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SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION (II)

APO 464, U. S. Army
24 January 1944

ATTACK ON MOUNT PORCHIO, ITALY

Laps: Italy 1:25000, British Reproduction of German Map,
GSGS 4229 Italy 1:50000, Sheet 160-II.

SITUATION: On 28 December 1943, the situation was as shown on
overlay number 1.

Orders were received for Battalion Commanding Officer to report to
Commanding General, Combat Command B, 1st Armored Division. At this conference
a copy of II Corps Directive, attached as Appendix Number 1, was issued to
each unit commander and a discussion held of proposed operation. Battalion
was directed by Commanding General, Combat Command B, 1st Armored Division
to carry out an extensive terrain reconnaissance astride HIGHWAY 6 and determine
feasibility of tank operation in cooperation with attack of 1st Battalion 6th
Armored Infantry. It was also directed that elements of battalion remain in
present positions until directed to move by Task Force Allen.

Arrangements were made with 15th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division to
attach battalion personnel to their night patrols.

On the night of 29-30 December 1943, elements of the 34th Infantry
Division relieved elements of the 36th Infantry Division. Elements of battalion
remained in same positions. See Overlay Number 2.

Night of 29th and 30th our patrols in conjunction with 15th Infantry
patrols reconnoitered the area north and south of HIGHWAY 6 up to S. VITTORE
ROAD later designated KNOX AVENUE. Patrols were unable to penetrate German
resistance along this AVENUE.

Night of 30-31st December, the 6th Armored Infantry relieved the 15th
Infantry. See overlay number 2. Patrols were continued with the 6th Armored
Infantry until 3 January 1944.

On 3 January 1944, battalion was ordered to assemble in vicinity of
G994118. Movement completed by 2300.

Based on an extensive study of maps and aerial photographs; from
observations gleaned from Observation Posts on MOUNT LUNGO when visibility
was clear; and from data obtained by our reconnaissance patrols, a picture was
developed which showed the terrain unsuitable for cross country operation of
tanks unless aided by Engineers. Aerial reconnaissance was not feasible
during this period because of rain, fog and mist.

TERRAIN: The ground to be fought over between MOUNT LUNGO and
MOUNT PORCHIO was generally flat having a slight downward slope, running from
north to south and interspersed with six stream beds of various widths. Just
south of C. MARELLI were four small mounds varying from 10 feet to 30 feet in
height and known as HILLS 76 and 86. There was a slight rise west of and
paralleling KNOX AVENUE - S. VITTORE ROAD which would afford some defilade cover.
Between HIGHWAY 6 and the railroad the area was devoid of cover; north of HIGH-
WAY 6 the area was dotted with orchards affording good cover and concealment
provided armored vehicles could negotiate the terraces.

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Attack on Mt. Porchio Cont'd.

Due to the heavy rains prior to 28 December, the streams carried anywhere from 1 foot to 5 feet of water. This dropped to about 1 foot of water by the night of 4 January. Most of the silt and some gravel washed down from the mountain mass on the north emptied into this area making the stream beds obstacles to tanks. The ground itself was plowed area, interdicted with irrigation ditches and very soft. The stream beds north of Highway 6 had good gravel bottoms and better suited for tank crossings. Several possible crossings were found that could be made feasible tank crossings with engineer assistance. See sketch number 1. Around the north west and western tip of MOUNT LUNGO the ground was marshy and a tank obstacle.

West of the stream bed between KNOX AVENUE and MOUNT PORCHIO the ground began to slope up. It was open firm ground suitable for tank operation up to the base of MOUNT PORCHIO and around its flanks. MOUNT PORCHIO itself is an obstacle since it has a forty five degree slope and stands some 900 feet high. Its base is about 1400 yards long. Its slopes are barren and rocky.

All in all it would require at least a week of sunshine and cold weather to dry out the ground sufficiently to hold tanks.

ROADS: HIGHWAY 6 bounds the area on the north. It is a good metallic road having two culverts, a two span bridge and a three span bridge all blown. See sketch number 1. ROAD 69 running to S. PIETRO and KNOX AVENUE - S. VITTORE ROAD were good lateral roads. Other roads shown on map were practically non-existent. It would require engineer assistance to move armored vehicles north off HIGHWAY 6 to covered areas between the two lateral roads. The rail-road track running west and south of MOUNT LUNGO - MOUNT PORCHIO is a cut which has been turned into a vehicle highway up to the western tip of MOUNT LUNGO. There a blown out bridge and marshy ground blocks any tank movement.

Based on the above information the Commanding General, Task Force Allen held another conference on 31 December 1943 to discuss PLAN RESOLUTION and alternate PLAN CHAFFEE. (Attached as Appendix Number 2 and Number 3).

Orders were issued by Commanding General, Task Force Allen for the attack on 3 January 1944. See Appendix Number 4 Field Orders Number 1 Task Force Allen.

Battalion issued its orders on 3 January 1944. See Appendix Number 5, Field Orders Number 7, 753rd Tank Battalion.

It is to be noted that in PLAN RESOLUTION and the CHAFFEE PLAN, the movement of the battalion was dependent upon the success of engineer units in repairing culverts, fixing suitable crossings and opening lanes through mines so that tanks could be spotted in designated area in accordance with whichever Plan was in effect.

MT PORCHIA BATTLE IN DIARY FORM

4 January 1944

In conformity with field order issued by Commanding General, Task Force Allen, the 6th Armored Infantry jumped off in their attack on MT. PORCHIA at 1930. At 1945 they had reached phase line B. HILLS 87 and 76 were taken. At 2000 word was received that the infantry had been pushed off HILL 87.

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Attack on Mt. Porchia (cont'd)

5 January 1944

From midnight until around 0500 enemy continued to infiltrate behind our lines and around our right flank. At 0345 verbal orders from Commanding General Task Force Allen ordered "B" Company, with the assault gun and mortar platoon attached, to TAVERNA C.R. to assist infantry to take that point. At 0430 there was a change in orders ordering "B" Company to assist the engineer and infantry in taking HILL 87. "B" Company moved out at 0500, with orders to contact engineer commander at road junction at 6 and 69 who would guide them into an area prepared by the engineers. On moving up to this area one "B" Company tank hit a mine disabling it. Upon arrival in this area (see sketch) tanks opened up on enemy machine guns on HILL 87 and destroyed them. Germans then withdrew up creek bed north of HILL 87 towards SAN VITTORIA. About 100 yards north of HILL 87 the Germans set up their machine guns and covered the top of HILL 87 with grazing fire. One "B" Company tank was ordered down HIGHWAY 6 to the creek line and ordered to fire high explosive on German machine gun position in creek bed. The tank after firing 10 rounds of high explosive neutralized the enemy machine gun fire. This enabled the infantry to move forward and capture enemy prisoners who were not killed or wounded. The company commander withdrew the one tank from HIGHWAY 6 to a position behind HILL 76, and continued to fire on targets of opportunity from a hull defilade position. One German tank firing from behind a house, was set on fire and several machine gun nests were knocked out. Five of "B" Company tanks bogged down in this area.

At 0700 Company "C" was ordered to move up in vicinity of HILL 87. At 0715 Company "C" was halted on HIGHWAY 6 by Task Force Allen liaison officer and ordered back into assembly area. At 0730 Company "C" with mortar platoon attached was ordered to move into a firing position west of SAN PIETRO and directed to fire on all targets of opportunity. Company "C" was in position at 1040 at (950170). By coordination between our observation post on MT. LUNGO and the Battalion Commander, these two companies were able to fire very effectively throughout the day. Companies "C" and "B" knocked out two self-propelled 88mm guns, broke up an attack of 8 German tanks and laid direct fire on houses along trail around northern slopes of MT PORCHIA. Quite a few Germans withdrew from these houses.

During the moving the infantry consolidated their positions along phase line "B". At 1400 the Commanding General, Task Force Allen issued an order for the infantry to attack at 1515 and take the line TERNARNO-ROCCO station road. "B" Company was ordered to support the attack by fire and movement. Company "C" was ordered to support the attack by fire.

At 1515 the infantry jumped off and met very little resistance. By 1700 the infantry had occupied phase line "C" (KNOX AVE.).

The 760th Tank Battalion was ordered to move down the express highway after dark. They were unable to advance beyond MT. LUNGO and were then ordered to move down HIGHWAY 6, and take up a firing position along HIGHWAY 6 and KNOX AVENUE and furnish fire support for the infantry.

Company "A" was ordered to leave assembly area at 2300 and go into a firing position west of SAN PIETRO along with "C" Company. (See sketch)

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Attack of Mt. Porchia (cont'd)

6 January 1944

Commanding General, Task Force Allen issued Field Orders #3 directing the infantry to attack at 0700, seize and secure MT. PORCHIA. The Battalion was ordered to support the attack by fire. Throughout the attack the Battalion supported the infantry by fire until they reached their objective. Thereafter they fired on targets of opportunity and laid concentrations in possible enemy assembly areas for the remainder of the day. About 1000 "B" Company received heavy artillery fire, seriously wounding one officer and one enlisted man and wounding the company commander.

The infantry reached the slopes on PORCHIA by 1100 but had to withdraw due to heavy artillery and mortar fire. After reorganizing, the infantry made another attack and reached the crest of MT. PORCHIA at 1700. The infantry was ordered to hold their positions at all costs.

At 1730 Company "C" was ordered to move to ROAD JUNCTION 69. There a liaison officer from Task Force Allen would give the company commander of Company "C" his orders. Company "C" was ordered to move to the vicinity of the south west slopes of PORCHIA; then to take up a firing position to break up enemy counter attacks coming around the southern slopes of MT. PORCHIA or from LT. CEDRO. (See sketch). At 1800 "A" Company was heavily shelled. One man was killed and two wounded from the mortar platoon. Two mortar half-tracks were also hit by shell fire. Throughout the night Companies "A", "B", and "C" were shelled sporadically, but suffered no casualties.

7 January 1944

During the morning the 6th Armored Infantry with two companies of engineers attached, continued to consolidate their positions on MT. PORCHIA. Company "C" wiped out ten machine gun nests located in houses and hay stacks south and south west of PORCHIA. It received fire from several German self-propelled guns of large caliber in the vicinity of (908156) which resulted in the loss of two tanks. The self-propelled gun located at (908156) was spotted and destroyed by fire placed on it by Company "C". This was later confirmed by infantry observation post on MT. PORCHIA. Throughout the remainder of the day they received heavy artillery fire (See sketch for Co. "C" operation).

Orders were received at 1315 directing Companies "A" and "B" to return to their assembly area at 1800. Both companies arrived at assembly area around 1845. Company "C" was to remain in its present position and protect the left flank of the Task Force until the British X Corps captured LT. CEDRO. It was to continue to assist the 6th Armored Infantry to hold their positions on MT. PORCHIA.

8 January 1944

Company "C" remained in a defensive position at (926153) throughout the day. That night they received heavy artillery fire, knocking out two tanks and wounding three men.

9 January 1944

Company "B" was ordered to move out of assembly area at 1200 and take up a firing position in the rear of HILL 76 to prevent any armored counter attacks. Company "C" was ordered to return to assembly area at 1800.

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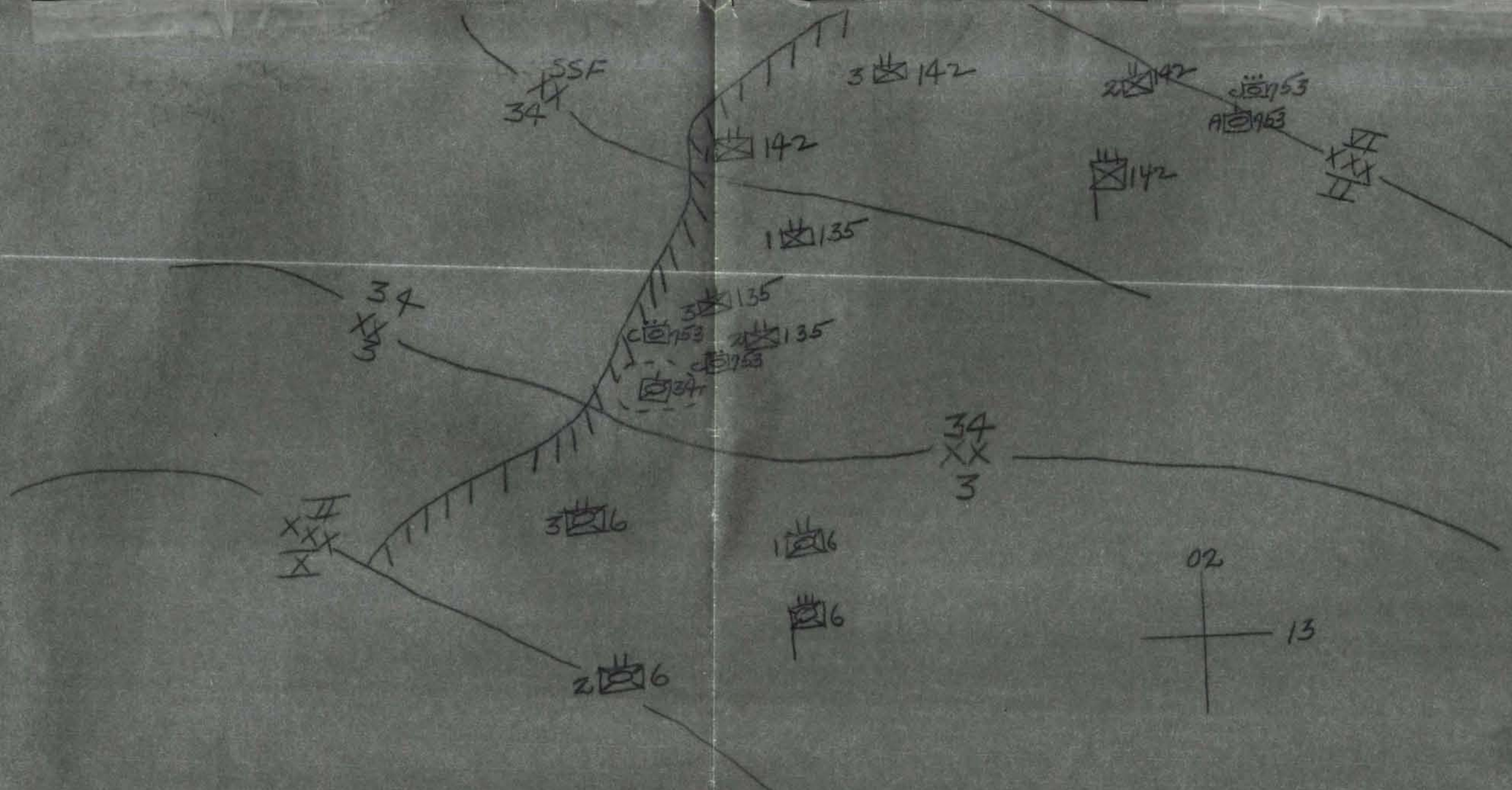
Attack on Mt. Porchia (cont'd)

10 January 1944

Company "B" was ordered to return to assembly area at 1800.

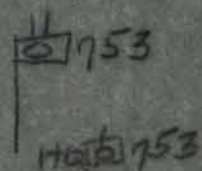
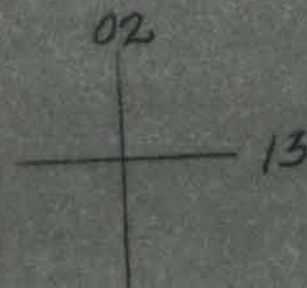
This concluded the operation of our battalion in the Battle for MT. PORC. In this operation our tanks were used the major portion of the time very effectively as direct fire support for the infantry. Because of bad terrain, cross country operation was practically nil, and resulted in very little tank versus tank action.

Joseph G. Felber
JOSEPH G. FELBER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn (M)
Commanding.

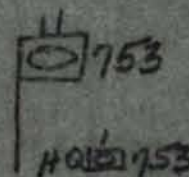


Overlay No 2 to Accompany
 Narrative on M. Porchia Attack
 753rd Tank Bn
 APO 464 US Army
 29 December 1943
 Map: Italy, 1/50,000
 Sheets 160II 161III

F. LBER



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Headquarters 753rd Tank Bn (A)
In the Field, Italy
031700 January 1944

FIELD ORDER # 7

MAPS: Italy Scale 1/50000 Sheet 160II
Scale 1/25000 (British Reproduction of German maps)

1. a. See Intelligence Annex attached.

b. (1) II Corps attacks "H" hour "D" Day to capture MT CHIATA and MT PORCHIA. Continues attack to northwest capturing high ground vicinity of CERVARO.

(2) 24th Infantry Division on our right attacks in coordination with TASK FORCE ALLEN to capture and consolidate the line along general axis LACCHIAIA - CERVARO.

(3) I Corps (British) conforms to movement of TASK FORCE ALLEN and will occupy MT CERVA on "D" Day. Furnishes fire support for attacks of 6th Armored Infantry night of "D" Day -1.

(4) TASK FORCE ALLEN with 2 Battalions, 6th Armored Infantry in the assault, attacks at "H" hour "D" -1 Day in its assigned zone of action to capture and consolidate the general northeast line through MT PORCHIA and protect left flanks of II Corps.

2. This Battalion, moving on orders from TASK FORCE ALLEN, follows in the zone of advance of the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry to the general vicinity of G-931165 where it will support the attack of the 1st Battalion 6th Armored Infantry by fire and movement. See overlay. .

Order of Movement:

Company "C"
Mortar Platoon
Company "B"
Company "A"
Assault Gun Platoon

Note: Company maintenance and Medical Detachment will remain in present positions.

3. a. Company "C" will move on order to area indicated on overlay. It will support the attack of Company "A", 6th Armored Infantry by fire and movement, assisting the capture of the northern slope of MT PORCHIA and the southern slope of MT CHIATA (C. CICERRELLI). It will provide one platoon as flank protection astride S. VITTORE Road vicinity of 934167. This platoon will not go north of red luminous signs placed on S. VITTORE road by engineers unless situation demands its movement. Right limit of fire for Company "C" unless attacked or fired upon, will be line PARASACCHI - 921177-920171.

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FO # 7 (cont'd)

b. Company "B" will move on order to area indicated on overlay. It will support attack of Company "B", 6th Armored Infantry by fire and movement and in the capture of that portion of MT PORCHIA within the zone of Company "B". It will be prepared to assist by fire the movement of Company "C" on its right and the 760th Tank Battalion on its left.

c. Company "A" will move on order to area indicated on overlay. Initially it will be base of fire of attack of 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry and Companies "C" and "B". It will be prepared to move and support either company or be attached to the Infantry Support Company.

d. Mortar Platoon will follow Company "C" to area indicated on overlay. It will destroy known enemy installations. It will be prepared to support attack of Company "C". It will prepare concentration fires for areas behind northern nose of MT PORCHIA - in draws north and west of CICERELLI.

e. Assault Gun Platoon will move to area indicated on overlay. It will initially support attack of 1st Battalion 6th Armored Infantry on MT PORCHIA. It will be prepared to support the attacks of Companies "B" and "C".

f. Reconnaissance Platoon will establish Observation Post on northern slopes of LUNGO. It will operate on Battalion channel in designating targets to tank companies, Assault Gun Platoon and Artillery Observer. Method of target designation to all concerned will be coordinated by S-3.

g. Service Company to remain in present position with following exceptions: Battalion Motor Officer to coordinate use of company maintenance in present assembly area.

Transportation Platoon with complete refill of gasoline and ammunition will move to assembly position prior to daylight 5 January 1944. It will be prepared to refuel companies in their rallying positions.

h. Artillery Observer, 91st Field Artillery initially to move with Assault Gun Platoon to area indicated on overlay.

x. (1) 235th Engineers will repair Highway 6 and check for mines. Two green luminous lights will be placed to indicate turn-off of companies to their areas

(2) Organization anti-aircraft guns will not be fired until anti-aircraft units engage hostile planes or unless attacked by hostile planes.

(3) Local security measures will be maintained at all times.

(4) Organizations will be prepared to put "Plan Chaffee" into effect on orders.

(5) Report will be made as each unit crosses phase line shown on overlay.

(6) T2 vehicles will be spotted by engineers at bridges along Highway 6. Call on these crews for assistance. Company maintenance will not be used, unless Engineer T-2's are unable to cope with situation.

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FO # 7 (cont'd)

(7) This order will not be taken forward of the assembly area.

4. Battalion Ammunition Dump at MIGNANO.

Battalion Gasoline Dump at MIGNANO.

Battalion Aid Station initially in present assembly area, thereafter in conjunction with Aid Station, 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry.

5. a. (1) Axis of Signal Communication - Highway 6.

(2) Axis of Vehicle and Personnel Evacuation - Highway 6.

(3) Current SOI - TASK FORCE ALLEN.

b. (1) Battalion CP at 993119.

Advance CP - Vicinity cross road Highway 6 - ST VITTORE road.

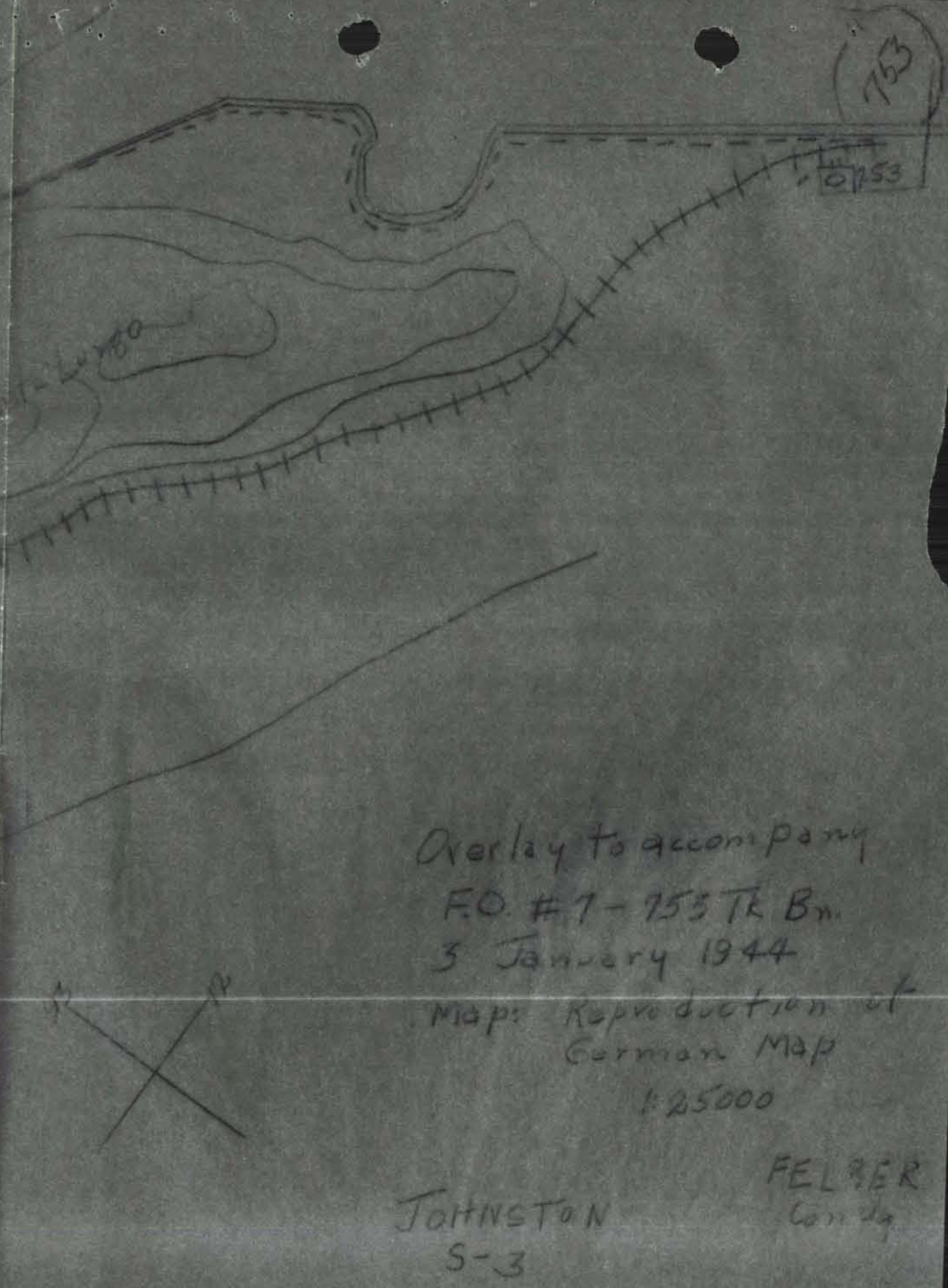
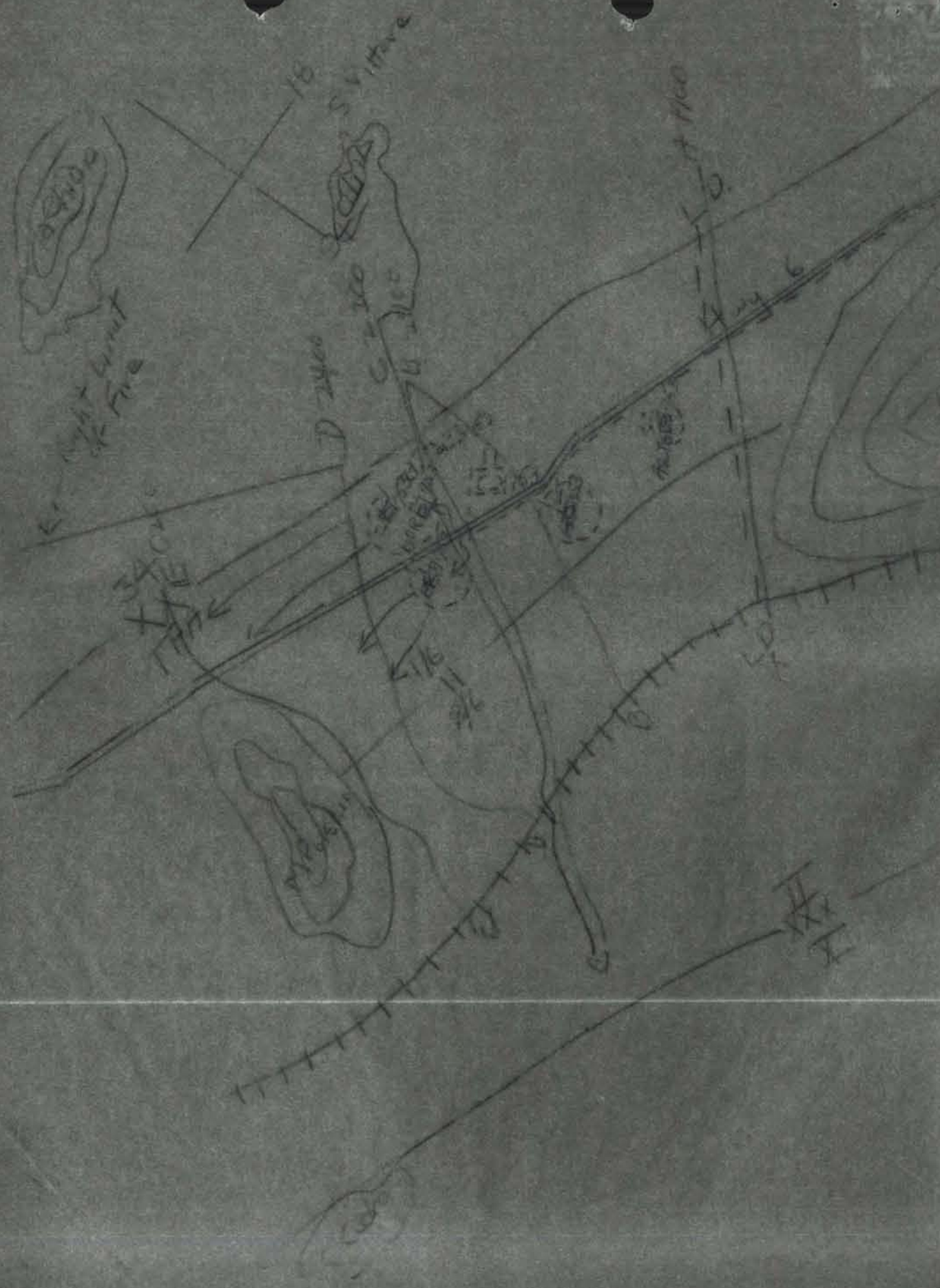
FELBER
Commanding.

OFFICIAL:

JOHNSTON
3-3.

Inclosures: - Signal Annex
Intelligence Annex
Overlay
Chaffee Plan

SECRET



Overlay to accompany
 F.O. #7-753 Tr Bn.
 3 January 1944
 Map: Reproduction of
 German Map
 1:25000

JOHNSTON
 S-3
 FELDER
 Comdg.

S E C R E T
Headquarters 753rd Tank Bn (M)
In the Field, Italy
031700 January 1944

Signal Annex
To Accompany
Field Order # 7.

1. Battalion and company command nets will be organized according to current Battalion SOP.
2. Current Task Force Allen SOI will be in effect. Excerpts of link signs and code key numbers will be issued to companies. Memorize pertinent data.
3. All Tank Battalion Headquarters and tank companies, and all Infantry Battalion Headquarters and infantry companies will have channel 75 on button 9 of their 528 radio. This channel will be used for infantry-tank and tank-infantry support. One man will be listening on this channel each organization at all times.
4. Company executive officer will listen on channel 75 and relay to Company Commander.
5. Radio silence will be maintained until 1900-Hours D-1. At that time all units will check into Battalion Command Net.
6. This Headquarters will operate in the Task Force Allen Command Net on 2510 KC. The Reconnaissance Platoon will operate their SCR 193 in the Task Force Allen Reconnaissance Net on 3100 KC. Command 1/2 track, Command Tank and Reconnaissance 1/2 track will have channel 68 on their 508 radios. This is the command channel of the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry Regiment. In the event of Plan Chaffee, this channel will be used for communication.
7. There will be two code clerks with M 209 cipher devices and code key to handle coded traffic to and from higher headquarters.
8. All traffic over radio telephone will be rigidly observed for security. Communication of information of value to the enemy will be enciphered on the prefixed message code of this headquarters, dated 17 December 1943 between the tank companies and this headquarters. Necessary encipherment of traffic with the infantry will be on the code key M-13, currently in effect. In event of capture or abandoning of tanks, these cryptographic devices will be destroyed.
9. In the event of Plan Chaffee the following visual signals will be used:
 - a. Green flag from tank-tank to Infantry, "Move forward".
 - b. Smoke shell to locality of AT gun by tank - "Anti-tank gun, cannot advance".
 - c. Red smoke grenade, tank to infantry - "Cannot advance". Infantry to advance with engineers at once.
 - d. White smoke grenade, tank to infantry - "Objective reached".

S E C R E T

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9. Violet smoke grenade, tank to infantry or vice versa: "Enemy counterattack underway."

NOTE: All signs to be supplemented by radio if possible, as a double check.

10. The 6th Armored Infantry has established certain Phase Lines as shown on Situation Overlay. As the tank companies reach these Phase Lines, they will report to this headquarters.

FELBER
Commanding.

OFFICIAL:

JOHNSTON
S-3

SECRET

Headquarters 753rd Tank Bn (M)
In the Field, Italy
3 January 1944 - 1700 hrs.
INITIALS:

Intelligence Annex to accompany Field Order # 7.

Maps: British reproduction of German Map - 1:25,000
GSOS Italy, 4220 Sheets 161 III, 160 II - 1:50,000

1. Summary of Enemy Situation:

- a. Refer to defense overprint II Corps, 1 January 1944.
- b. Overlay to accompany Intelligence Annex, 753rd Tank Battalion, Field Order # 7.
- c. Overlay to accompany Intelligence Annex, Field Order 1 Task Force Allen.

2. Essential Elements of Information:

- a. For gun positions, tank obstacles, enemy installations, fords, terrain features, etc., see overlay to accompany Intelligence Annex, Field Order # 1, Task Force Allen and Field Order # 7, 753rd Tank Battalion.
 - b. The terrain is generally rolling, with flat plowed fields, drainage ditches and low stone fences in area for 2000 yds east and southeast of M. ORCHIA. North of Highway 6, the ground is fairly steep some distance from Highway 6 with some low terraces in this area. These are not considered as tank obstacles. Near the Highway the streams and ditches are fairly deep and will need engineer assistance. Highway 6 will be prepared by engineers as far as the road junction at 932162.
 - c. The enemy has approximately 30 S.P. guns of probably cal. 75, which are in the vicinity of his immediate rear and may be used by him in advantageous locations (mainly along roads and trails) during the operation.
 - d. The enemy has been reported wearing both cotton summer and dark winter uniforms. At present the latter should predominate.
 - e. We are in contact with enemy units as shown on intelligence overlay. For more detailed information, see intelligence annex Field Order # 1, Task Force Allen.
- (1) The above elements are believed to be at approximately 3/4 full strength at present.
 - (2) The 129 Panzer Battalion, part of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division, is reported in reserve at 835185 and could be used in this area.
 - (3) The 115 Panzer Battalion, which may be a separate Battalion, or part of HQ Division is reported west of the Rapido-Carigliano rivers.
 - (4) The HQ EZ Regiment with approximately 100 tanks is reported east of the Rapido-Carigliano rivers.

S E C R E T

Intelligence Annex to FQ # 7

f. Conclusion: The armored units are all well behind MT. TROCCHIO and south of CASSINO. They may be used for counter attack during or after the operation, but their position is somewhat to the rear, and they are in considerable danger of being cut off should they be used. Major opposition should be from armored infantry and other infantry elements, supported by Self Propelled guns and permanent gun placements. At present there is little known about enemy positions on the slopes of LA CHIAIA. However, enemy observation from this height is excellent and some fire may be expected from this direction.

3. Reconnaissance and Observation Missions:

a. There will be an Observation Post established by the Battalion Reconnaissance Officer in the vicinity of 9451149.

b. There will be radio contact with this Observation Point (see communication annex.)

