

HEADQUARTERS  
632d TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 70

2 February 1945

REPORT AFTER ACTION  
For Period 20 October to 13 November 1944

MAPS:

1. Special Map, Central Philippines, Sheet 3.
  2. do do Villaba, Sheet F
  3. do do Ormoc, Sheet E
  4. do do Capocan, Sheet A
  5. do do Lake Danao, Sheet D
  6. do do Carigara, Sheet 1
  7. do do Dagami, Sheet 3
  8. do do Tacloban, Sheet 2
  - 9a. do do Tolosa NW, Sheet 4644 - III - NW
  - 9b. do do Basey SW, Sheet 4644 - IV - SW
  - 9c. do do Dagami NE, Sheet 4544 - II - NE
  - 9d. do do Kabalawan SE, Sheet 4544 - I - SE
- Luzon Series, Scale 1/50,000*  
" " " 1/250,000



1. NAME AND NATURE OF OPERATION:

a. Name: ASCOM Task Force.

b. Code Names used:

- |                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| (1) GHQ                    | Jockey  |
| (2) Sixth Army             | Warfare |
| (3) X Corps                | Dover   |
| (4) 24th Inf. Div.         | Danger  |
| (5) 32d Inf. Div.          | Ramrod  |
| (6) 1st Cavalry Div.       | Saber   |
| (7) 19th Regt., 24th Div.  | Dandy   |
| (8) 34th Regt., 24th Div.  | Dragon  |
| (9) 126th Regt., 32d Div.  | Relay   |
| (10) 127th Regt., 32d Div. | Record  |
| (11) 128th Regt., 32d Div. | Razor   |
| (12) 32d Div. Arty.        | Relax   |
| (13) 632d T.D. Bn.         | Rover   |

c. Nature of operation:

- (1) Seizure and occupation of Leyte Island, P.I.

2. MISSIONS:

a. This Battalion (less Co. B reinforced with 2d Reconnaissance Platoon attached) was initially assigned the following detailed missions, under 24th Division Landing Team control in Division Reserve:

- (1) Assist the securing of the initial beach-head by direct fire.
- (2) Defend and protect the initial beach-head from tank or mechanized attack.
- (3) Assist the assault on Hill 522 by direct fire.
- (4) Assist the assault on Palo by direct fire.
- (5) Defend and protect the A-Day Objective from tank or mechanized attack.
- (6) Defend assembly or bivouac areas from day or night attack.
- (7) Assist the defense of the initial beach-head from enemy sea-borne attacks under direction of the Perimeter Defense Commander.

b. Execution of (1), (2), and (3) cited herein above were precluded as the battalion was unable to effect landing on A-Day due to shallow LST beach approaches. Disembarkation was accomplished on A Plus 1. Battalion was prepared to: a. Assist in mopping up rear areas. b. Assist in capture of Hills B and C successively. c. Furnish anti-tank protection to West and South of Palo. While the Battalion was not relieved of the above missions, the battalion less B Co. less 1 Reconnaissance Platoon was subsequently committed to the support of the ASCOM Force by various attachments to units and commands of that force. Due to this attachment of elements of the battalion, the battalion did not function as a complete unit; Battalion Headquarters Command Group functioned as a special staff to the 24th Infantry Division from 21 October to 13 November. In general this battalion was assigned the following missions in support of the ASCOM Force:

- (1) Support the elements of the ASCOM Force by direct fire.
- (2) Engagement with enemy armor.
- (3) Long range indirect laying missions.
- (4) Provide mechanized security for wire laying crews.
- (5) Provide mechanized Beach Patrols.

### 3. IDENTITY OF FORCE:

- a. The 632d Tank Destroyer Battalion.
- b. The Battalion Strength during the operation was 34 Officers, 2 Warrant Officers, and 604 Enlisted Men.
- c. Roster of Officers and strength of command by organization is appended hereto.

