

HEADQUARTERS  
601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
A. P. O. NO. 1, U.S. ARMY

27 March 1943

BATTLE OPERATION REPORT OF CAPTAIN HENRY E. MITCHELL  
COMMANDING OFFICER COMPANY "B"

On the evening of March 24, 1943, I was ordered to place my Company on the left of Company "A" on a line extending in a direction Northeast to Southwest at about 2500 yards ahead of the El Guettar Pass. Our mission was to protect the artillery displacing to the East of the Pass. We arrived into position about 0200 hours and began digging our guns into position. I checked all guns to determine their separate positions and their digging, also I checked the positions of the artillery. Our plan was to hold our right while the tanks were pushed on to the soft ground on our right by maneuvering our left guns. At approximately 0530, our reconnaissance reported 16 tanks to our front. I ordered the guns into position even though time was too short to entirely dig them in. At approximately 0545, the tanks, followed by infantry, hit our right flank and our guns opened fire. Lt. Luthi reported infantry closing in on his guns. My position during this attack was about 500 yards directly to his rear. Darkness, smoke and haze made vision difficult. Finding his position untenable, Lt. Luthi ordered his platoon to withdraw to the pass. This made Lt. Lambert's third platoon position untenable and he was forced to withdraw. I reached the pass by traveling on foot and by jeep and endeavored to rally the guns. We had five guns left to fight - one had hit a mine, one had a <sup>breech</sup> jam and one had a flat tire. As we gathered these five tracks, Captain Paulick, on his own initiative, placed one of the guns on the skyline to fire at a group of tanks on the south. This gun was easily destroyed. Lt. Lambert endeavored to reach the artillery with the remaining guns under my orders. His guns all reached Battery "B". 5th P.A. Battalion and engaged the superior force of tanks. All guns fired vigorously and counted for many tanks before being entirely destroyed by the enemy. The remaining two guns were under the command of Lt. Stark and Lt. Luthi and fired at tanks approaching the pass. I set out on foot to discover another way to reach my other platoon which was far to the left front engaging the enemy. This proved too difficult and I returned to find another Tank Destroyer Battalion entering the fight and the pass held firmly. I have the highest admiration for the men of my command who remained in action against a superior force until their guns were silenced.

*Henry E. Mitchell*  
HENRY E. MITCHELL  
Co. "B", 601st T.D. Bn.  
Commanding



HEADQUARTERS  
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BATTLE OPERATIONS OF LT. JOHN D. YOWELL  
PLATOON COMMANDER 1ST PLATOON  
CO. "B", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