4. Measures for Handling Prisoners and Captured Documents:

a. Prisoners, deserters, and other persons captured by tanks during the attack will be handled according to current Battalion SOP. In the event tanks bring back any prisoners, they will be turned over to the Battalion S-2 section at the rear of the Command Post at 9941118.

b. All captured documents and material will be turned over to the S-2 section intact with the least possible delay.

5. Maps Furnished to Units:

a. British reproduction of German map, 1:25,000.

b. GSOS, Italy 4229, sheets 161 III and 160 II, 1:50,000

c. Aerial photographs - Numbers 4101, 4102 and 3092, 3093.

FELBER
Commanding.

OFFICIAL:

SCHWIMM
S-2

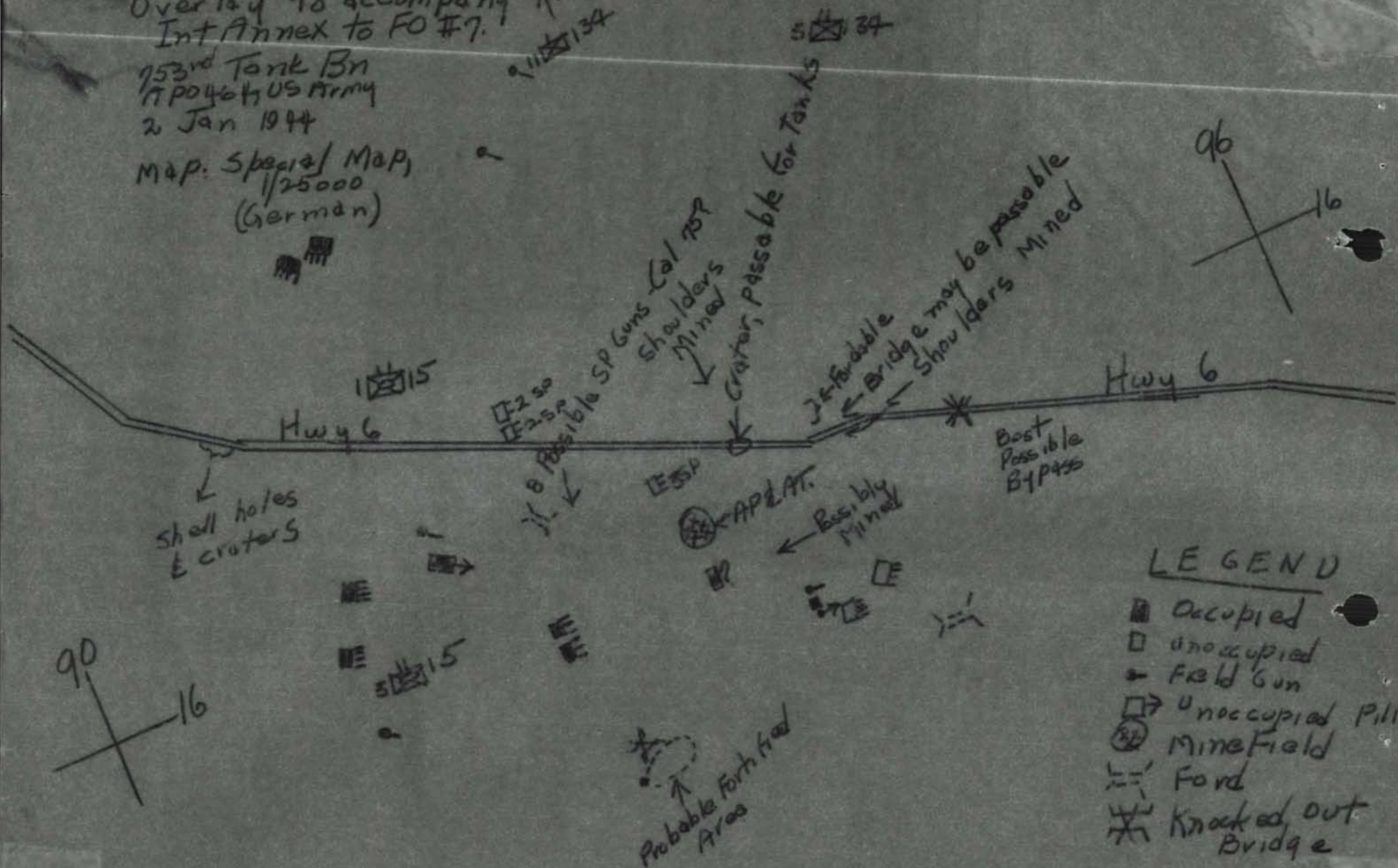
Inclosure:-Intelligence Overlay

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S E C R E T

753rd Tank Bn
APO 46th US Army
2 Jan 1944

Map. Special Map,
1/25000
(German)



S E C R E T
Headquarters 753rd Tank Battalion
In the Field, Italy.
031700 January 1943

Alternate Plan to Field Order # 7.

CHAFFEE PLAN

(To be used in case Plan Chaffee goes into effect before Battalion leaves bivouac area).

1. Location of Companies - See Overlay.
Boundaries between assault battalions - see overlay.
Phase lines - See Overlay
Line of Departure - See Overlay.
2. Immediately upon receipt of notification by Commanding General, TASK FORCE ALLEN that Plan Chaffee is in effect, the Battalion Commander will report to the Commander of the Infantry Battalion to which he is supporting. This will be done by radio or in person.
3. It will be assumed that the road, perpendicular to the axis of advance, extending from 0932162 to 0924150 will be the line of departure for the tank-infantry coordinated attack under Plan Chaffee.
4. a. Order of march from present assembly positions to assault positions: Company "B", Company "C", Assault Gun Platoon, Mortar Platoon, Company "A".
b. Infantry Battalion will place guides on road at positions tank companies will turn off road. 235th Engineers will check these positions prior to arrival of tanks.
5. This Battalion in support of the 1st Infantry Battalion will advance in three echelons, one company in each echelon.
 - a. First Echelon, Company "B" in line of sections in column. See sketch and overlay.
 - (1) Provide one platoon (-1 section) northeast of highway 6 as flank guard. It will proceed and assist infantry platoon, which is providing right flank protection for the infantry battalion. See sketch.
 - (2) Move at normal tank speed, combining movement with fire from the line of departure to objective.
 - (3) Signal infantry forward by pre-arranged signals.
 - (4) Keep enemy on objective inactive by fire and movement.
 - (5) After position has been secured, and upon receipt of orders, the company (-1 platoon) will proceed to rally point at 935165, Map 1:25,000.
 - (6) One platoon to occupy position on northern slope of MT PORCHIA throughout "D" Day until relieved. It will assist infantry to break-up enemy counter-attacks.

S E C R E T

Chaffee Plan-Alternate to FO #7 (cont'd)

b. Second Echelon - Company "C" in line of sections in column. See sketch and overlay.

- (1) Follow infantry assault platoons.
- (2) Advance at infantry speed.
- (3) Destroy machine guns or mortars that come to life after First Echelon of tanks has passed.
- (4) Watch infantry for signals for help and assistance.
- (5) In event infantry is held up, pass through infantry assault echelons to destroy weapons holding up their advance; infantry then to pass through Second Echelon of tanks which in original positions.
- (6) Provide one section northeast of Highway 6 as flank guard. It will follow and assist platoon which is providing right flank protection for the infantry battalion. (See sketch).
- (7) Limit of advance to creek line as shown on sketch unless Infantry needs further assistance; otherwise it will remain in firing position until ordered to return to rallying position.

c. Third Echelon: Company "A". See sketch and overlay.

- (1) Follow in rear of infantry support company when moving.
- (2) Support first and second echelon of tanks by fire from defiladed positions provided support company of infantry is not moving.
- (3) It will provide flank protection of forward elements by observation and fire.
- (4) It will counter attack against hostile armor or infantry.
- (5) Upon order from Battalion Commander it will return to rally position at 939158. Map: -1/25000.

6. a. The mortar Platoon will take up a firing position rear of Company "C".

b. It will lay fire on the reverse and forward slopes of MT PORCHIA. It will be prepared to smoke the south west slopes of MT CHIAIA.

c. Targets of opportunity will be given priority.

d. In addition the normal load of ammunition, it will have one ammunition half track loaded with 60% High Explosive and 40% Smoke.

e. It will be prepared to advance by bounds as the attack progresses.

7. a. The Assault Gun Platoon will go into a firing position in the rear of Company "C". See sketch and overlay.

S E C R E T

CHIEF OF PLAN - Alternate Plan to FO # 7 (cont'd)

c. Targets of opportunity will be given priority.

8. a. The Reconnaissance Platoon will establish an O.P. on the northeast slopes of Mt Lunge and be prepared to designate enemy targets to companies concerned.

9. Signals to be used between infantry and tank units:

LAD SOI.

a. All tank and infantry companies to be set on same channels as per

b. Tank to infantry:- "Move forward" green flag from tank.

c. By runner from infantry platoon to individual tank.

d. Tank to Infantry:- "Anti-tank gun, cannot advance", smoke shells to locality of anti-tank gun by tanks.

e. Tank to Infantry:- "Cannot advance", Red smoke grenade. Infantry to advance with engineers at once.

f. Tank to infantry:- "Objective reaches", white smoke grenade.

g. Tank to infantry or vice versa:- "Enemy counter-attack under way", violet smoke grenade.

WEISER
Commanding

OF ROLL:

JOHNSTON
S-3

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COST
B. B.

COST
B. B.

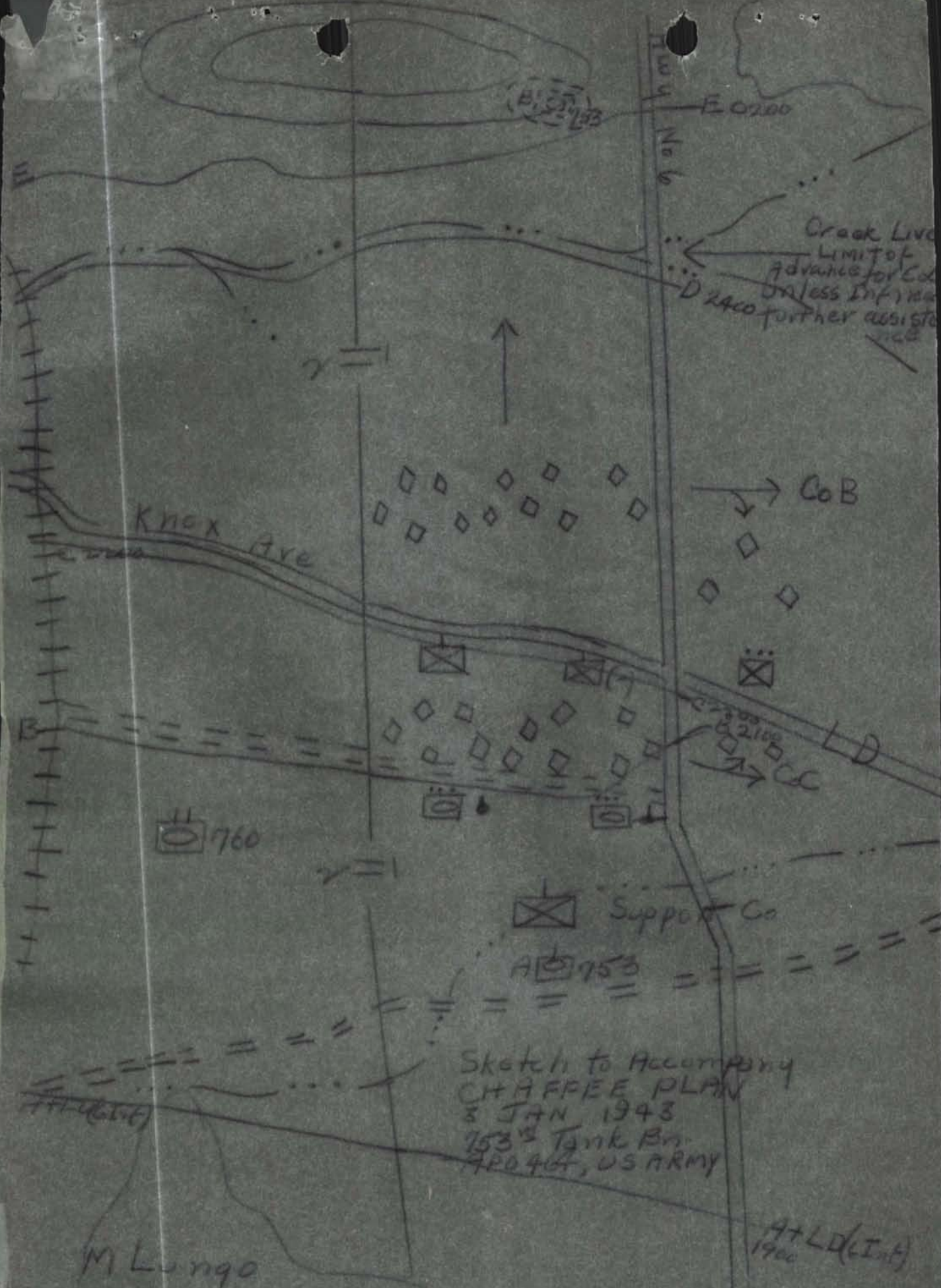
COST
B. B.

To accompany
CHAFFEE PLAN

Map: -1/25000

Reproduction of
German Map

JOHNSTON FELBER
S-3 Comdgr



Sketch to Accompany
CHAFFEE PLAN
8 JAN 1943
753rd Tank Bn.
APO 464, US ARMY

A+L (Int)
1943

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION (M)
APO 464, U.S. Army

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH
of
FEBRUARY 1944

Incl: 3

**HEADQUARTERS
75TH TANK BATTALION (M)
APO 664, New York, N.Y.**

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1944

Headquarters Company

Pvt. Earl E. Spence	34105498	KIA	3 Feb 44	Raleigh, N. C.
Pfc. Melvin E. Ann	37436581	LNA	3 Feb 44	Mason City, Iowa.

"A" Company

Pvt Floyd E. England	37510586	LNA	3 Feb 44	Cherryvale, Kansas
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"B" Company

T/S Peter E. Navale	35021185	SEA	19 Feb 44	Alliance, Ohio
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"C" Company

Sgt. William E. Smith	34078663	LNA	19 Feb 44	Newallton, La.
Cpl. Alfred V. Giddins	37436588	LNA	19 Feb 44	Mason, Iowa
T/S Joseph E. Gerts Jr	34082431	LNA	19 Feb 44	Sharon, Mass.
Pvt. Edward E. Ryghwood	37436642	LNA	19 Feb 44	Rock Falls, Iowa

Service Company

T/S Harley M. Hathorn	37095573	LNA	17 Feb 44	St. Paul, Minn.
Pvt Octave J. Ballouin	34078641	LNA	17 Feb 44	Grand Coteau, La.

National Detachment

None.

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION (M)
APO 464, U.S. Army

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT
for
FEBRUARY 1944

Incl: 4

HEADQUARTERS
TANK BATTALION (M)
APO 964, New York, N.Y.

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1944

CASUALTIES

None.

Relieved By

KIA	1
SWA	1
LRA	1
Total	<u>3</u>

HEADQUARTERS
7500 TANK BATTALION (H)

AFG 464, 1st Army
2 March 1964

UNIT DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

1 February 1964

One platoon Company "C", moved into firing position at 0700. Situation states Company "C" fired 300 rounds on designated targets in Cassino, destroyed one fuel dump, and inflicted an unknown number of casualties on the enemy. The platoon at 0800 returned to Company area (080057) after dark.

211 94 (085223) was taken by the 135th Infantry Regiment, 1st Division, during the afternoon.

At 2100, Company "A", 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Company "C", 100th Engineer Battalion, and "H" troop, 91st Reconnaissance Squadron, were attached to this unit by 1st Tank Group for future operations.

2 February 1964

Situation unchanged. Our units "A" and "C" fired on objectives (Cassino) during the day.

At 1900, several rounds of enemy artillery fire fell in Battalion Command Post area, one of which slightly wounded Battalion Commanding Officer, and Commanding Officer, 100th Engineer Battalion.

Some infantry and a few tanks (756th Tk Bn) reported in area eastern out skirts of Cassino in afternoon.

At 2200, Company "A", 756th Tank Battalion minus one platoon, was attached to this unit.

3 February 1964

Situation unchanged. Battalion Command Post moved to 020017 at 1000. Disposition of remainder of battalion unchanged. Enemy artillery fire received at 1100. One enlisted man killed (vt. Spence) and one enlisted man lightly wounded (Cpl. Ann). At 2200, two tanks, Company "C", left company area to attack engineer crossing at 0866207. At 2300 3rd Reconnaissance, 1st Infantry Regiment, was attached to this unit.

Unit Diary for Feb. (Cont'd)

4 February 1944

Heavy artillery fire received in Battalion Command Post and "C" Company area at 0215. No casualties.

Platoon leader, Company "C" returned at 0135, and reported crossing at G-66207 to be impassable for any type vehicle at 1130, one platoon Company "C" moved to firing position at G-667196 fired at Cassino for three hours, and returned to Company area. At 1630 Commanding officer, 3rd Assault, 114th Infantry Regiment arrived for discussion of plans for attack.

5 February 1944

Battalion Command Post moved to G906193 at 1730.

Disposition of remainder of battalion unchanged.

6 February 1944

Disposition unchanged. Intermittent enemy artillery fire received in "A", "B", and Command Post area during day.

7 February 1944

Disposition unchanged. Intermittent artillery fire received in Battalion areas. No casualties.

8 February 1944

Disposition unchanged.

9 February 1944

Disposition unchanged. Heavy artillery received in Command Post area during afternoon.

10 February 1944

Disposition unchanged. Second Battalion, 114th Infantry Regiment, relieved 3rd Battalion, 114th Infantry in plan for attack.

11 February 1944

Disposition unchanged. Company "B", Mortar and Assault platoons received heavy enemy artillery fire between 0500 and 0900. No casualties; but one "B" Company half-track was damaged. At 2000, 2nd Battalion, 114th Infantry Regiment, was relieved from attachment to this unit.

Diary for Feb. (Cont'd)

12 February 1944

At 1900, the Battalion less trains, was ordered to move to 0010082. At 2245, permission was obtained to move the Battalion to area at 0010015.

13 February 1944

At 0001, movement was started for new area. Movement was made in three serials, ten minutes between serials. Battalion, less trains, moved to new area (0010015) at 0430. Battalion was placed on six hour alert at 1901.

14 February 1944

Twenty First Battalion, 5th Infantry Brigade, New Zealand, and "A" and "B" Companies 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached to it, per Verbal Orders Commanding General, Combat Command "B", effective 12 February 1944.

15-16 February 1944

Disposition unchanged.

17 February 1944

Disposition unchanged. Service Company received a mortar shell and intense enemy artillery barrage during the afternoon. Three enlisted men were wounded slightly.

At 1800, order was received placing the Battalion, plus attachments, on a two hour alert, effective daylight 18 February 1944.

18 February 1944

Disposition unchanged. Battalion on two hour alert. Companies "A", "B", "C", and the Mortar and Assault Gun platoons moved forward to Grid Square 9047. Battalion Command Post at 0994159. Time of departure: 1700 hours in new area at 2200.

19 February 1944

Heavy enemy artillery fire was received in the Battalion area during morning. Night (8) enlisted men were wounded, and one tank was damaged. Companies "A", "B", "C", the Assault Gun and Mortar Platoons moved back to vicinity of 0994159 after dark, sleeping in new area at 2000 hours.

Unit Diary for Feb. (Cont'd)

20-24 February 1944

Disposition of Battalion unchanged. Plans made for future operations. Training in mines and bridge-laying with T-2's carried on.

25 February 1944

Several rounds of enemy artillery fire fell in Service Company area. Battalion ammunition dump was hit. No casualties.

26-29 February 1944

Disposition of Battalion unchanged. Training schedule issued by Battalion to all Companies.

SECRET

SECRET
: AUTH: G2, II Corp
: Initials:
: Date: 17 Feb 44

Hq, 753rd Tank Bn (M)
In the Field, ITALY
171300 Feb, 1944.

F.O. #8

I a. See General S-2 Overlay.

(1) II New Zealand Corps (SPADGER) consisting of 2nd New Zealand Division and 4th New Zealand Division will establish bridgehead across the Rapido River and exploit the LINE Valley.

(2) 4th Indian Division will attack from the North to secure Monte Cassino and Cassino and cut Highway #6.

(3) 2nd New Zealand Division will establish a local bridge head in the vicinity of Cassino to permit the passage of arms into the LINE Valley.

(4) 4th New Zealand Armored Brigade (Reinforced) to cross Rapido River on order of G.O. 2nd New Zealand Division and to pass through bridgehead established by 2nd New Zealand Armored Regiment reinforced by 23rd Inf Bn N.Z. will seize and secure FERNETANO. 20th NZ Arm Bde reinforced by MAORI Inf Bn will seize and secure S. ANELLO. (See reproduced traces of 4th N.Z. Arm Bde routes etc. attached as Annex.)

(5) U. S. Task Force "A", on order G.O. 2nd NZ Div, to cross the RAPIDO River into the bridgehead established by Task Force "B", to attack to the North South of Highway #6, to exploit the LINE Valley.

2. This Battalion, reinforced, upon orders from G.O., Task Force "B", passes through local bridgehead established by 2nd N.Z. Division. It will seize and secure creek crossing along phase line A. See Overlay.

Order of march:

Troop A, 1st Reconnaissance Squadron.

See reconnaissance plan.

21st Bn 5th Div N.Z.

Co C, 1st Inf Bn

Advance of 1st Bn

Company 1st, 753rd Tank Bn (M)

One platoon, Co A, 753rd Tank Bn

Company 2nd, 753rd Tank Bn (M)

Marker platoon (same squad)

Company 3rd, 753rd Tank Bn (same platoon)

Company 4th, 753rd Tank Bn (M)

Advance of 1st Bn

Marker platoon

Co C, 1st Inf Bn

G.I. platoon (same)

Reconnaissance platoon.

S E C R E T

1. a. Upon notification by C.O., T.F.B., the 21st Bn 5 Div, N.A., will move from its assembly area, cross foot bridge over the RAPIDO and assemble in vicinity of 853011. It will provide one company to follow tank attack over each route. (See Overlay) These companies will furnish small arms protection for engineers working on tank obstacles, otherwise continue to follow tank attack until objective is reached. Upon arrival on objective, infantry companies will secure and hold crossings until relieved. In the organization for infanteries, the tank companies will come under command of Infantry company commanders.

~~In event the tank attack boggs down, infantry companies will pass through the tanks and will secure and secure creek crossings.~~ 782

b. The 2d Bn, 1st Reconnaissance Squadron, upon orders, will make a route reconnaissance over tank attack routes. It will render report on all obstacles, minefields, and check for tank by-passes. In the event no opposition is met, it will suggest the three objectives. During tank attack, it will provide flank protection between Companies "C" & "D" and "D" & "A".

c. Company "E", 10th Engineer Bn will be prepared to cross the Rapido River on orders. It will initially be prepared to construct by-passes at 853011 and 853017; thereafter on call.

d. Company "F", upon orders, will attack west on Highway #6, seize and secure creek crossing at 853011. It will co-ordinate defense with infantry companies after objective is reached.

e. Company "G", with mortar platoon (less one squad) attached, will attack down 853011 Road, seize and secure creek crossings at 853011. It will co-ordinate its defense with infantry companies on Hill 65 and establish road blocks on all avenues of approach.

f. Company "H" with one squad, mortar platoon, and assault gun platoon attached, will attack down 853011 Road, seize, and secure creek crossing at 853017. It will co-ordinate its defense with infantry companies.

g. 29th A.F.A. Bn will be in direct support of attack. There will be an artillery observer with each tank company. Communication will be established through tank company channels.

h. Companies A & C, 776 T.D. Bn will support the attack of this Battalion.

Upon notification by this battalion, Companies A & C, 776th T.D. Bn will move from their bivouac area and be prepared to fall into their respective places in the column. Company maintenance officers will coordinate this movement.

Co A will have one platoon follow movement of tank company C. This position in vicinity of 853015 and provide flank protection for Company C. It will reconnoiter for routes to 853019 moving there-to when possible. It will remain in that position until arrival of remainder of Co A, 776 T.D. Bn. The remainder of the Company will follow tank company "D".

Co C will follow movement of tank Company "A" and take up a position along 853011 Road in the vicinity of 853018. It will be prepared to move to vicinity of 853018 if a situation permits.

SECRET

1. Reconnaissance Platoon initially to establish road guides for movement and coordination of battalion from present bivouac area to assembly area at 905175. Upon orders from this battalion, it will furnish road guides through CASINO. It will provide radio communication and liaison to Company C, 4th Engineer Bn, until relieved. It will establish an O.P. on southern slopes of MOUNT CASINO. Priority of fires on targets picked up by reconnaissance O.P. to be designated by Battalion.

2.1. Any tanks returning to or through our lines or moving in any direction other than towards the enemy will keep the muzzle of its tank gun at its maximum elevation.

2. American M-4 tanks used by the New Zealand Tank Regiments will be identified by large blue figures on the tank hull.

3. Maintenance officers with T-2s will determine whether a tank is fit for further operation or is to be evacuated to rear.

4. Raising of rifle above head to vertical position is signal for friendly infantry.

5. Significance of the fact that the bridge head may not be passed through by other forces prior to darkness D Day, all positions will be organized for the greatest possible security.

6. Supply. No Change. Upon orders, forward dumps will be established in vicinity of 850800. Service Company (less Battalion maintenance) will remain in present area.

5. Axis of signal communication: MOUNTARO Road.
Axis of evacuation: Highway #6, HIGH TIDE, ST. 11-10 Roads.
Battalion aid station will be at 890198 until ordered by this battalion to move across the river. At that time, an aid station will be set up along Highway #6, south of CASINO. 21st Bn 5 Bde will evacuate through this station.
C.P., 1st Tank Group: 900198 (after attack starts)
C.P., 753rd Tank Bn (M): 885198.
Advance C.P., 753rd Tank Bn (M): MOUNTARO Road.

PELBER
Comdg.

OFFICIAL:

JOHN DUN
2-3

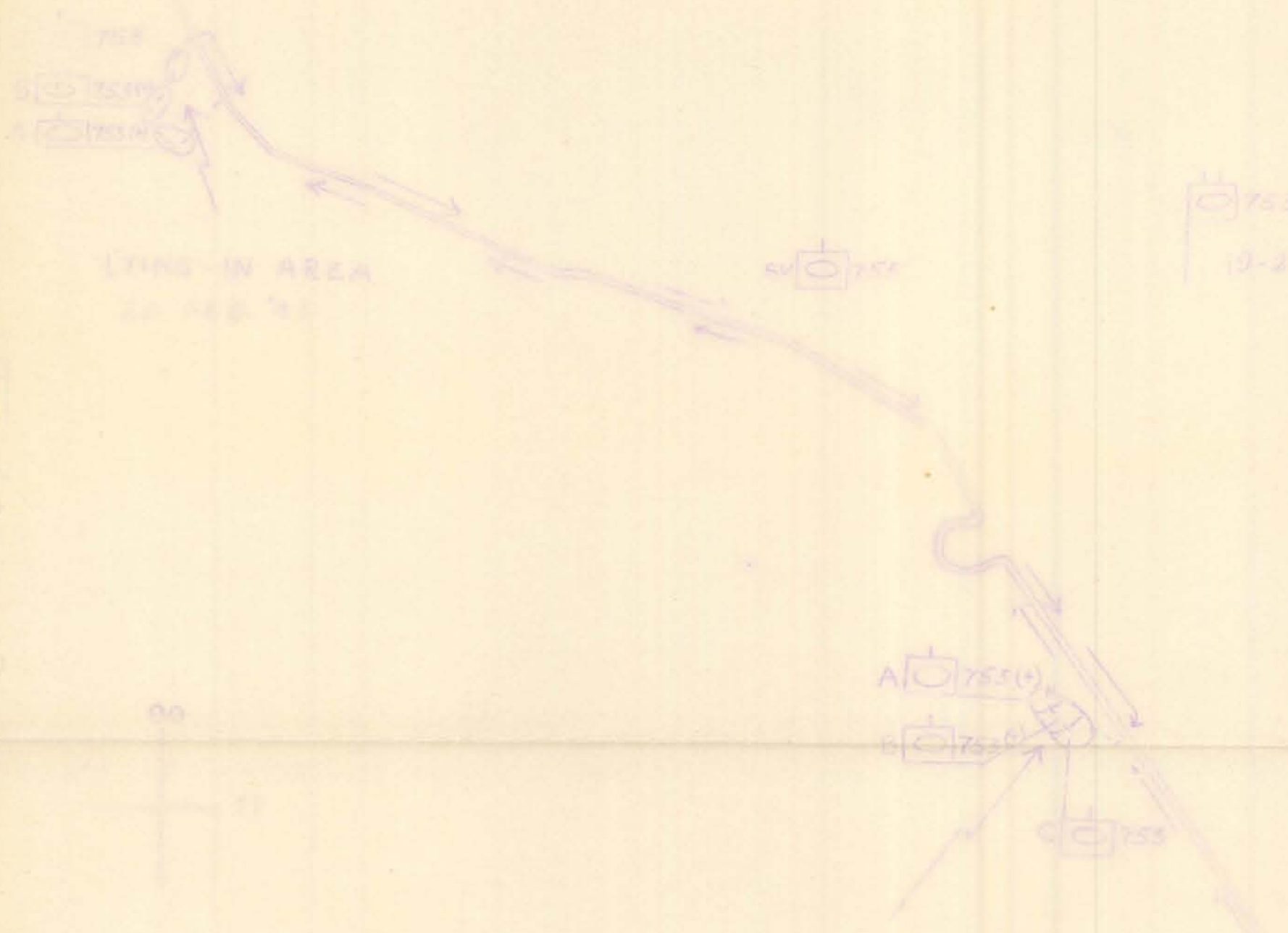


DISPOSITION OF
753rd TANK BATTALION
APO - 60 US ARMY
1 FEBRUARY 1964

MAP REPRODUCTION OF
CAPTURED DOCUMENT
MAP - 1/25000

800707
800707
800707
800707

JOHNSTON



LINE IN AREA
20 FEB '44

753
19-29 FEB '44

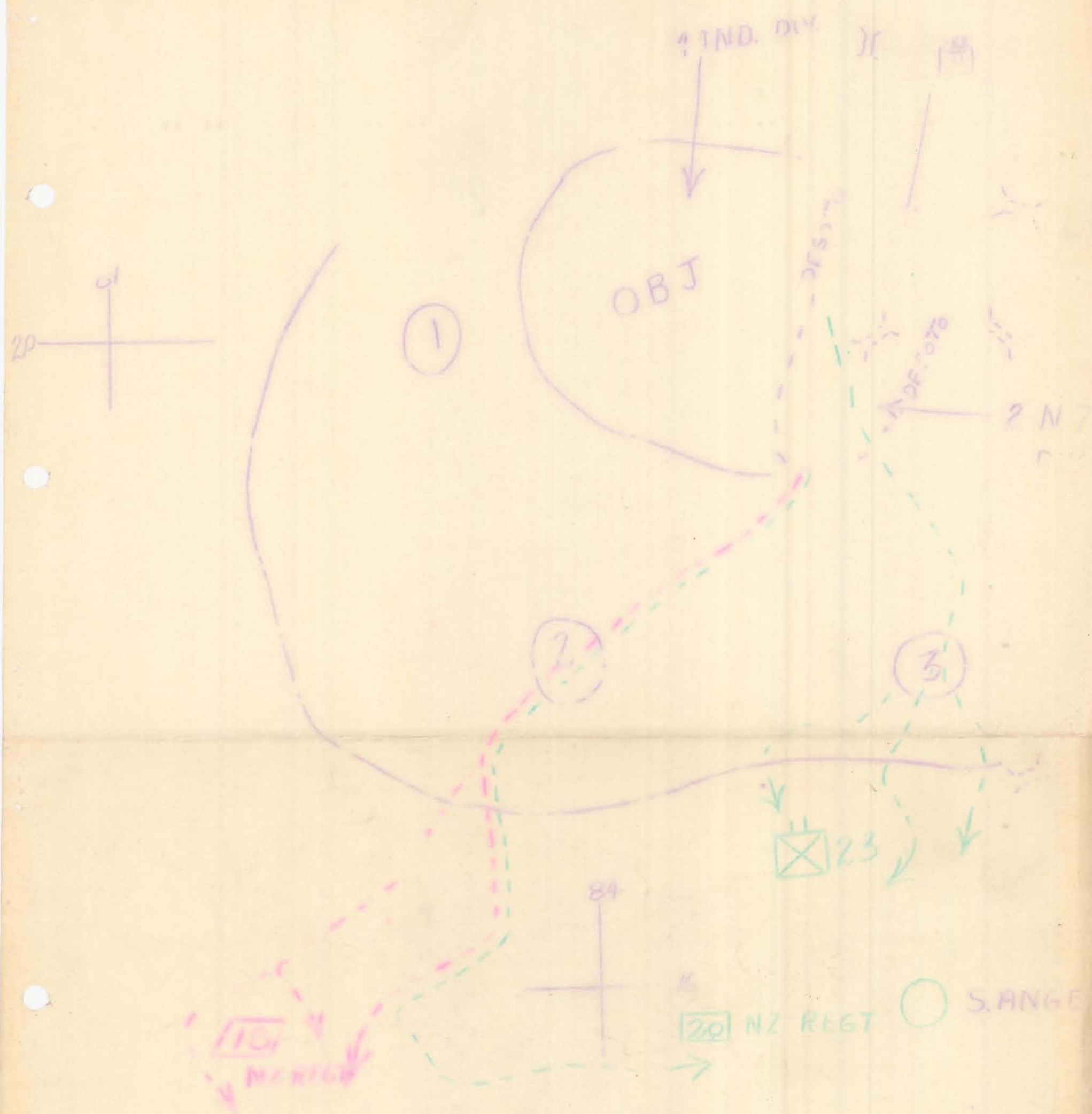
ASSEMBLY AREA
21-29 FEB '44

DISPOSITION OVERLAY
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 753 US ARMY
20-29 FEB 1944

MAP ITALY 1/50000
SHEETS 160 II, 161 II

FELBER
COMMO

JOHNSTON
S-3



PIGNATARO

OVERLAY TO ACCOMPANY
FIELD ORDER NO.
753 TANK BATTALION
APD 865 U.S. ARMY
16 FEBRUARY 1951

MAP: 1:25000 76011 N

JOHNSTON

FELDER

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION (M)

APO 464, New York, NY
2 March 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Report of Operations in Italy for February 1944.

