

COMPANY "A" 601st TANK DESTROYER BN.
A.P.O. # 302 U.S. ARMY

26 March 1943

SUBJECT: Operation Report

TO : Commanding Officer, 601st Tank Destroyer Bn.



About noon March 21, 1943 I was ordered to take command of the one platoon of Company "A" 601st T-D Bn. since Lt. Marcus the platoon leader had been wounded by bomb fragments. My mission at that time was reserve platoon for "C" Company against a possible tank thrust in a position about 2 miles S.E. of El Guettar. The platoon remained in this vicinity until 0300 hours March 23 when it was ordered up to a position about 4 miles S.E. of El Guettar to protect the pass on the Gafsa - Gabes road. I placed three of my guns on defilade on the North side of the road and one on the South side, all guns covering the road entering the pass. Shortly after daylight German Tanks approached us from the East traveling on the main road. I waited until the leading vehicle got within 800 yds and then ordered my platoon up to the crest to open fire. About the same time the unit on my right flank, units in the valley and the field artillery opened up thus making it difficult to observe the results of the firing of my platoon. The tanks then withdrew, reorganized and began to circle the high ground. To the right flank in an attempt to out flank our position on the high ground. At this time I counted well over 30 tanks circling to the right. I ordered two of my guns to take them under fire, keeping the other guns ready against another thrust at the pass. The combined fire of the artillery and Tank Destroyer elements on my right turned this thrust back before they had gotten 1000 yards from the hill. My platoon did no more firing until noon when an unidentified American half-track towing a field piece came down the road towards the pass. I held my fire because I was afraid that it was Americans escaping from the battlefield but when 7 Germans dismounted and placed the gun in position I ordered 2 of my guns to open up. About 20 rounds were expended which blew up the gun and vehicle. Later reports proved 5 Germans killed and two captured. We remained in the same position the rest of the day, that night, and the following morning, all the time under heavy artillery fire and bombing. At 1200 March 24 my platoon was relieved by a platoon of the 701st Tank Destroyer Bn.

Frederick C. Miner
FREDERICK C. MINER
1st Lt FA

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On the evening of March 23, 1943 Lt. Miner our Platoon Leader called all the chief of sections and told us what our mission was and what was expected of us, we moved our guns into position and I took my gun on the right side of the road and put it into position. I had a good field of fire and in the morning, around daybreak, we opened fire on tanks firing about 30 rounds. I no longer could see the tanks as they went to our right flank around a big hill. I waited to see if any more tanks were coming down the road when someone came up to me and told me that there were lots of tanks on my right flank. I asked Capt. Paulick to put my gun on the right side of the hill. There I saw plenty of tanks and I opened fire on them. I saw my gunner putting the shells right into the group of tanks. I kept firing until the tanks retreated. I had fired 125 rounds. Col. Baker then fired a few rounds of indirect fire at the tanks that were already knocked out in order to set fire to them. My gunner Cpl Kenny was hurt by shrapnel in the knee and we no longer could fire at the tanks as they were too far out to fire at.

CHESTER KAROLEWSKI
Sgt. Co. "A" 601st T-D Bn.

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TO : Commanding Officer, 601st Tank Destroyer Bn.



Company "A" of the 601st Tank Destroyer Bn under the command of Lt. Miner went into position just off the El Guettar - Gabes road about 6 miles S.E. of El Guettar on March 23 at 0300. We were in a well defiladed position among the ridges. Our mission was to prevent any armored force from coming through the pass. Shortly after daylight several vehicles were observed coming across the valley. Lt. Miner ordered us to the crest of the ridge and we opened fire. After firing 5 rounds we were ordered back down to our former position because we could not observe anything due to intense dust and smoke caused by artillery fire. Later in the morning Lt. Miner again ordered us into the crest of the hill to destroy a half-track carrying 10 enemy Troops and towing a light artillery piece. We fired ten rounds and after our mission was completed we dropped back to defiladed position where we remained over night through to noon of March 24 when we were relieved.

JOHN J. CONWAY
Sgt. Co. "A" 601st T-D Bn.

John J. Conway