

ORGANIZATION · DAY



SEPTEMBER 5, 1945
TUTZING · GERMANY

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FROM THE ARMY COMMANDER TO GENERAL WALKER

From the landing of the XX Corps in England until the termination of hostilities in Europe, you and your Corps have been outstanding for dash, drive, and audacity in pursuit and in exploitation.

Your determination and great tactical skill were evinced in your capture of Metz and subsequent advance to the Saar and capture of Saarlautern.

Your reduction of the Moselle-Saar Triangle and the capture of Trier was a brilliant feat of arms. The operation*** during which you turned the Siegfried Line, destroyed the center of enemy resistance, and crossed the Rhine, finally terminating your victorious advance in Austria, was in keeping with your previous exploits and standards.

Of all the Corps I have commanded, yours has always been the most eager to attack and the most reasonable and cooperative.***

GEORGE S. PATTON, JR.

General



GREETINGS

On this, the third anniversary of the organization of this headquarters, I take great pleasure in greeting its officers and men and their guests, and in welcoming them to our celebration festivities.

The past three years have seen this headquarters directing combat troops in training and in maneuvers, moving these troops overseas, and finally leading them in combat. Each of you, officers and men, has contributed to the brilliant success of the corps' operations and hence shares in the recognition of its success. Its record in training, in combat, and in occupation is a high tribute to your worth.

LOUIS A. CRAIG
Major General, U. S. Army
Commanding

HISTORY

On the afternoon of 1 September 1944, a platoon of XX Corps' 3rd U.S. Cavalry fought its way into Thionville, France, and captured the main highway bridge over the Moselle River. It was the culmination of a campaign which for 24 days had thrilled the Allied World. Behind it the Corps had left a record almost without parallel in the World's history, a running battle in which it had knifed 600 miles through enemy territory, spreading terror and destruction throughout the ranks of the foe and killing or capturing more than 20,000. It had proved that the once proud German Army could not only be beaten but that it could be destroyed!

On this historic day, as the Corps paused to catch its breath and prepare for the great battles which still lay ahead, it could look back on almost two years of life.



XX Corps was activated as the IV Armored Corps in the Desert Theater of Operations, California, on 5 September 1942, by Lieutenant General (then Major General) Walton H. Walker who was to lead it throughout all of its fighting days.

For seven months the Corps Headquarters remained at bleak, spartan Camp Young, near Indio, California. Here it was welded into a cohesive team through training under the most rigorous conditions where the temperature ranged from 125 degrees to freezing. Here its officers and men learned, through doing, the hard profession of war. Here, in a vast maneuver area of 30,000 square miles of mountains and sand the Corps hardened its sinews and tempered its spirit for the great days which were to come.

On 29 March 1943, General Walker, with his Corps Headquarters, moved to Camp Campbell, Kentucky. Life was easier here but the rigorous schedule of schools, marches and maneuvers continued.

On 2 September the IV Armored Corps celebrated its first birthday. Highlighting the star-studded program was the world premiere of the motion picture, "Sahara", a desert war story, dedicated to the Corps which had played a major part in its production.

Two days later the Corps moved to the Tennessee Maneuvers Area for nine weeks of simulated warfare. These Maneuvers completed the long period of training and readied the Corps for immediate employment overseas.

HISTORY

On 9 November 1943, the IV Armored Corps was redesignated XX Corps. Despite this change its officers and men were never to lose their tanker spirit. The Germans were to pay it the compliment of calling it in official orders "XX Panzer Corps" and to fear its sharp and sudden armored thrusts.

Alert orders for overseas movement arrived about the middle of January and on the 26th Brigadier General (then Colonel) William A. Collier, Chief of Staff, departed with the advance party. Five days later, the Corps Headquarters entrained for the port of embarkation at Fort Slocum, New York.



On the morning of 12 February 1944, the "Queen Mary" left New York Harbor. She dropped anchor in the Firth of Clyde, just off the town of Gourock, Scotland six days later. The next day found the Corps on its way to Marlborough, Wiltshire, England, where it was to spend the next six months.

Marlborough, the home of one of the oldest public schools in England, proved to be a friendly host. Here the officers and men of the Corps made many friends and got to know first hand their British Allies. Here, too, for the first time, they heard air raid sirens that whined their tune in earnest. They added the spice of realism to the training which still went on. Everyone sensed that the day of action was not far off.



On D-Day the Corps was restless for battle. It watched with quickened pulse as overhead roared the planes and gliders taking airborne troops to battle.

There was not long to wait. In a few weeks the Corps Headquarters moved to the coast and on 18 July, 1944, boarded the Liberty Ship "John Campbell" at Southampton. Late that afternoon the ship anchored off Utah Beach, Normandy. As the famous legendary hero of the Corps, T/5 Henry J. Malportus, is reputed to have said, "this was it."

