

HEADQUARTERS
628th Tank Destroyer Battalion
APO 403, U. S. Army

30 September 1944.

BATTLE EXPERIENCE COMMENTS
FRONT OF MARK VI TANKS CAN BE PENETRATED BY 3" SHELLS UP TO RANGES
OF 1800 YARDS.

On the morning of 19 September 1944, my Platoon, 1st Platoon, Company "B", 628th TD Bn. was in position on the reverse slope of Hill 408, near Mettendorf, Germany. At dawn the enemy started shelling this Hill from the N and NW with what appeared to be a flat trajectory gun, as the shells fell short of hitting on top of the hill, or went over landing well on the rear of our gun positions. This shelling continued until 0745 hours when it stopped momentarily.

During this lull in enemy firing, Pvt. Joseph F. Keller, assistant driver of the #2 Destroyer (M-10), walked around to the forward slope of the hill to see if there was any activity in the valley below Hill 408. By chance he looked to his left flank to the next high ground which was occupied by a friendly married tank and armored infantry Platoon and observed a column of enemy tanks approaching the position of this friendly married Platoon from the N under concealment of high ground. My No. 1 gun immediately opened fire on the enemy but they took cover under a ridge and disappeared from our observation. A few moments later, however, four enemy tanks appeared trying to work their way around the ridge and heading straight towards our position. Two of these enemy tanks, subsequently identified as Mark VI's moved into a partially defiladed position and one of them opened fire on us. The opening shot fell short and before he could get off another round he was hit by a shot from my #1 gun. As soon as the tank was hit the crew jumped out and disappeared in a hedgerow. Fearing the tank had not been destroyed with the first round, four more rounds were fired at it (APC shells), three of which could be seen to bounce from the front plate. The fourth round, however, hit the gun shield and ricocheted down through the front of the tank definitely penetrating the top armor. Two rounds of APCBDF were then fired and both exploded on the front of this tank. It is not known whether these last two shots penetrated through the armor.

A second tank pulled up alongside of the first also facing our position and we hit this tank with two rounds of APCBDF and it began to burn. Both these tanks were at a range of 1800 yards, and were facing the gun that knocked them out. The first tank was later set afire by our No. 4 gun which moved around so that it could get a round in on the side of the tank. Another enemy tank, also a Mark VI, was knocked out by the No. 3 gun with 3 rounds of APC which hit it aside.

After these three tanks were destroyed all of the attacking enemy tanks fell back trying to get out of our range. The next time this column appeared it was at a range of 2500 yards. The number 1 gun hit another tank at 300 yards but on the side bringing the score for the No. 1 gun to six Mark VI tanks in a period of action which lasted some thirty minutes.

It was later learned from Sgt. Charles H. Mead, the gun commander, that the asst. gunner did the firing and that the only firing he had done previous to this was to fire three practice rounds. The No. 2 gun crew knocked out a tank as they crossed the ridge line using three rounds of APC on the rear of the tank at 3200 yards.

/s/ Robert C. Jones
ROBERT C. JONES,
1st Lt., AUS,
Platoon Leader, Co. "A"



A TRUE COPY:

Elmer V. Sparks

ELMER V. SPARKS,
Capt., F.A.,
Adjutant.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S

ANNEX #2

HEADQUARTERS
628th Tank Destroyer Battalion
APO 403, U. S. Army

30 September 1944.

BATTLE EXPERIENCE COMMENTS
MARK VI'S CAN BE KNOCKED OUT AT 2200 YDS. WITH 3" SHELL

On the morning of 23 September 1944, the S-2 of CGR, 5th Armored Div. received a report that six Mark VI Tiger Tanks were approaching our left flank from the NW. My Plat. 3rd Plat., Co. "C", 628th T.D. Bn. was given the mission of occupying the high ground NE of the town of Kewenig, Germany, and to prevent any tank thrust from the N to NW.

We moved toward our position on the reverse slope of a hill which at the time was being shelled by enemy artillery. Reaching our position, S/Sgt. Scanlon, Plat. Sgt. and myself went forward on foot to pick destroyer positions and found the only plausible position was in defilade on the reverse side of the hill. We moved our destroyers (M-10) into position and established OP's with prearranged signals to indicate direction of any enemy movements.

After approximately one hour of waiting, action developed. Enemy tanks of the Mk. VI type attacked the first Plat. of Co. "B", 628th T.D. Bn. which was in position approx. 500 yards away protecting the right flank of CGR. After these enemy tanks had been repelled by the 1st Plat. of Co. "B" they moved back across my line of operation trying to obtain cover in a wooded area. My observer signaled the direction of the enemy column and we moved our destroyers into prearranged firing positions. I estimated the range at 2000 yards and ordered one round of HE to be fired to mark our range sensing. This shot was observed as being 200 yards short, so on the next command I went up 200 yards and ordered shell APCBDF, and the destroyer commanders took over and started firing. We expended 8 rds. of APCBDF, ~~expended~~ each destroyer, having three destroyers in action, and scored two tanks definitely knocked out and a third probable. In the meantime the remainder of the enemy reached the woods and we were out of sight of our OP. We then fired three rounds of HE into the woods, ~~knocked out~~ setting them afire. I then called for field artillery into the woods which the tank had entered, and saw a concentration placed where I had called for it but was unable to determine whether it was successful in knocking out any more of the enemy tanks.

/s/ Seymour Feldman
SEYMOR FELDMAN
1st Lt., AUS,
Plat. Leader.

A TRUE COPY:

Elmer V. Sparks
ELMER V. SPARKS,
Capt., F.A.,
Adjutant.

