

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS 644TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

APO 230
U S Army
29 January 45

SUBJECT: Battalion History for the Period, 1 November 1944 to 30 November 1944.

TO : The Adjutant General
Washington 25, D.C.
(Attention: Historical Section) (Thru channels)

The following history of this organization for the month of November 1944 is hereby submitted as per instructions contained in AR 345-105.

- a. Unit - no change.
- b. Changes in organization- No change.
- c. Strength, Commissioned and Enlisted:

(1) At beginning of period 1 November 1944

Officers	35
Warrant Officers	1
Enlisted Men	586

(2) Net Increase for Month:

Officers	0
Warrant Officers	0
Enlisted Men	6

(3) Net Decrease for Month:

Officers	1
Warrant Officer	0
Enlisted Men	0

(4) At the end of Period:

Officers	34
Warrant Officer	1
Enlisted Men	592

d. Stations of Unit or Parts Thereof:

Station: BOUVANGE (LUXEMBOURG)

At beginning of period:
Date of departure: 17 November 1944.

MULARTSHUTTE (GERMANY)

Date of arrival: 17 November 1944.
Date of departure: To end of period.

e. Marches.

- (1) Purpose: To move the Battalion to new station at MULARTSHUTTE, GERMANY
- (2) Length of Daily March: 159 miles.
- (3) Points between which marched, with dates:
Battalion moved by motor convoy via ULINGEN, OUILER, ST VITH, GERDMONT, MALMEDY, EUPEN, KATTENIS, ROETOMEN to a new location at MULARTSHUTTE, (GERMANY) (Coor. 930341) on 17 November 1944.

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- (4) Condition of roads and weather: Roads were wet and muddy and visibility was poor.
- (5) Remarks: Trip was made in heavy traffic.

f. Campaigns: GERMANY

g. Battles:

DEFENSE OF LUXEMBOURG (Continued)

a. The enemy

- (1) No change in the G-2 estimate in the continuation.
- (2) Nature and effectiveness of enemy defenses:
No change, See Battalion History for month of November 1944.
- (3) Disposition of enemy units: No change (Same battle)
The enemy was well emplaced in concrete and earthen fortifications along the German Siegfried Line and places in Germany. Their activities was confined mainly to defensive measures with occasional strong patrols which when engaged by our units sometimes resulted in fire fights. The enemy made full use of the natural obstacles of terrain. Some mines were used. No armor was used but occasional SP Guns were used. Air activity consisted of aerial reconnaissance and full use of rocbombs.

Armor: SP guns fired harassing fire missions.

Artillery by the enemy: All types of artillery were used by the enemy occasionally along the front lines. Mortars were also used as a harassing agent.

Number and types destroyed and captured: No change.

- (4) Number of Prisoners of War: During the period, ~~no~~ PW's were taken by the Bn.

Elements effecting action: (Same as October action)

Enemy reconnaissance consisted of strong patrols penetrating the front line areas in search of prisoners and intelligence. These troops sometimes wore American uniforms and spoke fluent English.

B.

Civilian population had been evacuated from front line positions.

Those people contacted in rear areas were usually helpful and friendly.

- (5) Nature of terrain: Terrain was hilly, and steep and heavily wooded with reforested areas covering most of the ground. Valleys between hills were marshy and almost always contained streams that overflowed during heavy rainy periods. Most roads were secondary and narrow.

DEFENSE OF LUXEMBOURG (Continued)

The 644th TD Bn, less Companies A, B and C, continued attachment to 8th Div Arty. All units of the Division continued mission of holding within VIII Corps Sector. Company "A" was attached to CT 121; Company "B" to CT 13; and Company "C" to CT 28. On 9 November 1944, Rcn Co., 644 TD Bn, was attached to CT 28, and reassigned mission of patrolling sector between HEINERSCHIED and FISHBACH, and maintained contact with friendly patrols of 13th and 28th Inf Regts on the left and right.

