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AFTER ACTION REPORT  
for the  
MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

821st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 230  
UNITED STATES ARMY

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C O N T E N T S

NARRATIVE REPORT

- I - Summary of Operations
- II - Awards and Decorations
- III - Commanding Officers

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Inclosure No. 1, S-1 Journal
- Inclosure No. 2, S-2 Journal
- Inclosure No. 3, S-3 Journal

MAPS AND OVERLAYS  
(In attached envelop)

- Europe 1/100,000 GSGS 4336 - Sheets 4 and 9
  - Europe 1/100,000 GSGS 4416 - Sheet R1
  - Overlay No. 1 - Positions During Phase V
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HEADQUARTERS  
821st Tank Destroyer Battalion (Towed)  
APO 230

1 December 1944

AFTER ACTION REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

I SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

1. PHASE V: The Battle for Julich.

a. During the period 1 November 1944 to 30 November 1944, the 821st Tank Destroyer Battalion remained attached to the 29th Division Artillery. At the beginning of the month Co "A" was in Division reserve, in the vicinity of Schinveld, map coordinates 765650. The 1st and 2nd Platoons, Co "A", were employed in their secondary mission of indirect fire. Co "B" was also in Division reserve, in the vicinity of Gillrath, map coordinates 830569. All platoons of Co "B" were in assembly position. Co "C" was in direct support of the 113th Cavalry Group in the vicinity of Tuddern, map coordinates 7170. Co "C"'s guns were in direct fire positions. The 1st Reconnaissance Platoon was providing additional security for Co "C", in the vicinity of Gangel, map coordinates 780675.

(1) Due to the static nature of the operations at the beginning of the month, it was possible to conduct a training program. Training was conducted so that reliefs were effected for the men on the line, thus enabling all men in the Battalion to participate. This training was continued until the actual beginning of the battle for Julich, on 16 November 1944.

b. On 6 November 1944, the Battalion was relieved of responsibility in the Tuddern (map coordinates 7170), Hastenrath (map coordinates 7669), Gillrath (map coordinates 9366), and Teveren (map coordinates 8463) sectors. Acting on orders of the Commanding General, 29th Division Artillery, the Battalion moved to a temporary assembly position in the vicinity of Schaesberg, map coordinates 7956.

(1) During the period 6 November 1944 to 16 November 1944, two TD Platoons were employed in direct fire positions. The 1st platoon, Co "A", in direct support of the 115th Infantry Regiment, in the vicinity of Ubach, map coordinates 8659. The 3rd platoon, Co "C", in direct support of the 175th Infantry Regiment, in the vicinity of Oldweiler, map coordinates 9156. Co "B" was employed on their secondary mission of indirect fire in the vicinity of Markstein Hofstadt, map coordinates 865570.

(2) During the static operations, from the 10th of November to the 16th of November, Company Commanders and Company Officers made constant reconnaissance for forward gun positions in the Division Sector. Selected gun positions, on possible tank approaches, were prepared for future occupation. This was done in anticipation of the impending drive toward Julich.

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Cont'd: After Action Report for the Month of November 1944.

c. On 16 November 1944, the 29th Division attacked to capture objectives in their path on the way to Julich (map coordinates 0359). At the beginning of this period three platoons of the 821st Tank Destroyer Battalion were in direct fire positions in general support of the Division's anti-mechanized defenses. As the Division mopped up resistance in villages, a platoon of TD's would move through the town and cover the road nets on the enemy front. Due to the open terrain it was necessary for a platoon of TD's to hold a position, at the tank approaches to a captured village, until the infantry had routed the enemy from the next town ahead and another TD platoon had secured the tank approaches to the forward village. As the infantry moved forward, TD platoons would "leap frog" their positions, one platoon holding the rear until the forward approaches were secure. Two companies of TD's were employed in this manner.

(1) From 16 November to 30 November 1944, 821st Tank Destroyer Platoons were employed in a sector bounded on the north by a line through Ubach (map coordinates 865590), Setterich (map coordinates 9159), Koslar (map coordinates 005595) and bounded on the south by a line through Merkstein (map coordinates 8555), Alsdorf (map coordinates 090545), Schleiden (map coordinates 9555), Putzdorf (map coordinates 980555), Bourheim (map coordinates 0157) and Kirchberg (map coordinates 025560). At the end of the month our guns were guarding tank approaches from the east at Koslar (map coordinates 005595), Bourheim (map coordinates 0157) and Kirchberg (map coordinates 025560).

