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HEADQUARTERS
638th Tank Destroyer Battalion
APO 339, c/o P.M.
New York, New York

RESTRICTED

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: History of Operations for February 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington 25, D.C.

THRU : Commanding General, 84th Infantry Division.

1. Authority: Par 10, AR 345-105.

2. Introduction.

- a. Lt Col HAROLD L. DAVIS, O 359 292, FA, Commanding.
Major JAMES D. MCCULLOUGH, O 227 185, FA, Executive.
Major DICKSON G. HIPPI, O 297 133, FA, S-3
Captain RECTOR PARKS, O 306 740, FA, S-2
1st Lt MONROE S. HALL, O1 168 700, FA, S-4
1st Lt FREDRICK A. KLEWIN, O1 822 585, FA, S-1
Captain RONALD C. HARMON, O 249 845, Inf. Comdg Hq Co.
Captain DONAL I. MEDLEY, O 397 029, FA, Comdg Co A.
Captain ALONZO J. GOLDEN, O 393 003, FA, Comdg Co B.
Captain ROBERT R. KLINE, O1 167 072, FA, Comdg Co C.
1st Lt ROBERT E. PARKER, O1 822 610, FA, Comdg Rcn Co.
Captain ARTHUR FORST, O 419 121, MC, Bn Surgeon.

b. Not applicable.

c. Period covered: 1 Feb to 28 Feb 45.

d. Maps used during period:

- (1) 1 Feb to 2 Feb 45: France and Belgium; Marche, scale 1:100,000.
Köln 1:100,000.
(2) 3 Feb to 8 Feb 45: France and Belgium, Liege, Central Europe,
Köln 1:100,000.
(3) 9 Feb to 28 Feb 45: Central Europe, Köln 1:100,000; France
and Belgium, Sittard 1:50,000; Germany, Julich 1:50,000.

3. Narrative.

a. Operations.

(1) Company A.

1 - 2 Feb 45: The company remained in the vicinity of Oufny, Belgium for maintenance, rehabilitation and reorganization in preparation for future operations.

3 - 8 Feb 45: On the morning of 3 Feb 45 the company moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Eiksken, Holland and continued on maintenance rehabilitation and reorganization in preparation for future operations.

9 - 28 Feb 45: On the evening of 9 Feb 45 the company moved to the vicinity of Frelenberg, Germany and continued reorganization activities.

On the 22 Feb 45 the company was attached to the 334th Inf Regt and that morning moved to indirect firing positions defiladed on open ground South of LINDERN. Registration was completed that day. At 0245 on the 23 Feb 45 the

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company commenced firing prearranged concentrations of harassing fire on towns and enemy installations in support of crossing of the Roer River. Fifty missions were fired and expended 537 rounds of Shell HE, Fuze delay, by 0945 of 24 Feb. At 1500 on 24 Feb the company crossed the river on a Ponton bridge to the vicinity of KORRENZIG. The 2nd and 3rd platoons went into firing positions in the vicinity of BAAL in support of an attack by the regiment. The 1st platoon was in reserve in the vicinity of KORRENZIG.

On 25 Feb the 1st platoon was placed in direct support of the 1st Bn, 334th Inf Regt in the vicinity of BAAL with the mission of guarding the regimental right flank. The 2nd platoon was placed in direct support of the 3rd Bn, 334th Inf Regt in the vicinity of GRANTERATH.

On 25 Feb the 3rd platoon, LT JOSEPH SILENCE, Platoon Leader, was placed in direct support of the 1st Bn, 334th Inf Regt in the vicinity of HETZERATH. In the morning the platoon assisted the infantry in the capture of 30 prisoners of war. That afternoon enemy personnel were observed moving into a chateau by way of a communications trench. A tank destroyer was brought up into direct firing position under cover of darkness and fired 4 rounds of Shell HE, Fuze delay, into the building at cellar level. Enemy personnel totalling 102 surrendered with celerity.

On 26 Feb the 2nd platoon captured 5 prisoners near SCHEIDT. The 1st and 2nd platoons from the vicinity of GRANTERATH fired at suspect observation posts in ERKELENZ. A church steeple and water tower were partially demolished. The 2nd platoon laid interdictory fire on a road between MATZERATH and ERKELENZ in support of attack by the 2nd Bn, 334th Inf Regt. At 1920 the company was assembled in the vicinity of RAABERBERG and was attached to Task Force Church, which included a battalion of tanks and a regiment of Infantry.

