

HEADQUARTERS SECOND BATTALION
SIXTIETH INFANTRY
A.F.C.#9

SUBJECT: Battalion History. from Port Lyautey to July the 3rd.

On January 30, 1943 the Second Battalion moved from Port Lyautey by rail in the 40 & 8 type cars (40 Men & Horses), and in some cases you could tell by the odor that it hadn't been long since horses rode in those cars. However, straw was put on the floors and the men were fairly comfortable.

The trip took three days, each kitchen had a box car and cooked the meals as we went. Coffee was always available and made the trip a little more pleasant.

The following route was taken, Port Lyautey, Petitjeann, Fez, Taza, Guercif, Gudja, Tlemcen, Sidi Bel Abbas and Cran.

Upon our arrival in Cran at dusk, on the 2nd of February trucks from M.B.S. picked up "E" Company and took them to an area where they guarded prisoners. Later the trucks came back and took "G" Company to the Sports arena, where they bedded down for the night.

The remainder of the Battalion was moved by foot to Caserne Neuf, which was a three story building with a club room and wash room.

The officers had a building by themselves on the top of the hill with a shower unit installed. They immediately installed an officers club and entertained nurses. These rareties were enjoyed by the majority of the officers.

"E" Company was moved a few days later to Arzew where they were in charge of guarding German prisoners. "G" Company was detached and put on guard at the docks in the 3rd Port area, and worked directly under Major Schoenborn with the mission of guarding ships while they were being loaded and unloaded to prevent pilfering of government food and property.

They had two Summary Court Officers who would take care of cases as soon as they were brought up.

"H" Company handled the truck guards which had the same mission of protecting government property, and worked in conjunction with "G" Company.

"F" Company and Headquarters Company were chosen as the city M.P.'s and also had the job of putting on a retreat parade almost every night. They were called the "White Leggin Boys", acquiring the name from Molotov back in Port Lyautey. However, they had a tough job in controlling discipline in Cran and did a good job.

This kept up for approximately three weeks and the battalion was being fully equipped for the big push. On February 13th the battalion received orders to proceed to Relizan and that afternoon "E" Company and "G" Company were shuttled in trucks to Relizan. The Battalion Commander, Major Kauffman, secured trucks from M.B.S. and was able to transport the remainder of the battalion to Relizan on February 19th 1943. The other two battalions had to walk and shuttle their troops there.

The battalion remained in bivouac outside of Relizan and on February 19th "G" Company had a "squad in the attack" problem, which allowed

Then to fire ammunition and get prepared for further operation. The remainder of the battalion went on a cross country march.

On Sunday, February 20th, 1943 the battalion moved in a night motor march to a bivouac area near O'Learyville. The battalion bivouaced in an open field with mud up to the ankles. The following morning the battalion continued the march to L'Arba. The final destination unknown to the battalion. That night the battalion bivouaced by the side of a very sandy field. Parts of the battalion tried to get their vehicles in the field and the result was a few of the vehicles were stuck. Early the next A.M. February 22nd, the battalion moved to Aina M'ila where we spent three days in getting "shaken down". We slept in rain and mud for three days and were soaked through. Our footlockers and barrack bags were taken away from us and all excess equipment taken up. During these three days the battalion went on the range and test fired all weapons. The officers and NCO's had a problem in compass reading. PI supplies were issued to the battalion and others were bought by the different companies. The day before we were ordered to leave, The entire battalion was inoculated for Typhus, Tetanus and Typhoid and there were some pretty sick boys in the battalion. During these three days we saw our air support, hundreds of fortresses, P-38's lightening, B-25's Mitchell Bombers and other planes of our Air Force that were going out daily. It was quite a morale booster.

On the 25th of February the battalion was moved by trucks to Sou Chebka where we relieved the Rangers. Here we went into a defensive position guarding the pass, "E" Company was on the right, "F" Company on the left sector, "G" Company went into position in reserve. During this phase "G" Company put in a "Company in attack" problem, while the other companies fired in their defensive weapons.

Lt. Clayton the battalion S-2 and his driver, T/5th Grade Galivin were killed, while out on a reconnaissance when their vehicle ran into a large crater in the road which had been blown up by the Jerries.

