

COMPANY B
SIX HUNDRED FORTY FIRST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

JOURNAL OF EVENTS

APRIL 14, 1944

Sailed from Oro Bay at 2017 hours.

APRIL 15, 1944

Arrived at Finschafen 1705 hrs (280 miles). Disembarked from Liberty Ship "David E. Hughes" at 1930 hrs. At 2045 hrs. proceeded to staging area Cape Cretin.

APRIL 16, 1944

Care of Individual Equipment.

APRIL 17, 1944

Left Cape Cretin 1900 hrs. by motor transport. Arrived at embarkation point 1445 hours. Loaded on USS Etamin 1727 hours.

APRIL 18, 1944

Sailed from Finschhafen 1035 hours.

APRIL 19, 20, 21, 1944

Aboard USS Etamin.

APRIL 22, 1944

First wave from USS Etamin was Company B, 641st TD Bn, 2nd and headquarters Platoon loaded in LCMs at 0600 hours. We landed with the Infantry to establish a beach head between Wapi and Korako. We were under sniper fire. There was a heavy aerial and naval preparatory bombardment. Dug in our guns 2 miles west of landing point between Korako and Pro Mission. The night was spent in fox-holes. Enemy in vicinity.

APRIL 23, 1944

Moved by alligators $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles west. Gun dug in. Expended 6 rounds on enemy positions.

APRIL 24, 1944

Improved gun positions at Tadji Plantation. Enemy in our area; some captured, some killed. Expended 19 rounds on enemy positions in vicinity of Aitape. CP party was observing and directing fire.

APRIL 25, 1944

Left Tadji Planation. Enemy activity nil. Travelled 6 1/2 miles Southeast. Set up CP. Dug in guns at Lemient Hamlet.

APRIL 26, 1944

Enemy in vicinity of our area. Cleared lanes of fire.

APRIL 27, 28, 29, 30, 1944.

Improved gun positions and area.

MAY 1, 1944

Expended 47 rounds on enemy positions. Infantry patrolled area. Fire was directed by plane observation.

MAY 2, 3, 1944

Worked on gun positions. Shortage of clothes.

MAY 4, 1944.

Inspection of equipment by Colonel of 191st FA Group Hq. Dock details (70 men and 3 NCOs)

MAY 5, 1944

Expended 101 rounds on enemy area. Fire was directed by plane.

MAY 6, 1944

Detail for dock work. Area cleaned..

MAY 7, 1944

Detail for dock work. Standing by.

MAY 8, 1944 to MAY 14, 1944

Several men taken sick. Doctors said from exposure. Dock work during this time.

MAY 14, 1944

Left Lemient Hamlet at 1800 hrs. Boarded LST 456 at 1930 hours. Sailed at 2400 hrs. Red alert at 0100 hours. 15 men boarded LST 202 with our kitchen truck.

MAY 15, 1944

Arrived at Hollandia. Red alert at 0400 hours

MAY 16, 1944

Arrived Tanamerah Bay at 1800 hrs.

MAY 17, 1944

Arrived in vicinity of Topheavy at 0600 hrs. Yellow beach on the mainland and Wakde Island were shelled by destroyers and cruisers, also bombed and strafed by aircraft. Co. B landed at 0830 hrs from an LST. Moved 200 yards south to a rendezvous area. Boarded LCMs for shore to shore operation to Insoemania Island at 1500 Hrs. Island surrounded by coral reef. Mortars and ammunition brought ashore in water 4 to 5 feet deep. Received some sniper fire from Insoemoar Island. Mortars were immediately placed into positions and 150 rounds expended on Insoemoar. Destroyed fuel and supply dumps. Lt. Finnegan and 25 men arrived from mainland, where they had laid an airstrip on the beach for Cub plane. No fresh water on Island. Artillery fired all night over our positions, on Wakde Drome. Shorts and high bursts fell in our area. No one injured. Red alert at 1715 hrs and 2100 hrs. Enemy bombers came over.