Beginning with 15th November 1944, the 8th Inf Div interchanged locations with 28th Inf Div, protecting left flank of V Corps. Division, when relieved, passed to the V Corps control. CT 13 with

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Company "B", 6th TD Bn attached, was relieved at daylight on 16 November 1944. CT 121 with Company "A", 6th TD Bn attached, was relieved in place by CT 109 (28th Inf Div) at daylight on 20 November 1944. CT 28 with Company "C", 6th TD Bn attached, was relieved in place by CT 110 (28th Inf Div) at daylight on 18 November 1944. RCM Co., 6th TD Bn reverted to Bn Control and the 6th TD Bn left area at BOUVANCE, LUXEMBOURG at 0645 on 17 November 1944.

(c) Action

1. 6th TD Bn assigned to the First U S Army attached to the Eighth Infantry Division. The Command Post remained as in "LUXEMBOURG DEFENSE" October History.
2. Missions: No change.
3. Special Weapons Used: HVAP Shells were used, communications to companies, subordinate units and higher headquarters were maintained with wire. Radio communication was maintained to platoons and companies.
4. Support by the artillery with record breaking artillery, with harassing, interdiction, and preparation fire.

Engineers cleared mines, prepared roads, filled craters, and improved drainage system of roads in most cases had become quagmires.
5. No bayonets, flame-throwers, etc, were used.
6. Supplies were adequate.
7. Casualties: See attached casualty list.

h. Commanding Officers in Important Engagements

I The Defense of LUXEMBOURG

1. CO 6th TD Bn - Lt Col EPHRAIM F GRAHAM, JR
CO Hqs Co, 6th TD Bn - Capt JAMES M CARPENTER
CO Co "A", 6th TD Bn - Capt HENRY A GARTON, JR
CO Co "B", 6th TD Bn - Capt CARL H WIGGENBORN
CO Co "C", 6th TD Bn - Capt HARLOW F LENON
CO Rcm Co, 6th TD Bn - Capt NELSON C WORKS, JR
CO Med Det, 6th TD Bn - Capt NATHANIEL BERG

i. Losses in Action: See attached casualty list.

(d) Stations of Unit or Parts Thereof:

MULARTSHUTTE (GERMANY)

(e) Marches

- (1) Purpose: To move the Bn to a new station.
- (2) Battalion moved by motor convoy via ROETGEN, KATTENIS, EUPEN to a new location at SOUBRODT (BELGIUM) coor. (861098)
- (3) Length of daily marches: Approximately 132 miles.
- (4) Roads were slippery and drifted with snow.
- (5) The trip was made without incident.

(f) Campaigns:

GERMANY

- (1) Battle of HURTGEN FOREST

See Battalion History for the month of October 1944.

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(a) The Enemy

1. The G-2 estimate of the situation is the same. (See October History)
2. Nature and effectiveness of enemy defense:
See October Battalion History.
3. Disposition of Enemy Units: No change from October History.
4. Prisoners of War: No Prisoners were taken by this unit during this period.

(b) Elements Effecting Action

1. Enemy sent small patrols to gather information some of which were caught. Night reconnaissance missions by air was used extensively.
2. Attitude of Civilians: Civilian people in the front line were evacuated. Civilians contacted in rear area were very cool and waved to PW's.
3. Nature of Terrain: Terrain was heavily wooded and rolling. The ground would not support heavy tracked vehicles because of the mire. Roads were poor.

(c) Action

BATTLE OF HURTGEN FOREST

On 17 November 1944 at approximately 1500 hours, 6th TD Bn arrived in new area (929344) and attached companies, upon arrival, organized and held ground taken over from units of 28th Inf Div. On 19 November 1944, Co "B", 6th TD Bn, was attached to the 13th Inf Regt; Co "C", 6th TD Bn, was attached to 28th Inf Regt; and Co "A", 6th TD Bn was returned to Bn control. The 6th TD Bn (less Co B & C) attached to Div Arty.

On 21 November 1944, the V Corps started an attack to seize and hold HURTGEN and KLEINHAU and the connecting road between these towns against enemy attack from north, east and southeast. Co "A", 6th TD Bn, was attached to the 121st Inf Regt through Phase I of this attack. Co "B", attached to the 13th Inf Regt, with mission of supporting that Regiment to hold on right flank and maintain patrols. Co "C", 6th TD Bn, attached to 28th Inf Regt.

