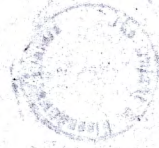


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REPORT AFTER/AFTER ACTION REPORT  
486TH ANTIAIRCRAFT ARTILLERY (AW) BATTALION (SP)  
APRIL 1945

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HEADQUARTERS  
 486th AAA AW BN  
 APO. 230

SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy, Report After/After Action Report.

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

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in Army Regulations 345-105, paragraph 10 and changes thereto, the following report for the month of April 1945 is hereby submitted:

a. Unit: No change. (486th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (Automatic Weapons) Battalion (Self-Propelled)).

b. Changes in organization:

Attachments: None.  
 Transfers: None

Change in Tables of Organization and Equipment: Pursuant to letter, Headquarters, First United States Army, Organization Order Number 43, file 320 (c), dated 13 April 1945, this unit was reorganized in accordance with Tables of Organization and Equipment 44-75, dated 17 November 1944.

c. Strength:	Officers	W.O.	Enlisted Men
010001A April	37	2	630
302400B April	33	2	596
Net increase	0	-	0
Net decrease	4	-	35

d. Stations:

This unit continued in operational role in Germany during the entire period.

e. Marches:

See Appendix I, Narrative Report and Appendix II, Operations Journal.

f. Campaigns:

- (1) Name: Campaign of Western Europe.
- (2) Duration: 6 June 1944 ---
- (3) Purpose: To destroy the German Armies.
- (4) Authority ordering: Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces.

g. Battles:

Encirclement of the RUHR Pocket.  
 Eastward drive to the ELBE and MULDE Rivers.

h. Commanding officers during the period:

Battalion Commander: Lt. Col. Raymond E. Dunnington  
 O-248170.

Headquarters Battery: Capt. Philip W. Shaw, O-390701.

Battery A: 1st. Lt. Oliver E. Spencer, O-1046278.

Battery B: Capt. Charles D. Watkins, O-1046314.

Battery C: Capt. Theodore J. DeFranco, O-491558.

Battery D: Capt. Ralph W. Abele, O-494318

Medical Detachment: Capt. William M. Gianquinto,  
 O-498048.

i. Losses in action:

- Cecil Howard, 31282784, KIA, 14 April 1945
- William W. Weaver, 38074942, KIA, 14 April 1945
- George E. Abrams, 31270094, KIA, 16 April 1945
- Elmer S. Smolnisky, 37091765, KIA, 16 April 1945
- Clyde J. Smith, 34365363, KIA, 16 April 1945
- Louis E. Michaud, 31090970, MIA, 16 April 1945
- Murry Coventry, 36708146, LIA, 22 April 1945
- Norman R. Harvey, 31219191, LIA, 22 April 1945
- Leo O. Martineau, 31265707, LIA, 22 April 1945
- Francis J. Doherty, 31219499, SWA, 24 April 1945



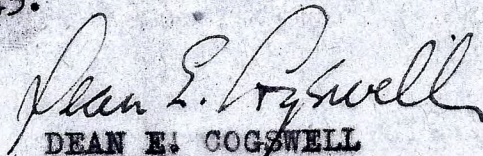
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Chester J. Stopyra, 31270206, LWA, 26 April 1945  
Lawrence E. Bassett, 31284107, SWA, 26 April 1945  
Louis B. Bourgoin, 31283110, LWA, 26 April 1945  
Lawrence A. Drury, 31218956, LWA, 26 April 1945  
Archie F. Bedford Jr., 31278576, LWA, 26 April 1945

j. Members who have distinguished themselves in action during  
the period:

Silver Star

Capt. Theodore J. De Franco, O-491558, Par II GO No. 50 Hq 3d Armd Div,  
dated 26 April 1945.



DEAN E. COGSWELL  
Major, C. A. C.  
Commanding

APPENDICES:

- I.....Narrative Report
- II.....Operations Journal

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**APPENDIX I  
NARRATIVE REPORT**





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**REPORT AFTER/AFTER ACTION REPORT  
 NARRATIVE REPORT**

**APRIL 1945**

Maps: GSGS No. 4416, Central Europe, 1:100,000, Sheets Q-3 (PADERBORN), Q-4 (KASSEL), Q-5 (NORDHAUSEN), and Q-6 (HALLE).

**I. General:**

During the month of April 1945, the 486th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (Automatic Weapons) Battalion (Self-Propelled) remained in attachment to the Third Armored Division and under Seventh Corps control. There was no change in the assignment to the First United States Army.

