

1 - 4 May 1945

## PHASE XVI

The European phase of World War II was fast drawing to a close on 1 May 1945. The Russian and American forces in the First U. S. Army zone had already linked up and the enemy split, confused and locking the innocent to flight, was surrendering in large numbers. The 29th Infantry Division, assigned to the Ninth U. S. Army and attached to XIII Corps, defended along the ELBE River line between DARSCHAU (110198) and SCHNACKENBERG (570002). In the Division rear areas Military Government functions were carried out as well as the control of Released Persons and Allied Prisoners of War.

The 116th and 175th Infantry Regiments occupied the front line positions at the beginning of the month with the river line from left to right being held by the 2nd Bn, 116th Infantry; the 1st Bn, 116th Infantry; the 2nd Bn, 175th Infantry and the 3rd Bn, 175th Infantry. The 115th Infantry occupied a zone in the rear of the 116th Infantry on the left. The 1st Bn, 115th Infantry and the 29th Cav Men Troop were detached from the 116th Infantry at 1200 hrs, 1 May. These units had formerly occupied positions in the left flank of the Division and they had been relieved by elements of the 8th Infantry Division in the last days of April.

On 1 May representatives of the German ZV (V-2) Rocket Division approached the 175th Infantry with an offer to surrender the entire Division. This offer was considered and accepted, and on 2 May the task of evacuating these prisoners across the ELBE River was begun. The first day more than 6,000 were ferried across and on 3 May the count was swelled to 9,974 Prisoners of War.

On 2 May at 2130 hrs a patrol from the 3rd Bn, 175th Infantry contacted elements of the Russian 5th Cavalry Division. Visits to the respective C's were made, and on the evening of 3 May, Brigadier General William H. Sonds, Commanding General Division Artillery, acting for Major General Gerhardt, presented the Russian General with a suitably inscribed "tommy gun" on behalf of the Division and a pistol on behalf of the Ninth U. S. Army.

MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF THE ENCLAVE MILITARY DISTRICT

5 - 11 May 1945

## PHASE XVII

Late in the night of 1 May the Division was notified by XIII Corps that it would move on 4 May to its former area in the vicinity of SCHWALENBURG (60065), STEINKENH (B9164), GUTERLOCH (B1268) etc. The Division would revert to XVI Corps control and resume its former mission of Military Government of the assigned area. As soon as this new mission was received the Division started preparations for the move and prepared to stop prisoner evacuation and to turn the entire area over to the 84th Infantry Division.

On the evening of 3 May, XIII Corps notified the 29th Division that their mission was changed with a consequent change in area. As the Division was scheduled to move the next day this required some manipulation, but the move was begun as scheduled on 4 May. The Division moved into a concentration area in the general vicinity of MUNSTER where preparations were begun to take over the mission of the 95th Infantry Division. Division headquarters was located at WARENDORF (B1772), while the 115th Infantry was located immediately north of WARENDORF; the 116th Infantry at ISSLEHOMST (B1672) and the 175th Infantry at BESELEN (B2670). All units got equipment into shape and received basic subjects. This mission was to occupy the

Enclave Military District which included the ports of BREMEN and BREMEN-HAVEN. The 29th Infantry Division (reinforced) was designated as Task Force Bremen. Additional troops were to be attached from time to time as they were available or the need for them arose. To further this movement of troops the Task Force was to operate an assembly area in the vicinity of MÜNSTER (A9374) with staging area headquarters at WERNE (A9210) and here troops were to be received, billeted and supplies prior to moving to the Enclave area. As soon as Task Force Bremen assumed responsibility for the Enclave area the Commanding General of the Task Force, Major General Charles H. Gerhardt, was to assume command of the Enclave Military District. In this capacity he would command troops attached or assigned to the Task Force, exercise area control, including all matters of military government and security over all U. S. forces in the district and coordinate the activities of the Bremen Port Command, Air Task Force Bremen and Naval Task Force 126.

The major ports of BREMEN and BREMEN-HAVEN are to be used as the supply ports for all United States Occupational forces. When the Division received the mission of taking over the Enclave, the area was occupied by elements of XXX British Corps and the 2nd Canadian Division, and it was those troops the Division later relieved. In addition to Task Force Bremen three other major units were to operate in the Enclave. Air Task Force Bremen, when control of the area passed to the Enclave Military District Commander, was to take over from the M.A.F. the function of disarming the German Air Forces and all personnel of these forces and to control installations in the area. In addition it was to construct, service and operate two airdromes in the area.

The Bremen Port Command was to rehabilitate and operate the two ports in conjunction with the Navy. The Command was also to take over from Task Force Bremen all German war material, factories, etc., and to accomplish the necessary documentation, storage and disposal of enemy war material.

Naval Task Force 126 was to exercise Naval control over the harbors and the WESER River and was to disarm and guard the German Navy afloat as well as to develop the ports in conjunction with the Bremen Port Command.

The 376th Infantry Regiment of the 95th Infantry Division had moved to the vicinity of Bremen before the 29th Division had taken over responsibility for that area and was guarding Naval installations in the vicinity. Accordingly the 115th Infantry Regiment was dispatched to the Enclave area to relieve the 376th Infantry in position, which it accomplished at 0600 hrs, 7 May. Co A, 121st Ingr C Bn and Co A, 104th Medical Bn were attached to the 115th Infantry and moved to the Enclave area with the regiment. Upon arrival the regiment was attached for operations to the XXX British Corps which unit was still responsible for the area.