(2) The reserve platoons continued to fire indirect missions of harassing and interdictory fire behind the enemy lines, during the hours of darkness. A total of 4,692 rounds were fired indirect during the month of November.

d. On the 26th of November 1944, the 1st and 3rd Platoons of Company "B" were in direct fire positions in the vicinity of Bourheim, map coordinates 0157. At approximately 0745 on the morning of 26 November the Germans counter-attacked the 1st and 3rd platoons' positions. The attack was preceded by a heavy concentration of artillery and mortar fire. All but one of the 1st platoon's four guns were knocked out by the artillery and mortar fire. The counter-attack, tanks supported by infantry, was heaviest in the 1st platoon's sector. The remaining gun, of the 1st platoon, fired until the gun commander and gunner were killed and the remainder of the crew were wounded. The crews of the knocked out guns fought as infantry for the duration of the attack. The attack of the Germans was successfully repulsed.

e. As a result of enemy action the following casualties were suffered.

(1) Five enlisted men were killed in action by shell fragments from enemy artillery and mortar fire.

(2) Two enlisted men died of wounds received in action. The two men were wounded by shell fragments from enemy artillery fire.

(3) Four officers and twenty seven enlisted men were wounded in action by shell fragments from enemy artillery and mortar fire.

(4) Two enlisted men were injured in action.

(5) One officer and eighteen enlisted men missing in action.

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Cont'd; After Action Report for the Month of November 1944.

## II AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

1. For meritorious service in military operations against the enemy, from 26 June 1944 to 18 September 1944, and 28 September 1944 to 18 November 1944, the following named officers were awarded the Bronze Star Medal; Major Robert E. Vollendorff 0415807, Captain Edward A. Burke 0440563, and Captain Dock A. Stuart 01166390.

2. For heroic achievement in military operations against the enemy, on 15 October 1944, the following named enlisted man was awarded the Bronze Star Medal; Tec 5 William E. Traynor 39046062.

3. The Purple Heart was awarded the following named officers and enlisted men for wounds received in action against the enemy on the dates following their names;

Major Robert E. Vollendorff 0415807,	12 November 1944
1st Lt Mershan G. Shaddy 01822638	24 November 1944

S/Sgt Max L. Kingery 39302002	12 November 1944
Sgt Walter H. Acord 38563371	10 November 1944
Sgt Stanley H. Morrell 39237118	5 November 1944
Tec 4 Frederick Garver 36366566	11 November 1944
Tec 4 Henry F. Leonhardt 37269086	11 November 1944
Cpl Raymond A. Pratt Jr. 18115217	10 November 1944
Tec 5 William Arant 39302400	11 November 1944
Tec 5 Ralph E. Marshall 36556230	24 November 1944
Pfc Jerome L. Goodman 37403663	24 November 1944
Pfc Henry E. Haarstad 39036757	11 November 1944
Pfc Henry Rappolt 37466640	26 November 1944
Pfc William E. Schoeppe 39552725	24 November 1944
Pfc William R. Farias 39119562	2 November 1944
Pfc George F. Schaefer 32708469	11 November 1944
Pfc Ward B. Smith 32708330	13 November 1944
Pvt Charles E. Lobaugh 38128905	28 November 1944
Pvt John E. Nilon 32708044	5 November 1944
Pvt Hendrick F. Solar 31208034	13 November 1944
Pvt Richard H. Terrell 18004929	23 November 1944
Pvt Manuel O. Ubarra 39284463	10 November 1944

4. The Oak Leaf Cluster to the Purple Heart was awarded to the following named enlisted men for wounds received in action against the enemy on the dates following their names;

Sgt Joe A. Goodart 39036734	24 November 1944
Pfc William R. Farias 39119562	25 November 1944
Pfc Thomas J. Stack 32756332	12 November 1944
Pvt Jack Gold 32613619	23 November 1944

5. The following named enlisted men were recommended for award of the Bronze Star Medal for heroic achievement in military operations against the enemy on 4 November 1944; Sgt Andy C. McEuen 39276104, Cpl Donald E. McEvoy 39119620, and Pfc Peter P. Belluomini 39691361.

6. The following named enlisted men were recommended for award of the Bronze Star Medal for heroic achievement in military operations against the enemy on 11 November 1944; S/Sgt Max L. Kingery 39302002, Tec 4 Frederick Garver 36366566, and Pvt George U. Van Meter 33726822.

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Cont'd: After Action Report for the month of November 1944.

