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HEADQUARTERS 609TH TANK CENTER YAK BATTALION
APO 403, U. S. Army

1 February 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report for Period 1st to 31st Jan '45 Inclusive.
TO : COMMANDING GENERAL, 10th Armored Division
(Attn: A/C of S, G-3)

1. Unit Strength:

- (a) At beginning of Period ~~01/00/45~~ January '45.
 - Officers - 39
 - WO - 2
 - EM - 591
- (b) At end of Period 3124~~00~~ January '45.
 - Officers - 37
 - WO - 1
 - EM - 578
- (c) Battle casualties during Period
 - Killed - 4 EM
 - Missing - 2 EM
 - Wounded - 4 Off, 7 EM

2. Unit Location and Attachments:

- (a) At beginning of Period ~~01/00/45~~ January '45
 - Bn Hq, atchd to 10th Arm'd Div, under Operational control of XII Corps, at BERINGEN (P8329).
 - Co "A", plus 3rd Rcn Plat and 2nd Sec Pioneer Plat, Rcn Co; plus one gasoline truck and two ammunition trucks, Hq Co; under Battalion control at BERINGEN (P8329).
 - Co "B", plus 1st Rcn Plat and 1st Sec Pioneer Plat, Rcn Co; plus one gasoline truck and two ammunition trucks, Hq Co; under Battalion control at BERINGEN (P8329).
 - Co "C", less 1st Plat; plus 2nd Rcn Plat, Rcn Co; plus one gasoline truck and two ammunition trucks, Hq Co; atchd CCB, 10th Arm'd Div, at BASTOGNE (P5558). 1st Plat under Bn control at BERINGEN.
 - Co "Rcn", less detachments, under Battalion control at BERINGEN (P8329).
 - Co "Hq", less detachments, under Battalion control at BERINGEN (P8329).
- (b) At end of Period 3124~~00~~ January '45.
 - Bn Hq, atchd CCR, 10th Arm'd Div, at BECHY (~~00~~43).
 - Co "A", with normal attachments, atchd CCB, 10th Arm'd Div, at BURBACH (Q5433).
 - Co "B", with normal attachments, less 1st Plat, atchd CCA, 10th Arm'd Div, at H. ACCOUNT (Q1042). 1st Plat atchd Task Force STANBACH at MERLEBACH (3282).

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:
CANCELLED
 BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
 G. E. Mc... Lt Col
 DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE 22c. Mar. 44

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- Co "C", with normal attachments, under Bn control at LUPPY (U9843).
- Co "Ron", less detachments, under Bn control at BECHY (Q943).
- Co "Hq", less detachments, under Bn control at BECHY (Q943).

Daily narrative of events:

- 1 Jan 45: Liaison established with 17th Armored Group, CAP XII U. S. Corps, per VOCO 17th Armored Group.
- 2 Jan 45: Second Platoon, Co "C", supported right flank of 101st Airborne attack on SENONCHAMP from positions vicinity (P522518). Third Platoon, Co "C" (-), moved from positions at (P525582) to positions at (P529589) overwatching MONTY (P599595) and approaches south of MONTY, while Team Cherry attacked from the south and took SENONCHAMPS (P513578). Platoon returned to original positions (P525582) at 1500. Remainder of Battalion: No change.
- 3 Jan 45: Second and Third Platoons, Co "C", were relieved from Team Cherry and attached to 502nd Parachute Regiment. Two destroyers moved to MONAVILLE (P5463). Two destroyers moved to LONGCHAMPS (P5363). Second Ron Platoon attached to Team Cherry. Second Ron Platoon established a listening post in woods SW of RECOGNE (P5763). During the evening of 3 Jan 45, two destroyers, Co "C", engaged enemy tanks in vicinity of MONAVILLE (P5463). Six tanks in all were encountered, five of these on a ridge north of MONAVILLE. Two were hit and burned and the remaining three fled. To the East of MONAVILLE a tank appeared out of the woods and was taken under fire. The tank moved a short distance after being hit and then burst into flames. Tanks were taken under fire at ranges of 600 to 800 yards. The tanks destroyed were type Mk VI. Sgt McMonagle destroyed one tank, Sgt Pilon destroyed the other two. During the night 120 rounds of HE and 18 rounds of AP were fired at the enemy. Number of casualties caused is unknown. Remainder of Battalion: No change.
- 4 Jan 45: Enemy counterattacked MONAVILLE-LONGCHAMPS in the morning but was repelled. Enemy suffered heavy losses. Co "C" disposed as follows: Temporary CP at ROLLE (P5361); four destroyers at MONAVILLE (P5463), and two destroyers at LONGCHAMPS (P5363), attached to 2nd Bn,

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502nd Para Inf; Second Reconnaissance Platoon attached to Team Cherry at (P5261); Trains at BARTONNE (P5558). Reconnaissance Platoon moved to woods vicinity (P5461). Remainder of Battalion: No change.

