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HEADQUARTERS
818TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

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:AUTH: CG 26 Inf Div:
:DATE: 1 March 1945 :
:INIT: JSB, Adj. :
:818th TD Battalion. :

APO 436, US Army,
1 March 1945.

UBJECT: After Action Against the Enemy Report.

TO : Commanding General,
26th Infantry Division,
APO 26, US Army.

In compliance with paragraph 10, change 4, AR 345-105, the following report is submitted for the period 1 February 45 to 28 February 45 inclusive:

1. PERSONNEL:

- a. Total effective strength at beginning of period:
38 O 1 WO 546 EM.
At end of period:
41 O 1 WO 624 EM.
- b. Killed in action: None.
Wounded in action: One.
Missing in action: None.
- c. Reinforcement received:
Total of 93, 25 of which were RTD's.

2. ENEMY:

a. Identifications: The only major unit in contact during the period was the 719th Inf Div. This is an under-strength Div estimated to have 3,500 troops on 15 Feb 45. There was some evidence of fill-in troops of poor quality being used, but this was much less in evidence than during previous periods in this section of the Siegfried Line. The 347th Inf Div was just right of our sector and the 416th Inf Div was just left.

b. Summary of enemy operations: The enemy seemed content to hold fast in his Siegfried Line fortifications. Enemy was generally inactive but was quick to resist our efforts to take more of Saarlautern and enlarge our bridgehead. Resistance was mostly from small arms and mortar fire. Artillery fire was light throughout. Only small local counterattacks were launched by the enemy. On one occasion two tanks and 3 SP guns were reported. Enemy air was inactive.

c. Estimated enemy losses during period: 26th Inf Div G-2 report lists the following enemy losses for the period: PW's - 50; En Killed - 374; En wounded - 784; Vehicles knocked out - 18.

The following enemy losses were a direct result of action of 818th TD Bn during period:

Pill boxes penetrated - 25
Occupied houses destroyed 8
MG's destroyed
OP's destroyed
Casualties inflicted - 75

d. Enemy morale and status of equipment: Enemy morale seemed from PW reports to be low. However, there was no evidence that the German Commanders did not have the situation well in hand and there were few instances of willful surrender or desertion. Enemy soldiers were well equipped. However there was a shortage of artillery, transport (indicated by common usage of horse-drawn transport), armor and of course, air support. Small arms ammunition was plentiful. PW's report that most troops get one or two hot meals a day, which had to be brought up to them at night.

e. Prisoners captured: None.

3. OWN OPERATIONS:

a. Throughout the entire period the 818th TD Bn was attached to the 26 Inf Div, asgd to XXI Corps, Third Army. During entire period, 3d Cav Gp was on our left flank. The XV Corps, Seventh Army, has been on our right flank with the 106th Cav Gp occupying the adjoining sector for approximately half of the period and the 101 Cav Gp occupying it the latter part of the period under XXII Corps.

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b. Reserves. During the entire period one gun company was in gen spt of Div and the two companies in dir spt of Regts generally had one pl in reserve.

c. Summary of Operations. Throughout the period the 818th TD Bn was attached to the 26 Inf Div which was in a defensive pos covering a very wide sector with one bridgehead across the Saar river at Saarlautern.

On 1 Feb 45 Co B was in pos in bridgehead area in dir spt of 104 Inf Regt. Co C was in pos around the right flank of Div zone in dir spt of the 328 Regt. Co A was in gen spt of Div in vic of Berus. No action. On 2 Feb Co B 3d pl fired 2 rds APC and 2 rds HE w/ GT 105 fuze on pillbox in Saarlautern, penetrating it and inflicting unknown number of casualties on the occupants. Other units n/c, no action. Rcn Co 2d & 3d pl's continued to man OP's in Saarlautern and vic Wadgassen. On 3 Feb Co B 3d pl fired 2 rds APC & 2 rds HE w/ GT 105 fuze at pillbox in Saarlautern, range 450 yds. Two hits obtained but with no effect on pillbox. One sec of 1st pl Co B reld one sec 2d pl Co B in pos at Q280813; the sec of 2d pl moved back to pos at the bridge in Saarlautern Q282801. Other units, n/c.