III. COMMANDING OFFICERS

1. Lt Col Howard H. Arbury was in command of the Battalion for the period from 1 November 1944 to 30 November 1944.

2. Company Commanders for the period from 1 November 1944 to 30 November 1944 were as listed below:

Company "A" - Capt Edward A. Burke

Company "B" - 1st Lt Hershan J. Snaddy

Company "C" - Capt Brock A. Stuart (1 Nov to 29 Nov)  
1st Lt Dale A. Harziger (29 Nov to 30 Nov)

Hq company - 1st Lt Harry G. J. Sweed

HOWARD H. ARBURY  
Lt Col., PA  
COMMANDING

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**HEADQUARTERS  
821st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 230**

1 November 1944

**BATTLE LESSON NOTES AND CONCLUSIONS**

1. Due to the lack of natural camouflage and protection, in the open rolling country of the current operations, positions must be prepared prior to moving to occupation. Action against enemy tank-infantry teams, in the vicinity of Pourheim, proved this point. Prior to the enemy counter attack an additional TD section was moved into the vicinity. The section was moved up during the hours of darkness, positions had not been prepared and guns could not be properly placed during the night. The enemy attack was preceded by intense artillery and mortar fire, which left these guns practically useless. Had the section been afforded an opportunity to prepare positions prior to occupation it is unlikely that the artillery and mortar fire would have had the same damaging effect.

2. One company of this unit was employed partially in primary mission and partially in secondary mission. One platoon continually on primary mission, with an additional platoon going from secondary mission to primary mission. The change was made at daybreak each day. It was found that one gun from the platoon undertaking both missions should be left in indirect fire position in order that daily registration could be made, also to facilitate laying in of the platoon after dark.

3. This organization executed "dry runs" to prepared positions during a recent rainy spell and found the following to be a fact: The use of secondary roads as concealed approaches to gun positions, make the time and space factors so great in going into positions that towed Tank Destroyer guns must be left constantly in position to stop any hostile tank assault.

4. The value of training during static operations can not be over emphasized. At all times the security sections and crews of knocked out guns should and will be made available to help strengthen infantry lines in the sector of the gun positions. Hence, proficiency in small arms is essential. This can be accomplished only by constant training.

5. Due to increased enemy artillery fire during the current operations, the following measures should be taken to protect both personnel and equipment;

a. Maximum use should be made of remote control units. Radios will not ordinarily operate in places that provide protection from artillery fire. Radios can be kept in the open for better reception and with the use of remote control, platoon leaders and section leaders can maintain control by radio without unnecessary exposure to artillery fire.

b. Guns must be dug in first. This often times leaves vehicles exposed to artillery fire without protection. Tires, radiators and gasoline tanks should be hastily sand bagged. In most cases, a single piece of shrapnel in the gas tank will set a vehicle on fire. Shrapnel in radiators and tires puts a vehicle out of commission. All vehicles should be dug in as soon as possible. However, a few sand bags properly placed will save a lot of time and material.

c. Bazookas are particularly vulnerable to shrapnel. They should be placed in bazooka "firing holes" for protection, and at no time left above ground. On the subject of bazookas, don't let the batteries get wet.

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Cont'd: Battle Lesson Notes and Conclusions.

6. Additional precautions should be taken on the police of wire when operating with armor through muddy secondary roads. Don't expect the tankers to see every wire. The safest policy is to keep wires off the ground whenever possible.

7. Signal security should be stressed when operating against an enemy who is holding a sizeable force in reserve. It can be assumed in this type operation that signal counter intelligence will be more active.

a. A pre-arranged message code has been adopted by this organization for use in sending radio messages, in lieu of the Slidex. It has proven to be more practical, in that, it has a much larger vocabulary, made especially for this unit, and messages can be coded and de-coded much faster. Two PMC's are kept on hand at all times. In the event the code in use is compromised by the enemy, the alternate code can be put into immediate effect.

