



HISTORY
of
646TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

I. Original Unit:

The 646th Tank Destroyer Battalion (Light Towed) was constituted at Fort Huachuca, Arizona by the War Department on 1 January 1942, and was activated on 15 May 1942 at the same post. (G.O. No. 8, Fort Huachuca, Arizona, April 23, 1942). Many months later the "Light Towed" designation was eliminated and the organization designated as a "self-propelled" Tank Destroyer Unit.

On 23 April 1942 Lt Col Williams E. G. Graham, 07644 was relieved from the 368th Infantry Regiment at Fort Huachuca and assigned to the 646th Tank Destroyer Battalion; on May 7, 1942, he assumed command.

The original cadre of Enlisted Men consisting of Thirty-five (35) men were transferred to the Battalion from the 846th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Camp Livingston, La. and were assigned on the date of activation.

The balance of the Enlisted (774 men) were obtained from Replacement Training Center, Fort Benning, Ga. and joined the Battalion on 9th and 10th November 1942.

The original complement of Officers, with few exceptions, derived from the Field Artillery Replacement Training Center, Officers Candidate School and other departments of the FA school. The majority of the Junior Officers were assigned from Tank Destroyer Officers Candidate School.

II. Changes in Organization.

On 21 January 1943, the Battalion moved from Fort Huachuca Arizona where it was attached to the 93d Div. for Adm and transferred to Camp Bowie, Texas where it was assigned to the 8th TD Group training under TD BUTC.

(AG 3705 TD GNMTE 93d Div. 9 Jan 1943)

20 April 1943, the Battalion moved from Camp Bowie to Camp Hood, Texas
(SO No. 87 Hqs TDC 10 April 1943)

13 Sept 1943. Battalion moved from Camp Hood to North Camp where it was

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assigned to the 24th TD Group. During the latter part of August and the first part of Sept 1943 the enlisted men of the Battalion with the exception of two (2) cadres (about 180 men) were transferred out of the Battalion. Most of these men were sent to Quartermaster units.

30 Sept 1943 Lt Col W.E.G. Graham was relieved from assignment with the 646th Tank Destroyer Battalion and assigned to T. Tng C.

2 Oct 1943 Lt Col Lloyd E. Gates O174999 was relieved from duty with Hq TDC and reassigned to the 646th Tank Destroyer Battalion where he assumed command.

III. Strength commissioned and enlisted.

At beginning of period. 15 May 1942	Officers	Enlisted
net increase each month as of:	2	35
31 May 1942	0	0
30 June 1942	0	3
31 July 1942	0	0
31 Aug 1942	3	-2
30 Sept 1942	22	119
31 Oct 1942	7	14
30 Nov 1942	4	736
31 Dec 1942	7	-6
31 Jan 1943	11	-107
28 Feb 1943	-1	-2
31 Mar 1943	-10	-15
30 Apr 1943	1	-6
31 May 1943	1	-76
30 June 1943	0	-33
31 July 1943	1	-15
31 Aug 1943	5	-15
30 Sept 1943	-9	-466
31 Oct 1943	9	8

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	Officers	Enlisted
30 Nov 1943	-12	-3
31 Dec 1943	-2	-2
At end of period 31 Dec 1943	39	167

IV. Stations (permanent or temporary) of unit.

A. Fort Huachuca, Arizona. (Permanent Station)

1 Jan 1942 Bn organized

Departed 21 Jan. 1943 (AG 3705 TD GNMTE 93d Div. 9 Jan. 1943)

B. Camp Bowie, Texas (Permanent Station)

Arrived 22 Jan 1943

Departed 20 April 1943 (SO No. 87 Hq TDC 10 April 1943)

C. Camp Hood, Texas (Temporary Station until 1 June 1943. Permanent Station there after.) (Ltr. 321/13 (TD Units)(R) GNGCT AFG-AWC 1 June 1943). Arrived 20 April 1943.

V. Marches

A. Fort Huachuca, Arizona to Camp Bowie, Texas. All rail. Permanent change of station. 21 Jan 1943-22 Jan 1943.

B. Camp Bowie, Texas to Camp Hood, Texas. Rail and motor. Temporary change of station. 20 April 1943.

VI. Important Events.

18 Sept 1942, a coat of arms for the Battalion was approved by the War Department: Gules, a dinosaur (naosurus) passant affronte or langued azure, the Battalion Motto: Perpared for Anything-a factual expression- a slogan of possibilities for development into an inspirational war cry. In the scarlet and gold of the Field Artillery Arm, the awe-inspiring ferocious appearing dinosaur, with its scaly armored hide and dangerous tail is symbolic of the destroying function of the organization!

29 January 1943 Walt Disney presented a Combat Insignia to the Battalion pursuant to request by the Executive Officer and with the approval of the Commanding Officer and the enthusiasm of the organization. (Battalion File Ltr. 220.5) The Insignia Consists of a mad bucking Broucho crushing

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with all four feet, a tank which is crumbling to pieces as he jumps on it.

The vivid browns, yellow and reds of the spirited animal enliven his animated motions. This insignia was never used because of a change in Army Regulations pertaining to combat Insignia for Ground Troops.