

HEADQUARTERS  
629TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 230, U.S. ARMY

3 May 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO : The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington 25, D. C.  
(Thru: Channels)

1. Transmitted herewith is After Action Report for this organization for the month of April 1945.

*Glenn Cole*  
GLENN COLE  
Lt. Col., Inf (TD)  
Commanding

Incls:

- 1 - Resume of Operations for Month of April 1945
- 1 - After Action Report for month of April 1945
- 1 - Battalion Journal for month of April 1945

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After Action Report, 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for month of April 1945

RESULT OF OPERATIONS:

The battalion was attached to the 99th Infantry Division for the entire period. It was assigned to the First U.S. Army to 17 April 1945 at which time it was assigned to the Third U.S. Army for the remainder of the period.

In the period 1 to 3 April elements of the battalion supported the respective infantry units of the division in the mopping-up operations following the 7th Armored Division in its advance east of the Weid River. From 4 to 17 April elements of the battalion supported the respective infantry units in operations against the enemy in the Ruhr pocket. One platoon supported elements of the 7th Armored Division in its sector on the right or northeast flank of the 99th Infantry Division.

On 18 and 19 April the battalion made the 300 mile march with the Division from vicinity of Ruhr Pocket in First Army Sector to the Third Army Sector in Bavaria. The destroyers had some mechanical, boggy wheel and track trouble but all vehicles were repaired and joined their respective companies within two days after the main elements completed the move.

For the remainder of the period, the infantry units were supported in the rapid advance in southeastern direction to the Altmuhl, Danube and Isar Rivers respectively.

Reconnaissance Company was usually attached to one of the infantry regiments for screening the regimental sector for stragglers and to keep the liberated Allied PWs in their respective places.

During the period the following enemy materiel was destroyed: Three (3) Jagdpanther tanks, one (1) Mk VI tank, two (2) Mk IV tanks, sixteen (16) GP vehicles, two (2) FA pieces, one (1) 40mm AA gun, eight (8) 20mm AA guns, two (2) H/T vehicles, three (3) motorcycles, two (2) MGs, two (2) ammo trailers and forty-four (44) strongpoints destroyed. Forty (40) wagons, eighty (80) horses, three (3) H/T vehicles, three (3) GP vehicles and 5380 enemy troops were captured. An unknown number of enemy were killed and wounded.

A total of 42 replacements were received. One EM was recommended for battle-field promotion to Second Lieutenant. Three officers and one EM received the Bronze Star and one EM received the Silver Star.

One M-32, tank recovery vehicle, was received from First US Army to replace a T-2 which was evacuated as unserviceable. Three  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton vehicles were received from Third US Army as replacements.

After Action Report, 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for month of April 1945

1. ENEMY Period 1 to 16 April 1945.

a. Units in Contact:

Artillery, anti-aircraft, signal and anti-tank units plus a wide assortment of other such units usually company or battalion strength existed on our front. Elements of major units contacted were the 176th Infantry Division, 130th Panzer Lehr Division, 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division, 338th Volks Grenadier Division, 22nd Anti-aircraft Division, 116 Panzer Division, and 3rd Paratroop Division. At no time were the front lines static. However, at the close of the period at which time all resistance in the eastern half of the Ruhr pocket ceased, the farthest line of advance our troops had reached was: A-963112 to Gerlingsen, (A-9509) to Ackenbrock and (A-9508) to A-930073.

No contact was made with enemy from 17 April to 23 April as this organization was moving to another sector and after arrival was getting ready for future operations.

Enemy opposition encountered during period 24 April to 30 April again consisted largely of miscellaneous replacement units, elements of 17th and 38th Panzer Grenadier Divisions and the 352nd Infantry Division. On April 24th the front lines were T742640 - T723630 - T740590 - T749581 - T710575 - T690555 - T665547, and at the close of the period the enemy front lines extended along the southern bank of the Isar River.

b. Reserves:

From 1 to 16 April the enemy had no reserves whatsoever at his disposal and possessed a definite lack of armor. He was compelled to employ troops of every branch and category available to him in defense of the Ruhr pocket.

From 24 to 30 April the enemy had available reserves in the form of hastily refitted SS Panzer Grenadier and Volks Grenadier troops. However, the majority of these troops were battle-weary due to constant frontline duty for months without rest.

c. Enemy Activity:

For the period 1 to 16 April, small arms, machine gun and mortar fire were mainly employed by the enemy to repel our efforts in diminishing the Ruhr pocket. Scarcity of armor and SP guns prevented much heavy caliber shelling. At frequent intervals artillery fire on a large scale harassed our troops as the encircled enemy attempted to use up his supply of ammunition on hand, rather than have it captured. Counterattacks to gain limited objectives were undertaken on a small scale, usually consisting of a company of infantry supported by 4 or 5 tanks. All such attacks proved unsuccessful and our well placed artillery fire quite often halted these counterattacks before they got underway. Enemy air activity was negligible, and patrolling and mine laying were of a sporadic nature and ineffective.

