



VII ARMY

LT. GEN. ANTHONY C. McAULIFFE

Commanding

VII ARMY ARTILLERY

BRIG. GEN. RALEIGH B. HENDRIX

Commanding



VII CORPS

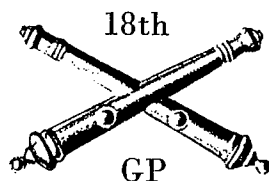
MAJ. GEN. JAMES M. GAVIN

Commanding

VII CORPS ARTILLERY

BRIG. GEN. ROBERT H. BOOTH

Commanding



18th

GP

18th FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP

COL. GEORGE A. CARVER

Commanding

690th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION



DESCENDED FROM

1st Regiment, North Carolina Field Artillery, 13 July 1917
113th Field Artillery Regiment 12 September 1917

Participated in World War I
BATTLE HONORS

Lorraine
St Mihiel
Meuse-Argonne

117th Field Artillery Regiment 1924
113th Field Artillery Regiment 1927

Inducted into Federal Service 16 September 1940, 2d Battalion redesignated the 2d Battalion 196th Field Artillery Regiment 16 February 1942. 2d Battalion, 196th Field Artillery Regiment redesignated 690th Field Artillery Battalion 1 March 1943

Participated in World War II
BATTLE HONORS

Normandy
Northern France
Ardennes-Alsace
Rhineland
Central Europe

Streamer in the colors of the Belgian Crois De Guerre. Embroidered Meuse River

Reactivated in the National Guard of the United States in North Carolina 25 June 1947. Inducted into Federal Service Camp Campbell, Kentucky 23 January 1951. Assigned European Command 6 April 1952

Organization Day 13 July 1917

Commanding Officer — LT. COL. DAVID G. COGSWELL

690th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION CREST ADOPTED 1949

THE FALCON ON THE MOUNTAIN REPRESENTS.
THE BATTLE OF MONTFAUCON,
NEAR VERDUN FRANCE IN WHICH THIS
UNIT PARTICATED DURING WORLD WAR I



3 FLEUR-DE-LIS REPRESENTS WORLD WAR I
BATTLE HONORS
LORRAINE · ST MIHIEL
MEUSE-ARGONNE

COURAGE PERSEVERANCE AND LOYALTY
MOTTO OF 690th F.A. BN.

690th FIELD ARTILLERY - BATTALION COMMANDERS



Lt. Col. Cogswell 1952



Lt. Col. Rodman 1947-1952



Lt. Col. Waston II. Willis 1943-1945

HISTORY OF THE 113th FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT

The Adjutant General of North Carolina was authorized on June 10, 1917, to organize a Regiment of Field Artillery as a unit of the State's National Guard. With the First World War already under way, and men of North Carolina already active in many branches of the American Armed Forces, little hope was held that a new Regiment of Artillery could be raised. This fear soon proved false, for enlistment applications for the new unit were heavy from the first day.

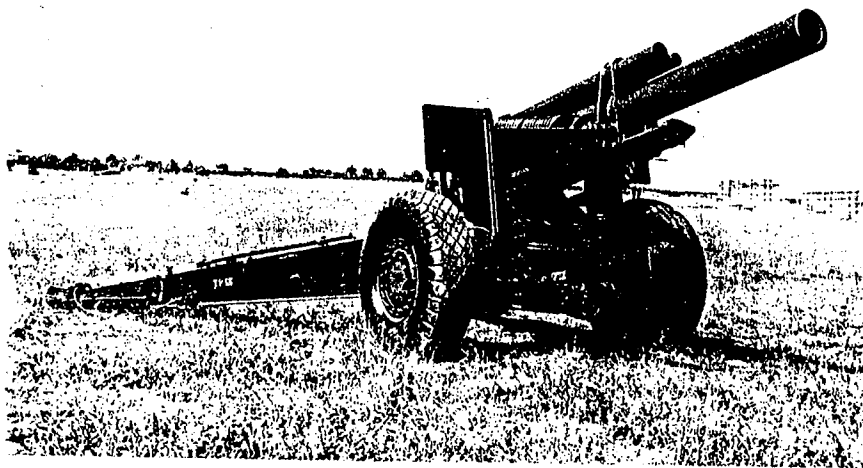
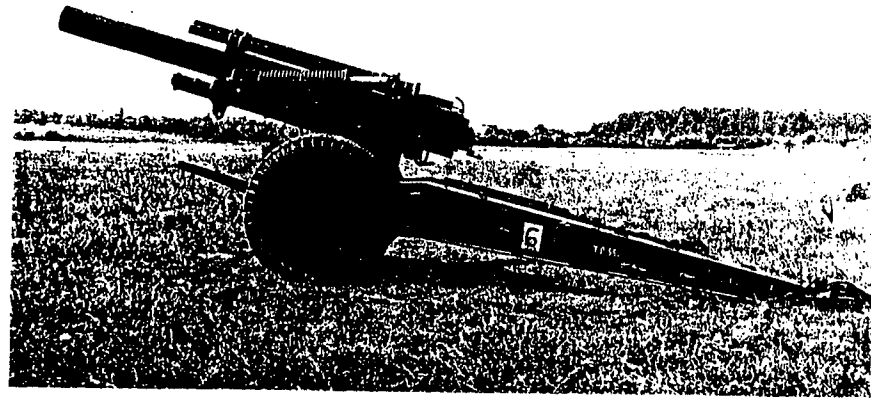
Captain Wiley C. Rodman accepted the first recruit for the Regiment, then known as the First North Carolina Light Field Artillery, at Washington, North Carolina, June 13, 1917. A month later to the day, the Regiment was Federally recognized by the War Department, and Albert L. Cox, Raleigh, North Carolina, was commissioned Colonel.

