

The 191st passed the crossroads of its career in August 1943. The Battalion was bivouacked in a valley southeast of BIZERTE, still attached to the Seventh Army, and wondering what would become of it. On August 15, Lieutenant Colonel EWING, an emissary of the Fifth Army visited us and spent two days inspecting the battalion for combat efficiency. His report was so favorable that just six days later (August 22) we were moved to a waterproofing area near the BIZERTE docks. The waterproofing area caused us a good deal of apprehension. It was a nice flat field, barrent of trees and cover, adjacent to the docks and in the backyard of the airport. It was inadequate in size to accomodate the several battalions assembled there, and no dispersion was possible. Vehicles were crowded often to within twenty-five feet of each other. "Jerry's" frequent nocturnal visits were, therefore, anything but welcome. The waterproofing, supervised by Lieutenant WILSON, was completed on the 27th. Ordnance did a good job -- too good, we learned later -- welding M-10 shrouds to M-4 tanks. The battalion personnel was moved on the 29th to "Ohio" area, just south of the waterproofing grounds, and on September 1st, we loaded the LST's with our equipment.

Loading operations were handled by Lieutenant NIEBOER, Transportation Quartermaster for the battalion. LST #389 carried "B" Company, Headquarters Company, and the Mortar Platoon, and was commanded by Major WATSON with Captain WALTZ as Transportation Quartermaster. "C" and Service Companies were loaded on LST #379, Captain WARNER in command. Sections of the Medical Detachment were assigned to each ship. The ships moved out into the lake at 1730 to await loading of personnel. Small crews were left aboard to watch over our equipment. Unfortunately the battalion was allowed space for only 150 vehicles. 31 vehicles and 143 men were left in BIZERTE and were to rejoin the unit as soon as the beachhead was established. This rear detachment was commanded by Captain HUNLEY.

During the afternoon of September 2nd, General MARK CLARK, Commanding General of the Fifth Army, inspected the battalion personnel in the vicinity of the docks.

On September 3rd our six LCT's were loaded as follows:

1. Battalion Command Tank, Reconnaissance Platoon (Lieutenant Colonel PERKINS, Commander).
2. "A" Company Command Tank, Maintenance, and one section of 3rd platoon (Captain PETERSON, Commander).
3. Assault Gun Platoon (Lieutenant WESOLOSKI, Commander).
4. "A" Company 1st platoon (Lieutenant COBB, Commander).
5. "A" Company 2nd platoon (Lieutenant NANGLE, Commander).
6. "A" Company 3rd platoon (Lieutenant STEUERNAGEL, Commander).

The LCT's under Colonel PERKINS' command departed for Italy the following morning.

At 1300, on September 5th, the remaining personnel were marched to the KAROUBA docks, were taken on LCT's out into the lake, and boarded the LST's by the way of rope ladders. Both ships lay in the inner harbor that night. At 1600, the following day, they moved out beyond the breakwall into BIZERTE BAY, whereupon the flat-bottomed craft gave forth with an annoying rolling motion. A few cases of seasickness resulted but there was no serious epidemic.

We were called to general quarters for an air-raid at about 2100. BIZERTE was well smoked within ten minutes after the alarm had sounded. The raid continued for about two hours. Though none of the ships were apparently damaged, two fires were seen burning on shore. Our .50 cal. guns on the upper deck proved helpful in keeping "Jerry" in his place. The blow gun on LST #389 accounted for at least one enemy plane. German paratroops were reported to have landed on shore, but all were apprehended by noon the next day.

The following morning, September 7th, at 0600, we moved slowly out of BIZERTE harbor. Our rolling motion ceased. The weather was excellent and continued so for the remainder of the voyage. We were notified officially of our destination and had ample opportunity for examining maps and orders and discussing the anticipated problems of debarkation. All were agreed that the landing would be a tough one and prepared themselves accordingly. We became well acquainted with the Navy, finding them most

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cooperative and enjoyed their mess no end. Personnel aboard LST's were told that they would say for the comforts of showers, kitchen-cooked food, etc., when they returned to beach. The LST was a nice fat target, but the little LCT usually came through unscathed. (We learned differently!)

