

HEADQUARTERS  
601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464 U. S. ARMY

2 July 1944

SUBJECT: Reports of Operations for Period 1 - 30 June 1944

TO : Commanding General, Third Infantry Division, APO #3, US Army

A. SUMMARY OF OUR OPERATIONS:

601st Tank Destroyer Battalion (with Company "A" - towed 3" guns -, 805th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached) continued to remain attached to Third Infantry Division at the opening of the period. Company "A" supported advance of 30th Infantry Regiment; Company "B" supported advance of 15th Infantry Regiment; one (1) Platoon, Company "C" supported advance of Special Service Force; two (2) Platoons remaining in Division Reserve. Two (2) Platoons, Reconnaissance Company attached to and supported advance of Companies "A" and "B".

Mission, Third Infantry Division: Continue attack towards and seize VALMONTONE (coords. 281590), prepared to continue attack N towards PALESTINA (coords. 083415). Mission, 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion: Continue to support advance Third Infantry Division by direct fire and render anti-tank defense within Division Sector.

The Battalion closely supported the advance of friendly infantry elements with direct fire, being employed in an assault gun role on enemy vehicles, machine gun nests, and groups of enemy infantry, etc. Targets of opportunity such as tanks, self-propelled guns, etc., were taken under fire on sight with excellent results.

The first week of the period was characterized initially by stubborn enemy resistance vicinity VALMONTONE and north towards PALESTINA. When this resistance was broken, a general withdrawal of the enemy turned into a disorganized retreat. The Battalion fanned out over a wide front in close pursuit, assisting entrapped infantry in reducing enemy road blocks and dispersing small pockets of enemy infantry supported by one or two tanks or self-propelled guns. The movement of the Division swung towards ROME and such was its rapidity that units of the Battalion became widely separated while supporting various fast-moving Task Forces speeding towards the TIBER. Difficult problems of supply were satisfactorily solved by contact with radio and use of guides to forward elements.

The latter three-fourths of the period found the Battalion attached successively to II Corps, II Corps Artillery, 89th Infantry Division (in II Corps), and final return to Third Infantry Division (in VI Corps). Liaison, bivouac areas, training programs were established with succeeding higher units only to be abandoned on receipt of new orders. Meanwhile the Battalion assembled East of ROME and underwent a period of rest, rehabilitation and recreation in the ROME Area. Successive road movements were made to the OSTIA LIDO area, ANZIO staging area and finally closed vicinity QUALIANO, north of NAPLES where the Battalion remained at the close of the period.

Final week of the period found the Battalion completing reconnaissance of training areas, establishing camp vicinity QUALIANO, drawing up a training program involving amphibious practices on the beach landing craft, and completing reconnaissance under a M1E T/E and T/G. (For details, see Annex #1, Summary of Events.)

**DOWNGRADED TO:  
CLASSIFICATION REMOVED**

BY AUTHORITY OF TAG JFS

13 Dec 45 HSD  
Date Initials

**b. SUMMARY OF ENEMY OPERATIONS:**

Enemy operations involving this organization were confined initially to blocking our destroyers supporting friendly infantry in assaulting VALANTONE and PALISTRINA and finally to supporting by direct fire the reduction of his small pockets of resistance holding up the Fifth Army advance on ROME. The German would fire on our destroyers with one or two tanks or self-propelled guns from behind successive natural barriers along his route of withdrawal to the North.

He would harass our tank crews with long range machine gun, machine pistol and sniper fire. Destroyer Commanders in turn would direct fire on suspected or known targets of opportunity such as houses, haystacks, woods, ditches, etc., behind or in which the enemy had sought temporary and hasty entrenchment.

The demolitions of the enemy and his infrequent employment of mines were effective in covering his withdrawal and delaying our pursuit. Likewise he attempted with a minimum of success to hold up our advance with lone strafing and bombing attacks by his aircraft at night.