MAY 18, 1944

Rained until 0500 hrs. Company hauled and unloaded ammo until 0730 hrs. We commenced firing at 0833 hrs and ceased firing at 0857 hrs. Expended 603 rounds on Jap pill-boxes, gun positions and general area of Wakde Drome. Excellent results obtained as observed by OP party. Our artillery laid down a barrage from the mainland corresponding to our barrage. The infantry invaded at 0900 hrs. We were under enemy fire. At 0900 hrs. Sgt. Louis (MMI) DeBortole was wounded in left shoulder from enemy fire. He was evacuated. Our planes strafed and bombed the airdrome from 0730 hrs to 0830 hrs. Our artillery continued to fire all day and night. Enemy snipers very active.

MAY 19, 1944

Standing by. Fighting continued near air drome. Enemy fire kept us close to ground. Destroyers opened fire again against enemy resistance on Wakde Strip. Tanks were used. Artillery continued firing. We left Insoemania Island at 1414 hrs. Our landing was very difficult as was the landing because of coral reef. We landed on Arara Beachhead at 1615 hrs. S/Sgt Luevano and part of his Platoon were left on Insoemania Island and joined us next morning. It was raining when we landed at Arara Beachhead (Toem). At 1815 hrs 105 FM and 4 officers were sent to 218th FA and 167th FA as security guard. Jap snipers had infiltrated into this area. 1st Sgt O'Donnell and Hq Platoon stayed in bivouac area. Heavy guard all night. Artillery firing on Tor River in enemy vicinity. At 1800 hrs Captain Marshall and 6 men went on recon in the vicinity of Tor River. Every one was wet. Standing by awaiting orders.

MAY 20, 1944

Captain Marshall and 20 men traveled 6 miles to Tor River and dug in one mortar. They expended 18 rounds on general area of enemy at 1500 hrs. Returned at 1700 hrs. Rest of Company stood by awaiting orders. At 1730 hrs. Captain E. J. Marshall ASN 0383172 was relieved of command and Lt. V. F. Woebeking assigned Command by 191st FA Group Hq-VOCO- The morale of the Company was low because of Captain Marshall being relieved. We dug in for the night.

MAY 21, 1944

Lt. Woebeking and 25 men went south to Temetoe River. Expended 18 rounds on enemy positions using one mortar. Lt. Finnegan observed from the air. Good results. Captain E J Marshall enroute to join BN Hqs, 641st TD Bn. on orders from APO 565-1.

MAY 22, 1944

Company moved at 1330 hrs to Temetoe River area. Dug in mortars. Enemy snipers in vicinity. Heavy guard in area. At 1700 hrs. an order came in for the return of 13 EM to U.S.A. on Rotation Plan. Morale was high. Attached to 163 Inf. Regt. Red alert at 1930 hrs.

MAY 23, 1944

On this date our planes landed on Wakde Drome. Enemy in area. Everyone digging in deep. Defense lines set up.

MAY 24, 1944

New mess hall erected. Our artillery laying barrage on Temetoe River vicinity. Enemy in vicinity our area. Heavy guard around camp.

MAY 25, 1944

0530 hrs Red alert. Ships laid down smoke screen. 13 EM trfd to APO 928-Rotation Plan-left by plane. Ammo Platoon hauling ammo to gun positions. 16 EM promoted to fill vacancies created by 13 EM returned on Rotation Plan. Enemy infiltrated into area next to ours. On this date word came that the 18 rounds expended on May 20 by Capt. Marshall and S/Sgt Bettsworth with 20 men, released a patrol of the 163 Inf, Company I, which had been pinned down for hours by Jap machine gun fire. The Japs retreated, enabling the patrol to return to safety. This patrol was high in the praise of Company B, 641st TD Bn. Our artillery again active during night and day.

MAY 26, 1944

- Inspection of ordnance by Officers. 16 rounds expended in vicinity of enemy on Aslsarer Village. Enemy was active in the vicinity of our area. Artillery firing on Tor and Tenetoe Rivers. Small arms fire throughout the night in our area. Red alert from 1900hrs to 2000 hrs. Company up all night.

