

HEADQUARTERS
607TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 230

5 May 1945

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS - TASK FORCE SUNDT

(period - 10 to 19 April 1945, incl)

incl Apr. 45

A. Operations for Period:

10 Apr 1945:

TASK FORCE SUNDT was reconstituted with the same troops and organization as in the original organization, ie -

- 607th TD Bn, less Co A, Co C, 1st Rcn platoon and 2nd Rcn platoon.
- Co A, 735th TK Bn.
- Co K, 346th Inf Regt.
- 87th Rcn Trs.
- 3rd plat, Co B, 312th Eng C Bn.

The TF was organized into three composite companies consisting of 1 plat of TDs, 1 plat of TKs, 1 plat of Inf, 1 Rcn plat, with a reserve of the Eng plat, Pion plat and TD Rcn plat. The Companies were numbered 1, 2 and 3. The Task Force assembled at TAMBACH (J0348).

11 Apr 1945:

Task Force left TAMBACH at 0630 for a line of departure at ARNSTADT (J2653). Proceeded in a column of Companies in the order - 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Route of march was through GEORGENTHAL (J0652), OHRDRUF (J1151), ARNSTADT (J2653), where the TF passed through the 89th Div and moved SE through DANNHEIM (J2849) to TRASSDORF (J3143) securing the high ground in the vicinity for the following Infantry. 1st Co entered TRASSDORF at 111020 and encountered heavy artillery and direct fire. 2nd Co moved through OBER WILLINGEN (J3246) and to high ground 1000 meters SE where it was stopped by heavy direct fire and artillery. 3rd Co moved to high ground overlooking TRASSDORF to cover the 1st Co. All efforts to move forward from these positions were stopped by the heavy fire. The 1st Co was withdrawn from TRASSDORF and ordered to by-pass the town to the West and to proceed on to the vicinity of ILMENAU (J2436). At 111450 orders were received to proceed East through STADTILM (J3647) to RUDOLSTADT (J5341). 1st Co was ordered to withdraw and move to high ground NW of STADTILM and 2nd Co was ordered to move into STADTILM from NIEDERWILLINGEN. 1st Co moved to attack STADTILM, but was stopped by heavy observed artillery and direct fire. As darkness fell Task Force bivouaced in place and made plans with 3rd Bn 346th Inf for a coordinated attack on the town in the morning.

12 Apr 1945:

At 120630 1st Co and 2nd Co attacked the town of STADTILM. The 346th Inf with 1st and 2nd Bns abreast attacked South of STADTILM seizing the high ground SE thereof. The 3rd Bn 346th Inf followed the 2nd Co and occupied the town. The bridge was captured intact, though it was mined and wired. After the bridge was declared safe by the Engineer and the fuzes in the two 500lb bombs removed, the 1st and 2nd Companies moved across the bridge and proceeded on to the high ground to the East and beyond, passing through GROSSLIEBRINGEN (J3844) and KLEINLIEBRINGEN (J3943). 3rd Co followed the 2nd Co to GROSSLIEBRINGEN then, due to a reported concentration of tanks in the vicinity of EHRENSTEIN (J4245), the Co was moved to NAWINDEN (J4044) to cover the left flank

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12 April 45, cont'd

from the threat. The 2nd Co moved on following the 1st Co out of KLEINLIEBRINGEN. At this point the air-liaison directed fighter bombers onto the town of EHRENSTEIN with good results. The 1st Co received direct fire and mortar fire from the North but moved on to the East.

The 1st Co was halted at THALENDORF (J4440) and the 2nd Co was sent on through, seizing KERLAU (J4840), EICHPELD (J4941). 2nd Co was then ordered to attack RUDOLSTADT (J5341) from the Southwest. The 3rd Co proceeded from NAWINDEN, through KLEINLIEBRINGEN, then to SOLSDORF (J4140) and fell into the rear of the 1st Co. EICHPELD was taken by storm. Numerous PW's were taken in all the towns.

