

HISTORY AND COMBAT OPERATIONS
OF
THE 818th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

Donated by LTC Halworth

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The 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion (less Companies "B" and "C") was activated on 15 December 1941, by General Orders Number 13, Headquarters, 18th Field Artillery Brigade, Fort Sill, Oklahoma and in compliance with letter, War Department Adjutant General's Office file AG 320.2 (11-17-41) MR-M-C.

The enlisted personnel for the Battalion were transferred from the 18th Anti-Tank Battalion (Prov) which was a cadre from the Anti-Tank Batteries of the 77th, 142nd Field Artillery Regiment and 83rd, 72nd and 71st Field Artillery Battalions.

The commissioned personnel were transferred from the 142nd, 77th and 349th Field Artillery Regiments.

The Battalion, with Major John E. Buxton in command, was assigned to 3rd Army and attached to the 18th Field Artillery Brigade for administration and training, and moved from Fort Sill, Oklahoma with the Brigade to Camp Bowie, Texas on 6 February 1942, at which time the Battalion became attached to the VIII Corps. Prior to departure from Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Lieutenant Colonel C. R. Reynolds assumed command which he kept until transferred about 6 March 1942. Major Thomas E. Williams, NG, then took command.

On 6 March 1942, Companies "B" and "C" were activated and on 7 March 1942, 327 enlisted replacements were received, giving a total of approximately 750 enlisted men and 15 officers for Battalion Headquarters and the five Companies. Headquarters,

Companies "A", "B", "C", and Reconnaissance Company, with Captain Roy Martin, 1st Lt. LeRoy Henderson, 1st Lt. George C. Warner, 1st Lt. Robert P. Gardner, and 1st Lt. James F. Thompson, respectively, commanding.

On 10 April 1942, Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth S. White, NG, took command of the Battalion, with Major Williams as Executive Officer.

During the month of April, several officers left the Battalion to attend various service schools. On 1 May, both the Commanding Officer and the Executive Officer left to attend a service school at which time Captain Teddy L. Haworth assumed command of the Battalion and remained as Commanding Officer until Colonel White returned on 1 June 1942, four days prior to the issuance of orders by VIII Corps directing the movement of the Battalion to Camp Hood, Texas, where it was attached to the First Training Group, Tank Destroyer Center. The Battalion underwent unit training at Camp Hood from 4 June 1942 to 28 July 1942.

While at Camp Hood, Special Order No. 140, Hq, VIII Corps, dated 19 June 1942, directed the Battalion to furnish a cadre of 2 officers and 77 enlisted men for the 820th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Camp Swift, Texas.

On 6 July 1942, six 2nd lieutenants, FA OCS Graduates, and on 14 July, seven 1st lieutenants, FA School Graduates, reported to the Battalion, thus giving an average of three officers assigned per company. Fourteen enlisted men were also transferred to the Battalion in July.

On 14 July, Major Thomas E. Williams again assumed command upon the hospitalization of Lt. Col. White.

The Battalion continued unit training under First Training Group until 28 July 1942, at which time it was ordered by VIII Corps to proceed to Mansfield, LA to participate in the Louisiana Maneuvers.

The Battalion was in bivouac six miles south of Mansfield, LA on the evening of 31 July 1942. The Battalion participated in the first four phases of the maneuvers. At the end of the fourth phase, the Battalion was pulled out of the maneuvers and alerted. After numerous showdown inspections and the drawing of shortage and other supplies for three days in the field, Third Army orders directed that the Battalion be moved with the 18th FA Brigade to Camp Bowie, Texas for final organization and supply prior to shipment.

The Battalion under command of Major Williams left the maneuver area on 29 August 1942, arriving at Camp Bowie, Texas 1 September 1942.

On 9 September 1942, Lt. Col. Clebert L. Hail, RA, was transferred to and took command of the Battalion with Major Williams remaining as Executive Officer. The Battalion remained attached to 18th FA Brigade and VIII Corps for Administration, Training and Supply.

Upon the organization of Headquarters, Special Troops of the Third Army, on or about 28 December 1942, the Battalion reverted to Third Army Control and was attached to 7th Headquarters, Special Troops, Third Army, Camp Bowie, Texas, remaining under this Headquarters until departure from Camp Bowie on 14 June 1943.

From September 1942 until 1 January 1943, considerable officer and enlisted personnel turnover existed. Some 275 enlisted

replacements were received during this period. The Battalion remained a little above T/O strength for both officers and enlisted men during the entire period.

January 1943: The 3rd Tank Destroyer Group was moved to Camp Bowie, Texas and the Bn was subattached to the TD group for Training.

Intensive Training started 8 February 1943 -- firing, combat problems, Physical hardening test, and 1st TD Brigade combat efficiency test.

Intensive training over 1 May 1943 - (Readiness date).

The Bn moved from Camp Bowie, Texas by rail on 14 June 1943, and arrived at Camp Pickett, Virginia, at which time it came under control of Second Army. Second Army attached the Bn to XIII Corps and subattached to 5th Headquarters, Special Troop, XIII Corps.