On 4 and 5 Feb all units remained in same locations. No action. On 5 Feb Co B 1st pl reld 3d pl in ready pos in Differten; 3d pl moved back to reserve pos in Uberherra. 328 Inf Regt reld by 101 Inf Regt at daylight and Co C was reld from dir spt of 328 Inf and placed in dir spt of 101 Inf. Other units - no/c, no action. On 7 Feb all units n/c, no action. On 8 Feb Co B 3d pl fired 10 rds HE w/ GT 105 fuze; 2 rds HE and 2 rds APC at 2 pillboxes in vic Saarlautern, ranges 450 & 1100 yds. 12 hits obtained but with no penetration. All other units n/c. On 9 Feb Co A 1st & 2d pls moved to surveyed indirect fire pos. 1st pl at Q22877615 reinforcing fire of 263 FA Bn; 2d pl at Q22987635, reinforcing fires of 102 FA Bn. No missions fired during day. Rcn Co Pio pl improving road between Wadgassen and Differten; 2d pl manning OP in SAARLAUTERN Q228806; 3d pl manning OP vic Wadgassen. Other units n/c. All units no action.

On 10 Feb Co A 1st pl in indirect fire pos, reinforcing 263 FA Bn registered, expending 5 rds HE. No missions fired. Co A 2d pl in indirect fire pos, reinforcing 102 FA Bn, registered w/ 21 rds HE, and on H & I fires on 2 concentrations, 32 rds HE were expended. All other units n/c, no action. On 11 Feb Co A 2d pl in indirect fire pos fired 7 rds HE on one observed mission on ex personnel w/ good results. On H & I fire this pl expended 178 rds on 5 concentrations reinforcing 102 FA Bn. Co B 2d pl reld 3d pl in pos at Q290809 in Saarlautern; 3d pl moved one sec to Q281807 and one sec in reserve at Q282801. On 12 Feb Co A CP, 1st & 3d pl moved out of Berus at 1500 hrs to Saarlautern to relieve Co B. Co A CP in Saarlautern at Q284798. Co A 1st pl reld Co B 2d pl in Saarlautern at Q290809. Co A 3d pl reld Co B 1st pl; 1 sec at Q280813 and 1 sec at Q282802. Co A 2d pl remained in indirect fire pos and at close of period had expended 258 rds HE on 6 concentrations H & I fire. Co B CP, 1st & 2d pls moved to Berus. Other units n/c.

On 13 Feb Co A 2d pl in indirect fire pos until 1000 hrs and expended 90 rds HE on 6 concentrations H & I fire. This pl then moved and reld Co B 3d pl in Saarlautern. As per Frag O 309, Co A placed in dir spt of 328 Inf Regt. Co B 1st pl moved into indirect fire pos at Q229761 to reinforce fires of 263 FA Bn and registered expending 13 rds HE. Co B 2d pl reld Co A 2d pl in ~~pos~~ and on H & I concentrations expended 48 rds on 3 concentrations. Co B 3d pl moved to Berus in reserve. As per Frag O 309, Co B reld from dir spt of 104 Inf Regt and placed in gen spt of Div. Other units n/c. On 14 Feb Co B 2d pl fired 3 H & I concentrations expending 78 rds HE over period. All other units remained in same location. On 15 Feb Co B 1st pl reld from reinforcing 263 FA Bn and returned to Berus. Co B 2d pl in indirect fire pos fired 3 H & I conc expending 138 rds HE during day. Co B 3d pl placed in dir spt of 104 Inf and moved at 1500 hrs to positions at Q228859 from which 26 rds APC and 5 rds HE w/ GT 105 fuze were fired on pillbox at Q249857 range 1800 yds. 27 hits obtained, 3 of which were on the embrasure. Results could not be determined. This pl moved back to Berus Q228857. Rcn Co Pio pl maintaining road between Differten and Wadgassen. Rcn Co 2d & 3d pls manning OP's in Saarlautern and Wadgassen.

