

After action report from 17 December 1944 to 17 January 1945 inclusive.

COMPANY "A"
825th Tank Destroyer Battalion



The company was alerted by Hqs. T FORCE 12th Army Group at 1130 hours 17 December 1944. At approximately 1600 hours, orders were received from T FORCE Commander that the Provost Marshall of First Army directed the Company move to Malmedy, Belgium and occupy firing positions East of town. The Company was to be attached to the 526th Armd Inf. Bn. for the move to Malmedy. Upon reaching Malmedy, the C.O. was to report to Col. Hansen, Commander of 99th Inf. Bn. The Company joined the 526th Armd Inf. Bn. and passed the IP at La Reid, Belgium at 2200 hours this date.

While enroute to Malmedy, the column was ordered to halt and await further instructions. Written orders were received that one Company of 526th Armd Inf. Bn. and one platoon of Co. "A", 825th TD Bn should be moved to Stavelot, Belgium, and occupy positions South and Southeast of the town, whereby the road blocks already established could be covered by fire. The force was placed under command of Major Solis, Executive Officer, 526th Armd. Inf. Bn., and was made up of Company "A", 526th Armd. Inf. Bn., and First Platoon, Company "A", 825th TD Bn. This force moved to Stavelot and the remainder of the column moved to Malmedy. The column arrived at Malmedy at 0200 hours 18 December 1944.

I reported to Col. Hansen as ordered upon arrival; who ordered my company to occupy positions already chosen to cover the road blocks by fire. Guides were furnished by Co. "C", 291st Engr. Bn., and Platoon Leaders moved guns into position (see attached overlay # 1). The third platoon took up positions in vicinity of road block at (803036). The second platoon took up positions in the vicinity of road blocks at (792052) and (778037). One section of this platoon occupying positions at each location. Defense was setup and guns in position at 0430 hours this date.

The first platoon arrived at Stavelot at approximately 0330 hours 18 December 1944. Major Solis, the force commander, sent one platoon of Company "A", 526th Armd Inf. Bn. and one section of first platoon this unit, across the river to occupy positions on the high ground south of town. The other section of first platoon and the Anti Tank Platoon of Company "A", 526th Armd Inf Bn. were held in reserve. The first section crossed the river at approximately 0545 hours and made contact with the enemy at approximately 0605 hours this date. This section was unable to reach the positions designated due to enemy fire and upon trying to withdraw to take up positions to return enemy fire, they were hit by direct fire of the enemy, knocking out the two guns and half tracks. As a result of this action, six (6) EM were missing, and two (2) were battle casualties. At daylight the enemy placed considerable fire on the town of Stavelot. The fire was coming from machine guns and heavy weapons which were set up in the houses overlooking the town. One gun was put in position at (721013) whereby fire could be placed on the fixed enemy positions. By 0930 hours, the gun had set fire to six (6) houses, and hit approximately ten (10) others. At 1000 hours the rumble of tanks could be heard and the tanks appeared on the hill south of town.

Four (4) Mark VI German Tanks were observed, and taken under fire by the section which remained in Stavelot. Each squad knocked out two (2) tanks. A fifth tank (Tiger Royal) had come into town by another route and could be heard reconnoitering the town by fire. A gun was moved to a position in the center of the street at (719012) so as to permit firing on the approaching tank. Some 15 rounds were exchanged in the fire fight. One of the rounds from the 3" gun hit the tank at a point where the gun extends from the turret, and the tank withdrew. In doing so, the tank backed into a brick building, and pulled the building down pinning the tank underneath the wreckage. During this action the platoon leader received orders to withdraw, but due to the enemy fire it was impossible. However, at 1145 hours the remainder of the platoon withdrew under covering fire which came from the

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gun at (719012). The gun commander and gunner, firing the gun at (719012) after making certain the platoon had withdrawn, rendered the gun useless to the enemy by placing an incendiary grenade in the breach. The two non-commissioned officers then withdrew on foot. One (1) 1/4 ton truck and one (1) half-track was lost during this action. One man was wounded.