MAY 27, 1944

At 0100 hrs Japs in our area. One killed 6 feet from a mortar position by James E. Umphries, 37101097. Small arms fire during early hours of morning. This Jap appeared to be in excellent shape. His equipment included gun, bayonet, 2 grenades--120 rounds of small arms ammo and 3 bags of food. 0450 hrs red alert. Enemy bombers made 7 runs over area. Our guard was very heavy. Machine guns used 2015 hrs to 2030 hrs. 3 red alerts. Enemy bombers came over, at 2030 hrs Japs counterattacked against the entire beachhead. Firing continued throughout the night. Machine guns, hand grenades and small arms, all used. Part of our infantry was pushed to beach. The Jap counterattack was defeated, some of the Japs killing themselves. Mortar and artillery fire all night. We were in our dugouts protecting left flank. Enemy fire was heavy at times.

MAY 28, 1944

Enemy small arms fire during early hours of morning in our area. 4 Gun sections of 2nd Platoon moved to vicinity of ~~Weske~~ River to assist 158th Inf. against enemy, at 0900 hrs. Major Preston, Commanding Officer of 641st TD Bn arrived at 0900 hrs. He accompanied Lt. Wagner and 2nd Platoon to ~~Weske~~ River area. Company improving dugouts and lanes of fire for protection against enemy counterattacks. We had to close in our perimeter. Small arms fire in our area, very light. Enemy started to infiltrate into 2nd Platoon area near ~~Weske~~ River area.

TOR

MAY 29, 1944

At 0200 hrs Japs attacked Lt Wagner's Platoon at ~~Weske~~^{TOR} River. Small arms and grenades were used at intervals. Sgt John Masayko, 39077037, at 0215 hrs killed one Jap soldier near his gun position. Corporal Walter J. Flaim, 36717320, wounded in leg by grenade at 0200hrs. Heavy fire in entire area. At the CP 1st Platoon fired 355 rounds--1120 hrs to 1230 hrs. Fire was directed in vicinity of Tenetoe River area in enemy territory.

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MAY 30, 1944

Major Preston left at 0800 hrs for Rear Echelon, accompanied by S/Sgt Gale Bettsworth (VOCO). Enemy in ~~Waste~~ Tor River area near our positions. CP moved to Toem area at 1600 hrs. Expended 113 rounds on enemy in Tomentoe River area at 1800 hrs. 50 EM and 2 Officers attached to 158 Inf., 14 EM with Service Company 163rd Inf 2nd Battalion assisting in defense of perimeter. Red alert 0010 hrs, 2025-2145 hrs. Sgt. John Masayko took over the 2nd Platoon.

MAY 31, 1944

1st Platoon improved gun positions. Small arms fire on Yellow Beach at intervals. 2nd Platoon at Tor River expended 67 rounds assisting in the repulsing of Japanese counterattacks. Furnished security for 158 Inf. Bn. Hqs. Harrassed by Jap knee mortars and machine gun fire all night. Red alert 2045-2125 hrs. We are having transportation difficulties again. We have 1 truck, 3/4 ton for the entire Company.

JUNE 1, 1944

At CP improved gun positions. On east perimeter our men assisted in the killing of 1 Jap and the capture of 3. At Tor River, 2nd Platoon expended 75 rounds on enemy gun positions and rendezvous area. Under Jap sniper and machine gun fire. One Jap killed in perimeter. Red alert 2030-2200 hrs.

JUNE 2, 1944

Lt Woebeking and 12 men of 1st Platoon joined 2nd Platoon replacing Lt Wagner and Lt Finnegan and 12 men of 2nd Platoon. At Tor River an enemy attack was repulsed on the left rear of the perimeter. Expended 72 rounds on Jap concentrations. Under enemy fire.

JUNE 3, 1944

At CP expended 27 rounds at 1830 hrs on enemy positions. 2nd Platoon at Tor River expended 109 rounds on enemy concentrations. Under enemy fire. Red alert 2400 hrs.

JUNE 5, 1944

Entire 1st Platoon now at Tor River and 2nd Platoon at CP at Toem. At CP small arms fire during night. Our artillery fire fell short near our area at 1700 hrs. 4 Gun sections and CP party joined 191 FA Group supporting 147 FA and 167 FA. One Jap killed on our east perimeter. At Tor River expended 10 rounds on enemy positions, supporting K Company, 158 Inf. Enemy activity at 2045 hrs. Red alert 2215 hrs to 2340 hrs. We had transportation difficulties again.