- 5 Jan 45: Two destroyers, Co "C", in woods (P5160) moved to LONGCHAMPS (P5363). Two destroyers moved from LONGCHAMPS to BONAVILLE (P5463). Reconnaissance still remained in same position. Destroyers received mortar fire thruout the day.
Lt. Col Roland A. Browne relieved of command of 609 TD Bn, and departed for 7th TD Group. Major William F. Shotola assumed command of battalion.
- 6 Jan 45: Company "C" CP now located at LONGCHAMPS (P5363). 2nd Recon Platoon attached to "C" Co and joined at LONGCHAMPS. All installations received mortar fire and artillery fire throughout the day and night. Recon LMG emplacement hit and destroyed by mortar fire but no personnel injured.
Remainder of Battalion: No change.
- 7 Jan 45: 2nd Recon Platoon (attached Co "C") Mortar section firing with 1st Bn, 502nd Para Inf Mortar Platoon. Enemy mortar and artillery fire heavy during night, on all "C" Company installations.
At 0900, four Recon patrols were dispatched from BERLINGEN (P8325) to make area and detailed gun position reconnaissance in 4th, 5th and 8th Divisions' zones, perfecting AT defense plans in accordance with CAF, XII Corps direct ves. Patrols returned 1630.
At 2130 a road patrol in area bounded by ROBBINGEN (P8328) HELMDRITHE (P8322) SAUER (P9221) ROBBENBURG (P9522) ESCHWEILER (P9725) BLIESWEILER (P9626) GRAULINSTEIN (P9527) GODBERGE (P9227) and FLOCHBERG (P8328) was initiated for the purpose of preventing unauthorized movement of civilians and to locate and report infiltrating ground and airborne troops. Patrol plan was submitted to CAF, XII Corps and subsequently approved.
- 8 Jan 45: All "C" Company positions remained the same, and received heavy shelling during the night. One round of mortar estimated at over 200mm landed in vicinity 2nd Platoon CP at BONAVILLE (P5463).
Position and area reconnaissance continued in zone of 5th, 8th and 4th Divisions.
Road patrolling per CAF order continued until 2200, when discontinued by authority of Executive Officer,

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17 Armored Group.

- 9 Jan 45: Company "C" alerted for movement in support of limited attack. Shelling of positions continued, Third Platoon moving to ROULE (P5361) on an alert status. All other elements of Co "C" remained in same position.
Reconnaissance patrols operated in area of 4th Div ~~0800~~ to 1300.
Road patrolling resumed at ~~0800~~ and continued throughout period.
- 10 Jan 45: Company "C" moves to LONNE FONTAINE area, attached to 506th Para Inf Regt. Second Platoon in position in woods (P5562); Third Platoon in position vic MONVILLE (P5463). Recon Plat in reserve (P5562). Co CP in woods (P5562).
Road patrols continued throughout period.
Battalion, less Co "C", moved from BERINGEN (P8328) to ROEDENBURG (P9622) at 1545, closed at 1740; Co "A" closed at CONDRANCE (P9222) at 1750; Co "B" closed at SEINGEN (P9721) at 1735; per order CG, XII U. S. Corps.
Road patrolling continued throughout period.
- 11 Jan 45: No change in Co "C" positions. Second Plat alerted to support limited attack. Non mortar squad firing with 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf mortar plat. All positions received light mortar and artillery fire.
Road patrol suspended 1200 per authority S-3 CAF, XII Corps.
Battalion, less Co "C", relieved from operational control XII Corps by order of CG, XII Corps at 1330; reverted to 10th Armored Division control, and moved to COLIGNY (U9756); Co "A" and Co "B" moved to PANGE (U9954), closing at 2025.
- 12 Jan 45: No change in Co "C" position. Second Plat again alerted for support of attack on RECOGNE (P5763). All positions received enemy mortar and artillery fire throughout 24 hour period.
Remainder of battalion engaged in rest, rehabilitation and repair of equipment.
- 13 Jan 45: No change in Co "C" CP. Second Plat moved at ~~0800~~ to support attack of Co "E", 3rd Bn, 506 Para Inf on FOY (P5862). Artillery preparation was laid down prior to attack. When smoke cleared, second Plat was ordered to fire from direct fire positions into buildings believed to be held by the enemy. Forty rounds of HE and AP were fired in a period of 15 minutes. The town fell

