

SECRET**HEADQUARTERS
5TH TANK DESTROYER GROUP**APO 436, U.S. Army
5 October 1944**SUBJECT: REPORT AFTER OPERATIONS AGAINST THE ENEMY.****TO : The Adjutant General, Army War College, War Department,
Washington, D. C.****THROUGH: Commanding General, Seventh U S Army, APO 758, U.S. Army, and
Commanding General, XV Corps, APO 436, U.S. Army.**

1. In compliance with Paragraph 10, AR 345-105, as amended by Change 3, dated 9 March 1943, and Paragraph 2, Third United States Army ltr, file AG 319.1 (G-3) GNMCC, Subject: Action Against Enemy, Reports After, dated 21 July 1944, the following report is submitted.

2. Arabic numbers following pertinent statements made in the report refer to Journal Entries made in the Unit Journal of the 5th Tank Destroyer Group, correspondingly numbered extracted true copies being attached as inclosure #1.

3. Report After Operations Against the Enemy - Period 010001B September 1944 - 302359A September 1944.

At the beginning of the period, the 5th Tank Destroyer Group, with the 773d Tank Destroyer Battalion attached, was located at Rozay-en-brie, coordinates (484212).

1 September was Organization Day for the 5th Tank Destroyer Group and appropriate recognition was made of the second anniversary (1). At approximately 010855B September, three PW's (one officer and two corporals) were taken in the immediate vicinity of the Group bivouac area. The three PW's were interrogated by the S-2; it was determined that they were infantry stragglers from Battle Group AULOCH, operating in a battalion commanded by a Capt. Wolf (2). After interrogation, the PW's were evacuated through the XV Corps cages.

During the period of 1 - 7 September, the 5th Tank Destroyer Group, with 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion attached, remained in the vicinity of Rozay-en-Brie. From the third to the seventh, the 3524 Ordnance Company (MAM) inspected and repaired all of the ordnance materiel (3). On the sixth, the Group S-1 & 4 section interviewed Lt. Delbert G. Reck, and S/Sgt Edward J. Land, 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion, regarding recommendation for the Congressional Medal of Honor (4). During this period the usual liaison was maintained with the XV Corps.

At 070910B, the 5th Tank Destroyer Group received Operations Instructions #13, XV Corps, which stated that the mission of the Corps (in compliance with Third Army Directive, 5 September) was to protect the south flank of the Army from MONTARGIS to the MARNE RIVER, to seize the line of the MOSELLE RIVER in zone, to seize KARLSRUHE, and secure a bridgehead over the RHINE RIVER, or to move through bridgeheads secured by the XII or XX Corps (5).

In compliance with Movement Order #4, XV Corps, the Group and 773rd TD Battalion closed station at Rozay-en-Brie at 080702B, and opened new CP vicinity VENDEUVRE at 081620B; distance traveled 95 mile (6).

Operational maps for the approaching Corps mission were received on the ninth. Late in the afternoon of the ninth, the executive officer of the 813th TD Battalion, which had just arrived from the Belgian frontier in the vicinity JOINVILLE, reported to the Group CO that the 813th requested to be relieved from the 79th Division for a short time in order to accomplish track replacement and maintenance (7). In view of the above situation, the Group CO recommended to the CG, XV Corps, that the 773rd TD Battalion be attached to the 79th Infantry Division, and that the 813th TD Battalion be withdrawn for general maintenance. The Corps Commander approved this plan (8). At 101135B XV Corps issued orders attaching the 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion to the 79th Infantry Division. At 101200B, 773rd TD Battalion closed station at VENDEUVRE and moved to join 79th Infantry Division at JOINVILLE, completing movement at 101600.

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To expedite maintenance for the 813th TD Battalion, the Group S-1&4 made arrangements with XV Corps G-4 for the 314th Ordnance Battalion to aid the 813th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

At 102030B, the Group received the XV Corps Movement Order #5, directing movement to vicinity MORANCOURT (10). FO #8 was also received which ordered the 79th Infantry Division and the 2nd French Armored Division to attack to objectives on the MOSELLE RIVER between CHARMES and EPINAL (11). In compliance with Movement Order #5, the Group moved from VENDEUVRE to vicinity MORANCOURT (12); time of movement, 110730 - 111253B; distance traveled 41 miles. At this time the Group dentists were placed on D/S with the 813th TD Battalion for dental work. On the following day the Group moved further to vicinity of REMOUILLE, closing at 121852B; distance traveled 55 miles (13).

The 13th of September was spent in usual staff liaison. The S-2 visited the 2nd French Armored Division in order to receive up-to-date information concerning German armor vicinity EPINAL (14). The Asst. S-3 contacted the 813th TD Battalion to ascertain their track status. He returned with the information that twenty-four M-10's would be ready by 151500B. Late in the afternoon, the Group closed station at MORANCOURT and moved to FRAISNES-EN-SANTOIS, closing at 132020B; (15) distance traveled, 40 miles. Usual staff liaison was maintained on the 14th of September.