As the 29th Infantry Division clears all units entering the Enclave area, two units, the 819th Signal Coort and the 104th Signal Service Bn were granted permission to move into the area on 5 May. The next day Headquarters and Headquarters Command Enclave Communications Zone were cleared to move on 9 May. The 3257 Signal Service Company was also granted clearance the same day. On 8 May the 121st Ingr C Bn moved to BREMEN and at 2100 hrs the same day was attached to the 115th Infantry Regiment. The general mission of the battalion was to take care of any engineer problems that the 115th Infantry might have, but especially it was to build a treadway bridge at BREMEN upstream from the British-built bridge in use. Two one-way bridges were essential at this point for traffic was very heavy. On 8 May also, the 1st Bn, 115th Infantry moved to BREMEN and took over the job of guarding the various installations in that area.

W-S Day, 9 May was celebrated appropriately throughout the Division. All units held parades and ceremonies and at Division Headquarters the Commanding General, Major General Charles H. Gerhardt, speaking to the assembled personnel of Division Headquarters and Headquarters Division Artillery, reviewed the Division's past accomplishments and spoke of the future. The 1st Bn, 175th Infantry and the Division Band participated in a ceremony at XVI Corps. Beginning on 11 May the long awaited film, "Two Down and One To Go", was shown to every available man in the Division.

The war in Europe had ended for the 29th Division. A war for which the Division had trained since 3 February 1941, and even before in National Guard days. From 6 June 1944 to 9 May 1945, a series of long, hard struggles through Normandy, Brest, Holland and finally Germany had been waged with victory always close, but still out of reach. Finally it had come.

On 10 May advance elements of Division Headquarters moved to BREMEN and on 13-14 May the remainder of the Division, less the Cavalry Recon Troop, moved to assembly area south of BREMEN. The 175th Infantry and the Division Artillery, with the 621st TB Bn (SP) and the 747th TK Bn attached, moved on 13 May to their new assembly areas (See Map Section). All 242-cranked vehicles, however, remained in the old area and then as transporters became available they were brought forward to the new area. The 29th Cavalry Recon Troop remained in the staging area to provide security for trucks moving in and out and the remainder of the Division moved to the new assembly area on 14 May.

Letter of Instructions No. 120, Hqs, 29th Infantry Division, dated 13 May, stated that Task Force Bremen would initiate the relief of the elements of XIX British Corps in the enclave Military District, that the relief would be conducted progressively from South to north and that it would be completed by 25 May. As each Regiment took over an area the Division assumed responsibility for it, but Ninth Army would not accept the overall responsibility until the entire district had been taken over. The 115th Infantry, with Co A, 104th Med Bn attached, was detached from the XIX British Corps on 14 May and the 121st Sqr (C) Bn was relieved of attachment to the Regiment on the same day. The Regiment, less the 1st Sqr, then proceeded to relieve elements of the 52nd (Lowland) British Infantry Division, XIX British Corps, in area B-1 and assumed responsibility for that area at 1600 hrs. (For breakdown of area see Map Section). The following day, 15 May, the Division assumed responsibility for area C-1 when the 3rd Bn, 175th Infantry closed into positions there and on 17 May the entire Regiment, less the 3rd Bn, moved to area C-2 and assumed responsibility at 1200 hrs.

The 1st Bn, 115th Infantry was relieved at BREMENHAVEN by the 3rd Bn, 116th Infantry at 1530 hrs, 15 May and moved to VEBESACK (AG909), and from there moved to area B-2 assuming responsibility at 1200 hrs, 17 May. The 3rd Bn, 116th Infantry, when it took over at BREMENHAVEN, was attached to XIX British Corps for operations.

Letter of Instructions No. 121, Hqs, 29th Infantry Division, dated 17 May 1945, ordered the 116th Infantry, with Co B, 104th Med Bn attached and less the 3rd Bn, to relieve elements of the 154th Brigade, 153rd Airborne and 152nd Brigade, all of the 51st (H) British Division, of responsibility in area B-1, B-2 and B-3 on the 19th, 20th and the 21st of May respectively. Accordingly area B-1 was taken over by the 1st Bn and Anti-Tank Co of the 175th Infantry on 19 May. The same day the 175th Infantry assumed responsibility for area C-2 and the Division Artillery took over that portion of the Canadian sector of the enclave area that lay south of HUCKE (AG226). On 20 May the Division assumed responsibility for area B-2 when the 3rd Bn, 116th Infantry relieved British elements in that zone.

An official "hand-over" ceremony was held at BREMENHAVEN (AG365) on 20 May. This ceremony commemorated the relief of the 51st British Highland Division by the 29th Infantry Division which was to be completed the next day. Major General Gerhardt, Major General Gordon Macmillan, Commanding General of the 51st Highland Division and Lt General Ryon G. Howocks, Commanding General of the XIX British Corps officiated and the anteroom was replete with kilted bands and flag ceremonies.

Permission was obtained from Corps to close the staging area, so the 29th Cavalry Recon Troop moved on Division order from its position at WERN (AG341) to new position in GRUHN (AG008) on 18 May but the 2nd Platoon was attached to the 115th Infantry and moved to W742958 where it again operated a staging area. Previously no troops had passed through the staging area because all clearance for movement and necessary arrangements would be made prior to the units move.



30 hours, by comparison with previous times. About the  
island and the island. I am not sure,  
I have not been to the island. I am not sure,  
I am not sure at all, but I am not sure.  
I am not sure at all, but I am not sure.