

**S E C R E T**



**SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF OPERATIONS 609th TD BATTALION**  
**Period: 15th November - 31st December 1944**

**TO : Commanding Officer**  
**1st Tank Destroyer Brigade (Att'n Major Orman S-3)**

During the period 23-27 November, while Company "A" was attached to the 358th Infantry Regimental Combat Team, 90th Infantry Division, attached to the 10th Armored Division, in an attack on TETTINGEN (LO46025) Germany, Captain Harold H. Dyke, Commanding, distinguished himself and was later awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in supporting the attack.

It was in this action that Company "A" knocked out a large heavy enemy pillbox.

1st Lt. Malcolm K. Grant, Platoon Leader, Reconnaissance Company, was awarded the Soldiers Medal for an act of heroism not involving combat when with his own body he smothered the flaming form of a Negro truck driver, saving the soldier from a horrible death. Lt. Grant also received a battlefield promotion to the rank of First Lieutenant for outstanding work performed in the vicinity of LAUNSTROFF (Q102938) in Germany.

1st Lt. Edgar M. Gray received a battlefield promotion to the rank of First Lieutenant as a result of outstanding work and initiative while engaging enemy strongpoints in the fortified area North of BORG (L0006) Germany. This Destroyer platoon accounted for nine enemy concrete pillboxes.

On December 17th, 1944, Company "A" (reinforced with one Reconnaissance Platoon, departed with CC-A, 10th Armored Division from the West side of the Moselle River, crossed at Thionville and marched to the MERSCH, Luxembourg area, North of the city of LUXEMBOURG, in an effort to stop the enemy counterattack in the Zone between ETTELBRUCK and ECHTERNACH.

Company "C" attached to CC-B, followed CC-A and assembled in an area West of the City of LUXEMBOURG and later departed from this area, less one TD Platoon, plus one Reconnaissance Platoon, for BASTOGNE (P5557) Belgium. The one TD Platoon was attached to CC-R.

Company "B", reinforced with one Recon. Platoon remained attached to the 3rd Cavalry Group to protect the area covered by TF/POLK between BESCH-BUSHDORF-MERZIG, Germany. Company "B" was relieved of this attachment and arrived to assemble in area at BERRINGEN (P835297) Luxembourg at 231700, at which time it was immediately attached to the 90th Cavalry Squadron (Mecz).

During this period Company "A" and Company "B" were employed in direct fire positions on the South bank of the SAUER River between ETTELBRUCK (P8140) and MOESTROFF (P925418). Both Company CP's being located at STEGEN (P874378).

Company "A" had platoons in position in vicinity (P887417) (P910420) and d (P874378). From these positions they destroyed the following enemy equipment

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- 1 MK III or IV Tank
  - 4 Volkswagens
  - 1 Armored Ammunition Truck
  - 1 Ammunition Carrier
  - 3 Personnel Carriers
- Estimated enemy personnel killed-60

- 1 Motorcycle
- 5 Cargo Trucks
- 3 Bicycles
- 1 Command Car
- 1 Half Track

Company "B" had platoons in position vicinity (P868414) (P830395) and (P837397). While occupying these direct fire positions they accounted for the destruction of the following listed equipment :-

- 1 "Tiger" Tank Mk VI
- 1 Mk IV
- 1 Battery 105 mm Guns
- 1 Battery AA Guns
- 2 Mortar Emplacements
- 2 Enemy CPs Vic DIEKIRCH

- 2 88mm AT Guns
- 1 Enemy Liason Plane
- 1 Command Car
- 1 Half Track
- 1 MG Emplacement
- 5 Bicycles

Estimated 80 enemy personnel killed.

In the occupation of these positions, Company "A" and Company "B", succeeded in denying the enemy the use of the road paralleling the SAUER River and all approaches from the North and Northeast into the key towns of EITTELBRUCK, DIEKIRCH and BETTENDORF thereby preventing the enemy transportation of supplies and personnel reinforcing troops contained within these towns.

The Reconnaissance Platoons attached to these two companies assisted in the securing of the positions, establishment of a warning system and engaging enemy personnel with 37mm and machine gun - small arms fire.

Total casualties to our personnel resulted in two killed one wounded.

Company "C", was contacted for the first time on the 28th December since their departure to the BASTOGNE pocket on the 18th December. Fifteen enemy Mk Vs and one Mk VI as well as three AT SP Guns were known to have been destroyed. Fourteen of these tanks were destroyed during the period 20th - 21st December by the 3rd Platoon under command of 1st Lt. David K. Hagens in the vicinity of NOVILLE (P588646) Belgium. The attacking enemy tanks were engaged as they emerged from the heavy fog at ranges of 200-300 yards. One destroyer knocked out five Mk Vs with six rounds. Lt. Hagens employed two destroyers in static positions with excellent fields of fire and took advantage of buildings in NOVILLE for cover. The other two destroyers of his platoon roved about the village and were prepared to move into numerous positions upon call from either Lt. Hagens or Platoon Sgt Mays.

The second platoon, commanded by Lt. Edward Gladden was successfully employed in direct fire at enemy infantry to repel counterattacks. It was while breaking up one of the enemy's persistent counterattacks, that Gladden's platoon destroyed a Mk V Tank with an M-10 Destroyer which was manned by a makeshift crew composed of personnel from Company Headquarters. The M-10 had been recovered under fire, manned and employed successfully.

The Recon Platoon, commanded by 1st Lt. M. K. Grant operated directly with elements of the 101st A/B Division and was outposting the BASTOGNE-ARLON Highway.

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Casualties sustained to date in the BASTOGNE pocket were 13 men and 8 vehicles, ( 2-M18s, 2 M-20s, 3 1/4 Tons and 1 - 2 1/2 Ton Truck). These losses were principally the result of the intensive nightly enemy bombings to which the company was subjected. Two of the men killed were slightly wounded in action however aerial bombing Christmas Night caught them in the hospital resulting in their deaths.

The company accounted for 48 Prisoners of War and killed an estimated 150 enemy troops.

For the Commanding Officer



WILLIAM H. HATINA,  
Major, FA (TD)  
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