved our 1st Battalion at 1700 on 21 January 45 and at 1800 the battalion started movement to the area of Menchhoffen-Uttwiller to rejoin the 410th Infantry.

At 0045 on 22 January 45 the 1st Battalion closed in at Menchhoffen and went into Regimental Reserve. Companies G and E received artillery fire at 0015 on the 22nd, and at 1213 two rounds dropped on Company G's left flank again. Five enemy rounds fell on Menchhoffen at 1850, four of which were dudds. Work continued on defensive positions by all battalions this day. Company E's OP fired on five enemy troops at 1900 and the foe withdrew into Zinswiller. At approximately 2100 an undetermined number of enemy infiltrated into the rear of the OPL through the gap between our left flank and the 36th Engineers. Either a civilian or a German in FFI uniform killed a bridge guard in Bousbach. The enemy cut off

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Company E's CP in Offwiller by hitting the town from the rear. A wounded American who returned to the lines said some of the enemy were dressed in GI uniform. At the same time Company G's outpost was hit in Rothbach, and that town also was occupied by the enemy.

The OPL on the left of the Regimental Zone was withdrawn and Company E took up a position behind Company G. There was no change in MLR positions.

The 1st Battalion CP moved up to Ingwiller and the battalion closed in there at 2115.

At the beginning of 23 January 45, the 1st Battalion was being held in reserve in the vicinity of Ingwiller. At 1245 the Battalion moved into the woods (830325) prepared either to attack on order or remain in position to counter-attack. During the afternoon it was decided to have Companies A and B remain in position in these woods to back up the left flank of Regiment, while Companies C, D, and Headquarters Company returned to Ingwiller.

During the day, the 2nd Battalion received more fire from the enemy. At 0820 Company G received heavy machine gun and automatic weapon fire from Offwiller. Our artillery fire silenced this harassment. At 1145 an estimated battalion of Germans was reported moving into Offwiller. At 1225 Company F received enemy artillery to their front. At the same time, Company E received mortar fire.

The 2nd Battalion informed Regiment that a Prisoner of War revealed that he was from the 6th SS Mountain Division, and that there were three battalions of the 11th Regiment in Rothbach.

The 3rd Battalion's activities for the day consisted of continued digging in on the Battalion Resistance Line. Company L captured three prisoners at 0025. The same company received artillery and SP fire at 1825.

Companies A and B of the 1st Battalion remained in position in the woods northeast of Ingwiller during 24 January 45, being prepared to assemble for a possible counter-attack in case of enemy penetration of the MLR. All signs pointed to an imminent heavy German attack.

Company G received a severe shelling at 0610 that day. At 0800 the enemy attacked the 3rd Battalion's OPL and continued on into Mulhausen, so at 0918 the Battalion pulled its OPL back to the MLR and Company L moved into position in the vicinity of Zutzendorf.

Mortar and SP fire hit Company F at 1130. The 2nd Battalion spotted 12 enemy tanks in Rothbach at 1515. An artillery concentration was laid on these tanks. Two were knocked out by the 2nd Battalion AT guns. The sector of the 2nd Battalion received another shelling at 1710.

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The enemy hurled a powerful attack against the 410th Infantry on the 25th of January 45, but before the next 36 hours had elapsed our men had thrown back the crack SS troops, caused heavy casualties and helped to severely shatter the enemy hopes for a full-scale Alsatian break-through.

The 3rd Battalion's left flank was attacked at 0443. Enemy Infantry, reinforced by two tanks, closely followed up an artillery barrage. The Germans had penetrated the left sector of Company K by 0455. At 0503 they were right outside of Schillersdorf. At 0505 Company K had committed its support and the 3rd Battalion had committed its reserve to block further penetration in their sector. The Company I MLR had not been penetrated.

The SS troops smashed into the 2nd Battalion CP in Schillersdorf at 0515. The Battalion's Commanding Officer and his staff moved out of town into the woods south of it and defended from there. The two front line Companies, G and F, had received no enemy thrusts but the enemy penetration had left Company F's right flank open.

One platoon of Company E counter-attacked and held the enemy at one end of town long enough for medics and a chaplain to escape, then the platoon withdrew.

The Regimental Commander made immediate plans to counterattack Schillersdorf. He alerted Companies A and B at 0530 and started Company C by truck to Menchhoffen to occupy regimental reserve positions and to block off further penetration toward Menchhoffen.

Company L moved out toward Schillersdorf at 0605. By 0630 the enemy penetration had been contained in Schillersdorf. The 3rd Battalion struck at Nieffern at 0640 but withdrew to the MLR upon meeting heavy resistance. Company L went into a corner of Schillersdorf at 0730 under small arms and automatic weapons fire. A Company E platoon also had moved forward into a Schillersdorf edge by 0750. Supported by tanks, the 1st Battalion jumped off at 0900 in the attack on Schillersdorf proper. Company A was to take the town and Company B was to by-pass the town and restore the gap in the MLR. A platoon of Company E pulled over to the side of town at 0817 and made ready to contact Company B. Company L also pulled back from town to avoid any raking tank fire. The Regimental Commander ordered Company L to follow the 1st Battalion and mop up the town.

