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**HEADQUARTERS
638th Tank Destroyer Battalion**

Jan 1945

**APO 230, U. S. Army
1 February 1945**

SUBJECT: After Action Report for January 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington 25, D. C.

THROUGH: Commanding General, 84th Infantry Division, APO 84, U. S. Army.

1. In accordance with the provisions of par 10, AR 345-105, change 4 the After Action Report of the 638th Tank Destroyer Battalion for the month of January 1945 is submitted herewith.

Harold L. Davis

**HAROLD L. DAVIS
Lt. Col., FA
Commanding**

6 Incls:

- Incl #1 - After Action Report (including Appendixes I, II, III)
- Incl #2 - Unit Journal.
- Incl #3 - Extract Copy of par II, GO #5 Hq 84 Inf Div dtd 7 Jan 45 (Award Silver Star to 2nd Lt Silence).
- Incl #4 - Extract Copy of par II, GO #5 Hq 84 Inf Div dtd 7 Jan 45 (Award Silver Star to Pvt Boan).
- Incl #5 - Extract Copy SO 18 FUSA dtd 18 Jan 45 (Commission of 2nd Lt Brumbaugh).
- Incl #6 - TWX 84 Inf Div dtd 28 Jan 45 (Commission of 2nd Lts Andrews and Wann).

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HEADQUARTERS
638th Tank Destroyer Battalion

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APO 230, U. S. Army
1 February 1945

AFTER ACTION REPORT FOR JANUARY 1945

1. Original unit: 638th Tank Destroyer Battalion (No change).
2. Changes in organization: Not applicable.
3. Strength:
 - a. 1 January 1945

Officers	-	33
Warrant Officers	-	2
Enlisted Men	-	563
 - b. 31 January 1945

Officers	-	37
Warrant Officers	-	2
Enlisted Men	-	560
4. Stations:
 - a. Barvaux, Belgium, 1 January 1945 to 6 January 1945.
 - b. Fisenne, Belgium, 7 January 1945 to 20 January 1945.
 - c. Sart, Belgium, 21 January 1945 to 24 January 1945.
 - d. Neuville, Belgium, 25 January to 31 January 1945.
5. Marches: Not applicable.
6. Campaigns:
 - a. (1) Belgium
 - (2) 1 - 14 January 1945
 - (3) Purpose: To reduce the German offensive and trap the enemy in a pincers movement by making contact with the Third Army pushing up from the south.

Inclosure #1

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(4) Authority Ordering: VII Corps.

b. (1) Belgium

(2) 22 - 27 January 1945

(3) Purpose: To seize the limited objective of BEHO, BELGIUM and hold the front line until relieved.

(4) Authority ordering: VII Corps

7. Battles: (See Narrative report, Appendix I)

8. Commanding Officers in important engagements:

Attack of LA ROCHE highway, 9 January 1945.

2nd Platoon Co B, 638th TD Bn.
1st Lt MAXWELL E. LEE

9. Personnel losses in action:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Date and type of Casualty</u>	
Kennedy, Taylor L.	A	1st Lt	3 Jan 45	LIA
Gribbin, Clement	A	Pfc	3 Jan 45	KIA
Blizzard James	C	Cpl	5 Jan 45	LIA
Scrogam, Elmer D.	C	Pfc	8 Jan 45	LWA
Soviak, William	B	Sgt	8 Jan 45	LIA
McCroskey, Sam P.	A	Cpl	9 Jan 45	LWA
Abraham, Nathan	A	Pvt	10 Jan 45	LIA
Weltzin, Gerald P.	A	Sgt	10 Jan 45	LIA
Benjamin, William G.	B	Pfc	12 Jan 45	LIA
Williams, Joe B.	Rcn	Pfc	14 Jan 45	LIA

b. Reinforcements:

<u>Name</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Asgd to</u>
1st Lt OTTO F. HAAS	01823733	Co A
1st Lt MELVIN C. MARTIN	01823905	Co A

Co A - 6 Enlisted Men
Co B - 6 Enlisted Men
Co C - 4 Enlisted Men

c. Prisoners of War: 4.

