

COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. ARMY

27 March 1945.

S T A T E M E N T

At 0230, March 23, 1945, Capt. Sundstrom and I selected positions, and then proceeded to have the gun crew dig their guns in. Capt. Sundstrom assigned me the mission of guarding the 32nd F. A., which was in the rear of our position. At 0530, word came over the radio that a German armored column was coming up the valley. I then went to my O. P. where I could both hear and see this column. The lead tank of this column was laying a smoke screen through which other tanks were advancing. Two tanks were also firing tracers from their machine guns, and wherever these tracers would ricochet, they would fire a round of, what I believed to be, 77mm. (This seemed to do little good, and it is my belief that it was for moral purposes, more than anything else.) By this time, the German tanks were within range and I ordered my sections to open fire. From my O. P., I saw Sgt. Breed's gun put a Mark IV in flames, as also did Cpl. Salwite's gun. Sgt. Begit's gun then reported hitting a tank, and setting it on fire. I then saw Cpl. Parkle's gun hit a tank which did not burst into flame, and two of the crew of this tank jumped out. Sgt. Langlois killed them both with a .50 caliber gun that we had ground mounted at my O. P. The remaining tanks that were on my front, then withdrew out of range. This ended the first wave of the attack.

It was now 0900 when the second wave began. By this time, the Germans had set up two machine guns and were constantly firing on my O. P., and destroyers. From my O. P., I spotted one of these machine guns and pointed it out to Sgt. Langlois who killed at least one of its crew with fire from our .50 caliber gun. At this time, 2 German light tanks were able to reach a defiladed position and they proceeded to set up mortars. Sgt. Langlois killed the man who I believe was to observe the fire of these mortars. At 0950, Cpl. Salwite's gun was hit by a shell from this mortar, wounding the driver, Tech 5 Gr. Rodeffer and Pvt. Christanzia. Rodeffer and Christanzia were brought to my O. P. track, where I administered first aid to both. By this time all guns were low on ammunition, and I ordered all guns to save at least 20 rounds in case the tanks closed in. Tech 5 Gr. Rodeffer was bleeding badly, and I realized that he would have to be taken in, if he were to live. I then turned the platoon over to St. Sgt. Moore, since I was going to take Rodeffer and Christanzia back, and also contact Lt. Perry, who was in charge of ammunition. On the way back, we encountered enemy machine gun fire. We got back alright and I found Lt. Perry and we left with ammunition for my gun position. (The Germans must have realized that this was an ammunition half track, for the fire laid down on us, was quite heavy.) We took the gun position OK. The platoon continued to engage tanks and we must have destroyed at least three more. At 1030, from my O. P., I could see German infantry advancing with the tanks. At 1100, Cpl. Salwite's gun was hit twice killing Pvt. Davis, and wounding Privts. Dekowski and Cockery. It was now impossible to hold this position any longer and I ordered them to withdraw to a position some 300 yards to our rear. At this time, Cpl. Parkle's gun became separated from the platoon. However, I soon learned that he had taken up a position, so that he might give further tank protection to a Field Artillery Battery. This position had been taken up by Cpl. Parkle, under the direction of the Captain of the 32nd F. A. From this time on, (1300), the tanks never came within range, or if they did, they were defiladed.



STATEMENT (CONT'D)

so that we could not fire on them. Sgt. Breed's destroyer then threw a track, and when I looked at it the next day, I decided it must have been hit, because the driving sprocket was shot to hell. At 1330, Sgt. Segit's gun was hit by mortar fire, destroying the radiator and rendering the track useless. This left me with but one gun, Cpl. Migliaccio's, which I had picked from the 2nd platoon. At approximately 1300, Lt. Perry and I observed from our O. P. the M-10's of the 899th T. D. Bn. move out from the pass. The German tanks were already in position, waiting and when two of the M-10's pulled over the crest, they were hit and put on fire. The remaining M-10's and the German tanks, then sat there the rest of the day and sweated each other out. At this time, Lt. Perry and I tried to call for an artillery concentration to be fired on the German tanks, since they were all bunched up. The artillery did fire, but most of this fire, was to the left. Lt. Perry and I tried to get word of this to the artillery, but since communication lines had been shot up, it was impossible. At approximately 1500, Lt. Perry and I got sore, and decided to fire the remaining gun indirect, but Col. Baker ordered us to stop, since we would give our position away, and the tanks were almost out of range. At 1600, the situation was becoming bad. Lt. Perry and I were warned of a German attack that was to come at 1605, we were then told that this attack was to be delayed until 1630. We then asked Col. Baker for instructions. He gave us two plans and told us to use our judgement, as to which we should use. At about 1640, German dive bombers flew over and bombed our artillery, and as they did this, the German tanks began to advance. I then asked the men for volunteers to drive the trucks out. Cpl. MacLean volunteered to drive mine out, and we loaded it with breech blocks and radios. Cpl. Langan said he would ride in a Recon track, which had been used to carry ammunition. Lt. Perry and I then led the men over the mountains and back to the rear. Lt. Perry and I reported to Battalion and then rejoined our Company.