"G" Company sent patrols and an outpost out to Thelepte, until it was relieved by "H" Company, then "G" Company reverted to Regimental reserve. Here the battalion remained until March 4, 1943, when it received orders to move to Feriana and occupy a seven mile front as a division C.P.L.R. On the night of March the 4th 1943 the battalion moved by truck to Feriana and went into position on the high ground overlooking Feriana. "F" Company had the mission of guarding Gouebblo Pass and protecting crossroads at Thelepte with one platoon in mobile reserve. "E" Company was the right sector and "G" Company in the left sector. The battalion spent eleven days in this position and dug in setting up barbed wire entanglement and laying mines. During this time the battalion received much mail and the morale was pretty high. On March 15th 1943 the battalion received orders to move to a Regimental bivouac area several miles beyond Thelepte in preparation for a move toward Sened and Maknassy. The regiment at this time was attached to the 1st Armored Division under command of old "Blood and Guts Patton".

The battalion moved in a night truck march to an assembly area some ten miles north of Gafsa. During this move a portion of the battalion was misguided by an I.P. who was placed on duty at a crossroad. Finally it was all straightened out and the battalion moved to its proper location. About 0300 the battalion had completed its move into the area. It began raining about midnight and all night long and the next day it continued. All the vehicles were stuck in the mud up to the axles. March the 19th, 1943 the rain stopped and most of the vehicles were gotten out of the mud. About 1700 hours the battalion received orders that it would attack the high ground west of Sened Station. The battalion was shuttled to an assembly area and moved out across country in one of the toughest foot marches of the whole Tunisian Campaign. "G" Company in the lead followed by "E" Company, Headquarters, "H", and "F" Companies, "P" Company being in reserve. Upon reaching the line of departure, (the foothills) "E" Company went into the left sector and "G" Company into the right sector. The battalion had one hour rest prior to jumping off. At 0530 the two assault companies crossed the line of departure and reached their first objective, "G" Company contacted a ten man patrol and exchange of fire from both "E" and "G" Companies caused the enemy to withdraw. Immediately following, "P" Company was disposed along the ridge lines on the right flank and "G" Company was sent across the range of mountains, policing and checking to see that there were no enemy in the hills. This kept up until late in the afternoon of the 20th, when the battalion received orders to go into an assembly area, and it was a good thing too because the boys were terribly tired. Hot chow was brought up about 11 o'clock that night and it sure did raise the moral. Another contributing factor was mail and a good night's sleep. Hot chow was served the following morning and the battalion was ordered to move out at 7 o'clock toward Sened Station and Sened. Formation was still the same "G" Company in the lead "E" following and "F" Company in reserve with "H" Company attached. Just as the Battalion pulled out of the assembly area the column was halted and the report came back that Sened Station had fallen. We were advised to sit tight until further orders. Just after noon the orders came back for "G" Company to be shuttled into Sened Station to police the town and defend it against any counterattack. All the $\frac{1}{2}$ tons were brought up to "G" Company and as the company loaded in the trucks, Jerry came over with about 12 planes and began strafing. Shortly thereafter, about 14 Spits came to our rescue and drove off the attacking planes and the company moved on into Sened Station. The $\frac{1}{2}$ ton returned and picked up the remainder of the Battalion. We had casualties in this strafing.

On the morning of the 22nd the Battalion less "G" Company moved toward Maknassy and attacked in the right sector. Fortunately no enemy were encountered. However, in the left sector, our comrades, the 3rd Battalion were less fortunate and ran into a tough fight.

