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HEADQUARTERS
629TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 230, U.S. ARMY

SEP - Oct

6 November 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO : The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington, D. C.

THRU : Commanding General, 2d Infantry Division, APO 2, U. S. Army.

1. Transmitted herewith is After Action Report for the period of October 1944.



GLENN COLE
Lt. Col., Inf (TD)
Commanding

Incl:

- 1 - Resume of Operations
- 2 - After Action Report

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HEADQUARTERS
629TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 230, U.S. ARMY

RESUME OF OPERATIONS

At the beginning of this period the battalion was attached to the 28th Infantry Division whose front line sector extended from Dasburg, Germany (P 8363), north to Brandscheid, Germany (P 9887). The firing companies each with a reconnaissance platoon, were supporting the respective Combat Commands, giving direct fire support to the infantry units and indirect fire support to the artillery, depending on the particular action against the Siegfried Line.

The companies of the battalion moved north with the Division on 3, 4 and 5 October to the vicinity of Elsenborn, Belgium where the Division front extended from coordinates 020700 to 020000. Companies B and C worked with their respective Combat Commands in planning all details for the attack on the enemy fortifications in that sector. All personnel knew all details of the operation. However, the attack was called off. All firing companies then supported the artillery units with indirect fire for the remainder of the time in that location.

On 26 October 1944 the battalion moved farther north with the Division to the vicinity of Lutzerath, Germany where the Division front extended from coordinates 015350 to 000280. The firing companies went into assembly positions. Detail reconnaissance was made by the companies for indirect fire positions to support the division artillery units. The reconnaissance platoons reconnoitered the area on the north or left sector for routes and gun positions for protection against any enemy armored thrust from the vicinity east of Aachen, Germany also for routes to the southeast.

The Battalion was relieved from attachment to V Corps and the 28th Infantry Division on 30 October 1944 and subsequently attached to VIII Corps and the 2d Infantry Division, the latter being in the vicinity of St. Vith, Belgium. The battalion completed the move on 30 October 1944 with the firing companies occupying indirect firing positions on the division front from coordinates 069038 to 910745.

During the period two pillboxes were badly damaged and 597 indirect fire missions were fired expending a total of 4827 rounds of ammunition.

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629TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

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AFTER ACTION REPORT

1. ENEMY SITUATION:

Period 1 October 1944 to 5 October 1944.

a. Units in Contact:

Enemy forces on our northern flank (left) consisted of the 78th Infantry Battalion, the 1030th Security Battalion, the 2nd Company F.A. Das Reich and an Infantry Fortress Battalion. On our immediate front were 3 companies of the 36th Marsch Battalion, the Panzer Rcn Battalion Das Reich and the 3rd Battalion of the Regiment Der Fuhrer. These units were part of the 2nd SS Panzer Grenadier Division.

The OCS Battalion of the Regiment K Wegelin, 273rd Antiaircraft unit, 1 company of the Combat Team Fleckenstein, 2nd Panzer Rcn Battalion and the 304th Panzer Grenadier Regiment of the 2nd Panzer Division occupied positions on our right or southern flank.

b. There were no enemy reserves located in a sector where they could be used to effect our mission or situation.

c. Enemy activity was confined to small scale patrol activity during the hours of darkness and harassing artillery fire on the roads used by our vehicles.

d. All companies and battalions were under strength, having about one half their authorized strength. A small number of replacements had been received. Morale from observance of PW's was fair. The enemy controlled the high ground to our front and had observation of our movements in clear weather. Most of our front line positions were known by the enemy.

e. Plans open to the enemy for attack were confined to patrols at night. Their high ground was defended from pillboxes and trenches, also, by dug-in antitank guns. All routes of approach to their positions were covered by direct fire, or by observed artillery fire.

Period 6 October 1944 to 26 October 1944.

a. Units in Contact:

Enemy forces on our northern (left) flank and immediate front consisted of the 77th Infantry Replacement Battalion and the 412th Infantry Training Battalion operating under the K.G. Von Rochow Regiment. On our southern flank was the 276th Infantry Battalion under the 276th Infantry Regiment.

