

DECLASSIFIED
Authority DN0735017
By KB NARA Date 9/26/09

Hist Sec

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS
FORTY FIFTH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 45 U S ARMY

.....
:Auth: CG 45 Div
:Init: LPD
:Date: 19 Dec 44
:.....

314.7

L-1025

19 December 1944
A4553-✓

Nov 44

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Unit History.

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U.S. Army.
(Attn: Historical Section)

Transmitted herewith Historical Record of the 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion, attached this command, for the period 1 November 1944 to 30 November 1944, inclusive.

For the Commanding General:

Emil P Navta
EMIL P NAVTA
WOJG USA
Asst Adj Gen

- 1 Incl:
- Hist Record, 645th TD Bn
- 1 Nov 44 - 30 Nov 44 (trip)
- Annex 1 - Unit Journal
- Annex 2 - Messages

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:
CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE *18 months*
Major [unclear]

TD Bn - 645 - 0.3

copy 2

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NW 0735017
By BR NARA Date 9/26/09

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
645TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 45, U. S. ARMY

L-1075 15 December 1944

SUBJECT: Battle Report

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U.S. Army (Thru Channels)

MAP: FRANCE 1/100,000, Sheet 15-G.

PERIOD COVERED: 01 November 1944 to 30 November 1944.

PART I

November marked the beginning of consistently bad weather, making armor more and more road bound. Woods fighting was still the mission with usable trails few and fields of fire nil, until open ground bordering the MESURTHE RIVER was reached. Upon reaching open ground the TDs were able to give some effective supporting fire to the Infantry. From the 9th to the 21st November (inclusive) the Battalion remained with the 45th Infantry Division in rest area vicinity COARRE, France, and on the 22nd November began movement with the 45th Division to XV Corps area. While with the XV Corps, the Battalion was under the control of the 5th TD Group, and for a short time was in support of the 44th Infantry Division in the RAINVILLERS sector, but then returned to support the 45th Division in its drive on Germany NE of SAVERNE. "B" Company continued its mission in the MIEZ area, mostly artillery with some direct fire.

During the month the Battalion (- "B" Company) destroyed 4 machine gun nests and one 75mm SP gun.

While in rest the Battalion reorganized under the change in T/O, 18-25, (Reduction of Personnel), and 20 enlisted men attending 1st Armored Group School for M-10 Drivers and Gunners returned after completing two week course. Also "A" Company fired into concrete casements vicinity METZIG using regular APCBIF and HE Delay Shells at 800 yards, with very little effect. Only small pieces were knocked out of the emplacements. Each Company now has T-105 fuzes which will be used in the future.

PART II

1. November 1st found the Battalion (- "B" Company) with "B" Company 636th TD Bn attached closely supporting infantry elements of 45th Infantry Division in the heavily wooded and mountainous terrain East of RAMBERVILLERS. "A" Company supporting 180th Infantry Regiment, "C" Company supporting 157th Infantry Regiment and 179th Infantry Regiment, and "B" Company 636th TD Bn supporting 117th Reconnaissance Squadron. Locations were as follows: 5 guns of "A" Company working in ST BENOIT sector, 2 guns "C" Company 1 1/2 kilometers SW of LA - SALLE with 2 guns in reserve in vicinity of LES ANGELES and the remainder working through the woods 3 kilometers W of ST REMY; one platoon 636th TD Bn in vicinity of ANGLEMOY and remainder in reserve with 2 guns in JEANMONT, 2 guns in BRU, and 3 guns in RAMBERVILLERS. Battalion CP located in HOUSSERAS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Battle Report for Period 01 November 1944 thru 31 November 1944 (Continued).

and Battalion Rear Echelon located in EPINAL.

2. At 1600 hrs 1st November, one M-10 of "G" Company was hit by mortar shell causing damage to the radiator. At 2100 hrs, "E" Company 636th TD Bn alerted to move to BACCARAT to support a 117th Bcn holding force in that sector. No other change in positions.

3. On the 2nd November, 5 guns of "A" Company in close support of advancing Infantry and 3 guns in reserve vicinity of ST BENOIT. "G" Company continued in close support of Infantry. At 0530 hrs, "E" Company 636th TD Bn reported in Antitank defensive positions in the BACCARAT sector.