Meanwhile "G" Company still back in Maknassy decided to attack Sened. Shortly after the noon meal, the company was shuttled in the two $\frac{1}{2}$ ton trucks and trailers to a company assembly area about 4 miles from

Sened Station to a position near Sened. The shuttling was completed about four o'clock in the afternoon. Orders were issued for the attack and the attack was under way about four thirty. Everything progressed well until the scouts contacted the enemy. Here is where Molotov went to work. He and Dekaree, the interpreter, held a conference with a group of enemy. Both aides had their conferees covered. This later involved the 1st Platoon Leader, Company Commander and 1st Sergeant, but the conference was to no avail and the attack was continued. There was a terrific fire fight assisted by a section of Artillery from the 91st F.A. Battalion. The company moved in behind the enemy and managed to capture 145 Italians and 6 Officers, plus 16 field pieces. Night fall stopped the attack and the company went into a defensive position for the night. At dawn the next morning, the attack was continued. The company was stopped by heavy concentration of machine gun and mortar fire, but after maneuvering into positions behind the enemy lines and silencing the machine guns and mortars, the company moved in and captured 352 Italians and 8 Officers, ranks of Major on down to 2nd Lieutenant. The company recieved very slight casualties, only three men wounded, while the enemy suffered several men killed and many wounded. Immediately the 2nd Platoon was moved thru the lines and drove 4 miles into the hills to exploit the attack and returned with 40 more prisoners. There was a large amount of booty captured, which was turned over to the 1st Division. While this was happening the remainder of the Battalion had moved into position to the high ground east of Maknassy and gone into defensive positions with "G" Company on the left and "F" Company on the right, controlling the high peaks to their right. At night the Assault and Pioneer Platoon would lay mines. The Battalion spent most of their time the next couple of days in digging in and putting up defensive wire and obstacles.

On March 24, 1943 "Q" Company moved to Maknassy and rejoined the Battalion for one hour then returned to 1st Armored Division control and was sent into the extreme right sector to occupy and guard the pass through Djebel Bou Hedma. It was reported around 200 enemy moving in that direction. The attack was repelled and the company remained in this position until March 28, 1943, when it received orders to move over into the left sector and relieved "H" Company of the 6th Infantry in a position in front of Djebel Hedia.

On March 29th the remainder of the Battalion moved over into the left sector and reinforced the line with 3rd Battalion 60th Infantry and 3rd Battalion 6th Infantry. Here the Battalion remained until April 12th.

During this period the Battalion carried out extensive patrolling and on March 31st, "F" Company captured enemy machine gun and two rifles by a patrol. The enemy shelled Hachi Wadi constantly and not a day went by that the Battalion wasn't shelled.

On April 1st at 0100 hours, "E" Company was attacked and they repulsed the attack, however a jeep loaded with ammunition was blown up. Planes came over and bombed the Artillery Position. "S" and "E" Companies sent out large combat patrols to contact the enemy. That day the Battalion was shelled by enemy Artillery and by our own Artillery.

On April 6th the Battalion in coordination with 3rd Battalion jumped on an attack, ran into stiff resistance and withdrew to original position.

On April 9th the Battalion received one of the heaviest shelling of the entire Maknassy Campaign. It was as the Jerrie was throwing everything he had at us, which later turned out to be just what happened. Waddi wadi was plastered from one end to the other on the night of the 9th. The Germans withdrew, one reason being that the British Eighth Army had broken through the Mareth line and had closed in on their rear. Our artillery gave them quite a beating also. On the 10th of April things were very quiet and the Battalion C.O. changed his staff and Company Commander around and made other changes within his Battalion. The staff consisted of Major M.B. Kauffman C.O., Major Arden C. Brill Ex. Officer, Capt. Max L. Wolf S-1, Lt. J. Nelson S-2, Capt. W.H. Barnwell S-3, Lt. F.M. Jossey S-4, The Company Commanders were, Lt. Sprindis "E" Co. Lt. Veller "G" Co. Lt. Langston "H" Co. Capt. Wolf "K" Company. During the Maknassy Campaign the Battalion had its first casualties since Port Lyautey.

On April 12th the Battalion received orders to move by truck from Maknassy back to a rest camp near Tebessa, where we remained for three days. This period was quite pleasant and the Battalion had a chance to get cleaned up and get hot showers, Food was very delicious, because we had been eating cold "C" Rations during the Maknassy Campaign.

