

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HEADQUARTERS 776TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

31 December 1944

Operations 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion December 1-31-1944

December 1 - A Company, First and Third ^{Platoons} moved to 569335 and 583330 respectively at 1430 hours. B Company First and Third Platoons moved to 576316 and 595320 respectively at 1530 hours. C Company Second Platoon moved from Tieffenbach, France to Weislingen, France, at 1800 hours, one section at 650360, one section at 643356. Third platoon one section in reserve at Tieffenbach moved into position at 647342 covering railroad to Fromhul, France, at 0800 hours. Reconnaissance Company continues to maintain contact with 121st Cavalry.

December 2 - "A" Company supporting 71st Infantry. "B" Company supporting 324th Infantry. "C" Company supporting 114th Infantry. Company CP at Petersbach (657303) closing at 1000 hours. At 0700 hours Second Platoon at Weislingen knocked out two enemy half-tracks (personnel carriers) and one SP gun at point blank range after enemy counter-attacks West of town and enemy troops began to infiltrate into Weislingen. Visibility was very poor and allowed the enemy vehicles to approach neighboring buildings before being seen, 6 rounds APC were fired. First Platoon moved from position in Petersbach, France, to attack Hinsbourg (674343) by way of La Petit Pierre with one Company of Infantry, one Company of Tanks. Tanks were stopped North of Hinsbourg by A/T fire and elements have held up at that position.

December 3 - "A" Company fired 50 rounds HE into Mackwiller and 43 rounds HE at MG nests and Infantry positions in near vicinity. Effect of fire was good. At 1345 hours Second Platoon Leader directed fire for 220

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

F. A. on enemy Infantry and enemy truck at 613394 with excellent results. The truck was damaged and estimated 15 casualties inflicted on the Infantry. At 1300 hours "B" Company, First Platoon moved out with tanks and 324th Infantry to attack Waldhambach, France. "B" Company in direct support of 324th Infantry advanced to following positions - 1st Platoon at 620364, 3rd platoon at 623369, 2nd platoon at 615364. Company "C" in direct support of 114th Infantry. First Platoon moved back to Peterbach after failing to through to Fromhul with the tanks which were stopped by A/T fire. Reconnaissance Company moved from La Petite Pierre at 1340 hours to Tieffenbach, France (645339).

December 4 - "A" Company in support of 71st Infantry moved Second and Third Platoons S and SE of Mackwiller, France. "B" Company moved to position vicinity 621365 continuing to support 324th Infantry. At 0315 hours one destroyer of 3rd Platoon hit an enemy mine at 628379. While advancing to the North from Waldhambach with the Infantry, 1st Platoon advancing on the town of Diemeringen fired 33 rounds HE and 5 rounds APC at buildings and general area around the town. Results of firing unknown. Reconnaissance Company 3rd Platoon supporting "B" Company moved to 620364. Pioneer Platoon reconnoitered enemy mine fields at 627378 and assisted engineers in removal.

December 5 - "A" Company (supporting 71st Infantry), 1st Platoon moved to vicinity of Diemeringen after platoon of "B" Company at Diemeringen moved towards Butten. Platoon advanced from Diemeringen to 585387 where it encountered road obstacles and mines. At 1705 one destroyer of the platoon was put out of action by an enemy mine at 587393. "B" Company supporting 324th Infantry advanced on Butten at approximately 1345. Platoon leader of 1st Platoon captured 8 PW while reconnoitering for gun positions in vicinity of

-2-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

621387. "C" Company supporting 114th Infantry. First Platoon Reconnaissance Company reconnoitered from Valksburg to Roesert taking trail rom Roesert to 680398 and then West and North to 675406. Route was found suitable for armor. S mines were located at 681394.

December 6 - Company "A" supporting 71st Infantry (Note: Destroyer that hit mine in vicinity Lorentzen , 5 December 1944, completely destroyed).

"B" Company supporting 324th Infantry with all platoons advanced to vicinity 663448. Company "C" supporting 114th Infantry with all platoons in position at Valksburg (682886) and are waiting for blown bridge to be repaired.

December 7 - Company "A" supporting 71st Infantry. "B" Company supporting 324th Infantry. One destroyer of 1st Platoon was hit by enemy artillery fire at 668458 - damaged but can be repaired. (Note: Direct fire done by "B" Company, 5 December at vehicles and personnel at 638479 resulted in enemy Mark III tank and a recovery vehicle destroyed. Number of enemy personnel killed or wounded unknown. Company "C" supporting 114th Infantry, platoons moved out to Montbronn. Reconnaissance Company continuing mission of reconnoitering roads, sweeping for mines and furnishing flank protection.

