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* Auth: CO 14th Infantry *
* Date: 10 April 1945. *
* Initials: YK *

UNIT HISTORY

CLASSIFICATION
CANCELLED

14th Infantry Regiment

Handwritten: History of the 14th Infantry Regiment

Unit History of the 14th Infantry Regiment is submitted to cover the period ~~from 10 April 1945~~ 31 March 1945, with a summarized account of the Regiment's activities for the preceding ten (10) months.

Regiment completed training as part of the 71st Light Division early in May 1944, shipped a large percentage of its personnel overseas as replacements, and departed by rail from Hunter Liggett Military Reservation, California, 18 May 1944 with a nucleus of key non-commissioned officers and officers under the command of Colonel Henry Y. Lyons for Fort Benning, Georgia. Unit closed in at Fort Benning 24 May 1944.

71st Infantry Division was re-activated as a regular triangular division 26 May 1944, and the 14th Infantry Regiment commenced reorganization and training as a normal table of organization regiment.

Colonel Donald T. Beeler assumed command of the Regiment 8 October 1944.

Normal garrison duties and field training took place during the months of June, July, August, September, October, November, and December.

Regiment completed training at Fort Benning, Georgia, and departed by rail for Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, 12 and 13 January 1945. Regiment closed in at Camp Kilmer 17 January 1945. Regiment embarked 25 January 1945 and sailed from the New York Port of Embarkation on the Navy Troop Ship "General J. R. Brooke" 26 January 1945. Regiment debarked 7 February 1945 at Le Havre, France, and moved by motors to Camp Old Gold outside Doudeville, France, where the Regiment trained and completed preparation for movement to the Western Front during the remaining days of February.

The "Right of the Line" Regiment found its positions constantly on the right of the line during its first twenty days under battle conditions, from the 12th through the 31st of March.

The Regiment served under three armies during the month, completing preparations for movement from Camp Old Gold under the Fifteenth Army, participated in the Sarre-Mosel clean-up under the Seventh Army, and crossed the Rhine and continued East under the Third Army.

After moving some 350 miles across France into an assembly area in the vicinity of Dieuze in the rear of the Seventh Army's front lines bordering the Sarre-Mosel Triangle, the Regiment made a thirty-nine mile night movement by motors 15-14 March into position guarding the right flank of the Fifteenth Corps.

The First battalion under the command of Major Samuel E. Hubbard made the Regiment's first contact with the enemy on the night of March 16, relieving elements of the Third battalion 399th Infantry Regiment, on the right flank of the 100th Division's attack on Bitche. The battalion pushed outposts out to its front 1000 yards during the night's action and took fourteen prisoners without suffering battle casualties.

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During the first twenty-four hours the Regiment was in the front lines, in the first combat operation of the 71st Infantry Division, twenty-four (24) prisoners were taken.

Three men of "K" Company, Third battalion, were officially congratulated by the Commanding General for imposing their will on the enemy by taking a group of prisoners while marching into position.

The Regiment moved by motors and marching approximately 180 miles under combat conditions as it participated in the cleaning up of the Sarre-Mosel Triangle and the crossing of the Rhine River during its first twenty days of action on the front.

After assisting in the mopping up of the Bitche vicinity, the Regiment participated in breaching the Siegfried line, jumping off at 1200 hours on the 22nd March to protect the 71st Infantry Division's right flank as it attacked. The Division was on the right of the XXI Corps drive to Pirmasens.

During the afternoon and early evening of that day, the Regiment advanced by motors and marching four miles through the Siegfried line against light resistance. The advance was seriously impeded by road obstacles, craters, and blown bridges.

Two days later, 24 March, the Regiment was in position on the West bank of the Rhine River in the vicinity of Speyer, following a motor movement of forty-nine (49) miles.

At 2200 hours 25 March, the Regiment commenced action in a feint at a river crossing near Speyer. The Regiment's feint at a crossing of the river in strength was made to draw the enemy's attention from the Seventh Army's successful main effort above Mannheim to the North.