4. Little change was reported in company positions on 3rd November. Tank Destroyers kept well forward with advancing infantry elements and Reconnaissance Company maintained roving OPs and provided liaison between Infantry and guns.

5. On 4th November, 3 guns "A" Company supporting 180th Infantry, 2 guns supporting 1st Bn 179th Infantry (attached to 180th Inf) and 2 guns in reserve vicinity of ST BENOIT. 1st platoon "G" Company in support of 157th Infantry, 2 guns 3rd platoon in support of 399th Infantry Regiment (100th Inf Div), and 3 guns in reserve vicinity of 281747. At 1400 hrs 2 guns 3rd platoon moved into the town of LA SALLE and were joined at 1700 hrs by 2 guns of the 1st platoon. "E" Company 636th TD Bn continued in support of the 117th Bcn Squadron vicinity of BACCARAT. During the period 3 guns vicinity of BERTICHAMPS received intermittent 10 barrel mortar fire, 2 casualties resulting.

6. On the 5th November four TDs "A" Company moved forward with the 1st Bn 179th Infantry in push on THIAVILLE and at 1630A fired 10 rounds at enemy tank vicinity of railroad NE of THIAVILLE (309808), causing tank to withdraw. "G" Company continued supporting advance of 157th and 399th Infantry Regiments in the LA SALLE-ST REMY sector. During period Reconnaissance Company continued to maintain liaison between infantry elements, and TDs and at 1700A OP vicinity of 300758 adjusted artillery on enemy gun battery vicinity of 373801. Battery believed to be destroyed. "E" Company 636th TD Bn remained in AT positions vicinity of BACCARAT.

7. On November 6th two TDs of Company "A" east of THIAVILLE were put out of action, one with smashed belly, and one with a thrown track. Enemy artillery registered on the area causing two casualties and destroyers could not be retrieved until the town was taken.

8. The following period up to the 8th November found no change in units.

9. At 1400 hours 08 November, Battalion alerted to pull back and go into rest with the 45th Inf Div and at 0730A 9th November Battalion started movement to bivouac area vicinity of CORRE, FRANCE (15 KIL SW of BAINS LES BAINS) arriving at 1130A the same day.

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Report for 1st Lt. James H. ... 30 November 1944 (Continued)

PART III

1. From November 9th to November 21st (inclusive) entire Battalion (-B Coy) remained in rest area. During that period care and cleaning of equipment was conducted and maintenance performed on all vehicles. Classes of instruction in the use of the Bazooka in wooded terrain were held and actual firing was conducted for selected personnel.

PART IV

1. At 1200A 22nd November, "A" Company and 2nd platoon Reconnaissance Company moved out of rest area and were attached to the 179th Infantry Regiment for operations per VO CG 45th Infantry Division.

2. At 1300A 23rd November the remainder of the Battalion (-B Company) moved to assembly area vicinity of TACONVILLE.

3. At 0715A 24 November the Battalion (-"A" and "B" Companies and one platoon Reconnaissance Company) were alerted to move to LUXHEIM to cover armored threat vicinity RAUVILLER (540237) per HQs XV Corps order. At 1030A Battalion CP arrived in VENIX LUXHEIM and at 1150A two platoons "C" Company and Reconnaissance Company (minus) arrived in same locality. One platoon of "C" Company was diverted on move by CG 5th TD Group to vicinity of 521220 to support 71st Infantry (44th Division) but reverted to Battalion control at 1700A. At 1536A 3 guns "C" Company moved into RAUVILLER but were forced to withdraw from the strongly defended town to vicinity of 545226. While in RAUVILLER the guns fired 30 rounds HE at enemy MG nests and CP in church steeple. 4 MG nests were destroyed. During the period Reconnaissance Company conducted reconnaissance for gun positions, maintained OPs and provided security for TDs.

4. At 0815A 26th November Company "C" in support of 157th Inf Regt (attached to 44th Inf Div) moved into the town of RAUVILLER and blocked all roads to the North. At 2300A Battalion CP and Reconnaissance Company closed into new assembly area vicinity of GOTTESHEIM (813195) and at 1200 hours 27th November "C" Company arrived in same vicinity. "A" Company and 2nd platoon Reconnaissance Company reverted to Battalion control. Entire Battalion (-B Company) attached to the 45th Infantry Division.

