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HEADQUARTERS
628th Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP)
APO #30, U. S. Army

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: Auth: Ltr. 5th Arm. Div.
: Date: 1 Feb. 1945.
: Initi: *[Signature]*

OPD
EO-1

1 February 1945.

SUBJECT: Report After Action Against Enemy - Month of January 1945.

TO : Commanding General, Hq. 5th Armored Division, APO 255, U. S. Army.

1. Campaign of Northern France.
Campaign of Germany.

2. Commanding Officers were:

a. Battalion Commander: William J. Gallagher, Lt. Col., F.A., O-384952, from 0001 hours 1 January 1945 to 2400 hours 31 January 1945.

b. H. Company Commander: Daniel L. Thomas, Captain, F.A., O-422582, from 0001 hours 1 January 1945 to 2400 hours 31 January 1945.

c. Company "A" Commander: James H. Lloyd, Captain, F.A., O-409317, from 0001 hours 1 January 1945 to 2400 hours 31 January 1945.

d. Company "B" Commander: Paul L. McPherran, Captain, F.A., O-317706, from 0001 hours 1 January 1945 to 1200 hours 5 January 1945, when he was relieved of above assignment and transferred to 106th Infantry Division as Division Anti-Tank Officer. 1st Lt. Frank B. Hurt, Jr., AUS-TL, O-1822008, from 1200 hours 5 January 1945 to 2400 hours 31 January 1945.

e. Company "C" Commander: Robert C. Jones, Captain, AUS-TL, O-1822013, from 0001 hours 1 January 1945 to 2400 hours 31 January 1945.

f. Res. Company Commander: David (DMI) Doerr, 1st Lt., AUS-TL, O-1821835, from 0001 hours 1 January 1945 to 2400 hours 31 January 1945.

g. Medical Detachment: Francis T. England, Captain, M.C., O-1683058, from 0001 hours 1 January 1945 to 2400 hours 31 January 1945.

3. Losses in action were as follows:

a. Killed in Action:

(1) William T. Salden, Private, F.A., 34370625, Company "B", SEA to DOW in Belgium, 4 January 1945.

(2) George A. Lelia, Sergeant, F.A., 33161296, Company "B", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.

(3) Lawrence W. Elmore, Sergeant, F.A., 20315803, Company "B", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.

(4) Chester W. Kuta, Corporal, F.A., 36016298, Company "B", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.

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- (5) William (NMI) Ayers, T/5, F.A., 34385822, Company "B", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (6) William J. Walters, T/5, F.A., 34386105, Company "B", KIA in Belgium 7 January 1945.
- (7) Tandy B. Carpenter, Pfc, F.A., 34425461, Company "B", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (8) Theodore Spalte, Pfc, F.A., 32065342, Company "B", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (9) Charles H. Hill, Private, F.A., 33161172, Company "B", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (10) Martin P. Lally, Sergeant, F.A., 32084601, Company "A", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (11) Floyd F. Marge, Corporal, F.A., 33034922, Company "A", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (12) Arnold B. Zeigler, T/5, F.A., 34425369, Company "A", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (13) Samuel A. Augustine, Pfc, F.A., 33028869, Company "A", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (14) Leo (NMI) Tovar, Private, F.A., 39564912, Company "A", KIA in Belgium, 7 January 1945.
- (15) Donald F. Beck, T/5, F.A., 36400303, Company "A", KIA in Germany, 30 January 1945.

b. Wounded and Injured Men in Action.