After temporary quartering near home stations, the Regiment was moved in August, 1917, to Camp Sevier, near Greenville, South Carolina, where it joined other units of the 30th Division, and spent many months in intensive training.

Life at Camp Sevier was hard, for the post was new and little improvement had been made on the rough ground when the Regiment arrived. Men of the 113th Field Artillery cleared their own parade ground, and many say that before this work was done, a South Carolina jack rabbit would not have dared enter the brush. As one company horseshoer put it: "I'm going to see the supply sergeant and see if I can't trade this blacksmith insignia in for a grubbin' hoe."

The first training in Artillery work at Camp Sevier was done with a wooden cannon, for there were no real field pieces available. Soon, however, American three-inch guns arrived and actual firing got under way. Much of this early training was lost, for upon arrival in France, the 113th was issued French 75's, and had to take fresh courses in their uses.

Now known as the 113th Field Artillery Regiment, the unit, after long training at Camp Sevier, departed for New York, and after a brief stay at Camp Mills, boarded the British freighter 'Armagh' on May 26, 1918, and sailed for Liverpool with the 55th Field Artillery Brigade, with General G. G. Gatley in command. Except for one submarine alarm, the voyage was without incident.



The 155-mm Howitzer

Arriving in Liverpool on June 8, the Regiment was sent to a rest camp at Winnall Downs, near Winchester, while a section went to a similar camp at Knotty Ash. The Regiment remained until June 11, when it departed for France, via Southampton.

After another course of intensive training at Camp De Coetquidan, the Regiment was ready for service at the front, and was sent into the St. Mihiel Salient, where the Huns had beaten a deep bulge into the Allied lines, a menace that the French and English commanders had long despaired of correcting. When General Pershing said he was going to force the Germans out in 10 days, he was warned that it could not be accomplished in six months. French and English commanders greeted General Pershing's proposal with alarm, and said the American forces would be butchered.

"At 2300 hours, word came to Regimental Headquarters that 'D' day was September 12, and at 11:30 p.m. came news of an entire change of program. Instead of 20 minutes of fire preceding the rolling barrage, firing was to begin at one o'clock in the morning and there was to be fire for preparation, harassing fire, gas shelling and every other variety of troublemaking for the enemy. These new plans had to be assimilated hastily, data worked out, and everything made ready for the big show less than one hour and a half away. Some of the batteries received their new orders less than three-quarters of an hour before the time set for the firing to begin, but they got ready. When the hour came, the 113th was all set.

"The night was pitch-black. Rain fell steadily. Rockets and flares continued to go up occasionally and there was an occasional rumble of firing far off, but in the area out in front of the 113th everything was quiet.

"While nobody was going over the top on that rainy morning at one o'clock, officers and men were keyed up to the highest nervous tension they had ever experienced. It seemed that the hour would never come. Watches had been carefully synchronized so that every gun, large and small, on that entire front would fire at the same instant. Out there in the rain the gun sections took their positions, the battery executive ran his pocket flashlight furtively over stacked ammunition, noted that every man was in place, dipped under cover for a last look at his data and

instructions, slipped back to speak a reassuring word to the eager artillerymen, broke away to listen to the last-minute admonitions from the battery commander at the other end of the telephone line. The minutes crept by on laggard feet. Would the hour ever come? The battery executive with eyes glued on the luminous dial of his watch counted the seconds. Finally it came. 'One o'clock', he called. 'Let her go'."

The Battle of St. Mihiel

"And there came an explosion that shook the very earth, rocked the giant oaks of the forest for miles around and lit up the heavens so brilliantly that one could have read a newspaper for miles back of the roaring, crashing front. More than 2,000 American guns, ranging from the 75 mm. gun on the fiery edge of battle to the giant naval guns on the railway tracks miles back of the lines, took part in this mighty bombardment, the greatest artillery concentration in the history of the world. During the action designated as the Battle of St. Mihiel, these American guns fired a total of 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition in approximately four hours. The magnitude of this battle may be emphasized by comparison with the Battle of Gettysburg, in the War Between the States, in which Union forces fired 33,000 rounds of ammunition in three days of fighting.

"Once started, there was no letup in the firing. Every gun was worked at top speed. The steady flares of the guns furnished enough light for the handling of ammunition and the eager artillerymen kept it pouring into their guns in a steady stream, hour after hour.

"The Infantry climbed out of the trenches promptly at five o'clock in the morning. They found the enemy wire in front of them ripped to shreds, their trenches caved in, their machine gun nests deserted or the gunners dead at their posts. The artillery had done a beautiful job of it.

"And the artillery was still on the job. Ahead of them, as per schedule, rolled a protective and offensive accompanying fire. They encountered pill-boxes, as the concrete machine gun nests were called, that had been missed by the artillery, and these they took with the bayonet if it could be done without too great a loss of life. If the pill-box could not be flanked or cleaned out with grenades, the doughboys sought what shelter the terrain afforded and sent back for a 75. Here was where the artillery-

man found a task to his liking and up across the fields and through the woods on a dead run would come a gun section, the men clinging on for dear life to the bouncing carriages and lying low over the necks of their horses. In less time than it takes to tell it, the 75 would be in position and spouting death and destruction in the direction of the obstacle that had held up the advance and in a few minutes the doughboys would go on again.

"It will be hard for those who did not see them in action that September morning, or encounter them later in the heat of the day, or mingle with them when the heat of battle had subsided by slightly to realize the exultation that swept through the 113th Field Artillery. No obstacle could stop them. When deep trenches and wrecked roads and bridges confronted them in what had been 'No Man's Land' and in the territory back of the old German lines, the horses were unhitched from the carriages and led, pulled or shoved across, while willing hands seized the guns and caissons and carried them over places that looked to be impassable. There was not time to wait for the engineers to build roads, and time and again on that memorable day the Regiment did the impossible, or what would have been the impossible under any other circumstances.

