

# If Ordered to the Armored Force

By Col. W. F. Millice, FA

A great many OCS graduates (as well as older officers) reporting to the Armored Force for the first time have a faulty conception of the Field Artillery in the Armored Force. Among their beliefs are:

- (1) Crossed guns on collars are changed to tanks.
- (2) You shoot when you see the whites of their eyes.
- (3) Armored Artillery fires battalion concentrations at 35 miles per hour (even faster before rubber conservation).
- (4) In short, 100% change.

In order to dispel the above ideas as well as others not mentioned, the following notes are given in a desire to assist the new Field Artillery Armored Raider.

Armored Artillery enlisted men wear red piping on their caps. Batteries carry red guidons. Officers wear the conventional crossed cannons similar to all Field Artillery, except that the number is omitted from the upper crotch.

The three prime requisites of Field Artillery, since the days of Hannibal's catapults, have always been Fire Power, Mobility, and Communication. Armored Artillery merely magnifies each of these basic requisites.

Fire power of each Armored Artillery unit is over 50% larger than that of other Field Artillery units, the battery employing six 105-mm. howitzers. Because of the mission to support tanks and motorized infantry, more small arms and close defense weapons are found in Armored Field Artillery—less protection can be expected from the supported troops. Over 95% of the fire delivered will probably be indirect from defiladed positions. In short, the only change for each Armored Artillery man is the greater fire power he must direct.

In supporting tanks and motorized infantry, the Artillery must have mobility. This does not include peeps and jeeps with wings and propellers. It does include vehicles capable of great cross-country mobility, able to change position rapidly. Self-propelled artillery is the logical answer. This artillery offers close support to the advancing tanks and their ground-holding, entrucked foot-soldiers. Continuous support is offered by usual Field Artillery forward observers and liaison methods, the only difference being more frequent changes of position by both observer and battery because of the mobility of the supported troops.

For the information of the uninitiated tank battles are a combination of fire and movement with many repetitions of the sequence *stop, shoot, and move*. And this movement is at only a very small fraction of 35 mph. Most artillerymen have fired at moving targets and noted the difficulties of such fire; add to this a movement of the gun,

and even the uninitiated can see why self-propelled artillery and tanks stop to fire at all targets more than a foot from the muzzle. Ammunition weighs too much to waste it in doing the spring plowing.

Who said the Armored Artillery used no surveys or observed fire charts? Certainly both are used — and probably to a greater extent than by other artillery. Methods involving hours to build up such surveys are *not* used, however. The frequent changes of position do not give instrument details three or four hours of daylight "the day before." Each battalion may occupy five or more positions tomorrow. The tanks you support have not yet chased the enemy from these five positions, and the enemy now occupying them do not welcome survey parties in daylight the day before. Rapid survey methods are the answer, in order that accurate support of several six-gun batteries can assist the Tanker forward *now*. The Tanker can not dig fox holes for his tank, and when he needs help it is now and in volume, not next week or in small quantities. The basic fundamental in mobility is now, was, and ever shall be training of drivers in maintenance, operation, and capabilities of their vehicles.

Armored Artillery communications must be keyed to the mobility and fire power outlined above. Since mobility keeps the artillery S-3 map changing so rapidly, all pins (as well as red and blue pencils) are mounted on rollers. Radio communication is therefore, of necessity, more used than in other artillery. Wire, visual, and runner (both mounted and dismounted) are not neglected, however, because the message must go through as every artilleryman well knows.

It is hoped the foregoing will help dispel some of the embryonic Armored Artilleryman's erroneous mental cerebrations. S.O.P. for all artillery is to use all fire power, mobility, and communications by sound methods. S.O.P. for Armored Artillery is the use of *all* fire power (plus), mobility (plus), and communications (plus) by any and all sound methods.

If you are ordered to a newly organized armored unit you and all artillerymen so assigned are eligible as instructors in basic artillery subjects in gunnery schools operated for tankers. Good, well rounded artillerymen take these additional duties in their stride. These instructors, in preparation, restudy their fundamentals and learn a few new commands to replace such age-old artillery commands as *Fall out One* (FM 23-7, par. 72).

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*If ordered anywhere give us your change of address!*