

OPD
ETO-2

HEADQUARTERS, 704TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

APO 403, US Army
19 March 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report for 1 September to 30 September 1944.

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

Under the provisions of paragraph 10, AR 345-105; as changed by change number 3, the following After Action Report for this command is submitted:

1 September 1944, Bn (-) left bivouac 1200, marched East crossing Marne at Cural on bridge built by our engineers and proceeded to bivouac 1/4 mile West of Houdelaincourt. Company closed in bivouac 1830, travelled 24 miles.

2-5 Sept 44, in bivouac. Rcn Co patrolling adjacent area. Sept 4 Capt. Hammer promoted to grade of Major as of 1 September 1944.

During this period "A" Company was attached to CCB and to the 51st Armd Inf Bn doing outpost duty. On the 24th and 3rd platoon of "A" Co captured 50 prisoners and 2 enemy vehicles at Hussean.

During this period under discussion the battalion suffered no battle casualties, but lost one EM by discharge to accept appointment as Warrant Officer, and four EM through non-battle injuries or illness. Two EM wounded and evacuated in a prior period were returned to battalion. Three officers and one warrant officer replacements were received.

6 September 1944, the battalion, minus "C" and "B" Companies, was in bivouac 1/4 mile west of Houdelaincourt. The Bn remained in this position till 10 Sept. The battalion (-) was attached to RC. "A" Co to CCB and "C" Co to CCA. Four replacements were received 7 September 1944.

10 September, Bn (-) moved 1000, 23 miles east. Closed in bivouac 3 miles east of Haroue, 1215. RC area was outposted and bridge across Moselle at Bayou covered by one outpost.

16 September, Bn (-) moved at 1515, 22 miles northeast. Closed in bivouac 1 1/2 miles southeast of Luneville, 1445. When the bn arrived in vicinity of Luneville it was ordered to protect left flank of RC, which was to attack and take the city. It was then discovered that the city was already occupied by friendly troops and the bn went into bivouac on high ground to the NW of the city. This position was held throughout the 17, 18-20 Sept. The 3rd platoon of "B" Co., moved to Luneville, which was under heavy artillery fire, to guard against enemy armored columns, reported approaching the city from the E. 1st platoon of "B" Co supporting the 10th Armd Inf Bn on high ground N of city. In the fighting at E edge of the city, 3rd platoon destroyed 3 Mk V tanks. The fighting continued through the night. On the 19th, the 3rd platoon destroyed one Mk V tank and one SP gun, one heavy machine gun and a crew and took five prisoners.

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[REDACTED]

Table 2, Battalion History, 704th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Cont'd.

The company held its positions in the city until relieved at 1500, 19 Sept. On the afternoon of 19 September, the battalion headquarters bivouac area was shelled and was also the position of the 1st platoon. At about 1:00 19 Sept, Col. [REDACTED], Battalion Commanding Officer was killed by enemy mortar fire in Luneville. [REDACTED] From these two days for Headquarters, Headquarters Company, "B" Company and Reconnaissance Company was one officer killed and six MIA killed; one MIA and 16 MIA wounded. At 1815, the battalion (-) left its position and did move 1 mile north to vicinity of Serres. Closed in bivouac at 0200, 20 September. Moved from this position at 0930, 20 September, 7 mules east to vicinity of Arracourt. Lt. Col. H.P. Heid, Jr., assigned to and joined Battalion, 1100 20 September, and assumed command.

At Serres, the battalion (-) was in position near Arracourt during this period, "C" Company took up positions guarding the right flank of CCA and on the 21st destroyed 6 MIA V tanks from this position.

21 September, 23 road elements received. 21-30 September: During this period the battalion remained in position in vicinity of Arracourt. On 22 September, the platoon of "C" Company destroyed 3 enemy tanks near Rechicourt. On 25 September, 23 replacements were received. On 25 September, the battalion (-) was attached to CCA and was joined by "C" Company. On 27 September, "A" Company joined the battalion. On 29 September, Capt. Otwell D. Smith joined from 38th Armored Depot and was assigned duties as Liaison Officer. During this period, the battalion was under constant artillery fire.

"C" Company, prior to joining the battalion, had marched with CCA crossing the Moselle near Fresnoy, 13 September. In the fighting there one MIA V tank, one S8mm tank and one armored vehicle were destroyed 13 September. The company then proceeded east with CCA and at Fresnoy-en-Saulnois, 17 September, three enemy vehicles were destroyed and four prisoners taken. The company moved into position east of Arracourt 18 September at 2:00. 18 September, one platoon was sent to Luneville to reinforce Reserve Command. On 19 September, the enemy attacked the positions held by the remaining two platoons and 19 enemy tanks were destroyed. On the same day the platoon sent to Luneville destroyed one enemy tank.

"B" Company was attached to CCA on 6 September at Burey-en-Vaux. On the 11th the company moved 1/2 mile east and crossed the Moselle near Vilecourt on the 12th. In the fighting around the Moselle, Lt Beckman was wounded and evacuated. On the 13th Lt Boufuss, platoon leader of the Rcn platoon attached from Aco Company was killed in action. Two enemy ammunition trucks were destroyed this day. On the 15th, the company moved to the vicinity of Drouville and on the 18th to the vicinity of Sallones. On the 21st, the company moved to near Fresnoy-en-Saulnois. On 24 September, the enemy was encountered in this area. Four enemy tanks were destroyed. Capt Ryan was wounded in the fight and evacuated and Lt. Lischner was killed in action. On 25 September, Lt Pruneta was assigned and joined from "C" Company, and assumed command. On 26 September, "A" Company rejoined the battalion in the vicinity of Arracourt.

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BATTALION HISTORY, 704th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Page 3 Cont'd.

During the period under consideration the battalion suffered casualties, as follows:

| | <u>KILLED IN ACTION</u> | <u>WOUNDED (EVACUATED)</u> |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Officers | 3 | 3 |
| Enlisted Men | 10 | 42 |

Vehicle casualties were four Tank Destroyers, M-18, one truck, 2½ ton 6x6, one armored car, M-20.

The battalion destroyed 37 enemy tanks, 2 SP guns, 7 enemy vehicles and one towed 88mm gun.

Sixty-one replacements were received during this period.

On September 30th the strength of the battalion was, Officers 28, Warrant Officer 1, Enlisted Men 621.

For the Commanding Officer

William L. Kline

WILLIAM L. KLINE
2nd Lt. FA (TD)
Adjutant

2 Incls:

Incl # 1 - S-3 Journal

Incl # 2 - Consolidated Report of Operations.