*Howard H. Arbury*  
HOWARD H. ARBURY  
Lt Col., FA  
COMMANDING



## C O N T E N T S

### MAPS AND OVERLAYS

Europe 1/100,000 GSGS 4336 - Sheets 4 and 9

Europe 1/100,000 GSGS 4416 - Sheet R1

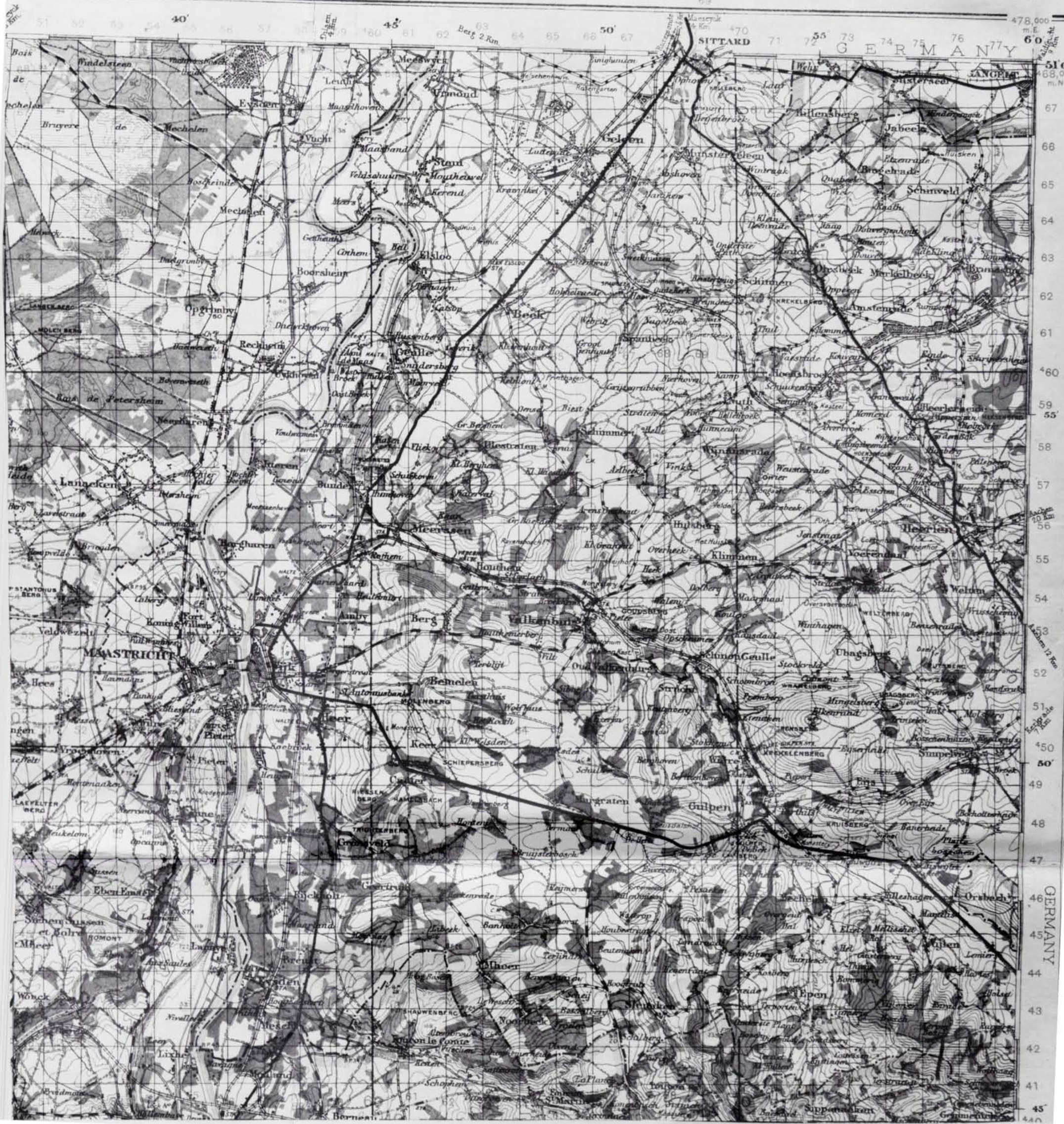
Overlay No. 1 - Positions during Phase V

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MAP COORDINATES OF TOWNS REFERRED TO IN  
AFTER ACTION REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

<u>Schinveld</u>	<u>765650</u>
<u>Gillrath</u>	<u>830569</u>
<u>Tuddern</u>	<u>7170</u>
<u>Gangelt</u>	<u>780675</u>
<u>Hastenrath</u>	<u>7669</u>
<u>Everen</u>	<u>8463</u>
<u>Schaesberg</u>	<u>7956</u>
<u>Ubach</u>	<u>8659</u>
<u>Oldweiler</u>	<u>9156</u>
<u>Markstein Hofstadt</u>	<u>865570</u>
<u>Julich</u>	<u>0359</u>
<u>Setterich</u>	<u>9159</u>
<u>Koslar</u>	<u>005595</u>
<u>Merkstein</u>	<u>8555</u>
<u>Alsdorf</u>	<u>890545</u>
<u>Schleiden</u>	<u>9555</u>
<u>Putzdorf</u>	<u>980555</u>
<u>Bourheim</u>	<u>0157</u>
<u>Kirchberg</u>	<u>025560</u>