December 8 - (Note: Direct fire done by "B" Company 7 December 1944 on enemy gun at 690510 was destroyed. Enemy MG nests marked by Infantry tracer fire were fired upon with good results. "C" Company 1st Section of 1st Platoon moved from Montbronn to position at S edge of Enchenberg to support attack of 1st Battalion 114th Infantry. They demolished church steeple in Enchenberg with 3 rounds HE to deprive enemy of observation on 114th Infantry in the town. Reconnaissance Company CP at Montbronn (688440)

December 9 - Company "A", 3rd Platoon, moved to 643409. (Note: One destroyer Company "C", 1st Platoon hit by enemy artillery fire at 1830 hours

-3-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

8 December 1944. Damage estimated as slight.

December 10 - Company "A", 1st Platoon moved to 710460 Enchenberg prepared to move through 114th Infantry and to make contact with 324th Infantry. Mission is to knock out pillbox reported at 694493.

December 11 - Company "A", Second Platoon at 682501 lost one destroyer by direct enemy tank fire at 1430 hours while firing at enemy tanks located at 682512. The destroyer burned immediately. Damage to enemy tank unknown due to poor visibility. It is believed that one enemy tank was destroyed. One destroyer was knocked out by enemy tank of "B" Company in vicinity of Maierhoff at 1420 hours. Platoon fired at enemy tank in vicinity 682512. Results of firing unknown due to poor visibility. Company CP moved to Rohrbach. Company "C" 1st platoon moved from Enchenberg at 1100 hours toward Maierhoff going into position at 695488. Observed two enemy tanks and a pillbox at 703517 and brought them under fire. Enemy tanks retreated beyond ridge at 694515 and pillbox was neutralized. Platoon moved back to 706464 at 1630 hours after being relieved by two guns of Company "A" at former position. Reconnaissance Company continuing to support gun companies in reconnaissance of routes and security. (Note: One gun "A" Company was moved to indirect fire position at 684445 and fired 85 rounds HE at barracks East of Bitche. The firing was for the purpose of testing the recoil mechanism of the 90 MM Gun).

December 12 - Company "A" supporting 71st Infantry. "B" Company 1st Platoon in support of 1st Battalion. 324th Infantry held up by enemy fire coming from pillboxes to the Northeast.

December 13 - Company "A" supporting 71st Infantry. "A" Company CP at Siersthal. "B" Company 1st Platoon at 0800 hours supported 1st Battalion 324th Infantry with platoon in position at 706525 with one gun covering

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

river crossing to the North from 712528.

December 14 - "A" Company supporting 71st Infantry. Second Platoon moved to firing position at 741513 at 0800 hours to support attack of 3rd Battalion 71st Infantry on farm at 750512. Third Platoon fired at pillboxes at 764515, 767515 and 770516, effect of fire unknown. (Note: It was verified today that one Mark IV tank was knocked out and burned by 2nd Platoon during tank action on 10 December 1944 from a position at Maierhoff. Enemy tank destroyed at 681515. "B" Company supporting 324th Infantry. Company "C" general support 1st Platoon remained in position at 697484 until 1000 hours at which time was alerted and moved to Maierhoff (683501) after report of enemy tank threat in vicinity of Bettviller had been received. Reconnaissance Company Platoons continue to assist firing companies in reconnaissance of routes and security.

December 15 - Company "A", Third Platoon continued fire on pillboxes and gun positions at 764516, 767515 and 765515 from a firing position at 731489. Visibility did not clear targets until 1100 hours. Platoon began firing and continued periodic fires throughout the day. Direct hits with APC, HE and HE with T-105 Fuze were observed on pillboxes by platoon leader.

December 16 - Company "A", First Platoon from position at 737510 fired on pillboxes to the NE, results of fire unknown. Second and Third Platoon no change. - B Company 1st and 2nd Platoon no change.

December 17 - Note: Firing done by 1st Platoon "A" Company on pillbox entrance at 731510 16 December 1944 and of the 15 APC expended, 10 rounds penetrated the 10 inch steel door.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

December 18 - Company "A" supporting 71st Infantry. Third platoon took up firing positions at 741514 at 0900 hours to assist Third Battalion, 71st Infantry in their attack. From this position they fired 6 rounds HE on the Fort at 761516, scoring direct hits, prior to the seizure of the Fort by 100th Division. Company "C" supporting 114th Infantry, completed relieving Company "B" at 0630 hours in place. Company "B" supporting 324th Infantry was relieved in place by Company "C" and moved to assembly area at 697435.

December 19 - Company "A" continues to support 71st Infantry. Company "B" in general support, 1 section of third platoon moved to 755505 at 0730 hours to be in direct support of 2nd Battalion 398th Infantry. Company "C" supporting 114th Infantry.

December 20 - Company "A" supporting 71st Infantry, 2nd Platoon moved to 727527, one section of 3rd platoon moved to 741519. Company "B" general support, 2nd platoon moved to Petit Rederching. Company "C" supporting 114th Infantry.