Four enemy aircraft were sighted at 1600. One bomb was dropped and comfortably missed a destroyer just ahead of LST #389.

The following day we were all cheered by the news of ITALY's surrender. We wondered if and how it would alter our plans. The convoy was fanastically big and seemed to include everything from aircraft carriers to mine-sweepers. Air attacks began at 2100 and continued well into the next morning.

September 9th, "D" day, was a day to be remembered. The battalion was to land on "blue" beach (843015, Sheet 198 III, Racca D' Aspide) as soon as it was secured by the initial waves of infantry. The six LCT's attempted a coordinated landing on "Blue" beach at 0620. The enemy was waiting for us, and had placed tanks, artillery, flame-throwers, and infantry all along the shore. The six craft met extremely heavy fire, dispersed and moved out again into the Gulf.

Three of the LCT's, aided by a destroyer which maintained continuous fire at the shore, finally made "Red" beach (835027) at about 1130. Lieutenant STEUERNAGEL, his ship listing, landed at that time on his third attempt. The craft had been hit and one man was wounded. Behind him came Lieutenant WESLOSKI who was also making his third attempt. His ship had been hit by artillery and his guns had accounted for one enemy aircraft. Lieutenant NANGLE followed, likewise landing on his third attempt. Lieutenant STEUERNAGEL was ordered by a general officer, (name unknown), to secure high ground about 500 yards from the beach, and repel an attack by enemy armored units (armor had been reported by infantry men). Lieutenant STEUERNAGEL, aided by Lieutenant NANGLE's platoon, took up positions knocked out two enemy tanks. Lieutenant WESLOSKI, using direct fire with his Assault Guns, accounted for at least one enemy tank. Our tanks were roadbound by marshy terrain in this particular area and were handicapped considerably.

Captain PETERSON's LCT was hit three times during the 0620 landing attempt. The first shell disabled the ramp mechanism. At 0642 another projectile, glancing off one of the tank turrets, hit the pilot house and killed two naval officers, an entire navy gun crew, and wounded other Navy personnel. At about 0645, the ship turned about and while in a position parallel to the shore, another shell of heavy caliber, went through the ship on the starboard side and penetrated the hull of Captain PETERSON's tank. Tank driver and assistant driver were killed instantly and the tank set afire. Despite the efforts of Technical Sergeant Guarino and his men, who, in an attempt to extinguish the flames, actually got inside the burning tank, the fire proved out of control and it was decided to push the tank overboard. The ramp was lowered, and with some difficulty, the burning vehicle was pushed by the tank behind it over the ramp. The damaged ramp could not be raised and the deck became flooded with two feet of water. The wounded were put aboard a control vessel. Captain PETERSON finally landed on "Red" beach at about 1330.

On Lieutenant COBB's second landing attempt, one tank about the LCT was hit and Staff Sergeant Toburen was killed. Lieutenant COBB landed on "Yellow" beach (837021) at about 1535. Colonel PERKINS' LCT, on its third attempt and after several close calls, landed at "Red" beach at about 1535.

LST #389, first of the larger ships to land, lowered its pontoons at 1030 while still out of sight of shore. The preparation of the pontoons required about two hours. At approximately 1245, with a destroyer and several mine sweepers ahead, the ship moved through smoke and haze toward the beach. When the destroyer turned out to sea, two heavy artillery pieces south of PAESTUM hit the LST twice. Debarkation on "Yellow" beach began at 1505 under heavy fire. Immediately on landing, Major WATSON was ordered by General LANGEY, of the 36th Division, to clear out the enemy from the vicinity of his CP. After a hasty job of dewaterproofing was done, Major WATSON, with Captain MAY and "B" Company, carried out the order satisfactorily. The resistance was mainly from infantry with machine guns and machine pistols. They retreated immediately from the tanks. Major WATSON proceeded on his mission.

LST #379, having been twice driven from "Blue" beach, landed on "Red" beach at 1530. On the approach to shore it was hit by two heavy shells. Several Navy men were killed, several wounded, and Master Sergeant Adkins, Battalion Maintenance Sergeant, was wounded severely.

