

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS 644TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

Record of Operations - March 1945

At the beginning of the period the 644th Tank Destroyer Battalion continued its attachment to the 8th Infantry Division and dispositions were as follows:

Forward CP	KERPEN
Rear CP	BOITENBROICH
Company A CP	KERPEN
Company B CP	KERPEN
Company C CP	BOITENBROICH
Reconnaissance Company CP	KERPEN

At 1000 hours Company B left their assembly area in KERPEN, traveled North and crossed the WEST Canal at KORTEN in the 104th Division sector, establishing contact with the 28th Infantry Regt at GOTZENKIRCHEN. Company B then turned south, following behind the infantry and took up positions of anti-armor defense North of MCDRATH which still remained in enemy hands.

The other units of the organization carried out their part of the Battalion mission which was to provide the anti-armor defense for the entire 8th Division sector and to give close support to infantry elements whenever and wherever possible.

The S-4 of the Battalion had a Forward Supply Dump in KERPEN as the period opened and one prisoner of war was captured by the personnel of that installation on 1 March 1945.

Throughout the day and night the enemy fired large caliber shells or rockets into KERPEN.

On 2 March 1945 Company A remained in anti-tank positions in KERPEN. Late in the period the 1st Platoon moved to anti-tank positions at GREERATH.

Company B moved the 3d Platoon from GOTZENKIRCHEN to MABB RATH, the 2d Platoon to MCDRATH, and the 1st Platoon to BOITENBROICH. During the period the 2d Platoon assisted the infantry in assault work. The 1st Platoon engaged in a fire fight with four (4) enemy tanks, destroyed one (1) and caused the remaining tanks to retreat.

Company C made a reconnaissance of the West end of MCDRATH from 0800 to 0900 hours and found there was a road block preventing entry directly up the main street, and that the only other route was blocked by an enemy assault gun. However, by 1100 hours the 2d Platoon was able to move into the town. At 1300 hours the 1st Platoon moved into MCDRATH and at 1400 hours the 3d Platoon followed. At 1600 hours the 2d Platoon fired 10 rounds HE at a German infantry company, at a range of 500 yards, and dispersed them. At 1800 hours the 3d Platoon M-10s moved into positions in the eastern end of town. During the period the Company took three (3) prisoners.

The Reconnaissance Company CP plus one platoon remained at KERPEN, providing security for the Forward CP and the remaining elements of Reconnaissance Company remained attached to the firing companies.

On 3 March Company A assembled all three platoons at BOITENBROICH in preparation for a night attack in support of the 3d Bn, 28th Inf Regt.

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Company B assembled the 1st and 2d Platoons at GREFRATH in preparation for a night attack in support of the 1st Bn, 28th Inf Regt. The 3d Platoon assembled in HABELRATH to support the 2d Bn, 28th Inf Regt.

The 1st and 3d Platoons of Company C remained in their anti-tank defense positions in MODRATH. The 2d Platoon moved to HABELRATH and relieved the 3d Platoon of Company B in its anti-tank defense mission.

Reconnaissance Company made extensive reconnaissance in preparation for the night attack by Companies A and B. Recon patrols were used to select the routes of the destroyers in the attack. The 1st Platoon had one section with the Reconnaissance Company CP in MODRATH and one section attached to Company A. The 2d Platoon was released from attachment to Company B and returned to Reconnaissance Company control in MODRATH. The 3d Platoon had one section with Company B and one section with Company C. The Pioneer Platoon had one section with Company A and one section with Company B.

At 1240 hours the Forward CP closed in new area at MODRATH. Reconnaissance Company also moved to MODRATH, less elements attached to firing Companies, and provided security for Forward CP.

The Forward Supply Dump was in MODRATH and the Rear CP remained at HABELRATH.

On 4 March 1945, early in the day, Company B started attacking FROCKEN with the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 28th Infantry Regiment. The day was spent in street fighting and securing the town. At dark Company assumed the anti-armor defense of the FROCKEN area.

