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HEADQUARTERS
774TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 403 US ARMY

1 April 1945



SUBJECT : After Action Report.

TO : Commanding General, 94th Infantry Division, APO 94, US Army.
Attn: Historical Officer.

On the 1st of March, 1945, the 774th Tank Destroyer Bn., minus Company "C", remained attached to the 94th Inf. Div. and at the beginning of the period was assembled in the Division area, prepared to cross the Saar River into the Division bridgehead on Division orders. Co. "A", less one platoon, with 2nd Reconnaissance Platoon attached, was placed in direct support of 301st Infantry and moved into positions in the area of the 301st Infantry. One platoon, with attached Recon. platoon, took positions in the vicinity of Ober Zerf 2310, one section in the vicinity of Zerf, 2310 and one section in the vicinity of Baldringen, 2414.

On 2 March, Co. "B", less one platoon, was placed in general support and occupied positions as follows: one platoon in the vicinity of Shomerich, one section in the vicinity of Lampaden 2518, one section in the vicinity of Obersehr, 2518. Company "C" was attached to 3rd Cavalry Group and moved to positions in their zone to furnish anti-mechanized defense on approaches from the east. The 2nd Recon. Platoon assisted with direct 37mm and rocket fire in clearing approximately 20 enemy from southern portion of Ober Zerf, 2310. 18 rounds 37mm HE and 9 rockets were expended. S/Sgt Latti, Sgt. Bognanni and Pvt Meehan, Recon. Co., were wounded in this action. Cpl Lemos, Co. "A", was wounded by artillery fire at Zerf, 2310.

No change took place in disposition of Battalion on 3 March, 1945. Capt. Gordon T. Stovall and Sgt Gibbons departed on reconnaissance of Company sector and failed to return and were reported Missing in Action. Pfc Miller, Co. "C", was killed and Cpl Rogers and Cpl Pike, Co. "C", were wounded by artillery fire.

On 4 March the Battalion continued to furnish anti-mechanized defense in the zone of 3rd Cavalry Gp. and 94th Inf. Div. Reconnaissance Co. was re-organized in accordance with T/O and E 18-25 per authorization, Ltr, TUSA, 28 February, file AG 320.2 TD-GHMCG. 1st Lt. Lawrence A. Satterfield was appointed Company Commander, Reconnaissance Co.

Also on 4 March, Co. "A", 818th TD Bn., SP, was attached to the Battalion and employed to add depth to anti-mechanized defense in Division zone, also to be used as mobile reserve in the event of an enemy armored attack in the Division sector.

On 5 March the Battalion continued to furnish anti-mechanized defense in the zone of 3rd Cavalry Gp and 94th Inf. Div. Company "B" captured four (4) P.W.'s, Company "C" captured two (2). No other activity reported during the day.

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Prior to dawn the enemy launched a counter-attack in strength estimated at 2 regiments of the 6th SS Mountain Division and succeeded during darkness in surrounding friendly elements located in Baldringen 2414 Schomerich 2515 Lampaden 2518 Obersehr 2518 Vorlingen 2726 and Guttweiler 2625 and at dawn, 6 March, launched attacks to dislodge friendly forces including one section, Co. "A", 2 platoons, Co. "B" and one platoon, Co. "C", in these localities. Gun crews and security sections defended their positions with all available means and in the action which lasted throughout 6 and 7 March, succeeded in throwing the enemy back with staggering losses while suffering only minor losses in men and materiel themselves. Enemy losses inflicted were: 80 known killed, 120 P.W.'s taken, 2 enemy MG's destroyed and 2 SP guns destroyed. Our losses were two killed, 8 wounded, 2 half-tracks destroyed and other vehicles damaged. Detail account of action is inclosed, as follows:

The 1st Platoon of Company "B" was in position in zone of 3rd Bn. 302nd Infantry, 2 guns, 1st Section, in position in the vicinity of Obersehr, 2518, covering armored approaches from the east. Security section, 1st Platoon, was also in this vicinity providing security for the two guns there emplaced. The Second Section was in position in the vicinity of Lampaden, 2518. There was no security with this section. Local defense was coordinated with I and L Companies, Third Battalion, 302nd Infantry.