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to the assault, number of casualties caused unknown, 40 POW taken. At 1430 2nd Plat released to 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf Reserve. 3rd Plat alerted to move in support of Co "B", 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf. Rcn mortar squad fired approximately 240 rounds, 81mm mortar. At 1630 2nd Plat moved back in FOY (P5862).
Remainder of Bn: No change.

14 Jan 45: At 0200, destroyer from 2nd Plat, Co "C", in FOY (P5862) fired at enemy infantry. All during the night enemy tanks moved about FOY but did not enter the town. Enemy tanks fired direct fire in support of enemy infantry. At about 0600 enemy tanks, estimated number 6 to 11, attacked FOY. Destroyer was forced to pull behind a barn because of direct fire from enemy tanks. Enemy tanks moved in on FOY from EAST, North and West, friendly infantry started withdrawal and small arms fire directed at destroyer from nearby buildings. Due to position of enemy tanks, destroyer could not be moved from concealment and had to be abandoned. Overwatching destroyer fired at two enemy tanks coming into town one behind the other. First tank was completely demolished, second tank was disabled and put out of action. Town fell to the enemy and disabled tank recovered. At 0930, 11th Armored Inf attacked FOY. The abandoned destroyer was recovered but had been hit by one round of AP. At 1300, M-32 recovery vehicle, while towing recovered destroyer, hit a land mine at (P5762). At 1400, 3rd Plat, plus one destroyer of 2nd Plat moved into 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf area, remainder of 2nd Plat moved to 3rd Bn, 506 Para Inf area (P5664). Rcn Plat in 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf reserve. In the action 25 rounds HE and 10 rounds AP were fired. Two enemy tanks, Mk IV, were destroyed and an estimated 15 enemy killed. Co "C" CP moved to COBRU (P5864).
Remainder of Bn: No change.

15 Jan 45: 3rd Plat, Co "C", attached to 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf and moved to woods (P5865) in their support. Destroyed one Mark IV tank, damaged another, destroyed a machine gun emplacement, fired at infantry in a house, and fired on enemy infantry digging in. 30 rounds HE and 5 rounds AP fired in action, estimated 25 enemy killed. 2nd Plat moved with the 3rd Bn, 506 Para Inf and advanced with them to forward positions (P5665). Rcn Plat moved forward with Co "C", 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf, and provided rcn for that unit.
Area and gun position rcn initiated from COLLIGNY (U0756) at 0900 along south boundary, XX Corps, as directed by CO, 4th TD Group. Three officer patrols employed.

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1st Plat, Co "C", moved from COLMIGNY (U9756) to VILLERS-LE-JUINEUX (U9754), closing at 1700, pending relief of Co "C" from attachment to CCB, 10th Armored Division.

Remainder of Bn: Engaged in training and rehabilitation.

- 16 Jan 45: 2nd Rcn Plat moved forward supporting leading company, 1st Bn, 506 Para Inf, in attack of woods at (P5865) and objectives to the northeast. Fired at haystacks and suspected terrain locations. 22 rounds of 37mm HE expended.
2nd Plat, Co "C", moved forward in support of leading company, 3rd Bn, 506 Para Inf, to (P5666) firing at enemy infantry in houses and suspected locations. 20 rounds HE and 3 rounds AP fired, estimated 40 enemy killed.
3rd Plat, Co "C", moved forward with leading company in attack on VAUX (P6067) and continued with the attack on objectives to the northeast. Destroyed two 88mm AT guns with direct fire at a range of 1500 yards, damaged an enemy half-track vehicle, fired at enemy infantry and destroyed a machine gun nest. 24 rounds HE and 2 rounds AP fired, estimated 30 enemy killed.
Co "C" CP moved to VAUX (P6067).
Area and gun position rcn continued in area of 95th Div FRAULHEMONT (Q1750) to COMBE-NORTHEM (Q562).
Unit alerted for movement at daylight 17 Jan '45.
Liaison established 1900 on VOCC, 10th Armd Div, as follows: Co "A" to Task Force Riley; Co "B" to CCA.
- 17 Jan 45: Co "C" released from attachment to 506th Para Inf Regt at 0100 and returned to BASTOGNE (P5558). At 1330, Co "C" moved to RUMELANGE (U7697), closing at 2000.
Co "A", reinforced with 3rd Rcn Plat, attached to Task Force Riley and moved to MOYANVIC (Q1421). Co "B", reinforced with 1st Rcn Plat, attached to CCA and moved to ZARBELING (Q2332). Hq Co, less Bn Hq, with 1st Plat Co "C" attached CCR, remained present location. Bn Hq, attached to Div Troops, moved to BIEUZE (Q2523), closing at 2330.
- 18 Jan 45: Co "C", less 1st Plat, reinforced with 2nd Rcn Plat, closed in ST JULIEN (U3861) at 1230, released from attachment to CCB and attached to CCR on closing. Hq Co, less Bn Hq, with 1st Plat Co "C", moved to ST JULIEN (U3861), closing at 1200.
Co "B", reinforced, moved with CCA to HOSTE-BAS (U3852)
- 19 Jan 45: Road, area and gun position rcn initiated in XXI Corps zone. Four officer patrols employed.