March 24, 1943.

Today, I learned that:

Sgts Breed and Segit had been wounded in withdrawing from our position. Cpl. MacLean had orders from a Captain in the 32nd F. A. to burn my vehicle, which he did, and then walked on foot. Cpl. Langan, with the aid of the medics, carried Pvt. Dekowski over the mountains, on a stretcher. Cpl. Markle ordered his section to withdraw on foot, that he would attempt to drive his track out. A job he knew, to be almost sure suicide. To the best of my knowledge and investigation, Cpl. Markle was killed in this action. Sgt. Seiffert saw a man dead behind the wheel, but he could not be sure if it was Cpl. Markle. On the 25th of March, I again went to the scene of the battle, where I saw Markle's track riddled with holes and the body had been removed.

NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:-

That each platoon have an armored half track in place of 3/4 ton for ammunition. That each platoon Commander have a radio that will enable him to contact Battalion as well as the Company. That ground mounted 50's are as important as 75's

STATEMENT (CONT'D)

OBSERVATIONS:-

1. German tanks fire time fire.
2. German tanks are serviced ammunition in captured American jeeps.
3. German Mark III have mortar squads in them.
4. That time fire by our Artillery had a great effect in breaking up the German infantry advance.

Charles N. Munn

CHARLES N. MUNN,
2nd Lt., F.A.,
Co. "C", 601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. Army



27 March 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

On the night of March 22, 1943, I was ordered to put one platoon in position about 2 or 3 miles along the Gafsa - Gabes road in front of the pass at Y 2678. At about 2330 hours, I received orders to move my entire Company to set up a defensive line of guns to protect the 32nd F. A. I put the 1st platoon on the left of the road with 4 guns extending left toward the mountains. The 3rd platoon to the left of the 1st and extending almost to the mountains. I ordered all guns dug in and sent back to Company headquarters for all extra shovels. I inspected 3rd platoon position and rearranged the guns. At about 0430 hours, our Reconnaissance Company reported suspicious movements. About 0500, a report came, saying "An armored attack is coming down the road!, don't fire on us." At about this time, a cloud of smoke enveloped the road and machine gun and cannon fire from tanks began coming from within the smoke screen. My 1st platoon called and asked if they could open fire. I told them yes, if the targets were within range. I went to the 3rd platoon and conferred with Lt. Munn. We counted at least 18 tanks moving toward us. I radioed to my reserve platoon to send 2 guns to re-enforce us and leave 2 to give depth to the roadside position. I informed Battalion of the envelopment. Battalion then re-instructed me on my mission. In the meantime, I had radioed Lt. Perry to have all ammunition vehicles ready, at the entrance of the pass, to give us ammunition. At this time, Lt. Matter with 2 guns of the 2nd platoon arrived and I directed him to extend the left flank of the 3rd platoon. He started out, but couldn't move over the crest, because of enemy fire. He turned back and I instructed Sgt. McElroy to go into position to give depth to Lt. Munn's guns. I then observed that our fire was in some cases, at too great ranges, so I radioed all platoons to hold fire until the tanks were within range. Battalion then radioed that "B" Company was coming to our assistance. Lt. Matter and I conferred and the nature of the fire indicated that tanks had gotten between our 1st and 3rd platoons. We moved to counter this, but everytime, we moved the guns, we seemed to run into a cross fire. We finally ended up near the mountain with 2 guns and 2 personnel carriers. Lt. Matter reported that the enemy was digging in a large caliber gun on a ridge above and to the left of us. We moved 1 gun and 2 personnel carriers into a ravine out of this 90mm fire, when the gun threw a track. The machine gun and 90mm gun had us pinned down, so we couldn't move. We went to an O.P. and were immediately placed under heavy fire. At this time, the 3rd platoon, which indicated before that it needed ammunition, was asking for it immediately. I previously had instructed Lt. Perry to deliver this and when he asked for a guide, I sent a jeep, which never got to him. I then saw Lt. Perry advancing toward the 3rd platoon under a hail of enemy fire. One of our men reported that enemy infantry was coming along the foot of the mountain. Lt. Matter and I conferred and agreed we couldn't get back to the Company and that our best bet on getting back to them, was to cut into the hills, then go back to the Company. I decided my radio was of no value where it was. I ordered all vehicles immobilized and I sent the men back in group of 3's. I told Lt. Perry to take over net control as I was destroying my set. This was about 1000 hours. I went over the mountains and reported to Col. Baker who told me to gather my Company together