On 27 Feb at 1300 the company started moving from the assembly area in support of the advance of Task Force Church. At 0600 of 28 Feb the platoons were in position in the vicinity of HEBLER and BERG continued in their supporting role. At 2000 on 28 Feb Task Force Church was dissolved and Company A was attached to 334th Inf Regt to support their attack.

(2) Company B.

1 - 2 Feb 45: The company remained in the vicinity of HABIEMONT, BELGIUM for maintenance, rehabilitation, and reorganization in preparation for future operations.

3 - 8 Feb 45: On the morning of 3 Feb the company moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of EIKSKEN, HOLLAND and continued on maintenance, rehabilitation and reorganization. During the hours of darkness on 8 Feb the Company began preparing dug in positions in the vicinity of Brachelen, Germany for occupation in future operations.

9 - 28 Feb 45: On the evening of 9 Feb the Company moved to the vicinity of FRELENBERG, GERMANY. Preparations of dug in positions continued and observation posts were established and the area observed for possible targets for future operations. On the night of 15 Feb the 1st platoon occupied the prepared positions. From 16 to 21 Feb the platoon fired at OP's and placed harrassing fire on RURICH. Using shell HE Fuze Quick at a range of 3300 yards a church steeple in KORRENZIG was completely demolished. Five hits were observed in a steeple in RURICH.

On the evening of 22 Feb the 2nd and 3rd platoons moved to the previously prepared positions in the vicinity of BRACHELEN. At 1245 on 23 Feb Feb all platoons commenced firing at predetermined targets in support of a crossing of the ROER RIVER. Firing was in zone and on order by the 334th Inf Regt and 97 missions were fired with an expenditure of 791 rounds of Shell HE fuze Delay. During the hours of darkness of 24 Feb the Company moved across the river to the vicinity of KORRENZIG and was held in mobile reserve.

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On 26 Feb the 2nd Platoon moved into firing positions near BAAL. The 1st and 3rd Platoons took up positions in the vicinity of HETZERATH. The Company was attached to the 533rd Inf Regt at 1600 in the support of their attack. On 27 Feb the Company moved to the vicinity of ORATH. In the afternoon the platoons moved to the vicinity of BEECK and that evening the 2nd Platoon moved to the vicinity of WOOFF. On 28 Feb the 1st and 3rd Platoons moved to the vicinity of FISCHELN and the 2nd platoon to the vicinity of HOSTERI.

(3) Company C.

1 - 2 Feb 45: The Company remained in the vicinity of HABLEMONT, BELGIUM for maintenance, rehabilitation and reorganization in preparation for future operations.

3 - 8 Feb 45: On the morning of 3 Feb the Company moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of EIKSKER, HOLLAND and continued on maintenance, rehabilitation and reorganization.

9 - 28 Feb 45: On the evening of 9 Feb the Company moved to the vicinity of FRELENBERG, GERMANY. The 2nd Platoon was attached to Company B and established observation posts in the vicinity of BRACHELEN for possible targets for future operations.

On 16 Feb Lt MONROE S. HALL was relieved from duty as Platoon Leader, 3rd Platoon and was attached to Headquarters, 638th Tank Destroyer Battalion, with duties as S-4 to replace Capt JOHN L. ROBERTS, O1 882 585, dropped from assignment due to illness.

On 22 Feb the Company was attached to the 335th Inf Regt and moved to SUGGERATH on 23 Feb. On 24 Feb at 1100 the Company crossed the ROER RIVER. The firing platoons took up positions in the vicinity of DOVEREN in support of a regimental attack. The 1st and 2nd Platoons moved to HOUVERATH on 25 Feb in direct roles of support and on 26 Feb moved to GOLKERATH.

On 27 Feb the platoons followed the Infantry providing AT support. In the vicinity of HOLKRATH the 1st Platoon fired 3 rounds Shell HE fuze quick at a M.G. nest which was holding up the advance of the Infantry and knocked it out. In the vicinity of SCHWARBERG the 3rd Platoon fired 2 rounds Shell HE fuze quick and knocked out a M.G. nest. The Company captured 151 prisoners in the advance.

