

After Action Reports of the 489th Armored Field Artillery Battalion (7th Armored Division)

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- Ruud Wilmsen of Harderwijk, The Netherlands – September-October 1944
- There are more months (see the images folder) of reports that have not yet been transcribed.

Edited by Wesley Johnston, son of Walter Johnston of Company "B", 38th Armored Infantry Battalion. All footnotes are those of the editor. The original spellings and format are generally retained in the transcript. Word wrap in which a line of text continues to the next line is not necessarily as in the original. In some cases in the transcription, the font size is reduced from the original, in order to keep each page together. If there is any question of accuracy, please contact Wesley Johnston (wwjohnston@aol.com) so that the original scanned images can be checked to assure that the transcript does or does not match the original.

S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS
489th Armored Field Artillery Battalion

BATTLE REPORT

PERIOD: 1 September 1944 -- 30 September 1944

September 1st found the 489th Armored Field Artillery Battalion remaining in their firing position at Glorieux, West of Verdun awaiting orders. The day passed without incident. During the night, enemy aircraft bombed Verdun and several of the Forward Observer tanks, then outposting the city were sprayed by close misses.

On September 2nd at 1300, the battalion received orders to move to a new combat command "A" assembly area three miles north of Verdun at the village of Bras. By 1500 they were closed in bivouac and received further instructions for a three-day maintenance halt. September 3rd to 5th were spent in the open fields about Bras in much needed maintenance work on all equipment. The battalion was preparing to move when the division was fully gassed.

On September 6th, the gas arrived and H-hour was designated at 1400. The 489th was to occupy its usual position of support to CC"A". CC"A" was to march in two columns, the south column consisting of two tank companies of the 40th, two infantry companies of the 48th, two 814th tank destroyer platoons, the 489th F. A. Bn. and trains in that order with the single exception of "C" Battery which was designated as advance guard battery. The north column which was much smaller consisted of one infantry company, one tank company, the 695th Armd F. A. Battalion, a battalion which had been attached to CC"A" for this operation. The objective of both columns was to cross the Moselle River north of Metz and establish a bridgehead.

At 1755, the battalion went into position near St Marie aux Chenes to support an attack on St Privat La Montagne, ten miles northwest of Metz where our advance elements were meeting heavy resistance. A preparation was fired and then the battalion fired at a number of Forward Observer designated targets of infantry entrenched and mortars. A total of 772 rounds were fired that day.

At 0700, on the morning of the 7th, the battalion registered and fired another preparation for a fresh attack on St Privat La Montagne. After the preparation, the battalion continued neutralization fires and later during the morning, the town was taken and the advance continued. At 1130, the battalion displaced forward with "C" Battery as advance guard. A temporary position was occupied, in the vicinity of Roncourt and "C" Battery continued firing missions supporting the advance guard. At 1600, a further displacement forward was made to Pierrevillers and the flat country bordering the banks of the Moselle river. Preparations were made to support a crossing of the Moselle, survey was started and registrations completed. During the afternoon and that night, the Battalion received considerable counter-battery fire from the heights overlooking our position and the batteries made an enforced displacement several times. At 2300 the information was received that it would be impossible to bridge the Moselle in the Talange sector. 320 rounds in all were fired during the day.

By 0800, on the 8th of September, orders were received that the crossing was not to be attempted and that the Combat Command would hold their present, area awaiting new instructions from the division. Supporting fires were continued to south and south-east where our advance elements were meeting infantry opposition and were receiving a considerable shelling from well dug-in and prepared enemy defensive positions. The 489th continued receiving intermittent counter-battery fire throughout the day and was forced to move to an alternate position. There were four men wounded during the day by shell fragments and one man killed, the first man to die as a result of enemy action in this battalion.¹

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¹ Pvt. Joe L. Manning

At 1730, orders were received placing the 489th in a task force consisting of "C" company of the 40th Tank Battalion, "A" Company of the 48th Infantry Battalion and a platoon of tank destroyers with instructions to move back to previous position in the vicinity of Roncourt to support an attack on Amanvillers south-east towards Metz. By 1830, the battalion was closed in position among the slag heaps of an abandoned mine near Roncourt and ready to fire within twenty minutes. Registration was completed by 2200 and harassing fires were fired throughout the night on important road junctions and suspected enemy installations. 1,057 rounds were fired altogether during the twenty-four hour period.