### 4. CHARACTER OF HOSTILE OPPOSITION:

- a. The enemy tried to destroy our forces in every way within his power, including local counterattacks. He employed his air force, navy, air borne units



and sent in numerous convoys of replacements. The enemy took up a series of defensive positions using the terrain to its best advantage. Each defensive position was defended strongly, using rear guards and delaying actions when he took up his next position. His resistance was stiff and determined throughout the operation. Snipers and infiltration parties operated widely; use was made of artillery to support his forces as well as to harass our troops. His artillery was not massed and single pieces were often located in caves making observation difficult. Our air strips were frequently bombed during dark and counterbattery was fired on our artillery. Little use was made of his armor. No armored attacks in force were made and his tanks were not aggressive. Little use was made of land mines along roads but anti-personnel were used in native houses at various times. No use of gas was made.

b. This unit was subjected to snipers, infiltration parties, harassing artillery fire and air attacks but did not encounter enemy ground forces in strength.

#### 5. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Lack of enemy armor and unfavorable terrain conditions has made it impossible to execute our primary mission, i.e.—destruction of enemy armored vehicles.

b. Direct support missions in general, were not satisfactory from our viewpoint. Again, terrain limitations restricted our movement to roads from which we could not maneuver, thereby decreasing our field of fire and preventing the use of shock action and maximum fire power. It is believed, however, that in some instances, much more effective direct support could have been given had the Infantry Commanders requested recommendations as to employment, and information as to the limitations and capabilities of the M-10s from our platoon and company commanders.

c. Indirect fire support was requested on only one occasion and was executed by one company to the 19th Infantry. Again, it is believed that more use could have been made of our elements in reinforcing the fires of the Division Artillery.

d. The tendency of Infantry to "bunch" around an M-10 or a tank should be discouraged as it caused many needless casualties.

e. Recommendations for present and future employment:

(1) It is recommended that a Tank Destroyer unit should be in reserve of the Commanding Headquarters in whose zone of action it is to operate, thus preserving the integrity of the unit. This makes available to all elements of the Tank Destroyer unit its trained Maintenance, Supply, Communications and Administrative personnel and facilities in addition to the following tactical advantages:

(a) It more readily permits mass employment on such missions as Tank Destruction, Beach Defense or reinforcing of artillery fires anywhere within the higher headquarters zone of action or boundary.

(b) Direct Support Missions, such as destruction of field fortifications by fire or other direct fire artillery support can then be





accomplished by the Tank Destroyers for all elements of the higher command rather than for one subordinate element.

(c) The additional burden of tactical supply and administration is not placed on a subordinate element of the command but becomes the direct responsibility of the Tank Destroyer unit.

(d) This precludes the commitment of a Tank Destroyer force too inadequate or too large to perform the mission required and yet makes the remaining Tank Destroyers available to other elements of the command on call.

(e) When the Tank Destroyer mission has been completed, the Tank Destroyer elements in direct support revert to Tank Destroyer unit control and are then immediately available to some other unit.

(f) The artillery characteristics of a Tank Destroyer unit can be used to better advantage when a larger area is available for firing positions; oftentimes artillery support cannot be given within a battalion or RGT zone of action.

f. Successful direct support of Infantry by Tank Destroyer elements requires complete understanding by Tank Destroyer commanders of the Infantry plan; direct liaison and communications with the supported unit so that location of enemy machinegun or gun positions can be transmitted to the Tank Destroyers thus insuring quick destruction. The open turret of the M-10 renders it very vulnerable to sniper fire and grenades, and close Infantry ground support is required to prevent destruction of the M-10 by mines or grenades.

#### 6. CHRONOLOGICAL NARRATIVE OF EVENTS:



The 632d Tank Destroyer Battalion departed from Aitape, New Guinea, 10 October 1944, and arrived at ASCOM Force rendezvous, Hollandia, 13 October 1944, proceeding therefrom with the ASCOM Force, and arriving at Leyte Island, P.I., morning of 20 October 1944. Attempts to land were repeatedly made during the day but were unsuccessful, shallow water preventing the LSTs from getting close enough to the beach to permit unloading. One LST nearby was damaged by enemy artillery fire during these attempts.

20/21 October: The night of 20 October was spent at anchor aboard LSTs 458 and 459. The debarkation of personnel and equipment commenced at 1200L, 21 October, on Red Beach and was completed by 1800L. O6 and O3 reported to 24th Division CP for duty and received orientation on situation. Disposition of Troops: Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Co.: 59.2 - 52.6. A Co.: 59.2 - 52.6. C Co.: 59.2 - 52.6. Reconnaissance Co.: 59.2 - 52.6.