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Both the Von Rochow Regiment and 276th Infantry Regiment operated as a part of the 526th Infantry Training Division.

b. The only reserve was the 1st company of the 412th Infantry Training Battalion which was later moved up to the line to replace the 1st company of the 276th Infantry Battalion. Thus, the boundary between the 412th Battalion and 276th Battalion was moved south approximately 2000 meters.

c. The enemy directed light artillery fire on roads used by our vehicles. Small scale patrols were sent out during darkness.

d. The estimated total strength of the units in contact was 1500 men including reserves. Their morale was just fair. The officers had to use reprisals to keep their men from deserting. The men were told that our negro troops would slit their throats if they surrendered.

e. The enemy was capable of launching a counterattack, strength not in excess of one battalion in the direction of FO209 and FO206. Small night patrols were used for limited objectives. The terrain to our front was favorable for the enemy to defend from pillboxes and prepared fortifications.

Period 27 October 1944 to 31 October 1944.

a. Units in Contact:

On our northern flank enemy forces consisted of the 275th F.A. Regiment, 20th G.A.F. Fortress Battalion, 3rd Battalion of 943rd Infantry Regiment and 496th Infantry Regiment forming the 275th Infantry Division. To our immediate front opposing forces included the 275th Fusilier Battalion, 16th Panzer Engineer Battalion, 5th G.A.F. Fortress Battalion, 1412th Fortress Battalion, 275th Engineer Battalion, K.G. Trier, 328th Infantry Battalion, 24th G.A.F. Fortress Battalion and 73rd Engineer Battalion. These units are under the 275th Infantry Division. On our southern (right) flank there was the 1st Battalion of the 1055th Infantry Regiment, 9th G.A.F. Fortress Battalion and 2nd Battalion of the 1055th Infantry Regiment, all a part of the 89th Infantry Division.

b. There were no enemy reserves that could effect our mission.

c. The enemy was defending his positions from both concrete forts and open fortifications all along the line. Our forward roads were subjected to harassing artillery and mortar fire. Small patrols were sent into our lines during the hours of darkness. No aggressive action was taken by the enemy and there was no indication of reinforcements.

d. The estimated combined strength of the regiments and battalions mentioned above is approximately 6300 men. The food and water shortage made morale poor. The enemy had no knowledge of our situation.

e. Enemy forces were not adequate enough for an attack, and there were no reserves to use for a counterattack. One plan open to the enemy was to use patrols at night and get information about our units as to strength and position. The enemy intended to defend his high ground from cover positions and had routes of approach covered by fire. Some routes were also mined.

For disposition of enemy units see attached overlays.

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2. OWN SITUATION:

a. On 1 October 1944 the 28th Infantry Division's front line covered the sector from Dasburg, Germany (P 855622) North to Branscheid, Germany (P 983813). The firing companies of this battalion were supporting the combat teams of the division on that front, Company A with the 110th Combat Team, Company B with the 112th Combat Team, and Company C with the 109th Combat Team. On the 3rd, 4th and 5th of October 1944 the battalion moved north to vicinity of Camp Elsenborn, Belgium (K 905085), where the firing companies again supported the regimental combat teams, Company B in support of the 112th Combat Team on the southern flank and Company C supporting the 109th on the northern flank. Company A initially supported one battalion of the 110th Combat Team in a diversionary attack to the north and east. The immediate division front extended from K 023032 north to K 035700. On the 26th October 1944 the battalion moved north with the 28th Infantry Division, occupying positions in vicinity of Lulartshutte, Germany (K 030342), the division front extending from F 000280 to F 015350. This unit was relieved from attachment to V Corps and 28th Infantry Division on 30 October and attached to the VII Corps and 2d Infantry Division with headquarters at St. Vith, Belgium (P 855380). The front lines of the 2d Infantry Division extended from P 910745 north to L 069038.

b. The battalion C.P. was located at the following places during the month: 1 October to 5 October 1944 in vicinity of Wilverdange, Luxembourg (P 785727); 5 October to 25 October 1944 at Camp Elsenborn, Belgium (K 905085); 25 October to 30 October 1944 at Lulartshutte, Germany (K 030342); 30 and 31 October 1944 at Andler, Belgium (P 906906).