On 16 Feb Co B 2d pl in indirect fire pos expended 75 rds HE on 6 concs H & I fire. All other units n/change, no action. On 17 Feb 2d sec 2d pl Co A moved in Saarlautern to Q280813 and second sec 3d pl Co A moved in SAARLAUTERN to Q282813. The 1st & 2d Bn 328 Inf Regt attacked in northern part of SAARLAUTERN and suptd by Co A 3d pl & 2d sec 2d pl. Co B 2d pl in indirect fire pos expended 314 rds HE on 10 H & I concs. This pl fired one TOT at 0930 hrs expending 2 rds HE. Other units - no change.

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On 18 Feb 2d sec 2d pl Co A moved forward in spt of 2d Bn 328 Inf to pos at Q28218. 1st sec 1st pl Co A moved at 1800 hrs to pos at Q282807 to cover bridge approach. Co B 2d pl in indirect fire pos reinforcing 102 FA Bn fired one H & I conc expending 16 rds HE. Co B 3d pl in spt of TF A moved one destroyer into pos in RHELINGEN Q238876 and fired 14 rds APC and 5 Rds HE at a tower at Q280881 across Saar river and destroyed it. The tower was being used as OP and also MG nest. Number of casualties inflicted unknown. As per Frag O 323 Co B (less 3d pl) placed in dir spt of 104 Inf Regt. Other units - no change.

On 19 Feb Co B CP & 2d pl moved to UBERHERREN at 1000 hrs; 1st pl reld Co C 1st pl in pos in DIFFERTEN. 2d pl Co B before being reld by 1st pl Co C in indirect fire pos, expended 84 rds HE on 3 concs, H & I fire. Co B 3d pl in spt of TF A, fired 25 rds APC and 1 rd HE on an pillbox. Results could not be observed. Co C CP, 2d & 3d pls moved to BERUS to replace Co B. Co C 1st pl reld Co B 2d pl in indirect fire pos at Q230764, reinforcing 102 FA Bn. pl fired 13 rds HE on registration and on H & I missions, expended 42 rds HE. Bn began replacing M10 destroyers with new M36's. On 20 Feb, Co C 1st pl on indirect fire pos, expended 141 rds HE on 3 concentrations H & I fire. Co C 2d pl test fired new M36's, expending 12 rds HE. Rcn Co continued to man OP's. On 21 Feb, one sec 2d pl Co A sptd 2d Bn 328 Inf with dir harassing fire from pos at Q282818, expending 60 rds HE and 25 rds APC, inflicting heavy casualties; destroying one MG, and 2 houses. This sec reld at dusk by one sec 1st pl Co A and moved to BERUS. 2d sec 1st pl Co A moved to Q282813 and reld sec of 3d pl Co A. 1st sec 2d pl Co B moved to ITZBACH and reld 1st sec of 3d pl which moved back to UBERHERREN. Co C 1st pl in indirect fire pos ~~at~~ expended 144 rds HE on 3 concs H & I fire. Rcn Co pio pl maintaining road between WADGASSEN & DIFFERTEN; 1st pl established OP vic HOFLIMBERG Q255824.

On 22 Feb one destroyer 3d pl Co A fired 6 rds APC into pile of rubble which was thought to conceal enemy pillbox. Limited observation prevented seeing results. 3d pl Co A moved to BERUS to turn in M10's for M36's. 2d sec 2d pl Co B moved to ITZBACH and reld 2d sec 3d pl Co B which returned to UBERHERREN. Co C 1st pl fired H & I missions until 1400 hrs, expending 68 rds HE on 3 concs. This pl moved back to BERUS to get new destroyers. 1st sec 2d pl Co C moved at 1100 hrs to WALDWISSE Q125914 to spt 3d Cav Gp and from pos vic Q207880 fired 38 rds APC & 49 rds HE at 6 pillboxes across SAAR river. Long ranges prevented observation for penetration of pillboxes. As per Frag O 332, Co C placed in dir spt of 101 Inf Regt. On 23 Feb Co A 2d pl moved to SAARLAUTERN. One sec 2d pl Co C moved to indirect fire pos at Q230764 to reinforce 102 FA Bn. No missions fired. 3 rds HE expended test firing M36's. Other units no change.