The normal mission of furnishing anti-aircraft protection to the units of the division artillery, attached artillery battalions, and the various installations of the division was carried on throughout the period. Because of the nature of the long armored drives resulting in the closing of the RUHR pocket and the eastward drive of the division to the Elbe and Mulde Rivers, there were many cases where in the gun sections were utilized in their secondary anti-vehicular and anti-personnel role. In completing these missions, the accomplishment of the primary role was in no way affected. The normal disposition of the batteries with the artillery battalions was such that much incidental protection was furnished to assembly areas, concentration areas, command posts, supply routes, and other divisional installations. In the furtherance of local security in the unsettled and indefinite situation, column protection was furnished for the essential gasoline, ammunition, and supply convoys operating to the rear supply dumps.

The majority of the period was spent in attacks which resulted in long and frequent moves. The supported units were in direct and general support of the component Task Forces and Combat Commands of the division and were disposed well forward as the action developed.

Enemy air activity was sporadic during the period with only one relatively concentrated period of attack at the beginning of the month. Direct attacks were made on the installations of the division, but no serious damage resulted to any of the protected objectives. As a result of engagements by this battalion, claims for six Category I and four Category II destruction of enemy aircraft were submitted. All engagements were very brief, there being no attacks of sustained length.

At the conclusion of the period, the entire unit was disposed in and around the assembly area of the division with the mission of protecting the critical concentration areas of the rest and maintenance area.

**II. Assignment of Batteries within the division:**

**010001A April**

- Battery A..... 391st Armd FA Bn (105mm How SP)
- Battery B..... 54th Armd FA Bn (105mm How SP)
- Battery C..... 67th Armd FA Bn (105mm How SP)
- Battery D 1st Pltn..... 83rd Armd Ren Bn
- Battery D 2nd Pltn..... 83rd Armd FA Bn (105mm How SP)

On 6 April the 991st Armd FA Bn (155mm Gun SP) was attached to the division and the 1st Platoon of Battery D was given the mission of furnishing the necessary protection.

On 13 April six half-tracks from Battery A, 2nd Platoon were assigned the mission of furnishing protection to the assault bridges across the SAALE River in the vicinity of FRIEDBURG (D-7844) and four half-tracks from Battery B, 1st Platoon were assigned the mission of protecting the assault bridge across the same river in the vicinity of BRUCKE (D-7845).

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On 15 April the half-tracks on the bridges across the SAALE River were relieved by fire units of the 438th AAA AW Bn and the 116th AAA Gun Bn. The fire units of Battery A resumed their normal mission of protecting the trains of the 391st Armd FA Bn and the fire units of Battery B returned to their normal mission with the 54th Armd FA Bn. The fire units of Battery A were given special instructions regarding the possibility of their employment on assault bridges across the MULDE River.

On 16 April 2nd Platoon, Battery A furnished protection to an unsuccessful bridging operation over the MULDE River in the vicinity of DESSAU (E-1365). In moving to and from the river during the morning, an M-16 was hit by bazooka fire resulting in the destruction of the vehicle. Two men were killed and four wounded. Later in the morning the same platoon engaged enemy infantry in the same vicinity inflicting unknown casualties.

On 23 April, the 2nd Platoon of Battery D was relieved from attachment to the 83rd Armd FA Bn when that unit left division control. The 183rd FA Bn (155mm How) joined the division the same day and the 2nd Platoon of Battery D was assigned the mission of furnishing the necessary protection.

On the 25 April the 2nd Platoon of Battery D was relieved from attachment to the 183rd FA Bn and the 1st Platoon of Battery D was relieved from attachment to the 991st Armd FA Bn. All batteries began preparations for the movement to a new assembly area.

On the 25 and 26 April the division moved to an assembly and rest area. This unit was given the mission of furnishing protection to vital assembly areas and points of concentration within the division zone. This mission was accomplished by deploying the batteries as follows:

- Battery A..... Western end of the divisional area.
- Battery B..... Maintenance and supply elements of the division.
- Battery C..... Maintenance elements of Combat Command A.
- Battery D..... Division Command Post and division trains.

There was not further change in mission during the period.

The Battalion Forward Command Post continued to operate with the Division Forward Echelon. The Battalion Operations Section continued to operate between the Battalion Headquarters and the Corps Anti-Aircraft Group, maintaining radio contact for purposes of aircraft warning. Whenever the situation permitted, radio contact was maintained with the radar facilities of the anti-aircraft gun battalions of the corps. In one case this system was used in cooperation with a radar station of the Ninth Tactical Air Force. The Battalion Rear Echelon remained in attachment to Division Trains. The Battalion Maintenance Section operated with forward sections of the divisional maintenance battalion and displaced with them as the situation demanded.

