

**S E C R E T**

**HEADQUARTERS  
818TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION**

/c

AFPO 436 US Army  
2 May 45

**UNIT HISTORY  
1 Apr 45 to 30 Apr 45**

**1. Origin of Unit:**

- a. Designation: 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion (Self Propelled).
- b. Date of organization: 15 Dec 41.
- c. Place of organization: Ft Sill, Okla.
- d. Authority for organization: The 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion (less Co's B & C) was activated by authority of General Order Number 13, Hq., 18th FA Brigade, Ft Sill, Okla, and in compliance with letter, WD, AGO, file AG 320.2 (11-17-41) MR-M-C. On 6 Mar 42, Companies B and C were activated.
- e. Sources of Personnel: 142d, 77th and 349th FA Regiments and Selective Service. On 7 Mar 42, 327 enlisted replacements were received making a total of approximately 750 enlisted men and 15 officers for the Battalion.

**2. Changes in Organization:** Unit designation has not changed. Tables of Organization however, have changed from T/O 18-25, dated 8 June 42 to T/O and E18-25, dtd 27 Jun 43 and on 5 Nov 44 to T/O and E 18-25, dtd 15 Mar 44.

**3. Strength. Commissioned and enlisted:**

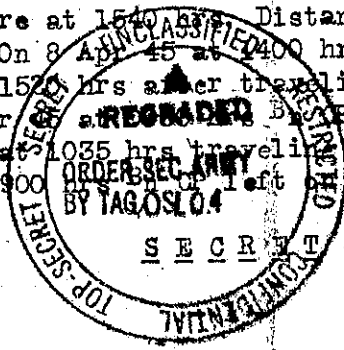
- a. At beginning of period:  
40 O 1 WO 606 EM Total 647
- b. Net increase. None.
- c. Net decrease. Nine tenths of one percent.
- d. At end of period:  
39 O 1 WO 603 EM Total 643.

**4. Stations (Permanent or Temporary) of unit:**

- a. United States:
  - (1) Ft Sill, Okla fr 15 Dec 41 to 6 Feb 42.
  - (2) Cp Bowie, Texas fr 7 Feb 42 to 3 Jun 42.
  - (3) Cp Hood, Texas fr 4 Jun 42 to 28 Jul 42.
  - (4) Louisiana Maneuvers fr 29 Jul 42 to 29 Aug 42.
  - (5) Cp Bowie, Texas fr 30 Aug 42 to 13 Jun 43.
  - (6) Cp Pickett, Va fr 14 Jun 43 to 1 Sep 43.
  - (7) Ft Dix, N. J. fr 2 Sep 43 to 13 Oct 43.
  - (8) Cp Shanks, N.Y. fr 14 Oct 43 to 20 Oct 43.
  - (9) Sailed for ETO 21 Oct 43.
- b. ETO:
  - (10) Murlough House, Dundrum, County Down, N.I. fr 1 Nov 43 to 10 May 44.
  - (11) Stowell Park, Wiltshire, Eng fr 14 May 44 to 11 Jul 44.
  - (12) Departed fr Stowell Park, Wiltshire, Eng 11 Jul 44 and arrived UTAH BEACH, vic ST MERE EGLISE, France 14 Jul 44.
- c. At end of period: Bn CP, Hq Co, Ren Co and Med Det CP's at FURSTENSTEIN, Germany. Co A CP at RATHSMANSDORF, Ger. Co B CP at HAUZENBERG, Ger. Co C CP at UNTER-HASELBACH, Germany.

**5. Marches (Bn CP marches only are recorded here):**

At beginning of period Bn CP located at SCHILLERBACH, Ger. At 1345 hrs 1 Apr 45 CP moved forward to GROSSENLUBER, Ger traveling a distance of 36 miles arriving there at 1800 hrs. Roads poor, weather cloudy. On 4 Apr 45 at 0900 hrs Bn CP left on march to vic of new CP at MOTZLER, Ger arriving there at 1155 hrs traveling a distance of 39 miles. Roads fair, weather cold with showers. On 6 Apr 45 at 1345 hrs Bn marched to new CP vic of WASUNGEN, Ger arriving there at 1540 hrs. Distance traveled 28 miles. Roads poor. Weather cloudy with showers. On 8 Apr 45 at 0900 hrs Bn CP started march to CP area at SUHL, Ger, arriving there at 1520 hrs after traveling a distance of 25 miles. Roads good, weather good. On 13 Apr 45 at 0900 hrs Bn CP started march to new CP area at SCHALKAU, Ger arriving there at 1035 hrs traveling a distance of 26 miles. Roads good. Weather fair. On 16 Apr 45 0900 hrs Bn CP left on march to new area at HELMBRECHT, Ger,