STATEMENT (CONT'D)

and that Lt. Perry and Lt. Munn could handle the one remaining platoon.

NOTES:-

1. German machine gun fire and artillery fire seemed mainly fired for morale purposes.
2. They used an Italian 90mm, as they usually used their own 88mm.
3. All other points are brought out by other officers and men. I can verify them.

COMMENTS:-

1. "O" Company dug in. This was a primary reason the attack was stopped. Well dug in machine guns were invaluable.
2. Fire and movement lessens vehicle casualties and befuddles the enemy. It also increases possibility of spotting "infiltrating" tanks.
3. Tendency was to open fire at too great ranges, resulting in ammunition wastage.
4. Platoon Commanders should dig in their O. P.'s, much like the Field Artillery, even if it will be occupied for only a short time.

All credit is due the men in Company "O". They never flinched and dealt serious blows to the enemy. The spirit was magnificent. Lt. Munn's and Lt. Perry's work was outstanding.



HERBERT E. SUNDSTROM,
Capt., F. A.,
Commanding Co. "O", 601st TD Bn.

COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. ARMY



27 March 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

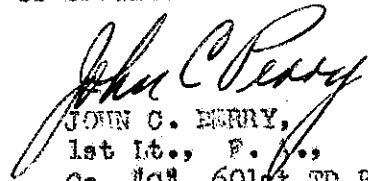
On the morning of March 22, 1943, south east of El Guettar, Tunisia, our unit was committed into action. Around 0500 hours, in the morning, the report came over the radio that an armored attack was coming towards El Guettar. My job at the time, was to supply ammunition to my Company, who were out in front. It wasn't long before our 3rd platoon began to call for ammunition. Failing to get a definite answer as to their location, I decided to try and find them, and started out of the pass, in which my half track was waiting. Cutting off to the main road, we skirted the mountain slope to the left flank, where we found Sgts. Bednarz, Futuluyohuk, and Bartling whose destroyers needed ammunition badly, so we gave them our complete load, and started back to reload. At this time, enemy artillery was getting close to us, and we increased our speed. On reaching the pass, the tanks had swung to our right flank and were shelling the pass heavily. We reloaded the half track with all the ammunition we could find, besides the supply in our ammunition trailer. Lt. Munn at this time came along to get ammunition, after bringing in a seriously wounded man. The pass as we came out, on our return into the battle field, was being shelled directly by a group of tanks from the right flank, who immediately spotted our track, and gave us no easy moments, as we returned to the left flank again. Lt. Munn who was riding in the rear of my track directed us to his guns. One time when he wasn't too sure of the terrain, he went ahead and located them, and was subjected to machine gun and artillery fire. We then loaded up his destroyer with the ammunition we had carried on our track, and started to return for another load. Circling slightly more to the north to get out of artillery fire, we found "B" Battery of the 32nd F. A., and they said it was impossible to get through that way. I went up on our O. P., and also confirmed their statement, as the tanks had moved in closer, and had cut us off from the pass. My driver said he was having motor trouble and the radio operator said we were now not control, as the Company Commander's half track was out. I decided to remain at the present location to direct the Company, and warn them of the enemies actions. I had the 3rd platoon fall back to the 32nd F. A., and there we decided to fight it out if the tanks rushed our position. Lt. Munn and myself set up several O.P.'s to prevent being surprised by infantry and tanks. Our artillery were trying to adjust on enemy tanks, which were holding the key point to the valleys entrance. We remained in our present spot until 1545, when the orders came that the tanks were going to attack at 1600, and we were to get out of our present location. We removed the breach blocks, radios, etc., and loaded them on the remaining runable destroyer, and sent it with a half track and a jeep, to make a run for it. The remaining personnel assembled, and we sent them in groups of six, up and over the slope, which was subject to enemy artillery fire. The enemies counter attack was well under way at this time, and Lt. Munn and myself hurried the men on, as we didn't want to be cut off, if our troops were forced to withdraw. On reaching the main road near the 7th F. A., we borrowed a jeep and went to the Battalion C. P. in the pass. Here we obtained a 2 1/2 ton truck to transport the men to the Company area. Getting there, I discussed