Reconnaissance patrols from the Regimental I&R platoon crossed the river in assault boats at that time under cover of smoke, and returned without suffering casualties. At 0100 hours 26 March, the Second platoon of "E" Company began crossing the Rhine River in four assault boats, received mortar fire on the River, and engaged in a fire fight with the enemy for fifteen (15) minutes after reaching the East bank. The platoon then withdrew under cover of smoke after suffering seven casualties.

The following morning the Commanding General presented three Silver Star Medals and fifty Bronze Star Medals to men who participated in the Regiment's successful feint at the river crossing.

March 29 and 30, the Regiment moved 105 miles by motors, crossing the Rhine River on the treadway bridge at Oppenheim on the 30th, and took up positions in the vicinity of Frankfurt.

The Regiment suffered thirty battle casualties during the month's activities. Seven of these men were killed in action,—one officer and six enlisted men. Five enlisted men were severely wounded in action; one officer and ten enlisted men were lightly wounded in action; six enlisted men reported missing in action;

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and one man died of wounds received in action.

Colonel Carl E. Lundquist, formerly of 44th Division, assumed command of the Regiment 19 March, to direct movement of the Regiment to Speyer, the subsequent feint at a river crossing of the Rhine, and movement of the Regiment across the Rhine at Oppenheim.

SUMMARIZED DAY BY DAY HISTORY

On 5 March 1945, the Regiment received movement orders and on 9 March departed from Camp Old Gold by rail and motors to travel approximately 350 miles to an assembly area in the vicinity of Dieuze. The Regimental CP was established at Nebing, France. Three days later the Regiment closed into its assembly area in the rear of the Seventh Army's front lines bordering the Sarre-Mosel Triangle.

During the hours of darkness March 13-14, the Regiment moved thirty-nine (39) miles by motors and marching to occupy hasty positions in the Misenthal-Volksberg-Soucht area, guarding the right flank of the XV Corps, and prepared to counter-attack along the Corps boundary.

Regiment closed into its positions 0400 14 March. During daylight hours the Cannon Company moved into positions vicinity of Meisenthal in preparation to support by fire the attack of the 100th Infantry Division, as the XV Corps made the main effort of the Seventh Army's opening thrusts in its drive to the Rhine.

At 1045, 16 March, following the attack of the 100th Division on Bitche, the Regiment was alerted for movement to Bitche. Warning orders were issued at 1145, and at 1432 hours the First battalion crossed the IP and by 2340 hours had completed relief of the Third battalion, 399th Infantry Regiment, on its Main Line Resistance on the right flank of the attacking forces.

Regiment with attachments of Company "B" 749th Tank battalion; Company "B" 635th TD battalion; 1st platoon, Company "B" 271st Engineers; and Company "B" 371st Medical battalion, moved approximately twelve and six-tenths (12.6) miles to positions along the right flank of the attacking elements of the 100th Division in the vicinity of Razerwiller, and initiated contact with the 45th Infantry Division on the right of the Corps.

Movement of the First battalion onto the main line of resistance of the Third battalion, 399th Infantry Regiment, constituted the first direct contact with the enemy for the Regiment. During this period of action, the First battalion captured fourteen (14) prisoners without suffering battle casualties as a result of enemy action.

At 2355 movement orders were issued preparatory to moving into Bitche. Regimental CP opened in Sierstahl at 2000. Second battalion closed into Bitche at 0750, 17 March, to relieve elements of the 399th Infantry, and completed the relief by 1800 hours. Third battalion leap-frogged the First and Second to relieve

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elements of the 398th Infantry Regiment in Camp DeBitche. Regimental CP opened in Bitche 0800.

Regiment continued to defend on the Corps right flank, moving the First battalion six and three-tenths (6.3) miles from a reserve position on the Regimental left flank 18 March. Second battalion extended its front to the right by taking over the First battalion zone to maintain contact with the 66th Infantry Regiment, and the Third battalion extended its front, relieving elements of the 398th Infantry Regiment on the left. Battalions received intermittent artillery fire throughout the day. At end of period, the Regiment was in a defensive position, with mission of holding Bitche, Campe DeBitche areas, and the line running Northward to Roppeviller.