From 24 to 30 April strong resistance was encountered from dug-in infantry who insisted on bitterly defending each town with good support from tanks spotted in well defiladed positions. An increase in artillery fire was noticeable in support of Battalion size counterattacks and small groups of infantry holding out in well prepared positions. Batteries of roving guns engaged in placing fire on our supply and communication terminals and on important road junctions; also in harassing our troops at night and early morning. Due to our incessant pressure and employment of armor and mechanized infantry the enemy was unable to establish or maintain a specific line of defense, and at the close of the period our troops continued to advance.

After Action Report, 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for month of April 1945

1. ENEMY (continued)

d. Enemy strength and morale:

From 1 to 16 April the enemy, encircled in a pocket, had only those troops who existed in the pocket at his disposal. Of these troops none were up to full strength nor were they adequately equipped, with possible the exception of 130th Panzer Lehr Division. The morale of the enemy troops was fair.

From 24 April to 30 April, the allied linkup in Central Germany left the majority of remaining enemy armor, SS troops and good infantry divisions in the southern portion of Germany. These troops displayed extreme fanatical resistance in relinquishing any territory whatsoever, and their morale appeared to be good.

e. Plans Open to the Enemy Period 1 to 16 April 1945:

(1) To break out of the Ruhr pocket and linkup with his forces to the east, thus permitting a means of supply and reinforcement. This he attempted without success.

(2) To employ a strict defensive action with intentions of delaying our advance in hopes his troops from the east might eventually break through to him. This policy he applied until he realized his efforts were useless. Then he surrendered the remainder of the forces in the Ruhr pocket.

Period 24 to 30 April 1945:

(1) To hold the bulk of his armor in reserve and defend from strong-points and towns with infantry and self propelled guns employing small arms and mortar fire on a large scale and artillery on a small scale. This he did to some extent.

(2) To infiltrate trained agents into our lines for espionage and sabotage purposes in order to hamper our communication and supply. This he practiced on an increasing degree.

(3) To fall back and form his lines along a natural defense barrier. This he attempted to do at the Danube River but failed to stem our advance, and at the close of the period the enemy was attempting to maintain a stable line of defense along the Isar River.

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2. OWN SITUATION:

a. During period 1 April to 3 April no definite front lines existed. The division to which the unit was attached was mopping up behind an armored division. 4 April to 17 April front lines were on the Southern part of the Ruhr pocket in vicinity of Arzfeld (G495684) northwest along the Lenne River on the south to its junction with the Ruhr River. 18 April to 19 April the unit was engaged in the road movement from the Ruhr pocket area of the First Army sector to the Southern flank of the Third Army in Bavaria. 20 April 1945 to 23 April 1945 the unit was not in contact with the enemy. 24 April to 30 April the front moved very rapidly over the Altmuhl, Danab, and Isar Rivers in a southeasterly direction on a line running from Schwabach (T386867) to Landshut (U255025).

b. During period the Battalion C.P. was located as follows: 1 April to 3 April at Grusen (G852677). From 4 April to 6 April at Arfeld (G495684). 7 April to 9 April 1945 at Wingshausen (G382749). 10 April to 11 April at Hundesossen (G328818), 12 April at Serkenrode (G234900), 13 April and 14 April at Allendorf (G152985), 15 April to 17 April at Sundwig (B027083). Part of 17th, 18th and 19th April enroute to Third Army area. 19 April to 22 April at Obr Schleichach (O-051540). 23 April at Schwabach (T386867). 24 April at Hilpoltstein (T518711). 25 April at Greding (T643561). 26 April to 28 April at Altmanstein (T870409). 29 April at Pfaffendorf (U084144) and 30 April at Altdorf (U220046).

c. The Battalion was attached to the 99th Infantry Division with Companies A, B and C being attached to the 393rd, 394th and 395th Infantry Regiments respectively. Reconnaissance Co operated for the most part under Battalion control. In several instances it was attached to one of the Infantry Regiments to screen rear areas.

d. From 1 April to 3 April the companies were engaged in supporting mopping-up operations of the Division in Vicinity of Grusen (G852677). From 4 April to 17 April the unit was engaged in supporting 99th Infantry Division operations in liquidation of the Ruhr Pocket. During the period 17 April to 23 April unit moved from Ruhr pocket area to assembly area on the Seventh U. S. Army—Third U.S. Army boundary in the vicinity of Obr-Schleichach (O-051540). During period 24 April to 30 April 1945 the unit supported Division's attack to the southeast from Schwabach (T386867) to Landshut (U255025).

e. Combat efficiency for the month was excellent with the exception of the period 17 April to 19 April when many combat vehicles were not operational due to minor mechanical difficulties, bad track, or suspension trouble, caused by forced march of over 300 miles in less than two days.

f. The period proved very lucrative in enemy personnel captured or killed and materiel captured or destroyed. A summary of the results follows, most of which occurred prior to the assignment of this unit to Third U. S. Army. Since the change in assignment to Third Army sector, the resistance has been practically negligible. Enemy materiel destroyed: Three (3) Jadgpanther tanks, one (1) Mk VI tank, two (2) Mk IV tanks, sixteen (16) GP vehicles, two (2) FA pieces, one (1) 40mm AA gun, eight (8) 20mm AA guns, two (2) H/T vehicles, three (3) motorcycles, two (2) MGs, two (2) ammo trailers, and the reduction of forty-four (44) strongpoints, most of which were defended houses. In addition forty (40) wagons, eighty (80) horses, three (3) H/T vehicles, three (3) GP vehicles, and 5380 PW's were captured. An undetermined number of enemy were killed.