5. At 2330A 27th November "A" and "B" Companies of the 824th TD Battalion (Towed 3") attached to Headquarters 645th TD Battalion for operations.

6. On the morning of 28th November all companies were supporting attack of the 45th Infantry Division. M-10s moved ahead with the Infantry and towed 3" guns took up AT positions vacated by the M-10s. At 1300A one M-10 "C" Company was knocked out by enemy mine vicinity of ZUTZENDORF (later retrieved) and at 1700A another M-10 of the same company was hit by enemy shell fire vicinity RINGELDORF causing one casualty. Reconnaissance Company reconnoitered road net in conjunction with advance of TDs.

7. On the 29th November M-10s and 3" towed guns continued supporting advance of 45th Infantry Division. At 1500 hours Battalion CP closed into new location vicinity of ZUTZENDORF. On the night of 29th November "C" Company fired 7 rounds HE at 7-man enemy demolition party, killing one man and dispersing the others,

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

Authority DN 0735017By R NARA Date 9/26/09

CONFIDENTIAL

Battle Report for the period 1 November 1944 to 30 November 1944 (Continued)

consequently saving the bridge enemy was to blow at 021274.

At 0900A 30th November "A" Company knocked out an enemy 75mm long barreled SP gun with 4 rounds HE and 3 rounds APCBCF causing SP to burn. At 0915A same gun fired 21 rounds HE with good effect at enemy Infantry vicinity of 874352 and at 1300A took under fire 4 enemy tanks in field vicinity of 975340. 15 rounds APCBCF and 7 rounds of HE were fired but due to the fact that only part of the turrets could be seen results were unknown. However, some ricochet hits were observed and tanks were reported abandoned. "C" Company supported Infantry advance on BITSCHOFFEN while Reconnaissance Company maintained OPs and reconnoitered road net in conjunction with TDs.

PART V

1. "B" Company 645th TD Battalion continued in attachment to Provisional Air-Borne Division, operating in the MARITIME Alps in Southern FRANCE. Indirect fire batteries were maintained and a total of 2633 rounds HE and 128 rounds Smoke were expended during the period 01 November thru November 28 1944. OPs reported effect of most observed missions as good. Many unobserved missions were fired including counter battery and harrassing fire.

2. Only twice during the period was the company called upon to furnish direct assault fire. On 3rd November 1 gun of 2nd platoon expended 16 rounds HE and 8 rounds APC direct fire on enemy fort scoring several hits. On 26 November 3rd platoon fired 26 rounds HE direct on enemy ski patrol.

3. No TDs were lost or damaged and no casualties among personnel were suffered as a result of enemy action.

4. For the period 01 November thru 28 November company CP was maintained at LANTOSQUE, 30 kilometers North of NICE. 1st platoon maintained 4-gun indirect fire battery vicinity ROQUEBILLIERE in support of 509th Paratroop Infantry Bn. and 4-gun indirect fire battery maintained by the 2nd platoon vicinity PIERREVALE reinforcing fires of 601st PA Bn. Two guns 3rd platoon were in indirect fire positions vicinity ST MARTIN VERSUBIE and two other guns vicinity ST ETIENNE, all in support of 551st Paratroop Infantry Bn.

5. On November 29th "B" Company was released from attachment to Provisional Air-Borne Division and moved to assembly area in NICE in preparation for move to rejoin 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion in 7th Army sector.