TO : Adjutant General, Washington (25) D. C. (Thru Channels)

1. General Situation:

The situation in the II Corps front prior to February 1st was essentially the same as reported in the January narrative.

Briefly reviewed, it was as follows:

a. After the capture of MOUNT CASTELLONE and MAYOLA, II Corps to continue attack to capture PIEDMONTE - AQUINO prepared for further exploitation to the North West.

b. First Tank Group to extend bridgehead to permit passage of Combat Command "D" to the West along HIGHWAY 6 by seizing creek crossings over HIGHWAY 6 (829201) and PIOPPETO RIVER at (837180) and (860179). It was to seize PIGNATARO and prevent escape of enemy to West and South West. It was to protect II Corps left flank.

c. 34 Division was to capture MOUNT ALBANETA (825217) and cut HIGHWAY 6; capture and secure high ground (795235); hold MOUNT MANNA until relieved by C. E. F.; hold MOUNT CASTELLONE and protect right flank.

d. 36th Division was to force crossing of RAPIDO RIVER South of HIGHWAY 6 to SAN ANGELO inclusive; exploit to the West to consolidate terrain captured by First Tank Group and CC"B".

e. 91st Reconnaissance Squadron was to initially screen the Corps left East of the RAPIDO RIVER; maintain contact with British X Corps. On Corps Order pass through bridgehead and reconnoiter West of AQUINO RIVER and South West to LIRI RIVER.

f. Combat Command "B" on Corps Order was to pass through bridgehead and capture PIEDMONTE - AQUINO area; be prepared to continue advance to North West, or operate to South and South East to destroy enemy in LIRI VALLEY East of AQUINO RIVER.

2. Special Situation:

On February 1st the 34th Division had captured MOUNT CASTELLONE and MOUNT MAYOLA and held the southern exit from CASSINO along 20 grid northing. It was to continue its attack to establish a bridgehead South of CASSINO in order to permit 48th Engineers to establish a bridge on HIGHWAY 6 over the RAPIDO RIVER to permit passage of 1st Tank Group. This battalion was to cross the RAPIDO RIVER, attack, seize and secure the objectives as outlined in PLAN "A", 1st Tank Group, attached hereto.

3. Terrain Analysis:

a. Upon receipt of orders that the battalion would operate under 1st Tank Group in the CASSINO area, the Staff began a terrain study of the ground over which it was to operate. The mediums used were: aerial photographs, maps, aerial reconnaissance and establishment of Observation Post's on MOUNT TROCHIO and the high ground West of CERVARO.

The area for the forthcoming operation was the beginning of the LIRI VALLEY toward ROME. It was low slightly rolling terrain with three small ridges averaging 50 meters to 75 meters in height running generally East to West and North West, interspersed by numerous small streams running generally from the West to the East and emptying into the RAPIDO RIVER. The stream bed just south of HIGHWAY 6 is a natural drainage line from the mountain running through plowed fields, generally averaging three to four feet in width and depth, with steep soft sides until it crosses the ST ANGELO ROAD when it widens out to fifty or twenty feet with hardly any banks. Between the ST ANGELO ROAD and the RAPIDO RIVER, the ground is soft, boggy and has been under water for the last week - definitely a tank obstacle. This same stream line West of the ST ANGELO ROAD may be a tank obstacle because of the steep soft banks which will not hold the weight of a tank; however, if the ground is thoroughly dry it should be easy for tanks to cross. It is believed that if the ground is still soft, tanks can find by passes across this stream bed.

Two thousand yards farther south is the PIOPPETO RIVER. This river is anywhere from three to fifteen feet wide and from three to six feet deep until it crosses the ST ANGELO ROAD where it forms a pond roughly 30 feet by 75 feet. Beyond the pond it narrows again to 3 to 6 feet in width until it nears the RAPIDO when it widens out to 50 feet without any banks. Fortunately this river has quite a few fords between the PIGNATARO - STANGELO ROAD, and unless it has a mud bottom, should not be a tank obstacle.

The area is bounded on the east by the RAPIDO RIVER running generally North to South and emptying into the LIRI RIVER South of STANGELO. This River from North East of CAIRO to a mile and a half South of HIGHWAY 6 is 30 to 50 feet in width and from eight to ten feet in depth. Beyond that point and to the South it widens from 80 to 100 feet. The ground east and west of this RIVER is flat and boggy. During dry weather this RIVER averages about three feet of water and easily fordable to foot troops. Several places North and South of HIGHWAY 6 could be made fordable for tanks with Engineer assistance. During rainy weather, the river overflows its banks, flooding the area approximately a quarter of a mile on each side and therefore impassable to tanks. The flood rate speed of this river is estimated to be 25 miles per hour.

North of the area is a mountain mass impassable to tanks with the exception of the MONTECASSINO ABBEY ROAD.

South of the PIOPPETO RIVER the ground is higher than the sector over which the operation is planned, thus affording the enemy the commanding ground over our sector.

The road net into the area of operation is poor, being limited to HIGHWAY 6. This will cause a bottleneck for vehicular movement. South of the HIGHWAY is a railroad which with engineer work could be made into another route of entry. Bridges over HIGHWAY 6 and the railroad have been blown thus requiring construction of Bailey bridges for passage of tanks. It is believed that placing of Bailey bridges across the River south of the railroad is not feasible due to the boggy ground west of the river which is unsuitable for tanks. Besides the area east of CASSINO and to a quarter mile south of the town is known to be heavily mined with tank mines of the rail, concrete post and fence post type.

Hence the movement of the battalion initially will be channelized down HIGHWAY 6 to the southeastern edge of the mountain where two other roads become available for movement.

HIGHWAY 6 is a good metallic two way road. All indications show enemy traffic staying on the highway indicating that the shoulders are mined. The bridge over the stream crossing at (829201) is still intact, however, enemy ambulances had been noted by-passing this bridge, thus indicating it to be mined. Aerial reconnaissance shows the trail north of HIGHWAY 6 not suitable for tanks.

The PIGNATARO ROAD is a good two way dirt road with an overpass across the railroad still intact. This overpass is expected to be blown, however this should not prove to be a hinderance since it will be possible to cross the railroad at several points where it is at ground level. The creek crossing at (838181) is narrow and no obstacle to tanks. The crossing at (833164) is wide and steep and a tank obstacle. This can be covered by fire from the ridge just north of the crossing. It is believed tanks can cross the river in this vicinity by using the ford to the east.

The ST ANGELO ROAD is a poor one way dirt road for tanks. It also has an overpass across the railroad still intact which is expected to be blown. To by-pass this it will be necessary to cross the railroad west of the PIGNATARO ROAD. It appears that the creek crossing at the bend in the road will be difficult for tanks, however there are several low spots along the creek west of the road that appear favorably for tank crossings. The creek crossing at (860179) is a tank obstacle, however it is believed it can be crossed to the west. To hold this it will be necessary to take the high ground south of the river and support it by fire from the ridge just Northwest of the crossing. (See route sketch appended hereto as Appendix I and Terrain Sketch marked Appendix II).

There are quite a few side roads running into our position from the west and south and numerous dry stream beds affording the enemy good avenues of approach during the night. During daylight hours it is believed the area can be effectively covered by cross fire.

From aerial photographs and air reconnaissance the entire area is believed to be good tank country for cross country operations during the dry season.

b. Weather: It has been raining intermittently for the past week. The RAPIDO RIVER has overflowed its banks and inundated the area east and south of CASSINO. Small lakes can be seen all over the area of proposed operation. Shell holes in the area are full of water. The low ground on our side of the river is spongy and boggy and not suitable for tanks. Since the ground is the same across the river it must be presumed to be in like condition. It is estimated it will take at least a week of dry weather before tanks can be used.

c. Enemy Situation: See Appendix III, IV and V.

4. Decision:

The mission of the battalion is to seize and secure the stream crossings at (829201), (833164) and (860179) in order to insure the passage of armor through our bridgehead for the attack on PIGNATARO - AQUINO - PIEDIMONTE and protect the flank of II Corps. This gives us a frontage of roughly 6000 yards that must be held until the engineers have repaired the creek crossings expected to be blown over these main routes. Hence it is anticipated that the ground

must be organized for defense for the night and against counterattacks.

Because of the greatly reduced strength of the infantry (companies averaging sixty fighting men); the continual rain fall making the ground unsuitable for cross country operation of tanks thus channelizing them to roads; and the large frontage to be covered and held, the battalion commander decided to break up his force into three combat teams and attack down HIGHWAY 6, the PIGNATARO ROAD and the ST ANGELO ROAD. A team to attack down each route with the mission to seize and secure the stream crossing in its sector.

No reserves were held out. If one column in its attack was held up, the other columns were to continue on their mission. Any assistance needed by any column was to be furnished from the reserves held by Commanding Officer, 1st Tank Group.

Based on the above decision, verbal orders were issued to:

a. Troop B, 91st Reconnaissance Squadron upon orders this headquarters to cross the RAPIDO RIVER on foot, conduct route reconnaissance over the three routes, checking roads for mines, possible by-passes around blown bridges and over the railroad. In event no opposition was met, it was to outpost each crossing until arrival of tank column when it would receive further orders. Radio reports to be rendered every 15 minutes.

b. Infantry battalion, 34th Division to provide one infantry company to follow each tank column as closely as possible. Upon arrival on objective to organize position for defense. One company to provide security for engineers working on blown overpasses over ST ANGELO - PIGNATARO ROADS.

c. Company G, 48th Engineers to cross RAPIDO immediately upon completion of Bailey Bridge. Initially to prepare by-passes across railroad on ST ANGELO - PIGNATARO ROAD. Be prepared to furnish assistance to either tank column stopped by obstacles.

d. Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion to attack down HIGHWAY 6, seize and secure creek crossing at (829201). Collaborate with infantry commander on organization of ground. Provide flank security.

e. Company "B", 753rd Tank Battalion with Mortar Platoon (less one squad) attached to attack down PIGNATARO ROAD, seize and secure creek crossing at (833164) collaborate with infantry commander on organization of ground. Provide flank security.

f. Company "A", 753rd Tank Battalion with one mortar squad and Assault Gun Platoon attached, attack down ST ANGELO ROAD, seize and secure creek crossing at (860179). Collaborate with infantry commander on organization of ground. Provide flank protection.

g. Company "A" 776 Tank Destroyer Battalion have one platoon follow Tank Company "C" column. Take position vicinity (848196), provide flank protection for tank column. When feasible, platoon to move to (832189). Remainder of company to follow Company "B" column, deploy astride road vicinity (840183). Be prepared to furnish supporting fires for all tank columns. Provide own dismounted security.

h. 59th Armored Field Artillery Battalion to furnish direct supporting fires as called for in Combat Command "B" Artillery Concentration Plan.

1. Reconnaissance Platoon, 753rd Tank Battalion to establish guides in CASSINO area for passage of battalion. Furnish radio liaison with Company "C" 48th Engineers. Establish Observation Post on hillside of MOUTE CASSINO.

j. Supply - no change

Axis of Communication - HIGHWAY 6 - PIGNATARO ROAD.

Axis of Evacuation - Each company route.

Aid Station - House near junction of STANGELO ROAD - HIGHWAY 6.

k. Battalion Advance Command Post - Initially (853203) - Thereafter PIGNATARO ROAD.

5. Narrative:

By night of January 31st - February 1st, the battalion was deployed generally north and south of HIGHWAY 6. (See appendix VI). The battalion was directed to furnish fire support for the attack on CASSINO by elements of 34th Division.

Company "A" from present position and Company "C" from (870198) were directed to furnish the fire support. The 48th Engineers were requested to check and prepare route as shown on Overlay in Appendix VI. This was completed before dawn. Company "C" moved from its assembly area before daylight, but due to boggy terrain was only able to place one platoon in firing position. Remainder of company was forced to return to its assembly area. Throughout the day this platoon and Company "A" fired on designated target area. One enemy fuel dump which burned for six hours was destroyed. Casualties inflicted are unknown.

Hill 596 (G 855223) was taken by the 135th Infantry Regiment 34th Division.

During February 2, the platoon of Company "C" and Company "A" continued to fire on target area south of CASSINO. Due to heavy mist, visibility was poor.

Message was received from 1st Tank Group changing the objective on the PIGNATARO ROAD to the creek crossing at (837180).

At 1950 the Command Post was heavily shelled. One enlisted man of 48th Engineers was killed, one enlisted and Commanding Officer of 48th Engineers were wounded and our Battalion Commander was slightly wounded.

On February 3rd, the platoon of Company "C" and Company "A" were unable to fire on target area due to heavy fog. Again received heavy artillery fire at 1330 killing 1 enlisted man and wounding another of the reconnaissance platoon. Two quarter tons were destroyed. At 1600 the Battalion Command Post was moved to (901195). At 2200 two tanks from Company "C" were directed to try out tank crossing over RAPIDO RIVER at 0100 February 4. Tanks crossed the river but were unable to climb the west bank. No artillery was fired on the tanks. Two enemy machine guns opened fire but did no damage.

At 2310 word was received that the 3rd Battalion 141st Infantry was attached and would replace the Infantry Battalion of the 34th Division for the operation.

On February 4, the Command Post and Company "A" received heavy artillery fire. Fortunately no casualties were incurred.

The platoon of Company "C" again fired on target area. It was directed to return to its company area at dark.

Late that afternoon the Infantry Battalion Commander and his staff reported to the Command Post. The Battalion Commander discussed the 1st Tank Group Plan A and issued orders for his Battalion's participation as given in paragraph 4b above.

Nothing occurred on February 5th until 1500 when a battalion of New Zealand Artillery moved into the Command Post area. The Battalion Command Post moved at dark to (G 906198).

On February 10, a message was received from 1st Tank Group that the 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry would replace the 3rd Battalion 141st Infantry. This change was caused by a redistribution of troops of II Corps. The 36th Division was being replaced by troops of the New Zealand Corps, and moving to the right of the 34th Division. The 141st Infantry was ordered to CATAC. At this time the 34th Division was still fighting in the northern edge of CASSENO and had not been able to take the ABBEY on the heights above the town.

On February 11th Company "D" received a heavy shelling from 0500 to 0900 resulting in the loss of one half track. At 2000 the 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry was relieved from attachment to our Battalion. This left us without Infantry for the forthcoming operation.

On February 12, the New Zealand Corps began taking over the 34th Division sector. At 1900 the Battalion less trains was directed to move to (H 018082). At 2245 permission was obtained to move the Battalion less trains to (H 082015) because the other area assigned could not accommodate the battalion. Movement began at 0001 February 13. Move was made in three columns, ten minutes between columns. Battalion closed in new area at 0430.

At 1300 February 13 the Battalion was placed on a 6 hour alert. The Battalion remained in this area until 18 February performing maintenance repairs.

At this time (February 13) the 21st Battalion New Zealand Division was attached to the Battalion for the forthcoming operation. From the 13th to the 18th of February the Battalion Staff met with the Commanding Officers of the different units attached to the Battalion and discussed the new plan of action. This culminated into Field Order Number 8 which is enclosed.

At 1600 February 18, orders were received to move at 1730 into the lying in area shown on overlay marked appendix VII, and directed to be prepared to cross the RAPIDO at daylight 19th. Battalion Command Post moved to 1st Tank Group Command Post area West of SAN PIETRO.

During the 19th attack of New Zealand and 34th Division elements to establish bridgehead failed. During the morning the Battalion in the lying in area received heavy artillery fire resulting in the loss of 8 enlisted men and 1 tank. This artillery fire continued throughout the day and was of such an intensity that at 1700, the Commanding General of Combat Command "D" directed that the battalion be moved at dark to the MIGNANO area (See appendix VII). Movement was begun at 1800 and completed at 2000.

From February 20 to 29th the Battalion remained in the MIGNANO area. It began company training and participated in the Combat Command "D" schools of mines and bridge laying throughout the remainder of the period.

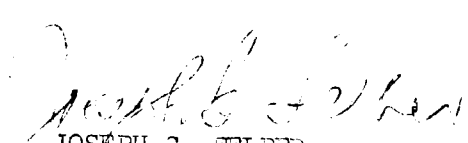
On February 24, our Service Company was shelled resulting in the loss of 3 enlisted men, one truck destroyed, four trucks damaged and suffered a considerable loss in tentage and supplies.

On the 25th, Service Company was again shelled, resulting in the loss of our ammunition dump. No casualties.

By midnight 29 February, the situation on the New Zealand front remained unchanged.

6. Conclusions:

No conclusions or recommendations will be made until after the proposed operation has been completed.


JOSEPH G. FELDER
Lt. Colonel, 75th Tank Bn (M),
Commanding.

4 Incls:

- 1- Unit Journal and Journal File.
- 2- Unit Diary.
3. Battle Casualty Report for Month of Feb. 1944.
- 4- Consolidated Battle Casualty Report.

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U.S. Army

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH
of
MARCH 1944

Incl: 3

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #161, U. S. Army

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF MARCH 1964

Headquarters Company

Pvt. Sam Collins	WY2601	SUA	13 March 1964	Cross Junction, Ohio.
Pvt. Mark A. Lashinski	2155609	LHA	13 March 1964	Osella, Kentucky

"A" Company

None.

"B" Company

None.

"C" Company

None.

Service Company

Pfc. Gvin V. Davis	11022802	LHA	13 March 1964	Maryville, Tenn.
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Medical Detachment

None.

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U.S. Army

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT
for
MARCH 1944

Incl: 4

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #161, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF MARCH 1941

OFFICERS

None.

ENLISTED MEN

SWA	1
LWA	<u>2</u>
Total	3

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION

APO 464, U. S. Army
4 April 1944

UNIT DIARY FOR MARCH

1 - 13 March 1944

Disposition of Battalion during period:

Battalion Command Post — G-994159
"A", "B", "C" Companies — Vicinity MIGNANO (G985117)
Service Company — Vicinity SAN PIETRO (G962158)
Headquarters Company — Vicinity VAIRANO (H082015)

This period was used for scheduled training of the battalion; and for planning future operations. Emphasis was placed on organizing ground defenses, practice night firing, abandoning tank drill, coordinated training with the infantry, and dismounted action.

14 March 1944

At 2000, a message was received from Commanding Officer, First Tank Group, that "D" day was 15 March 1944. Troops were to be notified by 150830 March.

15 March 1944

At 0830, the Air Force started bombing Cassino, the abbey, and vicinity, using dive, medium, and heavy bombers.

A meeting of all company commanders was called at 1000, at which time they were briefed on the operation.

At 1200, the artillery preparation fire was started, followed by the attack of the New Zealand infantry.

By 1300, it was learned that the infantry had entered the town of Cassino, encountering very little opposition.

At 1430, the battalion was placed on a one hour alert.

First Tank Group moved to its forward Command Post near CASTELLONE during the afternoon.

At 2300, word was received from S-3, First Tank Group, that construction of Bailey Bridge on HIGHWAY 6 over the RAPIDO RIVER had begun at 2245.

Unit Diary for March (Cont'd)

16 March 1944

At 0800, it was learned from Combat Command "B" that two battalions of the New Zealand Division had reached the southern outskirts of Cassino, and were temporarily held up in moving to the "Jockey" line by Machine Gun fire. The Infantry called for tank assistance. As a result of this request, the 760th Tank Battalion, less two companies, was moved to the lying in area between MOUNT PORCHIA and MOUNT TROCCHIO; with the mission of crossing the RAPIDO and assisting the infantry on its move to the "Jockey" line. It was reported that HIGHWAY 6 from the RAPIDO to Cassino was practically impossible for vehicles due to bomb craters. For that reason the 760th Tank Battalion is being supplied with two scissors bridges. It is at present awaiting orders to cross the river. It was also reported that the infantry has taken Hills 175, 193, and 435.

The bridge over the RAPIDO on HIGHWAY 6 was completed at 0630.

Telephone report from S-3, First Tank Group, stated that New Zealand tanks instead of 760th Tanks would be used to establish the "Jockey" line. New Zealand troops are at present held up at road fork of HIGHWAY 6 east of Cassino by small arms fire. HIGHWAY 6 from RAPIDO to Cassino has been cleared of mines. Twenty Teller mines were found and removed.

The 760th Tank Battalion (-2 Companies) will remain in lying in area for present.

No report of progress of Indian Division has been received at 1045.

At 1600, 6 New Zealand Tanks were reported in the town, assisting the infantry.

At 1800, an attempt was made by 15 enemy bombers to knock out the bridge over the RAPIDO on HIGHWAY 6, but failed.

17 March 1944

Elements of the Indian Division repulsed a counterattack during the night on Hill 435.

A squadron of New Zealand tanks in the northern part of Cassino hasn't been able to advance due to rubble in the streets at 0900.

At 0925, it was reported that the attack of 26th Battalion 6th Brigade is progressing favorably. At the same time, it was learned that Hill 202 has been taken by the Indians.

It was reported at 1500 that the 26th Battalion 6th Brigade had taken the railroad station.

Four tanks (new zealand) assisted in taking the station. Two were destroyed by enemy fire, and the other two took up hull down positions and assisted by fire.

Unit diary for March (Cont'd)

Heavy and small arms fire was received along HIGHWAY 6 south of Cassino, from vicinity of the amphitheater.

At 2100, troop "B", 1st Reconnaissance was ordered to make route reconnaissance of HIGHWAY 6 through Cassino to determine whether it could be used by wheeled vehicles and tanks.

18 March 1944

Troop "B", 1st Reconnaissance departed at 0230 on its mission. It reported a great deal of rubble in the road, and that roads could not be recognized as such. Considerable engineering work would be necessary before it could be used by wheeled vehicles, but tanks should be able to get into town. Small arms fire prevented further reconnaissance along HIGHWAY 6 than the road leading to the railroad station.

The Colonel went to a meeting at 1330, where it was decided to use the 76th Tank Battalion (- 2 companies) to help establish the "Jockey" plan. Proposed plan is for one company to go up HIGHWAY 6, take up firing position near railroad station, and give fire support to other company going up HIGHWAY 6 to attack the Coliseum.

The C.O. of First Tank Group was dive bombed around 0900. Five men were killed, several others wounded, and three halftracks were destroyed. The C.O. was moved back to the old location (994159) during the afternoon.

Situation as of 1800:

26th Battalion, 6th Brigade holding Cassino.

25th Battalion, 6th Brigade clearing town, including street lights.

24th Battalion, 6th Brigade attacking south along HIGHWAY 6.

23rd Battalion, (Maric), assisting the 24th Battalion. 6th Brigade on Hill 435 and 202 have contact. Two companies (Indians) attacking Monte Cassino.

19th Armored Regiment: 2 tanks burned, 2 tracks off, 7 top off, 2 mechanical failures.

New Zealand: 197 killed and wounded
3 tanks at the RR station
3 tanks at 857200.

Counterattack on Hill 193 was repulsed by the Indians during the night.

19 March 1944.

An attack was made on the southwestern part of Cassino during the afternoon. One German tank was knocked out at 30 yards range and 260 prisoners were taken from area around the hotel at 854209.

Elements of the 4th Indian Division, with Company "D", 76th Tank Battalion attached, made an attack on Hills 460 and 560 securing both.

Unit Diary for March (Cont'd)

Hills 435, 202 and 193 are firmly held. Hill 165 was lost to the enemy.

20 March 1944

Situation unchanged. Twenty-first Battalion, 5th Brigade, New Zealand, was relieved from attachment to this unit at 1200 to make an attack.

Elements of the 74th Division relieved elements of the 2nd New Zealand Division at the railroad station at Cassino.

21 March 1944

Situation remains unchanged. The enemy has been successful in infiltrating into positions around Hill 193 and the Continental Hotel, and is believed to be strengthening these points. He still holds Hill 165, while Hills 435, 202, and 193 are in our possession.

22 March 1944

Situation unchanged. Hard fighting continues around Cassino, especially Hill 193, and the Continental Hotel. The enemy is using the Baron's Palace, the Amphitheater, and the Coliseum to good advantage. These points, form his main line of resistance, while he is continuing attempts to infiltrate into our positions. Several of these penetrations have been thrown back, although he was successful in retaking the Continental Hotel.

We have not been able to use tanks very effectively due to soft ground, craters, and the huge amount of rubble in roads. Enemy air activity increased during the day. No damage was done to this unit.

23 March 1944

Situation static. The Battalion taken off the two hour alert at 1600, and will be off the alert until 271300 March 1944.

24 March 1944

An order was received at 1910, from Commanding Officer, 1st Tank Group, alerting the Battalion for move to H 175825. The Battalion is to be prepared to move within 48 hours.

25 March 1944

At 0830 verbal orders were received from 1st Armored Group to move the Battalion to the new area in two serials. First serial, 7 vehicles, to pass the IF (Hill) at 2130; clear the IF at 2130 and arrive at the Road Junction of HIGHWAY 6 and 65 at 2350; clear Road Junction at 2410. Second serial (100 vehicles) at 0900, clear the IF at 2100, clear at 0300, arrive at Road Junction of HIGHWAY 6 and 65 at 2410.

The 73rd Tank Battalion was detached from 1st Armored Group, and attached to Fifth Army for re-organization. Liaison officer to report to Fifth Army C.P.

26 March 1944

The movement was made according to plan, and the Battalion closed in the new area at 0400. The day was spent in setting up camp.

Unit Diary for March (Cont'd)

27 - 28 March 1944

This period was used in making the necessary preparations for the reorganization of the Battalion.

29 March 1944

The Battalion was reorganized this date under TO and E 17-17, in compliance with General Orders # 47, Headquarters Fifth Army.

30 - 31 March 1944

This period was used for completing the reorganization of the Battalion

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION

APO 464, New York, NY.
5 April 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Report of Operations in Italy for March 1944.

TO : Adjutant General, Washington (25) D. C. (Thru Channels)

On March 1st the disposition of the battalion was as follows. The Battalion Command Post was bivouaced with the First Tank Group at G-994159. "A", "B" and "C" Companies were in the vicinity of MIGNANO G-985117, Service Company in vicinity of SAN PIETRO G-962158 and Headquarters Company in vicinity of VAIRANO H-082015.

The companies were on a 24 hour alert status, waiting for the New Zealand Corps to take the town of CASSINO and establish a bridge head over the RAPIDO RIVER. The mission of the battalion was still the same. (See Historical narrative for the month of February for detailed plan.)

During the period March 1st to 13th there was considerable rain and the ground was very marshy. Aerial reconnaissance over the CASSINO area revealed water standing in the fields and all shell holes filled with water. It would have been impossible for tanks to operate over the terrain. The period, March 1st to 13th, was spent in combined training with the 21st Infantry Battalion, New Zealand Corps. Emphasis was placed on organizing ground defenses, dismount ed action and night firing. It appeared that this battalion would have to make a night attack and set up defensive positions for the night. These actual conditions were simulated as close as possible.

At 2000 hours, 14 March a message was received from Commanding Officer First Tank Group that "D" Day was 15 March 1944. Troops were to be notified by 150800 March.

At 150830, the air force started bombing CASSINO, the Abby and vicinity, using dive, medium and heavy bombers. At 1000 a meeting of all company commanders was called at which time they were again briefed on the forth coming operation. They were then allowed to assemble their companies and explain the situation to them. At 1200 the aerial bombing ceased and the artillery started a rolling barrage beginning at the northern edge of CASSINO and moving south. The New Zealand Infantry followed up this barrage and at 1300 it was learned that the infantry had entered the town of CASSINO encountering very little resistance. At 1430 the battalion was placed on a one hour alert. Preparations were made to cross the RAPIDO RIVER that night.

On the morning of the 16th Combat Command "B" reported the Bailey Bridge across the RAPIDO completed, but infantry being held up by machine gun fire and was having trouble establishing the Jockey line. It was also reported that the streets in the town were impassable to any vehicles due to the heavy shelling and bombing.

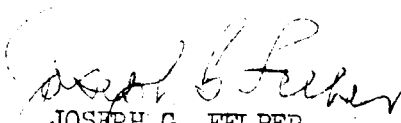
From March 17th to March 23rd the situation remained practically the same, in and around CASSINO. The New Zealand Infantry occupied most of the town of CASSINO and the railroad station. The Indians held HILLS 435, 202, and 193 but had lost HILL 165. The enemy had been successful in infiltrating into positions around HILL 193 and the Continental Hotel and was believed to be strengthening these positions. At 231600 the battalion was dealerted until 271800 March 1944.

On the 24th March an order was received from Commanding Officer, First Armored Group alerting the battalion for move to N-175825. The battalion to be prepared to move within 48 hours.

At 250830 verbal orders were received from Commanding Officer First Armored Group to move the battalion to the new area in two serials. The first serial of 70 vehicles to pass the IP (LIGNANO) at 2310 and clear the IP at 2330. Second serial of 100 vehicles to pass the IP at 2400 and clear at 0030. This battalion to be detached from First Armored Group and attached to Fifth Army for reorganization.

This movement was made according to plan and the battalion closed in the new area at 260400. The remainder of the day was spent in setting up camp.

The period 27 March to 31st was spent in reorganization of the battalion under T/O & E 17-25, dated 15 September 1943. Effective date of reorganization was 29 March 1944, per General Orders Number 47, Headquarters Fifth Army, dated 23 March 1944.


JOSEPH G. FELBER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn,
Commanding.

4 Incl:

- 1- Unit Journal and Journal File.
- 2- Unit Diary.
- 3- Battle Casualty Report for Month of March 1944.
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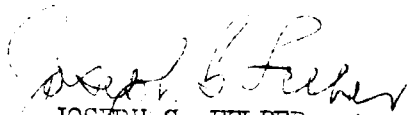
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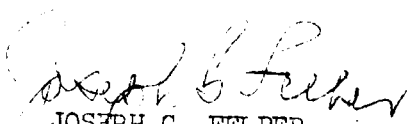
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HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. ARMY

BATTEL CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH

of

APRIL 1944

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 9464, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF MARCH 1944

Headquarters Company
None.

"A" Company
None.

"B" Company
None.

"C" Company
None.

"D" Company
None.

Service Company
None.

Medical Detachment
None.

HEADQUARTERS 153RD TANK BATTALION
ATO #464, U. S. Army

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

for

APRIL 1944

Encl: 4

HEADQUARTERS
730th Signal Battalion
Fort Monmouth, U. S. ARMY

EXHIBITATION FOR JUNE OF APRIL 1944

OFFICERS

1000.

Enlisted Men

LIA	0
STL	0
SWA	0

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO # 464, U. S. Army

UNIT DIARY FOR MONTH

of

APRIL 1944

Incl: 2

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION

Headquarters, Fifth Army
2 April 1944

UNIT DIARY FOR APRIL

1 - 8 April 1944

The Battalion was in a bivouac area at H-173832. Completion of reorganization and scheduled training was emphasized.

At 081500 April, the Battalion was alerted by Headquarters, Fifth Army, for possible move to vicinity of Aveline.

9 - 10 April 1944

During the morning of the 9th a reconnaissance of the area was made by Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, and Company Commanders.

At 1200, B-3 returned from Headquarters Fifth Army, with orders for moving the Battalion to Aveline.

The first serial departed 1600 for the loading area. The Battalion bivouaced in a temporary area at H-610717, at 102300 April 1944.

All full track vehicles were moved by tank transports, the move being made by infiltration.

The Battalion was attached to the 36th Infantry Division upon arrival in this area, per Verbal Orders Of Commanding General, Fifth Army.

11 April 1944

A reconnaissance for a new area was made during the day, but only area found was disapproved, as it was outside the division boundary.

12 April 1944

At 0200, orders were received from 36th Infantry Division, attaching one tank company to the Second Moroccan Division, effective 13 April 1944. Company "C" was designated, and prepared for the move.

13 April 1944

At 0715, Company "C" departed for its assignment.

At 1600, permission was granted by Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, to move the Battalion (- "C" Company), to vicinity Aveline.
(H-672414)

14 April 1944

At 0800, movement to the new area was started, and was completed by 1250. Disposition of Battalion as follows: Command Post and Headquarters Company - M-679419; Company "A" - M-679417; Company "B" - M-679418; Company "C" (attached to 2nd Moroccan Division) - M-732536; Company "D" - M-679417; Service Company - M-679416.

15 - 25 April 1944

This period was spent in scheduled training and range firing. Emphasis was placed on marksmanship, maintenance of vehicles and weapons, military courtesy and discipline, and inspections.

The Assault Gun and Mortar platoons of Headquarters Company were examined, and designated as "A" Battery, per Training Manual for the 3, Headquarters 753rd Tank Battalion, dated 21 April 1944.

26 - 30 April 1944

On April 27, the Battalion received permission from the Adjutant General's Corps, to move into an area at O-087205 for further training in tank driving and gunnery.

Preparations were made on the 28th and 29th, and the training was started at 300:00 April 1944. The Battalion (- Headquarters and Companies) closed in the new area at 301:00 April 1944.

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION

APO 464, U. S. Army
2 May 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for the Month of April.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO 464, U. S. Army.

1. During the month of April this battalion spent most of its time moving from one bivouac area to another consequently there was very little time for any concentrated training. The actions, in diary form, for the month of April, are as follows:

1 - 8 April 1944

This battalion was in a bivouac area at N-173832. Completion of reorganization and training was emphasized. The battalion was scheduled to go on the range on the 10th of April but at 081900 the battalion was alerted by Headquarters, Fifth Army, for a possible move to the vicinity of AVELLINO.