The enemy, having held our infantry to positions not more than 100 yards from the water, appeared to scatter and begin withdrawal as soon as our tanks had landed and commenced firing. "C" Company, (from IST #382 on "Red" beach) proceeded immediately to highway 18 and dewaterproofed when just outside of the town of PAESTUM (854026). "C" Company was joined by the Battalion Commander, the Assault Gun platoon, and two platoons from "A" Company. Near intersection 854033, the remainder of the battalion (Major WATSON, "B" Company and the Mortar Platoon) joined Colonel PERKINS' force at about 1715, (Reconnaissance Platoon was already on the highway) and all moved north toward our objective. Our objective was to hold the SELE River Bridge (860112). The terrain demanded that the movement be in column although single platoons were sent out at intervals to destroy machine gun nests and neutralize pockets of infantry. Antitank guns were encountered on a side road at 851053. Two of our tanks received direct armored piercing hits, but no penetrations were made and no casualties suffered. One platoon of "C" Company went forward, and from covered positions, fired about 10 rounds of high explosive into the gun positions. An infantry mortar mounted in $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton fired at the same time and the guns were definitely knocked out. During the march, enemy trucks and half-tracks were fired upon also and probably knocked out. Lieutenant ZOETEWAY, riding at the point, fired upon and definitely destroyed three enemy tanks (probably flame throwers) at ALBENELLA station (856104). By this time darkness had fallen and the battalion bivouacked on a deserted estate (857108) overlooking the river. Infantry were requested but were not received. The SELE bridge was destroyed just before we reached the bivouac position.

There were no losses in personnel or equipment after landing. Three men were killed, three wounded, and one tank lost during the beaching operations. Lieutenant ZOETEWAY's tank was put temporarily out of action on the beach when some of the wire netting used by engineers for roadways wound in his sprocket. Lieutenant HEDDES' tank threw both tracks in an attempt to get off the road when under antitank fire. Lieutenant NANGLE's tanks and Lieutenant WESOLOSKI's half-tracks experienced considerable difficulty in the marshy terrain criss-crossed with canals and irrigation ditches just east of "Yellow" beach.

All ships were under constant enemy fire from small arms, artillery, and strafing planes while unloading. Dewaterproofing was extremely difficult. Shrouds on most of the tanks would not jettison and had to be cut with axes or pulled off by other tanks. Snipers were everywhere and bothered the infantry no end. Tank Commanders found it necessary to keep their heads well down in the turrets. Germans used buildings, haystacks, etc., for camouflaging tanks and antitank guns. It is apparent that the defense of the highway from PAESTUM to the SELE bridge was not too carefully planned. The enemy withdrawal was not an orderly one.

The battalion score of enemy equipment definitely knocked out during the day was: at least eight Mark IV tanks, three antitank guns, one pill-box, one wheeled vehicle, one 88mm gun, one aircraft, and an unknown number of machine guns and infantry. In addition, two flame throwers, with crews, were captured by "A" Company. The vehicles were turned over in perfect running condition. All members of the battalion did a commendable job and fought like veterans. We feel that our battalion played a major role in the successful landing operation at PAESTUM because ours were the first tanks to land the lead the spearhead of advance.

On September 10th, the battalion was relieved from attachment to the 36th Infantry Division and attached to the 45th Infantry Division. The day passed without incident while the enemy reorganized to our front. No movement orders were received.

The battalion remained in approximately the same position at the bridge during the morning of the 11th. Fifth Army Command Post took over our bivouac area. At 1400 we received orders to move across the river and proceed Northwest. We crossed the river by the way of an engineer bridge which was installed during the morning. "B" Company, in the lead, moved on the highway to point 853135, (Sheet 198 IV, CAMBRIA) and moved cross-country to the north. Armored units and infantry were encountered in the vicinity of a tobacco warehouse (862156). Both Mark IV and Mark VI tanks were seen. Our tanks approached the tobacco warehouse cautiously from the southwest with two platoons out on the left (north). They fired on and destroyed several enemy personnel carriers (half-tracks), likewise a number of machine gun nests and anti-tank guns were destroyed. The enemy had apparently set a trap for when the tanks came into the immediate vicinity of the warehouse, they met a devastating fire of both heavy caliber weapons and small arms from all directions. Captain MAY withdrew

