

HEADQUARTERS  
648TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 758

15 March 1945

SUBJECT: Periodic Unit Report.

TO : Seventh Army, (Attention: Historian)  
(Thru Channels)

1 Feb 45 - 11 Feb 45. The Bn was stationed in Yvetot, France (near Rouen). A Shortage of equipment needed for our primary mission was being requisitioned and received. Shortage supplies were shipped as cargo from the States but were not received while we were stationed at Yvetot. During this time we received an order to proceed to Luneville, France.

Necessary modification, maintenance and training was being conducted during this period.

12 Feb 45. The advance party composed of the Bn Commander, Lt Col L.H. Stevens, the Bn S-3 Maj Erkkila, five company officers and twenty-three enlisted men proceeded by motor to Luneville. Overnight stop made at Soissons.

13 Feb 45. Advance party proceeded to Luneville and reported into 7th Army Hqs.

The Bn less advance party made preparations for move to Luneville. Maj Roninger, Bn Executive, was in command.

14 Feb 45. Lt Stevens and Maj Erkkila contacted all the G sections of 7th Army for instructions.

Main body of Bn bivouaced at Soissons.

15 Feb 45. Bn CO and S-3 and small party made recon of St Avold for billeting of main body.

16 Feb 45. Main body arrived at Puttelange and was picked up by advance party at 0600 hrs. Bn proceeds to St Avold.

17 Feb 45. Preparations of Companies A, B, and C for combat. Bn CO and S-3 visit the front lines to observe 70th Division attack.

18 Feb 45. 0830 Lt Col Stevens, CO leaves Bn CP, St Avold to visit 70th Div CP, there received instructions to move Co "C" up on line in direct support of 276th Inf Rgt thereby relieving one platoon of Co "B", 822 TD Bn. Maj Erkkila, S-3 leaves Bn CP to visit 70th Div Hq at St Jean Rohrback from there he contacted S-3 822nd TD Bn at their Hq located in Hambach, also visited Co "B" CP 822 TD Bn at Theding.

Co "C" move up into position during the night with 2nd section, first platoon Recon.

19 Feb 45. Lt Col Stevens, CO visited 70th Div Hq 0830 and received instructions to move A and B Cos upon line. Lt Co Stevens and Maj Erkkila with A and B Co Commanders respectively to reconnoiter positions and contact Regt Comm to tie in with Inf.

Companies move up at dusk with one section of Recon attached to each. As 3rd

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plat Co "B" moved into Grosbliederstroff at 2300 hrs it was fired upon by 88's and motors from positions across the Saar River.

20 Feb 45. At 07000 three men, Sgt Shultz, Pfc Dunlap and Pfc Jackson were wounded by motor fire. All members of 1st plat, Co "A". 1st platoon, Co "B" subjected to artillery and motor bombardment while in position at Etzling. Corp Philips of the platoon was wounded in the hip. Lt Cpl Stevens arrived at 3rd plat Co "C" 1000 to inspect gun positions. He was held down in this position for two hours because of mortar and 88 fire. Infantrymen in the area were killed but we suffered no casualties. 3rd plat Co "C" guns commanded by Sgt Brown and Kiraly, plat Sgt Bradley, plat comdr Lt Dowd, fired the first rounds from 648 TD Bn into Germany. Co "C" CP located at Rosbruck lost communication with their platoon because of mortar and artillery bombardment.

21 Feb 45. Maj Roninger, Bn Executive Officer left Bn CP at 0900 to find building more centrally located between the Companies to set up CP. Major Roninger returns to CP with information that he has four rooms available.

22 Feb 45. Third Plat of Co "B" captured three German soldiers dressed as civilians. One captured 2130 hours on 21 Feb 45 and two at 0930 hours on 22 Feb 45 in the town of Grossliebertroff.

Co "B" CP has moved from Roughling to Lixgen at 1130 hours. Third Platoon of Co "B" still occupying the town of Grosliedertroff and covering the approaches of the town from north and east. Have been under continuous fire from across the river Saar which separates 70th Div from 63rd Div.

The 2nd Plat of Co "B" held in reserve in vicinity of Behren has now moved in the vicinity of Spicheren and are 2000 yds from main line of resistance.

The first Plat of Co "B" is still occupying their positions around Etzling and covering the possible approaches of tanks from the northeast. Expect to move one section this evening approximately 500 yds south of 2nd Platoon.

23 Feb 45. Two men from the third platoon of Co "C" became casualties at approximately 2030 hours last night due to explosives placed under road by enemy which exploded at that time.

First platoon, Co "B" moved at 2130 hours from Etzling to Alsting. At approximately 2300 hours they were ordered by the Bn Commander of the 274th Infantry whom they were supporting to move up in line with his infantry Bn as a counter attack was imminent. Upon reaching their position, they received a barrage of 88's at which time they had four casualties and lost two 50 Cal machine guns. Due to this fire, it was impossible to place their guns properly. They immediately dismounted from their vehicles with their remaining machine guns and fought side by side with the infantry whom they were supposed to support with their 3" guns. This surprised the infantrymen so much that they assisted our gunners by bringing ammunition to our men.

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At approximately 0845 after assisting the infantry in repelling the counterattack, two more casualties were inflicted upon this platoon. Moral of this platoon is very high upon being questioned, various men said, "All they desired was the want of P X rations with emphasis on BEER." Location of platoon is approximately 1500 yds NE of Alsting.

Second Platoon of Company "B" same position as yesterday. Moved one section of Co "B" into the vicinity of Zinzing. The two other sections remained at Grosbliederstroff where they are menaced continuously by sniper fire. This platoon captured another prisoner at his own request in a basement today in Grosblieberstroff.

24 Feb 45. Co "A" fired no rounds during period. No casualties.

Co "B" received slight shelling during the night from heavy artillery at gun positions first platoon. Suffered one casualties.

Co "C" received slight shelling during night. No casualties.

25 Feb 45. Co "A" sector all quite.

Co "B", third platoon fired several rounds of three inch HE at enemy OP in Gudingen. OP was destroyed. Co "C", third platoon received slight shelling from mortar and 88's during night. No casualties

26 Feb 45. No change in Company gun positions. All Sectors quite.

27 Feb 45. No change in Company gun positions. Company still in direct support of Infantry ready to assist in attack. Co "C" first platoon fired 5 rounds, 3 " illum. shell, for practice, with not too success because of heavy fog. Bn contemplates change of forward CP.

28 Feb 45. No change in disposition of Companies. Bn passed 23 corps to 21 Corps from 5th TD Cp to 18th TD Gp supervision at 1200 noon this date.

JACK ERKKILA  
Major, Inf (TD)  
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