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arriving there at 1215 hrs traveling a distance of 52 miles. Roads fair, weather good. On 21 Apr 45 at 0900 hrs Bn CP marched to new CP at KEMNATH, Ger arriving there at 1115 traveling a distance of 44 miles. Roads good, weather good. On 24 Apr 45 at 0900 hrs CP started march to SCHWARSENFELD, Ger traveling a distance of 50 miles. Roads fair, weather cloudy and cold with sleet and rain. On 26 Apr 45 at 0700 hrs Bn CP left on march to STALLWANG, Ger arriving there at 0930 hrs traveling a distance of 50 miles. On afternoon of 26 Apr 45 at 1430 hrs Bn CP marched on to HASSELBACH, Ger traveling a distance of 17 miles. Roads poor. Weather cool. On 27 Apr 45 Bn CP moved to MITTERFELS, Ger arriving there at 1500 hrs traveling a distance of 2 miles. Roads fair, weather cloudy. On 30 Apr 45 at 0900 hrs Bn CP with Hq & Rcn Co marched to new CP at FURSTENSTEIN, Ger arriving there at 1540 hrs traveling a distance of 64 miles. Roads poor, hilly and mountainous. Weather cold and snowing. Bn CP at this location at end of period.

6. Campaigns:

- a. Name of Campaign: Southeast Germany.
- b. 1 Apr 45 to date.
- c. Purpose: To destroy the enemy east of the RHINE RIVER and to make contact with RUSSIAN ARMY vic LINZ, AUSTRIA.
- d. Authority ordering: Commanding General, 26th Infantry Division.

7. Battles:

a. The enemy:

(1) The start of this period found the enemy almost totally disorganized, greatly outnumbered and incapable of organizing anything like a coordinated defense line. The enemy had lost most of his large equipment such as airplanes, armor, vehicles and artillery. The majority of en personnel was low grade, either too old or too young, convalescents or recruits or rear echelon personnel. No special weapons were used. Morale in most cases was low and grew worse. The majority of en troops were willing to surrender when given an opportunity (this included all Hungarians) while quite a large number fought to the death. The almost complete disorganization of the en continued to grow worse during the period.

(2) Enemy defenses consisted mostly of delaying actions based on road blocks. Small towns and bridges were usually defended. Resistance was from small arms and bazookas, the enemy having almost no artillery, armor, air power and very few mortars. The terrain was rough and wooded and suitable for defense and enemy made use of existing obstacles within his capabilities. Few mines were used. Enemy was only partly successful in his use of demolitions; we were able to capture a great number of bridges intact.

(3) No en units of division strength were in contact during this period. During first part of period, elements of 159 Inf Div, 6 SS Mtn Div, 11 Pz Div and 2d Pz Div were identified. Later in period elements of 2d Pz Div were identified. With the few above exceptions, en units were a great number of small, makeshift, miscellaneous units. For example, 40 or 50 different units of Co or Bn strength were often identified in one day. Most of these units were miscellaneous units such as replacement, training, march or straggler units or rear echelon units. A large number were Hungarian units. There were no organized counterattacks; enemy use of air, armor and artillery was negligible. During our rapid advance it was not always possible to mop up all en troops and in several instances en troops were able to organize and offer effective resistance behind our lines. Many changed to civilian clothes but as a rule did not resist apprehension. The following was destroyed by the 818th TD Bn during the period:

SP guns	3	Airplanes	1	Locomotives	1
Vehicles	2	OPs	2	AT guns	1
Ammo Dumps	2	AA guns	2	Casualties (est)	200
Motorcycles	3	MGs	5		

(4) PWs captured by 818th TD Bn: 1113.