- (1) William L. Grizzle, Private, F.A., 34371247, Co. "B", LHA, Ret. to Duty
- (2) Peter Jacquins, Corporal, F.A., 20315219, Co. "A", LHA, Ret. to Duty.
- (3) Jont H. Greene, Pfc, F.A., 34431648, Co. "B", LHA, Ret. to Duty.
- (4) Anthony M. Marrapese, Sergeant, F.A., 32038362, Co. "B", LHA, Evacuated
- (5) William J. Barth, S/Sgt., F.A., 33022567, Ren. Co., LHA, Evacuated.
- (6) Daniel C. French, 1st Lt., Inf., O-373068, Co. "C", LHA, Evacuated.
- (7) Jay A. Hoffman, T/5, F.A., 36400135, Co. "C", LHA, Evacuated.
- (8) Willie M. Stephens, S/Sgt., F.A., 34071658, Co. "B", LHA, Evacuated.
- (9) Mario A. Mastro, Pfc, F.A., 33029156, Co. "B", LHA, Evacuated.
- (10) Edwin (NMI) VanVliet, Sgt., F.A., 32154572, Co. "C", LHA, Ret. to Duty.
- (11) Curtis W. Griffith, Corporal, F.A., 32085677, Co. "C", LHA, Evacuated.
- (12) Robert H. Elmore, Pfc, F.A., 34031996, Med. Det., LHA, Evacuated.
- (13) Adam S. Kiwior, Corporal, 36015566, F.A., Co. "B", LHA, Evacuated.
- (14) Bishop R. Love, Pfc, F.A., 34386245, Co. "A", LHA, Evacuated.
- (15) Emil L. Locatelli, Sergeant, F.A., 32065340, Co. "A", LHA, Ret. to Duty
- (16) James B. Carroll, Pvt., F.A., 34404069, Co. "C", LHA, Ret. to Duty.
- (17) Carl A. Forslund, 1st Lt., AUS, O-1822245, Co. "C", LHA, Ret. to Duty.
- (18) Arthur A. Denlinger, T/4, F.A., 33011580, Co. "C", LHA, Ret. to Duty.

c. No personnel of this Battalion Missing in Action during the month of January 1945.

d. No personnel of this Battalion Captured during month of January 1945.

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4. Battles:

a. The enemy.

(1) The enemy forces opposing this Battalion in Belgium in the Amcomont, Adrimont, Arbrefontaine, Acharmont, Goronne, Conce, Recheux, Petite-Halleux and Provedroux areas during the period 1 January 1945 to 16 January 1945, were well employed, dug in and made excellent use of terrain. They were well equipped with weapons and ammunition and their morale apparently was high.

(2) Enemy defenses in the area were principally infantry strong points and field fortifications well organized as to terrain. Mine fields and anti-tank guns were excellently camouflaged and placed. Mine fields especially were difficult to detect because of the deep snow and ice which covered the entire area. The enemy employed excellent natural camouflage, white painted vehicles and white camouflage suits. The natural obstacles of terrain, snow and ice were used advantageously combined with mine fields to impede our progress.

(3) Disposition of enemy forces, refer to 82nd Airborne Division and 75th Infantry Division G-2 Reports and Order of Battle Notes. This organization destroyed one Tiger Royal Tank in the vicinity of Goronne, Belgium, identified as from the 3rd Company, 101st GHq Ps. Bn. attached to "SS" Corps by Soldbuch on tanker's corpse. It is believed that additional Mark IV and Halftrack knocked out south of Goronne, Belgium were from the same organization. The ground forces were mainly Volksgrenadier troops and paratroops of the following German Units: 62nd VG Div, 326 VG Div, 18th VG Div and 3rd Para. Div. It is believed that some light armor of the 9th SS Ps. Div. was also engaged.

(4) Little enemy air activity was experienced although the vicinity of the Company "A" Command Post was bombed and strafed in Arbrefontaine on the night of 14 January 1945.

(5) Enemy armor was skillfully employed, having definite advantage of dug-in positions, camouflage and greater maneuverability in snow and ice because of wide tracks. Mark IV, V, VI and Tiger Royal Tanks were encountered as well as U.S. M4 tanks in German use. They made excellent use of defilade and covering fires.

(6) Enemy artillery and mortar fire was encountered frequently throughout the period but no unusual employment was encountered and little hindrance to our progress was caused by it.

(7) Tabulation of Enemy losses inflicted by this Battalion during the Month of January, 1945, is as follows:

<u>Tanks and SP Guns</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Ps KV VI	2	0
Ps KV IV	4	0
<u>Towed Guns</u>		
88 mm	1	0
<u>Others</u>		
Vehicles	2	0
Half Track	1	0

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<u>Installations</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
bazooka and Machine Gun Nest	1	0
OP in Masonry house	1	0

Personnel Casualties

Approximately 75 enemy casualties including 54 known dead, caused by 90 mm HE and small arms fire.

Prisoners of War

34 Prisoners of War were taken during the month of January 1945.

b. Elements Affecting Action.