c. During this period the firing companies worked in close coordination with the front line infantry units furnishing direct fire support and supporting and reinforcing the fires of Divisional Field Artillery units. Reconnaissance Company under battalion control performed reconnaissance missions for the firing companies, securing information on roads, bridges and possible direct and indirect fire positions.

d. During the period from 1 October 1944 to 5 October 1944, Company A with the 110th Infantry Combat Team furnished direct assault gun support and anti-mechanized protection in their operations in vicinity of Kesfelt, Germany. Company B reinforced the fires of the 109th P. A., firing harassing missions on German positions in vicinity of Kesfelt. Company C worked one platoon in a roving gun assignment and one platoon in indirect fire positions, supporting the 109th Infantry in vicinity of Severik, Germany.

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During the period 5 October 1944 to 25 October 1944, Companies B & C, supporting the 112th and 109th Combat Teams respectively, conducted extensive reconnaissance of Siegfried Line positions in the regimental combat teams' sectors and familiarized all necessary personnel with the pillbox targets they were to take under fire in support of the infantry in their contemplated attack. The plans of the Combat Command were to attack in column of battalions on an extremely narrow front to secure initial break-through. Routes to positions were carefully reconnoitered and prepared well in advance. Company C was to secure the range to various pillboxes, notifying a battery of 155mm SP's of the range and location, at which time the SP 155's would fire direct fire on these installations. Company A initially supported one battalion of the 110th Infantry in their diversionary attack through the cavalry screen on the division's north flank, afterwards reverting to the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 108th F. A. Company A was assigned a mission of reinforcing the fire of a medium F. A. battalion and to reconnoiter and familiarize personnel with direct fire positions on the right south-left north flank of the division to repel hostile counterattacks with armor. Training was conducted by B & C Companies with Infantry units, showing them capabilities and limitations of SP Tank Destroyer weapons. Reconnaissance Company made route reconnaissance of the area for use primarily by Company A. During the period 25 October to 30 October 1944 the firing companies reconnoitered indirect fire positions to reinforce the 28th Infantry Division's fires. Units were to operate under the control of the 108th F. A., which was to provide observation and target assignments for the three units. In addition, Companies A, B and C were to establish and maintain liaison with the 112th, 110th and 109th Combat Teams, respectively, in order to keep abreast of the situation and in order to advise the Company Commanders on possible employment of their units as the terrain and tactical situation required. Initial direct fire support of the infantry was not contemplated due to the nature of terrain. Reconnaissance Company reconnoitered area to east along the division front and north, charting possible routes to over which to move track-laying vehicles and direct fire gun positions to counterattack enemy armored thrusts. On 30 October and 31 October 1944 the battalion moved from an assembly position in vicinity of Mulartshutte, Germany (K 928341) to indirect fire positions in support of the 2d Division's light artillery battalions; Company A in support of the 15th F. A. with one platoon available to the 9th Infantry for any direct fire missions they may have in their sector; Company B in support of the 37th F. A. with one platoon available to the 23rd Infantry; and Company C in support of the 38th F. A. with one platoon available for direct fire missions in the 38th Infantry Regimental sector. Indirect fire positions were occupied and organized by the firing companies. Contact was made with the infantry regiments concerning use of the platoon made available to them on call.

e. All combat vehicle losses have been replaced. All key personnel losses replaced. Morale excellent. Combat efficiency excellent.

f. During the period 1 October to 5 October 1944 damages were inflicted upon the enemy positions in the Siegfried Line, two pillboxes being heavily damaged, one of which, according to reports received from friendly patrols,