(b) Elements affecting action:

(1) En information and reconnaissance was not effective because of disorganization, lack of communications, transport and air power and because of our rapid advance.

(2) All civilians were of course, considered unfriendly but in only a few instances did they offer resistance. Many soldiers in civilian clothes were captured. There were a few instances of resistance by Hitler Youth. There were few instances of resistance by the Volkstrum and as a whole the civilian population had little effect on the action.

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(3) The terrain was rough and wooded and suitable for defense. It was difficult to mop up all the wooded areas. The road net was generally very poor. During the latter part of period vehicles were more or less road bound by mud.

## (c) Action:

(1) The 818th TD Bn was attached to the 26 Inf Div and assigned to XII Corps during the entire period. Location of Bn CP's: Vic GROSSENLUDER from 1 Apr to 4 Apr; vic MOTZLAR fr 4 Apr to 6 Apr; vic WASUNGEN fr 6 Apr to 8 Apr; vic SUHL 8 Apr to 12 Apr; vic SCH-ALKAU fr 12 Apr to 15 Apr; vic HELMPRECHTS fr 15 Apr to 20 Apr; vic KEMNATH fr 20 Apr to 24 Apr; vic SCHWARZENFELD 24 Apr; vic STALLWANG 25 Apr; vic HASELBACH 26 Apr; vic MITTERFELS fr 27 Apr to 29 Apr; vic FURSTENSTEIN 29 Apr to 1 May. Supporting units: The organic 57mm AT units, plus the organic and attached artillery of the 26 Div, and the 778th Tank Bn all provided additional AT protection.

(2) Mission: The mission of the 818th TD Bn during the entire period was to provide anti-mechanized protection for the 26th Inf Div. An additional secondary mission was the close support given the infantry through direct fire against enemy pockets, MG nests, and buildings.

Operations: During the entire period the 818 TD Bn was attached to 26 Inf Div which was driving generally east through the German states of THURINGIA AND BAVARIA in conjunction with other Infantry and Armored Divs. of the Third Army. The ultimate goal was to make a junction with the RUSSIAN forces, driving generally west from VIENNA, in order to isolate Southern Germany.

At the beginning of the period, the gun companies were attached to the Inf Regts and in addition one platoon of Rcn Co was attached to each Regt. Up until the 5 Apr 45 the 3 Inf Regts were employed all on line with the gun company platoons closely supporting the Inf Bns. One pl of Co A was attached to 26 Rcn Tr which was screening the L flank of the Div. The Rcn pls assisted in the reconnaissance of routes taken by the Inf columns in their rapid movement to the NE. The enemy contacted by our Inf was generally in small groups, defending a town. On 1 Apr 45, Co C 2d pl destroyed one en SP gun in the town of OBER MOOS, firing 2 rds APC and 2 rds HE. Co A 1st pl fired 6 rds HE in vic WIRTHEIM, destroying an SP gun, which was defending a road block. Due to our infantry forces rapid movement, groups of the en were not cleared out of the zone, and these forces, at times, harassed friendly convoys before being wiped out. Hq Co was enroute to a new loc in vic HAINZELL on 1 Apr when the column was ambushed by 200-300 German soldiers dug in along the sides of the road. A fierce fire fight took place before the enemy was driven off. 20 Germans soldiers were killed and 28 taken PW. Hq Co casualties were 1 EM killed and 2 wounded.

Due to this problem of German troops harassing our rear elements, on 5 Apr 45 the 26 Rcn Tr was attached to 818 TD Bn and the mission was given the Bn (less Co A, B & C) of patrolling and clearing the area from the Regt's rear boundary to the Div rear bdy and patrolling the Div MSR.

From 5 Apr to 14 Apr 45 the 26 Inf Div was attacking to the NE with 101 Inf and 328 Inf Regts abreast. Co A was attached to 104 Inf in Div res and were clearing pockets of en behind the 2 line Regts. The 101 Inf and 328 Inf Regts w/ Cos B & C attached, advanced generally east meeting only light resistance. During this time the terrain which the 26 Inf Div was going through, was very hilly with thick woods and offered good defensive positions for the en, which were never met in any strength. Numerous road blocks were encountered, which temporarily slowed our motorized columns. En aircraft in small numbers were over the Div sector during daylight hours on 2 different occasions. Elements of Co A & B were strafed on 10 Apr 45; Co A assisted in destroying one aircraft and Co B accounted for the destruction of one ME 109. No en armor was encountered during this part of period. Rcn Co and 26 Rcn Tr continued patrolling and clearing Div rear and patrolling MSR. The patrols picked up many German soldiers in and out of uniform.