(1) enemy information and reconnaissance was not accurate or effective as he was often surprised and ambushed and did not seem informed as to the location of our forward elements. Night movements and night attacks frequently caught him napping.

(2) The Belgium Civilian population was friendly and cooperative.

(3) Terrain was difficult, hilly, heavily forested, deep creek beds and poor roads. Everything was covered by deep snow rendering all movement difficult and hazardous.

c. Action.

(1) The Battalion was assigned to the 3rd Armored Division, VII Corps until 1 January when it was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, XVIII Corps (Airborne). Battalion was relieved of this attachment to the 82nd Airborne Division on 11 January 1945 and assigned to the 75th Infantry Division. Battalion was relieved of assignment to the 75th Infantry Division on 16 January 1945 and put in XVIII Corps (Airborne) Reserve. Battalion was relieved of assignment as Corps Reserve and assigned to the 5th Armored Division, Ninth United States Army on 27 January 1945.

(2) On 1 January 1945, the Battalion remained assigned to the 3rd Armored Division and on the same date the Battalion was assigned to and joined the 82nd Airborne Division relieving the 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion. The Battalion Command Post was located at Chevron, Belgium. Company "A" plus Reconnaissance Platoon attached was kept in division Reserve. Company "B" plus the Reconnaissance Platoon attached was attached to the 505th Parachute Infantry and Company "C" plus the Reconnaissance Platoon attached was attached to the 504th Parachute Infantry. The Battalion supported the 82nd Airborne Division in the attack on Neharfont, Belgium. Company "B" lost one (1) M-36 Tank Destroyer and one (1) M-8 Armored Car due to minefields and one (1) man wounded. On 5 January 1945, 3rd Platoon, Company "C" supporting the 325th Glider Infantry lost one (1) M-36 Tank Destroyer due to mines and one (1) officer wounded. 2B supporting the 505th Parachute Infantry lost one (1) M-36 Tank Destroyer due to anti tank fire. Company "C" supporting the infantry, in the attack fired 9 rounds AP 90mm, 8 rds HE and 500 rounds .50 Caliber ammunition. Company "C" fired 5 rounds HE from 7 to 10th January. From 7 January to 10 January, Company "A" plus the Reconnaissance Platoon attached, supporting the 508th Parachute Infantry fired 36 rounds APC, 5 rounds HE 90 mm, destroying two (2) anti-tank guns, one (1) Mk. VI tank, two (2) Mk IV's, one (1) half-track, killed forty-five (45) enemy, captured five prisoners of war. Two (2) M-36 Tank Destroyers were lost due to enemy anti-tank fire (burned). Company suffered five (5) KIA and one (1) LWA.

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Company "B" plus Reconnaissance Platoon attached, supporting 505th Parachute Infantry in attack from 7 January to 10 January destroyed one (1) Mk. VI Tank (cug in), captured two (2) PW's and killed an unknown number of enemy personnel. The Company lost two (2) M-36 Tank Destroyers due to anti-tank fire. Company suffered eight (8) EM KIA; 1 LWA and one (1) Medic LWA.

Company "C" plus Reconnaissance Platoon attached, supporting the 509th Parachute Infantry destroyed one (1) pillbox, one (1) machine gun nest, killed nine (9) enemy personnel and wounded three other enemy personnel.

On 11 January 1945 the Battalion was relieved of assignment to the 2nd Airborne Division and was assigned to the 75th Infantry Division. Company "A" plus the Reconnaissance Platoon attached, supporting the 289th Infantry Regiment, and Company "C" plus the Reconnaissance Platoon attached, supporting the 291st Infantry Regiment took up defensive anti-tank positions and had no actual contact with the enemy.

On 16 January 1945, the Battalion was relieved of the assignment to the 75th Infantry Division and went into the XVIII Corps (airborne) reserve in the vicinity of Francorchamps, Belgium. Maintenance and re-supply were performed until 27 January 1945 when the Battalion was relieved from the XVIII Corps (Airborne) Reserve, First United States Army and was assigned to the 5th Armored Division, Ninth United States Army. The Battalion moved to the vicinity of Welkenraedt, Belgium. Company "A" was attached to CCA supporting them in the attack on Eicherscheid, Germany. The Battalion minus Company "A" remained in reserve performing maintenance and re-supply. Company "A" had one Platoon reinforcing the fires of the 47th Field Artillery Battalion and fired 77 rounds of harassing fire, effect unknown. One (1) M-36 Tank Destroyer was hit by anti-tank fire which killed the driver. The mission was accomplished with the taking of Eicherscheid, Germany.

