

Regimental History 133rd INFANTRY

1 June 1945 to 30 June 1945

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HISTORY

133RD INFANTRY

34TH INFANTRY DIVISION

From 1 June 1945 to 30 June 1945

The 133rd Infantry ushered in the month of June in a manner comparable to the closing period of the previous month--more or less an uneventful lapse of time. The road blocks on Highway #24 and Highway #25 on the Franco-Italian border were still being manned by the Second Battalion, and the routine patrols were maintained in coherence with our mission in that sector. Contact with the 168th Infantry on the left and the 81st Cavalry Recon Sqdn on the right was continued. The First and Third Battalion, who were garrisoned at Camp Rivoli, engaged in the training and athletic program which had been provided for them.

On 1 June 1945 OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS #46 was distributed, instructing as to the relief of the Battalions, which was to take place on 4 June 1945. The days intervening 1 June and 4 June 1945, held no unusual occurrences in store.

4 June 1945 was the day for the relief of the Battalions, according to OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS #46, issued on 1 June 1945. It provided that the Second Battalion, which was functioning in the Susa area, would be relieved in place by the Third Battalion. The Third Battalion accepted the mission in which the Second Battalion had been employed; and the First and Second Battalion carried on the contact with the 81st Cavalry Recon Sqdn and the 168th Infantry respectively. The troops in Camp Rivoli supported the motorized patrols and the training program as ordered. The relief was completed on 4 June 1945.

The motorized patrols apprehended numerous suspicious vagrants who claimed that they had fought with the Partisans. These persons were taken into custody, and allowed to state their cases, using what credentials they had to prove their right.

A road block was established at Rivoli (H903292, Map Italy, 1/100,000, sheet 56, Torino), for the purpose of guiding French vehicles on their route to Orbanasso, not allowing them to proceed into Torino. One officer and four enlisted men were placed in charge of this point. 5 June 1945 brought no change of events.

OPERATIONAL MEMORANDUM #1, issued on 6 June 1945, initiated Division staff conferences to be held with staff officers of lower

echelons, with the goal of correcting deficiencies observed in recent operations. Also, the conferences outlined instructions for schooling of replacements and specialists in preparation for possible loss of key personnel during the period of readjustment and redeployment. Personnel required to attend these conferences included S-3's, Communications Officers, S-4's, Chemical Officers, Communications Supply & Administration, Chemical Warfare, and Motor Maintenance comprised the list of subjects to be covered. The conferences were arranged over a four-day period.

Circumstances finally afforded a little action, which relieved the monotony prevalent during the preceding week or more. With the issue of Division OPERATIONAL MEMORANDUM #2, dated 8 June 1945, came the instructions that the Partisans were to surrender their arms by 7 June 1945; so it was our role to see that this order was enforced. Patrols were increased to aid this effort. All Partisans who were armed were to be disarmed, and turned over to the AMG in Turin where they would be handled.

The 9-10 June 1945 found our routine patrols slightly increased in order for the sector to be thoroughly swept in the check for any armed Partisans. Aside from the catch of a few PW's and Fascists, the patrols reported negatively. It was reported that our prize of troops captured at San Pietro totalled 459.

Swimming classes were inaugurated at Lago Grande on 11 June 1945, with the hope that all battalions would have an opportunity to send men to them. The following day, 12 June 1945, a schedule of these classes was posted under TRAINING MEMORANDUM #5, which offered instruction, from 11 June through 16 June 1945, for Companies "A", "B", and "E", including three three-hour periods for non-swimmers. Lt. Dwain Narigan, Regimental Athletic Officer, conducted the classes.

The lull from 13 June through 17 June 1945 was partially due to the decrease in patrol activities. The daily patrols were substituted by one roving patrol each week, as a result of their previous accomplishments. 17 PW's and 15 Fascists were taken to the PW cage on 14 June 1945. The one patrol each week was sufficient to handle the stragglers.

The large scale exchange of men between the 85th and 34th Division, in respect to the indications provided by Adjusted Service Rating scores, got under way on 18 June 1945. In return for our regiment's loss of 542 officers and enlisted men whose scores were more than the critical number of 85, an approximately equal number of lower point men were soon to stream in from the 85th. Outwardly, this readjustment appeared to be a comparatively easy task. However, it was a difficult undertaking to select qualified men to replace the specialists and key personnel who were transferred from this regiment. Of course a great many new men were

already eligible for these jobs due to their former work, but this number was not sufficient to cover the need. Therefore, the most capable inexperienced men were selected and trained to fill the necessary positions. By the end of the month the regiment had successfully recovered from its redeployment period and was again functioning smoothly.

Six men of the regiment, who were scheduled to leave this division, were decorated by Major General Bolte at a regimental ceremony arranged prior to their departure. One Silver Star, one Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star, and four Bronze Star Medals were awarded. General Bolte took this opportunity to express his farewell to the men who were to leave. After the ceremony refreshments of coffee and doughnuts were served to the entire regiment by the American Red Cross.