On 19 December 1944, two men of the company captured three (3) suspected German soldiers in civilian clothes in Malmedy, and turned them over to CIC. Third platoon received enemy mortar and small arms fire in their position. No casualties for the period. On 20 December 1944, gun positions were improved. No contact with enemy during this period.

An attack by the enemy was expected and all personnel were alerted at ~~0300~~ hours 21 December 1944. At approximately ~~0700~~ hours one section of the 2nd platoon located at (778037) made contact with the enemy, and destroyed one (1) 1/4 ton truck, one (1) half-track and one (1) Mark VI German Tank. In addition, the section at (778037) inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. During this engagement, two men were battle casualties, two wounded but not hospitalized. One 3 inch gun was knocked out. In this same operation the section captured one (1) M-8 and two (2) 1/4 ton trucks (American; in servicable condition, which were being used by the enemy. Company "E" 99th Inf. Bn. also engaged the enemy at this point.

During period from 22 Dec/44 to 23 Dec/44, platoons remained in defensive positions and continued to dig in and improve positions. On 24 December 1944, the 3" Gun and half-track of third squad 1st Platoon was repaired and put into position at ~~2000~~ hours at (778038). This gun supported one gun of second platoon at (778036), (See attached overlay # 2). 25 December 1944, positions remained the same, and the 3" guns and half-track of 4th squad 1st platoon was recovered from Stavelot. On 26 December 1944, the gun and half-track of 1st platoon was repaired and put in position at ~~2000~~ hours at (778039) (See attached overlay # 2). All other positions remained the same. All positions remained the same during period of 27 December 1944 to 28 December 1944 incl.

On 29 December 1944, reconnaissance was made for location of new and better positions. The second section of third platoon moved to and occupied new positions, at (804039) the other section remained in position at (797039) (See attached overlay # 3). Further reconnaissance was made for positions on 30 December 1944, and first section of the third platoon moved to and occupied new positions at (803041). During period from 31 December 1944 to 5 January 1945 inclusive, platoons continued to occupy defensive positions. (See attached overlay # 3).

At ~~0830~~ hours on 6 January 1945, orders were received from CO of 823rd T.D. Bn. that this company would occupy positions presently occupied by units of 823rd TD Bn. The change to be effected within a 48 hour period. At ~~1700~~ hours this date the third platoon of this unit moved to and occupied positions in vicinity of (758026). At ~~1030~~ hours 7 January 1945, the first platoon (- one section) moved to and occupied positions at (765036) at 1300 hours second platoon moved to and occupied positions at (735025) (See attached overlay # 4)

At ~~1400~~ hours 8 January 1945, the section of first platoon moved to alternate positions and fired 11 rounds H.E. at an enemy C.P. Fire was effective: Guns were then moved back into original positions at (765036).

All positions remained the same during the period from 9 January 1945 to 15 January 1945 inclusive. No casualties during period although all positions received light enemy artillery fire and concentrations of Nebelwefer fire.

At ~~1630~~ hours 16 January 1945, orders were received from Col. Hansen to assemble company in Meiz, Belgium. (755042) At ~~1830~~ hours 1st Platoon closed in assembly area. At ~~1900~~ hours third platoon closed in assembly area, and at ~~2000~~ hours 2nd

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platoon closed in assembly area. At 2300 hours this date orders were received through 526th Armd. Inf. Bn. that company was relieved of mission, and would return to T FORCE in vicinity of Marneffe, Belgium.

At 0930 hours 17 January 1945, company moved from Meiz, Belgium and arrived at Marneffe, Belgium at 1530 hours. Distance traveled 60 miles.

Joseph H. Dibert
JOSEPH H. DIBERT
Capt. 825th TD Bn
Comdg. Co. "A"