First battalion established contact with the Fifth Infantry Regiment on the left at 0130 19 March. Later that morning the other battalions established and maintained contact with the 117th Cavalry Squadron on the right.

Colonel Carl E. Lundquist, formerly of 44th Division, assumed command of the Regiment at 1015 hours 19 March, relieving Colonel Donald T. Beeler.

Telephone orders were received from Division to relieve elements of the 5th Infantry Regiment along line Roppeviller to Walschbrunn. An hour later, the Second and Third battalions withdrew from positions, the Second marching five and six-tenths (5.6) miles and the Third marching six and eight-tenths (6.8) miles to assembly areas. Under cover of darkness 20-21 March, the battalions moved into positions relieving elements of the 5th Infantry Regiment. Second battalion completed relief at 0540 and the Third completed relief at 0455.

Attack orders were issued while the battalions were moving into positions, and at 0800 both battalions jumped off in attack to straighten the MLR and OPLR to include Eppenbrunn on the right. At 0947, Second battalion reached its objective and thirteen minutes later the Third battalion reached its objective.

At 1550 contact was made with the 117th Cavalry Squadron near Eppenbrunn. Contact had previously been made with the 66th Infantry Regiment on the left. First battalion reverted to Regimental reserve at completion of marching attack of the Second and Third battalions.

At 2200 hours, received Division attack orders. Division then attached to XXI Corps with VI Corps on right (South) flank; Corps to attack divisions abreast, with 71st Infantry Division on right, at 0800 22 March. Combat Team 66 to attack on Northern zone and seize Pirmasens; Combat Team 5, initially reserve, to proceed vicinity Munchweiler. The 14th CT was to continue to defend Division right flank.

At 1200, 22 March, the Regiment advanced to protect the right flank as the Division advanced in its sector. During the afternoon and early evening of that day, the Regiment advanced by motors and marching four miles through the Siegfried line against light resistance. Advance was seriously impeded by road obstacles, craters, and blown bridges.

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The First battalion was in Regimental reserve, following generally along the right flank. The Second battalion attacked on the right in its zone, initiating vigorous patrols to the right. The Third battalion advanced in its zone and maintained contact with the 66th Infantry Regiment which was then moving rapidly to its objective at Pirmasens.

The Regiment's attack followed generally the line Kroppen-Bottenbach. The Regimental CP was established at 1830 at Trulben, Germany. The Commanding General directed constant pressure to be maintained along the entire front at 1900, as confusion continued in the area on the left (North) flank. At 2315 hours, Regiment received orders to establish defensive positions astride Ober Simten-Pirmasens extending along high ground generally N-NW from Erlenbrunn.

At 2330, Division attack order was received as all elements continued the Eastward drive toward a rapidly disintegrating enemy. Combat Team 14 was to be motorized the following day to follow its sister Regiments, who were to move at 0600 to a concentration area vicinity the West bank of the Rhine River as the XXI Corps continued its advance to the Rhine, divisions abreast. An enemy movement existed to the North in the Rhine plain, with the Corps and Division fight (South) flanks most vulnerable to enemy attack. Combat Team 14 was to move last, continuing to defend the right flank and to mop up.

Regiment cleaned up towns of Vinningen, Ober-Simten and Simten during the day 23 March. At 2030 Regiment initiated motor movement for assembly areas in the vicinity of Klein-Fischlingen, as Division continued following up the withdrawing enemy. At 2400 hours the head of the Regimental column was reported in Pirmasens.

At 1030, 24 March, CP opened at Klein-Fischlingen, Germany, and the Regiment with attachments closed into its assembly areas following a motor movement of approximately forty-nine (49) miles. The situation at this time was extremely fluid, with enemy pockets existing throughout our positions and with the enemy withdrawing rapidly.

At 1345, Regiment received verbal orders to leap-frog to the front, First battalion to move vicinity Harthsen in a reserve position, Second battalion to move to Speyer on right, and Third to move to Otterstadt on left. At 1600, Regiment moved against light enemy resistance by marching and motors to outposts on the West bank of the Rhine River. Regiment cleared up stragglers and pockets of light resistance with Second battalion and Third battalion closing into positions at 2200. First battalion was on the move to its reserve position at 2400 hours.