STATEMENT (CONT'D)

the situation with Capt. Sundstrom, and we decided, it would be out of the question to get any equipment out of the valley at this time, and we would wait until the situation was more stabilized.

IMPORTANT NOTES:-

- (a) Enemy: Under heavy artillery shelling, German tanks often group together.
- (b) Friendly:
 1. Each platoon should have an armored half track.
 2. Platoon Commander and Company Commander should get a good G. P. and dig in, when in a centrally located position.
- (c) Personnel:
 1. My highest admiration goes to the men and officers of our Company, and for the splendid job they did under such trying conditions. Not once did a man lose his head and become panicky. To the men of the 3rd platoon, to Lt. Mum, their platoon commander, to my half track driver, Tech 5 Gr. Scoggins, and my radio operator, Tech 5 Gr. Deutsch, whom I personally observed during the action, goes a great deal of credit.


JOHN C. BERRY,
1st Lt., P. A.,
Co. "C", 601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. ARMY



27 March 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

On the morning of March 23rd we proceeded out of the high ground a few miles East of El Guitar into the valley just below. Our mission was to defend Division Artillery against an Armored attack. I was in command of 2nd Platoon, Company "C". My Platoon occupied a dug in position behind a ridge. We were the second echelon in depth, having two platoons of "B" Company, a few hundred yards in front of us. The remaining Platoons of "B" and "C" Companies were on my left flank.

At approximately 0500 hours, I received a report that an armored attack was coming down the road. We held our position until the armor was in sight. The flashes from their guns, at least. I was then ordered to re-enforce the left flank with two guns. I immediately moved with my first section to the far left flank, leaving my other gun with my Platoon Sergeant. I put these two guns in position with four guns from the third platoon. After firing a few rounds from this position, we received a report that tanks were beginning to overrun the 32nd P. A. position. Capt. Sundstrom ordered me to put two guns in front of their position. Immediately, I moved my two guns further round to the left as this was the only direction which I could move as the enemy was already beginning effectively his envelopment of our right flank, the 32nd P. A. positions being on our left. I moved one gun a couple hundred yards to the left while the other covered the right flank during the move. Then the first gun began firing in an effort to cover the second gun's move. Both enemy machine gun and cannon fire was coming down on us very heavy at this time. Immediately, I left one gun to cover the right flank and moved my other gun on further to left in an effort to get down in front of the P. A. Both guns took up firing positions defiladed as much as possible from the front and right flank. The defilade was almost negligible for both fronts and the guns had to expose either one side or the other, however the firing continued. I made a further reconnaissance and found that I could take my guns no further to the left and that we were in a bottleneck. I could move my left gun into a better firing position about fifty yards to the front, this I did. At this time 88mm fire began coming down between my two guns along with machine gun and intermittent small arms fire. I observed to the front thinking possibly it was from that direction and I could knock out this menace. I directed fire on this gun for a short period until the enemy fire became too heavy, when I moved this gun back to a cover position in a deep gully. I climbed one of the mountains to my left and observed one dug in gun, 88mm, and probably two other dug in guns of calibre, probably 77mm. This I reported to the Captain who was with me, at the time and we climbed the mountain and observed again. This he reported to Battalion Headquarters endeavouring to get artillery fire on same. As we could not possibly get fire on it from our position, as the guns along with what we estimated to be some Infantry were on a precipice only a couple of hundred yards away and about 150 feet above us on a precipice with perfect observation. We waited for some time hoping the fire would be lifted, but it wasn't and it got to the point where we could not establish an O. P. without having fire brought down on us.