The daybreak attack on Amanvillers planned for the 9th of September was delayed somewhat, until the second combat team of the 5th Infantry Division with whom the attack was being coordinated could concentrate at Habonville. At 1115, the battalion was alerted for an H-hour of 1315. At 1315, a fifteen minute preparation, in which the battalion fired 923 rounds was begun on Amanvillers and at 1330, the tanks moved forward. At 1400, a report came that the forward movement of the tankers had come to a standstill in the open fields between St Privat La Montagne and the objective. F.O. #2 tank was knocked out, but firing on enemy strong points continued through F.O. #1, the Air Observer, and Battery "B" R.O. The Battalion fires called for by F.O. #1 forced the enemy to keep under cover and resulted in the withdrawal to safety of the crew of nearly all of the knocked-out tanks. At 1700, it was definitely ascertained that the attack was not progressing. There was no of the Second Combat Team. The supported forces withdrew somewhat to reorganize and little activity on either side took place during the night. After the preparation, 1542 rounds of supporting fire were sent out with considerable effect on enemy infantry, but with little or no effect on the concrete pill-boxes and fortress-like emplacements with which Amanvillers was ringed.

The 10th of September was spent largely in reorganization by the task force and the 489th fired intermittently through the day in their designated job of softening up Amanvillers. At 1800, a fresh attack was launched in a new direction east from Habonville by the tanks and infantry, but met with no more success than the one on the previous day and resulted in the loss of a number of tanks. At 2000, word came that CC"R" had been ordered to move to Pierrevillers in order to attack south and hit our objective from the rear on the following morning. A total of 1617 rounds were fired during the day.

In the early morning hours of the 11th, a plan for a 0600 continuation of the attack on Amanvillers by the CC "A" task force was received and at 0600, our tanks and infantry moved out in conjunction with CC "R". The 489th fired a preparation for CC "R" on the woods in the heights overlooking the Moselle to enable their infantry to move in and take possession. At 1045, a report came from the Liaison Officer that Company "A" of the 48th Infantry was 800 yards west of Amanvillers and moving slowly. All movement brought down heavy enemy artillery, mortar and small arms fire. At 1330, Company "A" drew back to attack on a new route thru woods to Hill 363 from Hill 346 after dark. A report came from CC"R" that they were working on a road block in their sector near Hill 370. At 1345 the First battalion of the Second Combat Team of the 5th Infantry Division requested a smoke screen in order to withdraw their troops pinned down by fire in Amanvillers. The battalion fired 2 rounds per gun per minute for 15 minutes of beso-ejection smoke and then running low on smoke ammunition continued with only one battery firing, for an additional 30 minutes. The smoke screen was entirely adequate for the purpose. At 2200, CC"R" withdrew from their sector to attack along a new axis sending three columns of Infantry toward objectives Hill 370, Bronvaux and Foret. 1899 rounds were expended during the day.

At 1000 on the 12th of September, CC"R" reported their forces two-thirds of the way to their objective of Feves. At 1800, the 38th Infantry, less Company "A", was added to the task force the battalion was operating under and given three successive objectives,

first, the high ground 3000 yards SE of St Privat; second, Feves in conjunction with CC "R"; and third, Metz. At 1900, the battalion R.O. went on a mission to select positions to ward off an expected Panzer counter-attack from the southeast. The Fire Direction Center prepared concentrations supporting road blocks at Malmaison, Gravelotte, St Marcel, Vionville and Rezonville. The attack never materialized and the battalion total for the day was 516 rounds fired in direct support of the augmented task force.