--- BATTLE OF MARCH 23, 1943 ---



The 1st platoon of "B" Company plus attached gun of "A" Company, plus 3 guns of "C" Company moved into position after dark on the night of 22 March 1943 and immediately started digging gun positions. I went to each gun and gave them a sector to cover by fire. About 0130 hours, 23 March 1943 machine gun fire was heard. About 30 minutes later a report was sent to me that an enemy armored force was rolling down the road, west towards El Guettar and toward the gun positions of my platoon. I told sergeant Nesmith to be especially watchful because he was nearest to the road. He reported that a tank was within one-thousand (1000) yards of him. As it was still dark I told him to fire when he saw fit. One enemy tank moved in such a position that neither Sgt. Nesmith or Corporal Hamel could fire at it. I moved both these guns back to facilitate an effective field of fire. Sgt. Raymond maneuvered his gun and destroyed this Mark VI tank with six (6) rounds. Four (4) rounds had ricocheted off the tank. Sgt. Raymond fired one more round at the same range at a following tank, this being a Mark IV. Immediately, it caught on fire. Sgt. Raymond's track was destroyed before he could fire another round. The enemy scored at least three (3) hits on his track burning it up completely. His crew came to my track and I told them to make their way back to the rear. Daylight was just beginning to break and Sgt. Nesmith, Cpl. Hamel and Cpl. Meczywor were firing heavily at the enemy tanks. At this position I saw Cpl. Hamel destroy a Mark IV and Sgt. Nesmith knocked the turret off a Mark IV at about 800-1000 yards range. Enemy infantry came in very close and their tanks were laying smoke over, bringing up line after line of tanks. I estimate at least 4 to 5 lines with 15 to 20 tanks in each line. There were over one-hundred (100) tanks and I am sure of this statement. There were tanks in groups of 6's and also a column of tanks along the southern ridge. The 3rd platoon, Co. "B", commanded by 1st Lt. Lambert was the first platoon to open fire, drawing all the tanks on the south side of the road. This action left all of the tanks exposed to us and they acted as though they could not locate our fire. The enemy's right flank was exposed to us continually until both Sgt. Nesmith and Sgt. Raymond's tracks were destroyed. When the tanks located us they turned completely around and came back over the same route. I believe they returned because of impassable terrain and also to put our four guns out of action. When the tanks located our position they fanned out and started towards us. All this time S/Sgt. Stima was keeping a steady stream of 50 cal. machine gun bullets on the infantry and also pointing out targets with tracers. It was quite difficult to see at times due to the density of smoke, gun powder and dust. I sent Cpl. Meczywor, Cpl. Hamel, and Sgt. Nesmith to the next ridge and then followed. During this action 3 guns of "C" Company

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covered me. Sgt. Nesmiths track was hit killing one man and injuring the others. I sent after the track as it was still available for movement. Before the man could get to this track it was hit again in the right rear. Cpl. Nowak bandaged the men who were injured and sent them to the hospital in a 3/4 ton truck driven by Cpl. Tech. Perretti. I sent all extra men not needed to the rear in a 1/4 ton truck. We fired continuously during this period. Cpl. Maczywor track was hit but no one was hurt and I had all ammunition transferred to P.F.C. Gauklis track. As they transferred this H.E. ammunition they turned it to delay-fuze. The men transferring the ammunition were P.F.C. Nerthling and Pvt. Grigiss. During the transfer P.F.C. Gauklis track was hit in the motor. I moved P.F.C. Nerthling and the other "C" Company track to the next ridge where I found another "C" Company track. Cpl. Hamel was out of ammunition and one "C" Company track was out of ammunition. I sent these two tracks back covering them with machine gun (50 cal.) fire and also shelled with one "C" Company track. P.F.C. Nerthlings track was out of ammunition. At this time we were doubly enveloped by enemy infantry and the friendly artillery had blown their guns and had gone over the ridge for at least 30 minutes. I heard and also felt a muzzle blast on my left. I told the two tracks to follow me. We stayed in the hills out of sight until 1700 hours. I told the men to either go out on foot or come with me. Eleven men came with me. We arrived at "B" Company C.P. the 24 March 1943 at 1200 hours with the following equipment; My personnel carrier, one "C" Company track, commanded by S/Sgt. Bartling, one track attached to my platoon from "A" Company, commanded by P.F.C. Nerthling

*John D. Yowell*  
 JOHN D. YOWELL  
 1st Lt., 601st T.D.Bn.  
 platoon Commander, 1st platoon  
 Company "B".



JDY/sjg

COMPANY "B" 601st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 302, U. S. ARMY

S T A T E M E N T

At 0300 hours, March 23, 1943, I went into position with Lt. Lambert's and Lt. Luthi's Platoons behind a small ridge one mile East of the high ground and seven tenths of a mile in front of the mine field. About 1630 hours, an armored attack came down the road, preceded by infantry. Several rounds of 75mm were fired, and then the two platoons withdrew. One gun hit a mine on the way back. It was daylight. On the high ground, three of the guns were put in positions and commenced firing. Shortly thereafter, an order was received from Col. Baker through Capt. Fuller to send one platoon to support Company "C". Five or ten minutes later, a second order, this time in writing, was received from the same source. This order directed us to send two platoons out, one to support Company "C" and one to help the 32nd FA. After checking up, I found four guns in shape to move out on such a mission, and after resupplying two of them with ammunition, the four guns were sent out to support Company "C" and the 32nd FA. Lt. Lambert was in charge.