On the morning of 28 Feb the platoons were in position in the vicinity of LLEOH. That afternoon the platoons moved to the vicinity of WALNIEL.

(4) Rcn Company:

1 - 2 Feb 45: The Company remained in the vicinity of HABLEMONT, BELGIUM for maintenance, rehabilitation and reorganization in preparation for future operations.

3 - 8 Feb 45: On the morning of 3 Feb the Company moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of EIKSKEN, HOLLAND and continued on maintenance, rehabilitation and reorganization.

9 - 28 Feb 45: On the evening of 9 Feb the Company moved to the vicinity of FRELENBERG, GERMANY. The 2nd platoon was attached to Company B, established observation posts in the vicinity of BRACHELEN and observed for possible targets for future operations.

On 23 Feb Captain DONALD M. MC AFEE was placed on detached service with G-2, Hq Ninth U. S. Army and Lt ROBERT E. PARKER assumed the command of the Company. At 0245 on 23 Feb the 2nd Platoon reinforced by four .50 cal M.G.'s of the Pioneer Platoon commenced firing at predetermined targets in support of the crossing of the ROER RIVER.

On 22 February the 1st platoon was attached to Company A in the vicinity of LINDERN and on 23 Feb the 3rd platoon was attached to Company C in the vicinity of SUGGERATH.

On 24 Feb the reconnaissance platoons crossed the ROER RIVER and performed route and area reconnaissance in the division zone. Observation posts were established by the 1st platoon in the vicinity of BAAL and by the 3rd platoon at DOVEREN. The 2nd platoon took up positions in the vicinity of KORRENZIG.

On 25 thru 28 Feb the reconnaissance platoons continued route and area reconnaissance in the zone of the division attack.

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b. Enemy Forces.

9 - 28 Feb 45: German forces identified as the 183 VG Inf Div, and a portion of the 59 VG Inf Div operated in the 84th Inf Div sector prior to the crossing of the Roer River. After the crossing elements of the 176 VG Inf Div and the 338 VG Inf Div were also encountered. The area from the Roer River East may be characterized as the enemy edge of the Siegfried Line. The river was used as the principal obstacle and flooding was accomplished by destruction of dams. The defensive positions on the east bank were largely dug in with pill boxes. Nebelwerfer fire was used in a quantity unprecedented and the artillery fire was mostly long range. Air was minor in quantity and showed aggressiveness only at points vital to the enemy, such as the persistent strikes at the bridges.

4. Annexes:

a. Personnel.

(1) Reinforcements

Hq Co: 1 EM MOS 345
Co A : 2 EM MOS 729; 2 EM MOS 610; 1 EM MOS 521;
2 EM MOS 745; 1 EM MOS 531; 1 EM MOS 736.
Co B : 2 EM MOS 605; 2 EM MOS 531; 1 EM MOS 636;
1 EM MOS 610; 1 EM MOS 745.
Co C : 4 EM MOS 531; 3 EM MOS 610; 2 EM MOS 745.
Rcn Co: 2 EM MOS 733; 2 EM MOS 345; 1 EM MOS 745;
1 EM MOS 729.

(2) 16 EM Wounded.

2 Officers Wounded.

(3) 295 PW's captured.

(4) Awards and Battlefield Commissions - See Inclosures.

b. Supply and Evacuation.

(1) Ordnance.

1 Car, Armd Utility, M20
1 Truck, 4 ton, command and reconnaissance.
1 M.G., 50 cal HB, flex.
1 Mount for 50 cal M.G.
1 General Mechanics Tool Set.

(2) Signal.

1 E.E.S. Telephone.
1 Command Post and Fire Direction Set.

c. Known enemy losses due to our operations:

1 Steeple destroyed; 2 Machine Guns destroyed; 2 Steeples damaged;
1 water tower damaged.

8-Incls: Incl 1 - Award Captain Donal I. Medley.
Incl 2 - Award Captain Robert R. Kline
Incl 3 - Award Sergeant Donald F. Westfahl
Incl 4 - Award Sergeant John W. Harrison Sr.
Incl 5 - Award Technical Sergeant Joseph M. Szymanski
Incl 6 - Award Private First Class John E. Hibbs
Incl 7 - Battle Field Commission First Sergeant John A. Youngren
Incl 8 - One Unit Journal

Harold L. Davis
HAROLD L. DAVIS
Lt Col, FA
Commanding

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