On 24 Feb 1st pl Co A with one sec in spt of 1st Bn 328 Inf and 2d sec in spt of 2d Bn 328 Inf fired 15 rds HE direct harassing fire on bldgs occupied by enemy, partially destroying 2 houses. Co B 2d pl in spt of TF A moved at 0530 hrs to RHELINGEN and fired 22 rds APC and 15 rds HE at an pillboxes and fortifications at a range of 1100 yds. Penetration obtained with 3 hits on embrasures. Pl moved back to ITZBACH at dusk. Co B 1st & 3d pls each fired 4 rds HE test firing new M36's guns. As per Frag O 335 Co C 2d pl atchd to 3d Cav Gp and moved at 0600 hrs to that sector, taking up pos with one sec at SCHWEMLINGEN Q172970 in spt of Troop B, 3d Cav Sq one destroyer vic FITZER Q180944 in spt of Troop A, 3d Cav Sq and one destroyer at FERMERSDORF Q212902 in spt of 43 Cav Sq. During day this pl fired 60 rds HE and 110 rds APC at 10 pillboxes across Saar river at ranges varying from 1100 to 3000 yds. Penetration was obtained on 7 pillboxes and one house occupied by enemy was destroyed. 1st sec 3d pl Co C moved to indirect fire pos at Q230764, relieving one sec of 2d pl at 0600 hrs. Until reld, one sec of 2d pl Co C had expended 19 rds HE on registration, and 2 rds HE on one conc. Co B 1st pl fired 16 rds HE test firing 90mm gun. Rcn Co 1st pl moved to DIFFERTEN and reld 3d pl which moved back to BERUS; 1st pl took over manning OP in WADGASSEN.

On 25 Feb Co A CP moved to BERUS at 1400 hrs being reld by Co C. 2d pl Co A was reld by 2d pl Co C and moved at 1900 hrs to BERUS. Co A 3d pl moved into ~~at~~ indirect fire pos at Q230764 at 1200 hrs relieving Co C 3d pl. Co A 3d pl expended 11 rds HE on registration and 12 rds HE in 3 concs H & I fire. Co B 1st pl moved to firing pos vic WADGASSEN at Q307746 in spt of 3d Bn 328 Inf and fired 13 rds APC & 8 rds HE at 2 church steeples in town of BOUS, being used by en as OP's. Both OP's were badly damaged. Co C 2d pl in spt of 3d Cav Gp from same pos used on 24 Feb fired 53 rds HE & 132 rds APC at 14 pillboxes and houses in MERZIG at ranges from 1100 to 3000 yds. Penetration was obtained on 9 pillboxes and 3 houses in MERZIG were destroyed. Enemy casualties unknown. This pl reld by 3d Cav Gp

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at 1430 hrs and returned to BERUS. Co C 3d pl in indirect fire position until 1000 hrs, fired 116 rds HE reinforcing 102 FA Bn on 3 concs H & I fire. Co C 1st, 2d, & 3d pl's moved at 1830 hrs to SAARLAUTERN. 1st sec 1st pl Co C moved across bridge and took up positions at Q281812. Co C CP moved to SAARLAUTERN at 1400 hrs. Rcn Co no change.

On 26 Feb Co A 1st pl moved to BERUS, being held by Co C 1st pl. Co A 3d pl in indirect fire pos, expended 7 rds HE in registration and 150 rds HE on 5 concs H & I fire. Co B 2d pl took up positions in RHELINGER Q290875 and fired 22 rds APC and 9 rds HE on 5 pillboxes across SAAR river, ranges 800 to 1500 yds. Penetration through embrasure obtained on 2 pillboxes. German medics later observed removing 7 bodies from pillbox. Co B 3d pl expended 4 rds HE test firing MG6 guns. Co C 3d pl moved to pos at SAARLAUTERN at Q285814 in spt of 3d Bn 101 Inf Regt. On 27 Feb Co A 2d pl atchd to TF B as per Frag O 337. At 1800 hrs this pl moved to DIFFERTEN Q297718 relieving Co B 1st pl. Co A 3d pl in indirect fire pos reinforcing 102 FA Bn, expended 96 rds HE on 3 concs H & I fire. One observed mission on a pillbox at Q30118014 was fired expending 12 rds HE. One hit on door of pillbox was observed but with no effect. One mission of 12 rds HE fired on smokestack at Q30408054. A direct hit obtained but had no effect. As per Frag O 337 Co B in spt of 104 Inf Regt; at 1830 hrs Co B CP, 1st & 3d pls moved to WADWISSE. Other units no change.

