

**HEADQUARTERS 807th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 444, United States Army**

BATTALION HISTORY

DECEMBER 1944

The month opened with the Battalion attached to the 88th Inf Div and the 752nd Tank Bn. The Div holds a sector thru Castelvecchio, C. di Guai, Highway 6531, all inclusive. Activity is limited to light patrolling by both sides; enemy artillery expenditure is rather heavy for a static front. A Co (less 1st platoon) is in assembly near Pignardola, having moved there when 88 Div left the line. B Co has 2nd and 3rd platoons and the 1st platoon, A, attached, on Castelvecchio, these 10 guns are supplied by pack mules. C is astride Highway 6531, Bn Co operates the AT warning net with Cps at C. di Guai and Castelvecchio. Bn CP is at Cappara, as it was throughout November.

- 1 Dec Plans initiated to move Co A up 6531 and to put a C platoon on Pignardola ridge.
- 2 Dec A and Bn made reconnaissance on Pignardola ridge. Bn reported into Div arty AT net for AT warning.
- 3 Dec Div Engrs are bulldozing trail to C. di Guai.
- 4 Dec A moved via La Martina to 912219, near Bn gear, closing at 0410. Cp 1 located on SP shelling him from 911341, reported to Div Arty. 365th Infantry, 92nd Division, is attached to 88 Div, is moving into sector of 349, will relieve reserve and support Bns, will stay off front line for the present.
- 5 Dec Div issued FO 14 directing an offensive operation with limited objectives, essentially the same as the planning directive. A will support left regt, B the right, C the center. Actually much of the firing will be in adjacent sectors, due to the terrain. Details of communication and coordination are being planned with 752. A-2 moved after dark to 16293, near Pignardola, preparatory to occupying positions near Savignano.
- 6 Dec C's CP received 5 medium rounds.
- 7 Dec
1113A A's area shelled; 2 Bn wounded.
1114A C reported a 30 round concentration.
1337A C received 30 more rounds, 2 men lightly wounded. passing traffic suffered 4 killed, 15 wounded.

- 8 Dec 2000 rounds 76mm having been allotted for indirect fire, plans were made for putting a platoon of each co into indirect positions. The trail to C. di Guai was completed but heavy rains prevented M-2 moving there as planned. 1 TD damaged by artillery fire.
- 9 Dec
1815A
1830A C received 25 rounds 105 near CP.
C had 2 men SWA at CP. Enemy artillery quite active throughout day.
- 10 Dec
1815A M-2 fired 30 rounds for 351 Inf. Enemy aircraft were up, last seen at 1700. C-2 moved to C. di Guai, closing without incident at 1811Z.
- 11 Dec
1845A
1855A C's area shelled, destroying an M-16, C-2-1, by setting it afire. C received another shelling. This area is between 2 battalions of artillery which, with the heavy traffic form a lucrative target. M-2 destroyed an enemy house at 903139, 24 rounds.
- 12 Dec Reconnaissance made to put C-1 in indirect fire at Ughano (927292). Engineers requested to widen trail.
- 13 Dec
1825A A selected indirect position at 909251, Castelnuovo. C CP received a 150 round concentration, including several direct hits on house, which set afire a half track and ammunition trailer. About 20 minutes later the weakened building collapsed, trapping and wounding 7, including the co commander. 2 men were killed, Tech Sgt Pitonic, scheduled for rotation, and Cpl Hall. Remnants of CP were evacuated to co near; Capt Elberbe, commanding co, with his co HQ, placed in command.
- 14 Dec M-2 now has 3 guns in firing position at Savignone.
- 15 Dec Though the trail has not yet been widened, C attempted to move 1 gun to Ughano, but it slid off cliff, overturned. M-2 attempting to retrieve it stuck.
- 16 Dec The move of C-2 and tanks at C. di Guai into firing positions indefinitely postponed. Infantry in coair desires no activity. C's retriever extricated, but has broken cable.
- 17 Dec NTR.
- 18 Dec NTR.
- 19 Dec Engineers widened trail to Ughano. C righted overturned TD and retrieved it. Placed 2 in position under cover of fog.
- 20 Dec C-1 completed occupation.
- 21 Dec NTR.