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- 20 Jan 45: Hq Co relieved attachment CCR and attached Div Troops at CHATEAU-SARLINS (Q0925) at 1020.
Bn Hq and Hq Co relieved attachment Div Troops and attached CCR at 1500.
Hq Co closed in LINKE-HAUTE (Q2724) at 1230; Co "C", reinforced with 2nd Ren Plat, closed in TORCHEVILLER (Q3534) at 1300.
Ren continued in XXI Corps zone. Four officer patrols employed.
- 21 Jan 45: Co "A", reinforced, moved with CCB to BURBACH (Q5433).
- 22 Jan 45: Ren of areas and gun positions continued along boundary XX-XXI Corps.
Bn Hq moved to TEFING (Q2151), closing at 1345.
Co "C", reinforced, moved to BAMBIBERSTROFF (Q1656) closing at 1415.
1st Plat, Co "B", attached to Task Force Standish and moved to MERLEBACH (Q3262) at 1600.
CO, Co "A", now commanding CCB Reserve at BURBACH (Q5433).
- 23 Jan 45: Hq Co moved to TEFING (Q2052), closing at 1100.
Co "A" initiates area and gun position ren with 3rd Ren Plat in area PETIT-REDBUCHING (Q6851) MEISENHAL (Q7241) and BUTLEN (Q6241).
1st Plat, Co "B", making detailed ren of area vic ROSBRUC (Q3562) HORN BACH (Q3763) KOCHERN (Q3661) ST NIKOLUS (Q3363) and KARLSBRUNN (Q3264). Plat commanders and plat sgts making further ren of MLR positions along Maginot Line.
- 24 Jan 45: Co "A" plat commanders and section chiefs continue ren in area.
Co "B" ren continued in same area.
- 25 Jan 45: Cos "A" and "B" engaged in rehabilitation and training.
Combat patrol from Co "C" operated in area north of BAMBIBERSTROFF (Q1656) per VOCC CCR, 10th Armd Div. Results negative.
Ren continued in area BOWLY (Q965) - ST AVOID (Q2556) for gun positions and defensive combat areas.
- 26 Jan 45: CO, Co "A", reld command of CCB Reserve.
Cos "A" and "B" continue rehabilitation and training.
Patrolling of woods north of BAMBIBERSTROFF (Q1656) continued. Negative results.

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27 Jan 45: Co "A" plat commanders rcn area SINGLING (Q6249) BINING (Q6549) and ROHRBACH (Q6550).

Co "B" training continued.

Co "C" patrolling of woods north of BAMBIDERSTROFF (Q1656) continued. Negative results.

28 Jan 45: Co "B" conducted eight hours of training. Company commander and 2nd Plat leader reconnoitered area vic BOU BACK (Q4261) for gun position to fire on suspected enemy OP (a church steeple) vic KERBACH (Q4363). At 1300, Lt Gray, 2nd Plat commander, with one destroyer, moved to eastern edge of BOU BACK and fired 10 rounds (3 APC - 7 HE) at steeple. 10 hits observed, mission accomplished. Destroyer returned to HOSSE-BAS (Q3852). Firing done at request of 276 Inf, Task Force HERRIN.

Patrolling of woods north of BAMBIDERSTROFF (Q1656) continued with negative results.