The overall picture of the Kraut's operations was that of a determined resistance collapsing with a consequent withdrawal and disorganized retreat comparable to the closing days of the Tunisian Campaign. Our final contact with him came at the TIBER River where his vehicles and infantry moving north across the River were taken under fire by our units before the Division was relieved by the French Expeditionary Corps.

**g. SITUATION AT THE END OF THE PERIOD:**

The Battalion was closed in bivouac north of QUALIANO, Italy at the end of the period, assigned to AFHQ, attached to PHS for Supply and Administration, verbally attached to Third Infantry Division for plans and training.

30th June found an amphibious training program underway, involving loading and unloading of landing craft; reconditioning of vehicles and personnel; training of tank crews under three categories: Drivers, gunners, radio operators, with each member becoming proficient in all three fields.

**d. STATE OF PERSONNEL AND MATERIEL:**

Battalion completed reorganization pursuant to Section III, General Orders #99, Headquarters, Fifth Army, dated 11 June 1944. Written request was submitted for retention of certain vehicles found absolutely necessary for successful continuation of method of employment ordered by Third Infantry Division. (See Annex #3 for copy thereof.)

Due to period of rest, rehabilitation, and recreation, morale was high. Increased spirit of "esprit de corps" was noted, with consequent improvement in efficiency, military bearing and deportment. Period closes with continued emphasis on complete rehabilitation of personnel and materiel in anticipation of future amphibious operations.

**e. COMMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED:**

When an attack is made by tank destroyers through an enemy minefield the speed of the attack must of necessity be limited to the rate at which the engineers are properly able to remove the mines.

**Recommendations:**

That each Company be provided with 13 M-10's so that one may be used as a command vehicle without decreasing the strength of one of the Platoons. The vehicles to date that have been provided for the Company Commander have all been too "thin-skinned" for him to move about in comparative safety while directing operations.

That an M-10 should have a sponson lap machine gun built right into it so that it may be operated by the radio operator.

That each M-10 and half-track which is used as a radio car have a small generator of the Tiny Tim Type built in it so that the vehicles engine proper does not have to be run to charge the batteries.

That some type of periscope be devised that could fit in the indirect sight mount when it is not in use.

That the magnification of the direct sight be increased to 6-8 power.

That a traversing hand wheel be on the <sup>RIGHT</sup> left of the turret as well as the ~~right~~ so that during indirect fire missions the gunner can bring the gun on the aiming stake himself.

That M-10's be equipped with chevron type tracks only. The degree to which this chevron type track increases cross-country mobility is unbelievable.

That some type of armored shield be provided for the radiators of the M-10's as time and again they were punctured with shrapnel.