At 0135 25 March, the First battalion closed into its reserve positions behind the Second and Third battalions on the West bank of the Rhine River. At day-break, First battalion and the Regimental I&R platoon cleaned out stragglers and scattered groups of enemy in the woods of the Regimental sector. Combat team ceased at 1200 hours. Second battalion searched and patrolled the city of Speyer. At 1700 the Third battalion sent strong combat patrols to clear light resistance pocket across the Rhine lagoon. All battalions strengthened hasty positions

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against possible attacks. Contact was established with the 100th Division on the left and the 42nd Division on the right. At 1905, Regimental CP opened in Speyer.

At 1200 hours, Division orders were received to effect a feint with a river crossing in strength vicinity of Speyer that night, to divert enemy attention from main effort to the North. During the early hours of darkness, the supporting engineers maintained normal river crossing activity, zone of activity in Speyer was restricted to civilians, and heavy engineer equipment was used to simulate presence of armor. Third battalion on the left sent patrols across the river throughout the night to harrass the enemy. The First battalion supported the river crossing with mortar fire.

Reconnaissance patrols from I&R platoon, commanded by 1st Lieut. Nat R. Freeman, O-1310365, crossed the river in assault boats vicinity of Speyer at 2200 hours 25 March, under cover of smoke and located enemy position without receiving enemy small arms fire. Artillery concentrations were received on launching points and some mortar fire fell in the river.

Beginning at 0100 26 March, Regiment feinted Rhine River crossing. Under smoke and artillery preparation, Second platoon of "E" Company, commanded by 2nd Lieut. Howard C. Stewart, O-551672, began crossing the Rhine River in four engineer assault boats, receiving mortar fire in the river, and small arms fire upon nearing the East bank. All boats landed, where they were engaged in a fire fight with the enemy. Platoon remained on East bank fifteen (15) minutes, located enemy positions, and withdrew under cover of smoke at 0200. The platoon suffered seven (7) casualties in the action. Regiment successfully feinted the river crossing.

"C" Company displaced to Speyer, Germany, 27 March to assume duties assisting in control of city. During night 27-28 March, all units vigorously patrolled East bank of Rhine River, pinpointing enemy positions.

At 1315 28 March, warning orders were received from Division of contemplated move later that night. Orders were then received for Regiment to be relieved by the 411th Infantry Regiment during hours of darkness. At 2258, relief of Regiment on position was completed and the Regiment was in assembly areas vicinity of Speyer, prepared for further movement by motors.

Regiment moved by motors 29 March approximately forty (40) miles via route Mutterstadt, Neustadt, Otterberg, to assembly areas vicinity of Dielkirchen, Germany. Regimental CP opened at Dielkirchen at 2045. CT 14 closed at 2230 when orders were received from Division and preparation initiated for further move the following morning. Division then in XII Corps, Third Army.

At 1100 hours, 30 March, Regiment resumed motor movement, moving from vicinity Rockenhausen to assembly areas vicinity of Frankfurt, a distance of approximately sixty-five (65) miles. Regiment crossed the Rhine River on the treadway bridge at Oppenheim, traveled via route Darmstadt to vicinity Frankfurt, with a mission of protecting the Corps right rear.

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Regimental CP opened at Obertshausen, Germany 1455 hours 30 March. Regiment closed into assembly areas 1745. First battalion was ordered to move to Hanau to assist Military Government in enforcing existing regulations there. Battalions posted all around security and road blocks night of 30 March.

Town patrols were established and motor patrols between towns initiated during the day 31 March. Regiment was strafed several times during the day between hours 0630 and 1700. Enemy objective appeared to be Grossauheim pontoon bridge.

First battalion located at Hanau, Second battalion at Hausen, and the Third Battalion at Weiskirchen at close of period.

Annexes:

- #1- Map References
- #2- Regimental and Battalion Staffs, Company Commanders
- #3- Battle Casualties
- #4- Medal Awards and Commendations