9 - 10 April 1944

During the morning of the 9th a reconnaissance of the proposed area was made by the Commanding Officer and Executive Officer. At 1200 the S-3 returned from Headquarters Fifth Army, with orders for moving the battalion to AVELLINO.

The first serial departed at 1600 for the loading area. The battalion closed in a temporary area at N-610547 at 102300 April 1944.

All full track vehicles were moved by tank transporters, the move being made by infiltration.

The battalion was attached to the 36th Infantry Division upon arrival in this area, per Verbal Orders of Commanding General Fifth Army.

11 - 14 April 1944

The area occupied was too small for training. Any attempt to move the full track vehicles usually resulted in a thrown track. The Battalion Commanding Officer then divided up the surrounding areas and assigned one area to each Company Commanding Officer to reconnoiter for possible bivouac areas for the battalion. Two areas were recommended, one in the vicinity of MONTEMOLITO and the other in the vicinity of FISCLANO (N-672414). The FISCLANO area was approved and the battalion (-Company "C") closed in the new area at 141258. Company "C" was ordered to move to N-782536 for combined training with the 2nd Moroccan Division.

15 - 26 April 1944

This period was spent in scheduled training and range firing. Emphasis was placed on tank gunner, indirect firing, maintenance, military courtesy and discipline. The assault gun and mortar platoons were combined and designated as X Battery.

Company "C" received extensive tank infantry training and range firing with the 2nd Moroccan Division.

One hundred and thirty eight men were sent to the 752nd Tank Battalion for a two weeks course in tank gunnery, firing and driving.

27. - 30 April 1944

On April 27, the battalion received permission from Headquarters II Corps to move into the vicinity of the 752nd Tank Battalion area for further training in tank driving and gunnery. Preparations were made on the 28 and 29th and the movement was completed at 301400 April 1944. However, at 301130 the battalion received orders to close into the AVERSA area by 6 May. The first company to move on the 2nd May.

Joseph G. Felber
JOSEPH G. FELBER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn,
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH
of
MAY 1944

Incl: 3

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #464, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF MAY 1944

Headquarters Company
None

<u>"A" Company</u>		
T/4	Eugene A. Houck, Jr.	39451156 LWA Corvallis, Oregon 17 May 1944
Opl	Casimir J. Slivinski	32348346 KIA Elmhurst, New York 17 May 1944
Sgt	Darris L. Jett	35270434 LWA Newton, West Virginia 24 May 1944
Opl	Raymond L. Markwitz	37436501 SWA Conrad, Iowa 24 May 1944
Pfc	Henry S. Pylkiki	36803445 SWA Highbridge, Wisconsin 24 May 1944
Sgt	William L. Dunkert	36333231 KIA Chicago, Illinois 26 May 1944
T/5	Owen P. Mc Ginn, Jr.	37129203 LWA St. Louis, Missouri 26 May 1944
T/5	Thurman L. Ledbetter	38115289 LWA Boonerville, Texas 26 May 1944
1st Lt	John L. Glark, Jr.	01012167 LWA Dallas, Texas 26 May 1944

<u>"B" Company</u>		
T/4	Merviel (MMI) Lawson	35452490 LWA Rockholds, Kentucky 23 May 1944
Pfc	William F. McGinn	11066142 LWA Bridgeport, Conn. 23 May 1944
T/4	Edwin A. Gorman	37095442 KIA Wm, North Dakota 24 May 1944
2nd Lt	Max L. Feldman	01015669 SWA Flint, Michigan 24 May 1944

<u>"C" Company</u>		
2/Sgt	Homer C. Marshall	38040710 LWA McKinney, Texas 12 May 1944
Sgt	Robert E. Reichardt	37192437 LWA Massena, Iowa 12 May 1944
T/5	Joe (MMI) Palasolo	12095768 LWA Newark, New Jersey 16 May 1944
Sgt	Frank E. Henrichs	32292073 DOW Dalgeville, New York 18 May 1944
Pvt	Spencer E. Wright	37436596 SWA Mystic, Iowa 24 May 1944
Pvt	Samuel (MMI) Lobato	38011672 LWA Montezuma, New Mexico 24 May 1944

<u>"D" Company</u>		
T/5	John J. Knut	37129674 LWA St. Louis, Missouri 24 May 1944
Pvt	Raymond E. Wallig	35013443 LWA Canton, Ohio 24 May 1944
Pfc	Roy J. Schultz	37436625 LWA Mason City, Iowa 24 May 1944
Pvt	Charles J. Covalenski	13113640 LWA Reading, Pennsylvania 24 May 1944

Service Company
None

Medical Detachment
None

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

for

MAY 1944

Incl: 4

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #164, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF MAY 1944

Officers

LMA	1
SMA	1
	2

Enlisted Men

KIA	3
DOW	1
SMA	3
LMA	1
	21

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

2 June 1944

UNIT DIARY FOR MAY

1 May 1944

Maintenance and necessary duties in establishing camp were performed.
Disposition of Battalion as follows:

Headquarters and Headquarters Company N-679419
"A", "B", "D", Service and X Battery O-085203
"C" Company N-695479

2 May 1944

Company "C" moved to new area at M-115595. Remainder of Battalion participated in scheduled training.

3 May 1944

Battalion (-"C" Company) prepared for move to M-115595.

4 May 1944

Companies "A", "B", "D", Service and "X" Battery left EBALI area at 0730, closing in new area (M-115595) at 1600. Headquarters and Headquarters Company left FISCIANO area at 0930, arriving in new area (M-115595) at 1230. All full tracked vehicles were moved by tank transporters. Battalion reverted to control of First Armored Group upon arrival in new area.

5 May 1944

Necessary duties in setting up camp, maintenance, and preparing of vehicles for combat painting carried on. Plans for future operations discussed.

6 May 1944

Disposition of Battalion unchanged. Maintenance, pattern painting of vehicles, and reconnaissance of routes and forward areas stressed. Also, plans for future operations are being discussed.

7 May 1944

No change. Maintenance of vehicles and weapons carried on.

8 May 1944

Company "C" departed for assembly area at M-835965 at 1755, and closed in area by 2400.

9 May 1944

Disposition unchanged.

Unit Diary for May (Cont'd)

10 May 1944

"X" Battery (Provisonal) departed at 2200 for assembly area vicinity CARANOLA. Maintenance and rest for remainder of Battalion.

11 - 12 May 1944

Battalion left bivouac at N-115595 at 112000. Company "B" closed M-837968 at 120330. Headquarters, "A", and "D" Companies located vicinity SELICE. Battalion Command Post closed M-846958 at 120300. "X" Battery closed MINTURNO sector 120330, attached 337th Field Artillery for operations.

Company "C" crossed the Line of Departure at 0520B, and reached objective (CLE CERACOLI) at 120737, with 5 tanks. By 1400, two additional tanks had reached objective. Remaining tanks failed to reach objective due to mines and terrain difficulties.

Companies "A" and "D" departed bivouac vicinity SELICE at 121148, in route to assembly area at M-836937.

13 May 1944

Companies "A" and "D" closed in respective areas at 0350.

Company "C" repulsed a heavy enemy counterattack on MOUNT CERICOLA between 0520 and 0730. Enemy strength estimated at 50 men, including two "bazooka" sections and two machine guns. Known enemy casualties: 19 dead, 3 wounded, and 11 Prisoners of War. No casualties in "C" Company.

Company "B" relieved Company "C" on MOUNT CERICOLA at 0800, and maintained position during day.

14 May 1944

Companies "A", "C", and "D" moved into new assembly area at N-803006.

Service Company moved to assembly area at 837965.

Company "B" moved forward, crossed the AUSENTE RIVER, and took up firing positions on HILL 60 (785017). Company was unable to advance farther due to extensive mine field encountered along north - south road. Late in the afternoon, Company "B" withdrew to assembly position at 6-803006, because there were no security elements with them. Company "B" knocked out one enemy tank, and took eleven prisoners during day. Prisoners of War were turned over to French.

15 May 1944

The Battalion went into an assembly area at 802010, with mission of supporting 350 Infantry in attack on SPIGNO. Battalion closed in assembly area 141730, and jumped off in the attack at 150430, in a column of companies followed by infantry. No organized opposition was met and the Battalion closed on objective at 150630, with two companies deployed at the base of SPIGNO and one company on high ground vicinity 786017 protecting the right flank. The light tank company was held in reserve at 790013. Infantry then occupied town, and Battalion returned to bivouac area at 152000, and prepared for move to vicinity S. MARIA, at close of period, "A", "C", and "D" Companies and Command Post Group had closed in respective areas. Company "B" en route.

Unit Diary for May (Cont'd)

16 May 1944

Disposition of Battalion:

Command Post 784960
"A", "B", "C" and "D" Companies ... 772984
Service 837965

Battalion closed in above areas 0400. Maintenance stressed during day.

17 May 1944

Disposition unchanged. Maintenance of vehicles and weapons.

18 May 1944

Disposition unchanged. Maintenance and rest.

19 May 1944

One platoon, Company "D", was attached to "Pursuit Force, 88th Division, but was relieved at 1830. Maintenance and rest.

20 May 1944

The Battalion was attached to C.E.F. at 2200, and was sub-attached to 3rd D.I.A. at 2245.

21 May 1944

Battalion left area vicinity S. MARIA INFANTE at 0700, combat elements closing in ESPERIA area at 1100. Service elements closed same area at 1900. Commanding Officer and staff contacted various French officers regarding future operations. Battalion was attached to 2nd Armored Group for administrative purposed upon arrival this area.

22 May 1944

Maintenance and rest. Battalion prepared for operations with French.

Battalion was relieved from attachment to 3 D.I.A. at 1730, and attached to 2 D.M.I.; however, this order was countermanded at 2045, and the Battalion was reattached to 3 D.I.A.

23 May 1944

At 0500, combat elements of the Battalion left the assembly area to make contact with the French. During the days operations, the Battalion advanced to following points: "A" Company G-654186, "B" Company G-644184, "C" Company 1 platoon at G-650175 and one platoon at 638174 and one platoon at 626173. "D" Company one platoon at 626173, one platoon at 645177, and one platoon at 650175. Battalion Command Post at 663154.

Unit Diary for May (Cont'd)

24 May 1944

Battalion Command Post moved to G-662169 at 1200. Combat companies supported the French infantry during the day, and, at 2000, were in the following positions: "A" Company two platoons - 630195, one platoon 648195; "B" Company 642184; "C" Company one platoon 643180, one platoon 632177, one platoon vicinity PICO. "D" Company two platoons at 633177, one platoon 643180. Companies are under tactical control of the French. Company "C" knocked out 2 Mark IV Specials, 1 SP, and two other vehicles during operations.

25 May 1944

Companies assisted infantry to taking its objectives. Company "D" is attached to 4 RTT, Company "A" is attached to 3 RGT, and Companies "C" and "B" to 7 RCC. Disposition at 2000: Command Post G-662166, Company "A" one platoon at 634200, one platoon at 636200, and other platoon at 628193. "B" Company one platoon 625195, one platoon 622184, one platoon at 645179. "C" Company one platoon 631201, one platoon 626190, one platoon 635190. "D" Company one platoon 631201, one platoon 627190, one platoon 635190.

"X" Battery left Battalion assembly area at 1200, moving into firing position at 667166 during afternoon.

26 May 1944

Battalion withdrew to assembly area as follows: Command Post 662169; "A" Company 668176; "B" Company 645190; "C" Company 658169; "D" Company 659170; "X" Battery at 667166.

27 May 1944

Battalion moved to area at 671160 for refitting and maintenance.

28 - 29 May 1944

Disposition unchanged.

30 May 1944

At 0930, the Battalion was alerted for move to ANZIO BEACHHEAD. Line companies moved out at 1500 to load on transporters. Wheeled vehicles moved out at 2030, in three serials.

31 May 1944

Battalion completed move to G-0431 at 1330, attached to VI Corps, and sub-attached to 45th Infantry Division for operations. Forward elements (Companies "B" "C" and Advanced CP) moved to F-878363 at 1900. Rear elements moved to F-9230 during afternoon.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

14 June 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for the Month of May.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO 464, U. S. Army.

The first of May found the disposition of the Battalion as follows:- One Company was in training with the French at N-695479, Companies "A", "B", "D", Service and "X" Battery in the vicinity of EDOLI (O-085203), and Battalion Headquarters at FISCIANO (N-679419). The Battalion was attached to the 36th Division.

On May 4 the Battalion received orders to move from its present area to a new area located at M-115595, and was to come under control of the 1st Armored Group, upon arrival. The Battalion closed into this area on the 8th of May.

Information was then received that the Battalion would be attached to the 88th Division for the next operation. The Division plan for the Battalion was in three phases. In the first Phase one company of tanks supported by a Battalion of Infantry was to take and secure CERACOLI then in phase 2 move forward and take MOUNT CERRI. From this position the entire Battalion followed by one Regiment of Infantry was to cross the AUSENTE RIVER and attack the town of SPIGNO, completing phase three.

The next three days before "D" Day was spent in preparation for the forthcoming operation. The Company Commanders and Platoon Leader made aerial and foot reconnaissance over the areas they were to operate. Aerial photos of the terrain were studied by all officers and men. Sketches of the areas were prepared and all S-2 information was recorded on the sketches.

For detailed accounts of these phases see Annexes 1, 2, and 3 with sketched 1 and 2.

Following these engagements the Battalion spent the next three days on tank maintenance and cleaning of all weapons.

On the 26 of May the Battalion was attached to the C.E.F. and sub-attached to the 3rd D.I.A. movement was made to the ESPERIA area on the 21st of May. The next day was spent in preparations for the attack on S. GIOVANNI. Colonel Bon Jour was to be in Command of all armour and the Battalion was to come under his command. (See Annex 4 for the detailed report by the Company and Platoon Commanders of the Battle of S. GIOVANNI.)

On the 27th May the Battalion moved into a maintenance area and remained there until the 30th of May when it was alerted to move to ANZIO. The move was completed on the 31st of May and the Battalion was attached to the 45th Division.

Phase three, battle of SPIGNO.

This town, as was stated before, was to be the objective in the third phase of the Battalion advance.

Narrative for May (Cont'd)

Tactically SPIGNO was in a most strategic position since it dominated the highway running from MINTURNO to AUSONIA (See sketch No. 2).

From all G-2 reports this town and the surrounding high ground was supposed to be strongly held. There were reports of enemy tanks and S.P. guns in the town itself and the enemy was reported to be well dug in from the AUSENTE RIVER west to the town. There were several mine fields reported in the area.

At 141630 the Battalion closed into the general area 802010 (See sketch) on the east banks of the AUSENTE RIVER. There was quite a bit of small arms and S.P. fire, forcing the Battalion to take up an all around defensive position to await the arrival of the Infantry. One platoon from "B" Company with a platoon of Engineers was ordered to cross the river with the dual mission of reconnoitering the crossing and trails leading to the town, and feeling out the enemy position. One mine field was found, running parallel to our line of advance, but it had been left well marked by the enemy and there was no danger of running into it. Considerable small arms and S.P. fire was encountered. The platoon knocked out several machine gun nests and one S. P. gun, then returned to the assembly area.

The original plan was to attack at 141900, but this was later changed to 150500 since the Infantry arrived late and it was feared darkness would arrive before the objective was reached. Then too the Battalion would be attacking into the sun.

At 141930 all tank and Infantry Commanders were assembled and the attack order was issued. One medium tank company was to spear head the attack and go as close to the base of the town as possible. The next two medium companies were to carry infantry, armed with machine guns and BAR'S, on the back of the tanks and follow the assault company as far as feasible. The three tank companies were then to drop back to a position where they could lay fire on the town and support the attack of the infantry. There was no way possible for the tanks to get up to the town. The light tank company was to occupy a position on the high ground east of the highway and protect the right flank of the Battalion.

After all plans were discussed and all difficulties ironed out the Battalion bedded down for the night. Each company was to leave one radio on in case of any changes in plans. The infantry was very cooperative in outposting all of the tanks.

At 150300 orders were received from the Commanding General, 88th Division to attack town of SPIGNO as soon as possible. Information was received of another mine field.

The Battalion was alerted and ordered to move out. A squad of infantry was to precede the tanks and keep them in the same track of the platoon that had gone on a patrol the previous day. Due to darkness the tanks were to close up to where the driver could see the tank ahead of them. At first light the original plan was to go into effect.

The Battalion crossed the AUSENTE RIVER at 150430, met practically no opposition and closed on its objective at 150630. The infantry then came forward and occupied the town.

The enemy was apparently expecting an attack up the highway from the south and had prepared an extensive mine field running from the base of SPIGNO to the

PHASE I BATTLE OF CERACOLI

Company "C" left the assembly area, South of CASLITEFORTE station at 120520, crossing the line of departure at 0540 hours. The Company advanced in two columns, the third and second platoon, in that order, on the trail running generally north between HILL 100 and MOUNT CASTELLOROMI. The second platoon turned left and advanced cross country to the north west of HILL 100, at 0645, the third platoon was on the north eastern slopes of CERACOLI. The first platoon cut generally north west, cross country to attack CERACOLI. The right flank tank was destroyed by A.T. mines about 100 yards from the crest of the hill. The rest of the first platoon, to avoid the mine fields, swung to the west and joined the second platoon which was going into position on the west slopes of CERACOLI. The platoon on the left had drawn no anti-tank fire and the situation was very favorable for a continuation of the attack. Two tanks, of the first platoon, were left in covering positions on the western slopes of CERACOLI and the remainder of the platoon attached north east to neutralize any German resistance on the northern slopes. The third platoon remained in position on the north eastern slopes to provide fire support.

In the attack on the northern slopes, the platoons neutralized probable anti-tank and machine gun positions such as buildings, and straw stacks. Germans were flushed from nearly every house that the tanks fired on. In this attack 21 German prisoners were taken and a probable 25 killed or wounded. The tanks returned to position in defilade on the slopes of CERACOLI and set up defenses for a counter attack. Five more Germans surrendered in this area. During this time all three platoons were drawing, small arms, mortar and artillery fire.

At 1840 the Company was warned of a counter attack from the vicinity of MOUNT CERRI, which did not materialize.

CERACOLI was out posted by one platoon of Company I 350 Infantry at 1947 hours. The rest of the Company moved up after dark to garrison the hill, with their strength to the left. As security for the tanks, there was an artillery O.P. in front of the first and second platoons and a security detachment from the I and R platoon near the third platoon. There was no infantry outpost in the center.

At 120515 German infantry was spotted on the ridge in front of the tanks. The third platoon of tanks engaged them along with artillery and mortar fire. The attacking forces were about 50 strong and were accompanied by two sections of bazookas and two sections of machine guns. The attack did not penetrate our defenses. After a two hour fire fight the enemy withdrew, leaving 19 dead and three (3) wounded on the field. Eleven Prisoners of War were taken. Both machine gun positions were knocked out, one was reestablished and had to be knocked out again. The second time it was knocked out the building was completely destroyed. The number of dead remaining in the building is not known.

H. E. Supper Ammunition with fuze set on delay proved very effective against these Italian houses. Contrary to Armored Force doctrine the anti-aircraft guns were manned as it was too dark to see well through the tank sights. Fragmentation grenades proved most useful against the infantry who infiltrated too close to the tanks.

The remainder of the day things were fairly quiet in this sector. Three positions north of the tanks were knocked out. This was requested by the infantry commander. Eleven of the enemy were killed in these positions. One sniper continued to snipe at a tank commander. The sniper was later killed by the said tank commander. Being hit in the forehead by a caliber 45 slug.

Phase I Battle of Coracoli (Cont'd)

The Company was relieved at 0800 hours by "B" Company and returned to the assembly area.

The terrain was very rough and hilly. Five tanks threw tracks. The crews however remained with the tanks and were prepared to man their guns in case of a break through by the enemy. Two tanks hit mines, one being totally destroyed. Another tank got out of control on a steep wet hillside and crashed into another tank breaking off a rear idler. One tank had a mechanical failure, but was put into a firing position and remained there until the Company was relieved.

"C" Company casualties: 6 Slightly wounded.

PHASE II ATTACK ON MOUNT CERRI

At 140930 Company "B", from their position on CERICOLI, received orders to advance on MOUNT CERRI and from there to the east banks of the AUSENTE RIVER.

The Company moved out with Company "A" 19th Engineers. The Company went down the northern slopes of CERICOLI to the base of MOUNT CERRI. Leap frog tactics were used in this advance. Two platoons always serving as a base of fire while the third platoon advanced. Frequently the D-7 bulldozer preceded the tanks, so as to be on hand when an obstacle was reached. This speeded up the attack and prevented the tanks from throwing tracks.

The Company advanced until it ran into a mine field in the vicinity of 796015. At this point one tank hit a mine and broke the track. The engineers, with one mine detector cleared the field. The job was slow because of enemy snipers and only one mine detector. At 1800 the field was cleared enough for tanks to pass.

Word was received for the Company to hold their present position and wait for the remainder of the Battalion. The remainder of the Battalion arrived at 1830.

Platoon Leaders account of reconnaissance across the AUSENTE RIVER.

On the evening of 14 May 1944 I was called upon by the Company Commander (Lt. Sorenson) and was given a mission to take my platoon and cross the AUSENTE RIVER and make a reconnaissance of terrain and roads west of CH TORRERIS to the road west of our objective.

With the aid of the Engineers I crossed the AUSENTE RIVER at 795018 and drew fire from some unknown enemy gun which continued without effect until we reached the southern tip of CH TORRERIS. After fording the river we proceeded west on a dirt trail and after going approximately 300 yards my tank gutted into a ditch. I quickly dismounted and jumped into my number 2 tank and turned south across the fields until we discovered a mine field. I then skirted the mine field and proceeded around the base of mountain. During that time we captured 6 Germans who were in some fox hole along the route.

At the southernmost tip of TORRERIS we encountered a Company of French Goums commanded by French Officers. Speaking to him, he informed me that the houses on CH TORRERIS and in dugouts nearby were housed with machine gun nests and enemy riflemen. I then asked the French Officer if he wanted to send the Goums along with the tanks and he consented. I then dismounted from my tank as I didn't have a transmitter in my number 2 tank and told my Platoon Sergeant (S/Sgt Raymond C. Arnold) to take over the platoon while I led the Goums in their assault. With perfect coordination between tanks and Goums we proceeded to extinguish all signs of enemy fire in the vicinity. During that time I communicated with my Platoon Sergeant by the use of hand signals and he was able to deliver accurate fire to the positions I wanted.

We were still drawing small arms fire from distant snipers but due to the fact that night fall was drawing upon us, I reorganized things and proceeded back to our lines.

One enemy S. P. gun knocked out.
Total known enemy dead 3
Prisoners 6
Our casualties wounded 2 (Goums)

Narrative for May (Cont'd)

river. The mine field was well marked with signs and barbed wire on the German side. On the American side there was one strand of barbed wire running along the ground, serving as a marker for the field. The Battalion advanced parallel and to the north of the mine field, thus avoiding the loss of any tanks by mines.

Joseph G. Felder
JOSEPH G. FELDER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn,
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION APO #100, U. S. Army

DATTE CAVALRIES FOR MONTH OF JUNE 1944

Headquarters Company Notes

2/4 Harlow E. Proberg	37253436	Laguna Beach, Calif.	LNA	3	June	1944
Pvt Freeman J. Acha	36415780	Honore, Michigan	DNA	4	June	1944
Pvt Billy W. Shell	37509774	Springfield, Mo.	KIA	4	June	1944
Cpl Charles W. Harvey	37436572	Marion, Iowa	LNA	4	June	1944
Pvt Warren H. Elgner	35241736	Hamport News, Va.	LNA	4	June	1944
2/5 Thomas L. Ledbetter	38115269	Brownsville, Texas	LNA	4	June	1944
Cpl Joseph F. Lammocelli	31112162	North Providence, RI	MIA	3	June	1944
2/5 Howard T. Richardson	34676505	New Orleans, La.	MIA	3	June	1944
Pvt William W. Beech	37541570	St. Cloud, Minn.	MIA	3	June	1944
2nd Lt William S. Amer	01015036	Beverly Hills, Calif.	MIA	3	June	1944
2nd Lt Robert L. Jett	35270414	Pratt Fork, Ohio	DOM	24	May	1944
2/4 Robert H. Alexander	16125520	Orleans, Ill.	LNA	8	June	1944
Pvt Thomas C. Miller	32921281	Indian City, N. J.	LNA	8	June	1944
2/5 John B. Radzowski	16155849	Wilkesboro, N.C.	LNA	8	June	1944
Pvt Nathan G. Forgeron	37169829	Parsippany, N. J.	LNA	8	June	1944
Pvt Earl R. Hanes	36397703	Orleans City, Ohio	LNA	8	June	1944
Pvt Walter J. Fenda	12747366	Hawesbury, N. Y.	KIA	13	June	1944

4th Company						
Cpl Elmer W. Rohling	35224102	Glennville, Ohio	DOM	5	June	1944
2/5 Russ L. Hilean	37353639	Colorado Springs, Colorado	DNA	2	June	1944
2nd Lt Plinio Kerkens	01011403	Brockton, N. Y.	DNA	2	June	1944
Sgt Leonard P. Moore	38040725	Waggoner, Texas	DNA	2	June	1944
Pvt William A. Delp	37414566	Knoxville, Tennessee	DNA	2	June	1944
Pvt Thomas R. DeJongle	38137405	Fort Worth, Texas	LNA	2	June	1944
Pvt John A. Stennett	37409866	Springfield, Mo.	DNA	2	June	1944
Sgt Guy H. Flannery	37353637	Shawnee, Texas	KIA	3	June	1944
Pvt Thomas A. Gannon	12159608	Oslo, Springs, Colo.	KIA	2	June	1944
Pvt Emanuel Vegas	37218899	New York, New York	LNA	2	June	1944
Cpl Clarence F. Overstreet	01013589	St. Joseph, Mo.	KIA	11	June	1944
1st Lt Richard A. Williamson	01012392	Rockport, New York	DNA	9	June	1944
1st Lt James L. Harrington		Middletown, Ohio	LNA	13	June	1944

5th Company						
Sgt Dulan J. Andrews	36116947	Hardin, Texas	KIA	1	June	1944
Sgt Lyman S. Hartman	37222970	Detroit, Michigan	SEA	1	June	1944
Pvt William Libbers	01015243	Cherry, Kansas	DNA	1	June	1944
2nd Lt William E. Young	01015243	Long Lake, New York	DNA	1	June	1944
2nd Lt Raymond O. Lesco	37336629	Watertown, New York	KIA	1	June	1944
T/5 Harvey R. Willis		Mereno, Colorado	LNA	3	June	1944

7th Company						
Pte Roy J. Redules	37436572	Harmon City, Iowa	DOM	3	June	1944
Sgt Jacob J. Pabst	36078415	New Orleans, La.	DNA	8	June	1944
Pte Frederick L. Lewis	35338909	Willard, Ohio	SEA	12	June	1944
2nd Lt Russell P. Bowditch	01011405	Aurora, Indiana	SEA	12	June	1944
2/5 John J. East	37223674	St. Louis, Mo.	DOM	11	June	1944

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF JUNE 1964 CONT'D

T/5 Thurman Wiggs
Sgt Paul C. Stiles

Service Company
37129960 Holland, Mo.
36148041 Flint, Michigan

MIA 11 June 1964
MIA 19 June 1964

Medical Detachment
None

HEADQUARTERS 753rd TANK BATTALION
APO 484, U. S. ARMY

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

for

JUNE 1964

Incl: 4

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO APO, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 1964

OFFICERS

KIA	1
MIA	1
SWA	1
LWA	1
	<u>4</u>

Enlisted Men

KIA	7
MIA	4
MIA	3
SWA	2
LWA	19
LIA	1
	<u>36</u>

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

8 July 1944

UNIT DIARY FOR JUNE

1 June 1944

Battalion completed movement to G 0430 at 311300, and was attached to 45th Infantry Division for operations. Companies "B" and "C" and forward CP moved to F 878363 during afternoon of 31 May, while Headquarters "A", "D" and Service Companies moved to F 9230. Company "B" was placed in direct support of 179th Infantry Regiment, Company "C" in support of 180th Infantry Regiment. Both companies jumped off in the attack at 0530. Heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy during the day. Company "C" lost two tanks.

2 June 1944

Companies "B" and "C" supported advance of infantry by fire and movement. Company "A" was attached to 157th Infantry at 012100 for operations. Company "A" was furnished 10 tanks by 191st Tank Battalion and moved into an assembly area northeast of CISTERNA at 0700.

Company "B" knocked out two tanks (Mark IV), one anti-tank gun and took 30 prisoners.

Company "C" destroyed two tanks, four SP guns, two anti-tank guns, several machine guns, and took 135 prisoners.

Company "B" lost six tanks during day's operations.

3 June 1944

Company "A" supported attack of 157th Infantry and 36th Division to the northeast of VELLETRI. Company "B" supported attack of 180th Infantry and Company "C" supported 17th Infantry. One platoon of Company "D" was used during the afternoon to assist in the attack of Company "C".

Company "C" destroyed two tanks, two SP guns, two anti-tank guns, and several machine guns.

Company "B" destroyed one anti-tank gun, but lost six tanks to enemy action. No report from "A" Company

4 June 1944

Company "A" supported 157th Infantry.

Company "C" and one platoon Company "D" were in support of 1st Battalion 180th Infantry. Battalion (-) in support of 180th Infantry Regiment.

Battalion (- "A" and "C" Companies) closed in assembly area at F 717550 at 2130. Disposition of Battalion at close of day: Company "C" in support of one Infantry Battalion of 180th is across the RIVER TIBER. One platoon Company "A" attached to VI Corps. Company "A" (-) enroute to rejoin Battalion

Unit Diary for June (cont'd)

Company "A" lost one tank during the day.

5 June 1944

Third platoon, Company "D" assisted 1st Battalion 180th Infantry, in mopping up operations. Company "A" rejoined Battalion at 1915. Battalion closed in new area at F 6259 at 2130. Battalion relieved from attached to 45th Division and attached to 34th Division, upon arrival in this area.

Company "D" destroyed one anti-tank gun.

6 June 1944

Company "A" (1 platoon, Company "D") was attached to 168th Infantry Regiment, and departed at 0540 to join that unit. The Battalion (-) then moved to new assembly area at F 669614, closing at 0730. Bn (-) left this area at 2130 and closed in area at F 527710 at 2315.

7 June 1944

Battalion (- "A") left F 527710 at 0945, closing in area at F 188911 at 1430. Companies "A" and "D" supported 133th Infantry Regiment during day. Company "A" destroyed two SP guns.

8 June 1944

Company "D" was attached to 133rd Infantry at 1545.

Enemy casualties during day included 4 motor traffic, 1 20mm Flak, 1 50mm anti-tank gun, 1 Mark III tank, 40-50 machine guns, killed and wounded estimated at well over 200, and 130 prisoners of war turned over to 133rd Infantry.

Companies "B" and "D" each lost one tank.

9 June 1944

Company "B" passed to control of 361st Infantry (attached to 36th Div.) at 0530. Company "C" was attached to and joined 143rd Infantry at 0630.

Battalion (- "B" and "C") closed in new area (A168046), vicinity ~~TARQUINA~~ at 1300.

10 June 1944

Battalion (- "D" and "C") moved to new area at E 954245, closing at 1730.

Company "D" passed to control of 141st Infantry Regiment at 2130.

Company "C" was attached to 142nd Infantry at 2030, joining that unit at 0630B.

11 June 1944

Company "D" was relieved by composite group of one platoon medium tanks, commanded by Captain Schwimm.

Unit Diary for June (cont'd)

Company "C" was relieved by composite group of one platoon medium tanks and one platoon light tanks under Lieutenant Harrington.

Three tanks, under Lieutenant Johnson, were attached to the Armored Column under Major Du Bois.

Before being relieved, Company "C" destroyed one mortar, one Field Gun, one Mark IV Tank and eight machine guns (estimated), captured 135 prisoners of war and killed minimum of 50 of the enemy.

12 June 1944

Group Schwinn supported 142nd Infantry
Group Harrington supported 141st Infantry
Group Johnson supported Task Force Du Bois

Lt. Roache, Company "D" was seriously wounded when he attempted to capture 12 German Assault Guns (with crews).

13 June 1944

Group Papizan (3 tanks) relieved Group Schwinn before daylight.
Group Anderson (3 tanks) relieved Group Harrington during night.
Group Johnson returned to Battalion area.

Lt. Harrington, company commander "A" Company, was seriously wounded by small arms fire while making foot reconnaissance vicinity E 6841.

14 June 1944

Two tanks, Group Papizan, were replaced during night due to mechanical trouble. This group fired on suspected enemy installations. Results unknown.

Group Anderson (3 tanks) supported 141st Infantry Regiment.

15 June 1944

Group Anderson (1st Sgt. Company "C") relieved.
Group Papizan, in support of right column.
Group Gaincy relieved Group Anderson ("B" Co.) in support of left column.

16 June 1944

Battalion closed in new area at E6449 at 1100. Battalion CP located at E 663484.

Group Anderson and Gaincy supported units to which they are attached.

17 June 1944

X Battery was attached to 517th RCT at 1600, and left Battalion area at 1730 to join that unit.

Six tanks were attached to 143rd Infantry Regiment.
Three tanks were attached to 361st Infantry Regiment.
Groups Gaincy and Anderson relieved.
Company "D" located E 636644.

Unit Diary for June (cont'd)

18 June 1944

Battalion CP moved to E 641657.

Disposition of Battalion unchanged.

19 June 1944

Three tanks ("A" Co. Sgt Carpenter) attached to 143rd Infantry Regiment.

Three tanks ("B" Co. Lt. Johnson) attached 517th RCT.