"It was a day of fast action. Starting at five o'clock, at noon on September 12, half of the work that the American General Staff had allotted 10 days for, had been accomplished. More than half of the distance between the bases of the salient had been covered and thousands of Germans had been made prisoners. The roads from the front back to the prison pen at Sanzy were full of them. The military police had all they could handle and more, and slightly wounded doughboys who were able to walk back to the rear were given squads of captured Huns to take back with them.

"Mont Sec, almost impregnable to frontal attack, had been virtually pinched off by noon of the first day and hardly a single American life had been sacrificed in its taking. This stronghold was raked by artillery fire from base to summit, but the main strength of the American thrust was at the bases of the salient and less than 24 hours after the drive started, those two veteran divisions, the First and the 26th, met at Vignuelles, the 26th coming from the west and the First from the east. St. Mihiel was no more.

First Casualties

"It was about 11 o'clock on the morning of the first day of fighting that the regiment suffered its first casualties. Battery E had fired with the rest of the regiment for four hours and in carrying out its mission as accompanying battery, was following close behind the Infantry. At a point north of Limey, in what had been 'No Man's Land', on the road to Thiaccourt, Boche shells began to fall around the battery. The entire battery behaved admirably under fire. First Lieutenant Allan W. Douglass, in charge of two platoons, was one of the first hit, but he continued to direct his men. Another shell struck one of the teams, killing four of the six horses and disabling the other two, then the shell that killed Lieutenant Douglass and Private William B. Melton, and wounded Sergeant Fred M. Patterson, Sergeant Walter R. Minish, Sergeant Edward J. Poe and Private Rom D. Kirby. Private Kirby died later of his wounds, while Sergeant Patterson lost a leg."

In General Orders No. 239, dated December 26, 1918, France, General Pershing said of the drive:

"It is with soldierly pride that I record in General Orders a tribute to the taking of the St. Mihiel Salient by the First Army.

"On September 12, 1918, you delivered the first concerted offensive operation of the American Expeditionary Forces upon difficult terrain against this redoubtable position, immovably held for four years, which crumbled before your ably executed advance. Within 24 hours of the commencement of the attack, the salient had ceased to exist and you were threatening Metz.

"Your divisions, which had never been tried in the exacting conditions of major offensive operations, worthily emulated those of more arduous experience and earned their right to participate in the more difficult task to come. Your staff and auxiliary services, which labored so untiringly and so enthusiastically, deserve equal commendation, and we are indeed indebted to the willing cooperation of the veteran French divisions and of auxiliary units which the Allied commands put at our disposal.

"Not only did you straighten a dangerous salient, capture 16,000 prisoners and 443 guns, and liberate 240 square miles of French territory, but you demonstrated the fitness for battle of a unified American Army.

"We appreciate the loyal training and effort of the First Army. In the name of our country, I offer our hearty and unmeasured thanks to these splendid Americans of the First, and Fifth Corps, and of the First, Second, Fourth, Fifth, 26th, 42nd, 82nd, 89th, and 90th Divisions which were engaged and of the Divisions in reserve."

The Argonne

Following St. Mihiel, the 113th Field Artillery began a long, hard march, hampered by ailing horses and rain, to fresh honors in the Argonne, one of the longest battles of the war. It was here that a Chaplain became an Artillery hero.

"It was here that Chaplain Ben Lacy won fame as an Artillery officer. Near the Regiment's position on the edge of the Blis de Montfaucon there was a complete battery of German 77's, with large quantities of ammunitions stacked at the guns ready for action. Chaplain Lacy had taken the full artillery course of instruction with honors, and he knew how to run a battery. The situation was critical and every available gun ought to be working. Here was a battery of idle guns. He went to Colonel Cox with the proposition that he be allowed to select the necessary gunners from various batteries of the Regiment and put the ex-German battery into action. His request was granted. From a German dugout nearby he dug up a quantity of German range tables, maps, firing data and instructions, and as he read German well, it did not take him long to learn how to handle his guns and teach his men. In a very short while he had that battery facing toward the Vaterland and hurling German ammunition into the ranks of the retreating Germans."

The battle was launched on September 26, and raged through the forest for many days. Taken by surprise, the Germans retreated in the first days of fighting, and then brought reinforcements in from every available spot in their lines. The Americans' position became grave once or twice in the counter-attacks, and one time when it was suggested by French and British commanders that, if necessary, the 113th desert its guns in retreat, the proposition was flatly turned down. Colonel Cox told the Allied command that he would never agree to abandon their arms. The Colonel was proved correct, the command scoffing the idea of such a desertion.

In General Orders No. 262, General Pershing said of the battle:
"It is with a sense of gratitude for its splendid accomplishment, which will live through all history, that I record in General Orders a tribute to the victory of the First Army in the Meuse-Argonne battle.

"Tested and strengthened by the reduction of St. Mihiel Salient, for more than six weeks you battered against the pivot of the enemy line on the Western front. It was a position of imposing natural strength stretching on both sides of the Meuse River from the bitterly contested hills of Verdun to the almost impenetrable forest of the Argonne; a position, moreover, fortified by four years of labor designed to render it impregnable; a position held with the fullest resources of the enemy. That position you broke utterly, and thereby hastened the collapse of the enemy's military power.