*Walter E. Tardy*

WALTER E. TARDY  
Lieutenant Colonel, Field Artillery  
Commanding

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ANNEX 13

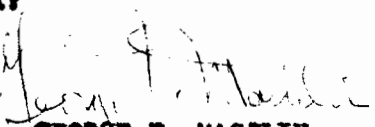
3 July 1944

SUMMARY OF EVENTS - JUNE 1944

- June 1 - 2 guns, 3rd Platoon, Company "A" destroyed one tank vicinity of 30th Infantry Sector and shelled enemy Infantry with direct HE fire.
- June 2 - 3rd Platoon, Company "A" captured 7 snipers. Company "B" knocked out 2 enemy tanks vicinity 109520.
- June 3 - Company "A" destroyed 2 self-propelled guns and one 88mm (probable).
- June 4 - 1st Platoon, Company "B" destroyed one Mark IV just South of PALESTINA on PALESTINA - VALMONTONE Highway. Recon. Company captured 6 PW's vicinity 119518.
- June 5 - Company "A" lost one M-10 by enemy shellfire.
- June 6 - 1 gun, Company "C" fired 25 rounds at enemy vehicles ( 2 burned and destroyed) and enemy personnel. 1st Platoon, Company "A" fired upon two enemy tanks (destroyed) and 3 enemy trucks (destroyed).
- June 7 - Pioneer Platoon, Recon. Company assisted 10th Engineers in mine sweeping of OSTIA LIDO Area. Reconnaissance of OSTIA LIDO Area for bivouacs, patrol routes commenced.
- June 8 - Reconnaissance of OSTIA LIDO Area for bivouacs, patrol routes continues while Pioneer Platoon assists 10th Engineers sweeping mines in OSTIA LIDO Area.
- June 9 - Reconnaissance being made of CRESSANO Area for future bivouac of Battalion.
- June 10 - Reconnaissance of bivouac area vicinity CRESSANO (635877) continues.
- June 11 - Battalion attached to 85th Infantry Division as of 111200Z June 1944. Reconnaissance instigated for moving Battalion to vicinity OSTIA LIDO (566487).
- June 12 - Bn. S-3 and Billeting Party selected new bivouac area at 670526. Pioneer Platoon, Recon. Company in process of sweeping for mines in new bivouac area.
- June 13 - Pioneer Platoon, Recon. Company continued sweeping mines in new bivouac area vicinity (670526).
- June 14 - Billeting Party departed from Bn. CP at 0600Z hours to locate new bivouac area for Battalion.
- June 15 - New bivouac selected vicinity 689447 and area being swept for mines by Recon. Company, Pioneer Platoon.
- June 16 - Battalion making final preparations for march to bivouac vicinity 689-447 at 161500Z June 1944.
- June 17 - Billeting detail, Recon. Company, left for vicinity of POZZIOLLI with Division Billeting Party.
- June 18 - Heavy maintenance work continued prior to Battalion move.

- June 19 - Battalion moved to bivouac vicinity 847184 at 190730Z June 1944.
- June 20 - Battalion underwent period of rehabilitation, rest, and care of equipment.
- June 21 - Final preparations being made to move Battalion wheeled vehicles overland to vicinity QUALIANO.
- June 22 - Battalion wheeled vehicles left bivouac vicinity 847212 at 220040Z to move to vicinity of QUALIANO.  
Tracked vehicles remained in bivouac awaiting movement by water.
- June 23 - Battalion moved from pre-selected bivouac to better bivouac location West of QUALIANO.
- June 24 - All tracked vehicles in Battalion arrived from ANZIO by boat.
- June 25 - Usual bivouac duties.
- June 26 - Usual bivouac duties.
- June 27 - Seventy-six persons in Battalion received awards at Third Division Ceremony.
- June 28 - Battalion began training schedule commencing with amphibious exercises with an LST.
- June 29 - Amphibious exercises with LCT's.
- June 30 - Usual bivouac and training duties. Capt. FULLER promoted to the rank of Major.

For the BATTALION COMMANDER:

  
GEORGE F. MACKLIN  
1st Lt., FA  
Adjutant

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ANNEX # 2:

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SUMMARY OF DAMAGE INFLICTED ON ENEMY  
PERIOD: 1 JUNE - 30 JUNE 1944

	A CO	B CO	C CO	REN CO	TOTAL
Tanks & SP's	5	3			8
Armored Cars & Half-Trucks					None
Machine Guns			2		2
Artillery & AT Guns	1 88mm				1
Prisoners of War	7			6	13
Miscellaneous	3 trucks		2 vehicles		3 Trucks 2 Vehicles

CASUALTIES INCURRED BY 601ST T.D. BN.  
PERIOD: 1 JUNE - 30 JUNE 1944

	A CO	B CO	C CO	REN CO	HQ CO	TOTAL
Enlisted Men	3	1	1			5
Officers			1 M1			None 1 M1
M-10's (KO'd not re- pairable in 24 hours)	1		2			3

For the BATTALION COMMANDER:

*George F. Macklin*  
GEORGE F. MACKLIN  
1st Lt., FA  
Adjutant