The Battalion prepared for Amphibian Training and carried on a physical conditioning program until 9 July 1943, at which time the 3rd TD Group and the Battalion moved to Camp Bradford, Virginia for Amphibian Training. Upon completion of this training of 18 July 1943, the Battalion returned to Camp Pickett, Virginia.

On 24 July 1943, Army Ground Forces letter File 321/19 (TD Units) (R) (24 July 43) GNGCT and XIII Corps letter dated 28 July 1943, file 322 (TD) (GNNMC) directed the Reorganization of the 818th Tank Destroyer as of August 1943, under T/O dated 27 January 1943.

The Battalion was reorganized on 1 August 1943 with 159 enlisted men over the authorized strength. On 25 August 1943, XIII Corps issued order to transfer 159 EM to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas.

On 1 September 1943, XIII Corps directed that the 3rd TD Group and the 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion move to Fort Dix, New Jersey. The Battalion arrived at Fort Dix on 2 September 1943. During the brief stay at Fort Dix, qualification and marksmanship firing was completed; Officers and Enlisted men were reduced to T/O strength; administrative records were completed.

Army Ground Forces and XIII Corps orders directed the movement of an advanced detail of the Battalion to the NYPE on 18 September 1943 prior to overseas shipment. The Battalion remained at Fort Dix until 13 October 1943, at which time it moved to Camp Shanks, New York for final staging prior to overseas movement. On 19 October, orders were received to move to NYPE for overseas shipment.

The Battalion, 3rd TD Group, boarded the USS FAIRISLE, Army Transport on 20 October 1943 at 2300, leaving the harbor at 1300, 21 October 1943. Arrived Belfast, North Ireland on 1 November 1943.

The Battalion disembarked and moved by rail to its present location near Dundrum, County Down, N.I., arriving at approximately 1430, 1 November 1943.

Upon arrival at DUNDRUM, the Battalion was split. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Company "A" and Reconnaissance Company moved to Murlough House, and Companies "B" and "C" were quartered at Mount Panther with the 21st FA of the 5th Infantry Division Artillery. In the early part of February 1944, Companies "B" and "C" moved from Mount Panther to DUNDRUM, Company "B" being quartered in the town and "C" Company in a one company hutment camp.

The Battalion remained in North Ireland until May 1944. On 30 April, an advanced party left for England and on 10 May, the main body departed and arrived in England 14 May. The Bn was bivouacked in tents at Stowell Park near PEWSEY, Wiltshire, England.

On 11 July 1944, the Bn was alerted and received movement orders at 1600 hours. At 1900 hours, the Battalion moved out from Stowell Park for Marshalling Area "D", WEYMOUTH, England arriving there at 0200 hours, 12 July 1944.

At 0230 hours, 13 July, Company "A", Reconnaissance Company and the Battalion Commander left for Port of Embarkation. At 1300 hours, 13 July, the balance of the Battalion left for the Port. On the morning of 14 July at 0500 hours, departed for UTAH Beach, NORMANDY, France. The LST's beached at 2100 hours, 14 July. The Battalion disembarked onto the shores at 2330 hours, 14 July, and proceeded to Transient Area "B", five miles inland.

The Battalion arrived Area "B" 0200 hours, 15 July. During the day, duffle bags and val-paks were collected and taken to CHATEAU LA BRISETTE, Coordinate 290110, for storage. Lt. Joy took his Pioneer Platoon to the Chateau to de-mine the building allotted for our storage. Earlier in the day, at 0900 hours, Lt. Col. Hail left for 5th Infantry Division Headquarters. Returning in the evening, the Colonel held a conference and issued orders for the movement of the Battalion to an assembly area in the 5th Division sector. The Battalion attached to 3rd TD Group and further attached to 5th Infantry Division and assigned to V Corps.

On 16 July at 0400 hours, Battalion left for assembly area in 5th Division sector near CORMOLAIN, France. Coordinate 696639,

map ST LO 1/50,000. Company commanders met their companies here and took them directly to position areas relieving the three gun companies of the 635th TD Bn. Battalion completed relief of the 635th TD Bn at 1000 hours. Battalion is now in direct support (direct and indirect firing positions) of the Infantry Regiments of the 5th Infantry Division.

CP received first shelling at 1300 hours on 17 July. General scramble for fox holes. Men needed no more warning to have a fox hole large enough to afford ample protection. No action by firing companies. All in direct firing positions ready to meet any enemy armor.

At 0100 hours, 18 July, 1st and 2nd Platoons of Company "A" started indirect harassing fire. Sixty rounds fired.

Up until this time, Battalion has been in fatigues. Orders from 5th Division Artillery directs us to wear OD's as the fatigue uniform is easily confused with that of the enemy near the front lines.

T/5 Winning of Headquarters Company died 19 July 2330 hours, of gun wounds received by our own guard.

No further action by companies. The 2 platoons of Company "A" still on indirect fire.