The Corps was committed to action on 4 August 1944, near Avranches, where its initial mission was the exploitation of First U. S. Army's breakthrough. Attached to Third U. S. Army, it was to become famous as the spearhead unit of General George S. Patton's historic sweep through France and to earn this great American

TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 1945

MORNING —

Swimming match (Starnberg)
Regatta — Würm-See
(Spectators on steamboat)

AFTERNOON —

Baseball (Tutzing field)

EVENING —

USO Show (Starnberg)
Pyrotechnics
Enlisted men's dance
(ARC Starnberg)
Officers' Club — Open house

FRANCE ★
WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 1945

MORNING –

Parade and Review
Award of decorations
Speakers
(Tutzing field)

AFTERNOON –

Gymkhana (3d Cav field)
Tennis match (Feldafing courts)
Golf exhibition
(Feldafing links)

EVENING –

Banquet- Buffetsupper (EM Club)
Tutzing
Boxing matches
(Starnberg open air theater)
Officers' dance (Yacht club)
EM Club – Open house

RHINELAND

★
EUROPE ★

HISTORY

soldier's thanks and praise. In this drive, too, it earned the appellation of the "Ghost Corps" because of its habit of moving rapidly and secretly to strike where least expected.



When the Corps broke out of Normandy it turned East at Vitre after having moved South to take Angers. Beating the First German Army into bloody impotence, it took Chartres, Melun, Montereau, Fontainebleau, Chateau-Thierry, Epernay, Reims and Verdun, to mention but a few, and came then to the Moselle River and the fortress city of Metz.

To the Corps was given the mission of reducing the 43 forts which surrounded the city — which Hitler had personally ordered was to be made another Stalingrad if necessary but was to be held at all costs. On 7 September the initial blow in the battle for the city was struck with an assault crossing of the river South of the city at Arnville. Heavy rain postponed the final assault until 9 September by which time the normally 300 foot wide river had reached a width of almost a mile in places.

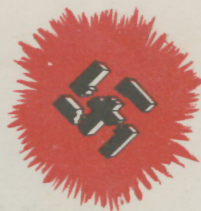
The Corps struck, without air support, at three points and attained complete tactical surprise. On 10 November the city was encircled and on the 22nd it was reported cleared, the first time since 451 AD that it had fallen by assault.



The fall of Metz destroyed the keystone of Hitler's defense. After it fell the Germans fought bitterly to hold the river line of the Saar and the Siegfried defenses but their efforts were doomed. Although forward progress was briefly stayed while forces were moved North to aid in stopping von Rundstedt's great attack through the Ardennes, our assault was soon resumed with a drive in to the triangle formed by the Saar and Moselle Rivers. In hard fighting the enemy forces holding this area were virtually destroyed. The attack was pushed relentlessly toward Trier and the city fell on 2 March. In capturing the city the Corps had passed another milestone, for in the battle it had breached and uncovered the Siegfried Line. The way to the Rhine was open.

HISTORY

Thus the back of enemy resistance was broken. From this time on, although there was much sharp fighting, the Corps was never seriously impeded and the issue was never in doubt. An assault crossing of the Rhine was made at Mainz, and Kassel was taken. Quickly changing direction, the Corps struck east across Central Germany to Chemnitz. Again shifting suddenly, although contact with the Russians was considered imminent, the Corps moved 100 miles South and launched its final attack through Bavaria. The attack continued across the Danube and to the Enns River in Austria where contact was made with the Russian forces. It was only upon orders from higher command that the advance ceased.

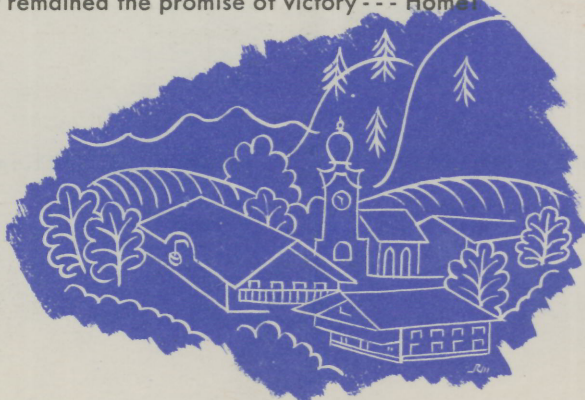


At 0847 hours, 7 May, the announcement was received that all the German land, sea and air forces had surrendered. The war in Europe was over. On 8 May General Walker personally received the surrender of German Army Group South, acting in the name of General Patton.

From its committal near Avranches to its last probings beyond the Enns, XX Corps had spent 279 days in combat and fought its way over 1300 miles. Prisoners taken totalled 431,419, equivalent to the destruction of 43 German divisions. The number of enemy dead and the amount of equipment destroyed is untold.



On 20 May General Walker was ordered back to the States and Major General Louis A. Craig assumed command. Its fighting over, the Corps settled down to occupational and police duties, but forever bright remained the promise of victory --- Home!



IN MEMORIAM

TO OUR COMRADES

KILLED IN ACTION

Col. Welborn B. Griffith, DSC

Maj. Alfred J. Scott, III, BS

Pvt. Paul G. Frank

Maj. Terry F. Overton SS

1st Lt. William N. Berkeley, Jr.,

Pfc. Homer Sturgill, BS

Theirs was the last full

measure of devotion

AUTOGRAPHS



ILLUSTRATIONS BY PFC JON ROD MORSE
PRINTING BY JOH. ROTH SEL. Ww. MUNICH



From the hedgerows of Normandy, across France to METZ, through the Siegfried Line, across the Rhine and Danube Rivers on through Germany and into Austria we have served and fought together. You have done your part well, and I say without qualification that the Officers, Warrant Officers and Enlisted Men of XX Corps have no equals. Your conduct on the field of battle has proven that to me. Your individual deeds of heroism will remain forever in the hearts of our people.

Halton H. Walker

Lieutenant General, United States Army