Edward L. Austin

EDWARD L. AUSTIN

LT. COL., Field Artillery
Commanding

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NW 0735017
By BR NARA Date 9/26/09

CONFIDENTIAL

Battle Report for the period 1 November 1944 to 30 November 1944 (Continued)

- ANNEX A - Administration Report**
- B - Overlays**
- C - Account of Destruction of Enemy SP**
- D - S-4 Report**

- ICIS: Unit Journals**
- Messages**
- Intelligence Summary**

CONFIDENTIAL

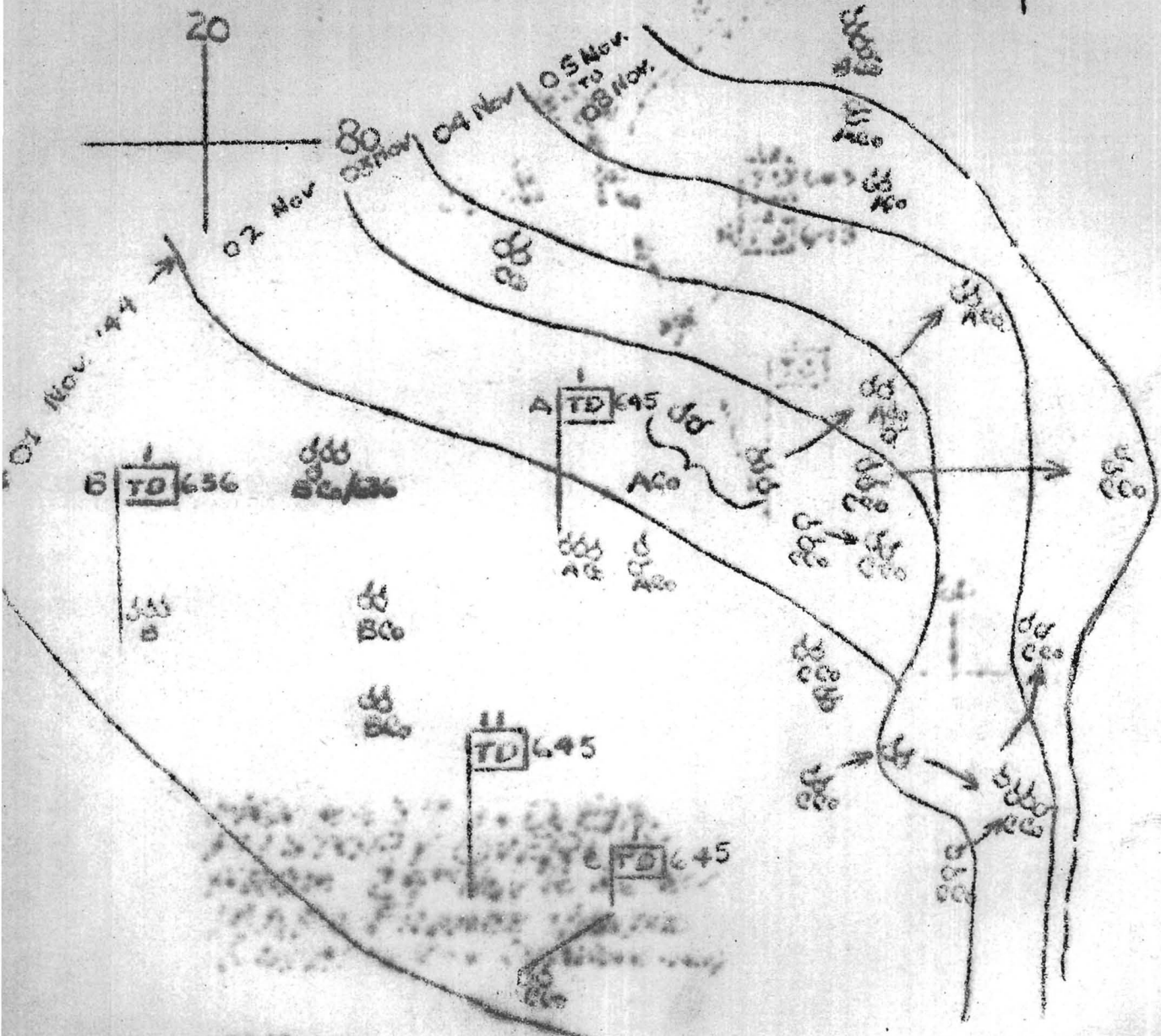
B TD 636
02 Nov 44

636 B Co
636 B Co

33

84

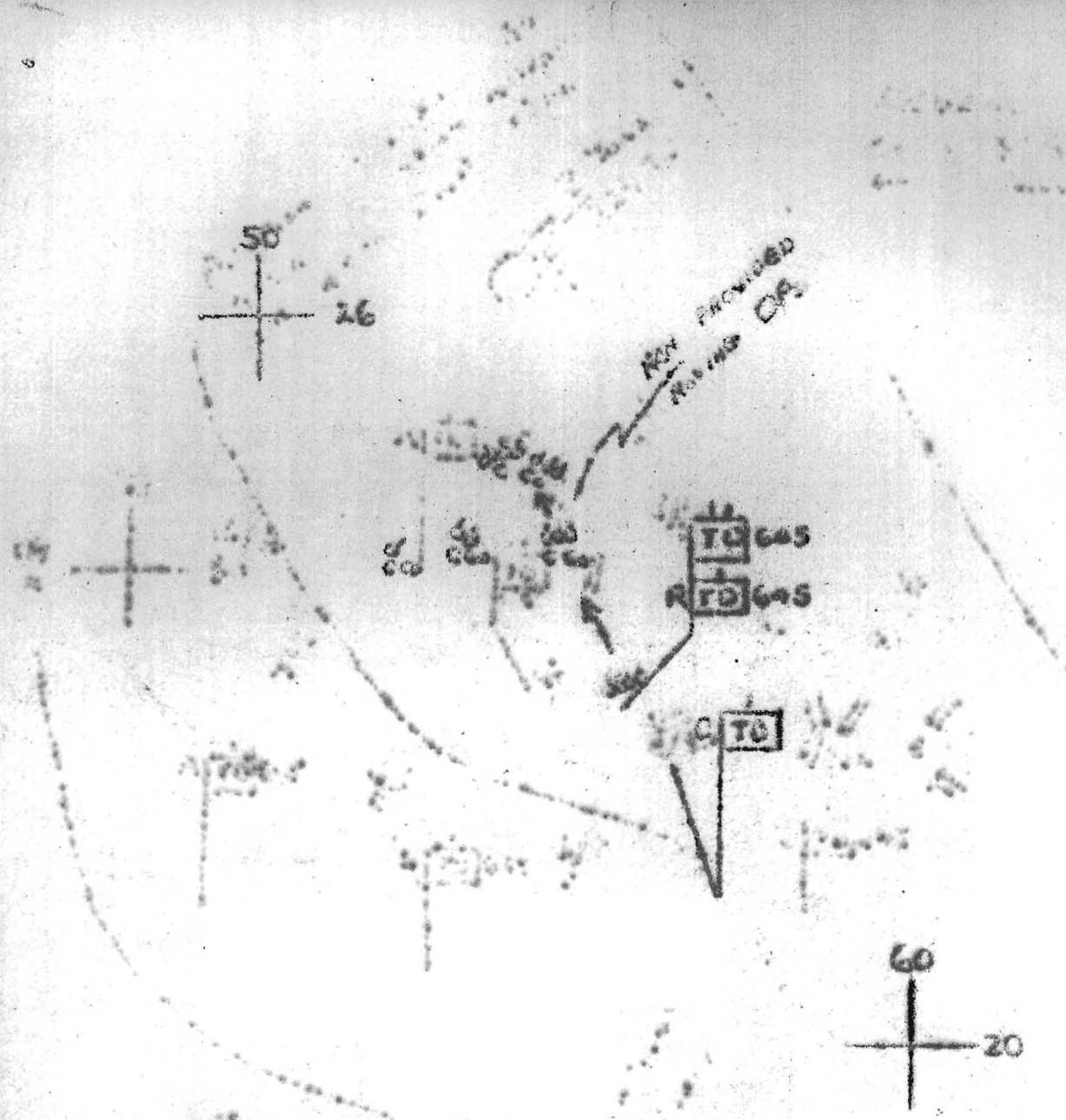
L1078



HQ. 645th T. D. BN.
HISTORY OVERLAY
FROM 01 NOV TO 08 NOV