Company A assembled in GREFRATH early in the period and moved to FROCKEN. This Company supported the 1st Battalion of the 28th Infantry in clearing and securing the town. Assembling in FROCKEN at dark, Company A prepared to support the attack of the 1st Bn of the 121st Infantry to THALHEIM, which was to begin at 2400 hours.

Company C assembled in FROCKEN prior to 1700 hours. This Company supported the 2d and 3d Battalions, 121st Infantry Regiment, in their attack to take THALHEIM. The attack began at 2400 hours.

During the period the Forward CP and Reconnaissance Company CP, with one platoon and one section of Reconnaissance Company, moved to MODRATH.

During the day of 5 March 1945 Company B disposed themselves as follows, in order to break up an enemy tank attack. One platoon at HABELRATH, one platoon at GREFRATH, one platoon at MODRATH. Movement was made under enemy fire and movement was successful in breaking up tank threat.

Company A supported the 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry, in their attack to take THALHEIM. Company B supported 2d and 3d Battalions, 121st Infantry, in their attack on THALHEIM. Company C supported the attack of the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, with the 1st platoon, to seize FROCKEN and HABELRATH.

On 6 March Company A spent the first part of the period supporting the 1st Infantry Regiment. The company was encountered

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during that period. At 1900 hours Company A supported the 28th Infantry Regiment in an attack to the east. No armor was encountered.

Company B spent the early part of the period supporting the 1st Battalion of the 28th Infantry Regiment. No armor was encountered during the supporting mission. By 1130 hours Company B had established anti-armor defense on the Division's southern flank. They remained in that position throughout the balance of the period.

Company C spent the entire period in support of elements of the 1st Infantry Regiment. No armor was encountered.

During the period, the Forward CP and Reconnaissance Company (-), by infiltration, moved forward to new area at the 34D010000 lower limit, near 34D010000. Reconnaissance Company personnel, plus the 3d platoon and one section of the 3d platoon, continued to provide security for the Forward CP, while other elements remained attached to the flank companies and reconnoitered the zones of advance.

Company D supported the attack of the 28th Infantry Regiment during the hours of daylight without incident.

Company E supported the attack of the 28th Infantry Regiment during the hours of daylight without incident.

The 1st platoon of Company B moved to position in the vicinity of 34D010000. The 3d platoon and 3d remained in 34D010000. The 1st platoon moved to 34D010000.

Early in the morning, 3 March, the 1st platoon of Company C was given the mission of supporting one battalion of the 1st Infantry Regiment and to occupy anti-armor defense positions.

Company C destroyed two (2) IFV's from positions maintained along the line, and passed through them.

Company C continued support of the 28th Infantry Regiment in daylight.

Early in the morning of the 11th March, and in order to thrust no longer west, 3 platoons 1 and 2 moved to the Battalion Assembly Area at 34D010000.

On 11 March Company B arrived in the Battalion Assembly Area and the 1st platoon of the entire Battalion was assembled in that area.

The Battalion remained in its assigned assembly area on 10 March and continued its program of maintenance and repair. During the day preparations were made for movement to 34D010000.

On 11 March the Battalion moved from 34D010000 to a new assembly area in the vicinity of 34D010000, 34D010000.

For the next two days the Battalion remained in this assembly area and continued maintenance, repair, modification and reorganization.

On the 14th of March the entire Battalion moved from assembly

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during that period. At 1900 hours Company A supported the 28th Infantry Regiment in an attack to the East. No armor was encountered.

Company B spent the early part of the period supporting the 1st Battalion of the 28th Infantry Regiment. No armor was encountered during the supporting mission. By 1130 hours Company B had established anti-armor defense on the Division's southern flank. They remained in that position throughout the balance of the period.

Company C spent the entire period in support of elements of the 121st Infantry Regiment. No armor was encountered.

During the period, the Forward CP and Reconnaissance Company (-), by infiltration, moved forward to new area at the GOLDENBERG Power Plant, near KNAUSACK. Reconnaissance Company CP personnel, plus the 1st Platoon and one section of the 3d Platoon, continued to provide security for the Forward CP, while other elements remained attached to the firing companies and reconnoitered the zones of advance.

On 7 March Company A supported the attack of the 28th Infantry Regiment during the hours of daylight without incident.