A night patrol sent out in the early morning hours of the 13th of September met some resistance and soon after daylight, the Artillery Liaison Plane went up to observe the quarry and Hill 306. The enemy were dug in along the draw De Wald Jauwont with two 88's some mortars and machine guns emplaced. At 1600, the plane came down to take the draw with one company of Infantry after an Artillery preparation. At 1900, the preparation was fired, 4 rounds per gun per minute for two minutes. The draw was taken easily as the enemy apparently made a hasty withdrawal. 723 rounds were fired during the day.

The 14th was a day of little action. The Battalion OP's were manned, but on the whole, the Infantry front remained inactive and little fire was called for. At 1200 a new Division plan was received. The 7th armored was to be relieved by the 90th Infantry Division and was to reassemble in the vicinity of Chembley. They would then follow the 5th Infantry across the Moselle south of Metz, swing in an arc about the city and finally seize the high ground north of Metz and east of the Moselle. By 2000 the battalion had been fully relieved by Artillery units of the 90th Division and at 2130, they pulled out for an assembly area in the vicinity of Champs.

The night was exceptionally misty, and the roads greasy with mud from a downpour in the late afternoon; so, after five miles of track and tank lined ditches, the column was halted. At 0400, the fog lifted somewhat and the battalion proceeded on its route closing in bivouac at Champs at 0900 of the 15th. At 1700, movement orders for the 489th under CC"A" arrived with instructions to cross the Moselle on the CC"B" bridgehead in the vicinity of Arnaville.

On the 16th of September, the battalion moved out towards the river at 0715. The Moselle was crossed without incident in a heavy smoke screen, but as the weather was extremely wet and the terrain knee-deep in mud, it was only with difficulty that the battalion was placed in position on the steep sides of a little valley one mile north of Arry by 1300. The 489th registered but fired no other missions that day, all artillery support coming from units west of the Moselle. Our position was apparently well known to the enemy for while it was screened from direct observation, harassing concentrations were dropped in on the battalion from time to time during the day and night.

The tanks and infantry of CC"A" started a forward movement at 0800 on September 17th. The weather continued bad and progress was correspondingly slow. Artillery missions were relayed to higher headquarters, but enemy counter battery continued throughout the day. By 1800, mbat Command supported troops occupied their line of departure, Marieulles.

On the 18th of September, the battalion went into Division reserve under CC"A" and was told to await further orders in its present location. During the day the overall situation improved somewhat--the weather cleared and the bridgehead expanded. All missions received were relayed to higher headquarters.

On the 19th of September, a new division plan was received, CC"B" to move east to Louvigny, CC"R" to move east thru Sillegny, CC"A" to be in reserve. The 5th Infantry Division was to move directly north and take Metz. At 1800, the battalion commander and the battalion RO made a reconnaissance of new positions in the vicinity of Mardigny and at 2000, the 469th displaced forward. At 2230, the battalion occupied a position in the cow pastures about Mardigny in order to support a possible movement of the Combat Command in a river crossing of the Seille in the vicinity of Sillegny. During the day, the 274th Armored Field Artillery Battalion had been attached to CC"A" for reinforcing fires.

At 0900 on the 20th of September, survey was started and by 1200, all batteries in the battalion had registered. At 1600, a preparation was fired in support of an attempted crossing of the Seille by CC"A". The FO's were with the tanks, the RO's with the Infantry and the Battery Commanders had established OP's on Hill 396. At 1800, the report came that the crossing had failed due to heavy enemy artillery fire and that the forward element

had withdrawn. After suffering serious losses, The battalion fired 1843 rounds altogether during the day.

The 21st of September, the situation remained basically unchanged with the supported units holding. At 1830, the battalion fired in serenade on Sillegny for a successful mission by the reconnaissance troops to secure information of the enemy and of likely crossing sites along the Seille River.