At approximately 0200 6 March a lone German soldier speaking perfect English approached a security outpost of security section on 1st Platoon Sector of Co. "B". When challenged this German gave the proper password and told security sentinel he would be back in a few minutes with two or three men. This soldier withdrew a short distance and returned with several more men who surrounded the sentinel and took him prisoner. This accomplished, an enemy force of approximately one Company, 6th SS Mountain Div., reinforced, and infiltrated around and surrounded the town. Some of this enemy force occupied buildings in the town and the remainder dug in surrounding the town. At daybreak the enemy launched an attack to clear our forces from the town. This attack lasted throughout the 6th of March until approximately 071000 at which time the Germans in the town, after inflicting only light casualties on our forces and suffering increasingly heavy casualties to their own troops, hoisted a white flag and demanded that our forces in the village surrender. The reply to their demands was "Nuts" and the fighting resumed, lasting until 071430 by which time the enemy had been dislodged from the village after suffering staggering casualties.

As a result of the action in and around Obersehr, 2518, there were 27 known enemy killed and an additional 35-40 estimated killed. 79 PW's were taken.

Losses: One officer and 5 EM evacuated casualties, 1 halftrack completely destroyed, 1 halftrack slightly damaged, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ ton destroyed, four $\frac{1}{4}$ tons slightly damaged, 1 M-20 slightly damaged, 1 one and $\frac{1}{2}$ ton slightly damaged. 20 rounds of 3" APC, 16 rounds HE, 7 HVAP, and 4 Smoke destroyed when half track burned.

Ammo Expenditure: 3,000 rounds cal. .50, 8,000 rounds cal. .30; 3,000 rounds cal. .30 carbine, 2,000 rounds cal. .45.

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The 2nd Section, 1st Platoon, Company "B", at Lampaden; 2518 :

At approximately 060400 infiltrating enemy infantry surrounded the 2 guns of this section and an enemy patrol of ten men attacked attempting to take the third gun. The crew on guard killed seven of this patrol and drove the remaining three back. After daybreak, these 2 gun sections defended their positions with small arms fire, killing an estimated 15 additional enemy without loss to themselves. At approximately 070100 the crew of the 4th gun section discovered an isolated group of 20 Germans apparently not desiring to continue the fight. Covered by a machine gun near their position, four members of this gun crew moved forward and took these 20 prisoners. At approximately 071830 the fourth gun section noticed an enemy self-propelled gun previously damaged by our artillery firing into the town of Lampaden, 2518. This crew immediately fired three rounds APC into the vehicle and completely destroyed it causing it to burn.

Gains: Seven known enemy killed, fifteen additional estimated killed, twenty P.W.'s taken, one SP destroyed.

Losses: Two half-tracks slightly damaged by artillery and rocket fire.

The 2nd Platoon, Co. "B", was in position in the vicinity of Schomerich, 2515, in the zone of the 2nd Battalion, 302nd Infantry, covering likely armored approaches from the east.

At approximately 060130 enemy infantry estimated at two companies (250-300 men) who had previously, by infiltration, encircled the village, launched a coordinated attack to dislodge our troops in the town and succeeded in occupying some of the buildings. The attack toward the town was stubbornly resisted by the platoon located therein and working in close coordination with G Company, 302nd Infantry, succeeded by 061500 in subduing this enemy force except for occasional sniper fire which was finally silenced after arrival of a platoon of friendly tanks.

During this entire action the village was constantly subjected to heavy artillery fire, both enemy and friendly which our troops had called for.

Gains : 35 known killed; estimated killed, 35 to 40; two enemy MI's destroyed. One SP gun being used as enemy OP was immobilized and destroyed by three rounds 3" gun fire.

Losses : Two killed (Cpl Johnson, Pfc Charron), two evacuated wounded, slight; four wounded not evacuated; one half track completely destroyed with all ammo and equipment therein. One 1- $\frac{1}{2}$ ton slightly damaged.

During this period of time the 3rd Platoon, Co. "C" was surrounded at 0700 in Korlingen, 2726 and Guttweiler, 2625 with two platoons of Troop A, 3rd Cavalry Gp. The enemy was estimated at strength of 200 foot troops. Germans at Guttweiler, 2625, were first sighted by TD Gun as they moved into new positions at 0600. The gun was taken by two German entrenched 30 yards from it. They were killed a few minutes later. TD's and Cavalry, in dismounted action prevented Germans from entering either town. Light tanks then routed and captured the outside defenders. The 3rd Platoon killed 4, wounded 2, and captured 11 P.W.'s. Other platoons reported no change except usual artillery fire.

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On the 8th and 9th of March, the Battalion continued anti-mechanized defense in the zone of the 9th Div. The Battalion Rear Echelon and Reconnaissance Company moved to Wawern, 1118 and Co. "B" captured two P.W.'s and Co. "C" captured four P.W.'s.