Three tanks ("C" Co. Lt. Thompson) attached 142nd Infantry Regiment.

X Battery attached 517th RCT.

20 June 1944

1345. Battalion (- attachments) closed in new area vicinity GROSSETTO at
All groups supported units to which they are attached.

21 June 1944

Battalion CP moved to E 520809.

Battalion (-) closed in new area at E 500816 at 2300.

No change in attachments.

22 June 1944

Group Thompson and X Battery relieved attachment 517th RCT, rejoined Battalion 1600.

Companies "A" and "C" moved into positions ("A" Co - E 615843); ("C" Co - E 561831) to protect division right rear against possible enemy counter-attack. Both companies closed positions before dark.

23 June 1944

Groups Anderson and Levine relieved Groups Johnson and Carpenter respectively.

"A" and "C" Companies returned to assembly area at 1800.

24 June 1944

CP moved to E459859 at 1100. Bn (-) closed area at E4786 at 1100.

Groups Anderson and Levine supported 143rd Infantry and 142nd Infantry respectively.

25 June 1944

Battalion CP moved to E377869. Battalion closed in new area (E3686) at 0730. Company "B" was attached to 143rd Infantry at 0800. One platoon "A" Company supported 517th RCT. One platoon "C" Company supported 142nd Infantry Regiment. Groups Anderson and Levine relieved and returned to assembly area.

Unit Diary for June (cont'd)

26 June 1944

All detached units rejoined Battalion during darkness 25-26 June. Battalion moved back into bivouac vicinity GROSSETTO. Battalion CP in GROSSETTO, Battalion Area one mile north of town on Highway 1. Battalion closed in area at 1330.

Seven Medium Tanks were turned in to 87th Ordnance during afternoon, by order of Commanding General, 5th Army.

27 June 1944

Two additional tanks (medium) were turned in to 87th Ordnance per same authority as before.

28 June 1944

Disposition of Battalion unchanged. Twenty-seven medium tanks and twelve light tanks were turned in to 31st Ordnance per order Commanding General 5th Army.

29 June 1944

Disposition unchanged.

30 June

The Battalion departed GROSSETTO area at 1900 in route to rest area nine miles north of ROME, on Highway 1. Movement was made in three serials, fifteen minutes between serials. First two serials, consisting of Battalion wheeled vehicles, plus 17 Quartermaster trucks (loaded with tank crews whose tanks were turned in to Ordnance), closed in ROME area 010140 July 1944. Last serial, consisting of Battalion tracked vehicles, dropped off at CIVITAVECCIA according to plan closing there at 2315. These vehicles to be loaded on ships at CIVITAVECCIA.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

9 July 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for the Month of June.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO 464, U. S. Army.

At the beginning of the month the Battalion had just completed a move from the PICO area to CISTERNA. Two tank companies were moved by transporters but the remainder of the tanks and all other vehicles had to make the 90 mile journey under their own power. Upon arrival at CISTERNA the Battalion reverted to Fifth Army control and was attached by them to VI Corps. The Corps attached us to the 45th Infantry Division in order to relieve the 191st Tank Battalion which had suffered severe losses.

The Division attack on the morning of the first at daylight with two regiments abreast. Each regiment was supported by a medium tank company. The remainder of the battalion was in division reserve.

The axis of attack was the Highway running north from APRILIA to LANUVIO. The terrain was in general rolling to hilly with numerous deep wadis running almost perpendicular to the direction of attack.

For a detailed description of the type tank action in this area see the report of the Company Commander of Company "C" attached hereto as appendix 1.

By the morning of June 4th all organized resistance had ceased. The entire Battalion was attached to 180th Infantry Regiment to constitute a pursuit force with a mission of regaining and maintaining contact with the enemy. The entire force marched from the vicinity of F9233 to F717550 without meeting any organized resistance. First Battalion of the 180th Infantry with "C" Company and one platoon of "D" Company attached crossed FIORE TEVERE during the night to establish a bridgehead for the remainder of the regiment and the division.

Our Battalion crossed the FIORE TEVERE late in the afternoon of the 5th and on reaching the area F6259 was relieved from the 45th Division and attached to the 34th Division, again relieving the 191st Tank Battalion.

During the next two days "A" Company with one platoon of "D" Company attached was in direct support of the leading infantry battalion, the remainder of the battalion was under division control but marched immediately behind the leading regiment. Resistance was almost non-existent, consisting mainly of isolated SP Guns and machine guns.

One item of interest occurred during the advance on CIVITAVECCHIA. The division commander had a report that the leading Infantry Battalion had run into strong resistance. He ordered that our battalion (-) load as many infantry as possible on the tanks and move at once to the resistance area. Within fifty minutes the tanks had moved forward past an infantry battalion marching on foot, had loaded the infantry on the tanks and were ready to move out. At this time a messenger reported to the Battalion Executive Officer that the report of strong resistance was erroneous and that the additional infantry and tanks were unnecessary. However since the infantry was already loaded, we carried them to the vicinity of their assembly area.

Historical Narrative for June (Cont'd)

We found that it was possible to load two infantry squads on a medium tank and one infantry squad on a light tank. To load so much infantry on a tank would be foolhardy if they were subjected to any type of fire, but in order to get infantry with tanks to a danger spot in a hurry it is an excellent idea. It is believed that one infantry company can be loaded on one company of tanks and stay on the tanks until within small arms fire.

On the 8th of June the enemy attempted to make a stand in the vicinity of the road junction of HIGHWAY 1 and 1 bis. The enemy troops were of a green Bicycle Regiment without artillery support. For an detailed report of part of this action see the report of the Company Commander of "D" Company attached hereto as appendix 2 and report of ~~Private~~ "Company" "A" attached as appendix 3. The resistance was crushed by dark but the division did not move forward as it was being relieved by the 36th Infantry Division at daylight. Our Battalion was released from the 34th Division and attached to the 36th Division upon the completion of the relief.

The 36th Division continued to use us as the 34th had; a company of tanks to the leading element, except that the 36th was advancing in two columns and we had one company with each column.

After thirty days almost constant running the men as well as the equipment was getting run down; both needed rest and maintenance. The problem was presented to the Commanding General of the division and he ordered that we furnish only three tanks to each of the two advance columns. This gave the bulk of the men and officers a chance to get some much needed rest and the maintenance personnel a chance to refit our tanks for further combat.

Our advance along the coast continued against generally light opposition. When the terrain was favorable the enemy would resist fiercely until the entire weight of our troops was brought to bear, then he would pull out. He blew all bridges and usually mined the logical bypasses. Our tanks with the infantry protected the engineers until by passes were prepared.

During the later part of the operation "X" Battery was attached to the 460th Field Artillery Battalion (AA) to reinforce their fire. Our heavier guns proved invaluable in speeding up the advance of the 517 Parachute Infantry Regiment.

During the evening of June 25th that portion of the battalion attached to the leading infantry elements had reached the village of CAMPIGLIA, where they received orders that they would be relieved at daylight. Since June 1st we had advanced approximately 200 miles (by road), an average of 8 miles per day; been attached to three divisions; and had killed or captured more of the enemy than we have personnel in the battalion.

The Battalion was relieved along with the division on the morning June 26th and moved back to a bivouac area one mile north of GROSSETTO. All tanks except 8 mediums and four lights were turned in to Ordnance by order of Commanding General, Fifth Army. While in this area plans and preparations were made to move the troops to an area 9 miles north west of ROME for a period of much deserved rest and recreation. The move was completed during the night of June 30 - July 1st.

JOSEPH G. FELDER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn,
Commanding.

REPORT OF COMMANDING OFFICER COMPANY "C" FOR JUNE 1st and 2d

June 1st: My company was attached to the 179th Infantry with the platoons sub-attached to each of the three battalions. The platoons were in position and attached with the infantry at 0530 hours.

840342 1st Platoon with infantry mounted on the tanks attacked northward from 89510 to 89510. An enemy strong point was known to be located in a draw at that point. They tried to break up our attack by a heavy artillery and mortar barrage but were unsuccessful; however, it did force a majority of the infantry to dismount from the tanks before reaching the objective. The tanks advanced well into the enemy position but were forced to withdraw slightly because of extremely accurate sniper fire and heavy bazooka fire. Two of the tanks were so badly damaged by bazooka fire as to be useless in the fight and were sent to the rear; the remaining three stayed forward until German infantry began to infiltrate around the vehicles, then withdrew to the protection of our own infantry.

At 1000 hours the 1st platoon reenforced by the 3d platoon again attack the objective carrying infantry on the tanks. Again heavy fire forced most of the infantry to dismount before the objective was reached but a few did make it. At this point the leader of the two tank platoons was killed by small arms fire. The tanks became disorganized and returned to their attack position. There had not been sufficient time for the platoon leader to tell them that the plans was to return to the attack position and pick up another load of infantry. These tanks remained in this attack position until ordered to rejoin the company in the vicinity of 883388.

2d Platoon attacked to the north from 883388 to 880910. The objective, HILL K, was known to be a well organized strongpoint with excellent fire support. The attack was stopped by mines and extremely heavy fire of all types, one tank being completely destroyed by Anti-tank mines. Both the tanks and infantry returned to their attack positions at 0930 hours.

The entire company (7 tanks now) attacked again at 1730 hours. By the time we reached a road about 400 yards south of the objective four of the tanks had thrown tracks. The company commander ordered that the remaining three tanks continue the attack by using a route in a draw that offered excellent cover, but very bad ground. After some time all three tanks were almost on the objective when one of them was destroyed by mines and anti-tank gun fire. Approaching darkness forced both the tanks and infantry to withdraw without taking the objective.

OUR LOSSES

2 Tanks ----- by bazooka fire
1 Tank ----- by A.T. mines
1 Tank ----- by A.T. mine and A.T. fire
1 Tank ----- by artillery fire
5 Tanks ----- by terrain
Personnel ---- Killed: 1 Officer
 1 Enlisted Man
 Wounded: 1 Officer
 7 Enlisted Men
 Exhaustion: 1 Officer
 15 Enlisted Men

ENEMY LOSSES (known)

30 Killed
6 machine guns destroyed

Appendix #1 (Cont'd)

June 2d: The company (6 tanks) attack HILL K in conjunction with "K" Company, 179th Infantry at 0600 hours. The tanks used the same covered route they had used the night before while the infantry used a similar parallel draw to our left. Both the tanks and the infantry reached the Line of Departure at the same time. The tanks advanced with all possible speed, reached the objective at 0602 and engaged the enemy. On reaching the objective the tank company commander dismounted from his tank to look for the infantry commander. After he found the commander they both returned to the command tank. The infantry commander with his "walkie-talkie" was put in the tank with the tank company commander. From here he directed the infantry support requested by the tanks. Resistance had virtually ceased by 0800 and by 0930 the infantry had consolidated their gains. At this time the Infantry Battalion Commander gave the tanks permission to return to their assembly area for reservicing.

The tanks received orders to return to HILL K at 1630 to contact Company "G", 179th Infantry. On arriving in that vicinity the tank company commander contacted a 2nd Lt. Evans, the only infantry officer present. He said that the enemy had infiltrated through the "K" Company position and had counterattacked in force as "G" Company was on the way up. Both companies were badly disorganized and had been pushed off the hill.

The tanks again gave HILL "K" a going over while Lt. Evans reorganized the infantry and started to mop up what the tanks missed. The hill was retaken and consolidated by 1930. The tanks returned to their assembly area but remained in contact with the infantry via the SCR 300. At 2130 the company was ordered to return to the Tank Battalion assembly area.

OUR LOSSES

2 Tanks ----- damaged by A.T. fire
1 Tank ----- terrain
3 men ----- slightly wounded

ENEMY LOSSES (known)

1 --- A.T. gun
2 --- S.P. guns
3 --- M4 IV tanks
12 --- machine guns
210 --- prisoners
60 --- killed

Appendix Number 2 to Narrative June 1944

REPORT OF COMMANDING OFFICER COMPANY "D" FOR JUNE 7th AND 8th

LOCATION; Approaching TARQUINIA from South

Orders received from the Battalion Commander at 1700 June 7th while in bivouac area vicinity CIVITAVECCIA to move out immediately with 1st and 3rd platoons along HIGHWAY 1 north until we encountered 3rd Battalion 133rd Infantry. We were then to proceed with them by bounds along the highway until defensive positions were established in the vicinity ROAD JUNCTION 180057. However, due to heavy small arms and mortar fire after dark on the 7th, also a blown bridge over T. MIGNONE, the advance stopped at 2400 in the vicinity of 177013. The last two hours of this advance an entire company of infantry was carried on the tanks. Two of the infantrymen were killed enroute by enemy mortar fire. Remainder of night spent vicinity of 177013..

At 0600 8 June Battalion trucks arrived for resupply. Regimental Commanding Officer gave orders for tanks and 3rd Battalion 133rd Infantry to continue advance up HIGHWAY 1. This plan did not sound feasible at the time due to heavy enemy resistance along the highway and lack of cover for tanks and infantry who were to ride tanks. Upon suggestion by Commanding Officer, Company "D", 753rd Tank Battalion and Commanding Officer 3rd Battalion these orders were changed allowing us freedom of movement around right flank and thence to objective--ROAD JUNCTION at 180057. We were allowed to take two medium tanks from "A" Company, 753rd Tank Battalion who were on our left at this time in the same vicinity.

At approximately 0800, 8 June with one company of infantry from 3rd Battalion mounted, on all but the lead medium tank, we began the attack along trail from 177013 to a point at approximately 194013, thence fording T. MIGNONE and up along ridge line known as PIETRARA. First enemy resistance was encountered while crossing T. MIGNONE and infantry dismounted from tanks in this vicinity. Enemy fire, including machine guns, automatic weapons, mortar and rifle, was coming from ridge line of PIETRARA. Leaving three tanks to protect the infantry along T. MIGNONE, the Commanding Officer, Company "D", took remaining tanks and attacked this ridge through draw at left of 190 Northing. Estimated some 150 enemy dug in on this ridge. The enemy held in face of our tanks until we were within 50 yards of their positions. Friendly infantry were called up and exceedingly heavy casualties were inflicted upon the enemy, killing approximately 65 and capturing 30 others. Orders were received by Infantry Company Commander to pull back into draw behind ridge (PIETRARA) where another company from 3rd Battalion would take over and consolidate the ridge. While this exchange took place three tanks were left on ridge for security. During the next hour four friendly infantrymen were killed by enemy mortar fire landing on our positions.

After regrouping we remounted the infantry company and proceeded along trail to the right of PIETRARA to vicinity of 193033. During this movement two light tanks had to be used to evacuate seriously wounded infantrymen. Fire was being received again from the ridge (PIETRARA) and houses to right front of our line of movement. Three remaining light tanks of 3rd platoon were then sent up along ridge to complete the job of cleaning all enemy from that position. Two enemy anti-tank guns were located and some 9 machine gun position were neutralized. Anti-tank positions were knocked out in vicinity of 190031. Tanks cleaned all enemy from houses to our right front which were giving the infantry considerable trouble at this time. While the fire was heavy, the infantry were dismounted and walked under protection of the sides of the tanks, tank speed being regulated by infantry speed of walk. Column halted at 1300 hours in saddle at 193033. The men ate lunch and rested while infantry and tank officers made foot reconnaissance forward to view the valley of F. RANCHESE which was

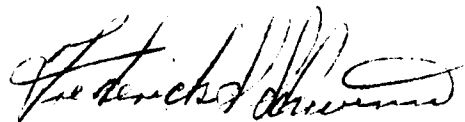
Appendix #2 (cont'd)

completely open except for small fringe of trees along this stream. At 1700 the two medium tanks were relieved and four others under Lt. Johnson, Company "D", 753rd Tank Battalion were sent to us. A second company of infantry from 3rd Battalion was sent to us at this time.

At approximately 1945 hours this date the column resumed the attack. Mounting as many of the infantrymen as possible on each tank we crossed the valley of F. RANCHESE under moderate direct fire from vicinity of HIGHWAY 1. at our left and small arms fire from C. TERCUTELLA (ridge on opposite side of valley). Some 40 prisoners, 18 bicycles, 90 dead and 3 trucks were the casualties of the enemy. Two of our infantry were killed and two were wounded. The movement across this valley was made in two waves, the tanks carrying and escorting as many infantry as possible on the first wave and while leaving 3 tanks to protect these, returned and picked up as many more as possible for the second wave. Two medium tanks were covering the entire operation from the saddle at 193033. The terrain from here to objective was a high flat plateau with haystacks, farms and sparse growth of trees. The infantry at this time was dispersed, line formation, orders for this action being relayed by commanding officer of the tanks to all stations and speed of tanks in conformation with speed of infantry progress. All possible enemy positions such as houses, haystacks etc, enroute, were reduced. Light enemy arms fire was encountered all the way to the objective. Objective taken and secured at 2115 hours in vicinity of Km. 183059. At 2200 hours all tanks pulled back to a security position at 179057. Foot reconnaissance was made by tank commanding officer within 300 yards of TARQUINIA and no opposition encountered. Tanks went into defensive position at 179057 and remained there until ordered by the infantry regimental commander to return to vicinity 077013. Thereon arose at approximately 2300 hours, and under its light all tanks moved back along HIGHWAY 1. The tank Commanding Officer's tank was in the lead, hit a mine at ROAD JUNCTION vicinity 168031 and was abandoned. Two men were injured. Closed into position for remainder of night, as ordered at approximately 0200 hours.

Estimated casualties of enemy due to this action.

- 155 killed
- 70 captured
- 2 anti-tank guns
- 3 trucks
- 18 bicycles
- 23 machine gun positions
- 4 mortar positions



FREDERICK S. SCHWINN
Captain, 753rd Tk Bn
Commanding.

REPORT OF COMMANDING OFFICER COMPANY "A" FOR JUNE 7th AND 8th

On June 7th, 1944, Company "A", 753rd Tank Battalion with 11 tanks plus the 133rd Infantry Regiment were advancing up HIGHWAY 1 north of ROME toward ARQUINIA. Little opposition was met but a few stray prisoners were taken. At seven o'clock in the evening the column was halted and reconnaissance went forward two miles to check for blown bridges and enemy strength. Finding the roads open and no enemy, it was decided to make an advance after dark. At dark one company of infantry was loaded on the tanks, the company of tank destroyers and the reconnaissance units of the First Armored Division. The column started and advanced two miles and a quarter. One anti-tank gun was encountered and destroyed by artillery. At this point, a bridge was blown and detour was made three quarters of a mile to the right to cross the river on a stone bridge. At this point the reconnaissance elements were ordered to withdraw due to darkness, but the tanks and infantry continued the advance. We were now in a valley very open and one mile wide with low hills about 500 feet high on both sides of the valley. The highway ran across the valley on the left. The valley continued to the sea and on the right, 500 yards from the road, a hill mass split the valley into two valleys. The column crossed the valley and returned to the road. At a point where the road entered the hills the enemy was encountered in strength and a fire fight started. Since it was very dark, the enemy could not be seen beyond 25 yards. One anti-tank gun was destroyed by a chance shot and the enemy were forced to withdraw to the top of the hill, but he continued firing all night. Although the enemy attack had been beaten off, the infantry took to the ditch beside the road and held that position.

At dawn the tanks withdrew to the other side of the valley to find cover, but no cover was available as the river banks were too steep to afford a route for tanks. The tanks were in a very exposed position. Mortar fire was very heavy and we were surrounded by the enemy. Small arms fire was extremely heavy. It was decided to make an attack and the tanks returned to their positions on the forward side of the valley.

Heavy enemy fire continued and due to lack of coordination the infantry ^{supporting the} refused to advance. We blew up an enemy ammunition truck receiving fire from a 20mm anti-tank gun on our right flank. German bazooka gunners were firing on us from low bushes on our right flank during the attack. Two tanks were stuck in ditches. One was destroyed by mortar fire. At 0800 hours 8 June four tanks withdrew to obtain fuel and ammunition at the regimental CP. Intensive mortar fire at the CP wounded four men; two tanks were sent on another mission to the right and the two remaining were neutralized from lack of crews to operate them. Three tanks were still in the action and firing continued until 1400 hours in the afternoon when the order was given to attack. As the three tanks were out of gas and ammunition, three replacements were sent in and the crews changed tanks. Two companies of infantry came up and the attack was launched with the commanding officer of one infantry company mounted in the leading tank which was equipped with a SCR 300, giving him contact with his elements. As the advance was slowed down by machine gun fire, the machine gun positions were given to this company commander of infantry and the tanks neutralized these positions. The advance was very rapid and casualties were light; one man being killed and two wounded. Approximately 50 prisoners were taken from the hill on our left front. The enemy was a bicycle regiment with no combat experience. An enemy SP gun was soon and neutralized by artillery and mortar fire. When we gained the top of the hill mass, we were on a plateau very flat and about ten miles long. All the enemy were killed or taken prisoner and the advance from this point was without opposition.

Our Losses

1 tank destroyed by mortar fire
5 men lightly wounded

Enemy Losses (Known)

2 anti-tank guns (75mm)
1 SP gun
12 machine guns
1 ammunition truck
1 anti-tank gun (20mm)
50 killed
50 prisoners

James A. Wilson
JAMES A. WILSON

1st Lt., 753rd Tk Bn *Wm*
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

2 August 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for the Month of July.

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army.

At the beginning of the month the bulk of the battalion was in a bivouac area nine (9) miles North of ROME. Sixteen full track vehicles with a skeleton crew of two each were at FOLLANICA, ITALY awaiting tank transport to CIVITAVICCHIA for transshipment by water to SALERNO. Seventeen half tracks with a skeleton crew of two each were at CIVITAVICCHIA awaiting water transportation to SALERNO.

The battalion (-) stayed near ROMA through the fifth. Every man was given an opportunity to visit the ETERNAL CITY at least twice. The Special Service officer arranged for sight-seeing tours, an enlisted men dance in town and extra post exchange supplies (with iced Coca-Cola). This period was the first in over a year in which the men were able to completely relax.

The move to SALERNO area on July 6th was made by motor convoy and by ship, approximately half of the battalion going each way. On arrival there the battalion went into a bivouac area five miles north of BATTIPAGLIA. On July 7th the battalion was received from assignment to Fifth Army and assigned to Seventh Army, attached, by then to VI Corps and sub-attached to the 36th Infantry Division. While in this area we were to draw new tanks, take amphibious training and begin planning on the forth coming operation. Due to a shortage of tank transporters the ordnance was able to deliver only eleven new (reconditioned) tanks to this area. The few tanks available made the problem of training difficult. This shortage coupled with the absence of range facilities and the lack of a suitable, available, driving area cut practical tank training to almost nothing. Training emphasis was placed on physical conditioning and dismounted action. Seven officers attended a TQM school conducted by the Invasion Training Center and all of the drivers and mechanics attended a waterproofing school also conducted by the ITC.

Companies "A" and "B" each sent eight crews with necessary officer and administrative personnel to the ITC for training in the operation and use of DD tanks. During the course of this training one tank had its canvas attachment ripped by a projection on the ramp of the LCT; the tank sank and one man was drowned. For a report on this type of equipment see Annex Number 1. Sixteen DD tanks are to be used by the battalion in the forthcoming operation.

On the twentieth partial crews were sent to the AVERSA area to draw and check the remainder of the full track vehicles, and to act as the advance party for the battalion movement to that area. The full track vehicles in the SALERNO area were shuttled to the new area by tank transporter between the 19th and the 24th; the remainder of the personnel and vehicles moved to the new area by motor convoy on the night of July 24th.

Through the courtesy of the 45th Infantry Division most of the tanks were able to test fire the tank guns using their range. With the exception of this test firing we were unable to do any practical tank firing due to a lack of adequate range facilities. An excellent flat driving area was available and used to a good advantage.

Narrative for July Cont'd.

During this last week of the month waterproofing shrouds were fitted on all of the full track vehicles the other vehicles were prepared for waterproofing, and we drew all of our remaining shortages except 1/4 ton trucks.

The loading plans have crystalized, the tactical plans have been made, the Battalion is ready for another operation.

Joseph G. Felber
JOSEPH G. FELBER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn,
Commanding.

HEADQUARTS S 753rd T IN BATTALION
A.O 758, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH
OF
JULY 1944

Incl: 2

HEADQUARTERS
THIRD TANK BATTALION
APO #198, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF JULY 1944

Headquarters Company
None

Reg 14.
7/3

William S. Palmer
Edward T. Richardson

1st COMPANY
None
2nd COMPANY
None

Beverly Hills, Calif., KIA 3 Jun 1944
New Orleans, La., KIA 3 Jun 1944

3rd COMPANY
None

4th COMPANY
None

5th COMPANY
None

Service Company
None

Medical Detachment
None

HEADQUARTERS 75th TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. ARMY

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT
FOR
JULY 1944

Incl: 3

**HEADQUARTERS
TENTH ARMY
APO #150, U. S. ARMY**

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 1944

OCCASIONS

KIA 1

Related Men

KIA 1

COPY

S E C R E T

COPY

30 April 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR: Commander, Eleventh Amphibious Force.

Subject : Results of Training, Tests, and Tactical Operations of DD Tanks at Slapton Sands, Devon, England, during period 15 March - 30 April, 1944.

1. This report is the result of a request made of me by Colonel James E. Kerr, USMC, Training Officer, COMANCRABLETHPFB, for information concerning the Medium tank M4A1 (DD).

2. From the middle of January to the middle of February, 1944 I attended with members of my battalion, both fresh and salt water training, with the Valentine tank (DD). On 10 March, 1944, I was directed by Col MacLaughlin, Commanding Officer, Third Armd Group, to locate an area and set up a school for the training of two medium tank companies from each of three tank battalions. This training began on March 15th with four Medium M4A1 (DD) tanks.

3. This tank has all of the fighting characteristics of the regular medium tank M4A1 when on land plus the ability to swim ashore under its own power and to wade when the water is not deep enough for flotation. The tank is held up by a canvas envelope which allows the tank to sink deeply enough in the water to displace its own weight in water. The canvas is raised by a series of 36 air pillars and held up by metal struts. The craft is propelled by two 18" moveable propellers which also act as rudders. Each craft is equipped with an Air Corps inflatable boat and each crew member with a submarine escape device and inflatable safety belt.

4. The capabilities of the DD tank are:

- (a) Four DD tanks can be loaded aboard an LCT (6) in ten minutes from a sandy beach.
- (b) DD tanks can be ready to launch from the LCT (6) within five minutes.
- (c) Four DD tanks can be launched from an LCT (6) in three minutes and forty-five seconds in daylight. Thirty-one DD's launched within five minutes on the Exercise TIGER.
- (d) Four DD tanks can be launched from an LCT (6) within eight minutes during darkness and blackout.
- (e) DD's have travelled at a speed of 7-8 miles per hour in water under ideal conditions.
- (f) DD's will travel 1,000 yards in seven minutes and if launched at 4,000 yards will hit the beach within 28 minutes after it starts down the (LCT) ramp. The average speed is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour.

- 1 -

S E C R E T

Annex 1 - Narrative for July - 753rd Tk Bn

Annex 1 - Narrative for July - 753rd Tk Bn Cont'd.

- (g) DD's have a Gyro Compass which when oriented by the LCT Magnesyn Compass will bring the vehicle to its correct beach if,
 - (1) The Magaesyn Compass is correct.
 - (2) The LCT(6) is launching from the correct pre-determined position.
 - (3) The speed and direction of currents have been properly figured so the magnetic course of the tank has been properly plotted.
 - (4) The Gyro Compass was properly set.
- (h) The craft can be navigated by periscope with all the crew buttoned up and can land, and deflate with all crew members under armor. The gas consumption of the tank about two gallons per mile.
- (i) The DD tank will wade in water under nine feet two inches and will float in deeper water.
- (j) The DD tank can drop its canvas in three seconds and the tank then becomes a land tank.

5. The following are limitations of the DD tanks:

- (a) It is given flotation by a very tender skin of canvas. This canvas is easily torn by rubbing it against buildings, and other obstructions while in transit on roads, or by rubbing against side of LCT or one another when loading. A tear greater than one foot may cause the tank to sink because of inability of bilge pump to handle inflow of water.
- (b) The DD tank is limited to a maximum force 3 wind and sea.
- (c) It is believed that a DD tank can be sunk by wash of LCT, LCS, and larger craft passing within a few yards of the tank.
- (d) British sources have stated that the concussion of a nearby explosion will cause the canvas to drop. I am conducting an experiment to determine the accuracy of this in the next few days.
- (e) While afloat in the water the tank can only fire its 50 cal (AA) gun.
- (f) Six cases of Carbon Monoxide poisoning have been noted in launches of 4,000 yds or greater. No fatalities.
- (g) Visibility of crew when under armor is limited by small vision area of periscopes. However, the tank commander's periscope can be rotated 360°.

6. Since the beginning of the school on 15 March, 1944, the following has been accomplished:

- (a) Five hundred and forty (540) officers and men trained in operation and maintenance of DD tanks.
- (b) Two hundred and ten (210) DD tanks received and prepared for use of which one hundred (100) have been used.

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Annex 1 - Narrative for July - 753rd TK Bn Cont'd.

- (c) Over one thousand two hundred (1200) individual launches made from LCT(6) with a crew of 5 aboard each tank. At least 100 of the above were made a night under blackout conditions.
 - (d) Over five hundred (500) launches from the beach.
 - (e) Over eight hundred (800) water hours of navigation.
 - (f) Total of three tanks sunk with three lives lost.
 - (g) DD tanks have been launched as far as 6000 yds from shore, but most are from 3000 to 4000 yds.
 - (h) Trained twenty-three (23) LCT(6) crews in proper way to trim ship, prepare and mark ramp, load, and launch DD tanks. This is a very important phase, and trained crews and LCT Commanders must be available for all exercises.
7. The tactical advantages of the DD tank are as follows:
- (a) They can be launched from an LCT 3000 to 4000 yds from the beach within five minutes and can swim to shore in a well dispersed formation under their own power in less than half an hour.
 - (b) They offer a small target and unless the enemy has seen them before will undoubtedly think they are small landing craft and allow them to beach without offering more than 30 or 50 cal resistance.
 - (c) They will bring a maximum of fire power and armor upon a beach in a minimum period of time.
 - (d) If a surprise, they will be a psychological shock to the enemy.
8. Recommendations.
- (a) That DD tanks will not be launched more than 4000 yds from the beach.
 - (b) That an Army officer who has worked with DDs and knows the sea conditions which are favorable to DDs give the decision as to whether the DDs will be launched or be carried directly to the beach by the LCT.
 - (c) That the above Army officer be aboard a vessel where he can advise the higher commanders of his decision and radio or signal the message directly to the LCT group leader.
 - (d) That a guide craft be furnished for each 4 LCTs to lead the DD tanks to within 1000 yds of the beach. It is recommended that this craft have a navigator with more experience than the tank commanders and with better navigational equipment than the tank. This is advisable so that tank commanders can spend their time observing the beach for enemy machine gun emplacements, strong-points, etc. This time spent as indicated above will pay dividends when the tanks reach the beach.

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Annex 1 - Narrative for July - 753rd Tk Bn Cont'd.

- (e) That one small craft such as an LCVP be available with each 4 LCTs to follow the tanks to act as life saving boats.
- (f) That no other vehicles be loaded onboard with DD tanks.
- (g) That LCTs go from column into a wedge formation at a minimum of 6000 yards so that they can slip into line formation and launch at 4000 yds without offering a broadside to the beach at a close range.
- (h) That all LCT crews and Commanders to be used on D day be made available for DD training immediately.
- (i) That tank Company Commanders know as soon as possible which LCTs and crews will be assigned to their unit on D day and arrangements made so that the tank Company and LCT crews can train together. This is vital for proper coordination under stress of battle.

t/ WILLIAM D. DUNCAN
Major, 743d Tank Bn (M)
School Commandant.

30 Apr 44

From: DD LCT Unit Commander
To : Commander ELEVENTH Amphibious Force
VIA : Commander, Landing Craft and Bases, ELEVENTH Amphibious Force
Subject: DD LCT Operations, Evaluation of Results of
Reference: COMLANCRABLLTHPHIB Operation Order No. 3-44.

1. In my association with the DD tank program since its inception some six weeks ago, the following facts are evident.

(a) That both the English and American version of DD LCT ramp extensions have been used for launchings of DD tanks and have been found basically sound.

(b) That 1087 launchings have been made with only two tank casualties and no casualties among personnel.

(c) Speed of tanks average $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 knots in an average sea.

(d) They can be launched in and can navigate in anything up to and including a Force 3 sea.

(e) Thirty and .50 calibre gun fire will neither ignite nor sink the craft.

(f) They can fire only the .50 calibre (AA through the open hatch - skyward) while in water. Seventy-five MM guns can be fired only after reaching beach and dropping canvas.

(g) Total bulk of tank, while navigating, is below water.

(h) That directional gyroscopic compasses, standard equipment on each tank, is sufficient, if escorting craft with the latest navigational equipment are not available to lead DD tanks from places of launching to beach, to navigate with a high degree of accuracy to a designated spot on a beach. They also carry periscopes (2) that are adequate for observation from within tank.

(i) That four tanks can be launched from an LCT in 3-5 minutes.

(j) Two companies from each of three battalions have been trained - all that the program called for.

(k) As of 6 May the crews of the following LCT (6)'s have been trained in this type of amphibious warfare: 510, 531, 535, 537, 549, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 601, 602, 603, and 713. A total of 24 LCTs is necessary to transport the six tank companies.

(l) They can be launched 3-4000 yds from the shore and reach a specified beach.

(m) Four tanks can be put in line from bow to stern.

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Annex 1 - Narrative for July - 753rd Tk Bn Cont'd.

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Annex 1 - Narrative for July - 753rd Tk Bn Cont'd.

(n) That the DD tanks are basically sound as evidenced by their performance in Exercise TIGER. (All but two of 32 tanks taking part reached correct beaches within five minutes of one another - the first one touching beach at H-2).