The 22nd saw little new. OP's were pushed as far forward as possible. A defensive fire plan was prepared on Division Artillery Orders.

The following day, the 23rd, plans were made for a night crossing by CC"A" on the Seille River south of Sillegny. Battalion received reinforced fires from the 274th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, an attached Artillery of the Division. Our counter-battery apparently was having good effect as the enemy artillery fires slackened noticeably. A total of 913 rounds of ammunition were fired in the form of observed and unobserved missions.

On the 24th, the battalion received orders to reassemble to the rear and turn their sector over to the 5th Infantry Division. At 1500, the 489th moved out and reoccupied their old assembly area in the vicinity of Chambley on the West bank of the Moselle. By 1730, we were closed in bivouac and maintenance started.

At 1600, on September 25th, the 489th received Combat Command order to move under the 7th Armored Division to the vicinity of Hasselt, Belgium. The battalion was to leave the XX Corps, 3rd Army and become part of the XIX Corps, 1st Army. Maintenance and preparation for the move continued throughout the day.

At 1230 on September 26th, we crossed the IP in Chambley. The CC"A" order of March was: Company "D", 87th Recon; 40th Tank Battalion; CC"A"; 48th Infantry Battalion; 489th Field Artillery Battalion; Company of Engineers; Company of Tank Destroyers. The route was Mars La Tour, Etam, Longuyon, Longwy, Arlon, Bastogne, St Trend, Hasselt, a total of 205 miles.

The march continued without delay throughout the night and at 1200 on the 27th of September, we reached our destination of Cothem near Hasselt, Belgium. There was no incident enroute and no stragglers. At 2200 an active road patrol was begun with adjacent units.

At 1800, on September 28th, the battalion received combat command orders to move north to a Division assembly area in the vicinity of Deurne, Holland. They were to operate in conjunction with the British 2nd Army in cleaning out a pocket of Germans in southeast Holland, west of the Meuse River.

By 1300, on the 29th, the 489th had moved out to their new assembly area. 1700 saw them closed in bivouac in a pine woods near Deurne. More specific instructions were received. The battalion was to move to an attack assembly area at Oploo. They were to move in one of CC"A"'s two task forces directly south to a final objective in the vicinity of Weert. The 440th Armd F. A. Bn was to reinforce our fires initially and then go over into direct support of the other task force in CC"A" when the attack swung forward. The fires of Division Artillery of the 11th British Armored Division, the Guards Armored, were to reinforce our fires in the initial assault. A detailed plan was prepared for the support of CC"A".

An early morning start was made on September 30th at 0600 for the attack area and by 0800 all the batteries were in firing position in the flat pasture land near Oploo. During the morning, the battery positions were surveyed and the batteries registered. The first objective was the small town of Overloon and at 1530, the Infantry and tanks moved out after an initial Artillery preparation. Observation was difficult for Artillery due to the extreme flatness of the terrain, and the intervening rows of trees at the border of every field. However, the Air Liaison plane did an excellent job of firing missions, OP's were established in windmills and the FO's called for considerable fire from their vantage point with the advance elements of the tanks and the infantry. Progress was slow and night came with the Infantry dug in near a woods north of Overloon. 1028 rounds were fired during the day which included a preparation of 358 rounds.

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H E A D Q U A R T E R S
489th Armored Field Artillery Battalion
APO 257, U. S. Army

GO/reb

1 November 1944

SUBJECT: Battle Report

TO : Commanding General, 7th Armored Division,
APO 257, U. S. Army.

The enclosed report is submitted in compliance with paragraph 2, Administrative Order number 31, Headquarters 7th Armored Division, dated 21 July 1944.

For the Battalion Commander:

(signed)
GUSTAVUS OBER III,
1st Lt, F. A.,
Adjutant.