MAP FRANCE 1/100,000
SHEET 15 G

ORIGINALS
[Signature]
Price

AUSTIN
Cmde

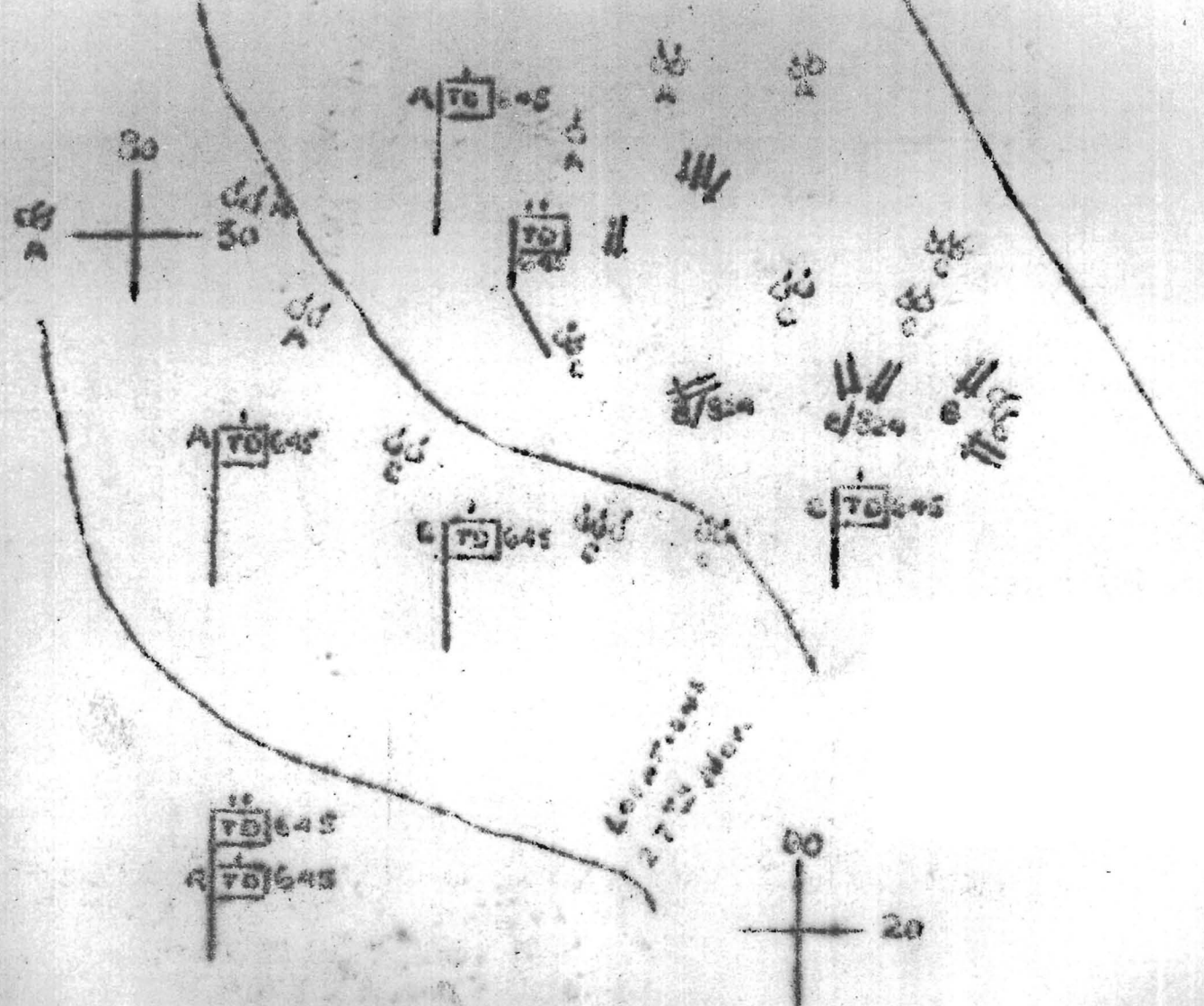


HQ: 645TH T. O. BN.
 HISTORY OVERLAY
 FROM 24TH NOV TO 26TH NOV
 MAP: FRANCE 1/100,000
 SHEET V-2 (HARRIS)

OFFICIAL
 PRINTING
 OFFICE
 S-3

POSITIONS OCCUPIED 30 NOV
 AFTER SUPPORTIVE ADVANCE
 OF 4.5th Inf Div.