S T A T E M E N T (C O N T ' D)


Also, while pulling my gun down into the gully, it threw a track, making it immobile for the time, and not in a firing position either. The Captain and I discussed the situation and decided to pull the command vehicles into the gully, immobilizing them, but not destroying them. To endeavour to get back through the rear as enemy fire was getting very close coming from both flanks and the front. We thought if we could get out of this spot, get back and then return to the other guns, that later, that same day we could recover these vehicles. We did this and returned to the forward O. P. at 1400. There upon talking to Lt. Col. Baker, with an effort to get the situation, he refused to allow me to go back to the valley.

In conclusion:-

1- The men I observed in my platoon and others, and from reports of Chief of Sections, and Platoon Sergeants of the guns detached, the men and N.C.O.'s did a magnificent job.

2- I believe it best, if possible not to split a platoon, that the Platoon Commander spot himself in a good position where he can observe all his guns, observe all his flanks.

3- German machine gun fire is primarily for morale effect and to keep the enemy's O. P. to a minimum.


LESTER D. MATTER, Jr.
1st Lt., F. A.
601st T. D. Bn.



COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK INFANTRY BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U.S. ARMY

27 March 1945.

STATEMENT

The way my men stood up under fire was marvelous. We could not move our guns unless we would expose ourselves out in the open, so we hid behind a small hill and fired 127 rounds without moving our gun, and not once did any man start to leave the vehicle until I gave the order. I did give the order to dismount when a 77 got us in the front. I gave the order to dismount then because we only had 3 rounds of ammunition left.

Woodrow Pickett
WOODROW W. PICKETT, 6953351
Capt., Co. "C", 601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.C. 992, U. S. Army

27 March 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

Platoon Commander led us to our position, where we were in full view of the proceedings taking place in the valley beneath us. Keeping in touch by radio, as well as possible, we opened fire on the vehicles which were identified as tanks, using few AP, for sensing, but on the average using a preponderance of HE. We remained in this position until we were spotted and fire was opened on us. Being on the first ridge, we harked the vehicle and came up on another part of the same ridge, looking down on the valley. We again opened fire, and in this manner was able to take several positions, until we realized that our right flank was visible to the enemy, and the left front was the possible position of artillery directed at us. We called for instructions and were told to circumscribe a knoll in the ridge and go behind the ridge. Here we were led into position by our Company Commander. Finding a spot between two knolls behind the ridge, just beyond the ravine, we pointed the gun towards our original right flank, or towards the mountain, where we spotted tanks moving in the valley. We managed to fire quite a few rounds with visible effect before we were spotted and moved again. This time to our left, in the ravine, still facing the valley, we continued to fire until batteries of fire which were landing in our vicinity were just a bit too close, and we moved again. Again we tried to mount the original ridge facing the valley to the front of the original firing, and managed to get off several rounds, when two shells, one to our right and one to our immediate left, made it advisable to retire down the ridge. We tried three times to come up on this ridge, but were immediately spotted and fired on. Our firing was at a minimum. After several attempts, we found a likely position for the half track, out of sight of both sides, and just beyond the first ridge. When artillery opened up on us, we decided to move on our own initiative, radio communication being nil. Moving to our left behind ridges, we came to the extreme left end of the first ridge, where we were only able to fire two rounds and then had to retire, artillery coming too close, and our position not too good to continue to fire from. Lt. Gunn decided to fire indirect with our gun, but due to the impossibility of reducing the minimum elevation to a more level plane of fire, one round was fired, and the job given up as a bad one. No longer able to communicate by radio, we took orders from Lt. Perry, who at all times kept in touch with us. At about 1630, we were told to abandon vehicles, after dismantling vital parts. This we did, and proceeded on foot towards our rear C. P.



Salvatore H. Migliaccio
SALVATORE H. MIGLIACCIO, 32316728
Cpl., Co. "C", 601st TD Bn.

COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. Army

27 March 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

After battle had started, I was sent to the left flank, under a hail of machine gun fire and artillery which I took to be an 88mm gun. Most of the machine guns being fired for demoralizing effect only, I think, although some were pointing out our guns with tracers, which immediately brought artillery fire on us. After getting as far to the left as the terrain would permit, I took advantage of a gulch, where, when pulling to the top, gave a good view of the valley. The tanks by then were covered with smoke and also being fired upon by several other guns, which made sensing of shots difficult. We got one tank and saw several burst into flames, but do not think it was our shots that caused the effect. We were being fired upon all the time, so we could only get out a few shots before pulling back down the hill. Then tried again at another spot. After repeating this several times we were opened upon from the flank, hit slightly and had to pull back up the ravine, where a track was thrown disabling our destroyer. We were then ordered to abandon vehicle and strip it of breech and sight, shoot up the radio, which we did.