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was filled with enemy dead upon their examination. Unknown number of dead caused by direct fire on enemy personnel was observed throughout this sector. Eighty-eight indirect fire harassing missions were fired with a total ammunition expenditure of 612 rounds. During this period roving gun tactics were employed against enemy positions, firing from positions on Sevenig Hill into German positions and installations on Kopp or Hill 515. German Barracks in this area were destroyed to the extent of making them untenable for troops. It was found that by indirect fire precision adjustment on pillbox installations at distances up to 5,000 to 6,000 yards considerable damage was effected by adjustment with HE and switching to T105 fuze when registration was completed and firing for effect commenced. 5 October to 25 October 1944 intense preparations resulted in all personnel being thoroughly familiarized with the parts they were to take in the attack of the Siegfried Line east of Elsenborn with gunners and gun commanders thoroughly familiar with precise targets to be fired on and well rehearsed in the signals indicating lifting fire. Training by infantry and tank destroyer units in forming assault teams resulted in complete understanding by each individual of his part in the operation. This thorough preparation for the attack resulted in complete confidence of the unit in their ability to perform the tasks assigned to them. Harassing fires reinforcing the 28th Division Artillery resulted in the expenditure of 4,215 rounds of ammunition in 509 harassing missions completed. It was found during this firing that the accuracy of the 3-inch gun aided forward observers and OP's in taking under fire pin-point targets, using a minimum of ammunition with excellent effect being secured. Artillery forward observers were very enthusiastic with the accuracy of the fire delivered by the units in indirect fire positions. From the 25th October to 30th October 1944, after moving to new positions in vicinity of Mulartshutte, Germany (K 928341), units conducted intense reconnaissance to locate indirect fire positions. Liaison was established with the Regimental Combat Teams by the firing companies in order to insure complete understanding between all forces and to make possible an effective move from indirect fire positions to direct fire support of infantry units requiring such support. Company-C had completed movement into indirect fire positions and position survey was completed prior to relief of attachment to the 28th Infantry Division and V Corps of this unit. On the 30th of October 1944 the battalion moved from the assembly position in vicinity of Mulartshutte, Germany (K 928341) to indirect fire positions selected in coordination with the 2d Infantry Division's light F. A. battalion commanders in the St. Vith sector. Complete organization and occupation of positions resulted in units being prepared to fire missions given them on 31 October 1944. Companies B and C made arrangements with the 23rd and 38th Infantry Regimental Combat Team Commanders for the employment of one platoon in each regimental sector to be used as roving gun position. Reconnaissance of concealed routes of approach and complete familiarization of personnel with targets to be fired upon was made on the 31st October 1944. Arrangements for 50 rounds HE ammunition per gun had been made by light field artillery units to be delivered to units upon arrival at gun positions.

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APO 230, U.S. ARMY

AFTER ACTION REPORT

3. ADMINISTRATIVE:

Casualty, Replacement & Prisoner Annex
1-31 October 1944

	WIA			KIA			MIA			N-BC			REPLACEMENTS			PRISONERS		
	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM
1	None			None			None			1	0	0	0			None		
2	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
3	"			"			"			2	0	1	1			"		
4	"			"			"			1	0	0	0			"		
5	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
6	"			"			"			0	0	1	1			"		
7	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
8	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
9	"			"			"			1	0	0	0			"		
10	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
11	"			"			"			0	1	0	0			"		
12	"			"			"			0	0	15	15			"		
13	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
14	"			"			"			2	0	0	0			"		
15	"			"			"			1	0	1	1			"		
16	"			"			"			1	0	0	0			"		
17	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
18	"			"			"		1	0	0	0	0			"		
19	"			"			"			3	0	0	0			"		
20	"			"			"			0	1	0	0			"		
21	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
22	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
23	"			"			"			1	0	0	0			"		
24	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
25	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
26	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
27	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
28	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
29	"			"			"			1	0	0	0			"		
30	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
31	"			"			"			0	0	0	0			"		
TOTAL	None			None			None		1	14	2	18	18			None		

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3. ADMINISTRATIVE (continued)

At the beginning of period covered by report battalion was 17 Enlisted Men and 1 Officer understrength. During the month of October 1944 18 Enlisted Men and 2 Officer replacements were received. At the close of the period battalion was 7 Enlisted Men understrength due to evacuation of non-battle casualties. Requisitions for tank destroyer replacements were filled by 9 tank destroyer Enlisted Men assigned from replacement pool, 2 Tank destroyer Enlisted Men transferred from 28th Infantry Division, 7 casual tank destroyer Enlisted Men returning to duty. (Members of this unit previously evacuated through medical channels and subsequently dropped from rolls of battalion)

