

Wells, Maine
Nov. 13, 1985

I am in receipt of your letter Nov 1,
1985, and, as always am glad to hear
from you. Also am pleased that my
lost letter, and the photos, were
of interest to you. I will answer
your questions as well as my memory
permits.

I believe the action at the Cross-
roads in Noville took place in the
A.M. of the 19th. Probably between 9
and 11 A.M. time.

It was very foggy which probably
was due in part for the short range.
Another factor was "surprise" maybe
this was true with both sides. We
were in a defilade position south of the
town when alerted that enemy troops
were approaching the town. On orders
from our C.O. (St. Hagen) we charged
down the main street to the crossroads,
stopping in or near the middle of the
intersection, up on fighting the troops.
I think one T.P. was still headed
toward Houlfange when we stopped, and,
it took us the gun to nearly a right
angle to the destroyer in order to get
the enemy troops in my sight. The
German troops were approaching the town
on a very narrow road directly across
from the Boney road and had actually

entered the Perimeter of the town. I do not know the name of this road or where it led too.

The tank crews were dressed in white. The Tanks were very nearly the same color as our own, which caused me some concern in making sure they were not our own, being at such close range.

I am quite sure the tanks were Mark IV's. Am not positive of this: I did not see any identification on them which would have disclosed the fact that they were enemy. I think the tanks we were firing on the next day (the 7th) were mostly Panthers at least the ones I saw.

Power Traverse had a lot to do with our getting the second tank, also 360° traverse played an important part as well as the limited traverse on the enemy tanks. The second tank seemed to be missed somewhat, but, after reconstructing the incident I think he may have been trying to maneuver in order to get us within his firing radius. Only two shots were fired. When I saw the crew bailout of the first tank I immediately traversed to the second one and fired. We then pulled back to our former position. I doubt that this entire episode at the crossroad consumed more than one minute in time.

We engaged the tanks almost roadside. There was one on either side of the road but, turned with

guns toward the town. They were both stationary at first, but, as I said I think the second one started to turn first before I fired. I did not see either one get off a shot.

To my knowledge we never used any of the "T-4" Hyper-velocity ammunition. However we could have used some without knowing. Whatever we used at Noville was very effective.

I do not know what color the Germans used for tracer. To the best of my recollection ours was an orange red color.

We had a great time at the 609th reunion. The regular driver (David Wilson of Graham N.C. Carolina) of our destroyer was there and we spent some time going over what happened that day at the crossroads in Noville. Wilson was wounded and evacuated the night of the 19th.

I cannot help much on the battalion score of armor knocked out. I do know that our destroyer was given credit for two tanks destroyed and two Probables on the 19th and at least 5 tanks destroyed on the 20th.

As the risk of duplicating information you already have, I am enclosing copy of 609th action report Dec 1 through 26. Note that Company "C" does not appear after leaving for Bastogne this with the exception of 1st Platoon. This leads me to believe that contact was lost during the Noville battle.

also find enclosed copies of snap shots of cross roads as it looks to day.

Bear in mind that the roads in 1944 were all secondary construction (mostly dirt as I remember) and the road where the German tanks were encountered was hardly more than a cow try lane.

Also, the building, nor the memorial was not there, nor was the power line. The buildings on the main street were all destroyed, but, have been rebuilt nearly the same as I remember them.

I hope that you can read my very poor writing and that some of this is the information you want. If it can be of any further help, please feel free to contact me.

As an after thought I would suggest that you contact, JOHN P PIRON 760 POOL DRIVE FAYETTEVILLE NORTH CAROLINA 27303, who was crew chief on one of the 3rd Platoon Destroyers. John went through the entire battle and into Germany for the surrender. He might be able to give some information on the pursuit of enemy armor propped out.

Hoping to hear from you soon

Respectfully,
Colly M. Picken



HOVEFALIZE

BASTO&NE

BOVACT



MEMORIAL WITH ACCOUNT OF THIS ACTION

BUILDING NOT THERE IN 44

BASTO&NE

RED 1ST TANK
GREEN 2ND TANK
WHITE OUR T.D.
+ SAME BUILDING

HOVEFALIZE

BOVACT