"You will be long remembered for the stubborn persistence of your progress, your storming of obstinately defended machine gun nests, your penetration, yard by yard, of woods and ravines, your heroic resistance in the face of counter-attacks supported by powerful artillery fire. For more than a month, from the initial attack of September 26, you fought your way slowly through the Argonne, through the woods and over hills west of the Meuse; you slowly enlarged your hold on the Cotes de Meuse to the east; and on the first of November, your attack forced the enemy into flight. Pressing his retreat, you cleared the entire left bank of the Meuse, south of Sedan, and then stormed the heights on the right bank and drove him into the plain beyond.

"Your achievement, which is scarcely to be equalled in American history, must remain a source of proud satisfaction to the troops who participated in the last campaign of the war. The American people will remember it as the realization of the hitherto potential strength of the American contribution toward the cause to which they had sworn allegiance. There can be no greater reward for a soldier or for a soldier's memory."

Post-War Years

During the period from 1921 to 1924, the old war-weary 113th was once again reorganized and with Federal recognition changed its name to the 117th Field Artillery Regiment. However, in 1927, the name was changed back to that of the famous 113th.

With the world at peace, the 113th Field Artillery Regiment rested. The period between World War I and World War II saw the 113th primarily concerned with weekly drills and summer camps. These weekly drill periods consisted of training in artillery fundamentals. During the summer months the 113th would go to either Ft. Jackson, South Carolina or Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and apply this training into actual experience. With the class room training in the winter months and the applications of this training in summer camps the 113th maintained their combat efficiency year round.

Because of the European crisis created by Adolf Hitler, a series of regimental and divisional maneuvers were begun in 1940. The first of these maneuvers was the "Louisiana Maneuvers" in 1940. During the months of July and August the 113th Field Artillery Regiment participated in combined operations with the 30th Infantry Division.

After this maneuver, the 113th returned to North Carolina and began a program of recruiting personnel to bring it up to full TO & E strength.

With the advancement of the German Army across Europe and the final surrender of France, the European situation began to look even more drastic than World War I. Poland and France had surrendered to the malicious German Army. England and Russia began to bear the burden of this useless war.

Return to Active Duty

Once again, the President of the United States called upon the various states to contribute their National Guard units for the defense of the United States. The 113th Field Artillery Regiment, the battle-scarred veteran of World War I, responded again to the call of its country. On September 30, 1940, the 113th reported to Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, for what was to be one year of active duty. However, this one year of active duty later developed into five eventful years of active service.

At Ft. Jackson the regiment underwent extensive combat training. February 13, the 2nd Battalion of the old 113th Field Artillery Regiment left the 30th Division and was assigned to Ft. Sill as school troops for the OCS, and for the basic trainees. While at Ft. Sill, the battalion had assigned to each battery four 75 mm Howitzers and four

105 mm Howitzers. These 75's were used for training purposes, whereas the 105's were the primary weapon of the battalion.

In the spring of 1942, the Army underwent a re-organization of its infantry and artillery divisions. The divisions were re-organized from an old-style square division, with 2 brigades and a total of four infantry regiments, into a triangular division, of three infantry regiments. At this time the 2nd Battalion of the 113th Field Artillery Regiment was re-designated as the 690th Field Artillery Battalion.

From Ft. Sill, the 690th Field Artillery Battalion moved to Camp Gordon, Georgia and completed combat preparation for overseas duty. From Camp Gordon, the 690th was sent overseas. The 690th sailed on February 11, 1944, from New York to Greenock, Scotland. The battalion was then quartered at Camp Crookston, near Glasgow, until February 26. The battalion then moved into their new training camp at Camp Sedbury in Monmouthshire, England. For the next eight weeks the 690th concentrated on more intensified training. After this training was completed the 690th sailed out of Southampton July 7, for the continent and for combat.

From Normandy to Leipzig

The first elements of the 690th Field Artillery Battalion to reach France landed July 8, 1944, on Omaha Beach, near Montebourg. These were Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, "B" Battery, and three vehicles from Service Battery. By the 14th, the entire battalion had been assembled in the St. Come-du-Mont bivouac area. The 690th had been assigned to the VII Corps as support, and then to the Ninth Division. At 1600, 8 July 1944, the 690th moved into position a mile and a half southwest of St. Jean de Daye. The battalion was to provide general support for the divisional artillery and, in particular, to reinforce the fires of the 26th Field Artillery Battalion.

At 2020 hours, 14 July 1944, the 690th fired its first round into enemy territory. The Allies, at this time, were waging a vicious struggle to break out of the hedgerows. The key cities of St. Lo and Caen, controlling the road networks to the East, had not fallen and Rommel's Seventh German Army, packed with its panzer and SS divisions, blocked the way at the base of the Norman Peninsula. For the next ten days the 690th Field Artillery Battalion fired counterbattery, interdiction, and

harassing missions, which knocked out vehicles and mortars, and helped blast a counter-attack led by Rommel's tanks on the 20th of July.

On the morning of the 25th, in the battalion's second position, eight miles southwest of St. Jean, after 2,500 Air Force bombers had put on the war's greatest saturation raid across the St. Lo-Periers highway, the battalion fired in the preparation for the big jump-off. Two days later, with the First Army offensive fully underway, the 690th moved to La Bosnordiere, three miles north of Marigny. On the 29th, when the Ninth Division moved off the line for a rest, the 690th was assigned to the Fourth Division. Until August 6th, the 690th was busy occupying positions and firing from Bourg, Hambye and Percy, returning to the Ninth Division on the 6th of August.

The VII Corps was heading south now with the Falaise Pocket as their objective. The 690th spent August 4, 5, and 6 reinforcing the 60th Infantry Regiment with 2,500 rounds fired near La Bourgerie. The 690th moved on to St. Sever Calvodas, on the edge of a huge forest, in which the Germans had placed one of their largest ammunition dumps. The following day, the battalion moved into position south of St. Pois. From here the 690th was in support of the 26th Field Artillery Battalion. It was in this vicinity that each night the enemy planes came over in force, bombing and strafing the positions of the 690th.