2. The following observations are made to enlarge on the above and for anyone's evaluation.

(a) A high degree of cooperation and coordination is needed between LCT and tank personnel when launching.

- (1) LCTs must be headed shoreward
- (2) LCTs are to be 100 yds apart abreast of one another.
- (3) LCTs are to be backed at 1200 RPMs as tank rolls off ramp - thereby avoiding damage to screws.
- (4) Correct compass heading be given when ship is on steady heading to tank commanders so they can set their directional gyros.

(b) All LCT personnel who may be used on D day must have the maximum amount of training that time will permit. The risk of tank casualties with green LCT skippers and crews involved is great.

(c) No launchings have been attempted in anything over a Force 3 sea as the difficulties of launching and navigation preclude operation. Also the tank bilge pump (capacity 15 gals per min) is of limited capacity.

(d) Surf and conditions of beach will affect it no more than any other type tank (wader).

(e) The two tanks sunk resulted from (1) failure of rubber wold in canvas, and (2) puncture of canvas at launching TIGER by LCT ramp extension.

(f) The canvas can be dropped (by deflated pneumatic supports) in three seconds and guns brought to fire on any target almost instantaneously.

3. I should like to make the following recommendations:

(a) It is imperative that no one of the above listed LCTs be left out of the plans for DD tanks on D day. The assault should have the use of the maximum amount of personnel with the maximum of training.

(b) No other cargo than DD tanks should be put aboard DD LCTs. This type of tank is far more bulky than ordinary and the addition of other vehicles can only result in crowding and danger of tearing of the highly vulnerable and all important water-tight canvas curtain that give tank its buoyancy. Is it not vital and paramount that this highly specialized type of cargo be given every assurance of a safe launching.

(c) All DD LCT personnel in the U.K. should be given the maximum amount of training expedient in the time remaining.

(d) That the Army be notified immediately of the LCTs by number that will be assigned to each tank battalion. This is imperative for future training to prepare for D day.

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Annex 1 - Narrative for July - 753rd Tk Bn Cont'd.

(e) Inasmuch as the Army is desirous of launching, if at all possible and feasible, the DD tanks on D day, an Army officer who is thoroughly cognizant of the limitations and peculiarities of said tanks should make the decision, in case of rough sea, whether or not the tanks shall be launched or taken directly to the beach.

(f) That one escort vessel with the latest and most accurate navigational equipment be furnished for every four LCTs (16 tanks). If not available or without adequate navigational aides, the tanks be allowed to navigate alone.

(g) That the DD tanks be used on D day.

D. L. ROCKWELL
Lt (Jg), USNR

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HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #758, U. S. Army

UNIT DIARY FOR MONTH OF AUGUST 1944

1 - 4 August

Disposition of battalion (-), 3 miles north of QUALIANO, ITALY. (Elements, "A" and "B" Companies, vicinity of BATTIPAGLIA, ITALY). This period spent in preparation for future operations, planning, waterproofing of vehicles and weapons, maintenance.

5 - 6 August

"DD" tanks (8 "A" Company, 8 "B" Company) were loaded on LCT's. Personnel of both companies rejoined battalion in bivouac area, vicinity of QUALIANO.

7 August

Personnel of "A" Company (manning "DD" tanks loaded on LCT's in NAPLES HARBOR.) Remainder of battalion completing preparations.

8 August

Personnel of "B" Company (manning "DD" tanks) loaded on LCT's in NAPLES HARBOR.

9 August

Battalion completed preparations for operation

10 August

Personnel and vehicles of "A", "B", and "C" Companies, plus advance CP Group loaded on LST's in NAPLES HARBOR.

10 - 14 August

Enroute to FRANCE.

15 August

The battalion (-Hq, "D", and Service Companies, and "X" Battery) landed at BOULOURIS, near ST. RAPHAEL during the day. Company "A" landed at 0805 attached to 141st Infantry Regiment, Company "B" landed a few minutes later attached to 142nd Infantry Regiment. Company "C" landed at 1930 attached to the 143rd Infantry Regiment. The Advance CP Group also landed at 1930.

Light opposition was met on the beaches used, although no troops were landed on RED BEACH due to heavy enemy fire from shore installations. The battalion CP was set up at 631312. The companies supported the Infantry Regiments to which they were attached.

16 August

At 0800, the battalion CP was moved to 620340. "B" Company had one tank knocked out during the day. "A", "B", and "C" Companies supported the 141st,

Unit Diary (cont'd)

142nd and 143rd Infantry Regiments respectively. At 1730 the CP was moved to 568357.

17 August

At 1230, the battalion CP moved to 358397 and Companies "B" and "C" closed in the same area at 1330 and reverted to battalion control. The battalion (-) was attached to 1st Provisional Armored Group at 1230. The remainder of the day was spent in preparing for future operations.

18 August

The battalion (-) moved out at 0630 as a part of the 1st Provisional Armored Group. The Group moved forward behind a reconnaissance screen provided by the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. Route of march: DRUGUIGNON, SAILLERNE, TAVERNE, MONTELEMAN, and QUINON. The force closed in an area 2 miles southwest of RIEZ at 1700.

At 2100 it was reported by civilians that the enemy had infiltrated back into QUINON, and one platoon of Company "C" and a platoon of infantry were sent back to secure the town. They met no opposition and rejoined the battalion at 0630 19 August.

19 August

The advance was resumed at 0700. Route: RIEZ, VALENDOLE, ORAISON, FEYRIUS, VOLOINE, SISTERON. Before reaching VALENDOLE the battalion was ordered to attach one company to a force commanded by Major Gentil, 143rd Infantry, whose mission would be to assist the FFI in the capture of DIGNE. The remaining tank company (Company "B") continued the advance with the 1st Provisional Armored Group, closing in an area 5 miles northwest of SISTERON at 1815.

20 August

At 1130, the battalion (-) continued the advance via LARAGNE, SERRES, ESPRES, closing in area vicinity LUS LA CROIX HAUTE at 1600. One platoon of Company "B" with other elements of the Group moved forward 3.4 miles to secure the pass there.

21 August

The battalion (2 platoons of Company "B") and the Group (-) advanced along the route CHATILION, DIE, SAILLAN, CRET, PUY ST MARTIN, ROYNAC, VERBANNE, to an area in the vicinity of CONDILLAC at 2145.

22 August

By daylight 5 of the Company "B" tanks were in positions to fire on the main highway from MONTELIAR to LYON. One platoon of Company "B" was sent to SAUZET at 0930 to assist the FFI. At 1538 one platoon of Company "B" was ordered to firing position between ROYNAC and PUY ST MARTIN to assist the McNEILL Force in securing ST MARTIN and to protect the left of the Group. This platoon was released to Company "B" at 2045. Company "C" with McNEILL Force arrived PUY ST MARTIN at 1915.

Unit Diary (cont'd)

No tanks were lost, but several enemy vehicles were destroyed. The Force was deployed across the east side of the RHONE VALLEY to prevent the enemy from withdrawing his forces from the MARSEILLE-TOULON front. Bn CP located at CHATEAU CONDILLAC.

23 August

At 0900, Task Force BUTLER was dissolved and all units of the force were attached to the 36th Infantry Division.

Company "C", reinforced (Task Force McNEILL) was in division reserve in the PUY ST MARTIN area to protect the left flank of the division. Company "B" supported the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment on the right flank.

The McNEILL Group, assisted by a platoon of Company "B", repulsed an enemy attack in the vicinity of CHAGNAC.

The battalion CP was moved to PUY ST MARTIN at 1615. Colonel Harmony, 141st Infantry, had assumed command of the CONDILLAC area and Colonel Felber had been ordered to assume command of the PUY ST MARTIN area.

24 August

Company "C" maintained defensive positions during the day.

At 2230 the battalion (-) was again attached to the 1st Provisional Armored Group and was relieved in ST MARTIN sector by the 142nd Infantry Regiment.

25 August

At 1230 hours, orders were received to assemble all tanks and tank destroyers in the vicinity of AMICHAUX and to intercept an enemy column reported at GRANE. One battery, 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion in direct support.

Company "C" and elements of Company "A", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, launched an attack on GRANE at 1400, but were unsuccessful in taking the town due to rubble in the streets and lack of infantry. The company took up firing positions south of the town but were forced to withdraw just before dark because enemy infantry was infiltrating into their position.

Company "B" supported the 143rd Infantry at SAUZET.

Company "A" attached to 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion in defensive positions astride the DROLE RIVER 2 miles west of CREST.

26 August

The Battalion (Company "C" (4)) was relieved by elements of the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron at 0210 and moved to an assembly area 1 mile east of MERSANNE. Arrived there at 0400. Battalion alerted at 0440 to be

Unit Diary (cont'd)

prepared to attack to the west, moved at 0700 and arrived in assembly area 1 1/2 miles east of CONDILLAC at 0800. Company "C" to support attack of 143rd Infantry on hill mass south of LA COURCOURDE by protecting their left flank. At dark the tanks returned to the assembly area east of CONDILLAC.

Company "B" in support of 143rd Infantry Regiment, vicinity SAUZET.

Company "A" attached to 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

Battalion CP at 972623

27 August

At 0345, four tanks of Company "C" and one Tank destroyer of 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion was attached to 143rd Infantry for purpose of establishing a road block at LA COURCOURDE. The remainder of Company "C" remained in reserve the entire day.

Company "B" supported 143rd Infantry in vicinity of SAUZET.

Company "A" attached to 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion in position west of CREST.

Bn CP at 972623.

28 August 1944

Four tanks of Company "C" attached to 143rd Infantry, vicinity of CONDILLAC. One tank at disposal of Major Hollis, 191st Tank Battalion. One tank at disposal of artillery observer. Remainder deadlined.

Company "B" in defensive position, vicinity SAUZET, attached 143rd Infantry.

"A" Company in position west of CREST.

At 0400, Company "A", 191st Tank Battalion, one company light tanks, 117th Reconnaissance Squadron and one platoon, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion came under Battalion control. They and X Battery were assembled at 993700, and prepared to launch attack on LORIOL between the MONTELIAR - VALENCE ROAD and the high ground to the east. The attack was started at daybreak, and by 1600 hours the tanks, tank destroyers and X Battery had taken up firing positions on the high ground overlooking LORIOL and the highway was taken under fire, and several vehicles were destroyed.

It was reported the Force WILBUR, moving west along the LORIOL, CREST ROAD had reached a point 4 kilometers east of LORIOL at 2100.

Battalion CP followed the attack, closing at 972729 at 2100.

29 August

Company "A", 191st Tank Battalion, the platoon of tank destroyers, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and X Battery maintained firing positions overlooking the highway and LORIOL.

Companies "B" and "C" were withdrawn from their respective positions during the morning, and assembled vicinity 993700.

Unit Diary (cont'd)

At 1600 word was received that WILBUR Force had passed through LORIOL, headed west.

At 1640, orders were received that all armor would pass through LORIOL during the night of 29-30 August.

The pioneer work of the tankmen and "A" and "P" platoons of 3rd Battalion, 157th Infantry on the trail leading north along the high ground, which had been started at 1530, was completed and movement over the trail started at 1930.

30 August

Light tanks, 117th Reconnaissance Squadron, and all tank destroyers reverted to control of parent unit at daylight.

Battalion CP arrived at LORIOL 0600.

Companies "B" and "C" supporting units to which they were attached, attacked south between railroad and HIGHWAY 7, meeting practically no opposition.

At 1500, the battalion was relieved from 1st Provisional Armored Group, reverting to control of 36th Infantry Division.

Company "A", 191st Tank Battalion, reverted to control of parent unit.

At 1830, Battalion CP, "B" and "C" Companies left LORIOL area for new area vicinity CHABEUIL, closing there at 2100. Headquarters and Service Companies in same area. Company "A" attached to 141st Regiment.

31 August

At 1100, Company "C" left area vicinity CHABEUIL to join 142nd Regiment.

At 1330, Company "B" left area vicinity CHABEUIL to join 142nd Regiment.

Company "A" attached to and supporting 141st Regiment.

Battalion CP vicinity CHABEUIL.

HEADQUARTERS 75th INF. BATTALION
AFC 758, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH
OF

AUGUST 1944

Incl: 3

HEADQUARTERS
753RD INFANTRY BATTALION
APO 753, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF AUGUST 1944

PRO G. H. Creelman Headquarters Company 38132370 Foran, Texas 27 Aug 44

"A" Company
Sgt Robert W. Croissant 36024213 Willmetts, Ill. LWA 15 Aug 44
Pvt Floyd R. Williams 37129941 Portageville, Mo. LWA 17 Aug 44

"B" Company
1st Lt Jacob R. Anderson 01013063 Milwaukee, Wis. LWA 16 Aug 44
Pfc John V. Egenberger 37439399 Des Moines, Ia. 27A 16 Aug 44
Pvt William J. Lemons 34707005 Huntsville, Ala LWA 16 Aug 44
Sgt Edward S. Moore 18097455 Phoenix, Ariz 27A 23 Aug 44
Cpl Philip A. Brusseau 34093574 Eline, S. C. 27A 23 Aug 44
Tec 4 Frank L. Mondo 36072131 Detroit, Ill KIA 24 Aug 44
2nd Lt Raymond C. Arnold 01683496 Sand Creek, Okla KIA 28 Aug 44
Cpl Raymond L. Halberg 32280671 Jamestown, N. Y. KIA 28 Aug 44
Pvt August E. Reikan 37539702 Kansas City, Kan KIA 28 Aug 44
Cpl Guther B. Phillips 39236490 Camarillo, Calif KIA 28 Aug 44
Pfc Thomas A. Wheeler 37436484 Irwin, Iowa 27A 28 Aug 44
Pvt Louis F. Reikan 37445371 Faulkner, Ia 27A 28 Aug 44
Sgt Homer J. French 34075669 Monroe, La 27A 28 Aug 44

"C" Company
Sgt Cecil B. Palmer 2060424 Glen Ellyn, Ill LWA 15 Aug 44
1st Lt Horace E. Miness 0450448 Memphis, Tenn 27A 23 Aug 44
Tec 4 Harold G. Landmesser 37436678 Gilmore, City, Ia LWA 23 Aug 44
1st Lt John C. Thompson 01015715 Seattle, Wash LWA 25 Aug 44
Cpl James E. Guest 34570246 Abbeville, Ga LWA 25 Aug 44
Pfc Joseph Richard 38266581 Opelousas, La LWA 25 Aug 44
Pfc Albert F. Bishop 32288073 Binghamton, NY KIA 25 Aug 44
Sgt Albert M. Palmer 38020859 Henryetta, Okla LWA 29 Aug 44
Pvt M. L. Williams 34606992 New Hope, N. C. KIA 29 Aug 44

"D" Company
None

Service Company
None

Medical Detachment
None

HEADQUARTERS 753rd TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. ARMY

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT
FOR
AUGUST 1944

Incl: 4

753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 9750, U. S. ARMY

ATTN: MEMORANDUM FOR THE BIRTH OF 1944

Officers

MAJ	1
1LT	3
	<u>4</u>

Enlisted Men

MAJ	2
1LT	3
SGT	0
1LT	<u>10</u>
	21

SIGILL ANNEX
to FIELD ORDER NO (Tentative)

1. The usual numeral designations of link signs will remain in effect.
2. The following channel assignments for radio sets, series SCR 500, will be in effect.

Button Number 1	----	20.6 m.c.	-----	"A" Company
* Button Number 2	----	21.9 m.c.	-----	Spare
Button Number 3	----	23.3 m.c.	-----	Battalion Command
Button Number 4	----	23.8 m.c.	-----	"B" Company
Button Number 5	----	25.0 m.c.	-----	"C" Company
Button Number 6	----	25.4 m.c.	-----	"D" Company
* Button Number 7	----	25.9 m.c.	-----	Mortar Platoon
Button Number 8	----	26.7 m.c.	-----	Battery "X" (Provisional)
Button Number 9	----	27.0 m.c.	-----	Air O.P., 36th Inf. Division
Button Number 10	----	27.2 m.c.	-----	636th T.D. Battalion Command

* NOTE: These are spare channels which may be used at the discretion of the company commander if their assigned frequency is jammed.

3. Channel 70 has been placed on every radio set. This channel is used by the 36th Infantry Division Air Observation Post for air-ground communication. Each company will keep a receiver listening on this channel not only for the incidental information to be gained but so the planes may warn the tanks of danger directly threatening.

Any observation plane will be available to fly reconnaissance or firing missions. Contact can be made by calling 3 A L E and giving the company link sign for identification. Do not interrupt a firing mission.

4. Channel 72 has been placed on Button Number 10 of every radio set. This is the battalion command channel of the 636th Tank Destroyers Battalion and every T10 will be listening on this channel.

Company commanders will contact the company commanders of the 636th Tank Destroyers Battalion who are supporting the same regiments. They will arrange when to establish contact and the details for close cooperation.

5. The following are channel assignments for each regiment of the 36th Infantry Division for radio sets SCR 300.

141st Inf. Regiment	142nd Inf. Regiment	143rd Inf. Regiment
1st Bn. --- Channel 5	1st Bn. --- Channel 9	1st Bn. --- Channel 3
2nd Bn. --- Channel 10	2nd Bn. --- Channel 15	2nd Bn. --- Channel 21
3rd Bn. --- Channel 33	3rd Bn. --- Channel 35	3rd Bn. --- Channel 29
Regt. Comd- Channel 40	A. T. Co. --- Channel 38	Regt. Comd- Channel 25

Each company will use their SCR 300 on the battalion command channel of the infantry battalion supported. Each infantry company will operate on this channel.

6. The AF CODE will be in general use through out the 7th Army from regiment and separate battalion headquarters down for use in radio-telephone communication. This code will be used in communication with other units and within this battalion. The Harco Code will be issued within this battalion but must not be used except in dire emergency.

Signal Annex Cont'd

7. The Link Signs of adjacent units --- infantry, armored and artillery-
- will be issued. These Link Signs will be used whenever referring to any unit
in any radio conversation or message, coded or in clear text. The telephone code
names will not be used.

8. The location of the Battal Command Post will be announced later.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

FIELD ORDERS)

NUMBER....12)

.....
: Secret :
: By auth: CG 36th Div: :
: Initials :
: Date :
:.....

1 August 1944

1. a. See current intelligence reports.
- b. (1) U. S. 7th Army composed of American and French forces assaults Southern Coast of France on "D" day to seize Ports of TOULON and MARSEILLES, prepared for further advance inland toward LYON and VICHY.
- (2) VI Corps (U.S.) supported by 8th Amphibious Force makes daylight assault on beaches from CAP CAVALLAIE to A.G.I., employing 3 divisions abreast pushes rapidly inland to seize Beachhead line prepared for further advance to Northwest, maintains contact with 1st French Corps on left after it is established ashore.
- (3) Provisional Airborne Division drops paratroops initially in rear of beach defences at 0430 hours "D" day, seizes LE MUY and high ground around it. Glider forces land in same area at 0800 and 1800 hours, "D" day.
- (4) 36th Infantry Division, reinforced, supported by Group 3, 8th Amphibious force, assaults eight beaches at "H" hour on "D" day, column of RCT's, with a delayed assault on left beach at Z hour; seizes A.G.I., ST RAPHAEL, FRIJUS and LE MUY, destroys enemy in its zone, contacts Provisional Airborne Division vicinity LE MUY pushes inland to Force Beachhead line, prepared for further advance to Northwest.
2. a. The 753rd Tank Battalion will support the assault and advance of the 36th Division.
- b. "H" hour and "D" day to be announced.
3. a. Company "A", attached to 141st Infantry.
- b. Company "B", attached to 142nd Infantry.
- c. Company "C", attached to 143rd Infantry.
- d. Service Company will attach 2 ammunition trucks to each of the sub attached companies.
- e. Medical Detachment will send two 1/2 track ambulances with the Advance Battalion CP.
- f. Remainder of Battalion in Division reserve, prepared to move to far shore on instructions from Division.
- x. Yellow smoke will be carried by all assault units, and be displayed upon appearance of friendly planes.

Field Orders Cont'd.

4. a. Assault companies will be supplied by unit to which attached until further orders.
- b. Assault companies will submit personnel reports to regiments in accordance with regimental instructions.
5. a. Advance CP, 753rd Tank Battalion - afloat aboard USS
- b. (1) Axis Signal Communication: USS
Beach Green, - ST RAPHAEL - FRYUS - LE MUY.
- (2) Company CP's will be reported.
- (3) See Signal annex - to be issued.

COMPANY "A"
753RD TANK BATTALION

APO 758, U. S. Army

Narrative of Company "A" for the Period 15 - 31 August 1944

15 August 1944:

Second and third platoons, Company "A", 753rd Tank Battalion landed H plus 5 with assault infantry. The second and third platoons were equipped with DD tanks. From 1000 yards off shore until reaching the shore they received enemy fire and our own rockets fell close to vehicles. Enemy fire consisted of automatic weapons and direct fire from a gun of undetermined caliber. Shortly before touching the beach one tank, 3rd platoon, was hit by direct fire, destroying the canvas covering and permitting water to flood the engine. However, the tank reached shore all right. All other tanks landed on their objective except two tanks of the 3rd platoon which had to go back into the water due to the terrain and landed on the right half of GREEN BEACH. Tanks were launched at 4000 yards; visibility was approximately 4000 yards, but the beach was obscured by shell bursts. The beach was very poor and barely passable for track vehicles. Upon landing the 2nd platoon moved forward with the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment and fired on machine gun positions and assisted the infantry in moving forward. Two tanks of the 3rd platoon landed with the 2nd platoon and knocked out an S.F. gun that was firing on LCT's that were discharging other vehicles. Other section of the 3rd platoon attached to the 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, fired on machine gun positions and moved to position on road above western end of beach to establish road block and prevent any enemy attack from direction of ST RAPHAEL. Tanks were moved approximately 600 yards inland and immediately removed all DD equipment. The Company Commander contacted the Regimental Commander of the 141st Infantry and was ordered to reconnoiter routes to the north and northeast in order to support the advance of the infantry. Reconnaissance was made by company officers. The 2nd platoon moved forward through DROMMONT and joined the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry approximately 4 miles northeast of the town. The infantry was mounted on tanks and tank destroyers and moved out on mission to establish road blocks and cut HIGHWAY 7 and secure HIGHWAY 7 from any possible enemy movement. The 2nd Platoon reached objective at 2300 hours.

The 3rd platoon received orders at 1300 hours to proceed to AGAY and assist the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry in cleaning up the town. The platoon was unable to cross the river due to debris on highway underpass. In the meantime the 1st Battalion 141st Infantry moved north across mountain range behind AGAY. 3rd platoon left AGAY at 1800 hours to try and contact 1st Battalion 141st Infantry on otherside of range, but was forced to halt due to darkness and bad road.

First platoon landed H plus 40 on GREEN BEACH in Regimental reserve. Remainder of company landed 1630 hours and moved to assembly area 1 mile west of AGAY. The 1st platoon followed route of 3rd platoon and was to join the 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry approximately 8 miles northeast of AGAY. The 1st platoon halted because of darkness and caved in road at 2130 hours.

16 August 1944:

The 2nd platoon remained in their position. Routes were reconnoitered by company officers in order to advance platoons to the east and northeast. The

Narrative of Co."A" (cont'd)

first platoon moved back to AGAY and east along the coastal road to join 1st Battalion 141st Infantry approximately 5 miles W of LA NOUPE. The platoon advanced with the infantry along highway and moved 2 miles east.

The 3rd platoon joined the 3rd Battalion 141st Infantry, but was unable to assist them due to the terrain. The 3rd platoon was relieved from the 3rd Battalion at 2000 hours and joined the company.

17 August 1944

The company received artillery and mortar fire during the day. 2nd platoon, no change. The first platoon relieved from 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry and the 1st and 3rd platoons moved at 2000 hours to position 1 kilometer northeast of FEEJUS.

18 August 1944:

The 2nd platoon remained in position. Platoon leaders of the 1st and 3rd platoons reconnoitered routes to the north and northeast and northwest for possible movement of tanks in event of an enemy counterattack.

19 August 1944

The 3rd platoon received orders at 0300 hours to move at 0600 hours to join the task force, consisting of 2 rifle companies, 1 platoon of tanks, one platoon of tank destroyers, 8 kilometers south of COLLIAN for attack on COLLIAN. Attack proceeded very slowly and tanks were on outskirts of COLLIAN at night fall. As attack started direct fire was received damaging one tank destroyer. Tanks deployed along the road, knocked out an anti-tank gun enabling the attack to continue. The platoon leader of the 3rd platoon was KIA due to enemy sniper fire, but not hospitalized. The platoon remained in position over night to assist the infantry. One tank turned over on its side at edge of town. Crew was evacuated and joined the infantry forward of their position. There was not sufficient infantry to protect disabled tank. Orders were received at 2400 hours to the effect that the company was relieved immediately and was to assemble in the vicinity of the Division CP 10 kilometers south of DRAGUINAN.

20 August 1944:

The 3rd platoon left COLLIAN at 0800 hours proceeding south to join company near FEEJUS. At this time orders were received from the regiment that one platoon must return to COLLIAN to assist infantry in cleaning up the town. The 1st platoon was sent on that mission. The 2nd and 3rd platoons closed into assembly area 10 kilometers south of DRAGUINAN at 1400 hours. The 1st platoon arrived at 1200 hours and only two tanks were used in the town. Received some small arms and automatic weapon fire. The 1st platoon relieved at 1600 hours and closed in assembly area at 1800 hours. Tank of 3rd platoon which had turned over was destroyed by enemy demolition at 0700 hours.

21 August 1944:

Remained in position 10 kilometers south of DRAGUINAN doing necessary maintenance in preparation for move to join division at SISTERON.

22 August 1944:

Company moved at 0630 hours enroute to SISTERON. One vehicle dropped out

Narrative of Co. "I" (cont'd)

near DRAGUINAN due to a burned out engine. Tank was left for the battalion maintenance to repair. Company arrived at SISTERON at 1830 hours. Distance traveled 105 miles.

23 August 1944:

Moved at 1430 hours to area 2 miles north of ASPREMAN. Distance traveled 30 miles. Unable to proceed further due to shortage of gasoline.

24 August 1944:

Remained in area two miles north of ASPREMAN performing necessary maintenance. Received gas at 2000 hours and was ordered to proceed to CREST immediately. Moved 7 miles to bivouac area and halted for night.

25 August 1944:

Left area at 0600 hours enroute to Division CP at CREST. Near CREST, Division officer messenger from G-3 Section, 36th Division arrived with orders for company to proceed with all speed to CREST and report to the Commanding Officer, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion on arrival. Arrived at CREST at 1400 hours. The 3rd platoon moved to position 2 kilometers east of GRANE to stop counterattack from direction of LORIOL. Attack did not materialize.

1st and 2nd platoons position approximately 6 kilometers east of ALLIX to stop expected counterattack for the west. Attack did not materialize. The 3rd platoon was relieved by the 2nd platoon at 2200 hours. The 3rd platoon was ordered to rejoin the battalion, but orders were changed and the 3rd platoon remained in CREST for the night.

26 August 1944:

Enemy counterattacked from direction of ALLANCE toward CREST. The 3rd platoon was ordered at 0600 hours to move immediately to stop counterattack. Enemy force estimated at 3 tanks (Mark IV) and 30 infantry. Road block which was established by reconnaissance was overrun by the enemy. The attack was halted and the enemy withdrew. The third platoon withdrew 2 miles and was attached to 2nd Battalion of 157th Infantry, at 1200 hours. Established road blocked to the north and west of CREST. The 3rd platoon relieved from attachment to the 157th Infantry at 1500 hours to rejoin company. Section of the 2nd platoon which was at road block near ALLIX was relieved and rejoined the company. The 1st platoon joined the 2nd platoon in area near GRANE to protect from attack from west. The 3rd platoon went into indirect fire position 1 kilometer east of CREST and registered on GRANE. Fired was directed by the platoon leader of the 1st platoon.

27 August 1944:

The 2nd platoon and 1st platoon remained in position 2 kilometers east of GRANE. The 3rd platoon in area 1 kilometer west of CREST. Company moved at 2000 hours into GRANE and prepared for attack in direction of LORIOL. Reconnaissance made by platoon leader for routes to west of GRANE.

28 August 1944:

Left GRANE at 0700 hours carrying infantry on vehicles. The 3rd platoon in lead followed by second and 1st platoons in reserve. The 3rd platoon advanced

Narrative of Co. "A" (cont'd)

astride main road to LORIOL. The 2nd platoon moved to a parallel road 1 kilometer to the south of the 3rd platoon. At approximately 6 kilometers east of LORIOL, the 3rd platoon received small arms fire and one tank was observed by an infantry officer. The 3rd platoon deployed and attempted to make contact. The platoon leader's tank fired at infantry and the suspected tank position. Terrain was well suited to defense as hills rose to the south side of the road and the country to the north was very open and exposed to enemy fire. The 2nd platoon moving north made contact with the 3rd platoon at that point. Two tanks of the 2nd platoon attempted to flank enemy positions and platoon leader's tank was hit in final drive by direct fire. Unable to locate the enemy positions artillery fire and direct fire from the 1st platoon was placed on suspected enemy positions. The incident occurred at approximately 1200 hours. Prepared to attack at 1600 hours, but attack was postponed to 1645 due to lack of coordination. Moved out at 1645 hours. Third platoon on right moving across flat ground to the north of road received small arms and direct fire from their right front. Fire was returned but the platoon leader's tank was knocked out by direct fire. The enemy gun flash was located and the platoon placed heavy fire on that location. No more fire was received from that position. At this time we were ordered to establish a defensive position and hold the high ground to the south. Positions coordinated with infantry for night defense.

29 August 1944:

Received orders at 1300 hours to attack west of LORIOL. No opposition. Enemy tanks were heard at 0530 hours but we made no contact with them. Contacted 143rd Infantry in LORIOL and was ordered to assembly area east, 1 kilometer from LORIOL by the Commanding Officer, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion. Received orders to attack west thru LORIOL at 1830 hours. West of LORIOL we received very heavy small arms and automatic weapon fire. Relieved at 1930 hours and were ordered to join 141st Infantry near CHEST - ROMANS road. Company now consisting of 8 tanks attached to 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment. Joined the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry at 3 miles south of CHABEUIL at 2400 hours.

30 August 1944:

Moved out at 0600 hours following reserve company of 1st Battalion by 500 yards. Moved by routes to south and east of CHABEUIL in order to by-pass the town. Mounted infantry on tanks at 1100 hours as no contact with the enemy had been made. Passed thru 3rd Battalion and moved into BOURG DE PEAGE at 1250 hours. At 1600 hours the 2nd platoon established a road block 5 kilometers west of ROMANS still attached to 1st Battalion 141st Infantry. Rest of company in Regimental reserve and bivouac area eastern edge of ROMANS.

31 August 1944:

One section of the 1st platoon moved to VALLENCE to join holding force there, other sections of 1st platoon attached to 2nd Battalion 141st Infantry for mopping up area west of VALLENCE. First platoon relieved and joined company which was now in bivouac area on eastern edge of BOURG DE PEAGE. The 2nd platoon relieved at 1200 hours and joined company in bivouac area. Received orders to contact 2nd Battalion in preparation for move to the north.

COMPANY "B"
753RD TANK BATTALION

Narrative of "B" Company for 15 August to 31 August 1944.

The L.C.T's that the assault platoons of the company was on were alerted at 1230 on D-Day and prepared to beach. Red Beach was subjected to an intense naval artillery barrage and the assault troops were ready to jump off. The Commanding General, seeing that the enemy opposition still remained, ordered the alternate plan to be put into effect and the company landed on GREEN BEACH, a well established beachhead at 1530 hours and joined the 142nd Infantry of the 36th Division. Supporting that unit, they moved inland.

The move inland was executed in column, with the infantry on foot. The route channelized the tanks, but little enemy resistance was met. During the course of the day, six shots were fired and one machine gun was destroyed and twenty prisoners taken.

August 16, the company jumped off at 0530 in an attack on high ground north of FREJUS, still channelized due to terrain. Little opposition was met until we reach our objective. The company was split up into two sections, one going on an assault to FREJUS and the other supporting the infantry by fire from a hill overlooking their objective. Due to the terrain, it was impossible to give them close support. Both objectives fell and the company reassembled in an area northwest of FREJUS. One tank was lost.

Believing that enemy resistance was crumbling in that vicinity, it was decided to form an armored column and proceed toward the town of LE PUGET. The 3rd Battalion of the 142nd Infantry Regiment loaded on the tanks and we jumped off at 1600 hours.

The column proceeded about three miles when the enemy started shelling the road. The infantry disembarked and the tanks deployed on both sides of the road. A battery of enemy artillery was spotted and destroyed by tank and artillery fire. In that action the company tanks accounted for two Mark IV tanks, one artillery piece, one ammunition dump and a truck. The infantry continued the attack on foot and occupied the town of LE PUGET at 1900 hours, supported by tanks. One officer was wounded in this action.

On the morning of 17 August 1944, the company left area near LE PUGET at 0600 with elements of the 142nd Infantry riding the tanks. Our mission was to contact forward elements of the 45th Infantry Division and the paratroopers. This contact was made at 0700, south of LE MUY. The infantry disembarked and the company moved to an area northeast of LE MUY, joining "C" Company of this Battalion. No enemy resistance was met.

Task Force BUTLER was formed 18 August 1944 and the company was assigned to it. The tanks left the area at 0745, protecting the rear of the armored column. The towns of DRAGUIGAN and SALARNES were passed through and the column stopped for the night one mile south of RIEZ. No enemy resistance was encountered. A distance of fifty-three miles was covered.

Still as a part of Task Force BUTLER, the company left the area south of RIEZ on the morning of the 19th and traveled fifty miles, through beautiful country, stopping for the night three miles north of SISTERON. The mission of the

"E" Company Narrative, Aug 15--Aug 30 (cont'd)

company was still securing the rear of the armored column and at night putting up road blocks on important roads. No resistance.