Because of a change in the 9th Div. boundaries on the 10th of March and since Co. "A" of the 818th TD Bn. had replaced Co. "C", attached to 3rd Cavalry Group, the Battalion was able with two companies (Co.'s A and C) to cover all approaches in the Division zone. Co. "B" was replaced in positions by Co.'s "A" and "C" and withdrawn to vicinity of Bn. Rear Echelon to be converted to SP.

On the 11th of March the Battalion continued to operate OP's and furnish anti-mechanized defense in zone of the 9th Div. with two companies. Co. "B" continued reorganization in the vicinity of Battalion Rear Echelon.

On 12 March, Co. "A", less one platoon, plus one section of Reconnaissance and one platoon, Co. "B" (SP) was attached to 302nd Infantry. Co. "B", less one platoon (SP), plus one platoon (T), Co. "A" and one section of Reconnaissance, was attached to 301st Infantry. Co. "C" (T) was given general support of the 9th Inf. Div. Liaison was established by attached companies and reconnaissance completed for assembly areas from which to move as directed in Division's attack eastward the Rhine River. Co. "B", test firing new 90mm equipment expended 3 rounds HE per gun, totaling 36HE rounds expended.

On 13 March, Co.'s "A" and "B" remained in assembly areas until completion of bridges over the Rumer River in zones of 301st and 302nd Infantry. Co. "B" then crossed 301st Infantry bridge with 2 SP platoons and occupied positions in the bridgehead. Co. "C", in general support, remained in assembly with Division reserve (378th Inf.) One platoon, Co. "C" moved to vicinity of Battalion Rear Echelon to receive SP equipment.

On 14 March the Battalion continued in support of the 9th Inf. Div., with Co. "A", minus one platoon, plus one platoon, Co. "B" (SP) and one Recon. Section, was attached to 302nd Infantry. Co. "B", minus one platoon SP plus one platoon (T), Co. "A" and one Recon Section, was attached to 301st Infantry in the attack by the 9th Div. eastward toward the Rhine River. Co. "A", operating with attached SP platoon, Co. "B" in close contact with forward infantry elements of 302nd Infantry, expended 40 rounds HE, 11 rounds APC and 4,500 rounds 50 cal. fire on enemy machine gun nests and strongpoints, slowing the advance. An estimated 20 enemy were killed by this fire. Co. "B", advancing with forward elements of the 301st Infantry against light enemy resistance, did not find it necessary to assist with fire the Infantry advance. One M-36 was destroyed by fire apparently caused by some mechanical defect. Co. "C" continued reorganization and test firing of new equipment in the vicinity of Battalion Rear Echelon.

On 15 March, Co. "A", attached to 302nd Infantry, furnished antimechanized protection for the leading battalion and established a base of fire under which the tanks and leading elements could advance. This Company had infantry mounted on its destroyers and entered the town of Riensfeld, 3820, wherein they assisted the infantry in the capture of 100 P.W.'s. Co. "B", attached to 301st Infantry furnished antimechanized protection for the advance of the southern column of the 9th Inf. Div. and during the day expended 11 rounds HE in destroying one enemy AT gun and captured 2 P.W.'s in the vicinity of Hedert, 3016. At the close of the period, Co. "B" had reached positions East of Kell (333158) in direct support of 9th Inf. Div. Co. "C" continued conversion to SP in the vicinity of Wawern, 1118.

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SECRET

Also on 15 March the following officers and EM received Bronze Stars for meritorious service against the enemy:

Capt. Lum A. Ingram jr, O-410728, Hq. Co.
 1st Lt. John C. Hendricks, O1822270, Co. "A"
 S/Sgt Ralph G. Coriell, 35202595, Hq. Co.
 Pfc Henry Sloan, 15044688, Co. "A"
 Pfc Richard H. Fifield, 11061976, Co. "A"

Capt. James D. Butler, O-448332, Co. "A" received a posthumous award of the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

Capt. Joseph W. Rood, O-417338, Co. "O" received the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

Also on 15 March, Reconnaissance Co., minus 1st Platoon, continued reorganization in the vicinity of Wawern, Germany, 1418.