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his tank just long enough to disperse the platoons for maximum security and effective fire, and then returned to the fight. The remainder of the battalion was in position at 855140, south of PERSANO (886168). When "B" Company rejoined the battalion at 2030, seven tanks were out of action (5 had burned), four men were dead, thirteen were missing. Captain MAY had been captured after escaping wounded from his tank (Information received from German officer, Prisoner of War, the following day). Lieutenant BROCKER was missing and Lieutenant SILLS wounded severely. Infantry officers who were eye witnesses declared that the attack had been very courageous. The tanks were far ahead of any supporting infantry and had moved in on an enemy bivouac area.

During the morning of September 12th, we received word of our being attached to the 157th Infantry Regiment. The battalion remained in its position southwest of PERSANO. At about 1000, Lieutenant WESOLOSKI, with his assault guns shelled the area and building northwest of the tobacco warehouse. "C" Company moved one platoon forward in a position to bring direct fire on the warehouse. The platoon had fine sport laying 180 rounds of high explosive into the building.

In the afternoon, it was found that the enemy had reoccupied their positions in the warehouse area before our own infantry had been able to move up. Machine guns and machine pistols constituted the main resistance. "C" Company was called upon at 1630 to make a quick thrust into the area, clean it up, and withdraw before dark. The mission was performed and our infantry occupied the ground. The Assault and Mortar platoons had taken up positions to the rear of the tanks and the Mortar platoon covered the withdrawal of "C" Company with a smoke screen at about 1830. Lack of information concerning the whereabouts of friendly troops almost caused needless casualties. We experienced this same difficulty on innumerable occasions and found it to be a tremendous hinderance to tank actions.

Lieutenant SIEGEL was transferred from "A" Company and took command of "B" Company.

At about 1830, "A" Company supporting the 3rd Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, made an attack generally northeast toward EBOLI (892246), on a mission similar to that of "C" Company. They cleaned out an unknown number of enemy machine gun positions in buildings, haystacks, etc. It was found to be a wise precaution, in any advance, (when knowledge of friendly positions permitted) to put fire on every building, haystack, clumps of trees, or any other spot where enemy might possibly be in position. Our infantry moved up when "A" Company withdrew.

September 13th proved to be one of the hardest days we experienced. In the morning, we were reinforced by a platoon of M-10's from the 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion. The sector was quiet until about 1400 when the enemy, apparently with an observation point somewhere in the buildings beyond the tobacco warehouse, put mortar fire on our bivouac area. The warehouse area had been reconnoitered in the morning, all the buildings entered and investigated, and found to be deserted. Lieutenants MIDDLETON and HEEDES, and Staff Sergeant Sullivan, all of "C" Company, were making a foot reconnaissance of the warehouse area at about 1410. An high explosive shell landed near them, killed Lieutenant HEEDES and wounded both Lieutenant MIDDLETON and Staff Sergeant Sullivan. The enemy had begun his counterattack. Lieutenant MIDDLETON, though wounded, returned to his tank and led his Company in another attack beyond the warehouse. Enemy armor and infantry broke through the 36th Infantry Division on the right flank and moved down into the salient at the junction of the SELE and CALORE rivers. Fire fell on us from that area. Colonel PERKINS quickly dispersed the tanks in a wide semi-circle to cover three fronts. Most of the tanks fired their combat load of ammunition and a fresh supply was brought up. It was dumped in the hedge row behind the vehicles and the tanks moved to the rear one at a time, to re-arm. Fighting continued until about 2100. "A" Company was so far out on the left that on one occasion it came under our own fire and had to withdraw. The tanks were surrounded by infantry, and the men in the tanks were unable to distinguish friendly from enemy in the darkness. Flares, released to mark our own lines would have been a tremendous help to our gunners. "A" Company returned to the bivouac at about 2300. All the tanks had encountered a good deal of small arms fire in the darkness. Lieutenant HAYNES took command of Company "C" in Lieutenant MIDDLETON's absence.