On 20 July, Company "B" moved one platoon to indirect firing position. Three platoons now on indirect--Two Company "A", one Company "B". Remainder of Battalion on Primary mission. CP area shelled at 1815 hours. T/5 McMorrow of Headquarters Company wounded on way to latrine. McMorrow very much put out at having nature call him just at that time. Evacuated from Division Area to Evacuation Hospital.

On morning of 21st July, CP area again shelled. No casualties. Order received for all M10's to display orange panel of panel set carried.

Received orders on 22 July transferring 1st Lt. Melvin F. Hargett and 2nd Lt. John T. Napier to Headquarters Company, XV Corps, effective as of 6 July 1944. Enemy shelling again at 1320 hours. No damage. Ordinance started installation of Hedge Cutters on our M10's today, known otherwise as cottonpickers, Arkansas plows, gismos. Private Robert Garcia of Company "B" wounded slightly--was not evacuated beyond Aid Station. Sergeant Leary Sooter, "A" Company, shot in both arms by own guard. Transferred to Evacuation Hospital. Cloudy and rainy today.

On 23 July, Battalion was notified that the British would relieve the 11th Infantry and Company "C" starting at 1400 hours. Plans were made to move Companies "B" and "C" to rear area except one platoon of Company "B" which will remain in indirect fire position. Lt. Colonel Hail appointed Division AT Officer.

Ammunition report as of 0600 hours, 24 July indicated that Companies "A" and "B" have fired 119 rounds HE on indirect fire missions. T/5 Duncan of Reconnaissance Company injured by exploding grenade. Grenades were being carried in saddle bags of motorcycle and pin worked loose. All grenades in Battalion have been checked and cotter pins spread. Companies "B" and "C" moved to rear area near BAYNES at 2330 hours.

On 25 July, Headquarters Company moved to the rear area near BAYNES.

Second Infantry Regiment on the offensive starting at 0600 hours, 26 July. One platoon Company "B" fired 393 rounds indirect fire in support of this attack. One platoon of Company "A" fired

118 rounds in support of this attack. Company "A", plus one platoon and one section Pioneer Platoon of Reconnaissance Company supported 2nd Infantry attack on primary mission. 3" guns were used to neutralize strong points. Three platoons of Company "A" are now in position in vicinity of VIDOUVILLE.

Private Leonard Benesh, Company "A" injured in shoulder by shrapnel. Evacuated by 5th Division Medical Battalion.

On 27 July, Company "A" on direct support of 2nd Infantry, Company "B" attached to 10th Infantry. Company "C" attached to 11th Infantry on V Corps Reserve. One platoon Company "B" fired 400 rounds indirect fire in support of 2nd Infantry attack. Enemy OP in church tower at BIENVILLE shelled and neutralized by 3rd platoon of Company "B" on indirect fire.

Battalion CP moved on 28 July to LITTEAU 634645 near 5th Infantry Division CP and Division Artillery CP. Battalion continued to give close support to front line Infantry providing anti-mechanized protection. Company "A" supporting 2nd Infantry, Company "B" supporting 10th Infantry, and Company "C" on Battalion Reserve. All companies again under Battalion control.

Headquarters Company moved to Battalion CP area 28 July. All platoons of Battalion are employed on primary mission providing Anti-Tank defense for the Division sector. Battalion CP moved forward to new area near LE BREVIL, Coordinate 613584. Casualty report from Battalion Surgeon shows T/5 Cleveland Thompson, Company "A", sick, non-battle casualty. Captain Emil J. Michal, Company "A", suffering from fatigue. Both evacuated to Clearing Station. All platoons displaced well forward in 5th Infantry zone.

On 31 July, the entire front is moving forward so fast the Battalion has difficulty keeping company locations. Battalion CP moved to temporary position near LE PERRON and there on to

Coordinate 636543 west to PAMPIERRE. Companies continued to displace forward providing Anti-Tank defense for Division sector. Companies are employed in depth with Company "C" in front followed by Company "B" and Company "A".

On 1 August 1944, the Battalion was bivouacked in the vicinity of GRANVILLE, Coordinate 633525. The 5th Infantry Division with our Battalion attached had been pinched out of the 11th British Army Division sector after a successful but limited campaign had been completed in the CAUMONT-VIDOUVILLE area. On the 2nd and 3rd of August, the Division and this Battalion assembled and made preparations for movement. On the 3rd of August the Battalion started a march to vicinity of ROUFFIGINY, arriving there after a march of approximately 60 miles at 0600 hours, 5 August 1944. At 1430 hours on same day, the Battalion started march to the east and bivouacked in the vicinity of ST. JAMES arriving there at 1800 hours, 5 August 1944, traveling a distance of 40 miles. Passed through ST. LO and AVARANCES which had been badly demolished by bombs and artillery. Hundreds of ruined and burned German vehicles lined the highways. On 6 August 1944, the Battalion started march south through France toward VITRE, arriving there at 0300 hours, 7 August 1944 and traveling 40 miles. On the 8th of August, the Battalion moved farther south into France, bivouacking near ST. CLEMENTS traveling a distance of 55 miles. Much debris and wreckage along route of march. At this point, the 5th Division and 818th Bn were held up for 2½ days by enemy action in vicinity of ANGERS. The attack was launched on ANGERS against stubborn resistance, road blocks and Anti-Tank ditches. The Infantry Tanks and TD's entered the town of ANGERS after hard fighting, built pontoon bridge over the Maine River and