III. Summary of operations and action:

- 02 All Batteries engaged 12 enemy aircraft resulting in claims for 5 Category I and 3 Category II destruction of enemy aircraft. One pilot was captured.
- 03 Enemy aircraft were reported over the area during the day but were not engaged.
- 04 Enemy aircraft were again reported over the area and at 1630 Battery D engaged 8 Fw 190. Battery B also engaged these. There were no claims on this action.
- 10 Enemy aircraft were observed at high altitude over the area but no attacks were made nor did the planes come within range.
- 13 A single Me 109 was observed over the area at high altitude. There was no engagement.
- 14 10 Me 109 and Fw 190 attempted to strafe column which were protected by fire units of Battery A. At the same time a Fw 190 started to strafe the column of the Division Command Post, but was intercepted



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- and destroyed by friendly fighters. Anti-aircraft in the vicinity with-held fire during this engagement. Battery A engaged when the friendly fighters were out of range, this engagement resulting in a claim for a Category I destruction of a Me 109.
- 17 Me 109's were observed in the area during the day, Battery D engaged in with no claims being made on the action.
- 18 Me 109 again were over the area but no engagement was possible.
- 19 2 Me 109's flew across the area just prior to dark and were engaged by all batteries. There were no claims on their action.
- 20 Battery D engaged 1 Fw 190 at 1354 with no resulting claims.
- 21 All Batteries engaged 2 Fw 190's at 0917. There were no claims on this action.
- 22 Battery A engaged 4 Me 109's but made no claims.
- 23 Batteries C and D engaged an Me 262, Battery B claiming a Category II on the action.
- 24 All Batteries engage an Me 109 at 0715, no claims were made.

IV. Ground action:

The following incidents of ground action are presented as examples of the various situations encountered during the period:

On 12 April fire units of Battery C were in convoy with elements of the 67th Armd FA Bn in the vicinity of ALLSTEDT (D-5318). A German 'Goliath', a remotely controlled tankette containing explosive, was observed in a field near the road. The machine had apparently been aimed at a near-by bridge but was, at the time of observation, motionless though the motor was still running. Since none of the personnel present was in possession of the technical knowledge required to disarm the mechanism, fire units of Battery C were ordered to destroy it by machine gun fire before it could explode in the middle of a convoy. This order came from the executive officer of the supported FA Bn. An M-16 opened fire from the road, a distance of about twenty yards. Only a few rounds were required to detonate the device. The explosion was terrific, all of the crew of the M-16 being temporarily stunned. There was no damage caused, but a greater range of engagement is recommended for future encounters.

On the 13 April the 2nd Platoon command post M-2 of Battery D was moving in convoy when small arms fire halted the column. A camouflaged 88mm gun on the flank opened fire, scoring a direct hit on the M-2 with the second round. Flaming gasoline was thrown on the one-quarter ton truck that was parked beside the M-2 and the resulting fire destroyed both vehicles. Casualties in this incident were three men slightly wounded (burned).

On the morning of 16 April at approximately 0700, two M-15A1's and two M-16's engaged a column of German infantry in the vicinity of FERNSDORF (D-9952). The column was first spotted as it approached the bivouac area from the west. The enemy were mounted on bicycles, but dismounted quickly when fire was brought to bear on them. The fire of the M-15A1 and M-16 mounts was answered by small arms, machine gun, and bazooka fire, the bazookas being used in a manner similar to mortars. One half-track moved out on the flank in an effort to dislodge the enemy from a ditch that they were using as an intrenchment, one man being wounded in this maneuver. The half-tracks continued to pin the enemy down while aid was called for by radio. Shortly afterwards, medium tanks, manned by inexperienced ordnance personnel, arrived and the half-tracks were withdrawn in favor of the heavier guns on the tanks. The Commanding Officer of Battery C took command of the force and began deploying forward. Many of the crews of the anti-aircraft weapons went forward as infantry with the tanks to give them some protection from the intense bazooka fire. The advance of the tanks drove the enemy from the ditch, through a small town, and resulted in the capture, death, or complete dispersion of the entire patrol. It was later learned that this patrol

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was of company strength and had been dispatched from the 85th German Infantry Division for the purpose of determining the strength and disposition of our armor in the vicinity. Needless to say, the patrol did not accomplish their mission.

These incidents do not indicate the full scope of the ground action of the unit during the period, but rather are examples of the various situations frequently encountered by self-propelled anti-aircraft in operation with an armored division.