JUNE 6, 1944

Tor River--expended 90 rounds on enemy at intervals. 2 Gun sections with 147 FA expended 12 rounds. 2 Gun sections with 167 FA expended 10 rounds. Red alert 0300. Harrassing Fire

JUNE 7, 1944

At 147 FA and 167 FA--furnished security guard. At Tor River 1st Platoon expended 104 rounds in support of F Company 158th Inf. At CP no activity. Red alert 0230 and 2000 hrs.

JUNE 8, 1944

At CP no activity. Cleaned ordnance. At Tor River 1st Platoon expended 150 rounds during the night. 16 men used for outside perimeter of I Company, 158th Inf. Enemy activity in vicinity. At 147 FA no activity. Corporal Accussio Piazza, 00253759, wounded in 2nd toe of left foot at 1630 hrs. The wound was non battle. Taken to 54th Evac. Hosp. At 167 FA no activity.

JUNE 9, 1944

At CP no activity. No activity at 167 FA and 147 FA. Tor River furnished perimeter guard. Red alert at 0500 hrs.

JUNE 10, 1944

At CP no activity. At 147 and 167 FA no activity. 2 Gun sections of 1st Platoon returned to Cp at 1100 hrs. At Tor River 2 Gun sections moved forward to 71.15-47.20-Maffin. Expended 102 rounds, one direct hit on Jap 70mm Gun. Intermittent firing from 1900 to 2406 hrs.

JUNE 11, 1944

At CP cleaned ordnance. At 147 FA and 167 FA no activity. Expended 97 rounds (Tor River Area) on enemy positions. Enemy activity all night. Red alert 0215 and 2345 hrs.

JUNE 12, 1944

At CP no activity. At 147 FA and 167 FA no activity. At Tor River expended 92 rounds on enemy concentrations. Enemy activity all night.

JUNE 13, 1944

At CP no activity. At 147 FA and 167 FA no activity. At Tor River expended 121 rounds on enemy positions with good results. Enemy activity all night. Red alert 0300 hrs.

JUNE 14, 1944

At 147 FA and 167 FA furnished perimeter guard. AT CP no activity. At Tor River expended 120 rounds on enemy at intervals.

JUNE 15, 1944

At CP no activity. Standing by. 2 Gun sections at 147 FA and 2 Gun sections at 167 FA relieved of duty. Above-- 4 Gun sections attached to 20 Inf. Regt., 6th Div., making 6 Gun sections with 20th Inf. 2nd Platoon at Tor River expended 73 rounds on enemy. Transportation difficulties arose again. 167 FA pulled out, leaving our 2 guns stranded, without food or transportation.

JUNE 16, 1944

Attached to 20th Inf. Regt, 6th Div., effective 0845 hrs, 17th June, 1944.

JUNE 17, 1944

Entire Company in process of moving to Tor River area with 20th Inf. Regt.

JUNE 18, 1944

Corporal Beckleff 20253055, wounded in left foot (non battle) at 1900 hrs. Entire Company at Tor River as of 1600 hrs, 17 June. 2nd Platoon expended 20 rounds on enemy with good results. Maffin area: As of 16 June, 2nd Platoon in Maffin 1 area expended 170 rounds on enemy concentrations.

JUNE 19, 1944

Entire Company now at Maffin Bay area in direct support of 20th Inf Regt. on push toward Sarmi. Expended 13 rounds on enemy at intervals. In moving we again had transportation difficulties.

JUNE 20, 1944

Lt. Voebeking and 6 Gun sections of 1st Platoon went forward in closer support of 20th Inf Regt in push on Sarmi. At Maffin 1 expended 234 rounds on enemy in support of Infantry advance. VP was used with excellent results. Entire Co. under Japanese artillery counter battery.

JUNE 21, 1944

1st Platoon still in close support of 20th Inf, under Jap counter battery. At 2nd Platoon Maffin 1 expended 329 rounds on enemy in support of Infantry advance. VP used again with good results. We were again under 70mm Jap counter battery. 1st Platoon lost 2 mortar carts destroyed and 2 garaged. Red alert at 2100 hours.