19 and 20 June 1945. Our routine patrols were still in effect throughout our sector. On 20 June a patrol to Pinerolo contacted AMG #2, and witnessed the Partisans' arms turning-in ceremony. The patrols maintained a high standard of efficiency. They viewed the situation in many towns by questioning numerous civilians. Apparently everything was running smoothly, as the civilians gave no indication of any disturbance.

Everyone interested in the trend of Italian industry was given an opportunity to see what goes on inside the FIAT plant at Turin. This plant, being typical of Italy's advancement in manufacture and production, offered a comprehensive picture of her achievements. Three days each week eighty men took advantage of the two-hour tours, which were conducted by English-speaking guides. The many enlightening points brought out proved the trips to be most worthwhile.

For the next few days the Susa area was the scene of the developments. The Third Battalion made a prize find of two German ammunition dumps in the region where its patrols were active on 21 June 1945. When these dumps were disposed of a total of 600 200-lb bombs and 18 truckloads of assorted ammunition was counted.

23 June 1945 presented a mysterious incident. On this day an explosion occurred in the square at Susa, killing 2 French Soldiers, 1 Italian, and wounding many others. Investigations brought to light few facts. The building in which the explosion took place housed French soldiers, it was learned. It was assumed that a time-bomb or mine was dropped down the chimney, but no clues as to who was responsible could be found. The French planned to patrol and police the town until they left Italy. Due to the fact that Susa was under the jurisdiction of the French, the situation was left entirely to their discretion.

The relief of the Third Battalion which was to take place on 24 June 1945, was postponed until 2 July, in order for the Battalion to be at hand for the Allied Parade the last of June.

The events of the following three days centered around the French departure from Italy, and the preparations for our relief in this sector by the 6th South African Division.

In order for the efficiency of our unit to maintain its recognized high standards, the second period of instruction for officers was to begin, in accordance with TRAINING MEMORANDUM #6, dated 28 June 1945. Although the classes, which included basic subjects, Supply, Administration, and writing small unit problems, were not to be held until the first part of July, extensive planning was already well under way.

20 Officers arrived from the 85th Division on 29 June 1945, filling the officer vacancies in the regiment. Except for occasional changes in personnel, the redeployment problems had come to a welcomed finish for the 133rd Infantry.

This month was climaxed with the Allied Parade at Susa on 30 June 1945. The French 27th Infantry Alpine Division was then formally relieved by the 34th Division, represented by the Second Battalion of the 159th Alpine Regiment and the Third Battalion, 133rd Infantry. When the American soldiers arrived, the French, who were already assembled, came to a snappy attention and presented arms. The French flag was waving from atop one flag pole. Another pole, just opposite, was empty, as the veterans of the 34th took their places. When both units were formed, the two Commanding Generals, with their staffs, marched onto the parade ground as fanfares were played by both the American and French bands. As the Stars and Stripes were hoisted, all troops came to attention and presented arms as the 34th Division Band played the "National Anthem". After the troops had been inspected, the French flag was lowered to the strains of the "Marseillaise". The French color guard then withdrew from the field, and the troops passed in review.

PX, cigarette, and beer rations came twice this month, leaving us a good supply both times. Red Bullhead Pins and innumerable gift items were on sale at the Special Service Store.

The rest camps at Lake Como, Venice, Allasio, and Strassa received an increased number of officers and enlisted men from the 133rd Infantry this month. Allasio, which has proved itself to be the favorite spot for gaiety and relaxation, was the destination of 154 enlisted men who received rest camp passes. Due to the expanded recreational and entertainment facilities this rest area is capable of handling the most number of men. 7 Men leave for Lake Como and Venice every 5 days. The officers' quota to Strassa has been enlarged

to include 7 officers every five days. Beside the rest camp leaves, day leave passes to Turin are issued at the rate of 64 per day for enlisted men, and three-day passes are given to 15 officers every three days. While in Turin, there are numerous possibilities for entertainment. An Enlisted Men's Club for men of the division has been opened in a choice location on the Po River, and offers music, dancing, boating, a bar, and a writing room. Also, dances are regularly held at Club Lido. A more recent addition to the comfort of the men is the new Red Cross Club that was opened at the close of the month. The traditional Red Cross hospitality may be enjoyed from 1000 until 2200 hours.

Softball is apparently the most popular inter-company sport, judging from the enthusiasm it arouses. By no means in the background are the swimming meets which have been held in Turin. Lake Grande is the refuge for everyone who likes to swim, and transportation is made available for those who desire to heed the call of this beautiful mountain lake.

The individual companies have found great success in the dances which they have held. Turin seems to be the favorite spot, with music by the regimental band, "The Wisecrackers", to make the evening complete.

Beside the scheduled quota of rest leaves in Italy, this month provided for passes outside of the country. One officer and three enlisted men had the fortune to spend a week in Cairo, Egypt, and one officer and two enlisted men left later in the month on a plane trip which would make Paris and London its destinations. These advantages were only for-runners of the many such facilities to materialize in the near future.

June---a month of great internal change for the 133rd Infantry. Veterans left the unit; new men came to take their places. Impatient weeks, not knowing what the future hold in store.

For the Regimental Commander:

Laird B. Peterson
LAIRD B. PETERSON,
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Adjutant.