Meanwhile, one of our guns under Sgt. Dragon had been hit on the right flank. Cpl. Richie's gun had a breech-block which had been hit and would not operate. It had been hit by small arms fire in our first position. Cpl. Bailey's track had a flat tire. I placed Cpl. Bailey's gun, which would still fire, in a position where it could fire at the tanks withdrawing on our right flanks, and it remained there until late afternoon.

The ammunition left on Cpl. Richie's gun and on Sgt. Dragon's gun was used to resupply the guns of Reconnaissance Company which were still in action. That afternoon, the firing died down somewhat, I returned to our Company Rallying Point. Here, I found one Company "C" gun which had been brought out by the 5th FA, one gun of Lt. Yowell's which had been brought back, out of ammunition, by its crew, and one gun of Company "B" under Cpl. Richie, the breech-block of which had been repaired. I resupplied these with ammunition, and shortly thereafter, Capt. Mitchell had me place them in position on the high ground we were holding. I remained there all night and was relieved about 1200 hours, March 24, 1943, by units of the 701st TD Bn.

*Kenneth B. Stark*  
KENNETH B. STARK  
1st Lt., 601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "B" 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO#302, U. S. Army

22 March 1943

S T A T E M E N T

On the night of March 22, 1943, our company was ordered to take up a defensive position across the valley, 8 miles east of El Guettar, on the Gabes road. We reached our positions about 100 hours and started to dig our guns in. At 400 hours we got a report that a tank attack was coming down the road. I ordered my four destroyers into firing position and waited. At about 530 hours I saw many men coming over a ridge in front of our position. I waited until they were a thousand yards from our position, then I ordered all guns to fire. I observed our shells landing all around the enemy infantry. Our firing continued till about 615 hours and it took a heavy toll on the enemy. Meanwhile, the enemy infantry kept advancing under our fire, and some of them swept around our left flank. I made a quick decision, and I ordered my platoon to withdraw to a hill about 1000 yds behind us, where A Co., 601st TD Bn. had their guns in position. I put my guns into position, and we commenced firing on 22 tanks that were coming down the right flank. A few of them were knocked out, and the rest withdrew. Lt. Lambert was ordered to take 4 guns and join the 1st Platoon on the left flank. Three of his guns were out of commission, so I was ordered to give him 3 of mine. I had two guns left. One of my own and one of Lt. Lamberts, which could still fire. I placed these guns into position, and they fired on tanks on the right flank until both guns were hit by enemy artillery. I had the crews withdraw to our rear bivouac area, and I remained with Lt. Miner and his platoon until about 1700 hours, then I went to the forward Bn. C.P.

*Robert A. Luthi*  
ROBERT A. LUTHI,  
1st Lt., FA.



COMPANY "B" 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 302, U. S. ARMY

S T A T E M E N T



On the morning of March 23, 1943 at about 0300 hours my platoon went into position about eight miles east of El Guettar. Just before dawn we were attacked by infantry and tanks. My guns, being on the extreme right flank of the bn., observed the infantry approaching in front of them, tanks followed close behind the infantry. As soon as the enemy became clearly silhouetted against the skyline, I gave the command to fire. My guns immediately opened up on the enemy. After a few minutes of intense firing, I heard a "march order" over the radio. I called the captain several times by radio in an attempt to verify this command. When I looked to the left flank, it seemed to me that all the vehicles in that sector had withdrawn, including two of the destroyers under my command; this left my two right destroyers completely exposed on the left and right. Not having received any reply to my radio message, I concluded that the command to withdraw to the highground was authentic, and consequently, I commanded my two right destroyers to follow me. On the way back Sgt. Christian's vehicle hit two or more mines and was almost completely demolished, several members of the crew being injured.