Company B passed through Company A at dark and supported the attack of the 28th Infantry Regiment.

The 1st Platoon of Company C closed in position in the vicinity of KNAUSACK and the 3d Platoon and CP remained in HURF. The 1st Platoon moved to FIOHENICL.

Early in the morning, 8 March, the 2d Platoon of Company C was given the mission of supporting one battalion of the 121st Infantry Regiment and took up anti-armor defense positions.

Company C destroyed two (2) CP guns from positions maintained when Company B passed through them.

Company B continued support of the 28th Infantry Regiment in mopping up.

Having reached the RHINE River, and an armored threat no longer present, Companies A and C moved to the Battalion Assembly Area at KNAUSACK.

On 9 March Company B arrived in the Battalion Assembly Area and by 0300 hours the entire Battalion was assembled in that area.

The Battalion remained in its assigned assembly area on 10 March and continued its program of maintenance and repair. During the day preparations were made for movement to KONIGSDORF.

On 11 March the Battalion moved from KNAUSACK to a new assembly area in the vicinity of KONIGSDORF, GERMANY.

For the next two days the Battalion remained in this assembly area and continued maintenance, repair, modification and reorganization.

On the 14th of March the entire Battalion moved from assembly

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area in vicinity of KONIGSDORF to designated assembly area at OBER LIBLAR. From this area the Battalion continued maintenance and initiated reconnaissance in preparation for future operations.

On 16 March the entire battalion moved from positions in OBER LIBLAR to a new assembly area in WALBERG. The 1st Platoon of Company A further moved, at 1800 hours, to BONN, in preparation for direct fire on targets East of the RHINE River.

Effective this date the Battalion was attached to 5th Infantry Division Artillery.

At the beginning of the period, 17 March, the Battalion, less 1st Platoon, Company A, was at WALBERG.

The 1st Platoon of Company A fired on and destroyed an enemy CP East of the RHINE River. During the day the balance of Company A moved to BONN.

Company C moved to BERGSDORF where two platoons took up indirect fire positions.

On 18 March Company A destroyed, by direct fire, an enemy CP located in a water tower on the East side of the RHINE River.

Company B had two platoons in indirect fire positions.

On 19 March Company C fired indirect fire missions at 1230, 1500 and 1600 hours. All units made reconnaissance for future operations.

On 20 March Reconnaissance Company was attached to 3th Recon Troop and moved to ROSENBERG. A mission of patrolling the area was assigned them.

Company A moved to the VOLKHOFEN area and went into indirect fire positions with all platoons.

Company B moved into indirect firing positions with all platoons in the GLEIBER area.

Company C moved to BERNHARD area and went into indirect fire positions.

Each company registered with one gun of each platoon and prepared for missions to be assigned.

On 21 March Company C was attached to the 413th Infantry Regiment of the 104th Infantry Division and moved, at 1500 hours, to an assembly area at HILBERG, east of the RHINE River.

Companies A and B fired harassing missions during the period.

The Battalion Forward and Rear CPs moved to HUNTERSDORF.

On 22 March Companies A and B fired a total of thirty-nine (39) missions.

Company C placed one platoon in support of each battalion of the 413th Infantry Regiment.

On 23 March Company G, now located at FAULENBITZ, was attached to the 415th Infantry Regiment of the 104th Infantry Division. The 1st Platoon remained attached to the 413th Infantry Regiment. All platoons supported attacks by these two regiments.

Companies A and B continued indirect, harassing fire.

During the 24th of March Companies A and B fired both observed and unobserved snipe throughout the period.

There was no change in the status of Company A, on 25 March.

Company B destroyed one enemy CP and at 0100 hours, with ten (10) destroyers, simulated an attack. The M-10s raced their motors and moved over the GODFREY-IMMENDORF-GUESDORF road for a period of one (1) hour.

Company C remained with the 104th Infantry Division, employed in mopping up behind the 3d Armored Division, and knocked out two (2) Mark V Panther tanks and two (2) self-propelled guns. Three tank destroyers received hits but all were repaired before the end of the period.