succeeded in capturing ANGERS on the morning of 11 August 1944. The Battalion Headquarters moved that afternoon across the river and to the east of ANGERS to a bivouac, a distance of 24 miles. The civilian population of ANGERS was glad to be liberated; they lined the streets as we passed through, cheering, throwing flowers and celebrating our arrival. On 13 August 1944 at 0500 hours, the Battalion moved north and east to the vicinity of ST. CALAIS, arriving there at 1316 hours on 13 August 1944, traveling a distance of 85 miles. The highways were good; we are now leaving the small hedgerow field country and entering a broad open prairie country which was very beautiful. Looked to be very fertile and had a good crop of small grains. After arriving in the ST. CALAIS sector, our Recon Company found 120 American bomber pilots in the woods around ORLEANS in hiding who had been shot down by the Germans, some as long as 6 months back. These pilots were mostly American airmen who had been shot down over France and had walked out of the vicinity of PARIS and assembled in a camp in the woods, being fed at night by the French. These men were evacuated back to our Battalion Headquarters, were fed, given haircuts, cigarettes, etc., and then evacuated by our Battalion to Division Headquarters. On 14 August, our Battalion started movement east fighting its way toward CHARTRES, traveling a distance of 85 miles. We were held up by stiff resistance on the southern outskirts of CHARTRES. The next day, we moved north of CHARTRES, a distance of 23 miles, and our TD Companies and Division Infantry were going through and mopping up CHARTRES. At this point, we captured considerable supplies and German stores, including seven automobiles for the Battalion as well as foodstuffs, wines, Cognac and other liquors. On 21 August 1944, our Battalion started its march eastward,

traveling a distance of 55 miles, going in to assembly area in vicinity of MALESHERBES. The next day, we moved through MALESHERBES but were held up by sharp fighting east of this town and stopped for the night after traveling some 6 or 7 miles. This enemy action was cleaned out during the night of 19 August 1944 and on the following day, we continued our advance to the east, traveling 15 miles to the vicinity of NEMOURS. The march was short, but held up by very hard rain storm, and we arrived there late at night. We stopped around NEMOURS and started movement again in pursuit of the enemy to the east on 25 August 1944, fighting our way eastward. We finally arrived in vicinity of NOGENT on the morning of 27 August 1944, traveling a distance of 54 miles. The Division and 818 TD Bn made a bridgehead across the River Seine at NOGENT and started movement to the east toward REIMS on 22 August 1944. We fought our way northward toward REIMS and entered the City on 30 August 1944, traveling a distance of 89 miles. We bivouacked on the east side of REIMS and spent the 30th and 31st of August in this area doing maintenance on our equipment, then moving on the 1st of September 1944 to the east. We crossed the River Seine at NOGENT and the River Marne at EPERNAY, which is 28 miles south of REIMS. These crossings were made on pontoon bridges, as all bridges had been destroyed before our advance by the Germans.

During this month of operations, we had lost 4 men, killed as follows:

Lee C. Freeman, Co. "A"
Vance Wallace, Co. "A"
Marvin L. Rouigher, Rcn. Co.
Raymond Ledbetter, Co. "B"

Six men wounded and evacuated as follows:

2nd Lt. Harry F. Drinkwater, Co. "A"
Victor C. Hensley, Co. "C"
Walter L. E. Hensel, Co. "C"
Lyman S. Andrews, Rcn. Co.
Clayton D. Cornelius, Rcn. Co.
John H. Wingert, Rcn. Co.

Three men missing in action as follows:

Clerc K. Rager, Co. "A"
Herbert T. Murphy, Rcn. Co.
Carl C. Knudsen, Rcn. Co.

The latter two men were later found dead and records changed to read as killed in action.

In equipment, this Battalion had destroyed by enemy action during the month of August, the following: 2 each M8's, 1 each Motorcycle, 1 each M10 TD.

We received eleven new replacements in men during the month.

We were given credit for destroying 6 MK IV tanks, 4 OP's, 1 MG nest, 2 mortars, 22 strong points, 4 88 mm AA and AT guns, 1 AA vehicle and Mount, and 2 Volkswagens. Numerous other missions were fired on enemy installations, but results are unknown. It is estimated that the enemy suffered at least 500 casualties from our TD action during the month.

The Battalion captured 91 prisoners during the month.