21/22 October: O6 received orders from DANGER 3 to be prepared to (1) Assist in mopping up rear area; (2) assist in capture of Hill B by 19th RGT and (3) Furnish anti-tank protection West and South of Palo. The 3d Platoon of Reconnaissance Co., conducted route reconnaissance from assembly area to Palo. O6 received orders from DANGER 3 to support 19th RGT. 1st Platoon of C Co. was ordered to support 19th RGT but was unable to do so because of poor and impassable



road conditions. At 1320I the battalion, less one platoon of C Co., moved to new bivouac area. C Co. was assigned to the 3d Battalion, 34th RCT and moved to Palo. Disposition of Troops: Battalion Headquarters: 58.1 - 52.6. Headquarters Co.: 59.2 - 52.6. A Co.: 59.2 - 52.6. C Co.: Palo. Reconnaissance Co.: 58.1 - 52.6.

22/23 October: A reconnaissance squad from Reconnaissance Co., with radio communication, was sent to Hill 522 to act as Observation Post. At 1500I, 1,000 Japs were reported at Jaro. Co. A attached to 34th RCT with one platoon in direct support South of Pawing. 039 reported to 06 that C Co. knocked out five Jap pillboxes and killed 30 Japs, supporting 19th RCT. From this date on during the operation, company commanders maintained personal liaison with commanding officers of supported units. Disposition of Troops: Battalion Headquarters: 57.5 - 51.9. Headquarters Co.: 59.2 - 52.6. A Co.: Co. Headquarters, 1st and 3d Platoons: 57.5 - 51.9; 2d Platoon under control of 34th RCT, South of Pawing. C Co.: Attached to 19th RCT, Palo. Reconnaissance Co.: 57.5 - 51.9.

23/24 October: 06 inspected 2d Platoon of Co. A, forward with the 34th RCT at Pawing. Orders were received from Headquarters X Corps, to post 24-hour Cossack Post along Highway 1. Cossack Post was recalled later this same day because of small arms fire received from friendly troops. Approximately 300 natives were brought into Battalion Perimeter for night, sheltered from enemy fire. Disposition of troops: No change.

24/25 October: Orders were issued by 06 that Battalion will be prepared to operate South of Palo River, with one company in direct support of 19th RCT and one company in support of 34th RCT. Field Order No. 3 received from DANGER. One man from Headquarters Co. was wounded by sniper fire in Palo. Disposition of Troops: No change.

25/26 October: 06 and 03 inspected on platoon of Co. C being held in reserve at Palo. The 2d Platoon of Co. A accomplished mission in support of 34th RCT. The DANGER Command Post is located at 56.4 - 52.2. 039 reported one man wounded in support of 34th RCT. The battalion reconnaissance patrols are working out of Castilla in all directions. One man, from Headquarters Co., was wounded by sniper fire within Command Post perimeter. Disposition of Troops: Battalion Headquarters: 56.5 - 52.1. Headquarters Co.: Palo. A Co.: Company Headquarters, 1st and 3d Platoons: 56.5 - 52.1; 2d Platoon with 34th RCT. C Co., less one platoon: Castilla, with 19th RCT, one platoon Mobile Reserve, Palo. Reconnaissance Co.: 56.5 - 52.1.

26/27 October: Tacloban airstrip commenced operations today. 02 made reconnaissance of two bridges between Palo and Santa Fe, reporting both bridges serviceable. One man, Co. A, was wounded by sniper fire within perimeter. 03 alerted Battalion for move to Santa Fe. Disposition of Troops: No change.

27/28 October: Company Commanders received instructions that Filipinos would not be permitted to carry firearms without written authority from DANGER. Disposition of Troops: Battalion Headquarters: Vicinity of Alangalang, 39.3 - 55.8. Headquarters Co.: Palo. A Co., less one platoon: Vicinity of Alangalang; 2d Platoon, no change. C Co.: Vicinity of Alangalang. Reconnaissance Co.: Vicinity of Alangalang.

28/29 October: One platoon of Co. A accompanied Co. C, 603d Tank Co., in support of 3d Battalion, 34th RCT attack on Jaro. 1st Platoon, A Co., assisted



in destroying machinegun nest between Galtan and Jaro. Headquarters Co. Rear Echelon moved to Alangalang. Disposition of Troops: Headquarters Co.: Alangalang. Remainder of battalion: No change.