On September 15, the CG, XV Corps, upon recommendation of the Group CO, directed that the 79th Infantry Division move the 813th TD Battalion up into a position closer to the front where quick support would be more obtainable if needed (16). The Division order was dispatched to the 813th TD Battalion via the Group S-3. It was agreed at the 79th Infantry Division to further reinforce the MOSELLE bridgehead, then held by one battalion of the 314th Infantry Regiment and two platoons Company "B", 773rd TD Battalion, by attaching the 773rd TD Battalion, less Company "C", to the 314th Infantry Regiment. The 313th Infantry, west of the MOSELLE, was to be supported by the 813th TD Battalion in event of a tank threat from the south (17).

In order to use all of the available weapons in the Corps against any tank attack, the Group Executive Officer visited the 115th AA Battalion (90mm) to give a talk on the subject of "Tank Identification and Employment of AA Guns in the Anti-tank Role." (18)

On the 16th of September, the award of the Silver Star was presented by General Haislip to Captain Edward N. Stiver, for gallantry in action near St. Denis, France (19). The 813th TD Battalion closed into bivouac vicinity VOMECOURT as per 79th Division order. Tanks were reported active across the river and all units were alerted (20). On the 17th, B Company, 773rd TD Battalion, destroyed one Mk IV vicinity CHARMES.

The 2nd French Armored Division reported contact with the 21 Pz. Division, the 112 Pz. Brigade, and that the 1st Battalion, 29th Pz. Regiment, had been destroyed by air-ground cooperation on the 12th of September. The main body of the remaining armor was now reported in vicinity EPINAL and east of the MOSELLE RIVER.

During the period of the evening of the 16th to 18th of September there was no movement of TD's in the Corps excepting continued reconnaissance and observation. In the afternoon of the 18th September, Corps cavalry, air observers, and the XII Corps reported columns of tanks, infantry, and artillery moving from the southeast toward LUNEVILLE, across the XV Corps front, east of the MOSELLE. In the absence of the Group Commander, the Group S-2 and S-3 were called upon by the Corps Chief of Staff to make a recommendation to the CG for the employment of tank destroyers, in advance of the Corps, to attack the flank of enemy armor moving in on LUNEVILLE. It was decided to send Companies A and C of the 813th TD Battalion with the 106th Cav Group with the mission of giving direct AT support in the advance of the Corps. 773rd TD Battalion was to remain in attachment to 79th Infantry Division, one TD company per combat team, and the 813th TD Battalion, less A and C Companies reverted to Corps reserve, attached to the 5th TD Group (21). This plan was approved by the CO, 5th TD Group and the CG, XV Corps. The movement of the Corps and tank destroyers, as recommended, began the evening of the 18th of September. The 5th TD Group moved with Corps Headquarters and Corps troops from FRAISNES-EN-SANTOIS to vicinity of CHARMES on the 19th of September, closing in bivouac at FLOREMONT (22) at 191555A, distance traveled, 9 miles. From firing positions south of CHARMES and west of the

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MOSELLE RIVER Company B, 813th TD Battalion was given the mission of protecting Corps troops from possible enemy attack from the south. Previously, Company B had protected the crossing of the MOSELLE by GCV, 2nd French Armored Division, from the same firing position.

The Group S-1&4 spent the 19th of September at the CP of the 90th Infantry Division expediting the processing of decorations of officers of the 5th TD Group and 773rd TD Battalion. He had also established liaison with 4th TD Group and 818th TD Battalion during this visit, exchanging tank destroyer information and dispositions (23).

During the 19th and 20th of September, the tank destroyers of the Corps advanced with the 79th Infantry Division and the 106th Cavalry Group and underwent considerable action in a close support role. Companies A and C of the 813th TD Battalion destroyed three enemy vehicles, damaged two Mk IV's, and caused an undetermined number of infantry casualties in the enemy ranks. The 773rd TD Battalion, attached to the 79th Infantry Division, destroyed one Mk V, three Mk IVs, six vehicles.

On the morning of the 21st, a billeting party selected a suitable location in the city of LUNEVILLE as a tentative command post for the Group. Later, at 1610 in the afternoon, the CO of the 813th TD Battalion visited the commanding officer of the Group; further employment was discussed. It was planned that A and C Companies would remain in support of the 106th Cavalry Group up on the northwest flank of the Corps, and that as soon as the south flank of the Corps was relieved by the capture of EPINAL, B Company would be moved forward to an assembly area in the rear of the 79th Infantry Division (24).

At the evening XV Corps staff conference, the Group Commander learned that 105mm How. ammunition was not readily available to the artillery. Inasmuch as three inch HE ammunition was at this time readily available to the tank destroyers, the Group Commander recommended to the CG, XV Corps, that B Company of the 813th TD Battalion be placed under the supervision of the Corps artillery in order to supplement the supporting fires of the Corps. With the approval of the CG, XV Corps, the Group Commander ordered the CO, 813th TD Battalion, to move his B Company to the vicinity of REHAINVILLE and to establish command liaison with the 173rd FA Group, who would provide survey and assist in the conduct of fire for the tank destroyer unit (25).