On 1 September 1944 at 0700 hours, this Battalion started movement east with the 5th Infantry Division from the vicinity of REIMS, 5th Division and our Companies encountered resistance at CLEREMONT and we were held up in the vicinity of ST. MENSOULD until 1530 hours, at which time the enemy was cleared out at CLEREMONT and the Battalion resumed its advance to the east toward VERDUN, France. We came through the famous Argonne Forest on this march from REIMS to VERDUN, traveling a distance of 70 miles; the

roads were good and the weather was fair and cool. The Battalion bivouacked on the edge of VERDUN the night of 1 September 1944, and that night the German Air Force gave VERDUN and vicinity a severe bombing, succeeding in wrecking the town, but did no harm to the bridge across the Muese River at VERDUN. Several bombs fell in our bivouac area; however, no casualties were caused at the time, but approximately one hour later, a delayed fused bomb which had fallen close to the area exploded, throwing rocks, dirt and other debris into our area, doing quite a bit of damage to our equipment and vehicles and slightly wounding three members of the Battalion. The following day, we moved three miles to the west of VERDUN to avoid the bombing which was sure to come the next night, and which did come as expected. On the 3rd of September 1944, the Battalion started movement to the east of VERDUN again, moving across the Muese River at VERDUN and traveling nine miles to the east where we went into bivouac east of VERDUN. On 6 September 1944 at 1050 hours, the Battalion started its march again to the east, traveling a distance of 28 miles and went into bivouac in the vicinity of ST. MARCEL, France. Here we stayed until the 10th of September 1944 at which time we moved our command post to the vicinity of GORZE, France, a distance of 10 miles. Our companies were all in direct support of the 5th Infantry Division and attempting to advance to the east. They approached the Moselle River in the vicinity of METZ, France where the division met very heavy fighting. The enemy was dug in and occupying old forts around METZ that were built by the Romans and which had withstood many attacks in the past centuries. The Divisions and our TD companies finally forced a crossing of the Moselle River in the vicinity of PAGNY SUR MOSELLE and ARNAVILLE, France, made a bridgehead and

took up a defensive position after some very heavy fighting. The Battalion command post moved to the vicinity of PAGNY SUR MOSELLE, traveling a distance of 10 miles on 28 September 1944, at which place, the Battalion remained for some time in a defensive position with two companies in indirect support of the Division. During this period, 1 September 1944 to 30 September 1944, the Battalion lost three Tank Destroyers and made major repairs on five other Tank Destroyers that were damaged in battle. Lost one jeep and destroyed for the enemy fourteen Mark IV tanks, one AA gun, 2 machine gun nests, one half track vehicle, three armored cars and one pill box, also killing numerous enemy soldiers and taking three enemy prisoners of war.

The Battalion had the following casualties during this period. Killed was one officer, 1st Lt. Sterl C. Bilger of Company "C", and two enlisted men. One officer and eleven enlisted men were wounded. There were none missing.

The Battalion was still at PAGNY SUR MOSELLE on the Moselle River starting the first of October 1944 and remained there until the 22nd October 1944 in a defensive situation in a small bridge-head across the Moselle River, furnishing anti-mechanized protection for the 5th Infantry Division and doing indirect artillery firing. On the 22nd, we received orders to move to the northwest to go in to a training area for ten days. The Battalion started movement at 1035 hours, 22 October 1944, to the vicinity of JOPPE COURT, France, a distance of 40 miles. We bivouacked in a large house and barn. The weather was cold and wet and raining every day. We remained here until the end of the period which was 31 October 1944, doing maintenance on equipment and training of replacements, regrouping and re-equipping. Battalion this month had 22

days of defensive action and the balance of the month in training. The Battalion in this period had no one killed, none missing, and one man wounded. Destroyed one tank and 10 other smaller vehicles for the enemy.

On 1 November 1944, the Battalion was ordered to move to the vicinity of PAGNY SUR MOSELLE to go back in the line. On 2 November 1944, the Battalion moved from the vicinity of JOPPE COURT, France, traveling 65 miles, arriving there at 1550 hours. The roads were poor and the weather cold and raining. The companies moved into position in the Moselle River bridgehead and one company went on indirect fire mission. On the 3rd of November, the Battalion CP moved to BOUXIERERS, France and set up our command post there in the Priest House of that town. The Battalion remained there in a defensive position until 10 November 1944 when the 5th Infantry Division, which we were attached to, went on the offensive and attacking to the east to encircle METZ, France. On 11 November, the Bn CP started movement to the east behind the companies and arrived in the vicinity of BUCHY, France where we set up our CP in the town school house, arriving there at 1550 hours that same day, traveling a distance of 18 miles. The roads were poor, having been heavily shelled and mined. At this point, the 5th Infantry Division with our Battalion started attacking to the north in the direction of METZ. The Battalion CP moved north to the town of CHERISEY, France, traveling a distance of 3 miles. The roads were slippery and covered with snow and the weather was very cold. We remained in CHERISEY until the 19th of November, at which time we moved north to the town of PELTRE, France where we spent the night in a bombed out hospital. We then moved on north the next day and set up our CP in a Catholic Seminary. We traveled a