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At 0100 (September 14) the battalion less "B" and "C" Companies moved back into Corps Reserve to a position about five miles south of the SELE River bridge on Highway 18. (868060, Sheet 198 III, Rocca D' Aspide). Obviously the reason for this movement was to shorten and straighten our own front line. At 0300, "C" Company, with Lieutenant HAYNES in command, took up a defensive position supporting the 157th Infantry Regiment at 848140 (Sheet 198 IV, Campagna). "B" Company, supporting the 179th Infantry Regiment, was also in defensive position (848149).

Our situation was desperate the morning of the 14th. "B" and "C" Companies on the front line were under artillery fire almost continuously. Personnel were forced to remain inside their tanks for long periods of time. The enemy attacked in the afternoon. "B" Company, with only seven tanks, but in position with good concealment, accounted for four Mark IV tanks, one Mark VI and two unidentified vehicles which were seen burning. "C" Company knocked out at least one Mark IV.

The battalion less "B" and "C" Companies was moved forward again at 1400 to a position one and a half miles south of SELE River Bridge (861090, Sheet 198 III). The battalion had no casualties that day.

Enemy planes were raiding us more frequently but our air defense was proving very effective.

The situation remained static on the 15th. "B" and "C" Companies with the Infantry were still being shelled. Artillery seemed to be playing the major role. Lieutenant WESOLOSKI brought his assault guns forward to assist the tanks with indirect fire.

At 1100 on the morning of the 16th, the battalion was attached to the 504th Parachute Regiment (36th Div) and ordered to support an attack on ALBANELLA and ALTAVILLA. We moved into an assembly area near Road Junction at N922074 and remained there two hours. A very few of our troops were in ALBANELLA at the time and the enemy threatened to retake the town. The battalion commander had been assured that the shorter route (left fork at N922074) to Albanella was clear. Near the top of the mountain, it was blocked and mined and we were forced to turn about on the narrow road and return to the junction below. In the maneuver one tank was overturned and two tracks thrown. The T-2 retriever remedied the difficulty in a short time. We went into defensive position north of ALBANELLA and remained for the night. We were under artillery fire most of the night but dared not reveal our position by returning fire.

In the afternoon of the 17th, "A" Company moved down one and a half miles into the valley to a better defensive position. ALTAVILLA was pulverized by artillery. None of our units contacted the enemy.

The enemy began his withdrawal from the ALTAVILLA sector on the 18th. At 1430, Lieutenant COBB took one platoon of tanks on an armored reconnaissance into ALTAVILLA. They took up a position outside the town and remained all night. Paratroopers moved into the town on foot.

At 2200, Lieutenant STEUERNAGEL's platoon was assigned the mission of protecting General O'DANIELS' Command Post in the valley below ALTAVILLA. "C" Company moved to a position one and a half miles southeast of EBOLI. No resistance encountered.

At 1700 (September 19) the battalion was relieved from the 36th Infantry Division, reattached to the 45th Infantry Division, and moved under cover of darkness back to the SELE River Bridge area (856115). "A" Company, at 2400, moved out to support the 180th Infantry Regiment, and bivouacked one mile northeast of the tobacco warehouse (865164). Lieutenant STEUERNAGEL's platoon was relieved from duty at ALTAVILLA and rejoined the company at 0200 (September 20th). "A" Company moved cross-country to CAMPAGNA (934294), arrived at 1800 and bivouacked in the middle of our Infantry. No contact with enemy during the day.

In the trains every man undertook the arduous task of supply with considerable enthusiasm. Each performed his duties with zeal and accomplished the enviable record of a continuous flow of ammunition, fuel, and rations, so that the forward echelon never ran low in any of these items. It required only a few days to establish a smoothly operating system of supply. The following system, devised by Lieutenant NIEBOER, Transportation Officer and coordinated by Captain WALTZ, Battalion S-4, was found to operate successfully:

