Sturmpanzer.com

HISTORICAL
DIVISION

10 pages

Alfred Zerbel

Koenigstein, 7 July 1950

Index for MS # A- 992.

Question 5 about "Combat operations in the AACHEN sector, from September to November 1944.

(Alfred Zerbel)

Artillery

Excellent training in artillery fire control	2
Concentration of division artillery under GHQ	
Artillery Commander	2

MS # A-922
draft translation

Lt General Koecaling

PW No 31/G/3 110 438 Oberursel, 30 Jan 46

To the

Historical Division

The reply to the question 5 re:"Fights in the AACHEN SECTOR September-November 1944 " is submitted enclosed.

3 enclosures sigd KOECHLING

PS.

For the correction and completion of the questions (1-5) which have already been attended to, as well as of the remaining questions, the fulfilment of the list of quest ons prepared by me for Generals Lange (comdr 183 Div) Burdach (senior arty comdr 15) and Wirtz (senior engr comdr army group B) is necessary. I should therefore be thankful if the trip of Lt Gen v Mellenthin to Allendorf (Gen Camp). for the purpose of questioning other generals also could be made as soon as possible

sgd KOECHLING

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF MILITARY HISTORY
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Lt General Koechling

former Comdr of LXXXI Army Corps

Oberursel, 20 Jan 46

Question 5: During engagements in October and November the effects of the German artillery fire were often discussed. The number of arty guns in the sector of Eschweiler - Huertgen was estimated at about 200. Was this estimate correct? Did the German st ffs prepare special fire-control maps for the batteries in the Eschweiler sector in order to attain a coordinated effect and were these maps used?

I. For the nymber and types of the guns used in the above sector see appendix.

II. I do not know whether fire-control maps were prepared and used in the units firing.

The Staff of the Corps demanded

1. accurate and quick target designations and
2. quickest possible commencement of firing and synchronizing even big artillery forces on the whole breadth of the Corps sector.

In consequence of that no special arty measures for the sector Eschweiler - Huertgen were ordered; owing to the unfavorable army, corps and division boundary running right through the sector, the overlapping fire of the extreme flank units was regulated.

The success of artillery fore concentration depended on:

I. a. well organized and deeply echeloned observation posts for all kinds of arms.

b. the btry group chief had the order to be personally present at the chief obsevation point.

II. the complete range of mears for signal communication (wire, radio, flares etc)

III. biggest possible attention the arty comdr of the corps paid to the arty of divisions.

IV. steady practice of special exercises of fire control, ordered and supervised by the Corps, which were exercised both from rear positions (Corps, div staffs) and front observation posts especially by radio with smaller and combined arms units and which by and by showed remarkable results.

signed KOECHLING

Artillery guns operating in the sector Eschweiler-Huertgen

Middle of October 1944							Middle of November						
Gun types	116 Pz	3 Pz Gren	12	275	Corps	Army	3 Pz Gr	12	47 V G	275	89	Corps	Army
1. light inf gun		8	12				8	6					
2. heavy inf gun		2	4				2	4					
3. heavy inf projector a.		12	10				8	8	8				
4. heavy antitank gun b.		(8)	(7)										
5. fortress antitank gun c.												(10)	
6. light fortress-howitzer	10	20	24	14	12		16	30	24	22	9	20	
7. antitank arty gun					12							8	
8. divisional AA-gun	8	8	8				8	8					
9. AA gun of airforces					32							32	
10. light 10 cm gun	3	4			4		3					7	
11. heavy fortress-howitzer	7	8	10		32		6	8	9			38	
12. 12,2 cm (Russian) gun					4							4	
13. 17,5 cm gun					2							4	
14. 21 cm howitzer (Moerser)				3	9							15	
15. railroad gun						2							2
16. 21 cm gun						2							2
17. 38,5 cm assault gun												4	
18. rocket launcher d.		18											
19. assault gun or Pz e.													
altogether (without ()):			276						303				
1-4. infantry-guns			48						44				
18. rocket launcher of projector troops			18										
8-9. AAA of the div airforces			56						48				
artillery-guns			154						211				

These numbers do not pretend to be absoltely correct.

Comments: to a. extreme shortage of ammunition, therfore firing orders stipulated number of shots to be made

b. in addition to antitann defense committed often as artillery;

c. the fortress-antitank guns were committed east of the Roer; took part in artillery duels only end of November when the American troops came near to Roer.

d. one battalion ~~-------~~ was committed on the 15-18 Oct to support the attack of the 3 Pz Gr Div south west of the Eschweiler. The whole projection brigade 16 was committed at Roer only end of November;

e. all assault-guns of Pz, in addition to fighting tanks, have repeatedly been used as aty(dired fire) guns, as well as in capacity of moving observation posts for the Div artillery.

KOECHLING

END OF FILE