distance of 10 miles with the weather very cold and wet. On arriving at the Seminary, it was necessary to move the German dead out of the door before we could move in; however, we captured German prisoners there the next day and we evacuated them along with their dead to the rear. We remained here at the Seminary the balance of the month where we had our Thanksgiving dinner while the Division and our forward companies finished taking and mopping up METZ. We occupied the town of METZ until the 4th of December 1944 and the Division and our Companies moved on to the east in the direction of the German border. We started movement that day behind the gun companies and arrived in VARSBERG, France that day at 1655 hours, traveling a distance of 35 miles. The next day, the Battalion CP moved north to the vicinity of the town of CRUETZWALD, France which is near the German border and set up our CP there in a house in that town. We remained there until the 9th of December when we moved to UBERHERRN, Germany, crossing the German-France border at 1813 hours that day and traveled four miles into UBERHERRN. The roads were fair and the weather very cold and snowing that day. We remained here until 9 December 1944 at which time we moved to the north. The 5th Division, with our Battalion gun companies, had moved north to the SAARLAUTERN area to relieve the 95th Infantry Division. We moved our CP into town of BEAUMARIS, Germany, traveling 8 miles. The roads were poor and shot up badly. We arrived at 1400 hours on the 19th of December and the Battalion was heavily engaged in the city of SAARLAUTERN fighting from house to house and the fighting was very bitter. We were also entering the SIEGFRIED line area at this position but we received word that day, the 18th of December 1944, that the German forces had started a large German

counter attack and offensive in the BELGIUM-LUXEMBOURG area to our north and on the following day the 818 TD Bn received orders to move to the rear to an assembly area in the vicinity of VALMESTROFF, France. We moved there at once, arriving there at 1650 hours after marching a distance of 30 miles. The roads were poor, bridges out and the weather was cold and wet. We ate our evening meal in the area and received orders to move to the north in the vicinity of LUXEMBOURG that night. We moved out at once and arrived in the LUXEMBOURG area at about 2230 hours and received word there to move to the west and into an assembly area at KLIEN-BETTIGEN, Luxembourg. We arrived there at 2330 hours after traveling a distance of 35 miles from VALMESTROFF, France. The companies closing in to the area at 0730 hours that same morning. We were billeted in the depot in that town and the next day, the companies moved out to join the Infantry Regiments of the 26th Division which we were attached to at that time. This division was part of 111 Corps and Third Army. They moved north and started attacking the German Salient from the south flank. The next day, on the 22nd of December 1944, at 1600 hours, we started moving our CP to the north by way of the city of ARLON, Belgium, to the town of REDANGE, Luxembourg. We traveled a distance of 15 miles with the road covered with snow and 6 degrees below zero weather. We were billeted in this town in a dwelling house where we stayed until 26 December. We spent Christmas at this location, our Gun Companies were in the line attacking to the north. On 26 December, we started movement to the north and after traveling a distance of 6 miles, arrived in the town of MERZIG and set up our Bn CP in a farm house and remained in that location until the 30th of December 1944. On 30 December 1944,

we moved to the town of GREVILS BRESIL, Luxembourg; the weather was still very cold with snow cover and the ground frozen. The companies were in contact with the enemy and resistance was becoming very stiff. We remained in this vicinity the balance of the month of December and where we spent New Years. The Gun Companies and the Division had been temporarily stopped at this time and were making plans for a new attack along a line about four or five kilometers north of the Esch River. During this period, from 1 November to 31 December 1944, the Battalion destroyed enemy personnel and equipment as follows:

6 Mark IV tanks	14 Occupied houses
1 Mark VI tank	11 Machine guns
4 Mark V tanks	3 Enemy OP's
3 Self-propelled tanks	5 Vehicles
5 Towed guns	1 Fuel Dump
3 Half tracks	1 Mortar
1 Pill box	

Approximately 300 enemy personnel killed, captured 30 prisoners. Our own losses in equipment were light. Had no Tank Destroyers destroyed, but did lose two ammunition trailers and a one and one-half ton truck.

Our personnel casualties for the period were as follows: 7 killed, 17 wounded, none missing. We had five men during this period who were awarded the Bronze Star and two men who were awarded the CROIX DE GUERRE, a French decoration. These decorations were awarded while in the city of METZ, France operations.

On 1 January 1945, the Battalion CP was in GREVELS BRESILS, Luxembourg with the companies attached to the Regiments of the 26th Infantry Division. On 22 January 1945, the Battalion CP moved to BONNAL, Luxembourg, traveling a distance of 7 miles. The weather still very cold and roads blocked with snow. The

23rd of January, we moved up to the town of WILTZ, Luxembourg, traveling a distance of 11 miles with the weather still very cold, roads blocked with snow and land mines. There we remained until the 27th of January, at which time the Division was relieved by the 17th Air Borne Division. Our companies moved into WILTZ where they assembled and on 28 January, the Division and our Battalion attached and started movement to the south to the vicinity of BOULAY, France. We arrived there the next morning after marching all night, traveling a distance of 93 miles in extreme cold and snowy weather. There, "B" Company went into position in the Bridgehead at SAARLAUTERN, Germany in direct support of the 104th Infantry Regiment. "C" Company was in support of the 101st Infantry Regiment at UBERHERRN, Germany and "A" Company, in direct support of the 328th Infantry Regiment in Division Reserve. The Battalion CP moved in to BERUS, Germany and set up a CP. This sector was very quiet and our companies were able to start maintenance of their materials and rest for the crews--the first they had since about the 1st of November 1944.