LEGEND
 O - 3" SP (645)
 T - TOWED 3" (824)



HQ 645th TD BN
 HISTORY OVERLAY
 FROM 27 NOV TO 30 NOV '44
 MAP: GEN. EUROPE 1:100,000
 SHEET V-2

OFFICIAL:
[Signature]
 Date

AUSTIN
[Signature]

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NW 0735017
 By KB NARA Date 9/26/09

545TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
 APO 45, U.S. ARMY

04 December 1944

SUBJECT: Destroyed Enemy Materiel.

FO

TYPE: SP - 75mm PAK '40 Long Barrel
 Mounted on Half-track.

PLACE: 87353401 - Map France 1/50,000 Sheet XXXVII-14.

EVENTS: At 0900A, 30 Nov 1944, 1 gun 1st platoon "A" Company fired 4 rounds HE (all hits), one of which landed in right forward part of motor; then fired 3 APC, two of which hit the half-track on the right side rear above the track, piercing side of half-track and entering pedestal of gun and compartment under pedestal. Three explosions were seen immediately after APC was fired. Vehicle was bogged down, burned out, thoroughly torn up, hood and front armor blown off. Part of damage due to exploding ammunition in half track. The gun was pointing N. No one else fired on enemy vehicle and no counterfire was received. Visibility was hazy.

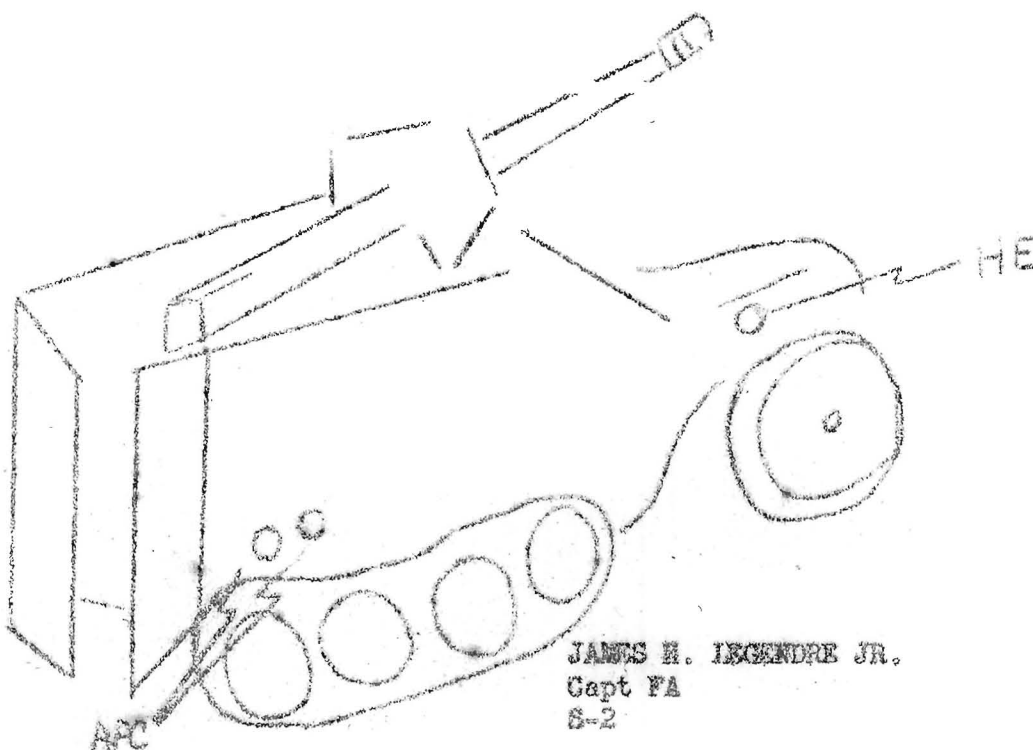
TERRAIN: Rolling, muddy.

ANGLE OF FIRE: 45° obliquity (horizontal)
 10° obliquity (vertical - looking down on target).

RANGE: 1500 meters.

SIGHT: M70G.

TOTAL ROUNDS: Seven- 4 HE, 3 APC.



JAMES H. ICEBENDRE JR.
 Capt FA
 8-2