On the 26th of March Company G was released from attachment to the 104th Infantry Division and was attached to the 16th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division. All platoons were in direct support of the battalions of the regiment.

On 27 March Company A was still engaged in its mission of indirect supporting fire.

Company B continued its mission of supporting fires, and, coordinating with the 3d Battalion of the 13th Infantry Regiment, knocked out a machine gun nest with direct fire.

Reconnaissance Company was released from attachment to the 8th Reconnaissance Troop on 28 March and assembled in MUNDERSDORF.

Company G also moved to the assembly area in MUNDERSDORF.

Company F was attached to OT 13 and moved from the COLOGNE area to DAADEN, east of the RHINE River, at 1600 hours.

Company C continued to support the 16th Infantry Regiment in its attack and continued in mopping up pockets of resistance north of the main drive by the 3d Armored Division.

On the 28th of March the Battalion (-) moved across the RHINE River into the new 8th Infantry Division assembly area in the vicinity of KESSELNICK.

Company G was attached to the 26th Infantry Regiment.

Company F remained attached to OT 13.

Company C was relieved from attachment to the 16th Infantry Regiment and attached to the 1st Infantry Regiment of the 8th Infantry Division.

Reconnaissance Company, under Battalion command, had elements attached to the firing companies of the battalion.

On 30 March Company A was engaged on assault gun missions with elements of the 28th Infantry Regiment. There was no contact with enemy armor.

Company B remained attached to the 13th Infantry Regiment, with all three platoons in direct support of the three battalions of the regiment. The 2d Platoon destroyed one machine gun in a fortification and one general purpose vehicle. The 3d Platoon destroyed one Mark V tank, two general purpose vehicles, one motorcycle, and several bicycles. In addition, the 3d Platoon killed an undetermined number of enemy personnel with 3" anti-air .50 MG fire, and probably destroyed two other Mark V tanks. Twenty prisoners of war were taken.

Company C, in support of the 121st Infantry Regiment, delivered direct, supporting fire at enemy personnel.

On 31 March Company A remained attached to the 28th Infantry Regiment and was in direct support of their attack. Just before the end of the period the 3d Platoon of Company A was attached to Task Force GRAEFORD.

Company C remained attached to 121st Infantry Regiment and fired assault gun missions into the town of DEUL. One Mark V tank was knocked out by Company C guns.

Company B remained attached to the 13th Infantry Regiment and supported the regiment in the attack. The 2d Platoon moved to HILDFELD at 2350 hours to support the 1st Bn, 13th Infantry Regiment.

During the period both the Forward and Rear CPs moved forward to ALLENDORF and HIRCHENDORF, respectively.

Reconnaissance Company moved to ALLENDORF and the CP plus 2d Platoon, plus one section of the Pioneer Platoon, continued its mission of providing security for Forward CP. 1st Platoon remained attached to Company A, 3d Platoon and one section of the Pioneer Platoon remained attached to Company C.

The final dispositions of the units at the end of the period were as follows:

Forward CP	514887	(ALLENDORF)
Rear CP	075401	(HIRCHENDORF)
Company A CP	058383	(FORWARD BATTALION)
1st Platoon, Company A	192400	(T. 10)
2d Platoon, Company A	058383	(FORWARD BATTALION)
3d Platoon, Company A	en route	In support of CP GRAEFORD
Company B CP	135436	(HILDFELD)
1st Platoon, Company B	023406	(ALLENDORF)
2d Platoon, Company B	125402	(HIRCHENDORF)
3d Platoon, Company B	125401	(HIRCHENDORF)
Company C CP	537508	(HILDFELD)
1st Platoon, Company C	161533	(FORWARD BATTALION)
2d Platoon, Company C	125401	(HIRCHENDORF)
3d Platoon, Company C	156850	(ALLENDORF)
Reconnaissance Company CP	113000	(ALLENDORF)
1st Platoon, Recon Co	058383	(FORWARD BATTALION)
2d Platoon, Recon Co	113000	(ALLENDORF)
3d Platoon, Recon Co	157000	(HIRCHENDORF)
Pioneer Platoon, Recon Co	(113000)	(ALLENDORF)