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HISTORICAL RECORDOF103rd Infantry Antitank Battalion - Redesignated 803rd A/T Battalion

EXPLANATION: The 103rd Infantry Antitank Battalion was organized during the summer of 1940 as a revision of certain units assigned to the State of Washington National Guard with home station at Tacoma, Washington. The Battalion was Federally recognized September 30, 1940 and consisted of the following units;

- | | | |
|--|---------------------|------|
| a. Headquarters & Headquarters Company | (TO&E STRENGTH) | |
| b. Company "A" (Combat) | (Personell | 817) |
| c. Company "B": " | (Vehicles | 108) |
| d. Company "C" " | (37MM Cannon, towed | 36) |
| e. Attached Medical Platoon | | |

The initial nucleus of personnel resulted from the deactivation of Troop "B", 24th Cavalry, WNG at Tacoma, Washington and the 41st Division Tank Company, WNG at Centralia, Washington plus some intensive recruiting efforts during August 1940 in areas adjacent to Tacoma, Puyallup, Sumner, Paulsbo and Bremerton, Washington.

Subsequent allocations of Selective Service Inductees were received after the Battalion was inducted into Federal Service on February 10, 1941 in accordance with GENERAL ORDER #1, Headquarters, Military Department of Washington and in compliance with DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EXECUTIVE ORDER 8633, dated January 14, 1941.

STAFF: The initial Battalion Staff was as follows;

- a. Battalion Commander - LTC Charles W. Goodwin
(formerly Captain, Troop "B" 24th Cav.)
- b. Hq & Hq Company - Captain Thomas H. StClair
(formerly 1st Lt. Troop "B", 24th Cav.)
- c. Company "A" - Captain Lawrence J. Nelson
(formerly 1st Lt. Troop "B", 24th Cav.)
- d. Company "B" - Captain Jesse L. Haire
(formerly 1st Lt. Troop "B", 24th Cav.)
- e. Company "C" - Captain Lewis A. Conviés
(formerly member 41st Div. Tank Co.)
- f. Attached Med. Platoon - (Captain McBroom Benjamin, MD
(Transferred from Officers Reserve Corp)

SUBORDINATE STAFF: Initially constituted as follows;

- a. Battalion Executive Officer - Captain Lilburn H. Stevens
(formerly Captain, 41st Div. Tank Co.)
- b. Battalion Adjutant (S1) - Captain Frank A. Lough
(formerly 383rd Infantry Reserve)
- c. Battalion Intelligence Officer - Captain Robert E. Vandenburg
(S2) (formerly Infantry Reserve)
- d. Battalion P&T Officer (S3) - 1st Lt. Norman E. Goodwin
(formerly member Troop "B", 24th Cav.)
- e. Battalion Supply Officer (S4) - 1st Lt. William E. Stewart
(formerly member Troop "B", 24th Cav.)

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INITIAL TRAINING & FACILITIES: Following induction into Federal Service, the Battalion was assigned quarters at Fort Lewis, Washington in one of the newly constructed battalion sized areas on the former rifle range on the main post and was later moved to North Fort Lewis, Washington adjacent to the 41st Division area, where it remained until its departure to Fort Hood, Texas for final training and equipment for overseas service. For the initial training purposes, the Battalion was issued three (3) old 37MM towed guns plus three (3) $\frac{1}{2}$ ton weapons carrier trucks and four (4) 6x6 GMC Cargo trucks as kitchen vehicles plus eight (8) 6x6 Cargo trucks for use as supply vehicles and personnel carriers. In addition the Battalion Commander was provided with a sedan type vehicle and each basic staff officer was issued a 1939 Dodge command car. For budgetary reasons, the three (3) 37MM guns were modified by inserting 22 caliber rifle barrels inside the cannon barrels and all the practice firing of the 37MM guns was conducted on the small arms range at North Fort Lewis, Washington using 22 caliber shorts instead of 22 caliber longs. After ten months of intensive training, the Battalion was authorized to participate in actual combat firing practice with the real 37MM ammunition for a period of one (1) day only and was issued a total of 45 rounds of 37MM AMMO., which amounted to only 15 rounds per combat company. This amount of actual combat firing practice was determined to be sufficient to qualify the Battalion for real combat duty.

REDESIGNATION TO 803rd T/D BATTALION: The 103rd Infantry Antitank Battalion was redesignated 803rd Tank Destroyer Battalion in accordance with Paragraph 1, General Order NB. 42, Headquarters Western Defense Command & Fourth Army, dated December 10, 1941 and effective December 15, 1941, with station at Fort Lewis, Washington and was attached to IX Corp. It is noted that the above orders were received at the Battalion Headquarters while the Battalion was performing a security mission at the mouth of the Columbia River, immediately following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The zone of operations for this mission consisted of 65 miles of the Pacific coast line from Megler, Washington on the Columbia River to North Head, Washington on the Long Beach Peninsula. This mission continued from December 7, 1941 to February 18, 1942, when the Battalion returned to its base camp at North Fort Lewis, Washington. During the period of this mission, the Battalion still had only the three (3) old 37MM guns used in their training period and some personnel were lacking the authorized personal weapons; Such was the status of preparedness of the Army on Pearl Harbor Day.

PERSONNEL LEVIES: During the fall of 1941 after the Battalion had gone through several intensive training periods, a series of personnel levies was made upon the organization resulting in a serious loss of qualified personnel, which seriously affected the efficiency of the organization. These levies were as follows;

a. Twelve (12) single men volunteers were transferred to the 752nd Tank Battalion in exchange for twelve (12) married men (National Guardsmen) who were restricted from overseas service in the Philippines prior to the declaration of war.

b. Sixty One (61) Enlisted personnel and Three (3) Officers were transferred to the Port of Portland, Oregon as the initial increment for

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PERSONNEL LEVIES: (continued) for the Convoy Guard Detachment.

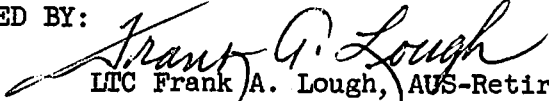
c. Subsequent levies were also made after the Battalion returned from its from its security mission indicated above, and prior to its move to Fort Hood, Texas.

CONCLUSION: As a conclusion for this historical record, the following inclosures are attached, which describe the combat record of the units of the Battalion, including Battle Credits and Combat Highlights;

- a. Inclosure 1. (Personnel Roster at the time of induction into)
(Federal Service, 10 February 1941)
- b. Inclosure 2. (Battle Credits and Combat Highlights - 803rd T/D)
(Battalion, including Department of the Army,)
(General Order 43, 1950; and War Department.)
(General Order No. 37, 19 April 1946; and Statement)
(of Service - 303rd Cavalry.)
- c. Inclosure 3. (Department of the Army Letter, dated 127 July, 1981)
(Subject; 803rd Tank Destroyer Battalion, including)
(2 inclosures.)

STATEMENT OF THE EDITOR: In view of the fact that the undersigned officer was declared overage for combat service as Captain during May 1942 and that his promotion to Major was not eminent at that time, a request for transfer to administrative duties was submitted and the officer departed the 803rd T/D Battalion in June 1942. Accordingly, the foregoing historical report is based on personal knowledge of events occurring during his tenure with the organization.

COMPILED AND RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:


LTC Frank A. Lough, AUS-Retired
Editor