The southern loop of the Falaise Pocket was developing swiftly. On August 13th, the battalion travelled 47 miles southeast to Chatillon-Sur-Calmont, near Mayenne. The VII Corps then turned North. By the 16th, the battalion had moved up 52 miles to Le Poirer, four miles northeast of La Ferte Mace. On the 17th and the 18th, the pocket was being sewed up with most of Rommel's Seventh Army practically destroyed.

Meanwhile, General Patton's Armor cut off Brittany and sped to the East. The American First Army and the British, having cleaned up the West, now took off across Northern France. The chase had begun!

The 690th moved 75 miles to St. Anne, in direct support of the 60th Infantry's 1st Battalion in a flank holding operation. On the 26th of August, the 690th covered 80 miles, stopping at Avrainville, near Arpajon, some 15 miles southeast of Paris. The battalion then moved

22 miles to Coupree, east of Chateau-Thierry, on 43 more miles to Chasseny, and on the 31st of August ended up in the Montloue area.

At 1520 hours, September 2nd, while in support of the 60th Infantry Regiment, the 690th crossed into Belgium near Seloignes. The 690th Field Artillery Battalion was the first battalion to enter that country. The 3rd of September, found the 690th going 48 miles northeast to Les Geronsorts, near Couvin.

The following day, the battalion moved to Gochenee, 30 miles eastward and 2 miles short of the Meuse River. This area was familiar to the 690th for it was in this same vicinity that the old 113th Field Artillery Regiment made history in World War I. For the second time, this North Carolina National Guard Unit was fighting on the same battlefield. The 690th was determined to live up to the reputation of the old 113th. Throughout the next three days and nights, the 690th maintained this reputation. During the next three days and nights, the 690th gave the enemy, on the opposite bank of the Muese, a steady and merciless pounding. Direct support was furnished the 47th Infantry, with the firing batteries dispatching 1,937 rounds in 24 hours. Control of all battalions firing for the Ninth Division was taken over by the 690th Fire Direction, and the battalion's air observers had a field day. Not only did they adjust fire almost without let-up, but they also frequently assisted the Armored Battalions by locating hostile tanks and road-blocks.

By the 8th of September, the bridgeheads had been expanded and the pursuit of the Germans across Belgium had resumed. At this time the battalion was sent back into bivouac at Momignies, near Chimay on the Belgium border. From then until October 17, with the rapidly lengthened supply lines having created a serious shortage up front, the battalion's drivers and their vehicles were employed on the emergency "Red Ball Highway" 24 hours around the clock.

While supplies were being rushed over the roads, the VII Corps, had pierced the Siegfried Line in the Aachen Sector, and had assigned its "Fighting First Division" to the capturing of this vital city. On the 17th, three days before Aachen collapsed, the 690th mission was that of security police. Military Government, about to undergo the initial big civilian control test in Germany, was to have a combat-experienced unit

to assist in enforcing its regulations, maintaining order, and assuring that the laws established by General Eisenhower were fully obeyed.

Security Police work in Aachen, started on the 23rd, was a far cry from hitting the enemy with artillery concentrations. However, in quick time, the 690th was operating in close co-ordination with both the Military Government and the Counter Intelligence Corps.

The battalion headquarters and the firing batteries were organized into platoons and assigned security areas throughout the city and in nearby Eilendorf. In order to enforce curfew and blackout, to halt looting and spot possible sabotage, and to prevent civilian interference with military traffic, walking and motor patrols covered the city day and night. A house to house search for arms and ammunitions was conducted.

In working with the CIC, the battalion brought in soldiers who had recently switched to civilian clothes, chased down war criminals, Gestapo Agents, Nazi Officials, Hitler Youth Leaders, and pulled frequent raids on places that were considered with suspicion by intelligence personnel.

When the German General von Rundstedt launched his all out effort on December 17th, the 690th put into effect a carefully prepared defense plan. Aachen, anchor of the West wall in the North, was put under rigid military control. The VII Corps, turned back to check the drive south of Liege, was replaced by the XIX Corps and until the Battle of the Bulge, the 690th worked directly under General Simpson's Ninth Army.

For three weeks in late February, and early March, 1945, the battalion was under control of General Hodge's First Army. Cooperation with the Security Police, the Military Government and the CIC, having been proved a big success in Aachen, the push was continued as the VII Corps completed its swing up to the Rhine River, swinging east and then north to encircle the Ruhr Valley. By VE Day the battalion had made almost every key stop along the route through: Stalberg, Eschweiler, Duren, Cologne, Brilon, Arolsen, Warburg, Duberstadt, Uslar, Buren, Hettstedt, Halle, and Leipzig.

Between the Roer and the Rhine rivers, platoons and even squads from Hq, "A" and "C" Batteries were given regular Military Government functions in several small towns and villages. They appointed burgomesters, set up police forces, controlled camps for displaced

nationals, supervised housing, public health and controlled food supplies, at the same time carrying on their normal duties as security police.

Following up the breakaway from the Remagen Bridgehead as March closed, the battalion mission was twofold. On the one hand, it was rounding up prisoners of war, most of whom had slipped into civilian clothes, and Gestapo, SS, and Nazi characters on the CIC target list. On the other hand it was working with MG in the handling of thousands of foreign workers in the VII Corps area. At the war's end the battalion was deep in both types of work. "B" battery was stationed in Halle, the CP and other four batteries in Leipzig.

On the continent 10 months to VE day from Normandy to Leipzig - the 690th had accomplished its mission.

The 690th Field Artillery Battalion was deactivated on the 29th of October, 1945.

