SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO: COMMANDING GENERAL, Ninth Army, APO 339

(Thru Channels)

After the beginning of the period the 605th TD BN, assigned to the Ninth U.S. Army, was attached to the 17th U.S. Airborne Division. The Battalion had crossed the Rhine in the land tail of the 17th Abn. Div. in the operation VARSITY and had linked up with the division in the vicinity of WESSEL, Germany. It had furnished anti-tank defences to the three Combat Teams of the 17th Abn. Div. on their offensive inland and on 1st April was in direct fire positions along the line HALTEN, HAUSMILLER, DULMEN, APPLEHANGER, and ALBACHT. The division front at this time was some 14,000 meters wide. The mission of the division was to hold the Rhine bridgehead along this line to allow the striking force of the 9th U.S. Army to build up and pass through this bridgehead. The mission of the battalion was to provide the Division front with protection against counterattack by tanks and self-propelled guns. This mission was accomplished by making platoon strong points of each inhabited area and covering the gaps between by fire. Each of the gun companies was attached to a Combat team of the division. It is felt that this mission would have been more successfully accomplished if all units had remained under control of the battalion.

On 1st and 2nd April the 605th TD BN with its companies attached to the Combat teams of the division supported the Division in the capture of MUNSTER. Because of the characteristics of the towed gun the unit was unable to furnish any direct fire support. The companies were moved into town with the assaulting infantry as a morale factor rather than as direct support weapons. Because of this they were exposed to fire unnecessarily and in a amount of proportion to the support they were able to furnish. Combat of cities is not a favorable mission for the towed weapon.

On the night of 2-3 April the 1st platoon then attached to Baker which was attached to the 194th Gl I Inf Regt. was given the mission of reconnoitering a large wooded area N of Münster which showed evidence of enemy activity. The platoon reported an estimated 2000 enemy personnel well equipped with 88mm guns, a Sherman tank, 2 Churchill tanks, and several SP guns entrenched in good defensive positions. Able and Baker companies were ordered into direct fire positions around the perimeter of the woods to engage any enemy that ventured out. One Pl of the 513th Para Inf made a night attack in the area supported by XIII Corps artillery and after a vicious fight the fanatical defenders were subdued. The TD usage on this operation was correct.
After the capture of Munster the battalion established road
blocks to defend the town against counter-attack while the full weight
of the 9th Army offensive was unleashed. When the danger of attack
in the Munster area was obviated by the success of XIX and XIII Corps
offensive, the 17th Abn Div was moved from Munster to relieve the 79th
Inf Div in the DINGLASEN area on the "EHUR POCKET". The 605th TD Bn
accompanied the division on this move.

Initial positions on the Ehur Pocket were taken up in the
Marzleb, Bittrop areas along the Schaffentakanal. Companies fired
harrassing and destructive fires from direct fire positions N of the
canal on enemy installations S of the canal. The battalion supported
the active defense along this line and was successful in destroying
numerous enemy OP's, troop concentrations, and installations across
the canal. This was a correct use of towed TD's.

The battalion also supported the assaulting regiments of the divi-
sion on their offensives which resulted in the capture of ESSEN,
BUHLN, and DUISBURG. The major assistance was furnished by the
Reconnaissance Platoons that maintained contact with German elements
when they withdrew S of the Ehur. The Reconnaissance Platoons captu-
red intact the bridge across the Ehur at Mulheim, pushed across and
seized the bridgehead across the Ehur on the Duisburg sector. They
captured numerous German prisoners including the Army Group Commander,
Generaloberst JOSEPH HARPE, CG of the 5th Panzer Army.

After the clearing of this pocket of resistance, the battalion
reinforced the 17th Abn Div in its mission of establishing order and
Military Government in its sector by maintaining units in mobile reserve
to move on call to suppress any disturbances.