August 20, 1944, the I.P. was crossed at 1130 and the column continued in a northwesterly direction passing through the towns of RIBIER, LELGANI, SERRES, LA FAURIE, ST. JULIEN-EN BEAUCHERE. Column stopped for the night at 1600 hours and company bivouaced on mile north of LES LA CHOIX HAUTE. Three tanks were sent out on road blocks to the north and west. Forty miles were covered and no enemy resistance was met.

August 21, 1944, the company, as a part of Task Force BUTLER, continued to roll in a westerly direction, passing through the towns of GLANDAGE, CHATILLION - EN - DIOIS, SAILLAN, DIE, CREST and pulled into an area one mile west of MARSANNE at 1700 hours. The tanks of the 3rd platoon were sent to a point overlooking the main highway to the west out of MONTILMAR near the town of CLIOUSELAT at 1900 hours, as a road block, while two tanks of the 3rd platoon were stationed at a road junction two miles from the town of SAUZET. No enemy resistance was met and sixty-seven miles were covered. The balance of the company bivouaced in an area near MARSANNE.

August 22, 1944, the company was relieved from Task Force BUTLER and assigned to the 143rd Infantry Regiment of the 36th Infantry Division. The tanks on roadblocks near CLIOUSELAT and SAUZET remained in position. The tanks at CLIOUSELAT opened fire on enemy convoys going north up the main highway at 1000 hours and destroyed fourteen vehicles and one anti-tank gun.

The 1st Platoon left company area at 1530 hours and moved through MARSANNE to a point overlooking PUY ST. MARTIN and the entire valley to the south and west. An enemy motor column was intercepted there and was fired upon by tanks and elements of Task Force McNEILL coming from CREST. Company tank fire destroyed five enemy vehicles. Task Force McNEILL relieved the tanks and they returned to the company area.

Also at 1500 hours, the 2nd platoon left company area and with elements of the 141st Infantry, seized and outposted the town of SAUZET. Slight enemy resistance was met. Second platoon and tanks of the first platoon on roadblocks remained in position for the night, outposted by infantry and Maquis.

The three tanks of the 1st platoon on roadblock near CLIOUSELAT fired, during the day, on enemy traffic on highway and destroyed six heavy enemy trucks loaded with ammunition and fuel. One vehicle of second platoon was destroyed in town of SAUZET at 0530, 23 August 1944 by S.P. fire. Two men were wounded. The company was relieved from attachment to 143rd Infantry and attached to 141st Infantry at 1100 hours.

All available tanks were assembled in an area one mile east of SAUZET. The three tanks of the 1st platoon on road block near CLIOUSELAT remained in position and destroyed one Mark IV tank.

The 2nd and 3rd platoons moved forward in direct support on the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment in an attack on MONTILMAR at 1730 hours. The attack advanced to the town of DESMARAIS and halted for the night. Heavy small arms and spasmodic artillery fire was encountered. The enemy was trying to withdraw his troops and was in a desperate situation. He fought back fiercely.

"B" Company Narrative, 15 Aug.--31 Aug (cont'd)

The terrain was generally suited to tank operations.

The tanks and infantry more closely consolidated their positions on the morning of 24 August and prepared for further attack. The attack jumped off at 0700 hours and progressed slowly. Two of our tanks were destroyed by enemy S.P. fire and due to intense enemy mortar and artillery, the attack stopped. The enemy counterattacked at 1415 hours and by 1800 hours, the 2nd Battalion was surrounded. Three tanks, left on roadblock in SAUZET were sent into attack on enemy troops on right rear of the 2nd Battalion and succeeded in breaking trap. The battalion started withdrawing at 2000 hours, covered by fire from tanks. All tanks withdrew after all friendly troops had passed. In this action one enemy tank was destroyed and 20 prisoners captured. Tanks withdrew to a position west of MARSANNE.

August 25, 1944, the company, less three tanks, went into a defensive position, protecting the regiment's left flank. Position afforded company commanding view of valley to the south. Three tanks of the 3rd platoon left area at 1300 hours and supported the 1st Battalion of the 141st Infantry Regiment on an attack on LA COUCOURDE. The town was taken at 1800 hours. The enemy counterattacked at 2300 hours and destroyed one tank by S.P. fire. The two remaining tanks destroyed one enemy tank. The battalion withdrew and tanks returned to area.

August 26, 1944, the tanks remained in defensive position on left flank of 141st Regiment southwest of MARSANNE. Two enemy Mark IV tanks were destroyed by tank fire.

August 27, 1944, the tanks still remained in a defensive position southwest of MARSANNE.

August 28, 1944, the company, less four tanks of the third platoon, remained in defensive position. The third platoon, supporting the 3rd Battalion of the 141st Infantry Regiment attacked the town of LA POIE, southwest of MARSANNE. Heavy enemy resistance was met and one tank was destroyed. Tanks were relieved after attack and returned to area.

Six tanks, three of the 1st platoon and three of the 2nd platoon, left defensive position near MARSANNE AT 0815, 29 August, and moved to the town of SAUZET. There, the 2nd Battalion of the 141st Infantry loaded on the vehicles and attacked the town of ST. MARCEL LES - SAUZET at 1000 hours. The town was taken at 1100 hours and no enemy resistance was met. The two platoons returned to area near MARSANNE, where the company was relieved from attachment to 36th Division and attached to Task Force BUTLER.

The company left MARSANNE at 1215 hours and moved by convoy to the town of MIRMANDE, arriving at 1330 hours. Left MIRMANDE at 1500 hours and moved to CLIOUSCLAT, where tanks bivouaced and crews, with picks and shovels improved mountain trail leading to the town of LORRIOL. The enemy shelled the working party twice, but no casualties were sustained.

The tanks left the area near CLIOUSCLAT at 2000 hours along built-up road to LORRIOL, where we were attached to the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Infantry Regiment. The 1st platoon moved into "A" Company's area and the second platoon moved into "C" Company's area for the night.

"B" Company Narrative, Aug 15 - Aug 31, (Cont'd)

The two platoons jumped off at 0600 hours, 30 August, supporting "A" and "C" Companies, respectively, generally to the west along the south bank of the DROME RIVER. Very slight enemy resistance was met and many prisoners were taken. The attack swung south at RHONE RIVER and continued until contact was gained with the 3rd Infantry Division pushing to the north from MONTELLIER. Contact was made at 1530 hours and the company then assembled in area west of LORIOU.

The company was relieved from the 1st Battalion and attached to the 3rd Battalion for a movement by convoy. The convoy left LORIOU at 1900 hours, and followed the main road, south of the DROME RIVER to CREST and then swung north to an area five miles north of CREST.

On 31 August, 1944, the company left the area north of CREST, carrying the 3rd Battalion of the 141st Infantry on vehicles at 1330 hours and traveled 40 miles to the town of LA GRAND SERRAIE, meeting no enemy resistance.

Casualties Inflicted On Enemy Due To All This Action

31 vehicles-----Misc.

- 1 S.P. Gun
- 1 Light tank
- 6 Machine gun nests
- 2 Anti-tank guns
- 11 Mark IV tanks
- 1 Ammunition dump
- 1 Half-track
- 2 Pill boxes

Casualties Company Suffered

- 5 tanks completely destroyed
- 2 damaged (tanks)
- 1 Officer KIA
- 2 EM KIA
- 2 EM MIA
- 1 Officer WIA
- 9 EM WIA.

COMPANY "C"
753RD TANK BATTALION

APO 758, U. S. Army

Narrative of Company "C" for Period 15 - 31 August 1944

15 August 1944

3rd platoon disembarked from LCT at H plus 90 minutes, attacked toward BOULOURIS with 2nd Battalion 143rd. 1st platoon disembarked from LCT at H plus 1 hour and joined the 3rd near BOULOURIS. 1st had received orders from Regimental Commander to bypass strong point being worked on by 3rd and proceed to join "G" Company, but was ordered into area with 3rd by Division Commander.

2nd Platoon disembarked at H plus 10 hours and joined other two platoons, but was not able to engage in fight because of lack of room in the vicinity of the strong point. After initially hitting the strong point, the tanks did not have any infantry support until they were withdrawn after darkness. Tanks fired and maneuvered in the vicinity of the SP until practically all resistance had ceased. The only resistance left at darkness was from a drainage ditch running to the sea and parallel to it for about 50 yards. It was impossible for tanks to take care of this area and there was no infantry in the vicinity of the tanks to clean it out. One platoon of infantry was contacted about 100 yards in rear of the tanks at darkness. The infantry commander said that his present position was the most favorable for him to hold at night. The tanks were withdrawn to an area about 75 yards to his rear. Tanks were serviced and Company Commander reported to Regimental Commander. 2300 hours company ordered to join regiment. Unknown number of Germans killed. 26 prisoners taken.

16 August 1944

Company left area 1/2 mile east of BOULOURIS at 0030 to join 143rd in assembly area 2 miles east of ST RAPHAEL. At 0600 company reported to "E" Company CP, company to work with them in attack on ST RAPHAEL. "E" Company Commander knew nothing of attack. Tank Company Commander found Battalion Commander, 2nd Battalion. Plan of attack as follows: 1st platoon to work with "G" Company on extreme left; 2nd platoon in center with "E" Company; 3rd platoon on right working with "F" Company; 3rd platoon on right working with "F" Company. Battalion attacking due west into the town. Each company had 2 streets to cover. The tanks were split up - a tank section with an infantry platoon down each street. It was impossible for the tanks to work off the streets except on the outskirts of the town. Attack started at 0800 hours. Very little opposition was encountered and tanks were assembled in ST RAPHAEL at 1030. At 1300, 1st platoon was sent to Red Beach with 3rd Battalion with the mission of mopping up the beach defenses.

The 1st platoon supported the 3rd Battalion until it was impossible to go any farther forward due to marshy ground. Two tanks were stuck, but pulled out. 3rd platoon ordered to rejoin company at 1630. Did so at FREJUS.

2nd and 3rd platoons joined the 2nd Battalion making tactical road march to seize CAMP DES CAIS - cleaning out any enemy strong points enroute, mission completed at 1730 - no enemy resistance encountered. Company assembled under regimental control as mobile reserve at 558395.

3 pill boxes destroyed by 1st platoon, 2nd and 3rd platoons destroyed 4 machine guns, 1 artillery piece.

own losses - 1 man slightly injured - not hospitalized.

Narrative of Co. "C" Cont'd

17 August 1944

Company left assembly area at 1345 and traveled to new assembly area 4 1/4 miles Northwest of LE HUY closing in new area at 1600. Remainder of day spent doing maintenance. No contact with enemy.

18 August 1944

Company a part of 1st Provisional Armored Group. Left assembly area at 0700 going Northwest to REIZ with 1st PAG. 1st PAG marched through DRAGUIGNAN, MILLERIEUX, MONTAIGNY, QUINON, going into defensive position for the night 2 miles Southeast of REIZ - No contact with the enemy. At 1915 1st PAG Commander ordered 1st platoon infantry, 1 platoon tanks back to QUINON for the night to keep supply route open. No contact at that point with the enemy. Company alerted for move at 0700 the next morning.

19 August 1944

A smaller task force, consisting of 1 infantry company and 1 tank company plus 1 light tank and 1 M8 armored car, organized under command of Major Gentil. 1st PAG left area at 0700 moving north. Due West of DIGNE at 1200 the Gentil task force was organized and given the mission to go east to DIGNE to destroy any German defenses in that area. Slight resistance was met at MALYALI which was quickly overcome. Task force reached DIGNE at 1830, contacting reconnaissance entering DIGNE from Southwest. The two forces took about 500 prisoners, completely freeing the town. Two platoons of tanks were put on road blocks on the 4 roads leading out of the town. 1 tank section and 1 squad of infantry on each block. The remainder of tanks and infantry held in mobile reserve. Company marched 42 miles.

20 August 1944

Company with Gentil task force, left DIGNE to rejoin the 1st PAG at 0915 closed in bivouac area 4 miles West of VEYNE at 1830. 51 miles traveled. No contact.

21 - 22 - 23 August 1944

See report of McNeill Task Force.

24 August 1944

Company remained at PUY ST MARTIN in Division Reserve with mission to defend the PUY ST MARTIN sector against enemy penetration. Tanks placed on road blocks leading into PUY ST MARTIN outposted by Company "G" 143rd Infantry. One platoon, Commanded by Lieutenant Anderson Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion accompanied Engineers 1900 to bridge along route Southwest from CLEON to BON LIEU to prepare same for demolition provided enemy in force attempted to attack. No action encountered.

25 August 1944

Company remained in defensive position at PUY ST MARTIN until 1330 - at which time company assembled approximately 1000 yards North of PUY ST MARTIN. 1430 company moved north along route PUY ST MARTIN - CREST to roads 2 1/2 miles South to CREST - West at cross road to GRAIN. Mission of company was to strike flank of enemy moving North along HIGHWAY 7 in the GRAIN sector.

Narrative of Co. "C" Cont'd.

Company "G" 143rd Infantry moved in column to cross roads at which time one platoon Commanded by Lieutenant Golden continued north to 1/2 mile South of GRANT to form road block on route leading northeast from GRANT to GRANT. Remainder of force moved west in column until contact was made with 117th Reconnaissance Squadron at which time approach march was assumed with platoon, main body etc. Upon approaching GRANT, elements deployed north and south of road to attack GRANT. One enemy tank and SP gun destroyed plus approximately 50 personnel. One Company "C" tank destroyed two wounded (Lt. Thompson and one enlisted man) one enlisted man killed in action. No action by Lieutenant Golden's road block platoon.

At 1800 received information of possible enemy cutting road to our rear. At 1930 company withdrew to points 4 kilometers Southeast of GRANT to take up defensive position to defend network of roads and valley along enemy approach. No action seen.

26 August 1944

At 0130 force left defensive position 4 kilometers Southeast of GRANT to assembly area 6 kilometers west of PUY ST MARTIN. 0715 force left assembly area to contact 143rd Infantry Regiment at 0800 contacted 143rd Infantry Regiment at MIRANDE tanks moved to closing in area 2 kilometers South of CONDILLAC. Force 1 Section tanks supported 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry in securing road net and dominating ground north of CONDILLAC on HIGHWAY 7 - (1 Section tanks company "C" road block - northwest CONDILLAC against possible enemy infiltration (No action))

Tanks supporting "L" and "H" Company (2nd Battalion 143rd) attack Southwest, fired on enemy killing approximately 150 personnel. Darkness appeared before mission completed. Tanks assembled 1 kilometer East of CONDILLAC.

27 August 1944

At 0330 one platoon plus 1 tank destroyer 636th T.D. left assembly area to establish CONDILLAC road block, taken by infantry during night. Tanks arrived new position to learn that road block still not taken. Thus tanks remained inactive throughout day and night. Remainder of company remained in assembly area 1 kilometer East of CONDILLAC.

28 August 1944

Four tanks to be used as road blocks remained 2 kilometers West of CONDILLAC in position to defend road net leading East from CONDILLAC. Remainder of force at 0500 moved North to assembly area at MIRANDE. Company strength was 6 tanks (4 used as road block - two accompanied force). The two remaining tanks used by: (1) 93rd Field Artillery Field Observer (2) Battalion Executive (9) tanks 191st Tank Battalion, "A" Company of 636th Tank Destroyer, 179th Infantry 45th Division pushed north along ROUTE 7 from MIRANDE to LORIOLE. No action by any Company "C" tanks.

29 August 1944

0300 infantry pulled out of road block position not telling tanks of same. 0400 enemy infantry armed with bazookas and rifles attacked tanks knocking out two and wounding 4 enlisted men. One tank destroyed completely, one repaired. Approximately 100 enemy killed during action. Two remaining tanks pulled back to infantry positions. At 0700 Commanding General 36th Division sent all armor to LORIOLE sector. Two tanks used by Field Observer and Executive 191st still used by same detachment. No action by either.

Narrative of Co "C" Cont'd.

30 August 1944

Two tanks used by 191st and 93rd Field Artillery returned to company enroute North through CRET to CHADEAUL at approximately 1900. Company alerted 2000 to join R.C.T. 142. Contacted 142 to learn that our position near CHADEAUL would be along the route of movement for 31st. Company remained approximately 2 miles South of CHADEAUL until 311100 August. No action.

31 August 1944

Company left assembly area approximately 2 miles South of CHADEAUL at 0045 to BEAUMONT - LE - VALENCE to join "A" Company 636th and R.C.T. 142. Left VALENCE at 1430 to move North along following route; MALLIARD, CHATEAUNEUF, ST DONAT, LA LOTTE, ANNEGRON to BAUREPAIRE to CHATEAUNEUF arriving at CHATEAUNEUF at 2130 to spend night. No action.

REPORT OF McNEILL FORCE AUGUST 21 - 23

At 0700 on August 21, Major McNeill, the Battalion S-3 was ordered, by the Commanding General 1st Provisional Armored Group, to assume command of a force consisting of Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion, Company "G", 14th Infantry, 2 Platoons Company "C", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and Company "A" (reinforced) 117 Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. The mission of the force was to size and hold COL DAYARD (970640) until relieved by elements of the 36th Infantry Division.

The disposition of the force was as follows: the tank company, less one platoon, the infantry company and the two platoons of tank destroyers were in an assembly area just east of ASPRES. The Reconnaissance troop, reinforced with one platoon from Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion, one platoon from Troop "F" (light tanks) and one platoon from Troop "E" (105mm How S.P.) 117 Reconnaissance Squadron, and one platoon of Company "E", 143rd Infantry; was out posting the town of GAP (970580).

The force Commanding Officer with the tank, infantry, and tank destroyer commander left ASPRES at 0725 to make a reconnaissance of the COL DAYARD area. That portion of the force in the vicinity of ASPRES was ordered to leave at 0745 and march to GAP under the command of Lieutenant Papizan, executive officer of the tank company.

When the reconnaissance party arrived in the COL DAYARD area at 0900 they found the pass held by a reconnaissance platoon and the medium tank platoon. FFI troops were protecting the east flank and were scattered through the wooded areas to forestall any attempts at infiltration by the enemy. The tank platoon leader reported that about 0830 he had observed an enemy patrol in the town of LAYE, fired on same and dispersed it. The reconnaissance troop was maintaining continuous patrols to the east of GAP, had a road block at (972611), and was patrolling a road from (934568) to (915608). With the exception of the patrol at LAYE, no enemy had been seen since the previous day.

At 0930 the reconnaissance platoon at the COL DAYARD was ordered to move into LAYE and if they met no resistance to move on to RJ 973682 and establish a road block there. By 1000 the force from ASPRES had arrived in the pass and strengthened our position there. A platoon of tanks and a platoon of infantry was placed on each side of the road, one platoon of Tank Destroyers was put in firing position about 400 yards in rear of the tanks on the east side of the road. One platoon of infantry and a tank destroyer platoon were in reserve at COL DAYARD.

About noon the FFI reported a force estimated at 300 Germans in the vicinity of MANSE heading Southeast. One platoon of tanks (from West side of road) with about 50 french paratroopers under the command of Lt. McIntosh, OOS was ordered to go cross country to MANSE then south to RJ 013648 . The mission of the group was to destroy any enemy they found and to establish road blocks at RJ 013648 . The reserve tank destroyer platoon was moved up to replace the tanks on the West side of the road. As a further safeguard against infiltration the security sections of both tank destroyer platoons was ordered to RJ 013640 to establish a road block there.

At 1330, Lt. Gould, Aide - de - Camp to Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group reported to the CP at COL DAYARD with the following information:

1. Elements of the 36th Infantry Division should arrive about mid-afternoon to affect the relief.

Rpt of McNeill Cont'd.

2. The reconnaissance group would be released at 1500.
3. If Major McNeill thinks it necessary he may retain one platoon of reconnaissance.
4. The Commanding General is satisfied with the defenses.
5. Supplies will be available at ASPRES when you return.
6. Do not travel at night.
7. Return to ASPRES when relieved.
8. On August 22 to march to the vicinity of MRSIMBE, via DIE and CREST.

Major McNeill deemed it necessary to keep one reconnaissance platoon in order to maintain the road block at RJ 973682. Lt. Gould was to report to the Commanding General that the situation was well in hand and that from all civilian (FFI) reports the enemy was heading north toward GRENOBLE.

Elements of the 36th Infantry Division began to arrive in the pass at 1700 and at 1900 accepted responsibility for the area. At 1930 the McNeill Force began to assemble in the vicinity of RJ 972611. The force left there at 2030 and arrived at ASPRES at 2300. After resupplying all vehicles and providing necessary security the men bedded down for the night.

See sketch, Appendix Number 1, attached hereto for further clarification of actions and dispositions of McNeill force between 1000 and 1900 on 21 August.

Major McNeill ordered the force to leave ASPRES August 220730. The reconnaissance elements to leave first and move with all possible speed to the vicinity of CREST and there make contact with their Squadron for further orders. The remainder of the force to march on CREST at 15 MPH under the command of Captain Rambo, the tank company commander.

The force Commanding Officer left ahead of the column to find and report to the Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group for orders and to learn the situation. He arrived at the 1st Provisional Armored Group CP at 1030 and was told by the Commanding General that his force would assemble at O-034645 in Group reserve. After making a reconnaissance of the assembly area the Commanding Officer went back along the route of march to MOUSTE to meet the column.

The head of the column arrived at MOUSTE at 1410. Major McNeill contacted the tank company Commanding Officer and the infantry company Commanding Officer and took them to the assembly area in order to assign sub-areas and arrange for all around security. The column was ordered to continue the march to CREST then turn south to PUY ST MARTIN where the reconnaissance party would meet it and guide it into the area. Lt Golden of the lead tank platoon lead the column.

About 1500 it was reported to Major McNeill that an officer of the 117 Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron had stopped the column just south of CREST; saying that there was a threat to CREST from the West and that General Butler wanted the column stopped there. This information did not sound plausible so the Commanding Officer left to report to the Commanding General; had the infantry company Commanding Officer remain in the assembly area to complete the lay out there;

and sent the tank company Commanding Officer back to the column to bring it on down to ST MARTIN. On reporting to the Commanding General; Major McNeill was told that an enemy column of one tank leading about 30 personnel carriers was moving from CLEON toward ST MARTIN. He was ordered to move on ST MARTIN from the North engage and destroy the enemy. At the same time Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group sent a message to the column, by liaison plane, to move on ST MARTIN at once. Major McNeill left immediately to rejoin the column and carry out the mission. About 400 yards West of ROYNAC he met Captain Rambo, the tank company commander, who reported that the enemy was already in MARTIN and that it was not possible to reach our column by that route.

Major McNeill contacted the Commanding Officer of Force Felber by radio and reported the situation to Colonel Felber. Colonel Felber ordered one of his tank platoons to proceed at once from the SAUZET area to firing positions between ROYNAC and ST MARTIN to prevent the enemy from attacking the 1st Provisional Armored Group CP and to assist by fire the attack of the McNeill force on PTY ST MARTIN.

A short map reconnaissance showed that it was possible to reach HIGHWAY N538 by going North from ROYNAC. By taking this route Major McNeill and Captain Rambo were able to intercept the column in the vicinity of O-115692 at about 1600 hours. The column was ordered to stop while the situation and the attack order was given by radio (Order of march in column at this time, Tank Destroyers (6), Tanks (10), Infantry (1 Co) Two Tank Destroyers were ordered to move immediately to RJ O-098633 and from that vantage point to fire on any movement between MARTIN and CLEON and between MARTIN and MILAS, the remaining Tank Destroyers to pull off to the right of the road just east of the RJ and there await further orders. The tanks were ordered to move on ST MARTIN and take up firing positions along the road east of town and to await the arrival of the infantry before entering town. The infantry was ordered to move by truck behind the tanks to RJ O-098633, detruck there, and move on MARTIN by marching along the road. In cleaning up the town a squad of infantry was ordered to work with each tank. After cleaning out the town one platoon of tanks with a platoon of infantry attached was ordered to establish road blocks at O-092616 covering the roads to MILAS and CHAROLÉ, a similar group was ordered to move 600-800 yards down the road to CLEON with a similar mission.

All movement from RJ O-098633 into ST MARTIN was road bound due to the steep slope of the mountain (See sketch appendix 2).

The attack went off as planned and the road blocks were established by 1915. An unknown number of enemy were killed and 10 vehicles destroyed. The vehicles were identified as belonging to the 11th Panzer Division.

Major McNeill reported to the Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group about 1945 and was ordered by him to send a platoon of tanks with infantry to CLEON and a similar force to MILAS with a mission of destroying any enemy found. After reaching their objectives the groups were to return to MARTIN. Both road block groups were sent out, met no enemy, and returned to their block positions at dark. Meanwhile the four reserve Tank Destroyers were brought down to reinforce the road blocks, two to each block. The tanks from Force Felber were ordered to rejoin that group at 2045. During the night the remainder of the infantry maintained a continuous patrol along a perimeter 800-1000 yards around the town.

Major McNeill went back to the Group CP about 2130 to report his dispositions for the night and to learn of his possible employment on the next day. General Butler personally expressed complete satisfaction with the operations of the force; said that the force would be in Group reserve on the 23d; and that since Colonel Harmony, 11st Infantry, was assuming command of the COMDMAC area on the 23d, Colonel Felber would assume command of the MARTIN-CLEON-MILAS area and the McNeill force sometime on the 23d. No unusual incidents occurred during the night.

Rpt of McNeill Cont'd.

At 1250 on 23 August Major McNeill received the following message from Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group ---- Tank column advancing North from CHLROLS to CLEON. Alert your command to move on CLEON, destroy the column at once - time signed 123013. The command had been alerted at 1240 because of an intercept from the artillery to the effect that an enemy column was crossing the bridge at CHLROLS. Major McNeill ordered one tank platoon and two platoons of Infantry, all under the command of Captain Henry (Infantry Company Commander) to attack Southwest toward CLEON, and from there to attack Southeast toward CHLROLS; one platoon of tanks and one platoon of infantry under the command of Captain Rambo (tank company commander) to attack South from ST MARTIN and seize the high ground in the vicinity of Q--02597.

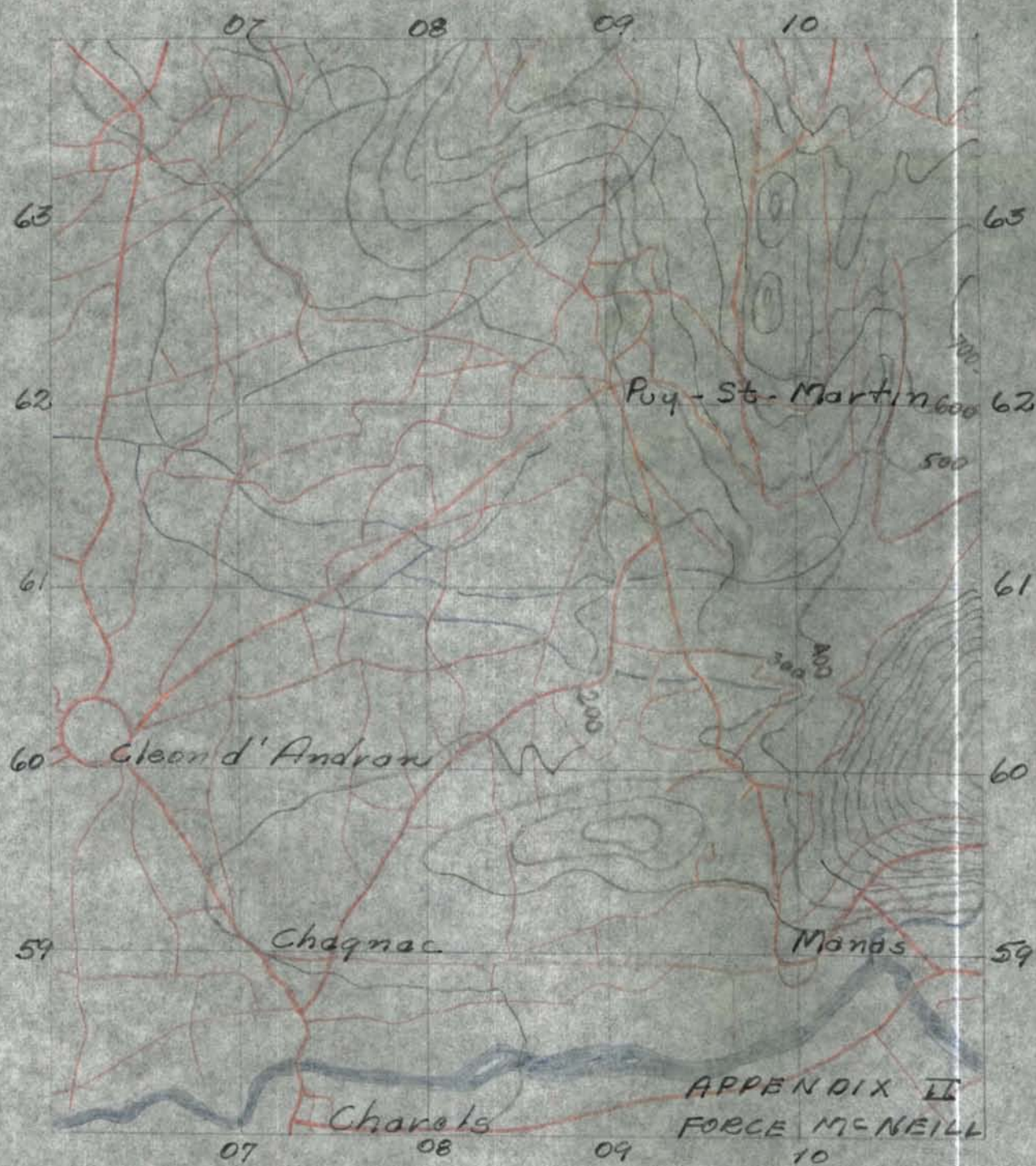
The group under Captain Rambo reached its objective about 1340 and destroyed one Mark IV Special and four armored personnel carriers in the flat between the objective and the R ROUEION. This objective controlled all of the ground between LAMAS and CHLGNAC. Major McNeill ordered the group to remain on this high ground in order to cover the advance of the Henry group on CHLROLS.

The group under Captain Henry reached CLEON about 1335 and there made contact with a tank platoon that had been ordered to the town by Force Felber. This platoon was also placed under the command of Captain Henry. The entire group moved out of CLEON for CHLROLS at 1345. They advanced slowly, cleaning out all houses and wooded areas and reached the R ROUEION about 1430. It was found that artillery fire had immobilized a Mark V tank on the far side of the bridge into CHLROLS, creating an effective road block. Our tanks set it on fire to prevent the enemy from making any further use of it. Patrols were sent out for 800 yards on either side of the bridge to find a suitable tank crossing but were unsuccessful.

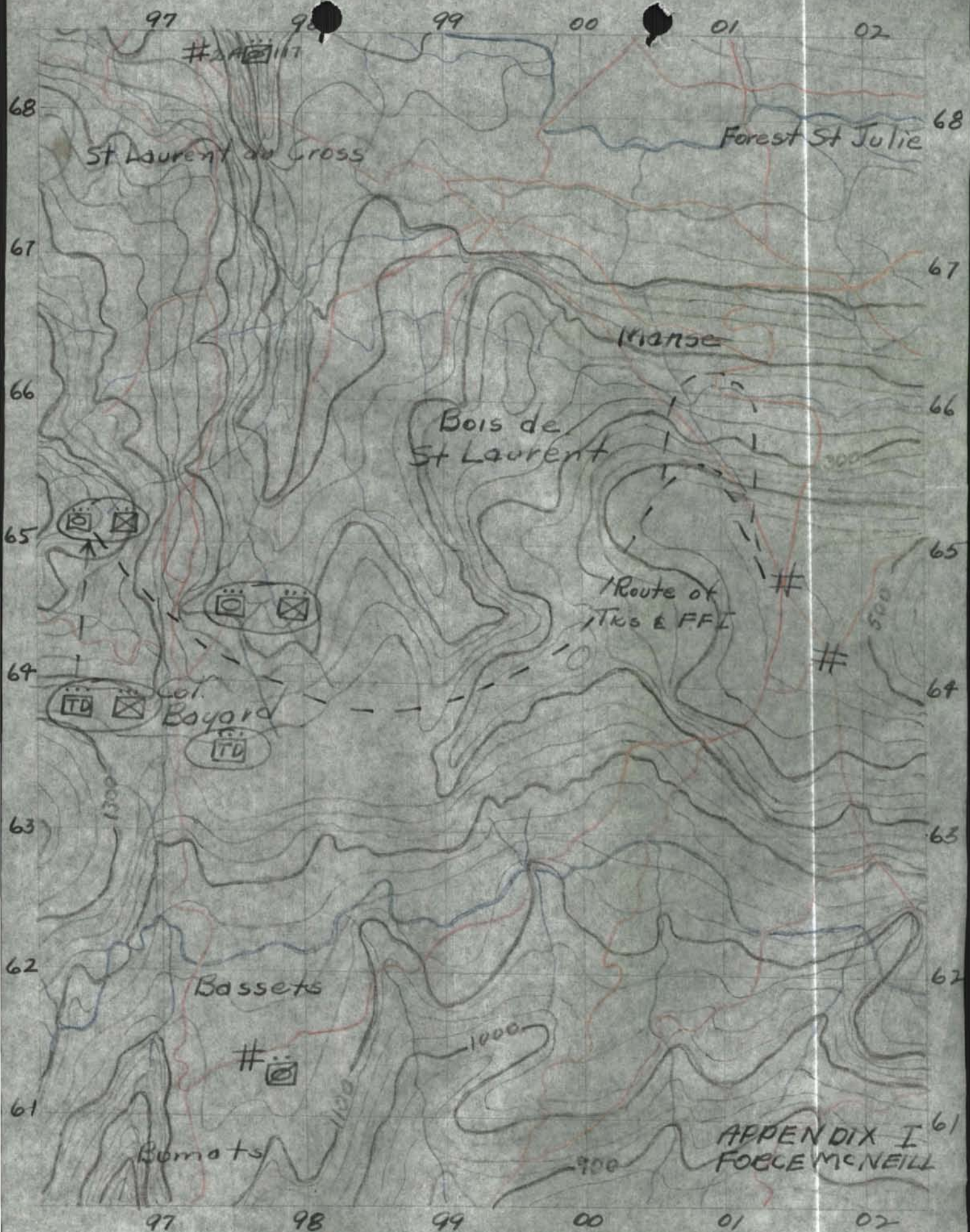
Major McNeill received the following message from Group at 1630: Do not move past La DEGUDE. Do not cross JABRON RIVER. He sent back to group the information that the bridge was blocked by a flaming tank and that the upper ROUEION was an effective anti-tank obstacle.