Post-War Years

From the 30th of October, 1945, until the 25th of June, 1947, the 690th existed only as a memory. However, in the spring of 1947, Lt. Col. Wiley C. Rodman, Jr. was interested in establishing the 690th as a National Guard Battalion in North Carolina. After having received permission from the North Carolina Adjutant General, Col. Rodman began a vigorous recruiting program. Col. Rodman recruited the first man for the 690th into "A" Battery, at Washington, North Carolina, in the spring of 1947. Thirty years prior to this time, in 1917, Lt. Rodman's father, Captain W. C. Rodman, had recruited the first man into the old 113th Field Artillery Regiment, also at Washington, North Carolina.

"B" Battery was organized with the aid of 2nd Lt. John J. George at New Bern, North Carolina. Lt. George had been a veteran of the old 113th Field Artillery Regiment and also had served as First Sergeant of "A" Battery, 690th Field Artillery Battalion during World War II.

"C" Battery was organized under the command of Captain James B. Tyndall, at Greenville, North Carolina. Captain Tyndall, a veteran of the 113th, served as Battery Commander of "C" Battery, 180th Field Artillery Battalion.

"HQ" Battery was also organized at New Bern, North Carolina, under the leadership of Captain Claude E. Hargett, a former Communication Officer during the War.

"SVC" Battery was organized by Captain Thomas W. Simmons, at Jackonsville, North Carolina.

"Medical Detachment" was organized at Washington, North Carolina, with the aid of Captain Franklin D. Bell, DMD.

The 690th Field Artillery Battalion received Federal recognition as a National Guard Unit on the 25th of June 1947, under the command of Lt. Col. Wiley C. Rodman, Jr.

Once again, the 690th began a program of intensive training. The firing battery personnel were to be thoroughly trained in the service of the piece, occupation and organization of position, care and maintenance of material, handling of ammunition, and the use of their secondary weapons. This training objective was accomplished in progressive phases - the individual soldier, the various sections in the battery, and the firing battery as a unit.

As proficiency in the service of the piece was gained, and a working knowledge acquired by all the sections in the battery, this training was conducted under increasingly realistic combat conditions at summer camps.

Following the summer camp training at Ft. Jackson, in 1950, Battery "B" was rated the best firing battery in the state of North Carolina. Also "B" Battery was rated the third best battery in the Third Army area, just missing the Eisenhower Award by 1.9 points.

The 690th Field Artillery Battalion was inducted into federal service on the 23rd of January 1951, to be stationed at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. Upon arrival at Ft. Campbell, and after an initial settling down period the battalion began a cadre training phase. This training consisted of receiving into the battalion numerous draftees, training them in the basic fundamentals of artillery and later transferring them to replacement companies.

While at Ft. Campbell, the 690th Field Artillery Battalion was attached to VII Corps Artillery for participation in Operation "Southern Pine". During this maneuver, at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, the 690th was in general support of the 82nd Airborne Division. This maneuver provided excellent training opportunity for the battalion, in that they were able to accomplish their mission in a realistic manner.

Overseas

On the 5th of January 1952, the 690th Field Artillery Battalion was ordered to prepare for overseas movement. This order required the 690th to make immediate preparations for foreign service and move from Ft. Campbell to the Port of Embarkation, New Orleans, Louisiana and thence to Bremerhaven, Germany.

Maximum effort was directed to the preparations for moving overseas. Through the combined efforts of the battalion staff members, the battalion was POR qualified. All personnel were qualified with the carbine, in the close combat course, in overhead artillery, in the machine gun infiltration course and in weapons familiarization. The battalion was brought to TO &E strength in personnel as far as possible.

On 1 March 1952, the advance party of the 690th proceeded from Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey for immediate departure to the Port of Debarkation, Bremerhaven, Germany. This advance party consisted of 2 officers and 4 enlisted men. The advance party, under the command of 1st Lt. Macon J. Moye, Jr., had as their mission the acquiring of billets for the battalion and the acquisition of the necessary post, camp and station property for the battalion.

The 690th Field Artillery Battalion officially cleared Ft. Campbell on the 22nd of March, 1952. This was one of the few battalions to have cleared this post with no discrepancies. On the morning of 23 March 1952, the battalion personnel loaded on the train for New Orleans, Louisiana, the Port of Embarkation. At noon, the following day, the battalion personnel embarked on the USNS General M. L. Hersey. A Navy band was present to welcome the troops aboard the ship and to give them a cheerful farewell. The USNS General Hersey sailed at 1800 hours, the 24th of March, 1952.

The voyage was made pleasant by such forms of entertainment as movies, talent shows and scheduled training classes. The USNS General Hersey docked at Bremerhave, Germany, on the 6th of April, 1952. The battalion was met at port by Lt. Col. R. P. Murphey, of the Seventh Army Artillery Section and by Major C. E. Clark of the 108th FA Bn, who acted as escorts for the battalion to their destination, Nellingen, Germany.

After arriving at Nellingen, the 690th was attached to the V Corps Artillery and to the 18th Field Artillery Group. The remainder of the month of April was spent in becoming operational. The battalion became operational the 25th of April, approximately two and one-half weeks after arrival in the European Command.

The principal training at this time was conducted by the firing batteries in preparation for the battery tests, which were to be given in August. Major Abbott C. Weatherly, the Battalion Executive Officer, acted as Chief Umpire for these practice tests. Although a definite shortage of personnel existed in the batteries, adequate training alleviated this shortage.

On the 22nd of June, 1952, the 18th FA Gp and the 690th FA Bn were relieved from attachment to the V Corps Artillery and attached to the VII Corps Artillery. Shortly after this transfer, Brig. Gen. Robert G. Gard, VII Corps Artillery Commander, visited the 690th FA Bn and briefed the officers and non-commissioned officers as to the mission of the 690th with the VII Corps Artillery.