On 16 March 1945 Co. "A" relieved of attachment to 302nd Inf. was placed in direct support of 94th Inf. Div. and assembled in the vicinity of Lampaden, 2518, and then moved to vicinity of Wawern, 1418, to be converted to SP. Co. "B" continued antimechanized defense in zone of 301st Infantry advancing rapidly, assisting with direct fire from MG and 90mm guns in the reduction of points of resistance en route and by 100 hours had closed into the city of Hermeskiel, 4317. At approximately 1430, when the 301st Inf. was relieved by the 376th Inf., Co. "B" was then attached to 376th Inf. and continued to advance and at the end of the period was in the vicinity of Grimsburg, 3813.8 rounds HE 90mm ammunition were expended during the day. Co. "A" was relieved by Co. "C" and continued to furnish antimechanized defense in the zone of 302nd Infantry and during the advance to the vicinity of Riensfeld, 3820 destroyed one enemy MG. 10 rounds APC, 15 rounds HE ammunition were expended. Rcn. Co., minus 1st Platoon, remained in Battalion reserve and during the day moved to the vicinity of Lampaden, 2518. Maintaining close contact with the 94th Div. CP, the Battalion CP moved to vicinity of Schillingen, 3116.

On 17 March Co. "A", in general support of 94th Inf. Div. continued conversion in the vicinity of Wawern, 1418. Co. "B", with direct 90mm and MG fire continued to aid and furnish antimechanized defense in the zone of the 376th Infantry and at the close of the period forward elements were in the vicinity of Eisen, 5012. During the advance two M36 90mm SP's were destroyed by direct enemy AT guns. Co. "C" continued to furnish antimechanized protection in the zone of the 302nd Inf and to fire on targets of opportunity as their rapid advance overtook the fleeing German column. During this advance Co. "C" destroyed two enemy cargo vehicles and captured 17 PW's. At the close of the period, Co. "C" had reached the vicinity of Birkenfeld, 5916. Rcn. Co., minus 1st Platoon, remained in Battalion reserve and during the day moved to vicinity of Hermeskiel, 4317, where one P.W. was taken. Battalion CP moved to vicinity of Hermeskiel, 4317.

On 18 March Co. "A", in general support of the 94th Inf. Div., continued conversion in vicinity of Wawern, 1418. Co. "B" continued to furnish anti-mechanized defense in zone of 376th Inf. and at the close of period had reached vicinity of Mettweiler, 6900. Co. "C", operating with attached Rcn Section and an Infantry I and R Platoon as a point, with Infantry riding the destroyers, spearheaded the advance of the 302nd Inf. in its pursuit of the fleeing German column.

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During the day, 18 March 1945, Co. "C" expended 50 rounds HE and 15 rounds APC and destroyed 3 enemy AT Guns, two armored personnel carriers, two cargo vehicles, captured 18 P.W.'s and killed an estimated 110 of the enemy. This day's drive cleared the towns of Riensberg, 6217 Nohen, 6415 Reichenbach, 8400 and near the close of the period, Baumholder, 7113. The 2nd Section, 1st Platoon, Ren. Co., attached to Co. "C", operated as a point in conjunction with an Inf. I and R platoon and succeeded by a surprise advance in capturing intact the vital bridge spanning the Nieder River in the vicinity of Nohen, 6415. The remainder of company in Battalion reserve, moved with Bn. CP to the vicinity of Birkenfeld, 5916.

On 19 March Co. "A", in general support of 94th Inf. Div., continued conversion in the vicinity of Wawern. In the absence of supporting tanks, Co. "B", with attached section of Ren. Platoon as a point spearheaded the advance of the 376th Inf. and at the close of the period had reached the vicinity of Wolfstein. During the day's advance 165 P.W.'s were captured by Co. "B" and one ambulance captured. Very little opposition encountered and operations consisted mainly of a roach march. Co. "C", with infantry mounted on destroyers, led by attached Ren. Section, continued to lead the 302nd Inf. in pursuit of the fleeing German elements. During the day 300 rounds HE, 5 rounds APC were fired on the German column. Six cargo trucks loaded with ammunition, 1 armored personnel carrier, one enemy SP and one enemy pillbox were destroyed. Forty-three P.W.'s were taken and 52 of the enemy killed. In the vicinity of Reibolskichen, a full unit was trapped by the rapid advance, and in support of the 3rd Bn., 302nd Inf., 1500 P.W.'s were taken. At the close of the period, Co. "C" was continuing its advance. Ren. Co., minus 1st Platoon, remained in Battalion reserve and moved with Bn. CP to vicinity of Baumholder, 7113.