1 Incl:
(Unit Journal, 489th (A) F. A. Bn.)

SECRET
H E A D Q U A R T E R S
489th Armored Field Artillery Battalion

BATTLE REPORT

PERIOD: 1 October 1944 - 31 October 1944

On the morning of the 1st, the Overloon operation, now in its second day, continued with the 489th Field Artillery Battalion in direct support of CC"A" and reenforced by the 440th Field Artillery Battalion. Starting at 0650 and continuing throughout the morning, neutralization fires were laid down on various enemy "Tiger" tank positions. At 1100, a heavy artillery preparation enabled our leading elements to approach within 1,000 yards of their objective, Overloon. Here, the advance was slowed down by entrenched Infantry and at 2000, plans were made for a preparation prior to the attack the next morning. 2,103 rounds of ammunition were fired up to 2400 that night.

At 0630 on October 2nd, the battalion fired the preparation that had been requested coordinating its fires with the fire of six (6) other battalions, British and Americans, that were in the vicinity. 1500 rounds were fired in two minutes. However, well-emplaced enemy tanks, AT guns, and machine guns prevented our supported unit from actually entering the town. At 1200, air support began--the artillery marking air targets with colored smoke. At 1900, a report came that the town was circled and that the tanks and infantry were going into leaguer for the night. A defensive fire plan was prepared and a check showed 1824 rounds of ammunition had been fired during the day.

At 0800 on the following morning, the Germans launched a counter-attack in some strength but were repulsed. However, the sector continued most active throughout the day and a good deal of artillery support was called for in the repulsing of small local enemy advances. There was some marking of targets for the attached planes and our normal harassing and interdiction missions continued uninterrupted. A total of 1545 rounds were fired.

October 4th turned out to be even more active than the previous day. The Germans counter-attacked in great strength on a narrow front along the line held by "C" Company of the 48th Infantry. The line held and credit for this was largely given to the cool, expert functioning of the Battalion Forward Observer present. He waited 'til the enemy was within 200 yards of our advance fox holes and then laid down a concentration right on them. In the resulting confusion, they started to retreat across an open field and the observer, calling for "100 short" every minute or so, managed to wipe out the greater part of a battalion before they reached the safety of the woods and their dug-outs. Air support continued and a number of other missions, totalling 2762 rounds were fired during the day.

At 0530 the morning of the 5th, a heavy German artillery preparation was laid down on our front lines with guns of light and medium calibre participating in addition to the usual mortars and Nebelwerfers. There were a number of local attacks and counter-attacks during the day, but the front lines remained virtually unchanged. At 1500, CC"A" received orders that they were to be relieved by CC"B". The 489th was to reinforce the fires of the 440th in direct support of CC"R" at present holding a line on CC"A"'s left flank. 1901 rounds of ammunition were fired.

During the early morning hours of the 6th, CC"A" was relieved and the battalion shifted over to its new missions without an actual change of position. The day was a quiet one devoted to harassing and neutralization missions with 815 rounds of ammunition being expended.

At 0900 of the 7th, a division plan was received. The battalion was to occupy a defensive position in the vicinity of Weert in direct support of CC"A". The combat command was to take up positions generally east of the town on a north-south line relieving the British elements that were holding them at present. At 1300, the reconnaissance elements moved out and 1530, the entire battalion was on the road moving south.

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BATTLE REPORT, 489th Armd FA Bn continued, page 2.

At 2100, the entire battalion had closed into their new positions among the small farms and orchards approximately one mile east and north of the town of Weert. A defensive fire plan to support CC"A" in this sector was immediately prepared with fire on roadblocks to be coordinated between all units.

By 1200, the Forward Observers with the 40th Tank Battalion and the Reconnaissance Officers with the 48th Infantry Battalion had relieved the British elements holding a line, Nederweert on the north, and Steenwel on the south and generally along the canal. To our immediate north was CC"B" and to the south, the Belgium Brigade. Division Artillery was in position to cover a maximum front and yet furnish additional support where necessary. Registration of each battery was accomplished and detailed defense plans were drawn up against the small German patrols that infiltrated nightly through our lines in this area causing some casualties and damage and considerable tension.