The 690th received its first colored troops on 27 June 1952. This was the first step toward integration of this battalion. Previous to this time, no colored troops had been assigned to this battalion. To further the integration, troops from the 690th FA Bn were later transferred to another battalion undergoing integration. However, this situation has never created any problems and complete cooperation has been achieved between the two races.

On August 18th, the battalion went to Grafenwohr for the purpose of having the firing batteries take the Battery Test. From August 18th till the 28th of August was spent in practicing for the battery tests. Under the supervision of the 18th FA Gp umpires, "A" Battery took the test. The results of this test was a score of 95 per cent. This score was the second highest score ever given by the 18th FA Gp for a battery test. On the same day, "B" Battery took the battery test with a score of 78 per cent. The following day, 29 August 1952, Battery "C" under the command of Captain James B. Tyndall, took the battery test and obtained a score of 95.4 per cent. This was the highest score ever given to a battery by the 18th FA Gp. The greatest error that was made by "B" Battery was in their fire direction center. However, with more ade-

quate training and the rearrangement of a few personnel, these deficiencies were later eliminated. The improvement of "B" Battery was later demonstrated by the battalion test, which was given the 22nd of October, 1952.

During the month of September, the battalion began losing several National Guard officers and enlisted men. Some of these losses were: the Battalion Communication Officer, Captain Edward W. Paul; Army Aviator, Lt. Charles W. Warrington; the Battalion S4, Captain James F. Davis; and the Battalion Personnel Officer, W. O. Augustine Piner, Jr. As a result of these losses the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Wiley C. Rodman, Jr., assigned: 1st Lt. Isaac S. French, the Battalion Communication Officer; 1st Lt. John B. Fleming, the Battalion S4; WOJG John C. DeGram, the Battalion Personnel Officer. Also on the 25th of September, Major George L. Wickersham reported to the battalion and was assigned the Battalion S3. Major Wickersham replaced Major William A. Thompson who was transferred to VII Corps Artillery.

The battalion moved to Vilseck for further field training on the 13th of October, 1952. During this training period the Battalion Test was given to the 690th FA Bn by the 18th FA Gp. The battalion test was taken on Wednesday, the 22nd of October, 1952, under the supervision of Major W. M. Hogue, the Chief Umpire. The results of the battalion test was an over all average of 87.36 per cent. Major Hogue, stated in his summary of the test that, "This battalion is unquestionably one of the best, if not the best, that the 18th FA Gp has ever tested."

In accordance with VII Corps Artillery movement orders, the 690th FA Bn began making preparations for a permanent change of station from Nellingen, Germany to Crailsheim, Germany. Under the command of Major Abbott C. Weatherly, the Battalion Executive Officer, the advance party was sent to Crailsheim to prepare the new post for the arrival of the battalion. The battalion moved by rail and motor convoy to its new Kaserne, the 13th of November, 1952.

The 15th of November, 1952, the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Wiley C. Rodman, Jr., was relieved from this assignment and reassigned as Executive Officer of the 35th FA Gp. Lt. Col. David G. Cogswell reported as the new 690th Field Artillery Battalion Commander.

In order to establish and maintain desirable relations with the German Nationals of this area, Lt. Col. Cogswell, the Barracks Coordinator, formed a Christmas Fund Committee. Under the supervision of Lt. Col. Cogswell, this committee collected money from the 690th FA Bn, the 556th Medical Battalion, and other subpost personnel, for the needy German Nationals. A party for 100 children and their parents was given, the children received many Christmas packages. About fifty German families were given CARE packages. There are four orphanages and one D. P. camp in this area. These children were given gifts of toys and a small gift of candy.

With this Christian attitude the 690th Field Artillery Battalion looked forward to a peaceful and eventful New Year.

The 690th FA Bn. began the new year with re-newed anticipation for greater achievements. One of the greatest events of the year is the battery test. In January, the battalion spent two weeks at the Grafenwohr Training Area training for the test. Because of the extreme cold and heavy snow, this practice was difficult and hazardous. However, personnel of the battalion soon became adjusted to the weather and devised many labor saving devices.

The battery test was administered by the 18th Field Artillery Group on the 7th and 9th of April. "C" Battery started off in an excellent performance. However, the base point was misidentified to the observer and it became necessary for them to continue the test on the 9th of April. On the afternoon of the 7th, "A" Battery moved into position for the test. The entire test was performed in a superior manner. The results of this test - "A" Battery received a score of 95.91 per cent. On the morning of the 9th, "B" Battery begun the test in complete confidence. The occupation of position indicated a winning battery. Time came for the forward observer to send his fire mission to the battery - communications failed! It seems as though the driver for the forward observer was a little too camouflage conscience. He camouflaged his radio antenna thereby grounding out his radio. Consequently, "B" Battery received a score of 89.50 per cent. In the afternoon, "C" Battery continued their test and received a rating of 95.91 per cent. This tied the score of "A" Battery.