On reaching the high ground, my remaining three guns went into position and opened fire on the enemy. Cpl. Ritchie's vehicle became inactive due to a hit by a small arm bullet on the breech latch. I ordered him to pull back to attempt to fix it. I then received the command to gather my platoon and go forward to protect a battery of guns in front of the ridge to the left. Cpl. Bailey's vehicle had a flat tire, this gave me only one vehicle of my own. Sgt. Christian's, Cpl. Ritchie's, Cpl. Bailey's vehicles being out, I got my one remaining vehicle, Sgt. Horne's, and borrowed three destroyers from Lt. Luthi, Sgt. Ritso's, Sgt. Kindall's and Cpl. Holden's. We followed the designated route in an attempt to get to the artillery, but extremely heavy tank fire knocked out my vehicle and I ordered the guns to keep going at full speed, in an attempt to get them in defilade behind a small ridge to the east. My men and I, having jumped out of my vehicle, ran for cover behind a ridge. Here I decided to attempt to get to my guns. Cpl. Linkey volunteered to come with me. However, before we could reach the gun position, my destroyers had gone into action under Sgt. Ritso, and after having brought very effective fire on the enemy and having destroyed several enemy tanks, three destroyers were destroyed by the enemy and the remaining one was destroyed by its crew when its position became untenable.

Meanwhile, Cpl. Ritchie and Cpl. Bailey's vehicles were in action on the ridge to the rear. Cpl. Ritchie himself was in command of Sgt. Horne's destroyer, Sgt. Horne having been knocked unconscious by a shell just before we left on our mission.

After finding that all my guns had been knocked out, I returned with what men I could find to the Rallying Point.

Statement of Francis K Lambert continued (page) (1)

*Francis K Lambert*

FRANCIS K LAMBERT  
1st Lt., MA  
601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "B" 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO#302, U. S. Army

Statement on battle of March 23, 1943



Movement into position under cover of darkness was carried out. Our platoon dug in without the knowledge of the terrain features, consequently a few tracks had to move later in order to fire on enemy tanks.

Observed fire along the southern ridge, east of us, at about 0430 hours, later enemy machine gun tracers keep pouring up the valley-knew at this time that they were hunting for armour.

Radio communication was excellent. Our troops started looking for and Infantry attack, making them a bit unsure of themselves.

First sight of a tank by our platoon was observed by Sgt. McSmith who communicated to Lt. Yowell, who reported he would wait until it got closer, he also reported Infantry moving up. First shots were fired by Sgt. Raymond on our left. It was still very dark and vision was only possible on sky lines at 1000 yds. Sgt. McSmith discovered a tank a few yds ahead of him but could not lower his piece enough to fire. Lt. Yowell ordered him back a few hundred yds. At this time there was very heavy fire, both machine gun and field guns, both by enemy and us.

My vision of the tanks knocked out before dawn was limited: saw numerous fires and was firing in draws that ran North and South which was to our front, right front, and left front, also along the road running east and west. At this time Sgt. Raymond's half track was hit and set on fire, his crew got out and came to the Platoon C.P.

When dawn finally came Sgt. McSmith was to the right with Cpl. Hamel and Cpl. Maczywor was on the left with contact to C Co. 601st TD Bn. It appears to me that the enemy believed us to have withdrawn and Raymond's track was burning and the shells were exploding; thus it seemed to the enemy that no one was there. Lt. Yowell had three tracks and the personnel carrier right behind the fire with partial defilade. The tanks were at a halt so we were not sure which ones were hit.