From 14 Apr to 17 Apr the 26 Inf Div employed all 3 Inf Regts abreast, with a TD Co attached, in their attack in an easterly direction towards the CZECHOSLOVAKIAN border. There was still a noticeable lack of en resistance and except for numerous road blocks and small groups of fanatical German soldiers, which had to be cleared, the advance was very rapid, cutting the MUNICH-BERLIN AUTO-BAHN S of HOF and reaching a restraining line only a few miles from the CZECHOSLOVAKIAN border. Rcn Co and 26 Rcn Tr were clearing many en troops from Div rear areas.

For a brief period of 1 day, 17 Apr 45, the TD Cos (less 1 pl each) reverted to Bn control, remaining in their present locations in Regt's sectors, and performed needed maintenance. One pl from each of the 3 TD Cos was placed in D/S of the Inf Regts, providing AT protection.

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On 18 Apr 45, Cos A (less 2d pl), B & C were atchd to 101 Inf, 104 Inf, and 328 Inf respectively and the 26 Div jumped off in the attack to the SE following the 11th Armd Div with the 104 Inf and 328 Inf Regt attacking a<sup>2</sup>east. The 26 Rcn Tr was reld fr atchmt to 818 TD Bn and with Co A 2d pl atchd, the Tr moved to the R flank of the Div sector to screen that flank during the advance. On 18 Apr 45, Co A lost one M36 Destroyer on entering the town of WEISSENSTADT O 966750, due to fire from enemy bazooka team.

From 18 Apr to the end of the month the 26 Inf Div w/ 818 TD Bn atchd advanced rapidly to the SE, with the line of advance more or less parallel to the CZECH border. Only at a few points did our Infantry meet moderate enemy resistance including some mortar and artillery fire. On 23 Apr 45, Co C destroyed one enemy steam locomotive that was attempting to get away with 3 box cars. On the 25 Apr the 328 Inf encountered 3 enemy tanks and AT guns in defensive positions on S bank of REGEN R. Co C 3d pl destroyed one 75mm AT gun; the armor retreated. Rcn Co continued patrolling and clearing Div rear and patrolling Div MSR. Between 75 and 100 en prisoners were ~~pl~~ being picked up every day by their patrols. The 26 Div reached the DANUBE R on night of 25 Apr, and from then on to end of month the river formed the Div right (S) boundary. The terrain covered during the latter half of the month varied from fairly open, rolling country to very hilly country with heavy woods. Up until the last week of the period the weather and roads had been very good, but the good weather turned to rain and roads became narrow, winding, and muddy, all of which slowed the advance of the units somewhat. On the close of the period, elements of the 26 Inf Div were within 3 to 4 miles of the AUSTRIAN border.

- (3) Special weapons used: None. Communications: Radio and wire communications were both used by units of the Bn.
- (4) Assistance from supporting artillery and engineers. The 26th Inf Div Arty supported the Bn with the secondary mission of anti-tank defense by both direct and indirect fire. Engineers provided bridges and maintained roads.
- (5) Use of bayonet, grenades, flame throwers, etc: None.
- (6) Supply and evacuation.

a. During the time covered by this report, the Bn was atchd to 26 Inf Div. All supplies were handled through the normal channels of the Div. Their supply branches serviced the Bn with the exception of Class V and Ord Class II supplies which were drawn from the assigned Corps and Army installations. The asgd Ord unit was the 501st Heavy Tank Ord Co which took care of all requisition, replacements, and third echelon maintenance. Bn Motor maintenance platoon and the Company motor maintenance sections performed first and second echelon maintenance. Bogie wheels and rear idlers still remained very critical during the entire period.

b. Rations for the month have been 100% operational type, with avarity of 10 in 1, C's, and K's being used. The Bn drew RAC kits only once during the month.

