

COMPANY "C"
820TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #339, US Army

28 December 1944

RECORD OF EVENTS

Company C, less the second platoon was placed in position at Bleialf, Germany 11 December 1944, 0400 hrs. There was no activity in this area until Saturday, 16 December 1944. At this time heavy artillery fire and mortar fire, was entered upon us. The German infantry started moving forward. Saturday night 16 December 1944, the Company CP was moved back to an overnight bivouac four and one half (4½) miles ~~SW~~ of Bleialf, Germany. The Company Commander was with the 3rd platoon CP on the high ground above Bleialf. The 1st and 3rd platoons remained in position until Sunday, 17 December 1944, 0920 hrs, and the enemy infantry was attacking us from all sides, and mortar and rifle fire from the rear. Just before march order was given by the Company Commander, I saw the Germans taking our men prisoners, they were of one section of the 3rd platoon. Mortar fire was heavy, and march order had been given so Lt Cella, 3rd platoon leader, started getting his men and vehicles out of this position. I gave march order to my platoon also. The first section of my platoon could not get their 3" gun out of position, due to machine gun fire of the enemy. They did get the two H/Ts and ammunition 1½ ton truck out and pulled in the road behind the CO and Lt Cella. One vehicle and 3" gun of the 3rd platoon pulled into the column, plus several other vehicles of the 3rd platoon. I went to get my 2nd section out of position then, as they were in close combat with the enemy, hand grenades and small arms were being used here. We got one crew of this second section and the H/T out of position, and it pulled into the column behind the Company Commander. One gun crew would not leave their position, so a machine gun was placed to cover plus small arms, and I took a 1/4 ton vehicle and raced to the position under the covering fire to get the gun crew. They ran to meet me and hung on the vehicle while I drove away. Then the other men followed me in their vehicles. One squad of the 3rd platoon was with us. We started for Schonberg, Belgium and encountered enemy fire on the road. The vehicles were abandoned and we went on foot around this action. Upon returning to the road on the other side of this, a vehicle came up to us, driven by a Tec 4 from our Hq platoon. He told me of our Executive Officer and about 80 men trapped in a building back down the road. We had a 30 cal. MG, and small arms which we used to lay down covering fire while I went down to see just what the conditions were. My Executive Officer informed me and we laid down a smoke screen and ran for it. There were about sixty men, and a Warrant Officer in this building also from a Field Artillery service company. We managed to get three vehicles from here and proceeded to Schonberg. Upon reaching this town we were stopped by other Americans and told of this town being held by the enemy. This was confirmed by a medical aid man who had just taken a wounded man into this town. We secured a place on the side of the road and a recon was sent out to check for a route around Schonberg. It was found and we started again with more vehicles, and men added from those stopped on the road here. We crossed ridges and small ~~rats~~ finally returning to the road. We started down the road and received artillery fire, so again we left the road and started across country. This being late in the afternoon, we secured and slept in the woods. In the morning we reconnoitered and ran into enemy patrols, so the vehicles were abandoned and on foot we started again.

Co. C, 320th TD Bn., APO #889, US Army.

28 December 1944

RECORD OF EVENTS con't

About noon we came upon a Battery of the 9th Armored Field Artillery. They fed us and we reported to their CP. They had to move and we moved with them back of St Vith about 1500 yds. Here we spent the night. The next day I went to Division Hq., and located our battalion CP, then took a truck back to get the men and brought them to the CP. Seven of these men became seperated the night before in the move to St Vith and had been sent to the rear echelon after getting to the CP. These men numbered twenty-seven (27) and the two (2) officers. Two (2) men were evacuated to a hospital on the return trip. The night was spent at the battalion CP, and the next day, I and three (3) men went to the rear echelon. We were joined by the other officers and seventeen (17) enlisted men in the rear echelon on the 25th of December 1944. Still no word has been received from the 2nd platoon.

Julian P. Garber
JULIAN P. GARBER
1st Lt., FA,
Commanding.