On 28th April the battalion was given the mission of protecting
all bridges across the Ehrne in the 9th Army sector by providing
security from both banks against such threats as floating mines, swim-
ing saboteurs, parachute troop attack, and attack from underwater or
surface river craft. (See Field Order No 6, 605th TD Bn) The battal-
ion accomplished the relief of 807th TD Bn at 171800 April.

The battalion was relieved from atachment to 17th Abn Div at
221300 and atched to 79th Inf Div via Gerther. 466th Para FA Bn
relieved Bn of responsibility for Ehrne River Bridges. At this time
the 79th Inf Div was engaged in Military Government functions in the
Ehur industrial area to include Dortmund. 605th TD Bn was attached
to Div Arty with the mission of reinforcing Organic Field Artillery
Battalions in their mission of screening and separating displaced
persons in zone. The Bn established road blocks and flushed out wood-
ed areas in the division zone. PW's were turned in to PW cages.
Displaced persons were turned in to DP Camps.
At 261500B the battalion received orders to make preparations for a move to the East at 271400B. The battalion was relieved from attachment to the 79th Inf Div and was attached to the XVIII Corps (Ama) at Nolsen, Germany. Battalion moved by motor on 28 April to Schweine-litze, Germany and was attached to the 82nd Airborne Division on arrival at 281830B. 29 April was spent on motor and gun maintenance and preparation for Elbe River crossing. On Platoons crossed Elbe River on D Day 30 April on LVTP's with mission of reinforcing 82nd Airborne Division Reconnaissance. At close of period remainder of battalion was in assembly area awaiting orders to cross river to support the 82nd Ama Div in establishment of bridgehead and attack to E and HE.

O. S. Buchwald
Mjr. F. Buchwald,
Lt. Col. 685th TD BN
Commanding.

ANNEXES:

3-3 Journal - Record of Events.
Field Order No 6. 20 April.
Field Order No 7. 30 April.
SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
605TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 339 US ARMY

4 May 1945

RECORD OF EVENTS
1 April to 30 April

011700 Able Co moved via Kanzahn to new location via Losbeck.
011700 Baker Co moved from via Applehausen to Vic Albaschent.
011700 2nd Ron Plt relieved from A Co., Atchd to B Co.
011730 2nd Ron Plt reported to CO Baker Co.
011745 Baker Co arrived Albaschent (856695). 
021625 CP closed Hahnfor via new location vic Applehausen.
021700 CP Gp opened via Applehausen.
021730 CP Gp closed Applehausen for new Fed CP.
021733 CP Gp opened vic Munster (900702).
021800 B Co relieved from 513th CT reverted to En control.
021800 2nd Ron relieved from B Co and Atchd to C Co.
021802 C Co moved vic Munster.
021840 Rear Echelon closed Haltern.
021945 Rear Echelon arrived vic Munster.
031330 Baker Co Alerted for movement.
031345 Baker Co Atchd to 513th CT vic Munster.
031350 3rd Plt "C" Co Atchd to "B" Co and 513th CT.
041600 CO reports to CO 17th Abn Div.
041630 CO returns to CP vic Munster.
041730 3rd Plt "C" Co reverted to Cn control.
041745 2nd Ron relieved from "C" Co.
041920 Baker Co moved to assembly area (890740).
041700 Charlie Co w/elements of 507th CT Atchd to 11th Cav Gp
    for special mission Vic Munster.
050130 Charlie Co relieved of Atchment to 11th Cav Gp.
042215 En relieved Atchment 17th Abn Div in present position as
    of 042200H, Atchd to XIII Corps Arty effective same time
    and date.
051030 Received OIr. No. 6, 17th Abn Hq's reserving Atchment to
    17th Abn, ordered to move En (--) to Dinzlaken, Germany.
    Day of departure, present date, hour not given. Unit in
    assembly area ready to comply W/OI No 6.
051200 2nd Ron Plt reverted to En control, returned to vic of CP
    in Munster (050630) Able Co rel'd of Atchment to 194th CT.)
051500 Baker Co departed vic Munster to new positions vic Hamborn.
052100 Baker Co arrived new location vic Hamborn (351229).
051945 En (--) departed vic Munster.