Robert C. McElroy
ROBERT C. McELROY, 33092001
Sgt., Co. "C", 601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. Army

27 March 1943.

STATEMENT

Took over gunning, was chased out of first position by 88 fire. We then moved behind a small knoll where we fired on the enemy until we got the order from Lt. Yowell to move out. During the battle, I'm sure I knocked out 2 tanks because they went up in flames. I fired three fast rounds of Super HE into about ten trucks that had grouped together and I'm sure that two were knocked out of commission, the rest scattered in all directions. I'm saying that I got 2 tanks and 2 trucks, but there might have been more. When I couldn't spot any tanks to fire at, I'd fire the rifle at a machine gunner, who was firing at us from our direct front. Lt Yowell's machine gunner also fired at him. The 88's on our left spotted us and started firing at us. Sgt Pickett's gun in back of me was hit and then they started adjusting on me. There were three vehicles about 8 feet apart (Lt Yowell's, Sgt Pickett's and mine) and the 88's were coming so close, that I could feel the breeze. Lt. Yowell then gave the order to withdraw. The Lt. covered our withdrawal by firing the machine gun, while we took our vehicles to where the Artillery was in position. It was impossible to get the vehicles out, so Pvt. Saul got permission from a Colonel to destroy the vehicles. After this we took off over the hill.



Leo G. Cook

LEO G. COOK, 12015826
Opl., Co. "C", 601st TD Bn.

COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DEPARTMENT BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. Army

27 March 1945.

STATEMENT

The morning of March 23rd, my guns were in "dug in" positions on a ridge about 2 miles East of the entrance to the valley on the North side of the road. My O.P. was on a ridge in front of my guns. A few minutes after I received word that an Armored thrust was coming down the road, I observed vehicles moving on the road to my right front and reported the fact to the Company Commanding Officer by radio. He told me to open fire. I tried to radio my guns to open fire, but could not contact them. I sent a messenger with the message for them to open fire, and they did. I observed the effect of this fire. It was effective and I believe 3 or 4 vehicles were knocked out. A little later I observed tanks on the road to our right flank that were firing on "B" Company's guns. I sent word to my guns to pull off the ridge and take the guns to the right flank under fire. They did, and I observed 3 Mark VI's and 3 or 4 other tanks knocked out by the fire from our guns and those of Lt. Towell's platoon which was on our right. The other vehicles and tanks then began to mill about and withdraw slowly. During this lull, I sent a messenger around the ridge to see how many guns were left. Radio communication was out. The messenger reported 2 guns still in action, several tracks knocked out and on fire, and one track which appeared deserted. (I later found out that this track had been hit and was immobile.) I told the messenger to get some of the men out of the Anti-Aircraft section and go man the gun. As he and the crew started to go over the ridge, a heavy artillery barrage came down on the ridge behind us. When it lifted, I told the messenger to see what was left. He reported all guns either gone or knocked out and burning. (I later found out that the guns he reported as knocked out were not our guns, but those belonging to "B" Company and that my guns had already withdrawn with Lt. Towell.) During all this time, Pvt. Bailey, Tech 5th Gr. Brockler and Pvt. Volley were firing the machine guns (30 and 50 calibre) from my track, at Infantry along the road to our right flank. My radio operator reported that he heard the 3rd Platoon radio report to the Company Commanding Officer that Infantry was surrounding his position and that he was low in ammunition. He stayed in position observing and trying to gain radio communication. We heard several transmissions concerning ammunition and then one which said that Infantry was coming around our left flank and that we were to withdraw by leap frog methods to Battalion Forward O. P. I called over the ridge to my security to come back over the ridge and get into my track. I told the others to get into the 3/4 ton truck and the jeep that was there. They did and we made a dash for the pass. When we reached the mine field, there was a vehicle burning on the road, at the forward edge of it. I told the driver to gun it past the burning vehicle. He did and the momentum of the track carried us into the mine field. About 4 or 5 mines exploded beneath, but luckily no one was seriously injured. We got out and then removed the rest of the mine field, so that the M-10's of the 899th T. D. Co., could get into the valley. As soon as the field was cleared, the men loaded up into the vehicles and went on foot to the rear. I remained and helped guide the M-10's through the mine field and then went back and reported to Capt. Fuller at the Recon O. P.