The 9th was a quiet day. CC"B" went into position on our north flank. A few missions were fired at various types of enemy activity observed along the east bank of the canal. Six observation posts had been established, but the only really good observation in this country was in the occasional church steeples in the local villages and this only on days when the ground haze wasn't too heavy. As for the rest, 1,000 yards was the maximum, the remainder of the view being effectively blocked by rows of trees, small woods, and the high earthen banks lining the canal and rising out of the surrounding flatness.

Activity was again slight on the 10th, 56 rounds being fired all day. Word was received that the 7th Armored Division was now attached to the British 2nd Army. An order came down from Division with instructions as to a training program to be carried out during the day while in this sector.

During the night of the 10th-11th October, enemy patrols, having crossed the canal in rubber boats, succeeded in penetrating our front lines and caused some damage by direct bazooka fire on the supported units, and half-tracks in the leaguer. The battalion fired several missions on call during the night and continued with their regular harassing fires, a total of 302 rounds being expended.

The 12th saw a lessening of enemy night activity, 181 rounds being fired during the twenty-four hour period.

The 13th again saw an increase in enemy patrol operations with an entry being forced into a small town where one of our OP's was located. No vehicles were damaged although considerable confusion resulted in the enemy's wearing of G-I winter overcoats and having located our positions with some success, they were able to lay down an accurate mortar barrage the next morning. Liaison was maintained with British troops in connection with Operation Constellation now in progress to our north. The general plan of this operation was to wipe out the German pocket in eastern Holland west of the Meuse River and then attack the important fortress towns of Venlo and Roermond. The 7th Armored was to play an important part in this plan once British Troops had pushed sufficiently far south through Overloon and Venraij and CC"A" had been relieved in its sector by the 15th Scottish Division, preparing to make a push across the canal there. The 7th Armored Division would then be concentrated on a narrower front to the north of Weert and attack through the center of the pocket.

On the 14th of October, the sector remained quiet with a number of harassing missions on German patrols being fired during the night. A total of 243 rounds were fired during this 24-hour period.

The 15th saw a definite increase in enemy activity. During the night, German patrols entered the position area of the small task force outposting the dairy at Steenweg and succeeded in destroying by bazooka fire several of the tanks and half-tracks of the supported unit. Our battalion observers reported many signs of movement across the canal during the day and the number of missions fired were considerably more than for several days previous, 828 rounds being expended.

The night of the 15th-16th was again an active one. German patrols entered the little Dutch town of El where Lt Judson Douglas, Battery "A" Reconnaissance Officer,

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BATTLE REPORT, 489th Armd FA Bn continued, page 3.

had set up an OP near the church, and a street fight with knives, grenades, and rifles ensued. The fact that the enemy were apparently dressed in GI overcoats increased the confusion. The day, however, saw a considerable tapering-off from the previous one with a total of 436 rounds of ammunition being expended.

The 18th and the 19th were very quiet with no change in the disposition of our own or the enemy's troops. There was a small amount of patrol activity at night by Germans crossing the canal in rubber boats. 758 rounds and 413 rounds were expended respectively.

At 1200 on the 20th, the 48th Armd Infantry Battalion, who had been outposting CC"A", was relieved by the 38th Armd Infantry Battalion. The battalion Forward Observers remained in their same OP's with the new outfit. Nothing but occasional sniper and machine gun fire were observed by our front-line installations during the day. Further to the north, CC"B" and CC"R" were reported to have canal crossings four miles southeast of Deurne after heavy fighting in that area. British elements had pushed south of Venray.

The 21st to the 25th saw a very definite lull along our front. Enemy activity consisted only of dug-in infantry outposts on the east bank of the canal. Ammunition expenditure was uniformly light, 335 rounds on the 21st, 234 round on the 22nd, 236 rounds on the 23rd, 401 on the 24th, and 295 on the 25th.