JUNE 22, 1944

Pfc Thomas P McKenna 39011894, wounded in action, left arm at 1700 hrs, 21 June. Pfc Joseph Cohen 32115546, wounded in action, left foot, 1730 hrs, 21 June. Entire Company at Maffin 1 area now. Our biggest barrage to date 929 rounds were expended in support of 20th Inf advance toward Sarmi. Jap's artillery fire ceased. Attached to Hqs US Forces APO 704. Moved from Maffin 1 area to Toem area at 1200 hrs. Set up perimeter guard. Transportation difficulties again.

JUNE 23, 1944

Set up camp. Cleaned ordnance. Forged perimeter guard.

JUNE 24, 1944

Cleaned area, checked ordnance. Furnished perimeter guard. Three sections from 1st Platoon and 3 sections from 2nd Platoon went on practice landing operation from 0900 hrs to 1545 hrs.

JUNE 25, 1944

Cleaned equipment. Our strength is now 143 EM and 4 officers. Lt Finnegan is in the hospital.

JUNE 26, 1944

Standing by awaiting orders.

JUNE 27, 1944

Lt Woebeking and 24 EM boarded LST 459. Lt Wagner and 25 EM boarded LST 467. T/5 Jack Cliff (taking Lt Finnegan's place) and 3 men boarded LST 472. Lt Fetke and 3 men boarded LST 466. Rest of Company standing by. T/5 Stephen L. Haywood 39677463 accidentally shot in right foot (non-battle)

JUNE 28, 1944

32 EM and Lt Woebeking returned from LST 459 for meals. No arrangements had been made for messing. Anthony Carrisi burned around face. (Non-battle)

JUNE 29, 1944

All equipment loaded on IST. Awaiting orders.

JUNE 30, 1944

1st Sgt O'Donnell and 34 EM boarded LCI 364 at 0900 hrs. Lt Schluckebier and 51 EM boarded LCI 107 at 0900 hrs. Sailed from APO 565 at 1900 hrs. 2 EM left at APO 565 with kitchen truck, to join us on D plus 2. Company messing respective LCIs and LSTs. No hot meals. All 10 in 1 cations.

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JULY 1, 1944

Enroute to APO 704.

JULY 2, 1944--NOEMFOOR ISLAND--

Arrived in vicinity of Yellow Beach at 0500 hrs. Planes bombed and strafed Kamiri Air Drome. Cruisers and destroyers shelled it. 6 Gun sections on ducks landed at 0800 hrs with 158th Inf. Regt. Immediately went into position. Rest of Company landed at 0945 hrs. 1st Platoon dug in on beach and expended 86 rounds at intervals on enemy. 2nd Platoon dug in positions 1000 yards east of 1st Platoon near Kamiri Air Drome. 1st Platoon supported 1st Bn, 158th Inf. and 2nd Platoon supported 2nd Bn, 158th Inf. 2nd Platoon expended 12 rounds. The landing was made under enemy counter battery. We suffered no casualties. A coral reef 400 yards out from beach made landing very difficult. We had to carry ammo across this coral reef, water about 3 feet deep. Had 3 guns under water for one day with other equipment. 6x6 truck which was used, hit a deep hole in coral reef and had to wait for tide.

JULY 3, 1944

1st Platoon at Kamiri Drome expended 90 rounds on enemy positions. 2nd Platoon expended 18 rounds in support of 2nd Bn, 158th Inf. Red alert at 2300 hrs.

JULY 4, 1944

1st Platoon expended 70 rounds at intervals on enemy positions. 2nd Platoon no activity. Red alert 1945 hrs to 2390 hrs.

JULY 5, 1944

1st Platoon at CP expended 95 rounds on enemy. 2nd Platoon no activity. 503rd Parachute Regt. was dropped on Kamiri Drome. Red alert 1945 hrs.

JULY 6, 1944

Lt. Woebeking with Lt. Wagner and 2nd Platoon plus attached men from Headquarters Platoon and 1st Platoon joined 2nd Bn, 158 Inf. Regt on encircling movement by water to Nanber Air Drome. 1st Platoon expended 36 rounds at intervals during the night on enemy territory for harrassing fire. Red alerts 0300 hrs 2030 hrs 2130hrs.