The 2nd Co encountered abatis on the SW approaches to RUDOLSTADT, but reduced these with the help of the Engineer bulldozer. There they encountered heavy small arms and bazooka fire, but by nightfall had taken the SW part of the town. The 1st Co moved to SCHAALA (J5141) and attacked RUDOLSTADT from the West in conjunction with 2nd Co's attack, but encountered a defended road block and lost a tank to bazooka fire. They were unable to reduce the block and withdrew to a defensive position in SCHAALA. The 3rd Co was sent into RUDOLSTADT over the same route that the 2nd Co followed and moved in on the 2nd Co's left. During the afternoon and prior to the attack on the town the air worked the high ground to the East and enemy movements in the town with good results.

13 Apr 45:

Continued the attack on RUDOLSTADT in conjunction with the 2nd En 346th Inf Regt, meeting small arms, bazooka and sniper fire. The bridges in the town were found blown and the Task Force was ordered to reassemble, refuel, refit and prepare for immediate movement to the East to take the high ground in vicinity of POSSNECK (J7239). There were no bridges across the SAAL River and bridging had not started so at 131730 the TF moved to a field bivouac 3000 meters NW of SAALFELD (J5634). The high light of the days operations was the capture of the castle in RUDOLSTADT by 1st Co.

14 Apr 45:

At 141345 2nd Co crossed Treadway bridge at SAALFELD followed by 1st Co, then the 3rd Co. The column proceeded through GORNDORF (J5935), ROELITZ (J6035), to RW (6636), turned South to OLSEN (J6635), GRABENDORF (J6835), RANIS (J7036) where 2nd Co moved on to WERNBERG (J7338). 1st Co moved SE to SCHMORDA (J7234). 3rd Co followed the 2nd Co. 2nd Co proceeded on toward PEUSCHEN (J7636) but were stopped by intense direct fire and artillery fire 800 yds West of the town. The 1st Co reached SCHMORDA and proceeded toward PEUSCHEN but was stopped by bazooka fire at the edge of the woods, losing one M-8 with crew. 3rd Co moved to the high ground to the North of PEUSCHEN to cover the 2nd Co's movement into the town. 2nd Co moved into town followed by 3rd Co. 1st Co withdrew from woods and by-passed to the North to WERNBERG. Darkness fell at this time and the Task Force bivouaced for the night with CP and 1st Co in WERNBERG and the 2nd and 3rd Cos in PEUSCHEN. A MK IV tank on the East end of PEUSCHEN was destroyed by our attackers. A number of prisoners were taken.

15 Apr 45:

At 150700 Task Force continued on toward its objective with 3rd Co leading followed by 2nd. They proceeded through LASKAU (J7736), KNAU (J8135), PLOTHEN (J8534), DITTERSDORF (J8835). At DITTERSDORF the 3rd Co was halted due to the number of PW's on hand, plus cleaning up work required, and the 2nd Co passed through them and continued the move on through DRAGENSORF (J8935), TEGAU (J9135), to FORTHEN (J9434) then to LAWITZ (J9534). At this point they received heavy artillery fire and small arms fire from the

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15 Apr 45, cont'd

East and Northeast. 2nd Co moved from WERNBERG to BODELWITZ (J7439) to GERTWITZ (J7538), to DAUTMITSCH (J7837), to KNAU, PLOTHEN and to DITTERSDORF where it passed through the 3rd Co and followed 2nd Co, closely covering the 2nd Co's advance from deployed overwatching positions. 3rd Co proceeded to TEGAU, to GOSCHITZ (J9233) to KERSCHKAU (J9527) where it eliminated scattered resistance and halted for gas. The 2nd Co withdrew from LAWITZ to FORTHEN then moved to KIRSCHAU, covered by 1st Co fire and passed through the 3rd Co at KIRSCHKAU and moved to LOSSAU (J9329) and thence to LANGENBUCH (J9526) where it intercepted a sizable force of enemy moving out of the town on foot and in wagons. It deployed and destroyed the column, killing or dispersing the foot elements. The 1st Co following the 2nd also deployed and entered into the firing. The 2nd and 1st Cos then proceeded to THIERBACH (J9828) where heavy resistance was encountered. The two Companies held up for the night. The 3rd Co with the CP group moved into LANGENBUCH and bivouaced for the night.