On the 26th, a clear increase in enemy movement on the other side of the canal first became apparent. A number of harassing missions were fired, the days total being 536 rounds. On the 27th, the increased activity continued all along the canal front. Artillery and Nebelwerfers pounded Nederweert, where Lt Donald Stelma, Battery "A" Reconnaissance Officer had established his OP in the church tower. It was the first shelling of any importance observed in the CC"A" sector since our arrival. This shelling rendered the church spire unusual as an OP by blocking the passageway. In the north, enemy counter-attacks were reported along the CC"B" and CC"R" front.

On the night of the 27th-28th, the enemy attempted a rubber boat crossing in force on the town of Nederweert. It was a clear moonlit night and when their intentions became clear to Lt Donald Stelma, watching from his OP located in a warehouse, he landed a concentration on them completely smashing their preparations. In the daytime, enemy activity went forward and the sound of hammering was clearly audible to our outposts on the west bank of the canal. Heavy shelling of Nederweert continued and Weert itself was subjected to a light shelling by Nebelwerfers with the target apparently being the bridges spanning the canal in town. A small task force under Captain Nelson, of the 40th Tank Battalion, was sent to clean out a pocket of Germans across of the canal north of Nederweert. Lt Edward Hayes, of the 489th, went as Forward Observer, with them. The days ammunition expenditure was 806 rounds.

The 29th Was a day marked by strong German attacks on CC"B" and CC"R" fronts directly north of us. Some local success was achieved. In our sector there was no counter-attack, but activity on the German side of the canal was reported by all observers. G-2 reports indicated a considerable number of new units in the area between the Maas River and the canal front. A liaison officer from the British 4th Royal Horse Artillery reported to our CP preparatory to supporting the division in this sector. No missions were requested from the British. 946 rounds were fired.

In the early morning of the 30th, elements of other units of the 7th Armored Division began arriving in Weert per division order to concentrate in the CC"A" sector after being relieved by the 15th Scottish Division in their own areas. At noon, a detailed plan was released for new operations. CC"B" was to relieve CC"A" and the 489th was to turn fire support over to the 434th. We were to continue in direct support of CC"A", a force composed of the 40th Tank Battalion, and 38th plus 23rd Armored Infantry Battalions. Our mission was to move east on division order across the north-south canal

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to the north of the town of Nederweert and then pushed forward keeping our right flank on the east-west canal in this area. Batteries "A" and "C" were laid in the new direction to cover the route of our proposed advance. Battery "B" remained laid in the CC"B" sector until the 434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was in position and ready for action. Harassing fires were fired throughout the 24-hour period in the old and new sectors, a total of 703 rounds being fired.

By 0600 of the 31st, the 434th had finished relieving us in the old sector. A complete fire plan was prepared for our new mission and CC"A" units began their movement for the line of departure. All the Forward Observers moved out with the supported units, three each being furnished with the 40th Tank Battalion, and the 38th Armd Infantry Battalion respectively. At 1800, Lt Edward E. Hayes, the Battalion Observer with Company "C" of the 40th, was reported a casualty. No details were immediately available. The supported units met heavy resistance trying to gain the assigned line of departure. 285 rounds were fired.

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BATTLE REPORT, 489th Armd FA Bn continued, page 5

- b. The name of the commanding officer of the 489th Armored Field Artillery Battalion during the entire period covered by this report was Lt Colonel James W. Milner.
- c. The battalion had 0 killed; 4 wounded; 0 missing; 0 prisoner.
- d. The following officers and enlisted men distinguished themselves in action:
 - (1) 2d Lt George K. Tanham, near Overloon, Holland. He continued to adjust fire on the enemy under continuous mortar, artillery, nebelwerfer, and small arms fire, and succeeded in holding the enemy from our position. He received the award of the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star.
 - (2) Staff Sergeant Robert D. Mask, near Overloon, Holland. Sgt Mask operated an Forward Observer's radio for three days under continuous enemy small arms fire. He received the award of the Silver Star

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