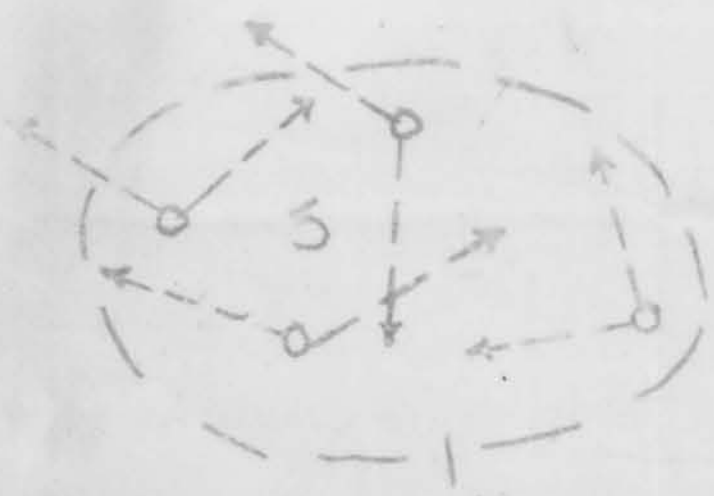




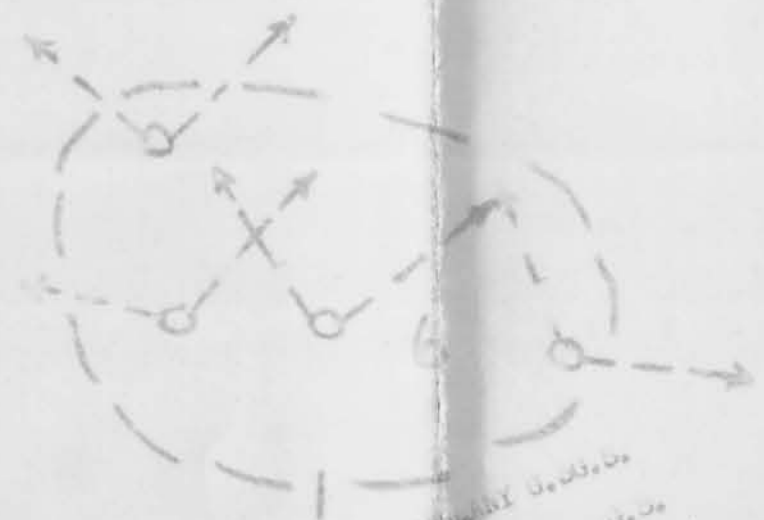


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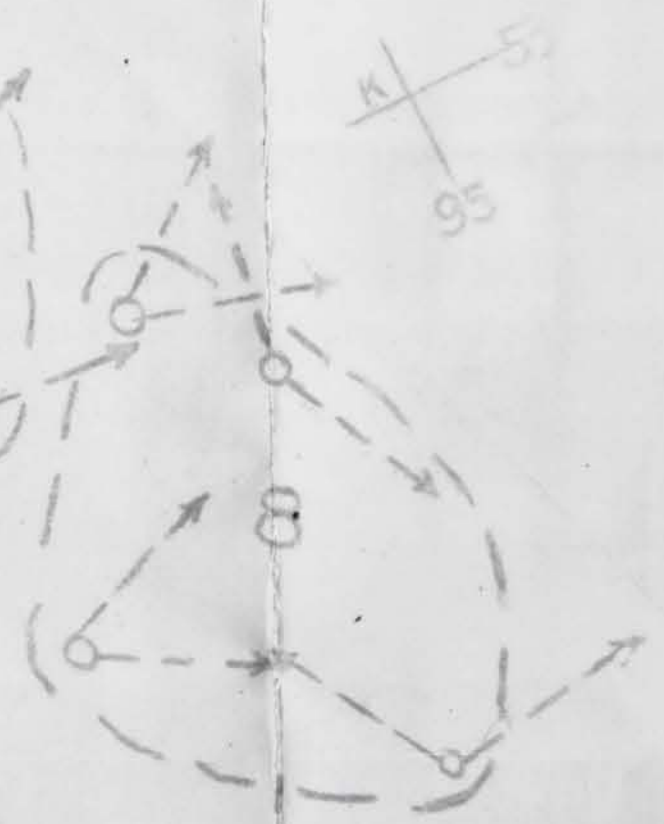
WPS: GEMANY 3.33.5.  
WPS: GEMANY, 3.33.5.  
WPS: 1:25,000

Hq III Corps  
Herxade  
29200 Lec 14

DEFENSE TO  
ANTITANK DEFENSE PLANS  
OF  
III Corps

1. Guns can posns of 141 AA Gun Bn when ordered on secondary TD mission
2. For AT defense of 141 "CG" and Switch 141-11000

SAUCY  
Antitank officer



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