29 Jan 45: Patrols discontinued in woods north of BAMBIDERSTROFF (Q1656) at 0730.

Bn Hq and Hq Co closed in BLCHY (Q443) at 0900.

Co "C", reinforced, closed in LUPPY (U9843) at 0940.

Co "B", less 1st Plat, moved from HOSSE-BAS at 0815 to THONVILLE (Q1443), closing at 1100. Moved at 1400 to HOLLCOURT (Q1042), closing at 1430. 1st Plat remained attached to Task Force Standish at MERLEBACH (Q3862).

30 Jan 45: Co "B" initiates officer rcn patrols in area vic PAULJUMONT (Q1749) BASSIVILLE (Q1757) and GROS TERNJIN (Q2742).

Remainder of Bn: No change.

31 Jan 45: No change.

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4. Recommended changes in light of Battle Experience:

- (a) The Pioneer Platoon of Reconnaissance Company was converted into two mortar sections of 10 men each, and attached to Reconnaissance platoons when the tactical situation indicated they could be used. The Pioneer Platoon Leader handled one section and the Platoon Sgt handled the other. The mortars used came from the M-32 Tank Recovery Vehicles, and organic transportation (four 1 1/2-T Trucks) used. It was necessary to store the Pioneer tool boxes normally carried on these trucks, but all Demolition equipment was carried. In 128 days of combat operation, the Pioneer Platoon performed two Pioneer missions, both of minor nature, using only shovels and axes for tools. Since being reorganized into mortar sections, in October 1944, they have been supporting the Rcn Platoons continuously, on one occasion firing over 200 rounds in one day. The men were trained as mortar crews after arriving in France, and with limited equipment and training ranges, were able to work accurately enough to be used two weeks after training started. It is recommended that (1) the Pioneer Platoon be reorganized and trained as three mortar squads and equipped with Half-track Mortar Carriers in place of 1 1/2-T Trucks; or (2) the Pioneer Platoon be abolished and the three Rcn Platoons reorganized to include one Mortar Squad per platoon.
- (b) In operation with an Armored Division, where the firing companies are habitually attached to Combat Commands, it is recommended that the Battalion Staff be divided, sending one officer to each CC, to act as AT advisor and liaison officer with the attached company. Our experience has been that the gun company commanders have either been required to spend most of their time at Combat Command Headquarters, or send their executive officers as their representatives. Either solution is undesirable, and it is felt that use of a battalion staff member for this purpose would result in the following advantages:
1. Company commander would be able to remain with his company with his full complement of officers.
 2. Combat Command commanders would have a capable TD representative who could be used in planning, discussing capabilities, checking on execution of plans formulated involving the attached Tank Destroyers, and coordinating all tank defenses for the combat command.
 3. Timely information gained by Staff Officers would be relayed to the Bn Commander, who would keep an

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accurate AT situation for Division Area available for G-3 use.

- (c) The car, armored, light, M-20, has not proved to be very efficient in TD operations. It is too awkward and unwieldy to move into front lines, and does not have the cross country ability to keep up with the M-18's. Tire trouble has resulted every time these vehicles were exposed to artillery fire. One Hcn Plat leader at BASTOGNE acquired a M-8 Light Tank Assault Gun to replace his damaged M-8 Armored Car. He used this vehicle for several days, then loaned it to a platoon leader in a gun company for a command vehicle. Both officers were enthusiastic about substituting light tanks for armored cars. This change is recommended.

5. Combat Notes:

- (a) Steel Tracks on Ice.

Under the worst icing conditions encountered during the month of January, the battalion was able to march at the rate of 6 mph. An attempt was made to weld ice cleats to the tracks of the M-18, but it was found that the intense heat necessary for a successful weld resulted in melting the rubber track bushings with resultant dead blocks. Drivers were given practice in winter driving at every opportunity, and it is felt that the battalion can remain mobile under extremely adverse icing conditions without additional cleats or grousers being added to the tracks. The only difficulty encountered was when an M-18 attempted to tow a loaded ammunition trailer up a steep hill. All ammunition trailers are now being towed behind M-20's.

- (b) It was found expeditious to have the gunner up forward with the observer when spotting direct fire targets with the M-18's held in a defilade position. The gunner can positively identify his targets, thru glasses if necessary, then call up the destroyer and fire. This avoids exposure of the destroyer while a fire order is being given, and insures that the gunner has the correct target before the first round is fired.

For the Battalion Commander:

John M. Rugh
JOHN M. RUGH
Captain, Cav (TD)
S-3.

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