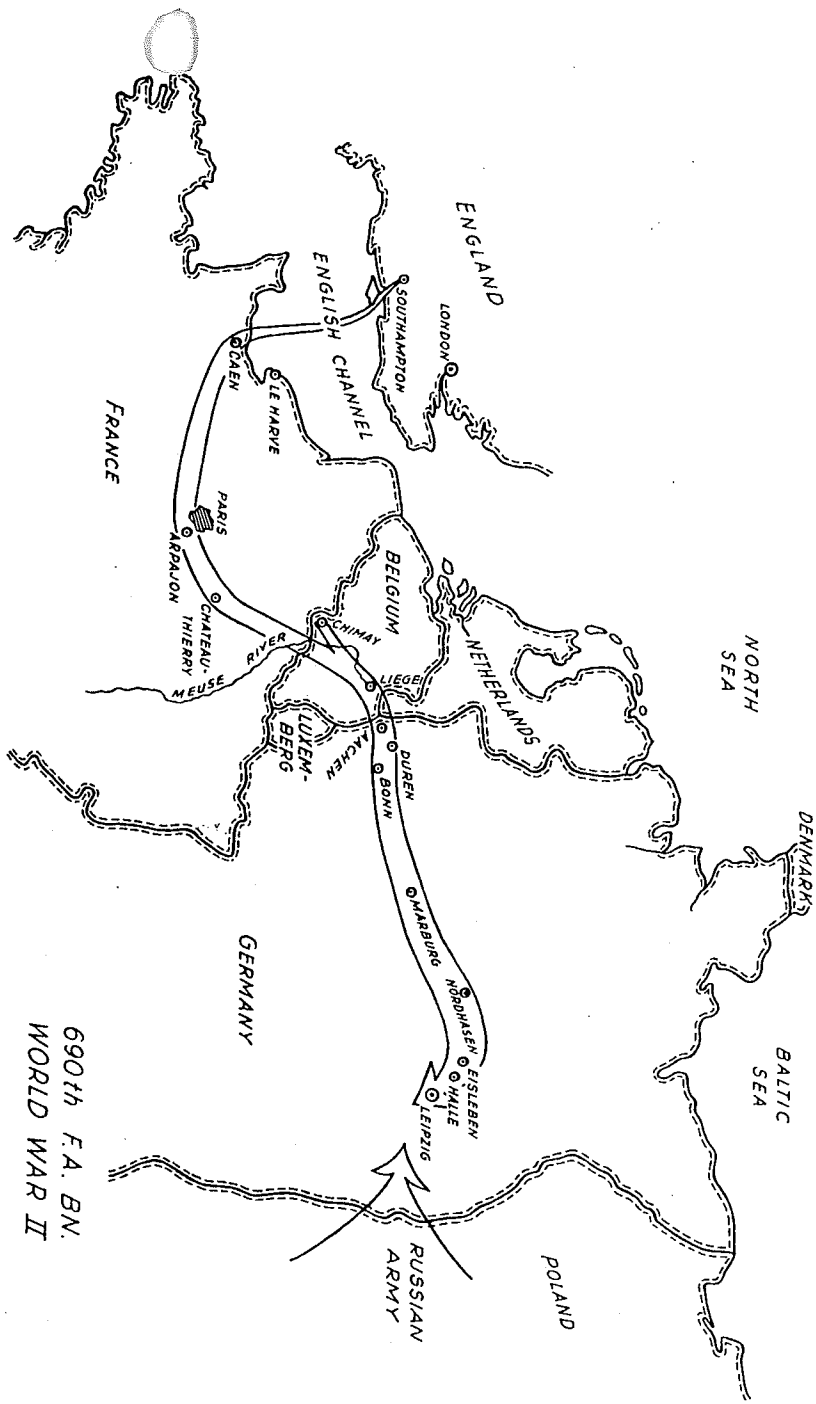
Shortly after the battery tests the battalion was given a test by the VII Corps Artillery testing team. The results of this test and the battery

test indicated that the 690th Field Artillery Battalion was combat ready and prepared to accomplish their mission in Germany.

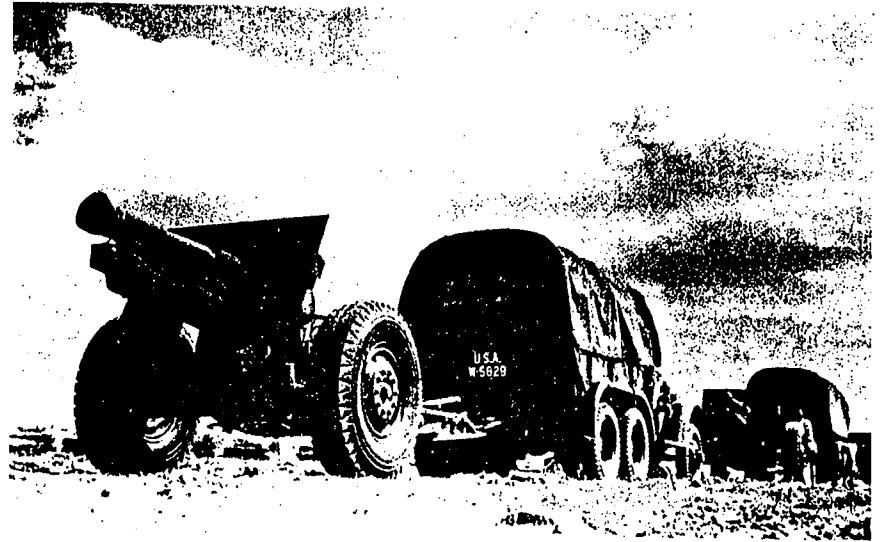
In April, Colonel George A. Carver assumed command of the 18th Field Artillery Group, relieving Colonel Wesner. Colonel Carver came to the 18th FA GP from VII Corps, where he was the VII Corps G-3.

During 1953, the battalion had many distinguished visitiers. Major General James M. Gavin, VII Corps Commanding General, inspected the battalion along with Colonel Carver, 18th FA GP Commanding Officer. Brig. General Robert H. Booth, VII Corps Artillery Commander aslo paid a visit to the battalion.

The battalion has come a long way since 1917. There has been many changes in personnel and materiel but the mission of the battalion has remained the same: "The Preservation of Peace".



113th FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT



The 155-mm Howitzer
"Moving out"



The 75-mm Gun "Ready Ram"
Primary Weapon World War I