On 26 November 1944, the Bn (less Co "B") was attached to the 121st Inf Regt. Co "C" in close support of 1st Bn, 13th Inf Regt (also attached to 121st), supporting the 121st Inf, moving to HURTGEN. Co "A" in close support of 2d Bn, 121st Inf, moved into HURTGEN. On 29 November, one platoon, Co "A", attached to 1st Bn, 13th Inf Regt, to hold KLEINHAU, Companies "A" and "C" attached to 121st. Co "A", moving over circuitous route, reached the northern edge of HURTGEN at approximately 290200 Nov 1944 to carry out mission of supporting the 2d Bn, 121st Inf Regt. Co "A" arrived in position, less two (2) destroyers. All are now operational.

Co "C", following the tanks of 709 Tank Bn, arrived on their objective in HURTGEN with the infantry riding the TD's. Buildings and other targets in the town were fired upon and HURTGEN was taken by our forces. Co "C" suffered the loss of nine (9) M-10's due to mines and the difficult

terrain and arrived in HURTGEN with only three (3) destroyers, however, by fifteen hundred (1500) the same day, five (5) M-10's were operational and the Company now has a total of eleven (11) M-10's operational. These destroyers were recovered and put in working order by the unit.

Company "B" continued support of the 13th Inf Regt throughout the period. A mission of holding force only. On 22d November 1944, at 1700, Co "A" moved one (1) destroyer, 1st Platoon to fire on M IV tank, used by the Germans to bring heavy machine gun fire upon leading elements of the infantry company in that sector. The M IV tank was destroyed. On 23d November 1944, Co "A", 644 TD Bn sent one (1) destroyer up the GERMETER-HURTGEN Road to (028345) for purpose of firing at targets of opportunity. On 23d November 1944, Co "B" sent one (1) destroyer of 3d Platoon to (987304) for purpose of locating an enemy gun, by flash, and firing counter-battery direct fire at nearby guns.

1. Headquarters to which unit was assigned; The unit was assigned to the Eighth Inf Div and Div Arty on the 19th November 1944.

Company "B", 644 TD Bn, attached to the 13th Inf Regt
Company "C", 644 TD Bn, attached to the 28th Inf Regt
644 TD Bn (less Co's "B" & "C") attached to 8th Div Arty.

2. Mission: To repel armor attacks and give direct support to the infantry in their attack in HURTGEN.

3. Special Weapons Used: HVAP ammunition.

Communications were good through the use of wire to all companies in higher headquarters. 608 and 610 radios were used among the companies.

4. Support of Friendly Artillery was heavy and effective.

The Engineers cleared mine fields for the tank destroyers. Roads were drained by the Engineers and secondary roads were rebuilt through the forests.

5. No use of bayonet, grenades, flame-throwers for the period.

6. Supply and Evacuation: Supply and evacuation of wounded were excellent.

7. Casualties: See attached casualty list.

- h. Commanding Officers in Important Engagements.

The Battle of HURTGEN FOREST

- (1) CO 644 TD Bn - Lt Col Ephraim F Graham, Jr
CO Hq Co, 644 TD Bn - Capt James M Carpenter
CO Co "A", 644 TD Bn - Capt HENRY A GARTON, JR
On 25th November 1944 Capt HENRY A GARTON, JR
was evacuated after being wounded.
CO Co "A", 644 TD Bn - Capt WILLIAM P BYE
CO Co "B", 644 TD Bn - Capt CARL H WIGGENHORN
CO Co "C", 644 TD Bn - Capt HARLOW F LENON
CO Rcn Co, 644 TD Bn - Capt NELSON C WORKS, JR
CO Med Det, 644 TD Bn - Capt NATHANIEL BERG

- i. Losses in Action: See attached casualty list.
- j. Members distinguishing themselves in action: See attached list.
- k. Photographs of important events, or scenes or personnel: Not available for this period.

For the Commanding Officer:

Vincent C Bristol
VINCENT C BRISTOL
2d Lt, FA
Adjutant

- 2 Incls:
Incl 1 - Losses in Action, Officers and Enlisted Men
Incl 2 - Former and Present Members Who Have Distinguished
Themselves in Action.

