



so did the training. Now the company emphasized such problems as platoon fire in direct support of each battalion, anti-tank training laying the guns direct on moving targets, individual proficiency with infantry weapons. The whole division was readying itself for its mission.

Preparations for overseas shipment is arduous. Inspections of TE, TO, men were repeated endlessly. Equipment had to be waterproofed from cannons to baseball bats. New equipment had to be issued. While the Day always had seemed far off, now it was so close there didn't seem time enough for anything.

Lt. Bart had arrived in the company in August. Capt. Thomas, Cn CO had won his promotion in September. Lt. Penniman joined the company in October, and Lts. Miller and Rueckel in November. It was under these men that Cannon left Ft. Wood for Camp Miles Standish, Boston Port of Embarkation on 19 Nov 44. Arrived there 21 Nov. Again too much to do in too little time - shots, lectures on what to do on the boat, preventing seasickness, movies, more issue, and finally on 6 Dec 44 Cn loaded on the BSS West Point and shipped out to what turned out to be Marseilles. The lectures on sea sickness were to no avail.

15 Dec Cn debarked at Marseilles and camped out at CP 2 in pup tents. It was a cold, raw night, small foretaste of what was to come. The next few days were a hectic reversal of the last few at Wood. Everything from the cannons to baseball bats were de-waterproofed and made combat serviceable again. On 22 December Cannon left CP 2 split into two parties, one moving north in our own vehicles, the other going out in 40 and 8s. One vital change had been made in TE at DBS. We were issued 2 1/2 ton prime movers instead of the 1 1/2s we had in the States. The change was for the better.

First step as a combat unit was at Weyersheim, France where the company assembled on 26 Dec. 27 Dec it moved to Wantzenau and on that day Cannon Co, 275 Inf had the honor of being the first unit of the 70th Div to hurl an artillery shell onto German soil. It was a base point registration. MIKX Fire mission was given at 1415 and was fired by Capt. Thomas and Lt. Penniman as FO's. On 29 Dec, at Russchwig, France, firing from map data on coordinates provided by supporting Arty, Cannon destroyed a Kraut ammo dump. We drew first blood.

1 January 1945 was the day the war caught up with Cannon. That morning we arrived in Phillipsbourg, France. The Jerries got there just a short time later. That day we drew our first counter-battery fire, and that a bare 15 minutes after we got there. That day we were forced to move in e anti-tank positions. That day we were threatened by strafing and bombing by planes that looked remarkably like P 47s. That day we moved for a third time, dug in behind Phillipsbourg and began firing in support of 3rd Ba, 275 Inf, Task Force Herren.

Phillipsbourg was snow, sub-zero weather, continuous guard. Phillipsbourg was where we learned the difference between incoming mortars, 88s, 105s, and bigger stuff. Phillipsbourg was where cannoners left their gun posts to act as riflemen in flank security because battalions simply had no other riflemen between us and the krauts. Phillipsbourg was where Cannon was credited with 2 Kraut tanks. Phillipsbourg was where Jerries were killed 400 yards from the gun position. Phillipsbourg was where we expended better than 500 rounds a day, in one 24 hour period topping 800 for 4 guns. Phillipsbourg was counter-battery and tree busters. Phillipsbourg was sweating out the return of FO parties over routes covered by Kraut

small arms and artillery. Phillipsbourg was where Cannon Co, 275 INF as part of Task Force Herren, helped contain the first German attempt to break thru the thinly spread defenses of the 7th Army. Phillipsbourg was 13 days of combat, short time when compared with 18 months of previous training, but terribly much longer for those who went thru it, ~~but~~ educational as only the threat of death can be.

Cannon was at Neusseviller, France from 15 Jan to 8 Feb 45. 275 moved into positions previously held by units of the 103rd Div. For the gun position this was a quiet sector. But a check on the number of rounds expended indicates the amount of patrol activity carried on by the line companies and the support Cannon Co. afforded them. On 6 Feb one gun fired over 200 rounds. That was the day King Co. took the hill that commanded Lixingen and Gressbieder stroff and held that position long enough for patrols to investigate the two towns. There were two Cannon FOs with King on that hill and at the end of the day, when it was discovered their position was surrounded, the FOs used Cannon to blast a path back and 883 to cover the withdrawal. That is one incident cited merely to show the interdependence of line and cannon companies.

Iplingen, France from 9 to 19 Feb was the site of Cannon's position next. It was during this time that the 70th Div, operating for the first time as an offensive unit, started the push that was eventually to lead to Saarbrücken. As 275 moved up on to Spicheren Heights Cannon Co moved up in close support - Reuhling, 20 to 22 Feb, Kerbach, 23 Feb to 13 March, Alsting, 14 to 20 March, and finally with the dateline Germany, Saarbrücken on 21 March. We didn't know it then but for all practical purposes the European war was over for Cannon Co and the rest of 275 after 85 ~~days~~ consecutive days on the line.

For five days at Saarbrücken Cannon relaxed. Then starting on 26 March Cannon started on a new phase of duty, maintaining order in occupied enemy country. From that date til 27 May Cannon moved slowly eastward occupying successively Harsberg, Jugenheim, Frankfurt, Höchst, Niederhochstadt. Then from 28 May to 15 June Cannon bivouacked in tents near Bieber and spent that time perfecting fire techniques on a sometime Kraut artillery range. From 16 June til present writing Cannon has been in Wehrheim, and while it still retains some of the aspects of occupation ~~the~~ the training schedule has taken on more of the aspects of garrison, what with Saturday inspections, ~~with~~ classes, etc.

Sometimes bare statistics help round out a picture. In 85 days on the line, Cannon expended over 9,500 rounds. Since Marselles the reconnaissance jeep has travelled over 11,000 miles, the other five average around 10,000. The commo vehicle has covered 8,500 miles, the three ammo trucks 7,500 miles, and the six prime movers averaged somewhat better than 5,000.

Two Cannon men made field commissions, Lts. Humphrey and Gamba. Sgt. Zembre has received a discharge on points and Sgt. Hubbard has taken his job, with Sgt. Thompson moving up to take Hubbard's place. In addition to the five officers that came over with the company we now have Lts. Gamba and Andres.

The European war is over.