At this time enemy Infantry were observed. We opened up with machine guns supported by C Co. 601st TD Bn. on the left—fire was effective. Next observed smoke laid down east and west along the southern ridge, half hours later that lane was full of tanks, it appeared that we were now really cut off. It was light now and we knew the layout of the ridges. All our three guns opened up plus C Co., 601st TD Bn. and 105's to our rear. All the tanks from the right front, that is; further advanced ones, pulled back fast. We felt pretty good then. Had numerous hits and there were plenty of fires. Sgt. McSmith shot the top off a MK VI. There were a large number of MK VI's immobilized with crews bailing out. Tanks in all directions were just sitting, was not positive if they were out or not. At this time we were positive of seven tanks destroyed, large ammunition truck destroyed by fire, numerous Infantry either cleaned





Statement on battle of March 23, 1943 (Cont'd)

out or hiding.

Then at around 0730 the large field guns opened up on our Artillery and got a few hits on their ammunition or something which burned. Enemy tanks on our left opened up on us and we started pulling back once more. Sgt NeSmith's track received a direct hit and the crew were badly cut up with one killed. Lt. Yowell and Cpl. Nowak administered first aid and our machine guns cut loose. Ammunition was transferred to our remaining tracks. Another C Co. 601st track was hit from the left-crew were safe.

Lt. Yowell sent in the wounded by our A.A. truck and jeep. Remaining men from the disabled half tracks were put in Cpl. Hamel's track as he was out of ammunition and our supply was out plus our communications. It was now 0800 hours-seemed like a week to us all. One track from C Co. 601 was attached to our remaining track and personnel carrier and we withdrew to the North West about 800 yds. By this time the enemy had a lot of small arms going and rapid fire machine guns. His heavy field batteries were firing and tanks were all over the terrain in groups of six's. Saw a large flight of our bombers and fighters so figured we had plenty of help. We were zeroed in on again, so we shifted again, counted our ammunition, had 5 H.E.'s in our S.P.M. and C Co. 601's track claimed he was about out, so we took up a position and just waited. Could see our Artillery firing and the enemy tanks pulling up and drawing back, keeping our friendly barrages from being direct hits.

The enemy tanks numbered in three digits, no one actually counted as it hurt us bad as it was.

Waited until the enemy shifted at about 1630 hours, supported by large numbers of aircraft. Moved N. West again and came in to our C.P. at noon next day.

*Michael W. Stima*  
 MICHAEL W. STIMA,  
 S/Sgt., Co B 601 TD Bn.  
*Platoon Sgt.*

COMPANY "B" 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO#302, U. S. Army

S T A T E M E N T

This happened about 130 hours in the morning when we were digging fox holes. Our forward Observer sent us the word that we were being attacked by Enemy tanks; everybody was ready on the guns waiting for the tanks to get in close enough range to open fire, when we spotted enemy Infantry. We got the command to open fire on the advancing troops and we did so. At the same time enemy tanks opened fire on us with their 88's and machine guns. I saw a bunch of Infantry, about twenty five, all in the same bunch so I fired on them with a couple rounds of H.E. Well, the results were about six left to get up and walk. Then the Infantry kept right on coming and got within fifty yards of our gun position. Here we were in a valley where we couldn't get to them. At the same time the tanks were advancing toward us, so we got the command to withdraw to a better position, which we did in an orderly fashion. We then took up new positions and opened up on the enemy tanks again. After we had knocked out a few of the tanks we had orders to move to a forward position, about six hundred yards to the front and about a 1000 yards to the left flank through an open field. While we were advancing to our forward position the enemy tanks zeroed in on us and were dropping shells all around us. They finally did get a hit on one of our tracks and put it out of commission, temporarily, which happened to be the commander's track, but the rest of the tracks got to their new position safe. After the commander's track got knocked out, I was Senior, so I put the guns in position and started firing so as to support the Field Artillery. I spotted a tank to my front so I fired on it but the shot landed over the tank. I came down on the range and got a hit with an A.P. tracer. The crew started climbing out of the tank so I put a round of H.E. delayed fuze in the tank and it started to burst into flames. I then put another round among the crew that were running for safety and got them. At the same time another tank which was a MK 4 came in behind the one I all ready knocked out. I put a round in it with an A.P. tracer and stopped it; so to make sure I put an H.E. delayed fuze in it and set it on fire. Then a third tank came up beside the two I had already put out of action. I fired an A.P. tracer into it stopping same. I had one more round of H.E. left so I fired that at the tank. I hit the tank but didn't set it on fire this time, so the tank crew kept on firing the guns at us. I had no more H.E. so I fired what few round of A.P. I had so then the enemy Infantry were already coming over the mountain with their machine guns and machine rifles and were firing at us. Enemy tanks were all ready approaching us from all sides except the rear, because they couldn't get over the big hill which was behind us. We were trapped in our position and couldn't get any of the guns out. Two guns were already out of action, and rather than to let the Enemy get the guns and use them on us, we destroyed the other two that were usable and the Artillery did the same thing. Then we withdrew to the hills with wounded and got to safety. However, the tanks were stopped and the enemy suffered severe losses in tanks and men.