Company A had to move across an open area to reach the edge of Schillersdorf and suffered several casualties from below-the-knee zeroed-in enemy fire. The 2nd house on the right, a strongly defended enemy point, held up Company A's advance at 1000. While Company A and two tanks began the blotting out of the strong point, Company C was committed and entered Schillersdorf at 1220 after leaving the woods at Waswiller. The house to house fighting in Schillersdorf continued fiercely during the day. Hair-line cooperation between Infantry and Tanks crushed the enemy. The tanks blasted one house ahead of the foot troops, who used bazookas and rifle grenades to blow open sides of houses; thus moving from house to house under cover.

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Company B ran into heavy enemy fire at 1230 to the north of Schillersdorf and was pinned down. One prisoner revealed that a battalion of the 6th SS Mountain Division had been in Schillersdorf. In the early afternoon, Company I, received attacks on its left flank. At 1716 Company B made contact with Company F after cutting down the enemy separating them.

The 2nd Battalion of the 411th Infantry was attached to the 410th Infantry and attacked at 1600 to reestablish the MLR in the zone of the 3rd Battalion where a gap existed between our I and F Companies. The 411th Infantry started moving into its MLR positions at 1930. At 1800 our Company B was attached to our Second Battalion. Company I of the 410th Infantry tied in with the 411th's Company E on the MLR at 2300.

Our 1st Battalion buttoned up for the night in the north end of Schillersdorf with the enemy still in the southeast end. From left to right on our MLR were squads of Company E, Company G, Company F, Company B, the 2nd Battalion of the 411th Infantry, then our Company I.

At daylight on 26 January 45, the cleanup of Schillersdorf rolled into motion and was completed by 1115. During the afternoon, Companies A, C, and D started movement back from Schillersdorf into Regimental Reserve in the vicinity of Ingwiller, closing there at 1835. Company B was relieved in its position along the line by Company G of the 411th Infantry at 2300, but remained attached to our 2nd Battalion as Battalion Reserve in the vicinity (839321). Company K closed into Schillersdorf at 1830.

A 3rd Battalion patrol reached within 300 yards of Uhrwiller at 0045 on the 27th of January 45 and heard no movement in town. Nieffern was burning the patrol reported, and there were some fires in Kindwiller. Our patrol spotted an enemy formation moving along the creek which runs from Nieffern down toward the 409th Infantry Zone. Company B was relieved by Company F at 0250 and Company B closed into Ingwiller at 0905, reverting back to the 1st Battalion. An enemy patrol of 20 men were reported moving toward Company F's right flank at 1855, and artificial moonlight was used to help pick out the foe.

A Company K patrol came within 200 yards of Uhrwiller at 0200 on 28 January 45, but retired before heavy machine gun fire. Another Company K patrol entered Mulhausen but was forced to withdraw when it met heavy enemy opposition. Tanks in support of this patrol drew enemy AT fire and one tank was disabled. The tank was retrieved at 1240 beneath the protection of an artillery barrage. Company G's CP was shelled by either enemy 88 or 75mm fire at 0405 but there were no casualties. An I & R platoon patrol was forced to return without prisoners when it struck at Bischholtz at 0220 and met heavy MG fire, also on 28 January 45. At 1830 that day, elements of Companies G and F of the 411th Infantry relieved our Company E on line. At 2000 Company K moved from Schillersdorf to Obermodern as 3rd Battalion Reserve.

Company G reported activity among enemy tanks and troops in the vicinity of Rothbach at 0800 on 29 January 45. An artillery concentration quieted that sector.

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On the report that the Germans had pulled out leaving a big covering force behind, two platoons of Company K supported by four medium tanks, raided Nieffern at 1530 on 29 January 45, and captured ten prisoners. The patrol met with heavy mortar, artillery and SP fire. One prisoner said his company of 50 men from the 36th Infantry Division had been in town.

The 411th's 2nd Battalion front received a heavy mortar shelling at 1200 on 29 January 45.

Our 1st Battalion relieved our 2nd Battalion on 30 January 45. Company A relieved Company E at 1535. At 1900 relief of Company G by Company C and Company F by Company B began. The 2nd Battalion closed into Ingwiller as Regimental Reserve.

Company B machine gun fire hit one of 3 German soldiers spotted in Company B area at 0800 on 31 January 45.

The 410th Infantry in accordance with Regimental OI #16, dated 30 January 45, began preparations for the shifting of its right boundary to the northwest, the move to be completed by 020800 February 45. The 3rd Battalion was to relieve the front line elements of the 411th's 2nd Battalion (their companies F and G) during the night of 31 January-1 February 45, with relief to be completed by 010300 February 45. Company F of the 411th Infantry was relieved by Company L of the 410th Infantry at 1900 on 31 January 45. Our 3rd Battalion moved over and covered the line to relieve the 2nd Battalion of the 411th Infantry at 2024 on 31 January 45. Companies E and F of the 411th Infantry were attached to our 3rd Battalion as battalion reserve.

This concludes the operations of the 410th Infantry for the month of January 1945.

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