Samuel G. Richardson
SAMUEL G. RICHARDSON,
1st Lt., P. 5

COMPANY "O", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. Army

27 March 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

About 0500, the attack had started, the first thing we heard was enemy machine gun firing. The gunner of my gun looked through his sight and couldn't see anything. Also looking through my glasses, I couldn't see a thing, except tracers from the enemy machine guns. All my men were on the alert and kept a sharp lookout for enemy Infantry. Finally it got light and we were able to fire. The radio was out and we couldn't send or receive any messages. Sgt. Steese came up to me and told me that enemy Infantry were approaching. I gave my commands and the crew went into action. We threw out about 20 rounds of M.E. Normal and the Infantry stopped their advance. Looking up away, we saw the enemy tanks lined up in the background. They were lined up pretty close about 15 miles apart. Again my crew went into action and started firing at these tanks. I don't know how long we fired but it seemed like days. Enemy artillery started adjusting on us, but we still kept on firing. They finally started to get a bracket on my gun emplacement. So, I told my driver to turn the motor over and pull into another position. By that time I must have knocked out about six tanks. I pulled in behind the 5th F. A. and got into position there, but was chased out because they claimed I would draw fire on them. We therefore pulled into another position about 100 yards to the left of the 5th F. A. and started to fire again. This time we fired indirect and knocked out four enemy trucks. The enemy fire around us was terrific, but we did not pay any attention to it. The enemy Infantry advanced to about 500 yards in front of us. The 5th F. A. started to dismantle their guns, but my truck wouldn't start. Finally one of the destroyers came up, gave me a push and that started me off. We tried to take up another position by the 32nd F. A., but we couldn't. All this time the enemy were firing artillery and machine guns. We saw that we couldn't get away, so I pulled out the firing pin and safety piece from the 75mm gun and the back plate from the .50 calibre machine gun, and withdrew under heavy fire. The crew of my gun were cool and calm and took and obeyed all my orders. The amount of tanks that we knocked out were about six and four German trucks, and I don't know as to how many of the German Infantry.

Sgt Louis J. Bednarz
LOUIS J. BEDNARZ, 6975281
Sgt., Co. "O", 601st TD Bn.



COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. Army

27 March 1943.

STATEMENT

On March 23rd, after daybreak and it became light, we were able to pick out our targets. I picked out a tank, called my range and after a few rounds, the tank started to smoke. Then firing at another tank, with rounds, when a tank that I took to be a Mark 6, came between the gun and our target. We kept on firing at this tank and after several rounds, the tank stopped moving, although it was not on fire or smoking. I backed up to a new position, where there were several half tracks, but before I knew it, I was there alone. They had a bracket on the gun, so I told the driver to back around the knoll, pull in a ditch and wait to see what was going to happen. Machine gun fire was hot around us and we backed the gun up more, but we threw a track. A Field Artillery Lieutenant told us to leave and get out of there, as the enemy had the range on us. We left the gun and found our way back.

90 rounds of ammunition were expended.



Henry G. Manning
HENRY G. MANNING, 6953516
Sgt., Co. "C", 601st TD Bn.

COMPANY "C", 601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 302, U. S. Army

27 March 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

Enemy machine guns opened up at 0500. We waited until we received the order to fire. It was still dark when we opened up, daylight just breaking. My gunner sent 2 tanks up in smoke and I another. I'm positive of 3 tanks going up in smoke. This happened between daylight and 0800. At 0830, we ran out of ammunition. I had the destroyer backed up in a defiladed position and told my crew to wait there, in the meantime I went up to Sgt. Mannings destroyer and brought back about 8 rounds of A. P. and went up on the hill to spot more tanks. Just about that time, Lt. Perry came through with a track of ammunition, of which I received about 40 rounds of H. G. Normal. We went back up and kept firing until the only officer present, Lt. Yowell gave us the order to withdraw for the artillery really had the range. During the fire, our machine gun barrel was completely destroyed. A few shots hit the shield. As we withdrew to the 5th F. A. guns, I found out that the road leading through the pass was unsafe. So I turned the two vehicles around and headed them up to the 32nd F. A., trying to get them over the hill. The half track turned completely over, and so we left.

120 rounds ammunition expended.



Steve Futulnychuk
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