- c. Ammunition: Basic load was maintained by replacement as expended.
- d. Status of supply at close of period:

<u>BRANCH</u>	<u>ON HAND</u>
Ord	70%
QM	100%
Med	100%
CW	100%
Eng	100%
Sig	90%



e. Major shortages at close of period: 2 ea M36; 1 ea Tk recovery vehicle M32; 1 ea 1 1/2 T truck; 1 ea 2 1/2 T truck; 1 ea 1/4 T truck; 1 ea Lt Tank M5; 1 ea car, Armd Night M8.

f. Evacuation of personnel was through Bn Aid station and Regtl med units.

- 8. Commanding Officers in important engagements:
 

Lt Col C. L. HALL, Bn Cmdr	1 Lt EDWARD H. BRINLEY, Rcn Co
Capt NORMAN H. DAVIS, Co A	Capt EMIL J. MICHAL, Hq Co
Capt ROBERT T. CHRISTIANSON, Co B	Capt HERMAN J. WILLIAMS, Med Det.
1 Lt JOHN A. HAUTH, Co C	

- 9. Losses in action. Officers and enlisted men:
  - a. Engagement: Southeast Germany.
  - b. Killed: One
    - (1) Alfred B. Byrne, 37596859 Co B

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- c. Wounded: Five.
- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| (1) Edwin C. Kno <sup>bbe</sup> , 37420611 | Hq Co  |
| (2) Oscar L. Wilson, 35200220              | Hq Co  |
| (3) J. G. Williams, 38102195               | Co A   |
| (4) Jack E. Dale, 38088858                 | Co B   |
| (5) Eugene W. Shawver 14002747 *           | Rcn Co |
- \*Listed in History for Mar 45 as MIA.

d. Missing: None.

10. Members who have distinguished themselves in action:

a. Awarded the Silver Star:

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| (1) Capt JAMES R. HENDRICK, 01165875            | Hq Co             |
| (2) Edwin C. Kno <sup>bbe</sup> , Pvt, 37420611 | Hq Co             |
| (3) Alfred B. Byrne, Pvt, 37596859              | Co B (POSTHUMOUS) |
| (4) Jack E. Dale, Sgt, 38088858                 | Co B              |

b. Awarded the Bronze Star Medal Cluster:

- |                                      |         |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| (1) Capt JAMES R. HENDRICK, 01165875 | Hq Co   |
| (2) 1 Lt JAMES H. TAYLOR, 01823955   | Hq Co   |
| (3) John J. Cadena, T4, 38029790     | Med Det |

c. Awarded the Bronze Star Medal:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| (1) Eugene J. Connelly, T Sgt, 32011646 | Hq Co   |
| (2) Ted W. Troutman, S/Sgt, 20847726    | Hq Co   |
| (3) Curtis A. Crook, Sgt, 37062959      | Hq Co   |
| (4) Thomas E. Kuebler, T5, 37420641     | Hq Co   |
| (5) Cecille E. Wax, T5, 37420599        | Hq Co   |
| (6) Leo N. Leerskov, 1st Sgt, 6273523   | Co A    |
| (7) Robert G. Strange, T4, 18107886     | Co A    |
| (8) Howard B. Haskins, Sgt, 33272670    | Co B    |
| (9) Weldon L. Summy, T4, 38102292       | Co B    |
| (10) Velbert A. Ashworth, Cpl, 20736283 | Co B    |
| (11) James Odom, T5, 38097876           | Co B    |
| (12) Russell L. Heath, T5, 18086277     | Co B    |
| (13) Evan O. Brollier, Sgt, 39015811    | Co C    |
| (14) Wilmer A. Spaeth, Sgt, 6916046     | Rcn Co  |
| (15) Willie T. McDonald, Pvt, 18014318  | Rcn Co  |
| (16) James E. Norton, T5, 11106737      | Med Det |
| (17) Jonnie H. Hotz, T5, 38090374       | Med Det |

11. Photographs of personnel, important scenes and events: None.

12. Miscellaneous: None.

*C. L. Hail*

C. L. HAIL,  
Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry,  
COMMANDING.



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