10. a. Awards

2nd Lt JOSEPH F. SILENCE - Silver Star (See inclosure #3)
Private Willis E. Boan - Silver Star (See inclosure #4)

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b. Battle field commissions

2nd Lt BRUMBAUGH, HOWARD, 02005226, date of rank 17 Jan 45 (See Incl #5)
2nd Lt ANDREWS, EUGENE, 02005375, date of rank 28 Jan 45 (See Incl #6)
2nd Lt WANN, CHARLES A, 02005416, date of rank 28 Jan 45 (See Incl #6)

11. Unit Journal enclosed.

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APPENDIX I

OPERATIONS

1. Company A

1 - 14 Jan 45: On 1 Jan the 2nd platoon of Co A received mortar fire in the vicinity of VERGENNE, BELGIUM, 600 yards to their front. 2 rds HE eliminated the firing.

On 3 Jan Co A, attached to 333 IR moved from the vicinity of OPPAGNE to GRANDMENIL. On 4 Jan the 1st platoon selected firing positions east of MANHAY and dug in. 1st Platoon leader TAYLOR L. KENNEDY and his driver Clement Gribbins ran over a mine while on reconnaissance, killing the driver and injuring the platoon leader. On 4 Jan the 1st platoon captured 2 Germans. On 6 Jan the 1st platoon moved to the vicinity of ODEIGNE; the 2nd platoon was in reserve at GRANDMENIL and the 3rd platoon was in the vicinity of LAMORMENIL. On 7 Jan 1st platoon moved to the vicinity of HREYNEUX and the 2nd platoon moved to ODEIGNE. On 9 Jan the company occupied positions covering road blocks on two principal highway routes SE of ODEIGNE. On 11 Jan the company displaced to FISENNE and continued in mobile reserve.

15 - 21 Jan 45: Company A continued rest and rehabilitation pending future operations.

On 22 Jan the company moved to assembly positions SW of COURTIL, BELGIUM. On 23 Jan the 1st platoon moved to firing positions in the vicinity of BEHO. Two prisoners were captured. The remainder of the company provided AT defense in the zone of the 334 IR. On 25 Jan the company was attached to Task Force Church. The 3rd platoon moved to firing positions in the vicinity of WALDANGE. The company was relieved from attachment to Task Force Church on 27 Jan and moved to the vicinity of OUFNY for maintenance, rehabilitation and rest pending future operations.

2. Company B

1 - 14 Jan 45: On 1 Jan Co B withdrew to assembly positions in the vicinity of HOTTON, BELGIUM. On 2 Jan moved to assembly area in the vicinity of WERIS to rejoin the rest of the battalion which was in mobile reserve. On 7 Jan supported the attack of the 334 IR and on 8 Jan was attached to same for operations. 1st platoon was in ANONINES and the 2nd and 3rd platoons NE of DEVANTAVE.

On the afternoon of 9 Jan the 2nd platoon moved to firing positions in the vicinity of CIELLE with the mission of covering the LA ROCHE highway with fire and denying its use to the enemy. The platoon was at half strength with only two destroyers. It selected a concealed route to firing positions, moving thru mortar and sniper fire. The positions were behind buildings on the south edge of CIELLE. 1st Lt MAXWELL E. LEE, platoon leader called the two destroyer commanders together and pointed out five vehicles grouped close together in a woods of thickly scattered pine trees. Each destroyer fired 2 rds APC at each vehicle starting from the extreme ends and moving towards the center of the group.

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The enemy personnel abandoned all vehicles as the first round struck. All rounds were fired at a range of 2500 yards. An artillery observer confirmed the knocked out vehicles to be 3 Mark IV tanks, one SP gun and one general purpose vehicle. Two hours later an artillery observer requested Sgt Perry T. Gross, destroyer commander, to take under fire an artillery piece since his firing battery had not yet been registered. The destroyer was put into a firing position alongside of a strawstack and at a range of 2400 yards fired 6 rds HE and completely destroyed the gun emplacement. This gun was the one believed to have been firing on the 1st Platoon.

That same day the 1st Platoon evacuated two destroyers as a result of enemy shellfire on the MARCOURAY*CIELLE road.

On 10 Jan the 1st and 2nd Platoons held positions in the vicinity of CIELLE and later moved to assembly positions at MARCOURT. On 11 Jan the 3rd Platoon, attached to 354 IR moved to an assembly position in the vicinity of SAMREE. On 12 Jan the 1st Platoon moved to an assembly position in the vicinity of DOOHAMPS while the remainder of the company moved to SAMREE.