29/30 October: Road from Alangalang to Santa Fe to Pastrana was reconnoitered by 3d Platoon of Reconnaissance Co. O6 reported to 34th RGT and ordered A Co. to move to Jaro. At 1120I O6 reported Jap tanks firing on our troops West of Jaro. Later report from O6 that fire received by our troops, West of Jaro, was from 37mm. self-propelled weapons and not tanks. A platoon of Co. C was dispatched to transport Co. D, 185th Chemical Unit, through sniper areas. A Co. reported to 34th RGT and was prepared for one platoon to support the 3d Battalion, with the remainder of the company held in reserve. Disposition of Troops: A Co.: Vicinity of Jaro. Remainder of battalion: No change.

30/31 October: Co. A ordered to continue in direct support of 34th RGT. The battalion moved to a position of readiness, vicinity of Jaro, as Division Reserve. C Co. was prepared to reinforce A Co. and the 19th Infantry as directed. Disposition of Troops: A Co.: With 34th RGT. Remainder of battalion: Vicinity of Jaro.

31 October/1 November: A Co. remained in direct support of 34th RGT. Rest of battalion in Division Reserve. A Co. furnished one platoon to follow assault of 2d Battalion, 34th RGT, with balance of company in Regimental Reserve. Platoon was engaged against enemy machineguns and results were undetermined, but three enemy machineguns were silenced. Disposition of Troops: No change.

1/2 November: Received Field Order No. 4, Headquarters DANGER, dated 1 November 1944. A Co. was committed in direct support of DANGER in attack on Carigara. Battalion (less B and C Companies) moved to vicinity of Tunga. Disposition of Troops: A Co.: Carigara. Remainder of Battalion: Vicinity of Tunga.

2/3 November: C Co. reported killing two Japs near their Command Post. A patrol from C Co. was ambushed 1 mile from Tunga. Six Japs were reported killed and one light machinegun captured. The patrol suffered no casualties. C Co. moved to Jaro and fired indirect interdiction fire throughout night on mountain pass West of Jaro. Disposition of Troops: A Co.: Vicinity of Carigara. C Co.: Vicinity of Jaro. Remainder of Battalion: 28.1 - 61.2.

3/4 November: C Co. was relieved of fire mission with 19th RGT at Jaro. Disposition of Troops: No change.

4/5 November: Field Order No. 6, DANGER, 4 November 1944, received at Battalion Command Post. A thorough cleaning and inspection of all ammunition was conducted. O6 and O3 reconnoitered area around Carigara River and Pinampoan, for likely positions for coastal defense in the event of a sea-borne attack. Disposition of Troops: No change.

5/6 November: With permission of DANGER 3, the Battalion moved to new area 3 miles West of pontoon bridge West of Carigara. From this newly selected location the Battalion was prepared to occupy previously determined areas for beach defense. C Co. was attached to 21st RGT and moved to vicinity of Pinampoan, keeping one platoon in position of readiness in rear of assault elements.





029 returned from hospital to duty. Three new Officers reported for duty from 5th Replacement Depot and were assigned. Disposition of Troops: Headquarters Co.: Carigara, Co. C; Pinampoan. Remainder of Battalion (less B Co.): 17.8 - 67.3.

6/7 November: The Battalion Rear Echelon is located in abandoned church in Carigara. One section Co. C was employed delivering area fire against snipers and automatic weapons not definitely located. Disposition of Troops: C Co.: Pinampoan. Remainder of Battalion: No change.

7/8 November: One section Co. C engaged the enemy South of Pinampoan, and was able to hold the Infantry position, evacuate wounded, while the Infantry regrouped their forces. Disposition of Troops: No change.

8/9 November: Companies spent the day in care and cleaning of equipment and maintenance of vehicles. Disposition of Troops: No change.

9/10 November: DANGER reported that 14 LVTs would be operating in Capocan area during the night. Beach defense elements of Battalion were cautioned not to fire. Disposition of Troops: No change.

10/11 November: The day was allotted to care and maintenance of all wheeled and track vehicles. A report on the activities of Co. C was submitted to DOVER 3. The Carigara bridge was closed to all traffic and roads were reported to be in poor condition due to heavy rains. Disposition of Troops: No change.

11/12 November: One platoon of Co. C moved to support the 3d Battalion, 21st REGT, assault. Heavy automatic weapons fire was encountered and many pillboxes could not be fired upon due to conditions of local terrain. Town of Limon was now under artillery fire and C Co. was alerted for possible fire mission against Limon. Disposition of Troops: No change.