On 28 Feb Co A 3d pl fired 7 concs I expending 177 rds HE. One observed mission fired on house thought to be an OP. 35 rds HE expended obtaining hits on house with good results. As per Frag O 138 Co A 2d pl rel'd from atchmt to TF B and placed in dir spt of 322 Inf Regt. Co B 1st pl moved to pos in OBERUSCH Q151893. Co B 2d pl took up pos via BUREN and fired 20 rds HE at an en OP ranged 3800 yds, destroying it. Rcn Co 3d pl rel'd 2d pl in SAARLAUTERN and began manning OP at Q282806; 1st pl manning OP via WADGASSEN Q313742; 2d pl moved back to BERUS.

d. Results. At end of period the situation was more or less static with only small diversionary attacks in the SAARLAUTERN bridgehead. Up until last day of month, the 26th Inf Div had a 17,000 yds frontage including the SAARLAUTERN bridgehead and on the 28 Feb the Div took over the 3d Cav Gp sector doubling the area to be occupied by its troops. Towards close of period the 818th TD Bn began a coordinated firing on enemy held pillboxes across SAAR River in sector. During period the Bn provided anti-tank protection for the 26 Inf Div at all times; supported the attacks of the Div in the SAARLAUTERN Bridgehead; and reinforced the fires of the 26 Div Arty with indirect fire by one platoon. The gun Co's accounted for the destruction of one pillbox, one OP, one MG, 8 enemy occupied houses; breached 22 pillboxes, and inflicted an unknown number of casualties upon the enemy. Rcn Co manned OP's from which artillery fires were directed on enemy targets.

4. SUPPLY AND EVACUATION:

a. Summary of supply activity during period and factors affecting flow of supply. The period covered by this report, the Bn was atchd to the 26th Inf Div. The various supply agencies of the Div supplied the Bn with the exception of class V and Ordnance class II which were obtained from the nearest Corps or Army installations. Ordnance requisitions, repair and replacements were handled by the 47th Medium Maintenance Company. However, the 116th Medium Maintenance Company was asgd to do the Tank Destroyer repair work.

b. Rations for the month averaging 95% B and 5% 10-in-one, were issued to the Co's daily. Co's requisitioned on Bn for all supplies which are secured as rapidly as possible from the proper supply agencies. Motor Maintenance and parts supply was handled by the Bn Motor Officer. The 47th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Co and the 116th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Co provided Third echelon maintenance. First and second echelon maintenance was performed by the Bn Motor Maintenance platoon and Company motor sections. Ammunition: Basic lead maintained by replacement as expended.

c. During the past month the Bn was converted from M10's to Carriage Motor 90mm Gun M36's and M36B1. The M36 mounts a 90mm gun M3 on a M10A1 chassis, while the M36B1 mounts the same gun on a tank M4A3 chassis. Both vehicles are powered by a Ford gasoline driven engine. Other items issued were: Shoe-pac's (large size), issued to all individuals of the Bn wearing appropriate shoe size; jackets and trousers pile OD were issued to replace combat suits; containers round, insulated were obtained 1 ea for every 25 men, which enables Co's to feed a higher percentage of B rations. Panels AP-50-A were exchanged for smaller size

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Status of Supply and Evacuation at Close of Period:

BRANCH	ON HAND
Ordnance	95%
Quartermaster	100%
Medical	100%
Chemical Warfare	100%
Engineer	100%
Signal	95%

Major critical items short are: 20 pairs of binoculars M16 or M17.

C. L. Hail
C. L. HAIL,
Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry,
COMMANDING.

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