

HISTORY  
OF  
633D TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

In a letter dated December 10, 1941, Lieutenant General Ben Lear directed various Field Artillery Units to activate Tank Destroyer Battalions. Six days later, December 16, 1941, from the 122nd, 123rd and 124th, Field Artillery of the 33rd Division, the 633rd Tank Destroyer Battalion was formed.

These Units were of the Illinois National Guard, whose roots go deep into American History and whose rosters have borne the names of Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses Grant.

Thus, while their Nation stung with the ignominy of Pearl Harbor, descendants of the men who had driven Braddock from the Kentucky wilderness, stormed Chapultepec, and taken Vicksburg, were again banded together at the call of their Country--

"There breathes again that haunted air  
The sons of sires who conquered there.  
With arms to strike, and souls to dare,  
As quick, as far, as they."

The 633rd Tank Destroyer Battalion today flies its battalion standard. The presentation was made by Colonel H. J. McChrystal, CO of the 22nd Tank Destroyer Group to Lt. Colonel F. R. Brisack CO, 633rd Tank Destroyer Battalion. The 633rd TD Battalion is at present a school troop unit for the Tank Destroyer School.

The 633rd is one of the "Old Guard" tank destroyer battalions; the unit was activated on December 16, 1941. The 33 is a carry over from the famed Illinois 33rd Infantry Division from which the battalion was formed. The 633rd was formerly a provisional anti-tank battalion of the 33rd Division.

When these provisional anti-tank battalions were formed in 1941, Btrys. G and H and the 1st and 2nd Hq. Btrys. of the 123rd FA Anti-Tank FA Regt. were designated as the 33rd Anti-Tank Prov. Bn. The 123rd FA Regt was in turn part of the 58th FA Brig. Major O'Brien and 10 per cent of the enlisted men of the present 633rd <sup>with</sup> were ~~of~~ the 123rd FA Regt.

The battle record of the parent organization of the 633rd, the 123rd FA Regt, dates back to the Spanish American War where the unit added in 1898 to its distinctive coat-of-arms the ram from the seal of Puerto Rico. In World War I the 123rd received unit citations for its part in three of the five major AEF engagements. These battles were the Muese-Argonne, St. Mihiel and Luecre-Lorraine. The 123rd dates back to the 12th Inf. (1837) which was stationed at Fort Dearborn (Chicago, Illinois).

In November, 1942, the 633rd was transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington, where by coincidence the 33rd Infantry Division was then stationed. At the time of its activation, the unit was designated as a light tank destroyer battalion. Since then it has been equipped with the M-3 half-track, the M-10 and at present the M-18.

*Compiled by John C. Coulson*

Since its activation the Battalion has had eight commanding officers, Their names and tenure of command follows:

Major Frederick B. Mann . . . . . December 16, 1941 to February 9, 1942  
Major Richard L. Kapsa . . . . . February 9, 1942 to March 12, 1942  
Lt. Col. Charles H. Read . . . . . March 12, 1942 to July 29, 1942  
Major Lee A. Rodgers . . . . . July 29, 1942 to August 25, 1942  
Lt. Col. George H. O'Conner . . . . . August 25, 1942 to October 25, 1942  
Major Meredith C. Engle. . . . . October 25, 1942 to December 25, 1942  
Lt. Col. Buhl Moore . . . . . December 25, 1942 to February 3, 1943  
Lt. Col. Floyd R. Brisack . . . . . February 3, 1943 until/deactivated 1945  
unit

These have been our homes while in the States:

Camp Forrest, Tennessee . . . . . December 16, 1941 to July 28, 1942  
Camp Hood, Texas . . . . . July 28, 1942 to October 30, 1942  
Fort Lewis, Washington . . . . . October 30, 1942 to May 25, 1943  
Yakima, Washington . . . . . May 25, 1943 to June 15, 1943  
Camp White, Oregon . . . . . June 15, 1943 to July 29, 1943  
Yakima, Washington . . . . . July 29, 1943 to August 23, 1943  
Bend, Oregon . . . . . August 23, 1943 to October 27, 1943  
Fort Lewis, Washington. . . . . October 27, 1943 to January 12, 1944  
Pilot Knob, California. . . . . January 12, 1944 to March 15, 1944  
Camp Maxey, Texas . . . . . March 15, 1944 to April 13, 1944  
Camp Hood, Texas . . . . . April 13, 1944 until early part of 1945  
prior to going to Europe.

The 633rd Tank Destroyer Battalion consisted of Headquarters Company, Companies "A", "B", "C" and Reconnaissance, along with its Medical Detachment. Major Herschel C. O'Brien was Battalion Executive Officer.

As previously stated the 633rd remained in the States and was used as "School Troops" before it went overseas on or about April 1, 1945 and landed at LeHarve, France on April 11, 1945.

This note from S.O. No. 47, March 17, 1942: Detail of five Officers and seventy-seven Enlisted Men to form cadre for 809th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

It appears that the 633rd Tank Destroyer Battalion was deactivated in December of 1945 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

ROUTE OF MARCH TO ACCOMPANY

MARCH ORDER No I

29 APRIL 45