Month of November 1944

1. LOSSES IN ACTION - OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN

1. Engagements.

- a. Defense of Luxembourg.
- b. Battle of Hurtgen Forest.

2. Names.

a. Defense of Luxembourg:

Tec 5 Steve Evanina, 33104646 (WIA)
Pfc Carlos Gimenez, 32688322 (WIA)
Pvt Morris J Rondeau, 31381091 (KIA)

b. Battle of Hurtgen Forest:

Capt HENRY A GARTON, JR, 0407272 (WIA)
1st Lt ALBERT M DAVIS, 01823572 (KIA)

Sgt Anthony J Ricciardo, 32058000 (WIA)
Sgt T C Godwin, 34180121, (WIA)
Cpl Clarence H Weaver, 33242483 (WIA)
Tec 5 Robert D Moore, 37108799 (WIA)
Pfc Robert J Mills, 35657349 (WIA)
Pvt Esker R Mills, 34332281 (WIA)
Pvt Houston Creighton, 33547654 (WIA)
Pvt Donald L Wilt, 33495849 (WIA)

3. Killed in Action:

- a. Defense of Luxembourg.
One (1) Enlisted Man.
- b. Battle of Hurtgen Forest.
One (1) Officer.

4. Wounded in Action.

- a. Defense of Luxembourg.
Two (2) Enlisted Men.
- b. Battle of Hurtgen Forest.
One (1) Officer.
Eight (8) Enlisted Men.

5. Missing in Action.

None.

6. Taken Prisoner.

None.

J. FORMER AND PRESENT MEMBERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN ACTION

1. Engagement:

- a. Defense of Luxembourg.
- b. Battle of Hurtgen Forest.

2. Names:

- a. None.
- b. 1st Lt CHARLES E COATS, 01822238
2d Lt OWEN R McDERMOTT, 0886903

S/Sgt Henry P Mutz, 20234664

3. Act:

- a. None.

b. First Lieutenant Charles E Coats, 01822238, Field Artillery (Armored Force), Company C, 644th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against the enemy on 28 and 29 November 1944 in the vicinity of *****, Germany. In an attack on a strongly held enemy town, Lieutenant Coats led his platoon in support of the infantry over very difficult terrain and in the face of bitter resistance. Throughout the action his numerous examples of personal courage and his inspiring leadership contributed much to the success of the attack. Entered the military service from South Carolina.

Second Lieutenant Owen R McDermott, 0886903, Field Artillery (Armored Force), Company C, 644th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for gallantry in action from 20 November 1944 to 26 November 1944 and on 3 December 1944 in the vicinity of *****, Germany. Lieutenant McDermott advanced into a town and selected and supervised the digging of two tank destroyer positions. Despite furious enemy artillery fire which blanketed the area, he directed the operations of his men. Although wounded at one time he refused evacuation and continued his duties. On 3 December he moved his platoon into a forward position in darkness in the face of violent and accurate enemy shell fire. When his vehicle was knocked out of action he directed the evacuation of the crew and then continued at the head of his platoon. Throughout the action Lieutenant McDermott's outstanding leadership and repeated examples of personal courage were an inspiration to his men. Entered the military service from New York.

Staff Sergeant Henry P Mutz, 20234664, Field Artillery (Armored Force), Company C, 644th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for gallantry in action on 29 November 1944 in the vicinity of *****, Germany. Sergeant Mutz led his platoon in an advance into a strongly-held enemy town. Despite intense mortar fire and enemy artillery fire directed at his vehicle, he led the advance into the center of the town and delivered fire against enemy buildings. When his vehicle was knocked out by rocket fire, he directed the evacuation of his crew while under withering machine gun fire. Throughout the action his sound leadership and outstanding courage were an inspiration to his men. Entered the military service from New Jersey.

4. Awards:

a. None.

b. Silver Star Medal- 2d Lt OWEN R McDERMOTT

S/Sgt Henry P Mutz

Bronze Star Medal- 1st Lt CHARLES E COATS
(Oak Leaf Cluster)