V. Strength and Casualty tabulation:

A. Battle casualties:	
Lightly wounded in action.....	8
Seriously wounded in action.....	2
Seriously injured in action.....	0
Lightly injured in action.....	5
Killed in action.....	5
Missing in action.....	1
Died of wounds received in action.....	1
Total battle casualties.....	22
B. Non-battle casualties:	
Killed.....	0
Absent sick.....	19
Total non-battle casualties.....	19
C. Reinforcements received.....	4
D. Casuals returned to duty:	
Officers.....	0
Enlisted men.....	4
E. Transferred:	
Officers (to Military Government).....	3
Enlisted men (to Officer's Candidate School).....	3
F. Battlefield appointment of officers.....	0

VI. Vehicular damage during the period:

One one-quarter ton truck and one M-2 half-track were destroyed by direct shell fire. One MCMC M-16 was destroyed as a result of a hit by a German 'Panzerfaust'.

One one-quarter ton truck, one command trailer and one MCMC M-16 were damaged as a result of enemy shell fire. Both of these vehicles were back in operation within twelve hours after being damaged.

It is of interest to note that the shell fragment that damaged the command trailer passed within an inch of the commanding officer's head as he worked at his desk. So far, the commanding officer has had minor damage to two one-quarter ton trucks, his command half-track and his trailer as a result of enemy shell fire.

VII. Techniques developed within the unit as a result of experience:

A. Continued trouble with the carburetors on the half-track vehicles has indicated that a larger sediment bowl is needed. The present system becomes frequently clogged as a result of continued operation of the motor on long convoy drives and the use of the motor to charge the battery. It is believed that the modification of the carburetor to furnish a larger sediment bowl would aid materially in eliminating this trouble.

B. The use of both the MCMC M-15A1 and M-16 as air and ground column protection for supply convoys was continued during the period. Dispositions as stated in previous After Action Reports were found to be sound. The location of a M-16 at the head of the columns has proved satisfactory within the limitations of the equipment. Since this type of mount cannot fire at ground targets directly ahead of the vehicle, the drivers of such leading vehicles have been instructed to swing their vehicle across the road and halt in such a manner as to allow the gunner to train his guns on the location of the enemy troops. This action will



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bring heavy automatic weapons fire to bear on the enemy in a very short length of time, but in narrow, channelized roads the entire convoy must be halted as a result of the road being blocked. In cases where the encountered enemy is a pocket of resistance that has been by-passed previously, one or two M-15A1 or M-16 mounts may be hastily placed slightly to the flank in order to pin down the resistance until after the column is passed. Normally no effort is made to completely mop up these pockets as the anti-aircraft is not considered to be equipped or trained for this type of work.

C. In special situations it has been found that both types of mounts are able to hold a large infantry force at bay until such time as tanks and supporting infantry can go into operation. The potent fire power and extreme accuracy of the mounts may then be used in support of the tanks and to furnish heavy, mobile fire from the flank. This technique was developed and employed by Battery C, the results being very satisfactory. It is not suggested that this system be used as a method of attack, but rather as an emergency counterattack measure.

D. In all instances of ground action where the situation has been mobile, a SCR 510 radio would have been of great value to the Platoon Commander in his one-quarter ton. This would enable him to control his vehicles in their movement and at the same time bring all the details of the action to his attention in ample time for him to make the proper decision for disposition. The use of the M-2 command post half-track rather than the one-quarter ton has been found impractical because of the consequent loss of speed and mobility.

VIII. Summarization:

During the month of April 1945 this unit continued in attachment to the Third Armored Division and under Seventh Corps control. There was no change in assignment to the First United States Army. Fire units of all batteries participated in the operations of the division that resulted in the successful closing of the RUHR pocket and later in the eastward drive that carried the division to the banks of the ELBE and MULDE Rivers in the vicinity of DESSAU, Germany. The normal mission of protecting the battalions of artillery assigned and attached to the division artillery command was carried on and in addition, protection was furnished to assault bridges across the SAALE River and bridging operations of the MULDE River. Vital supply convoys, reconnaissance parties, command posts, assembly and concentration areas, and other divisional installations. Close support was furnished in numerous incidents of ground action, and considerable number of prisoners of war being taken and much enemy equipment destroyed as a result of these encounters.

Air action again was almost subordinated to ground action, there being very little increase in air attacks despite the depth of the penetration into Germany. Jet-propelled aircraft were observed and engaged during the period, though not in the numbers that had been observed during previous months.

Total claims during April 1945:

Category I..... 6


Category II..... 4

Ground action occurred in many cases as a result of the scale and depth of the penetration of the armored drive. The capabilities of both the MGMC M-15A1 and M-16 were again noted to be excellent for this purpose.

Casualties during the period were unusually heavy as a result of the general situation and the advanced positions of the batteries.

Morale..... Excellent.

Combat efficiency..... Excellent.

  
*Dean E. Cogswell*  
DEAN E. COGSWELL  
Major, G. A. C.  
Commanding

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