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HEADQUARTERS 654TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
Office of the Commanding Officer
APC 339, US Army

Auth: CG 35th Inf Div

Initials: *R.C.C.*

Date: *16 Apr 45*

1 April 1945

SUBJECT: Report After Action Against the Enemy.

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

1. In compliance with the provisions of Par 10, cs, AR 345-105, submitted below, is Report After Action Against the Enemy, for the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion, covering the period 1-31 March 1945:

March 1, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies located in Wassenberg, Germany. Battalion attached to the 35th Infantry Division and further attached to the 35th Division Artillery. "A" and "B" Companies in direct support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company attached to Task Force Byrne. 3rd platoon "A" Company destroyed two 75mm anti-tank guns. Technicians 5th Grade Wallace T. French and Herman Vinsch, Jr., were each presented the Bronze Star Medal, by Captain Lee R. Barnes. Captain D. L. Benton, Jr., appointed Major and 2nd Lt. Raphael Jenkins, appointed 1st Lt., this date.

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March 2, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies moved from Wassenberg, Germany to Kaldenkirchen, Germany, distance of 20 miles. Command Post closed at Wassenberg at 1445 hours and opened at Kaldenkirchen at 2000 hours. "A" and "B" Companies continued in direct support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. One enlisted man in "C" Company wounded in action and evacuated. "B" Company captured 38 prisoners and 3rd platoon of "C" Company captured 50 prisoners.

March 3, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies moved from Kaldenkirchen, Germany to Venlo, Holland, distance of 6 miles. Command Post closed at Kaldenkirchen at 0900 hours and opened at Venlo at 1010 hours. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. 1st platoon of "C" Company knocked out two pillboxes, 2 machine-gun nests and one OP. One M-36 destroyer got a direct hit on ONE shell, resulting two crew members. 3rd platoon of "C" Company captured prisoners.

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Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies moved from Venlo, Holland to Nieuwerkerk, Germany, distance of 15 miles. Command Post closed at Venlo at 1500 hours. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. 1st platoon of "C" Company knocked out two pillboxes, 2 machine-gun nests and one OP. One M-36 destroyer got a direct hit on ONE shell, resulting two crew members. 3rd platoon of "C" Company captured prisoners.

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March 4, 1945 (cont'd):

tinued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. 3rd Platoon of "C" Company knocked out 1 artillery OP; Headquarters and Reconnaissance platoons captured one 170mm artillery howitzer. 1st platoon killed 12 German soldiers and knocked out one 20 mm gun. 3rd platoon also captured 7 prisoners.

March 5, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained at Nieukerk, Germany. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. 3rd platoon of "C" Company fired 30 rounds of HE and 30 rounds of AP, destroying 2 machine-gun nests and 8 buildings occupied as German strongpoints. 3rd platoon captured 10 prisoners.

March 6, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies moved from Nieukerk, Germany to Lintfort, Germany, distance of 8 miles. Command Post closed at Nieukerk at 0830 hours and opened at Lintfort at 1455 hours. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. 3rd platoon captured 10 prisoners. One officer and three EM slightly wounded in action, and were evacuated.

March 7, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Lintfort. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. "B" Company destroyed one enemy half track vehicle. "C" Company destroyed three enemy strongpoints and knocked out one anti-tank gun, five Germans were killed in the action. Lt.-Col. John H. Minton, Battalion Commander, and eight EM returned from leave and furlough in England.

March 8, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Lintfort. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. 1st platoon of "B" Company destroyed one machine-gun nest and one strongpoint, killing five Germans. 2nd platoon of "B" Company destroyed 2 Mark VI Tanks and two strongpoints. One EM of "B" Company wounded in action, treated by Medical Detachment of 137th Infantry Regiment, returned to duty. 2nd platoon of "C" Company destroyed 2 enemy machine-guns and one 88mm towed anti-tank gun.

March 9, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Lintfort. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company continued attached to Task Force Byrne. 2nd platoon of "B" Company destroyed one 88mm towed anti-tank gun, two 20mm anti-aircraft guns and 5 general purpose vehicles. One EM of "B" Company wounded

March 9, 1945 (cont'd):

in action, and was evacuated. 2nd platoon of "C" Company captured one prisoner. 1st Lt. Spain and 2 EM returned from leave and furlough to England. 1st Lt. Spain presented with the Air Medal, by Lt. Col. John H. Minton.

March 10, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Lintfort. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company relieved from attachment to Task Force Byrne and reverted to Battalion control at 0630 hours. "C" Company destroyed one 75mm anti-tank gun, 2 machine-guns and one enemy strongpoint.