On the 22nd of September transportation to haul HE ammunition to B Company of the 813th, while it was on its indirect fire mission (26), was arranged by the Group S-1&4. The XV Corps supplied twelve trucks which were to pick up 2500 rounds HE at COMMERCY. ASP #28, northeast of CHARMES, supplied HE until the truck column arrived. The guns were registered by the personnel of the 961st FA Battalion on the afternoon of the 23rd. During the night 23-24 September, 638 rounds of HE were fired on enemy positions and routes of communication north of LUNEVILLE. Results were not observed on the 24th, due to heavy rain and fog.

During the period 21-25 September, A and C Companies of the 813th Battalion, attached to the 106th Cavalry Group, remained in firing positions echeloned northwest from LUNEVILLE, protecting the Corps left flank. The 773rd TD Battalion, attached to the 79th Infantry Division, was in close support of the regimental combat teams. There was no tank action.

The situation on the 26th of September was such that the south east flank of the Corps was protected by the 2nd French Armored Division, and the 79th Division on the north east of the French, had the 773rd TD Battalion in support. The 106th Cavalry Group was holding the northeast flank adjoining the XII Corps zone. Considerable tank action had taken place in the XII Corps zone, and in view of this situation, the CO, 5th TD Group, recommended that the 813th TD Battalion be attached to the 106th Cavalry Group. B Company of the 813th was to remain in indirect firing positions already occupied. The CG, XV Corps, approved this plan and at 261000A this plan was carried out (27). In order to keep better informed on the situation, the Group CP was moved to LUNEVILLE. Movement began at 261300A and was complete at 261430A September, distance traveled, 24 miles (28).

Operations Instructions #18, XV Corps, gave the objective as being on a general north - south line on the high ground east of the FORET DE PARROY (29). The

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FORET was found to be a strongly defended, dense woods. In order to aid the advance, medium bombers of the 9th Air Force were called upon to bomb the woods prior to the attack. There was no change in the employment of the tank destroyers during the current phase. Following the bombing which occurred on the 28th of September, the 79th Infantry Division and the 106th Cavalry Group advanced to the attack and soon encountered enemy resistance. The 813th TD Battalion, working north and south of the RHIN AU MARNE CANAL fired direct missions on towns being assaulted by the cavalry. No losses were received by the tank destroyers. During all phases of this attack, close liaison was maintained with the division and the cavalry by the tank destroyer group.

At 290001A September, the XV Corps and Corps troops passed to the control of the Seventh United States Army. New boundaries were given and the Corps mission remained to advance northeast in their zone, protecting the right flank of the Third Army (30). There was no change in the dispositions of the XV Corps TD troops.

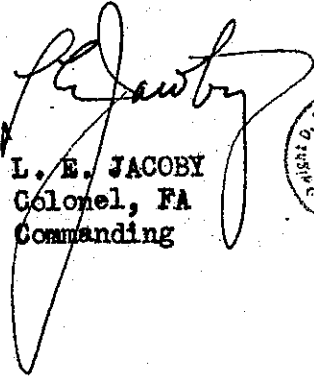
At 291200 there were reports of tank activity in the area just north of the RHIN MARNE CANAL. The flank guard of a German force, attacking the 4th United States Armored Division, advanced into the sector of the 121st Cavalry Squadron, G Company of the 813th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached. This attack was also observed by A Company of the 813th which was supporting the 106th Cavalry Squadron. The attack was met squarely and was beaten back without loss to the tank destroyers. Two Mk Vs, thirteen Mk IVs, four SP guns, and four other vehicles were destroyed by the 813th. Co B, of the 813th, firing with the 961st FA Battalion and the 182nd FA Battalion in vicinity of REHAINVILLE and LUNEVILLE, fired 4748 rounds of HE between 241200 September and 291800 September. These missions were harrassing fire placed on the enemy in vicinity of the FORET DE PARROY.

On the 30th of September, the usual liaison duties were maintained. The Group S-1&4 arranged for ten additional sets of M-10 tracks to be delivered to the 773rd TD Battalion (31).

This brings to a close the operations for the period 1 - 30 September 1944.

For the period covered the Commanding Officer, 5th Tank Destroyer Group, served as the Antitank Officer for the XV Corps. During this period the XV Corps is credited with knocking out 130 tanks and self-propelled guns, of which 28 were destroyed by tank destroyers, 44 by air action, and 58 by other combined branches. Since the XV Corps became operational at 311600B July 1944, the cumulative total of tanks and self-propelled guns liquidated by all troops assigned, attached, or in support of the Corps totals 697. Of the 697 tanks and self-propelled guns liquidated 89 were eliminated by Hq, 5th Tank Destroyer Group and 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion on temporary detached service with the V Corps during the period August 17 to August 22, 1944.

Total cumulative battlefield casualties of this headquarters to date are 1 officer, slightly wounded, and 1 non-commissioned officer seriously wounded, both evacuated and replaced. Total cumulative awards to date, one Silver Star awarded to Captain Edward N. Stiver, O-393084. Total distance traveled to date in France is 752 miles, as follows: 67 miles from UTAH BEACH to MARCHESIEUX where Group became operational 311600B July 1944; 476 miles during month of August 1944; 209 miles for month of September 1944.


 L. E. JACOBY
 Colonel, FA
 Commanding

