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The 1st Tank Group held a CPX on 12 November, the 701st participating; all staff vehicles moved north of CAPUA on the problem, returning to the area at 1700 hours.

All "B" Company vehicles, except for one T-2 retriever, being present, the company was alerted on the morning of the 13th for further movement with CC"B" of the 1st Armored Division. This movement began at 2200 hours this date, and the company closed in bivouac in the Pignatara area (1st Armored Assembly Area north of the Volturno) at 2350 hours. One officer and nine enlisted men also arrived in the Battalion area this day with 7 wheeled vehicles and 11 trailers.

The following day, Sunday, Church Services were held in the area. Two officers and 42 enlisted men with 34 wheeled vehicles and 6 trailers also arrived this day.

During the following week a total of 28 wheeled vehicles, 16 M-10's, 1 T-2 retriever, 10 motorcycles, 3 officers and 73 enlisted men arrived in the Battalion area.

On the 22nd of November the Battalion moved from the SUCCIVO area to the 1st Armored Division forward assembly area in the vicinity of FIGNATARO, where "B" Company was already in bivouac. On the following day another CPX was held by the 1st Tank Group, the Battalion again participating. Seven M-10's and 15 enlisted men arrived this day, followed by 1 M/T and one enlisted man on the 24th. Thus, all vehicles, except two T-2's, were present and available for duty.

Mud had been holding front line operations on the 5th Army front to a minimum, but on the night of the 24th information came from Division Artillery (of 1st Armored Division) of a proposed allied offensive of a local nature (MT. CAMINO and vicinity - map coordinate G 953081, Map - Italy 1/50,000, sheet 160 II) to be undertaken simultaneously by the British and American troops. The Battalion, attached to Division Artillery, was

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to be in support of elements of the U.S. 36th Infantry Division. Thus, on the morning of the 25th the Bn. C.O. and Exec., Company Commanders and Platoon Leaders of "A", "B", and "C" Companies left in a party to choose gun positions in the vicinity of LE CAVE (coordinate H-0005, Map-Italy 1/50,000, sheet 161-III). Said party returned in the evening of the same day.

On the following day, Capt. Morrison and one officer from each line company left for the forward area (vicinity LE CAVE) for the purpose of preparing gun positions, roads to gun positions, and laying of telephone lines for proposed operation in artillery role. All work to be in coordination with 1st AD Artillery (In the coming operation, although the gun companies were to be under control of the Bn. Commander, all fire missions of an artillery nature were to be fired through the FDC's of the 1st AD Artillery Bns. "A" Company was to be attached to the 91st F.A.Bn., "B" Company to the 68th F.A.Bn., and "C" Company to the 27th F.A.Bn.).

The 27th and 28th of November were spent in preparation for combat and in loading the M-10's with 2 units of fire. Also, on these days details of men were sent to the LE CAVE area to assist in the preparation of gun positions (all positions were dug into the side of the hill to offer the greatest possible security for personnel against expected heavy enemy counterbattery). On the night of the 28th 13 $2\frac{1}{2}$ T truck loads of 3" HE ammo were sent to the forward area, and the ammunition dumped near the gun positions under cover of darkness (the intensive rains of the preceding days made this mission a difficult one).

The two T-2 retrievers of the Battalion arrived on the morning of the 29th from Africa. This brought the Battalion to full combat strength (all vehicles, men, and equipment having been shipped from Africa to Italy without loss due to enemy sea action). Seven more truck loads of ammunition were sent to the forward area and unloaded this night; also the Bn. Commander's H/T, the S-2 H/T, two company command H/T's, and 3 M-10's (the latter, one

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M-10 from each company for registration purposes). Due to the bad condition of the area inlet road, and the intense rains of the preceding days, the M-10's were left in front of positions to be moved in as soon as possible after daylight (during the whole preparation for the operation all work and vehicular movement was at night as far as possible, due to the fact that our positions were in full view of the enemy).

The following morning the M-10's of "A" and "B" Company were placed in the prepared positions (a "C" Company M-10 became mired in the soft mud, and was thus unable to register this day). Visibility was poor and the artillery FO's were unable to observe in the morning, so registration of guns was postponed until late in the afternoon.

At 1800 hours (Nov. 30th) the Battalion (A, B, C Co's. and Command Group) moved from bivouac in the PIGNATARO area (Bn. trains and Rcn. Co. were left in rear area), and arrived at LE CAVE at 1200 hours, midnight. The movement was made in complete blackout, and the roads were muddy and slippery. After leaving the main road, it was necessary for personnel to dismount from vehicles to lead the way. Two M-10's of "B" Company threw tracks coming into the area, and blocked the road for some time.

At dawn, the guns moved into their prepared positions.

Company locations on 1 Dec. 1943 were as follows:

"A" Company - 1st Platoon - 00313 - 05069
2nd Platoon - 00408 - 05481
3rd Platoon - 00339 - 05282

"B" Company - 00543 - 08836
1st Platoon - 00883 - 06229

"C" Company - 2nd Platoon - 00853 - 06049
3rd Platoon - 00808 - 05862

Map - Italy 1/50,000, sheet 161-III.

Albert B. Morrison
ALBERT B. MORRISON
Capt., 701st T.D. Bn.
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