Commanding Officers during period covered by this report:
(no changes during period)

Bn. Cmdr.	Lt. Col. Glenn Cole
C.O. Hq. Co.	Capt. Francis H. Dobbins
C. O. Co. A	Capt. Charles M. Grimshaw
C. O. Co. B	Capt. Edwin H. Stewart
C. O. Co. C	Capt. Edward A. Ryan
C. O. Rcn Co.	Capt. Harry L. Harris
C. O. Med Det	Capt. Domenico A. Savoia

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3. ADMINISTRATIVE (continued)

All supplies with the exception of ordnance supplies were drawn through the 28th Infantry Division Supply Officer. Major items of ordnance equipment were handled through V Corps Ordnance. Two M-8 vehicles were received on 27 October 1944 from the 526th Ordnance Company on allocation from V Corps. On 29 October 1944 eleven (11) motor cycles were turned in to the 257th Ordnance Company. Motorcycles are not used by this organization due to the tactical situation and the muddy condition of the roads. TD 18-25 and components dated 15 March 1944 authorize $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton vehicles instead of motorcycles. These authorized $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton vehicles have not yet been made available.

Three M-8 vehicles were received from the 526th Ordnance Company on 30 October 1944 on V Corps allocation. Two half-tracks (L-2) which were substitutes for M-8s formerly turned in on V Corps order, were turned in to ordnance on 30 October 1944.

Injectors for the diesel motors on the M-10 have not been available for some time. The lack of new injectors is becoming critical in the maintenance of our M-10's.

All directives issued by higher headquarters in regard to requisitions for anti-freeze solution have been complied with. To date no anti-freeze has been received.

The gas and oil supply and the basic load of ammunition is replenished daily as required by the situation.

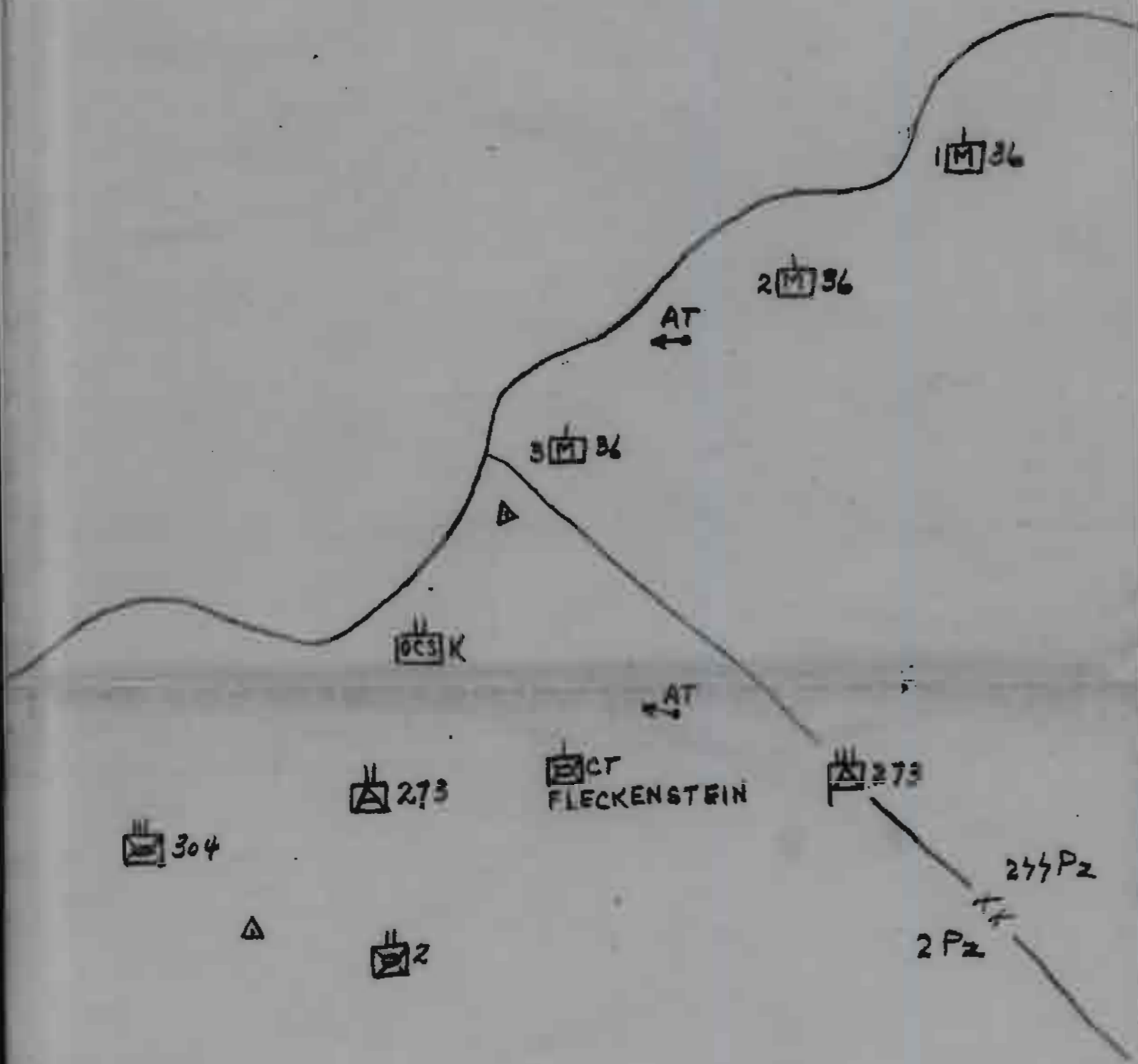
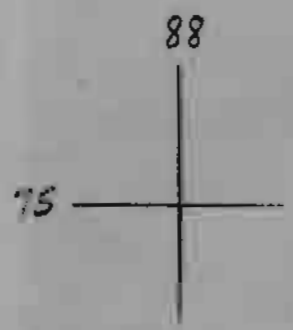
Roads used by the organization supply vehicles are generally good except in wet weather when they are somewhat slippery due to being covered with mud.