JULY 7, 1944

At CP 1st Platoon standing by for orders. Company B, 641st TD Bn., (less 1 Platoon) relieved from attachment to 158th Inf Regt. and attached to 503 Parachute Regt., 1800 hrs, 7th July, 1944. Red alert at 2015 hrs.

JULY 8, 1944

At CP 1st Platoon awaiting orders from 503 Parachute Regt. 2nd Platoon events unknown at this time. Shortage of water at CP. Red alert 0500 hrs and 1950 hrs.

JULY 9, 1944

Our strength 138 EM and 5 Officers. Exposure again affecting the men. Lt Woebeking and 6 men of 1st Platoon returned to CP from Namber Drome. 1st Platoon nil activity. Lt. Wagner at Namber Drome with 2nd Platoon. Red alerts 0500, 0600, 0900, 1900, 2000, and 2230 hrs.

JULY 10, 1944

At CP no activity. Delayed reports from 2nd Platoon Namber Air Drome on July 7 landed at Namber Drome at 1000 hrs. Coral reef again caused considerable difficulty on making landing. Expended 15 rounds on Jap concentrations. On July 8, 1400 Hrs to July 9, 1400 hrs expended 88 rounds on enemy in vicinity of Namber Drome. On July 9 to 10 expended 90 rounds on enemy area. Red alert 1950 hrs

JULY 11, 1944

At CP Kamiri Air Drome no activity. 2nd Platoon, Namber Drome, reports not in as yet.

JULY 12, 1944

At CP no activity in Kamiri Drome area. 2nd Platoon at Namber Drome reports not in as yet. Red alert 2100 hrs and 2400 hrs.

JULY 13, 1944

CP moved to higher ground south of Kamiri Drome at 1400 hrs. 2nd Platoon at Namber Drome, no activity.

JULY 14, 1944

At CP no activity near Kamiri Drome area. At 2nd Platoon at Namber Drome, no activity. Delayed report from 2nd Platoon, no activity for July 11, 12, 13, 1944. Transportation again difficult. We borrowed trucks from Air Corps Engineers to move. Standing by awaiting orders. Red alert 0200 hrs and 0430 hrs.

JULY 15, 1944

At CP Kamiri Drome no activity. At 2nd Platoon Namber Drome, no activity. Awaiting orders. Red alerts at 0200 hrs, 0430 hrs, and 2230 hrs.

JULY 16, 1944

At CP Kamiri Drome 35 men used for CM and Ammo dump details. At 2nd Platoon Namber Drome reports not in as yet. As of July 14, 1944, Company B 641st TD Bn., less one Platoon relieved from attachment to 503rd Parachute Regt. and attached to 158th Inf. Regt. The 2nd Platoon at Namber Drome relieved from attachment to 158th Inf. Regt and attached to 503rd Parachute Regt., Red alert 2030, 2100 Hrs.

JULY 17, 1944

Kamiri Drome-Noemfoor Island-At CP-furnished 30 man detail for Gas and Ammunition dumps. Standing by for orders Red alert at 2030 hours.

JULY 18, 1944

Kamiri Drome--Furnished 48 enlisted men and one officer to Shore Party Cp. Worked from 1200 hrs to 1900 hrs, unloading a Liberty Ship. At 2nd Platoon, Namber Drome--delayed report--July 13 through July 16: Standing by for orders from 503rd Parachute Regt.

JULY 19, 1944

At CP, Kamiri Drome--Furnished 48 enlisted men and one officer to Shore Party for work on Liberty Ship--0730 hrs to 1300 hrs. Furnished 10 man detail to Shore Party--2300 hrs to 0700 hrs. Red alert 2255 to 2310 hrs.

JULY 20, 1944

At CP Kamiri Drome--furnished 48 men and one officer for Shore Party detail--0700 to 1300hrs. At 1500 hrs Task Force was notified us to break camp and board IST 469 by 1700 hrs. 2nd Platoon arrived from Namber Drome area and joined us at 1500 hrs. Company boarded IST 469 at 1700 hrs sailed at 1900 hrs.--enroute to Hollandia.

JULY 21, 1944

Enroute to Hollandia.

JULY 22, 1944

Arrived at White Beach 1-Hollandia at 1030 hrs. Disembarked and traveled by motor to Base Camp. Arrived 1730 hrs. Distance traveled- 35 miles.