During the month of January, the Battalion destroyed the following:

3 Mark IV tanks	1 Command Car
4 Self-Propelled Guns	2 Machine Guns
1 Towed Gun	1 Church Steeple used as an OP
3 Strong Points and killed and wounded approximately 75 enemy personnel	

We lost no equipment due to enemy action this month. The Battalion had two men killed in action, 12 men wounded and none missing in action during this period. There was one Silver Star and 21 Bronze Stars awarded to members of the Battalion during the month of January 1945. There was one officer and one enlisted

man sent on furlough to the U.S. during this period.

During the month of February 1945, the Battalion remained in a defensive position with the Gun Companies in direct support of the Infantry Regiments, of the 26th Infantry Division with one of these companies in general support, doing indirect fire missions-- mainly harassing and interdiction fire. The gun companies were also doing considerable firing at pill boxes across the Sarr River into the SIEGFRIED line. The Battalion was reorganized during the month and turned in all their M-10 Tank Destroyers and drew 36 new Destroyers M-36 equipped with 90 mm guns. We destroyed, during the month, 25 pill boxes, 8 occupied houses, 2 machine guns, 2 Observation Posts and inflicted approximately 75 enemy casualties. No prisoners were captured this month. We had no men killed, one wounded, and none missing in action. We had 4 men awarded the Bronze Star medal during this month.

At the beginning of March 1945, the Battalion was still at BERUS, Germany in a defensive position, but on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of March, the Division with the 818th TD Battalion attached moved to the vicinity of SAARBOURG, Germany to relieve the 94th Infantry Division. The Battalion moved on the 8th of March, traveling a distance of 54 miles, arriving at 0100 hours in the vicinity of SAARBOURGH on 9 March 1945. On the 13th of March, the Division with the Battalion attacked to the south and east, down the SIEGFRIED line. By the 18th of March, the line was broken and the Division and Battalion started its push to the east, to the Rhine River. The Battalion marched to REIMSBACH, Germany on the 18th of March, traveling 20 miles, and on the same day, moved on to AUSSEN, Germany, a distance of 6 miles. The next day, on the 19th of March, the Battalion moved on to BERSCHWEILER,

Germany, a distance of 13 miles. On 21 March, with the Gun Companies in direct support of the Infantry Regiments, the Battalion moved to LANDSTUHL, Germany, a distance of 44 miles. At this time, the Battalion was given the mission of protecting the right flank of the Division and maintaining contact with the 65th Division on our right. This force was known as Task Force Hail and consisted of our Rcn. Company, one Infantry Company, one section of 390 AA Ban. and a platoon of the 26th Rcn. Troop. On the 23rd of March 1945, the Battalion started movement to the vicinity of ALZEY, Germany. We arrived there, setting up our CP at GAU ODERHEIM, Germany, traveling a distance of 52 miles. We were now on the Rhine River and on 25 March 1945, at 2200 hours, the Battalion started its march across the Rhine River, and at fifty minutes past midnight on 26 March 1945, it actually crossed the Rhine and proceeded on to GODDELAU, Germany, a distance of 23 miles. On the same day, we proceeded on to DARMSTADT, Germany, a distance of 10 miles and on 27 March, the Division and this Battalion moved north to the vicinity of LELIN-AUHEIM, Germany, traveling a distance of 31 miles, and on 30 March, proceeded to MARKOBEL, Germany, a distance of 14 miles. On 31 March 1945, we marched to SCHLIERBACH, Germany, a distance of 23 miles. We remained in this position at the close of the period or end of the month. Our Gun Companies were still in direct support of the Infantry Regiments of the Division and in hot pursuit of the enemy east of the Rhine River.

During the month of March 1945, our Gun Companies destroyed 32 pill boxes, 2 fortified houses, 1 vehicle, 2 anti-tank guns, 2 enemy wagons, inflicted 175 enemy casualties and captured 266 prisoners of war. We lost 4 tank destroyers during this period,

these being destroyed by German 88 mm and 75 mm guns. We had 4 men killed, 22 men wounded, and one man missing, who later was found wounded. There were 12 men and officers who were awarded the Bronze Star during this period. A correction on the month of February 1945, instead of four men being awarded the Bronze Star, it should read as follows: Four men awarded the Silver Star and 26 men and officers awarded the Bronze Star medal.