March 11, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Lintfort. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company in assembly area in vicinity of Kamp, Germany, under Battalion control. First Lieutenants Harper and Brooks, and seven EM departed on 72-hour pass to Paris. Colonel Deery, 12th TD Group Commander, visited the Command Post and reconnoitered Battalion Sector, accompanied by Major Benton.

March 12, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Lintfort. "A" and "B" Companies continued in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company attached to 320th Infantry Regiment for move to vicinity of Natt, Germany. 1st Lt. Arnold relieved of duty as Battalion Adjutant and transferred to "B" Company. Captain Barnes relieved of duty as Commander of Headquarters Company and assumed duties of Battalion Adjutant. Captain Zach relieved of duty as Battalion S-2 and assumed Command of Headquarters Company. Captain Stevens relieved of duty as Commander of "B" Company and assumed duties of Battalion S-2. Captain Schwedler assumed Command of "B" Company.

March 13, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies moved from Lintfort, Germany to Kaldenkirchen, Germany, distance 26 miles. Command Post closed at Lintfort at 0830 hours and opened at Kaldenkirchen at 1055 hours. "A" Company moved to assembly area in vicinity of Bieth, Germany, and relieved from attachment to 134th Infantry Regiment. "B" Company moved to assembly area in vicinity of Gier, Germany, and relieved from attachment to 137th Infantry Regiment. "C" Company moved to assembly area in vicinity of Natt, Germany, and relieved of attachment to the 320th Infantry Regiment.

March 14, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Kaldenkirchen. "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in assembly area under Battalion control. Time was spent in motor maintenance and in cleaning of equipment. Captain Witherspoon and 1st Lt. Lucas were each presented a Bronze Star Medal, by Lt. Col. John H. Minton, at Kaldenkirchen.

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March 15, 1945:

Battalion was attached to 30th Infantry Division, for operations only, effective 1200 hours, and moved from vicinity of Kaldenkirchen, Germany to vicinity of Milligen, Germany, distance 35 miles. Command Post closed at Kaldenkirchen at 1200 hours and opened in the vicinity of Milligen at 1400 hours. "A" Company continued to Borth, Germany. "C" Company continued to Rheinberg, Germany. All Company Commanders and platoon leaders made separate reconnaissance along Rhine River, for gun positions. "A" and "C" Companies fired 56 rounds of HE across the river with unknown results.

March 16, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. 2nd platoon of "A" Company fired 33 rounds of HE on enemy OP across the Rhine River. 1st platoon of "C" Company fired 10 rounds on towers and buildings across the river. Extent of damage and casualties unknown.

March 17, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. 1st platoon of "A" Company fired 100 rounds on enemy strongpoint and OP's. 3rd platoon of "A" Company fired 56 rounds on enemy strongpoints. All targets were destroyed or damaged. "B" and "C" Companies continued to make reconnaissance of their individual sectors, and dug gun positions in dikes along west bank of Rhine River.

March 18, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. 1st platoon of "A" Company fired 5 rounds on enemy strongpoints with undetermined results. 3rd platoon of "C" Company fired on three OP's and one house which the enemy were using as strongpoints, destroying them.

March 19, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. M/Sgt John D. Cain, Battalion Motor Sergeant, received battlefield appointment to Second Lieutenant. 1st Lt. Jim B. Harper was presented the Oak-Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal, by Lt. Col. John H. Minton. "A", "B" and "C" Companies continued to make reconnaissance along the Rhine River, and to dig gun positions.

March 20, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. 1st platoon of "A" Company fired 50 rounds on enemy targets, and 2nd and 3rd platoons fired 96 rounds. Extent of damage and number of casualties undetermined. One EM of "A" Company slightly wounded in action. 2nd platoon of "B" Company destroyed tower across Rhine River, used by enemy as OP. One EM of "B" Company wounded by rifle fire, treated by Medical Detachment and returned to duty. "C" Company supporting 120th Infantry Regiment. One EM of "C" Company killed in action.

March 21, 1945:

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March 21, 1945 (cont'd):

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. "A" and "C" Companies continued to fire direct fire across the Rhine River, in support of the 119th and 120th Infantry Regiments respectively. 2nd platoon of "B" Company moved into position on Rhine River and fired 22 rounds, destroying one enemy OP, and returned to assembly area. Two EM of "C" Company wounded in action, and were evacuated.

March 22, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. "A" and "C" Companies continued in support of the 119th and 120th Infantry Regiments respectively. "B" Company in support of 117th Infantry Regiment.

March 23, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. "A", "B" and "C" Companies continued in support of the 119th, the 117th and 120th Infantry Regiments respectively.