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S H U N T 2
060910 Able Co arrived new location via Hamborn (322228).
060740 CP Gp and Rear Echelon arrived new location via Marxleb.
060840 Able Co remained in En Res assembly area, cc
051455 Baker Co Atchd to 513th Inf Regt. assembly area prepared
to move S under Regt control.
051345 Baker Co moved from assembly area, occupied AF positions
via Hamborn.
050825 Charlie Co moved to 513th Regt's assembly area.
051430 Charlie Co departed assembly area under 507th Regt control.
050740 Charlie Co arrived in via Bettrop.
060740 1st and 2nd Ron Plts located in via of CP in Marxleb.
072000 En Atchd to 17th Abn Div located in Marxleb (324236).
072100 Able Co via Hamborn (322217), in En Res.
072100 Baker Co Atchd to 513th Para Inf Regt via Hamborn (332217).
072100 Charlie Co Atchd to 507th CT located in Bettrop. Fired
197 rds Harrassing fire.
082100 En Atchd to 17th Abn Div located in Marxleb.
081630 1st and 3rd Plts in Regt Res. under Baker Co control.
081500 1st and 3rd Plts Charlie Co in Defensive position via Bettrop.
082400 1st Plt Charlie Co crossed Rhein Herne Kanal, located via
(0935) and (487220) captured eight FV's.
091145 2nd Plt Charlie Co crossed Rhein Herne Kanal via (483221).
091500 2nd Ron Atchd to Baker Co.
091400 CP Gp moved to new position via Bettrop.
091515 CP Gp arrived new CP via Bettrop (437228).
091600 Able Co moved to new location via Bettrop.
091650 Able Co arrived new assembly position via Bettrop (430238).
091630 2 HM's Charlie Co behived captured with jeep and code.
100200 1st Plt B Co arrived assembly area (341129).
101345 Baker Co CP moved to Sterkade.
101413 Baker Co CP arrived in Sterkade (503248).
101800 Charlie Co Atchd to 507th CT moved to attack Essen.
101730 1st Ron Plt Atchd to Charlie Co.
110725 Charlie Co in Essen moving to attack Malheim.
111000 CO visits Charlie Co CP in Essen.
111100 CO returns to CP in Bettrop.
111100 Hq Co moved from Marxleb to new location
111045 Hq Co arrived new location via Bettrop.
111645 Col. Hart Div ATO visits CP in Bettrop.
121000 CP Gp closed Bettrop for new location.
121000 Able Co closed Bettrop for new location.
121100 CP Gp and Able Co arrived via Malheim (406144)
121300 Able Co Atchd to 507th Regt 1st En.
121300 Able Co relieved Charlie Co at (415142) 1 Plt per En.
1st to A, 2nd to B, 3rd to C.
121200 En Atchd to 507th Inf Regt V006 17th Abn Div
121300 Baker Co rel'd from 513th Inf., Atchd to 507th Regt.
121300 Charlie Co w/1st Ron Plt Atchd to 507th Regt. 2nd En.
Relieved by Able Co.

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SECRET
CP 6p and Rear Echelon moved from Mulheim to new location.

CP 6p and Rear Echelon arrived via Breslau.

Rcn Plts relieved from atachment to Gun Co's.

En (-) Reld from Atechment to 507th CT and Atech to 194th CT.
Able Co Atchd to lst En vic (938148)
Baker Co Atchd to 2nd En vic (405133)
Charlie Co Atchd to 507th Regt vic Ulmenhof (308143).

Charlie Co moved from Essen to new location.

Charlie Co arrived vic Ulmenhof.

En CP 6p, Rear Echelon and Rcn Plts arrived vic Mulheim (404144)

Baker Co moved to new location in Mulheim.