December 21 - Company "B" attached to 324th Infantry ^{REGIMENT} ~~DIVISION~~. CT moved to the vicinity of Sarreguemines (5157) to displace into defensive positions of the Division sector. (Note: Company "B" enters Germany). Reconnaissance Company and one platoon moved to vicinity of Sarreguemins.

December 22 - Company "A" attached to CT 71st Infantry, moved with CT to temporary assembly area at Zetting 563535. Company "B" attached to CT 324th Infantry, in defensive position. Company "C" attached to CT 114th Infantry, moved with CT to defensive positions. Reconnaissance Company 1 platoon with each destroyer company to furnish security and route reconnaissance. Battalion CP moved to Sarreinsming (545547) closing at 1400 hours. Rear Echelon moved to Siltzheim (528513).

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~

December 23 - Company "B", one gun of 1st Platoon moved to A/T position at 582597.

December 24 - "A" Company moving to defensive AT position in 71st regimental sector. "B" Company withdrew with elements of 324th Infantry from North side of La Elies river to assembly area at 570566 upon order of 324th Infantry. Third Platoon moved to defensive AT position at 565575 at 1430 hours. Platoon fired 10 rounds APC and 5 rounds HE at enemy tanks at 565608. Results of fire could not be observed. Battalion CP moved to Siltzheim (528516) closing at 1330 hours.

December 25 - "A" Company in defensive At position. "B" Company, 1st platoon, one section, moved to defensive AT positions at 550585 at 0700 hours, other section in artillery position with one section of 2nd platoon at 567556. Company "C", 1st platoon moved into artillery positions at 554552 at 1215 hours. Guns were registered by air OP of 217th Field Artillery at 1400 hours.

December 26 - "A" Company supporting 71st Infantry. Second platoon in indirect fire position at 577515 expended 51 rounds HE harassing fire missions designated by 156th Field Artillery Battalion. "B" Company supporting 324th Infantry. Company "C" supporting 114th Infantry. Enemy tanks reported at 512612 at 1210 hours could not be picked up by "C" Company OPs and Reconnaissance Company OPs at 510570 and 502569. Area was continually under observation by both OPs until darkness. Enemy Infantry observed by Company "C" OP at 546614 at 1600 hours fired on by artillery with good effect.

December 27 - "A" Company 2 guns of 2nd platoon moved to 609587 at 0630 hours into AT position. "B" Company guns in artillery positions fired 24 rounds HE harassing fire on town of Rubenheim. Company "C" 1st platoon fired 48 rounds

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HE harassing fire on targets designated by 217th Field Artillery.

December 28 - "A" Company 2 guns of 2nd platoon at 609587 moved to 608576 into more suitable AT positions. "B" Company one gun of 1st Platoon at 551589 being dug in by engineers at 553583. Company "C" 1st Platoon fired 48 rounds HE harassing fire on targets designated by 217th Field Artillery Battalion.

December 29 - "A" Company 2 guns of 2nd platoon moved into defensive AT position at 609581. "B" Company emplacement dug for one gun of first platoon at 551589 was not occupied due to water in the position. Company "C" - 2 guns of 2nd platoon at 515577 fired 9 rounds HE at house in vicinity 513577 at a range of 250 yards. Friendly Infantry was being fired on by enemy MG from this house. HE was fired into all three floors of the house and neighboring building. The enemy evacuated a member of gun crew from 3rd floor of house. MG was silenced.

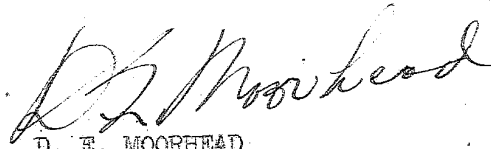
December 30 - "B" Company 1st platoon no change, one gun of 2nd platoon on roving mission fired 20 rounds HE and 7 APC from a position at 569575 at house suspected to be enemy CP. Approximately 20 direct hits were made on the house completely demolishing it.

December 31 - "A" Company no change. "B" Company guns in artillery position fired 111 rounds HE harassing fire at targets designated by 220th Field Artillery. "C" Company guns in artillery position fired 50 rounds HE harassing fire on targets designated by 217th F. A. Enemy infantry observed by 3rd platoon in vicinity of 546620 was dispersed by artillery fire. (Note: Enemy materiel captured or destroyed by the 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion from October 31, 1944, date entered combat in France, to December 31, 1944, is as follows: 1 Mark III,

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

10 Mark V8s, 3 SP's, 4 combat vehicles, 15 general purpose vehicles, 9 towed
AT guns, 17 towed artillery pieces, 8 pill boxes, 9 machine gun nests,
cpatured 222 PW.



D. E. MOORHEAD
Lt. Colonel, CAC
Commanding

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~