John C. Retso  
JOHN C. RETSO, *Chief of Sect.*  
Sgt. Co B 601st TD Bn

COMPANY "B" 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 302, U. S. Army

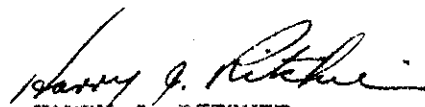
S T A T E M E N T

From our first position on the right of the road we opened fire on an enemy tank about 0500 hours. The second round stopped the tank and we fired 3 more rounds into it. We believe this was a MK VI. From this same position we knocked out a second tank with 4 rounds. Fired about 10 rounds of H.E. at the infantry. We then withdrew to a new position about 300 yds up the road. While we withdrew Cpl. Diaz fired about 150 rounds with the 50 cal. machine gun. We fired about 5 rounds from our new position before our breech block jammed. We took the gun back to try and fix it but the breech latch was hit with machine gun fire.

I then took charge of another gun with Cpl. Diaz. We went forward to protect a battery of guns from the 5th FA Bn. We opened fire immediately on a concentration of tanks to our right front. We knocked out two tanks. Both of these started to burn. There were several more tanks stopped in this area but there were three other guns firing from the same position. However, I think we stopped at least two more of these. We were being fired upon very heavily but this time our track was hit in the front. We took cover until the 5th FA Bn. blew up their guns and then we blew up our track and took off on foot.

In all we destroyed 4 tanks and possibly two others.

When we got back in the afternoon our track was fixed and we then went back into position. Stayed there all night and the next morning until we were relieved by the 701ST TD Bn.

  
HARRY J. RITCHIE  
Cpl. Co B 601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "B" 601ST TANK DESTROYER BN,  
APO#302, U. S. Army

S T A T E M E N T

Tanks attacked at dawn. We could not make out in what directions they were going. We could hear their motors. I was dug in and in good defensive position. At the break of day light I did not see any tanks at my direct front. I saw three tanks that had passed our line of fire. They were in line with my vehicle facing our lines on my right flank at a thousand yards. I backed my vehicle and faced it to our right flank and opened fire on a MK VI. Five rounds bounced off and the sixth one went home. I lined my gun on the second tank as Sgt NeSmith and Cpl. Hamel backed their vehicles up for a better position, as they had no targets to fire on. I fired and hit a MK VI with one round and he stopped. While this was going on tanks appeared at my previous position-I mean from where the enemy started the attack-and they were engaged by four guns from C Co. 601. I was hit once, and Sgt NeSmith who had changed positions got the tank that hit me. On the second round that was fired into my motor I gave my crew orders to bail out. Sgt Stima covered our get away with a 50 cal. machine gun. We got on Cpl. Hamel's vehicle and he took us out of the enemies line of fire. The vehicles that were knocked out had 30 cal. guns on them for protection against enemy ground troops.