16 Apr 45:

The TF continued the advance at 160700. Resistance in THIERBACH (J9828) continued with small arms fire. The 3rd Co by-passed the town and proceeded cross country, bypassing PAUSA (K0128), going to UNTERPIRK (J0227), then to BERNSGRUN (J0427), to FROBERSGUN (K0827), to STEINSOF (K1127), to where the bridge was blown as the armor approached it at BARTHMAHLEN (K133268). The 1st and 2nd Cos contacted the buergermeister of THIERBACH and requested surrender of the town and garrison on threat of destruction. The request was refused and a sniper killed Capt Nicklas, 2nd Co Comdr. The 1st Co pulled back and took positions overlooking the town. When the 2nd Co had cleared, the 1st Co opened fire and destroyed the town with direct fire, setting it afire with tracers and incendiary bullets. After the town was well afire the two companies pulled out with 2nd Co leading and followed the route of the 3rd Co. About 75 German soldiers came out of the town and surrendered to the covering force.

The 3rd Co encountered 1 halftrack-drawn 150mm howitzer and 3 horse-drawn 75mm guns at BARTHMAHLEN. All were destroyed and the personnel captured or killed. The 3rd Co immediately swung North along the WEISSE-EBER River and captured a railroad bridge at (K129289) and crossed the river, proceeding to JOCHETA (K1436) and to HELMSGRUN (K1725) thence to GANSGRUN (1723) where they were met by intense tank fire. They knocked out one tank and lost one tank. The tank fire came from the vicinity of THOSSFELD (K1923). 2nd Co proceeded to NEUENSALZ (K1821) fording the river at BARTHMAHLEN. The 1st Co moved through the 2nd Co and moved to MECHHELGRUN (K1919). The 3rd Co withdrew from GANSGRUN to ALTENSALZ (K1722). The Task Force bivouaced in place for the night, CP and 2nd Co at NEUENSALZ, 3rd Co at ALTENSALZ and 1st Co at MECHHELGRUN.

17 Apr 1945:

At 170700 the 3rd Co moved through the 2nd and 1st Cos and seized and held BERGEN (K2218). The 2nd Co followed and moved to TRIEB (K2219) and the 1st Co moved to UNTERLAUTERBACH (K2421) by way of ALTMANNSSGRUN (K2322). The CP moved to BERGEN.

18 Apr 45:

Task Force remained in defensive positions. Enemy patrols came into each of the Company areas and destroyed one M-20 in the 2nd Co's area. During the day patrols were sent out by all Companies.

19 Apr 45:

1st Co moved from UNTER-LUTERBACH to TRIEB. All Companies patrolled to the front.

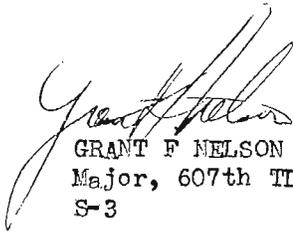
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20 Apr 45:

Task Force ordered to assemble (less the Inf Co) in vicinity of NEUENSALZ (K1821). Move was initiated at 201945 and last elements closed in new location (K172206) at 202100.

B. Results of Operations:

1. PW's captured - 1344.
2. Enemy Equipment Destroyed: - 2 tanks (MK IV).
 - 11 trucks
 - 4 half-tracks
 - 3 armored cars
 - 6 wagons (horse-drawn)
 - 2 tractors
 - 3 motorcycles
 - 3 75mm guns
 - 1 105mm gun
3. Distance traveled - 109 miles, captured 58 towns, spearheaded advance of Div.
4. Our losses: - (vehicles) (personnel)
 - 1 tank (M4A1) 5 killed in action
 - 3 M-8 34 wounded " "
 - 1 M-20 5 missing " "
 - 1 half-track


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Major, 607th TD Bn
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