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To each Company was attached one ammunition truck, two fuel trucks, and a 3/4-ton self-propelled anti-aircraft gun (SPAT GUN), all under the supervision of a Technician Fifth Grade. He took this section of the trains to an area a short distance from the front lines if that company were in combat. If it were not in combat, he kept his supply vehicles with the company to which he was attached. He used the 3/4-ton SPAT gun truck as transportation to keep contact with the company he was supplying. Hence ammunition, and fuel were always available in five or ten minutes. The ration section made contact with these forward supply sections when delivering rations. Sergeant Roberts, of Service Company, aided the Technician Fifth Grades and supervised their work by daily visits to each forward supply section. He did outstanding work establishing contact between the companies and their supply sections, even going to the companies while under fire to find out the status of their ammunition and supply. Lieutenant NIEBOER assisted Captain WALTZ in the coordination of the delivery of supplies to the forward echelons. Two fuel trucks and two ammunition trucks were kept in Service Company rear echelons as reserve. After delivering the supplies to the forward areas the trucks come from their forward positions to Service Company for refueling. Thus the forward trains never had to be away from the front longer than a very short time.

The system has proved very successful mainly because of the attention to duty and the enthusiasm of the men who were performing this work of supply. Frequently these men went through machine gun fire and have been under artillery fire while bringing supplies up to the combat vehicles, but this has not slackened their efforts nor hindered the movement of needed items to the combat companies.

"B" and "C" Companies were relieved from the 179th and 157th Infantry Regiments on the 21st. The battalion moved at 1730 to an area three miles northeast of EBOLI and bivouacked in an olive orchard where "B" and "C" Companies joined us. (N920230). "A" Company remained with the 180th Infantry Regiment to support their advance on OLIVETO. "A" Company bivouacked under artillery fire on a hillside south of OLIVETO, and at 2400 found itself attached to the 756th Tank Battalion (L).

The battalion, less "A" Company, spent September 22nd in their olive orchard and read the first mail to reach the battalion in Italy. "A" Company, relieved from the 180th Infantry Regiment and attached to the 179th Infantry Regiment, advanced over mountainous terrain southeast of OLIVETO. (041328, Sheet 186 II, CALABRITTO) The advance was stopped by shell fire at 0900. Tanks remained in a covered position until late afternoon. At 1630, they made an attack covering a large area immediately south of OLIVETO. At last six enemy machine guns were knocked out, six prisoners taken and an unknown number of enemy infantry were destroyed. The attack lasted about two hours. The coordinated movement of light and medium tanks proved successful in this instance. The medium company moved between two light companies. Our tanks were roadbound by unfavorable terrain and presented too good a target for our own comfort.

At 0800, September 23rd, Captain PETERSON, of "A" Company, moved one platoon to the outskirts of OLIVETO. Infantry had just entered the town. The street, so narrow that tanks could negotiate it only with great difficulty, was blocked by debris from a shelled building. At 1030, the road was clear and Lieutenant NANGLE moved his platoon through the town and took up a position just north of it. The enemy gave forth with a heavy three-hour artillery barrage and all vehicles remained under cover. At 1300 Lieutenant COBB moved his platoon to join Lieutenant NANGLE who was supposedly still in position north of the town. Lieutenant NANGLE had, however, received orders from the Infantry Commander to move further north and had reached a position about three miles up the valley. The terrain was entirely unfavorable for tanks. The valley was narrow and the road had high steep banks on either side. The foliage was thick and visibility poor. No formation but column on the road was possible. The forward platoon (Lieutenant NANGLE) was in defilade when Lieutenant COBB's platoon was fired upon two miles north of the town. The two leading tanks were hit and Staff Sergeant Tucciarone's tank caught fire. Technician Fifth Grade Korzenko, commanding "Warhawk" (Headquarters Company tank attached to "A" Company) came alongside Sergeant Tucciarone's tank, thus enabling the crew of the burning vehicle to escape. "Warhawk" crew located the position of the enemy guns and fired twenty-nine rounds into it. An enemy tank and antitank gun were positively knocked out. (The enemy tank was set afire

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The road was now blocked by our burning tank. The tanks behind could not go forward and in an attempt to get down the first tank and off the road they bogged down and all but two had to be abandoned. Three tanks had been hit, one man was killed and five were wounded. Only the burned tank was lost. The others were retrieved during the night. Captain PETERSON, using Lieutenant NANGLE's tank as an Observation Post, informed the 160th Field Artillery of gun positions across the valley near VALVA (072382) and the guns were destroyed. "Direct" radio communication with supporting Field Artillery units would be of tremendous value to the tanks. Likewise communication with front-line infantry would give us information of enemy antitank gun positions without our first blundering into them and drawing their fire.