II has completed arrangements and issued orders to move B-1 and B-3 starting at 01130, 1 Jun 45 to BA near where they will revert to parent Cos. A-2 reverted to Co. A moved CP to 909306, closing at 2130. Except for A-1 with B, Cos will be intact.

The year opened with the Battalion, then armed with 3 inch towed guns, supporting the 2nd Moroccan Division on the head waters of the Volturne, then the 34th Division in the first Cassino offensive. This tour lasted 51 days, plus 30 from '43; 30,000 rounds were expended. After a 19 day rest it moved to the Anzio beachhead for 91 days in action, firing 38,471 rounds. Its reconnaissance platoons entered Rome at 0330, 4 June. There followed a 47 day rest during which it reorganized and retrained on the self-propelled T/O, and was equipped with M-18 gun carriages.

It re-entered combat for a 28 day tour with IV Corps in the Pisa area, firing 4537 rounds. During a 13 day rest period, it made plans and was alerted for the II Corps Arno plan, which proved unnecessary. It resumed operations 6 September for the Gothic Line offensive in which it has to date fired 8829 rounds, mostly direct, has had 117 days on the line. During the year it has had 287 combat days, has fired 82, 638 rounds. Total in Italy, 94,865.

The Battalion operated under II, IV and VI Corps and the French Expeditionary Corps (XI Corps) and under the 3d, 34th, 36th, 85th, 86th and 91st Infantry Divisions and the 21st Division Infanterie Marocaine; also under 18th P.A. Brigade, 45th A.A. Brigade, Tank Force Army, First Special Service Force, and the 36th Engineer Regiment (C).


It has had 16 men and 5 officers killed, 81 men and 10 officers wounded. Total losses, all causes, were 290 men and 30 officers, about 45 and 85 percent. As replacements it has received 101 men and 29 officers. Battle casualties during 1943 had been 225 men and 10 officers. In 2 years and 4 months overseas it has had on its rolls 1210 men and 94 officers, i.e., about 200%, and 270% of present strength.

Primary weapon losses were 1 towed gun to mortar fire, 2 M-18s to artillery fire, 2 M-18s by sniping in inaccessible places. Casualties evacuated to ordnance are not included.

There were no cases of self-inflicted wounds, and no desertions or AWOLs from the battlefield, though 28 men were absent from rest camps, formations, and the line. Of those, 7 aggravated cases were tried by general court. There were no capital or criminal offenses reported. No cases of trench foot were reported. 305 days were lost due to venereal diseases.

First Lieutenant [redacted] who was the [redacted] by jumping on a tiger tank and killing its crew with a carbine. First Lieutenant Ralph G. Hardy, subsequently killed in action, was awarded Al valore Militare (Italian) for steering an Italian retreat. Other awards were a Legion of Merit, 112 Purple Hearts or clusters.

At the close of the year morale is excellent though the apparent prospect of spending the winter months on the front is certain to lower it considerably. Our carriages are suffering from want of 2nd echelon maintenance, especially those supplied by mile. The aircraft type engine when run without load warms badly; not running it periodically entails a tactical risk. Spare tools and replacement parts are too heavy for scale transport. It requires these mile loads to rarely change oil. Unless the situation can be relieved soon, combat efficiency must be expected to lower considerably.



CHARLES H. MOONRILLE,
Lieut Colonel, FA,
commanding.

APPENDIX I

2-3 Journal
2-1 Report
C-2 Reports (80th Inf Div)
Operational Directives
Maps ("Army Plan" to date)
Messages

APPENDIX II

Roster of Officers
2-1 Journal
Casualty Report