March 24, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen, Germany. "A", "B" and "C" Companies took up pre-selected positions on the Rhine River, after dark, and supported the assault crossing of the 30th Infantry Division, with direct fire. "B" Company, and the 2nd and 3rd platoons of "C" Company, returned to assembly areas upon completion of firing mission.

March 25, 1945:

Battalion less "A" and "C" Companies remained in vicinity of Milligen. "A" Company was relieved by the 807th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and returned to assembly area in vicinity of Borth, Germany. "A" Company attached to Task Force Miltonberger at 1600 hours. "B" Company remained in assembly area. 1st platoon of "C" Company relieved by platoon of 807th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and rejoined Company in assembly area. Battalion was relieved from operational attachment to 30th Infantry Division, and reattached to 35th Infantry Division.

March 26, 1945:

Battalion moved from vicinity of Milligen, Germany to Mollen, Germany, distance 17 miles. Command Post closed at vicinity of Milligen, at 0910 hours and opened at Mollen, at 1120 hours. Enemy planes were over the Command Post several times during the night, but no bombs were dropped. Three EM of "A" Company were wounded in action and were evacuated.

March 27, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Mollen, Germany. "A" and "B" Companies placed in support of 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments respectively. "C" Company supporting 134th Infantry Regiment. Three EM of "C" Company were wounded in action and were evacuated.

March 28, 1945:

March 28, 1945 (cont'd):

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Mollen, Germany. "A", "B" and "C" Companies continued in support of 134th, 137th and 320th Infantry Regiments respectively. 3rd platoon of "A" Company knocked out three Mark V Tanks, at 1500 hours. 1st Lt. Nealey, of "A" Company, wounded in action and evacuated. 1st platoon of "B" Company fired 5 rounds of HE into building used by enemy troops. 3rd platoon knocked out two enemy observation posts, at 1000 hours, and fired 15 rounds into enemy strongpoints.

March 29, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies moved from Mollen, Germany to Kreul, Germany, distance 14 miles. Command Post closed at Mollen, at 1345 hours and opened in Kreul, at 1630 hours. "A", "B" and "C" Companies continued in support of 134th, 137th and 320th Infantry Regiments respectively. 1st platoon of "B" Company knocked out one personnel carrier and fired on buildings housing enemy troops, killing 10 German soldiers.

March 30, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Kreul, Germany. "A", "B" and "C" Companies continued in support of the 134th, 137th and 320th Infantry Regiments respectively. 1st platoon of "B" Company knocked out one enemy locomotive. 3rd platoon of "B" Company captured 15 prisoners. Sergeant Marbut, of "B" Company, presented the Bronze Star Medal, by Captain Stevens. Corporal Zeigler, of "B" Company, presented Oak-Leaf Cluster to Purple Heart, by Captain Schwedler. 1st platoon of "C" Company fired 33 rounds of HE at dug-in positions, and captured four 120mm dual purpose guns in position. 1st Lt. David R. McNaught, of "B" Company, presented two Oak-Leaf Clusters to the Bronze Star Medal, and Sergeant Pritchett presented the Oak-Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal, by Lt. Col. John H. Minton.

March 31, 1945:

Battalion less "A", "B" and "C" Companies remained in Kreul, Germany. Battalion attached to 35th Infantry Division, and further attached to 35th Division Artillery. "A", "B" and "C" Companies continued in support of 134th, 137th and 320th Infantry Regiments respectively. "A" Company captured 8 prisoners. 2nd platoon of "B" Company fired 44 rounds of HE and 1130 rounds of .50 Cal. into buildings housing enemy machine-gun nests. Machine-guns were put out of action, but extent of damage, otherwise, was undetermined. 3rd platoon of "C" Company knocked out 7 machine-gun nests and fired on a factory used as a strongpoint, by the enemy. Three prisoners were taken, and two Germans were killed in the action.

CASUALTIES:

Killed in Action:	Officers	0; Enlisted Men	2
Missing in Action:	Officers	0; Enlisted Men	0
Wounded in Action:	Officers	2; Enlisted Men	19
Injured in Action:	Officers	0; Enlisted Men	3
Non-battle Deaths:	Officers	0; Enlisted Men	0

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Silver Star:	Officers 0;	Enlisted Men 1
Croix De Guerre:	Officers 2;	Enlisted Men 0
Bronze Star:	Officers 3;	Enlisted Men 1
Oak-leaf Cluster to Bronze Star:	Officers 1;	Enlisted Men 1
Purple Heart:	Officers 2;	Enlisted Men 22
Oak-leaf Cluster to Purple Heart:	Officers 0;	Enlisted Men 3
Certificates of Merit:	Officers 0;	Enlisted Men 3

For the Commanding Officer:

Lee R. Barnes
LEE R. BARNES,
Captain, Infantry,
Adjutant.