Baker Co arrived new location in Mulheim (405133)

Col Hart, Corp ATO visits CP in Mulheim.

Co Cmdr meeting.

En Cmdr Visits Co's positions.

Col Helsen 17th Abn Div visits CP in Mulheim.

Rcn Plts relieved Inf Rcn elements.

Rcn Plts captured Generallåberst JOSEPH HARPE, CG 5th Panzer Army.

Rcn Plts relieved from patrolling mission, referred to En cont control.

En Relvd from 194th Gli Inf Regt and Atchd to 17th Abn Div VOGG. En to relieve 807th TD En of its mission of Guarding Rhine River Bridges in 9th Army Zone.

All Companies under En control in Div Res vic Mulheim.

Quartering parts departs CP for Marxloh.

Able Co departed Duisberg for new location vic Budberg.

Baker Co departed Mulheim for new location vic Baerl.

Charlie Co departed Ulmenhof for new location in Ossey.

CP 6p and Rear Echelon departed Mulheim.

Able Co arrived vic Budberg (235274).

CP 6p and Rear Echelon arrive Marxloh (325235)

Baker Co arrived Baerl (262222).

Charlie Co arrived Ossey (271255).

S-3 visits Co's and Atchd units.

Relief of 807th TD En completed. En assumed responsibility of guardin Rhine R Bridges.

CO and S-3 visits A and C Co's, also atchd units of 464th FA En. F0 No 6 delivered to same.

Charlie Co moved from assembly area to new location vic Werefien (325256).

Charlie Co arrived new location in Werefien.

Major Galsam, S-3 45th AAA Op visits CP.

Rec'd VOGG 17th Abn Div. Reld from Div as of 221200. Prepare to move E.
All units notified of Detachment and movement alert to B.
Upon relief will assemble in Co assembly position.
Units continuing defense of sectors.
Lt Col Booth 456th FAMN Prcht and Co Co's visit CP and
are oriented on defense of Rhine Bridges and will relieve
units at designated time.

En relieved Atchsd to 17th Abn Div.
En Atchsd to 79th Inf Div.
Co Cadres meeting.
8-3 Briefs Co Cadres on move to Brambauer.
Adv Ron and Houte Markers cross IP.
CP Gp closes Marxloh. Crossed IP.
Charlie Co crosses IP.
Able Co crosses IP.
Baker Co crosses IP.
CP Gp opens vic Brambauer (797355) Atchsd 79th Div Arty.
Charlie Co closes vic Wiltrop (778363) Atchsd 904th FA Bn.
Able Co closes vic (564414) Atchsd 312th FA Bn.
Baker Co closes vic Herten (553316) Atchsd 311th FA Bn.
CP Gp left Brambauer for Fwd CP vic Malt (549390).
CP Gp arrived vic Malt. Contacted Hcn O and Able Co.
Units screened DP's and area, turned DP's over to 79th Div.
Fwd CP closed vic Malt, returned to former location.
CP Gp arrived Brambauer.
Ron Plts Ral'd upon completion of mission.
CO leaves in inspect companies.
Unit continues screening action with 79th Div Arty.
En received notice of probable move to Uelsen.
CO's alerted for possible movement.
En reld from 79th Inf Div CG XVI Corp.
En Atchsd to XVIII Corps.
Received TX 239, ordering En to move on 28th April to vic
Uelsen. (X9189).
Ron Plts Cross IP, Brambauer HJ 795332.
Able Co cross IP.
Baker Co cross IP.
Charlie Co cross IP.
HQ Co cross IP.
En closed in new CP vic Schwenlitz (029967).
En Atchsd to 82nd Abn Div upon arrival CG XVIII Corp.
Co Cadres report to CP.
Unit alerted to move vic Div assembly area.
Co Cadres report to CP.
CP Gp moved to new location vic (018201).
En (-Rear echelon) arrived Div assembly area vic (018201)
Rear echelon moved out to new location.
Rear echelon joins En in vic (018201).