On April 1945, the Battalion was bivouacked at SCHILERBACH, Germany and moved on 1 April 1945 to GROSENUBER, Germany, a distance of 36 miles. On 6 April 1945, we again moved forward to WASUNGEN, Germany, arriving there at 1540 hours, traveling a distance of 28 miles. Our next move was to SUHL, Germany on 8 April 1945, a distance of 26 miles. Again on 16 April, we moved 52 miles on east to HELMBRECHT, Germany, which was near the Czechoslovakian border. There, we turned south and advanced to KEMNATH, Germany, a distance of 44 miles on 21 April 1945. On 24 April, we moved to SCHWARSENEFELD, Germany, a distance of 50 miles. On 26 April, we moved again to STALLWANG, Germany and then on to HASEBACH, Germany the same day, traveling a total distance of 67 miles during the day. On 27 April 1945, we again moved forward to MITTERFELS, Germany, which was only 2 miles. We remained here until 30 April 1945 when we moved to FURSTENSTEIN, Germany through snow and cold weather, traveling a distance of 64 miles. We remained here until the close of the period or the end of this month after traveling a total of 433 miles during the month of April.

During this period, the Battalion destroyed 3 self-propelled guns, 2 ammunition dumps, 5 vehicles, 1 airplane, 2 observation posts with personnel, 2 anti-aircraft guns, 5 machine guns, 1 railroad locomotive, 1 anti-tank gun, and inflicted approximately

200 casualties in dead and wounded on the enemy. Also, during this period, the Battalion captured a total of 1,113 German prisoners.

The Battalion had 1 man killed, 5 men wounded, and no men missing in action during the month. We had 4 men awarded the Silver Star medal and 20 men and officers awarded the Bronze Star medal.

On 1 May 1945, the Battalion was still at FUNSTENSTEIN, Germany and on this date, we moved to TITTLING, Germany, a distance of 3 miles. We remained in TITTLING until 3 May 1945 and then moved on east to GRIESBACH, Germany, a distance of 41 miles. There we remained until the Official End of the War. However, by this time, our companies had moved into AUSTRIA and were assisting the Division in the fall of LINZ, Austria. After taking LINZ, our Battalion turned north into Czechoslovakia, advancing as far north as a general line along the MOLDAU River. On 12 May 1945, the Battalion CP moved up through Austria and into Czechoslovakia. A distance of 40 miles. We set up our Command Post at KIENBERG, Czechoslovakia where we remained from the 12th of May until 22 July 1945, mostly doing Army of Occupational duties.

During this period, the Battalion inflicted an estimate of 100 casualties on the enemy and captured 4,205 German prisoners. We had no men killed, wounded or missing during this period.

We spent the balance of the month of May rounding up prisoners, guarding Prisoner of War camps and started the occupation and supervision of Czechoslovakia. During June, the Battalion took over guard of road blocks into Austria, started Information and Education programs, as well as an Athletic program, organizing softball and other sports. During the first

part of July 1945, we received word that we were placed in Category IV which meant demobilization of our unit. We sent home 39 men with 85 or more points to be discharged and started transferring both men and officers to other units under 85 points. On the 22nd of July 1945, the Battalion moved to ALTDORF, Germany where it started doing occupation duties such as guarding the Stars and Stripes Newspaper Plant, captured German ammunition dumps, patrolling the Autobahn and German hospital. We remained here during July and September 1945, by which time we lost all our high point men to be returned to the States. We drew all new men with scores between 65 and 75 points and on 1 September 1945, the Commanding Officer of the Battalion was transferred to Headquarters Third Army and the Battalion received orders to move to Camp BALTIMORE at SUIPPES, France for processing for return to the United States. We moved to Camp Baltimore on 11 September 1945 and after three weeks, we moved again to Camp CHESTERFIELD in southern France on or about the 2nd of October 1945. The Battalion, in October 1945, sailed from NICE, France out through the Mediterranean Sea, taking the southern route across the Atlantic and up the coast of the United States to Camp SHANKS, New York, and was inactivated on 30 October 1945. On 26 February 1946, the 818th TD Battalion was converted and redesignated the 323rd Mechanized Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and allotted to the Reserve. On 10 March 1952, it was withdrawn from allotment to the Army Reserve and reallocated to Regular Army and redesignated the 818th Tank Battalion and was assigned to the 11th Armored Division on 25 February 1953.

The 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion participated in 5 major campaigns and won 5 battle credits for the battles as follows: Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. The 818th TD Battalion was cited in the order of the Day of the Belgian Army for its action in the Ardennes (Bulge) and the First Platoon of Company "A" is entitled to the Distinguished Unit Citation for Action in Luxembourg.

ABBREVIATIONS

TD	Tank Destroyer
OP	Observation Point
AT	Anti-Tank
AA	Anti-Aircraft
CP	Command Post
Bn	Battalion
HQ	Headquarters
FA	Field Artillery
OCS	Officer Candidate School
T/O	Tables of Organization
EM	Enlisted Men
NI	North Ireland
LST	Landing Ship Tank
Rcn	Reconnaissance
NYPE	New York Port of Embarkation