On April 17, 1943 the Battalion was ordered to move by truck into the northern sector. We moved into a bivouac area for three days near LaCalle and rested here over Palm Sunday. During this time the Battalion was paid for the month of January. We were allowed to go swimming while here. The Battalion was moved on April 19th from LaCalle to Djebel Abiod and while trying to move, were up with trucks from 1st Division, French and British 1st Army. Trucks were jammed up on the road bumper to bumper for miles around. The traffic jam was corrected and shortly after midnight the Battalion was in position and bedded down for the night. The next day April 20th, the Battalion C.O. and S-3 went on a reconnaissance in the 39th Infantry area around Sedjanane. Before the Battalion C.O. returned, the Battalion had received orders to move by a night foot march on a route toward Sedjanane. The Battalion had a long march that night, but remained under cover all the next day. On April 21st in a night march across country, the Battalion moved into a position near Cap Serrat and relieved a Battalion of the Free French, who moved farther north. On April 22nd the Battalion moved to Djebel Mzed, 3 miles west of Djebel Krata. The Battalion received orders to attack Djebel Krata at dawn on the 23rd of April. The plans and a reconnaissance were made on the 22nd of April and orders were issued for the attack. Battalion was to attack in a column of Co's "F" Co. in the lead, following was "E" Co. "H", "I" and "G" in reserve. The Battalion crossed the line of departure at dawn and proceeded to Djebel Krata. "F" Co. encountered the enemy at Krata, and after a fire fight, maneuvering, and a bayonet assault upon the hill. They overcame the opposition capturing and killing many Germans. The Battalion Commander sizing up the situation ordered "F" Co. to organize their position and immediately ordered the attack of Djebel Dardys with "E" Co. in the lead and "G" Co. support in the attack. The attack was such a surprise upon the enemy that it caused disorganization and "E" Co. captured and killed several Germans. The Battalion captured much equipment and ammo. and immediately upon taking the first ridge on Djebel Dardys dug in and set up a defense.

The enemy showered artillery down upon the hill while the defense was organized. During the night of April 23rd, the 1st Battalion came in and relieved "F" Co. and the remainder of "H" Co. which joined the Battalion and reinforced the line considerably. The men had no food and their water was getting very low. The next A.M. April 24, 1943 came the eventful day that will never be forgotten by the members of the Battalion who were there. The Battalion was deployed with "E" Co. on the left, "F" Co. in the center and "G" Co. on the right. "H" Co. mortars were in position in the rear of the hill supporting the Battalion. The morning was very foggy and observation was difficult about 0745, the Jerries counter attacked our position. It was estimated and substantiated by prisoners, that approximately two reinforced German Battalion's attacked our position. Our boys opened up on them with everything we had and mowed down many of the attackers. This did not stop the Jerries however, because they had orders to take the hill at all cost. They continually attacked from every where and even though the Battalion had no artillery support what soever, the defense was so organized that Jerry could not penetrate it. At this stage of the game there was a little humor brought into the picture. Although it was not considered very funny at the time. You could see and hear members of the Battalion as they would shout, "They are coming from the right" at which time part of the mobile reserve would run to the right flank and reinforce it and drive the Jerries back. Then they would shout, "They are coming from the left" and the reserve would take off for the left flank. In this battle "H" Co. machine guns along with every man in the Battalion showed the type of American Soldier that he is and proved that he was better than the Jerries. All during this 4 hours of counterattacking the Battalion was constantly shelled by mortar and artillery fire but they stuck by their guns. When the dust cleared away, the enemy had withdrawn leaving 116 dead and many more wounded and captured. This was indeed one of the most decided victories of the Campaign and made possible the capture of Kasser, however great the victory, we had losses of gallant men, who we will always remember for their daring gallantry and bravery, twenty three of our comrades lay dead upon the Djebel and approximately 190 were wounded. Despite these losses the Battalion morale was high and a confidence in them which later on proved the ability of the men to be able to accomplish any task they undertook.

Immediately following the withdrawal, the enemy pounded the position with mortar and artillery fire.

During the attack the ammunition supply was getting dangerously low and members of the staff with a few who were slightly wounded, collected what ammunition was left upon the dead and wounded and distributed it among the men in the front line. In fact the ammunition was so low that the men were using German guns and ammunition.