GLENN COLE
Lt. Col., Inf (TD)
Commanding

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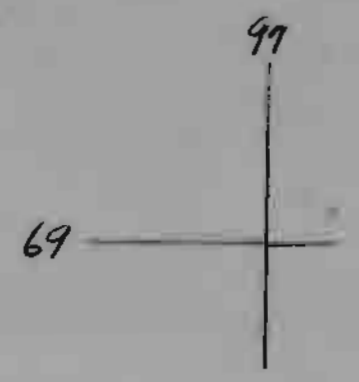
F1

2 DR

3 DF

3 DF

DF
M 36

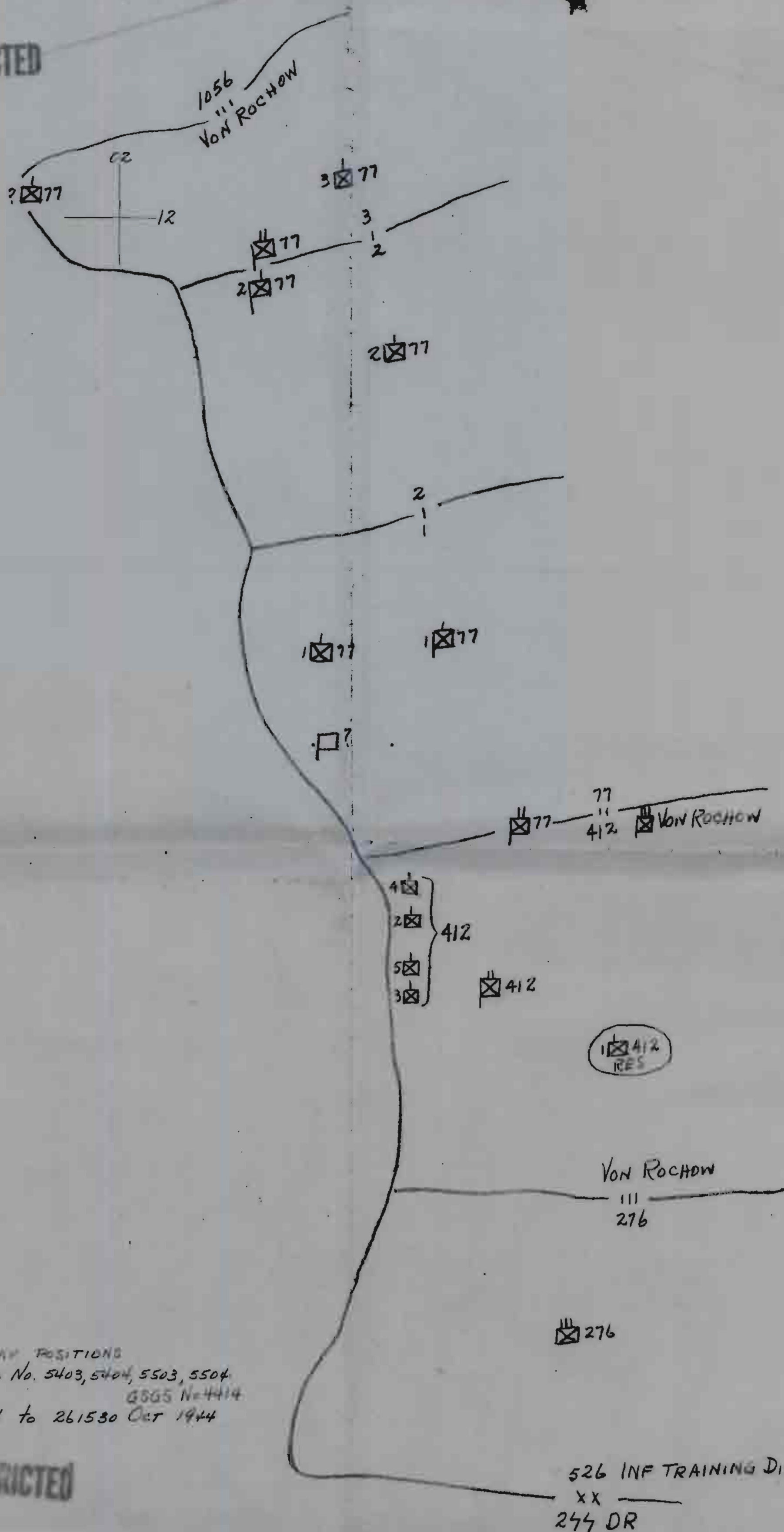


OVERLAY SHOWING ENEMY POSITIONS
 MAPS: 1/25,000 SHEETS No. 5802, 5803, 5902, 5903
 HQS., 629th T.D. BN. GSG5 No 4414
 FROM 010001 OCT 1944 to 051630 OCT 1944

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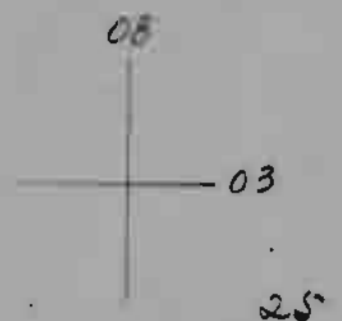
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OVERLAY SHOWING ENEMY POSITIONS
MAPS: 1/25000 SHEETS No. 5403, 5404, 5503, 5504
HQ, 629th T.D. Bn. 6565 N-4414
FROM 051630 OCT 1944 to 261530 OCT 1944

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526 INF TRAINING DIV
XX
277 DR



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FORT 20 GAF

3 743

03

35

275 FUS

TRIER

275

14.2

275

73

5 GAF

16

323

FORT 24 GAF

FORTS

09

30

275

XX?

89

1055

FORT 9 GAF

FORTS

OVERLAY SHOWING ENEMY POSITIONS
MAPS: 1:25,000 SHEETS N's 5203, 5204, 5303, 5304
HQs, 629th T.D. BN. GSGS No 4414
FROM 261530 OCT 1944 TO 30100 OCT 1944

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