*Adolph I. Raymond*  
ADOLPH I. RAYMOND,  
Sgt. Co. B 601 TD Bn.  
*chief of section*

COMPANY "B" 601ST TANK DESTROYER BN.  
APO# 302, U. S. Army

S T A T E M E N T

On the morning of the attack, the first thing I heard was that an armored attack was coming down the road, so I went forward about twenty-five yards to observe and I could not see any armored vehicles, but I did see infantry. I then gave the range to my gunner and we fired about twenty rounds of H.E. Ammunition at them, just then to the right I spotted about ten or eleven tanks. I estimated the range at about one thousand or eleven hundred yards, we fired about five rounds of A.P. and I know that two of the tanks were stopped. We hit them low. I think it must have been the bogie wheels we hit. We then were ordered to withdraw, which we did back to a ridge which overlooked the valley and that gave us a much better chance to fire at them. We took up a position and fired about ten more rounds of A.P. and Super H.E. into a bunch of tanks at about fourteen hundred yards. I know we hit them but there were other guns firing at them also so I can't say just how many we stopped. We then had an air raid alarm and I ran to a waddie to take cover and that was the last I remembered until I awoke and found out a shell lit in the trench and knocked me out and killed a doughboy. I understand Cpl. Ritchie took over my track from there.



*James G. Horne*  
JAMES G. HORNE,  
Sgt. Co B 601 TD Bn.

*Chief of Section*

HEADQUARTERS  
601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
A. P. O. No. 1, U.S. ARMY

27 March 1943

BATTLE OPERATION REPORT OF SERGEANT MICHAEL H. DRAGON  
COMPANY "B"

I, Sergeant Michael H. Dragon, on the morning of March 23rd 1943, being attached to "B" Company went forward from El Guettar to meet an expected armor attack. We made our first position on a crest of a rise overlooking the direction from which lay the enemy lines. About 0430 hours or thereabouts we were warned of armor units coming toward us. Spotting tanks which were supported by enemy infantry, we opened fire. Soon later we were given march-order, as enemy infantry was too close for us to do much firing without danger of being enveloped. We retired to another hill to the rear which held some of our infantry. Taking up a position, we took up the fire again. Shortly, twenty-one (21) tanks appeared on our right front and were working down the valley. Shifting my position upon orders from Captain Paulick, we opened fire on the right at three thousand (3000) yards. This position wasn't very good and I was told there were more positions to be had on the far right side of the hill. Finding a better position, I moved my half-track and as I was directing my driver into a partial defilade we got hit in our motor. The half-track started to burn and we abandoned it, taking cover in some dug-outs. We made five or six trips saving what we could and getting ammunition out for the other tracks, who were almost out. We stayed there the rest of the day with the infantry. Towards evening we started back to the rear and contacted the rest of "B" Company.



Sergeant Michael H. Dragon

*Michael H. Dragon*

COMPANY "B" 601st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO # 302, U. S. ARMY

S T A T E M E N T

We went into position at night and dug in. First sighted enemy troops in early morning and reported it to Lt. Yowell. Heard tanks moving down the road on our right flank. Sgt. Raymond opened fire and covered us while we were moving to a new position. He got his first tank a few minutes later which was a <sup>4</sup>VI. He then swung around to another tank, fired a few rounds and put it out of order. At that moment he was also hit and his track was set afire. He got on my track and I brought him and part of his crew to safety, and went back to my position and opened fire. Sgt. Negsmith opened fire on the tank that got Sgt. Raymond and sent the turret sky high. I had already gotten one tank and put it in flames. Then the German Infantry started harassing us with machine gun fire. In the meantime Sgt. Negsmith was hit and his track was out. Seeing one of his men crawling toward us, I jumped out and helped him to the personnel carrier. We had gotten our second tank hitting it at the bogey wheel and put it out of order. There was so much dust in the air that we waited for an half-hour so we could spot enemy tanks. I opened fire on the first tank and put it in flames, with my 5th round, which was a super shell on delayed fuse. Then they started to double envelop us and we had orders to pull out.

VICTOR T. HAMEL  
Sgt. Co B 601st TD Bn.