Also on 19 March S/Sgt Charles J. Andrunaites, 3604293, Co. "C", received a posthumous award of the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

On 20 March Co. "A", in general support of 94th Inf. Div., continued conversion in the vicinity of Wawern, 1418. Co. "B", with infantry mounted on their destroyers, continued to lead the advance and furnish antimechanized protection in the zone of the 376th Infantry. During this advance Co. "B" expended 34 rounds HE and 3 rounds APC. Three AT guns, estimated 75mm, six enemy vehicles, cargo, were destroyed. An estimated 4 of the enemy were killed and 39 P.W.'s were taken in the advance. At the close of the period, Co. "B" had reached the vicinity of Neukirchen, 0899. Co. "C" continued to lead the advance and furnish antimechanized protection in the zone of the 302nd Inf. During the day 25 rounds HE, 9 rounds APC and some small arms ammunition was expended. Two armored personnel carriers and one cargo truck were destroyed. Eighteen of the enemy were killed and 72 P.W.'s taken. At the close of the period, Co. "C" was continuing the advance. Ren. Co., minus 1st Platoon remained in Battalion reserve and moved with Bn. CP to vicinity of Otterberg, 0208.

On 21 March Co. "A" completed conversion to SP and moved to assembly area in the vicinity of Otterberg, 0208. Co. "B" continued to lead and led the advance and furnished antimechanized protection in zone of 376th Inf. and at the close of the period had reached the vicinity of Ogersheim, 4699. Co. "C" continued to lead the advance and furnish antimechanized protection in the zone of the 302 Inf. and at the close of the period reached the vicinity of Frankenthal. With one platoon in support of one Battalion of the 302nd Inf., Co. "C" assisted in the taking of three small villages in the vicinity of Frankenthal, 4404. During the day's advance Co. "C" expended 15 rounds HE and 5 rounds APC. One enemy AG, one 150mm artillery piece, one armored personnel carrier and 1 half-track were destroyed. Sixteen of the enemy were

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killed or wounded and 8 P.W.'s were taken. Rcn. Co., minus 1st Platoon, remained in Battalion reserve and moved with Battalion CP to vicinity of Grunstadt, 3007.

On 22 March 1945, Co. "A", attached to 94th Div. Artillery, reinforcing fires of 919th FA Bn., was placed in secondary mission positions in the vicinity of Frankenthal, 4404. No missions were fired. Co. "B" assembled in the vicinity of Oggersheim, 4699 and remained throughout the period performing much needed maintenance. Co. "C" reverted to Battalion control and assembled in the vicinity of Frankenthal, 4404 and performed much needed maintenance. No activity during period was reported. Rcn. Co., less 1st Platoon, relieved of attachment to Co.'s B and C, assembled with remainder of Company in Battalion reserve in the vicinity of Asselheim, 3009.

On 23 March Co. "A" remained in indirect firing positions, but due to ammo shortage failed to fire. Co. "B", attached to 376th Inf., became a part of Task Force Cheadle and assisted the 376th Inf. in its assault on Ludwigshafen, 5098. Co. "C" remained in assembly area in the vicinity of Frankenthal, 4404 throughout the period. Rcn. Co. remained in assembly area in the vicinity of Asselheim, 3009, throughout the period.

On 24 March Co. "A" remained in indirect firing positions, but due to ammo shortage failed to fire again. Co. "B" continued with the 376th Inf. in the assault on Ludwigshafen and was successful in the taking of this city. During the period, 12 P.W.'s were captured. Co. "C" remained in assembly area in the vicinity of Frankenthal throughout the period. Rcn. Co. remained in assembly area in the vicinity of Asselheim, 3009, during the period.

On 25 March, Co. "B" was relieved of attachment to 376th Inf. and reverted to Battalion control and the Battalion moved to 94th Div. rest area, closing into same approximately 1830 in the vicinity of Baumholder, 7113.

On this date the following EM, Co. "B", this organization, received the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service against the enemy:

S/Sgt	William J. Murphy, 32108718
S/Sgt	Thomas G. Monahan, 35121744
Pfc	Roy M. Arendall, 20944607
Pvt	William J. Bergeron, 20140287



From the period 26 March to 29 March the Battalion remained in Division assembly area; completed reorganization and much needed maintenance. It also conducted training in subjects as prescribed by combat necessity.

On 30 March the Battalion was relieved from assignment to Third Army, and with the 94th Inf. Div. was assigned to the 15th Army. Moving by motor the Battalion departed from the Third Army area and at the close of this period was bivouaced for the night in Arlon, Belgium.

On 31 March the Battalion continued its movement to the 15th Army sector and at the close of the period was in the process of closing into assembly area in the vicinity of Huls, Germany

CONRAD B. STURGES
Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

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