After Action Report, 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion for month of April 1945

3. Administration:

Assignments, attachments, personnel, promotions, Awards and decorations:

a. List of assignments and attachments:

99th Infantry Division (III Corps)(1st US Army) 1 April to 17 April 1945.  
 99th Infantry Division (III Corps)(3rd US Army) 17 April to 30 April 1945.  
 (Auth: Troop Assignment Letter No. 101, 12th Army Group, 19 April 1945, confirmery VCCG of 17 April 1945)

b. Strength status at beginning and end of period:

	Auth. Strength			Strength as of 1 Apr 1945			Strength as of 30 Apr 1945			Net Increase			Net Decreased		
	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM	O	WO	EM
Hq & Hq Co	13	2	110	13	1	108	13	1	109	0	0	1	0	0	0
Recon Co	7	0	110	6	0	107	4	0	110	0	0	3	2	0	0
Co A	6	0	124	6	0	121	5	0	126	0	0	5	1	0	0
Co B	6	0	124	6	0	114	5	0	126	0	0	12	1	0	0
Co C	6	0	124	6	0	122	6	0	123	0	0	1	0	0	0
Med Det	1	0	15	1	0	14	1	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>BN TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

(See casualty, reinforcement and prisoner annex for breakdown) (attached)

No personnel requisitions were submitted, but nineteen (19) enlisted reinforcements who were received by the 99th Inf Div were transferred to this unit without requisition, 20 received from 3d Reinf Depot on previous months' requisitions.

No unfilled personnel requisitions were outstanding.

S/Sgt Adam I. Taracko recommended for battlefield appointment to 2d Lt.

Awards and Decorations made during period:

<u>RANK</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>AWARD</u>	<u>GENERAL ORDER</u>
1st Lt.	Floyd H. Dikeman	0-1822864	Bronze Star	Sec II, GO 60, 83rd Inf Div dated 23 March 1945
Capt	Francis H. Dobbins	0-1166046	Bronze Star	Sec I, GO 23, 99th Inf Div dated 1 April 1945
Cpl	Clarence E. Austin	33008982	Silver Star	Sec I, GO 46, 82d A/B Div dated 3 April 1945
S/Sgt	Charles L. Lohr	33050650	Bronze Star	Sec I, GO 51, 82d A/B Div dated 5 April 1945
Capt	Edwin H. Stewart	0-1166425	Bronze Star	Sec II, GO 28, 99th Inf Div dated 15 April 1945

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3. Administration: (Cont'd)

Commanding Officers during period covered by report:

Bn Cmdr	Lt. Col. Glenn Cole, Inf.
CO Hq Co	Capt. Francis H. Dobbins, FA
CO Rcn Co	From 1 April to 15 April 1945: Capt Harry L. Harris, FA From 15 April to 30 April 1945: 1st Lt. Floyd H. Dikeman, AUS
CO Co A	Capt. Charles M. Grimshaw, Inf.
Co Co B	Capt. Edwin H. Stewart, FA
CO Co C	Capt. Anthony G. Covatta, AUS
CO Med Det	Capt Domenico A. Savoia, M.C.

CASUALTY, REPLACEMENT AND PRISONER OF WAR ANNEX

DAY	WIA	KIA	MIA	NB	PW	REPLACEMENTS
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	1 Off	0	0
4	0	0	0	1	0	20
5	0	0	0	1	0	0
6	0	0	0	1	0	0
7	2	0	0	1	0	0
8	0	0	0	1	0	0
9	1	0	0	0	0	0
10	1 Off, 3 EM	0	0	1	0	0
11	0	0	0	1	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	1	0	0	1	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	1	0	0
16	0	0	0	1	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	0	0	0	1 Off	0	0
22	0	0	0	0	0	3
23	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	0	0	0	1	0	18
26	1	0	0	1	0	0
27	0	0	0	1	0	0
28	0	0	0	2	0	1
29	0	0	0	2	0	0
30	0	0	0	1	0	0

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3. Administration (continued)

During the month of April all Class I supplies were drawn from the 99th Infantry Division.

Classes II & IV supplies were also drawn through the 99th Infantry Division. Until this unit was transferred from First U. S. Army to Third U. S. Army on April 17, 1945, all major and controlled items of ordnance equipment were drawn on either Corps or Army allocation. After that date all major items of ordnance equipment were secured by requisition through normal ordnance attachment. Classes III & V supplies were drawn from Army dumps.

One - vehicle, tank recovery, M32 was drawn from First U. S. Army as replacement for a T2, evacuated as unserviceable. Three - truck, 1/4 ton, 4 x 4, were drawn as replacement for unserviceable vehicles.

Basic loads of Classes I, III and V supplies were maintained at all times.

Roads were generally good, although there were not many major roads available during the latter part of the month. The flow of traffic was slowed down at many points because of the number of one-way bridges in use.