12/13 November: One platoon of Co. C moved to position 06.6 - 67.3 to give direct fire support to the assault on Limon. Due to the condition of roads the platoon was unable to proceed with the 21st Infantry Regiment. 02 and one platoon of Reconnaissance Co. conducted reconnaissance in the vicinity of Jaro for possible trail leading to Ormoc Valley with negative results. Disposition of Troops: No change.

13/14 November: Companies spent day in care and maintenance of 37mm. and 3" weapons and reviewed indirect fire technique. Disposition of Troops: No change.

14/15 November: 32d Division moving up to front. Battalion Hq. and Co. C attached to RALROD. A Co. still attached to 24th Division and still on beach defense mission.

15/16 November: One Jap bomb dropped close to our area.

16/17 November: Battalion Hq. and C Co. and Reconnaissance Co. moved out of area and went forward to join RALROD. Perimeter closed. Japs bombed to East and West of our area.

Report After Action Cont'd: Page 8.

17/18 November: Jap over area again, dropped bombs South of area. Condition of roads due to heavy rains and much traffic prevented move to new area.

18/19 November: Company moved to new area on beach approximately 500 yards North of old area. Company still part of Beach Defense.

19/20 November: Company spent day on pioneer work improving road and making route of egress. Company alerted at 1655I to move immediately to RAMROD C.P. in vicinity of Capeosan. Company attached to RAMROD per VCOG, X Corps. Arrived RAMROD C.P. at 1905I. To remain with 32d Division and held as Division Reserve troops.

With all elements of the 632d Tank Destroyer Battalion under control of RAMROD, so much of Chronological Narrative of Events as pertains to the period this battalion was under control of DANGER, is closed.

*Malvin P. Wang*

MALVIN P. WANG,  
Major, F.A.,  
Commanding.





**HEADQUARTERS  
632d TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 70**

OFFICERS ROSTER AS OF 20 NOVEMBER 1944

Bn Staff	- Lt Col	HUGH M. FANNING	0274047
	Capt	DAVID A. MARCELLE	0397220
	Capt	FRANCIS E. LANG	0401073
	Capt	THEO W. JORDAN	01166523
	Capt	HAROLD E. BELL	0372043
	Capt	THOMAS E. MOEHN	0425244
	Capt	ROBERT L. MICHALSKI	0502053
	1st Lt	EMIL C. RASSMANN	01823484
Hq Co	- Capt	FRED C. WELSH	0413757
	Capt	JOHN M. THOMPSON	0911067
	1st Lt	ROBERT E. STORTS	0373018
	1st Lt	DONALD J. STICKLER	0359582
	1st Lt	RANDOLPH V. FOSTER	0451595
	1st Lt	OLIVER M. TUCKER	0359458
	2nd Lt	HUBERT S. ROUSH	01606322
A Co	- 1st Lt	ROBERT R. TIDERMAN	0888198
	1st Lt	HARRY A. BEST JR.	0322074
	1st Lt	JAMES A. MC LELLAND	01168371
	1st Lt	KENNETH L. SAVAGOL	0888309
	1st Lt	MILTON J. BOJDAK	01822348
	2nd Lt	HOWARD S. BETTRAM	01686308
G Co	- Capt	JAMES C. SAWYER	0450113
	1st Lt	DENIS J. ILLIGE	02034680
	1st Lt	NOBERT F. PETERS	0888199
	1st Lt	WILLIAM R. JOLLY	01824866
	2nd Lt	VIRGIL O. MC EROY	01824063
	2nd Lt	OMAR B. GEORGE	01824849
Ran Co	- Capt	ELDON A. HAASE	0384205
	1st Lt	WILLIAM R. JUNKMAN	0888272
	1st Lt	PASCAL ADAMO	01822972
	1st Lt	CHARLES E. MYERS	01824901
	2nd Lt	JAMES R. FITZSIMONS	01822690
Med Det	- Capt	JOHN J. O'CONNOR	0419061



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APO 70

STRENGTH REPORT

AS OF 20 NOVEMBER 1944

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
Headquarters	8	0	0
Headquarters Company	7	2	104
Company A	0	0	120
Company C	0	0	125
Reconnaissance Company	5	0	111
Medical Detachment	1	0	16
Total	<u>33</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>476</u>