"A" Company's score for the day was three enemy tanks (probably Mark IV), one antitank gun, and an unknown number of machine gun installations.

We have experienced a good deal of difficulty during our periods of attachment to Infantry Regiments because of a lack of knowledge of tank tactics on the part of some Infantry Commanders. Many of them appear to have little realization of a tank's limitations and capabilities.

A good deal of the terrain we have seen thus far is entirely unsuitable for tank action. The vehicles are usually roadbound by soft plowed earth. The terrain is almost always mountainous, the roads are very narrow and winding. The fields are cut by canals, irrigation ditches, and rivers unfordable without engineer assistance.

"C" Company replaced "A" Company with the 179th Infantry Regiment under cover of darkness at 2100 on September 23rd.

At 1400, September 24th, the battalion moved to a new bivouac area four miles northeast on the same highway. (approximately 965265, Sheet 198 IV) "C" Company remained in position and had no contact with the enemy. The enemy was delaying our advance with mines and demolitions. From PAESTUM to OLIVETO more than twenty-five bridges had been blown up. The engineers had no easy time.

The situation was the same on the 25th. "C" Company moved to a better position about five miles up the valley. We took steps to avert a repetition of "A" Company's difficulties of two days previous by establishing radio contact between tanks and infantry.

"A" time became theater time at 0200 on the 26th. The battalion moved at 0500 to a position on a hillside south of OLIVETO. "B" Company, attached to the 157th Infantry Regiment, moved to a position below VALVA, on the east side of the river. We experienced our first rain in Italy during the night.

The rain continued well into the morning of the 27th and made it very difficult to move vehicles. Plowed fields, our only available bivouac areas, were seas of mud. At 1400, the battalion, less "B" and "C" Companies, moved to position on the east bank of the river, two and one-half miles north of VALVA. (068398, Sheet 186 II) "C" Company received orders to move on the following morning, twenty-five miles to vicinity of SAN ANGELO DE LOMBARDI. (N990590, Sheet 186 IV) Lieutenant MIDDLETON returned from hospital in AFRICA and again took command of "C" Company.

Orders were received from 45th Infantry Division at 1030 to move entire battalion to vicinity of SAN ANGELO as soon as 34th Infantry Division traffic was clear of roads. The battalion sent a liaison officer to the 34th Division then operating in the vicinity of MONTEMARANO (839578). Our movement began at 1700. The narrow roads were lighted by a spectacular electrical storm which was followed by a deluge of rain. The battalion spent a wet night and two succeeding days in bivouac four miles west of SAN ANGELO (945588). The respite was welcomed for it required all of two days to dry out our clothing and equipment.

Malaria was giving us cause for considerable worry and lowering our combat efficiency appreciably. On September 30th, a total of seven, six men and six officers were hospitalized by malaria, battle casualties, and from other causes. However, the morale of both officers and enlisted men was always excellent and offset whatever other deficiencies we might have suffered.

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With the exception of the three days immediately following, the landing at PAESTUM, our unit was never employed in its entirety, that is, as a battalion during the month of September. Single combat companies were attached to Infantry Regiments or Battalion. We have found that the Table of Organization and the Table of Basic Allowances of a separate tank battalion are inadequate for this type of employment. The most glaring shortage is in liaison vehicles. In every attachment it is necessary that we send a liaison officer to the higher unit. If the single one-quarter ton truck in the line company is used for this purpose, it leaves the company with only heavy vehicles for reconnaissance, messenger work, etc. The allowance of vehicles for the battalion reconnaissance platoon is likewise inadequate for giving each line company reconnaissance personnel during their periods of detachment from the battalion. It is imperative that we do our own reconnaissance. Information given us by the infantry units is always meager, incomplete, and gathered without reference to tank action by personnel who have little knowledge of tank tactics.

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