On 13 Jan the 5rd platoon headed for NADRIN but was unable to reach that destination because the road was blocked by a Sherman Tank which had hit a mine. The platoon fired 5 rds HE at a range of 3000 yards with unknown results. On 14 Jan the company moved to assembly positions at FISENNE. The company remained in rest and rehabilitation from 15 Jan to 31 Jan moving to SART on 21 Jan and HABLEMONT on 25 Jan 45.

3. Company C

1 - 2 Jan 45: Co C moved to the vicinity of WERIS, BELGIUM on 1 Jan and continued in mobile reserve. On 7 Jan the company moved to the vicinity of FISENNE and continued in mobile reserve.

At 0450, 22 Jan the company moved to assembly positions in the vicinity of HONYELEZ and BOVIGNY, BELGIUM to support the attack of the 353 IR. The company maintained firing positions from the vicinity of ROGERY and BEHO as the attack progressed. Moved to HABLEMONT for maintenance, rest and rehabilitation on 25 Jan and remained there until 31 Jan 45.

4. Rcn Co

1 - 14 Jan 45: Rcn Co moved to the vicinity of WERIS, BELGIUM on 1 Jan. On 4 Jan the 1st platoon was attached to Co A in the vicinity of GRANDMENIL and performed route and position area reconnaissance. The 2nd platoon performed route, position area and OP reconnaissance south of SOY. On 5 Jan 3rd platoon relieved the 2nd platoon and continued on the same mission.

On 7 Jan the 2nd platoon and one section of Pioneer platoon was attached to Co B. The remainder of the company moved to the vicinity of FISENNE. From 8 to 10 Jan all platoons performed route and position area reconnaissance in the division zone. On 9 Jan the second platoon reconnoitered routes from MARCOURAY to CIELLE along the infantry axis of advance. One M-8 vehicle was hit by shrapnel and its radio damaged. On 13 Jan the 2nd platoon (attached to Co B)

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reconnoitered south of SAMREE for possible firing positions when the roads were cleared also acted as a radio relay station for Co B. On 14 Jan the entire company was reassembled in FISENNE in mobile reserve and remained there until 21 Jan 45.

On 22 Jan the 1st platoon was attached to Co A in the vicinity of COURTEL, BELGIUM, the 3rd platoon attached to Co C in the vicinity of HOMÉLEY, BELGIUM and the balance of the company was in reserve in the vicinity of JOUBIEVAL. The 1st and 3rd platoons conducted area and route reconnaissance in the zones of the 333rd and 334th Infantry Regiments respectively. On 25 Jan the company less 1st platoon moved to the vicinity of HABIEMONT, BELGIUM. The 1st platoon remained attached to Co A which in turn was attached to Task Force Chruch in the vicinity of BEHO, BELGIUM. The platoon reverted to company control and rejoined the company on 27 Jan 45.

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APPENDIX II

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SUPPLY AND EVACUATION

ORDNANCE

4 ea	Truck, $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton, 4x4	5 replaced
9 pr	Binocular, M17	replaced
4 pr	Binocular, M3	replaced
2 ea	Mount, Tripod, MG, cal. 30, M2	replaced
1 ea	Mount, Tripod, MG, cal. 30, M2	replaced
5 ea	Carriage, motor, 76mm gun, M18	replaced
1 ea	Trailer, ammunition, M10	replaced
2 ea	Gun, mach; cal. 30, Browing M1919A4	replaced
1 ea	Launcher, grenade, M-7	replaced
2 ea	Launcher, rocket, AT 2.36in, M9A1	replaced
8 ea	Carbine, cal. 30, M1	replaced

SIGNAL

1 ea	Radio set, SCR - 610	replaced
1 ea	Receiver & transmitter SCR-659 (for SCR-610)	not replaced
4 ea	Telephone, EE -8	replaced
6 ea	Tool Equipment, TE-33	replaced
6 mi	Wire, W-150 on spool DR-8	replaced

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APPENDIX III

Known Enemy Losses Due to our Operations

<u>No</u>	<u>Type</u>
5	Mk IV Tanks
1	G P vehicle
1	S P gun
1	Arty gun
*1	Mk V Tank
*1	Pillbox

* Not recorded in previous report

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