(3) No special weapons were used. The M-36 Tank Destroyer was the primary weapon.

(4) Radio and wire were used supplemented by messenger and liaison.

(5) No supporting units.

(6) No bayonets, flame throwers, were used by this unit.

(7) During the month of January, 1945, supply operations were spent in drawing needed supplies and equipment from the various supply echelons. Losses, combat and otherwise, sustained by this unit during the month of January were replaced almost in their entirety. Ordnance replacements were practically 100 percent, issuance of ordnance equipment this month bringing this unit up to T/O and E strength in ordnance wheeled vehicles. However, this unit is still short as of this report two (2) each Carriage, Motor, M-36, w/Gun 90mm and one (1) each Vehicle, Tank Recovery, T5. The Motor Maintenance Platoon of this unit is still seriously hampered in performing vital and necessary work on all types of vehicles within the organization, due to the existing shortage of one (1) each Charger, Battery, Portable, 12 volt, 2000 watts, gasoline engine driven and one (1) each Tool Set, Battalion Crew, M-10A1. This unit was further reorganized from T/O and E 18-25 to 18-28 dated 15 March 1944 to T/O and E 18-25 to 18-28 dated 29 August 1944, Change 2. Preliminary paper work was accomplished and some equipment drawn.

(8) Evacuation of the wounded for the month of January 1945 was done partly through the Battalion Aid Station and partly through the 307th and 75th Medical Collecting Battalions. The Aid Men attached to the Firing Companies encountered no trouble in evacuating the wounded. Supplies for the Battalion Aid Station were obtained by requisitions submitted weekly through the Bn. S-4 section. Supplies were adequate and no shortage of any specific items were noted.

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(9) Casualties: Types of casualties incurred by Medical Detachment for the month of January 1945 are as follows:

Battle Casualties

KIA	15
SWA	1
LNA	15
LIA	2

Non-Battle Casualties

Disease	9
Injury	4
C.A.	1

5. Summary:

a. At no time during the month did this Unit function as a Battalion. Companies were attached to Combat Commands and Combat Teams, and in some instances further broken down into Platoons. In the first half of the month, this Unit was attached to three different Divisions, the 3rd Armored, 82nd Airborne and the 75th Infantry Division. Advantage was the experience gained in working with three different types of American Divisions. Disadvantage was recurring necessity to become adjusted to the modus operandi of the various commanders, and the lack of time, due to the press of combat for the maintenance of vehicles. No special problems arose during the month. German armor was employed piecemeal, and never in enough strength to warrant the employment of an entire company at any one time. Every enemy piece of armor encountered by this unit during the month was knocked out, including two Mark VI's which were lured into exposing their flanks to our guns. Highlight of the month was the close knit cooperation and camaraderie between the 82nd Airborne Division and this Unit. This Battalion supported the 82nd Airborne in its attack on the Salm River line and men and officers of both units worked excellently together; Company "B" having received a commendation from the Division Commander for its aggressiveness in knocking out enemy strong-points. In this attack, the 82nd Airborne attacked with four regiments abreast, with elements of this unit attached to each regiment and to the reserve (fifth) regiment. Tank Destroyers were kept behind the assault groups of the Battalions and were called up when the Infantry would spot a tank, or machine gun nest. In one instance, one round from a 90mm knocked out a machine gun nest killing an enemy Lt. Col. and 11 PW. On the 27th of the month, this Battalion was returned to its parent unit, the 5th Armored Division. It is the earnest hope of all officers and men that this attachment will this time be a permanent one. On the 30-31st January, Company "A" supported CCA of the 5th Armored Division in its attack on Eicherscheid; one Platoon reinforcing the fires of the 47th (Armored) Field Artillery Battalion, and the rest of the Company making the assault with the 34th Tank Battalion. No enemy armor was encountered, all of Company "A"'s direct fire being directed at enemy strong-points, OP's, and machine gun nests.

1 Incl.
BATTALION JOURNAL

William J. Callaghan
WILLIAM J. CALLAGHAN,
Lt. Col., F.A.,
Commanding.

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