At 1700 Colonel Felber sent a radio message to Major McNeill requesting that he come back to PUY ST MARTIN. Since the situation was static the Major returned to ST MARTIN and reported to Colonel Felber at 1715. He explained the situation and the disposition of troops to the Colonel, who then assumed command of the area.

Casualties during operations of Task Force McNeill: One M4 tank destroyed, one officer and one enlisted man lightly wounded on afternoon of 23 August 1944.



Scale - 1:33,000
Contour Interval - 100 m.



HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

8 September 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for Month of August.

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army.

Section I - August 1st - 15th

At the beginning of the period the Battalion (-) was in a bivouac 3 miles north of QUALIANO, Italy. All of the DD (amphibious) tanks, 16 in number, were under the command of Lieutenant Clark, Commanding Officer, Company "A", in a training area near BATTIPAGLIA, Italy. These tanks were manned by eight crews from "A" Company and eight crews from "B" Company. The remainder of both companies was under the command of Lieutenant Sorensen, Commanding Officer, Company "B", in the Battalion area.

For some two weeks previously the Battalion had been making preparations for an amphibious operation, and in the QUALIANO area the tempo of these preparations was increased. The tank company commanders and platoon leaders attended frequent meetings with the Regiments to which they were attached. All of the combat officers had an opportunity to study the terrain maps, aerial photos, and maps of the operations area on the coast of Southern France. All waterproofing and loading was completed on or before August 10th as per schedule contained in Administrative Instructions Number 2, Operation Anvil, Headquarters 36th Infantry Division, dated 22 July 1944.

While in the QUALIANO area the Battalion made every effort to secure adequate ranges for the firing of tank weapons but none were available. All of the 37mm, 75mm and 105mm guns were test fired either out to sea or over a salt marsh 2 miles west of the bivouac area. The lack of range facilities caused a difficult situation particularly with the 105mm (105mm) tanks: i.e. they had to go into combat without ever having fired a round of direct fire at a target. An adequate flat driving area was available and was used up to the last minute.

During the period one of the "A" Company tanks was equipped with a dozer blade. This tank-dozer and one attached from the 111th Engineer Battalion was trained in cutting roads, filling AT ditches, digging in tanks, and clearing obstacles. Six men from the Engineer Battalion were trained to operate the tank-dozer.

Two Scarifier tanks of the 6617th Mine Clearing Company were attached to the Battalion for administration, maintenance, and loading.

On August 8 orders were received to load the sixteen tanks replaced by DD tanks on four LCT's to go with the "D"-day convoy. Lieutenant Young, Battalion Maintenance Platoon, was placed in charge of these tanks. Each of these tanks had a crew of one; to drive it on the boat and to get it to an assembly area on the far shore. It was planned that they would land between D + 1 and D + 3. (They landed on "D" day).

Thus "A", "B" and "C" Companies complete, and the Battalion Command Post half track were loaded by the 10th, stayed at sea (except for LCT's) the 10th through the 14th and landed in Southern France on the 15th. The personnel loaded on LCT's had a 24 - 36 hour stop-over at CORSIKA.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

The remainder of the Battalion was loaded on Merchant Transport between the 10th and the 15th and was scheduled to land on D + 5. This group, under the command of Major Johnston, Battalion Executive Officer, consisted of Headquarters Company (- CP $\frac{1}{2}$ track), "X" Battery, "D" Company and Service Company.

Section II - August 15 - 31st

The morning of August 15 turned out to be cool, having an overcast sky with a moderate ground haze.

"H" hour for the invasion of Southern France was 0800. Our Company "A" attached to Reconnaissance 141st Infantry and equipped with 8 DD tanks (amphibious) were floated 4000 yards from shore off Green beach and landed at 0805. The Company received small arms fire of no consequence from shore. The fire of one German antitank gun located somewhere on a hillside to the right flank of the beach damaged the canvas of one of the DD tanks causing the engine compartment to be flooded. Fortunately the tank was close enough to shore to get on the beach without sinking. This antitank gun was finally located at about 0045 and knocked out by the fire of Sergeant Slinger's tank from the 3rd Platoon.

After reaching shore, the tanks of "A" Company went inland 600 yards to positions covering the beach. Since the opposition amounted to very little, the crews took the occasion to strip their DD tanks of its canvas and readied their equipment for cross country fighting.

RCT 141 turned to the right to cover the division flank and headed toward CANNES. For a detailed account of Company "A", see appendix Number 1.

Immediately following the landing of the RCT 141, the RCT 143 with Company "C" attached, began its landing on Green beach. Four tanks of Company "C" which had landed with Company "A" tanks had taken up flank positions at BOULOURIS waiting for the RCT 143. The remainder of the company landed by 1830. For a detailed account of Company "C" operation, see appendix Number 2.

Company "B" with 8 DD tanks and attached to RCT 142 were to make a landing on Red beach. Due to water obstacles this landing was called off. The troops were diverted to Green beach putting the Division alternate plan into effect. The DD tanks of Company "B" were landed on Green beach by LCT's.

The Commanding Officer came ashore with the Assistant Division Commanders party at 1330, landing at Green beach. The remainder of the Advance CP group were landed by 1930 and reported to the Division CP at 631312.

By 1930 all units of the Battalion, that is; companies "A", "B", "C" and the advance CP group had completed landing on Green beach.

By 1945 the Battalion CP was established in vicinity of the Division CP at 631312.

The remainder of the Battalion was not to arrive until the D + 5 follow up.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

On the 16th the Battalion CP first moved to 630340 and later to 568357. At 1200 the Battalion received a message from VI Corps to be prepared to assemble in vicinity of LE HUY the Battalion less 1 light and one medium company which was to constitute a part of the First Provisional Armored Group.

At 0700 the 17 August the Battalion less Company "A" was released from the 36th Division and attached to the 1st Provisional Armored Group.

The Battalion, that is Companies "D" and "C" and the CP group which consisted of the Commanding Officer, the S-3, and the CP half track assembled by 1400 in vicinity of LE HUY at 385397.

At 2030 the Commanding Officer reported to Headquarters 1st Provisional Armored Group for orders. Verbal Orders were issued by General Butler which in substance were as follows: -

The mission of the Group was to seize and hold GRENOBLE.

The Butler force would consist of the 117 Reconnaissance Squadron, 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry, 753rd Tank Battalion (-), with Company "C" 636th T.D. attached, the 59th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, Company "F", 344th Engineers, Detachment Company "C" of 111 Medical Collecting Company, Detachment of 87th Ordnance and one Quartermaster truck company.

For the march, all units except the 117 Reconnaissance Squadron and the 59th Armored Field Artillery Battalion were placed under the command of Colonel Felber and were to follow the 59th Armored Field Artillery Battalion.

Route of march: The route NAPOLEON. This route passed through DRUGUEY, SALERNES, TAVERNES, MONTE LEYAN, OUNSON and RIEZ.

Colonel Felber asked for permission to organize two combat teams. This was deemed not necessary by Commanding General, 1st PAG. Due to the different type of vehicles, that is, wheel and armored, and because of the necessity for keeping the Infantry close to the Artillery, Colonel Felber decided to split up his march unit into two columns. One column consisting of the Infantry, the light vehicles of the Engineers, and the Detachment of 111 Medical Collecting Company (-); and the other column of tanks, tank destroyers, heavy vehicles of the Engineers and a section of the 111th Medical Company. The first column to move at a speed of 22 miles an hour, the second column at 15 MPH.

At 0630, 18th August, the columns moved out from its assembly area on the tail of the 59th Armored Field Artillery.

The march of 55 miles to the assembly area 2 miles South of RIEZ was without enemy incident. The bridge at OUNSON had been blown necessitating the use of a by-pass. This by-pass caused us trouble and required the use of our 2 Tank bulldozers to make new trails cross country. This delayed the truck column for two hours. Members of the French Marquis materially assisted the passage of the columns by guiding each vehicle across the only feasible ford on the VERDON RIVER in that vicinity. The water in this ford was about 16 inches deep - only one 1/4 ton 4 x 4 flooded.

By 1700 the entire column closed in the assembly area 2 miles south of RIEZ.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

At 1943, a message was received for the Commanding General, 1st PAG directing armored reconnaissance be sent to the town of QUINSON based on a report that some Germans had taken over the town after our passage thru.

One platoon of tanks from Company "C" with a special combat platoon of the 2d Battalion 143rd Infantry mounted on tanks returned to QUINSON with the mission of driving out the enemy, outposting the town and protecting the supply route through to 1st Provisional Armored Group.

This small force found no enemy in the town. It outposted the town until relieved at 190600 when it rejoined its unit.

Again Colonel Felber asked to organize two combat teams but Commanding General considered it not advisable at this time.

At 190700 the columns proceeded on its march in the same relative order as the day before. The column was to proceed to SISTERON.

Reconnaissance elements of the 117th Reconnaissance Squadron ran into opposition north of VALENSE.

At 0955 message was received directing Colonel Felber to report to Commanding General.

Colonel Felber was directed by the Commanding General to organize a combat team and have it prepared to proceed via ORAISON - LES MEES - to DIGNE with the mission of assisting the Fighting French to capture DIGNE.

A task force consisting of Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion, Company "G", 143rd Infantry and two platoons of Tank Destroyers was organized under the command of Major Gentil, 143rd Infantry. This force left at 1045 to proceed on its mission. For full account of this force see Company "C" report, Appendix Number 2.

The remainder of the force was also organized into a combat team. Upon completion of its reorganization it proceeded to its assembly area South of ORAISON.

At about 1445, the Felber Force proceeded by 117th Reconnaissance Squadron (less detachments) and 59th Armored Field Artillery Battalion (less detachments) departed from ORAISON for SISTERON.

As the head of the Felber column was passing thru BRILLANNE the column was strafed by approximately six Spit-fires. Three enlisted men of the 143rd Infantry were wounded, one maintenance truck of the 143rd damaged. The rest of the march was without incident.

The column after a march of approximately 40 miles assembled for the night at 1850 about 5 miles Northwest of SISTERON and along a by-pass route. The bridge at SISTERON had been blown sometime previously.

At 200930 orders were received from Commanding General 1st PAG to proceed to the pass 3.4 miles North of LUS-LA-CROIX-HAUTE; seize, organize and defend it against a German Force reported to be advancing toward it from GRENOBLE.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

The Felber force moved at 1130 and arrived at the pass at 1630, completing a day's march of 50 miles.

The French Colonel in command of the Fighting French holding the pass imparted the information that a German Force of 200 had stopped for the night the day before at LONESTIER. These troops were tired, inexperienced and young; and a German Force of 2000 moving on LA MURE from GRENOBLE.

Colonel Felber held a conference with the French Colonel and the Commanding Officer's of the 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry and 59th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. It was agreed and approval received from Commanding General 1st Provisional Armored Group to furnish the French demolitions and grenades. In case of attack by German column proceeding from LA MURE to LALLEY, the French were to blow the bridge across the stream 2 1/2 miles Northeast of LALLEY. The French were to defend the hill mass on the right of the pass and also block the highway at CLELLES.

Colonel Felber issued verbal orders to Commanding Officer 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry for the organization of the ground. For disposition of troops, See appendix number 3, overlay and extract of verbal orders.

It was necessary to deploy the elements of the Felber Force in depth due to the steep slopes of the mountains on either side of the road. The mountain on the left was 2065 meters. The mountain on the right was 1851 meters. The CP was located at an elevation of 1179 meters. The railroad passed thru a cut about 30 foot wide through the pass. On the right side of the railroad there was about a 75 yard wide strip that wheel vehicles could park. The overpass across the railroad being wide enough to handle wheel traffic but too narrow for armored. The left side of the railroad had about a 250 yard strip that armored vehicles could park in - however, this was devoid of cover and because of the information that a German reconnaissance plane flew over that pass daily, it was deemed advisable to keep the remainder of the armor below the pass a distance of approximately 3 miles from the Felber Force CP. The small amount of cover available was used by the Artillery.

No incidents occurred during the remainder of the day and night. A road reconnaissance was made of route 539 running thru CHATELON to DIE to determine feasibility of passage of armor. Route was found to be suitable.

At 0600 on the 21 August Colonel Felber received orders to proceed by the shortest direct route to DIE and then behind a reconnaissance screen to Sieze and hold high ground approximately 3 miles South of LIVRON. Colonel Felber was directed to leave behind 1 battery of artillery and 1 platoon of tanks to support Fighting French to hold the pass until arrival of elements of 36th Division where upon above named elements were to join the Felber Force at CONEILLAC.

The Felber Force was organized and split up in two columns; one column of Infantry and Artillery proceeding at 22 miles per hour and one column of armor and heavy engineers equipment proceeding at 15 miles per hour. The head of the column began marching at 0830 via route 539 - DIE - SAILLANS - CREST - PUY - ST - MARTIN - ROYNAU - THORNIER to CONEILLAC.

At PUY ST MARTIN Colonel Felber directed the Infantry Battalion Commanding Officer to establish a road block of Infantry and Anti-tank guns at CLEON. The necessary personnel were dropped off to accomplish this.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

After a march of 70 miles, the Felber column closed into the CONDILLAC area at 2145.

A study of the map and the actual terrain showed that the Felber Force was not sufficient to hold all the high ground in the vicinity of CONDILLAC. It was felt that in case of an attack the high ground to the North and South of CONDILLAC could be held until the arrival of reinforcements thus covering the routes over the hill mass to the east. The Force could be in a better position to cover its left flank and block to the RIVIERE than to overextend and cover the hill mass South of LA COUCOURDE to SAVASSE.

The troops at the disposal of Colonel Felber consisted of one Infantry Battalion, less two rifle companies, one Anti-tank gun, and a Squad of Infantry. This left with the Felber Force, one rifle company (- a Squad), a heavy weapons company, and a Skeleton Headquarters Company with an anti-tank platoon of 3 guns (- one gun at CLEON), an Armored Artillery Battalion less one battery. A tank company of 14 tanks, a tank destroyer company of 10 tank destroyers (- 6 with McNeill Force), one company of Engineers of which approximately 100 men only were armed with rifles, carbines or sub-machine guns. Since these engineers were not combat engineers, they possessed no machine guns or other heavy weapons.

Authority was obtained from Commanding General 1st Provisional Armored Group to use Engineers for defense. At the same time the Commanding General directed a road block be established in vicinity of CLIOUSCIAT.

Based on the above, the Infantry Battalion Commanding Officer was directed at 1730 to organize the high ground North and South of CONDILLAC; to outpost the North side of the high ground South of LA COUCOURDE; to establish a road block on the CONDILLAC - LA COUCOURDE road; and to furnish a section of machine guns with an officer for a road block at CLIOUSCIAT.

Request was made to Commanding General for attachment of Troop "B", 117th Reconnaissance to Felber Force. This was granted the following day. Arrangements were made for that night for Troop "B" to outpost the hill mass west and north of SAVASSE and block the road net from SAVASSE to ST MAREEL - LES - SAUZET.

The Tank Destroyer Company (less six TD's) were to move to positions overlooking the highway on the forward slope of the north hill mass. Its mission was to destroy by fire all moving traffic in its zone of visibility and range.

Engineer Company was attached to the 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry and were placed on the hill mass to the South of CONDILLAC.

The Tank Company was directed to establish a road block with 2 tanks at 983-598 (1/100000); and a road block with 3 tanks having a section of machine guns attached under command of the Heavy Weapons Company Lieutenant in vicinity of CLIOUSCIAT.

The Artillery was directed to send one battery to vicinity of CLIOUSCIAT to support road block and fire on all targets of opportunity. The remainder in position vicinity 975-620. Early that evening the Artillery began firing on the highway.

At 2300 all units of the Felber Force were in position and prepared to (1) hold the high ground occupied and (2) cut the highway by massed fire.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

After the verbal order had been issued, Colonel Felber proceeded to MARSANNE to contact the Captain, French Army in command of Maquis in that area. Fifty French Commandos were obtained from him and dispatched to cover the road block at CLIOUSCIAT. Arrangements were made to send 150 Maquis to hold SAUZET and vicinity and assist reconnaissance platoon outposting in that area. This force to be backed up the next day with 5 tanks.

Request was made on Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group to have reconnaissance elements outpost hill mass east and southeast of LORIOU. This was granted and furnished by 117th Reconnaissance Squadron.

The Felber Force CP was established at CHATEAU CONDILLAC. Colonel Felber being without a staff, used the staff of the 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry also located at the CHATEAU.

The artillery fire on the German traffic travelling north on highway from MONTELLIER to LORIOU caused a great deal of consternation, confusion and disorganization, and if French Maquis reports can be believed, proved to be a complete surprise.

On the morning of the 22d the Tanks and Tank Destroyers joined in the firing on moving traffic. Enough vehicles were damaged or destroyed during the night and early morning to cause a temporary road block. This forced the German to begin to look for other routes of escape.

At 0930 the battery of artillery left the day before at the pass reported in under Armored Field Artillery Battalion control.

At 0930 one platoon of Company "B" tanks was directed to SAUZET to assist the French.

At 1000 word was received from Commanding General, 1st PAG that the McNeill column was proceeding to CONDILLAC to join the Felber Force. Colonel Felber was directed to close this column in the vicinity of MARSANNE - leave the column intact since it would constitute Group reserve.

About 1430 reports were received that the German vehicles were beginning to infiltrate from MONTELLIER and moving toward CLEON and ST MARTIN. At 1515 the Germans attacked the road block at CLEON knocking out the anti-tank Gun and scattering elements of the 117th Reconnaissance Squadron. This enabled the German to proceed to ST MARTIN.

At 1538 Company "B" 753rd Tank Battalion was directed to send a platoon of tanks to a firing position between ROYNAC and ST MARTIN and assist by fire the attack of the McNeill column which was then moving from CREST to PUY ST MARTIN, and to prevent the enemy column from turning west toward the Group CP.

The Company "B" tanks effectively blocked the ROYNAC route as an escape avenue and assisted the McNeill column in destroying the few remaining German vehicles attempting to escape to the South and Southwest.

At 2045 Major McNeill ordered the "B" Company tanks to rejoin their company.

At 2100 word was received from Commanding General, 1st PAG that 141st Infantry was moving in to take over. Colonel Harmony, Commanding Officer 141st was contacted and informed of dispositions of Felber Force. One Battalion 141st was to move into the SAUZET area northeast of town that night prior to midnight.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

This information was relayed to the platoon of tanks and the French Maquis in SAUZET.

Unfortunately the Infantry Battalion did not arrive until late the morning of August 23. This resulted in an unpleasant incident in that the Maquis outpost southeast of SAUZET permitted a column of vehicles to enter the town of SAUZET thinking them Americans, but actually being two German tanks with some motorized infantry. Since dawn was just breaking the German tanks spotted one of the "D" Company tanks east of HILL 294. They opened fire and destroyed the "D" Company tank. About this time the Battalion of Infantry began arriving into the area. As soon as enough Infantry were available they in conjunction with the tanks, attacked the town. By 0930 report was received from the tank platoon leader that the Germans had been driven out of town and dispersed and that all roads leading into town were blocked by our Infantry. In this fight the Maquis lost 10 killed 20 wounded. Losses of our infantry not known.

At 0900 operations instruction 36th Infantry Division were received dissolving 1st Provisional Armored Group and attaching all elements of the Group to 36th Infantry Division.

Throughout the day of the 23rd the artillery and weapons on the road blocks fired at targets on the highway. Damaged and destroyed German vehicles were piling up so much on the highway as to be a serious hindrance to further German traffic. Further attempts were made to detour to the east and north. At 1303 a report was received that enemy tanks were approaching CLEON. Company "D" was directed to send one platoon of tanks to CLEON to engage and destroy them. This information was relayed to the McNeill Force at PUY-ST-MARTIN. They also had been directed to engage these enemy tanks. While this was going on another enemy tank column with unknown number of vehicles attempted a break through at CLEON. This column crossed the river, turned to the right and proceeded toward CLEON. The McNeill Force had been informed of this column and was on its way to intercept it. This Force caught the head of the column north of the river. In the fight that ensued Company "C" lost one M4 tank and destroyed 1 Mark IV Special, four personnel carriers and 1 Mark V tank immobilized on the bridge by our own artillery fire. The remainder of the German column was scattered south of the river by our artillery.

By 1530 Colonel Harmony, Commanding Officer 141st Infantry took command and relieved Colonel Felber of responsibility. Colonel Felber received orders from Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division to take command of the 36th reserve in the ST MARTIN area and organize and defend the ST MARTIN - CLEON - CLEON area.

At 1700 Colonel Felber arrived to take over command of the McNeill Task Force. This Force consisted of Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion, 6 Tank Destroyers from 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and Company "G" 143rd Infantry. The 117th Reconnaissance Squadron had a platoon of reconnaissance at CLEON and one platoon at CLEON.

The Battalion Commander Colonel Felber made a reconnaissance of the area and then issued verbal orders for the night's defense which were as follows:

1. a. Reconnaissance platoon at CLEON to establish road blocks south of river;
- b. To barricade and mine road tunnel thru hillside east of CLEON.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

c. To mine bridge Southeast of LINES and establish road block.

d. To hold blocks around LINES, two tanks, two tank destroyers and one platoon infantry from Company "G" were ordered to assist reconnaissance platoon.

2. a. Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion (-) with one platoon of infantry to hold the key hill mass 1500 yards North of bridge from CHEROLS.

b. Tanks were to zero their fire on knocked out German tank on Cherals bridge - a very effective road block.

c. The Infantry was to establish a listening post North of the bridge and run a telephone line to it. Information of any attempts by the German to remove this knocked out tank was to be relayed by telephone to the tanks which would then cover the area by fire.

3. Platoon of tanks at CLEON from Company "L" to return to its organization.

4. a. Reconnaissance Platoon with its attached Infantry Platoon at CLEON to block all roads leading into CLEON.

b. Company "C" to furnish 3 tanks to assist reconnaissance platoon to hold CLEON.

5. a. 2 Tank Destroyers in firing positions between CLEON and ST MARTIN in direct support of CLEON group.

b. 2 Tank Destroyers in firing positions between LINES and ST MARTIN in direct support of LINES group.

c. Both Tank Destroyers groups to be prepared to support by fire Company "C" group North of CHEROLS.

6. a. Company "G" 143rd Infantry (-) to outpost and secure ST MARTIN supported by 1 tank platoon.

b. Company "G" to patrol river line from LINES to ST GERVAIS - SIER - ROULION and furnish contact patrols between the three forward groups.

7. Each group to maintain contact with the group on its right and left.

8. Command Post - ST MARTIN.

By 2100 all positions were organized for defense. Major McNeill, S-3, was sent to 36th Division CP as liaison officer and directed to inform the Commanding General of our dispositions for the night. Major McNeill was also directed by the Battalion Commanding Officer to request the Commanding General for a cub spotting plane beginning at daylight.

At 2300 message was received from Major McNeill stating a cub plane would be up at daylight.

The remainder of the night was quiet and without incident.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

A civilian passing thru ST MARTIN at 0900 24th August reported to the Battalion CP that an enemy column of 50 vehicles were moving from DOMELIAR Northeast toward DOMLIEU and CLEON. This was relayed to Division with request for cub plane to check. About one hour later message was received from Division that cub plane was unable to observe enemy column moving to DOMLIEU.

At 1330 the Battalion Commanding Officer was notified by the armored groups at LINES and CLEON that the reconnaissance platoons had moved out. This was immediately relayed to Division and request made for their immediate return. A squad of infantry and a section of machine guns were immediately dispatched from ST MARTIN to CLEON to temporarily plug the gap left by the reconnaissance platoon. The group at LINES had sufficient infantry to cover its armor.

The Battalion Commanding Officer then went to Division and personally requested the Commanding General for additional infantry and authority to mine the three bridges west of CHANOLS: one located between CHANOLS and ST GERVAIS; one at ST GERVAIS; and one at DOMLIEU.

The Commanding General ordered Company "F", 344th Engineers to report to Colonel Feller and authorized the mining of the three above named bridges. The Commanding General also informed the Battalion Commanding Officer that the 142nd Infantry would arrive in the CLEON - LINES area after 2100 to defend the river line from LINES to DOMLIEU to the river junction 2500 yards Northwest of DOMLIEU. When this line was organized by the 142nd Infantry the Feller Force would be relieved but remain in that area as division reserve.

At 1800 the Engineer Company arrived in the ST MARTIN area. The company less one platoon was sent to outpost the river line from DOMLIEU to the Northwest. One platoon was attached to the road block at CLEON. The Engineer demolition party had enough explosives for two bridges, hence Colonel Feller directed that the bridge at DOMLIEU and at ST GERVAIS be prepared for demolitions. At the same time the Company Commander of Company "G", 142nd Infantry arrived and stated he was to take up positions from 030-575 to 061-582 (1/100000). He was asked if he had any demolitions. When he stated he had, he was directed to prepare the bridge at 060-580 for destruction.

Colonel Feller then proceeded to DOMLIEU to ascertain the progress of the Engineer party at that bridge. Since this area constituted the greatest threat he remained there until the work was completed and then returned to the Battalion CP. The mining of the bridge at ST GERVAIS was completed at 2100 at which time Division was notified that the bridges were ready to be blown.

At 2130 orders were received from Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division to blow all bridges west of CHANOLS. This was completed by 2200 and Division so notified.

At 2230 Colonel Feller was directed to report to Division. At the Division CP Colonel Feller received orders that the 1st Provisional Armored Group was reconstituted; that the Battalion was to be relieved by 142nd Infantry in ST MARTIN area; and that the Battalion was to revert to control of 1st Provisional Armored Group upon completion of relief by 142nd Infantry on night of 24-25 August.

At 0400 25 August Colonel Feller was relieved by the Commanding Officer 142nd Infantry.

At 0900 General Butler dropped into the Battalion CP and directed Company "G" 143rd Infantry to return to its organization at CONDILLAC.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

At 1230 25th August orders were received from 1st Provisional Armored Group to assemble and have all tanks and Tank Destroyers at once to MONTICELLI, thence Northwest 045-735- then Northwest to GRANE. Enemy armored column of 8 tanks has stopped with lead vehicle in town. Engage and destroy. Contact tank destroyers at CHEST and coordinate. Attach 4 tanks to infantry column moving up highway toward CHEST to support infantry.

The force was immediately assembled at the Company "C" maintenance area and orders issued for the march on GRANE.

Lieutenant Golden with 4 tanks was directed to proceed with the infantry then passing the area.

Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion (less 1 platoon) with 4 tank destroyers from 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion proceeded at 1300 for GRANE via MONTICELLI. Major McNeill was sent to meet the Commanding General at 117-704. Contact was made with 636th Tank Destroyers and information obtained that Company "A", 753rd Tank Battalion attached to 636th Tank Destroyers Battalion had established two road blocks: One road block vicinity 095-727 with 5 tanks Company "A", 753rd Tank Battalion and 6 Tank Destroyers; the other road block vicinity NJ 114-745 with 6 tanks.

On the march to GRANE our artillery observer informed the Battalion Commanding Officer that his battery was firing concentrations on the tanks at GRANE. Movement to GRANE was slow due to the mountainous country and winding roads. The head of the column reached the southern outskirts of GRANE by 1415. The column was halted outside of town where it was defiladed from observation by a small hill mass just south of GRANE. The Battalion Commanding Officer and tank company commander made a foot reconnaissance to the edge of town. They were fired upon by snipers. Two tanks were called up to a small clump of trees at the southern entrance to town to fire on the houses in that area. Upon arrival of tanks they received machine gun and mortar fire from an undetermined direction. The tanks shifted their position and thereafter were not molested. At this time the artillery observer informed the Battalion Commanding Officer that his battery was firing at the enemy tanks then proceeding westward toward MARYON. Upon completion of the reconnaissance, the Battalion Commanding Officer directed Commanding Officer, Company "C" to cover the valley to the east of GRANE with 2 tank destroyers; to place a base of fire on the hill mass 500 yards south of town; to cover the head of the draw running south just west of GRANE with 2 tank destroyers; and to push a couple of tanks into town to clear up the situation.

At 1500 two tanks moved into town encountering heavy sniper, machine gun and mortar fire. It was estimated that about two companies was scattered in and out of town. The tanks flushed two small armored vehicles which disappeared down side roads too narrow for tanks to follow. Reaching the center of town the road deadended into a road running east and west. The rubble from the houses along this road proved to be a block for the further passage of tanks, thus stopping the attack.

When the Battalion Commanding Officer was informed of this he made a hasty reconnaissance to the left flank for a possible route around the town to the west. The terrain was such that it was not feasible to get armored vehicles into the draw. The bridge over the draw was too narrow and weak to hold armor. One mile south of the town a crossing was found. By this time our artillery concentrations were falling farther to the west. A study of the map showed that the next best thing to do was to travel overland and attempt to cut the enemy armor at MARYON.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

3000 yards to the west of GRANE. With this in view the Battalion Commanding Officer called Group and asked if any reconnaissance unit was operating in the hills south of BRAYON. If there was, it was requested to have them immediately reconnoiter a route for tanks to BRAYON from 650-718. Authority was also requested to proceed on BRAYON.

At 1720 message was received from Group not to move to left but to hold position south of GRANE.

At 1940 the Battalion Commanding Officer was informed by Group that situation had improved and to hold position until relieved by Engineers and Tank Destroyers. After relief was accomplished, the battalion was directed to proceed to ROYNAC and await further orders.

At 2200 Colonel Felber was directed to report to Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group. At the conference the Commanding Officer was informed that elements of the 117th Reconnaissance would relieve Force Felber South of GRANE. Plans were discussed for the forthcoming attack on LORIOU.

At 0200 26th August message was received from Group that reconnaissance elements were in position and that Company "C" was relieved. The company moved at 0210 for the assembly area east of LARSANNE arriving there 0400.

At 0440 radio message from Group directed the Felber Force be alerted immediately and be prepared to attack to the west. Enemy armored column caused breakthrough at CONDILLAC at 0100. Column advancing to north.

At 0645 Colonel Felber received orders to move his force to vicinity CONDILLAC. It was also directed to pick up two infantry companies of 141st Infantry in LARSANNE and transport them to CONDILLAC. At 0700 the Felber Force moved from its assembly area and closed at 0800 into an area 1 1/2 miles east of CONDILLAC. Colonel Felber then reported to General Butler at the advance CP located at CHATEAU CONDILLAC. Plans were discussed for the attack of the 143rd Infantry to seize and occupy hill mass extending to the south from LA COUCOURDE. In this attack Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion was to place one platoon in position between the two hill masses south of LA COUCOURDE and CONDILLAC and provide left flank protection for the attack of the 143rd Infantry. One platoon of tanks was to reinforce roadblock of 141 between LA COUCOURDE and CONDILLAC; the remainder in reserve south of CONDILLAC.

During this interim a German SP gun or tank managed to get in position either on the hill south of LA COUCOURDE or on the hill south on CONDILLAC. It would fire direct 5 to 10 rounds within the CONDILLAC area then move position. Bazooka squads from 143rd Infantry were sent out to destroy it but were unable to locate it. Colonel Felber while on foot reconnaissance received a shrapnel wound in left thigh from this same gun. Wound was not serious enough for hospitalization.

The attack of 143rd Infantry jumped off at 1400 and progressed slowly throughout the remainder of the day and night. The platoon of tanks protecting the left flank of the 143rd Infantry was continually being pestered by sniper fire. The company commander was wounded in the face from bullet splash and had to be evacuated. The sniper fire became so bad that a request was made for a platoon of infantry to clear them out. This was granted and by 1800 sniper fire ceased.

No other action occurred as far as the Felber Force was concerned for the rest of the day.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

Conferences were held with General Butler at CHATEAU CONDILLAC reference to 1st Provisional Armored Group Field Order Number 3 (See documents Supporting Journal for August). For this forthcoming operation Colonel Felber was to have attached to him one tank company from the 191st Tank Battalion, the light tank troop from the 117th Reconnaissance Squadron and the 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry 45th Division. Company "C", 753rd Tank Battalion plus tank destroyers were to remain in position in the CONDILLAC area and continue to support the 143rd Infantry.

By 1800 Company "A" 191st Tank Battalion and the light tank troop of 117th Reconnaissance Squadron arrived in the CONDILLAC area. By 2000 the 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry closed into the CONDILLAC area.

Because the 143rd Infantry was unable to establish road blocks at LA COUCOURDE, General Butler issued orders at 2000 for the 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry to make a night attack on LA COUCOURDE; for the Tank Company of 191st Tank Battalion to follow it up at daylight; and for Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion to be prepared to furnish 4 tanks and one tank destroyer to be placed in a road block astride the highway at LA COUCOURDE after the town was taken by the 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry. Purpose of this was to anchor our rear before our attack to the north.

The village of LA COUCOURDE was astride the HIGHWAY NUMBER 7. West of the town the terrain was flat to the river with the exception of the railway embankment 300 yards west of town running North and South which averaged from 4 feet to 10 feet in height. The north nose of the ridge along the highway ran into the southern edge of town and was held by our own troops. The ground to the east and toward CONDILLAC was rising rolling, terraced and open terrain with here and there small clumps of trees. 400 yards east of town was a group of eight houses practically in line and bisecting the CONDILLAC road. A deep gully ran east between the town of LA COUCOURDE and the hill to the south of it which was a tank obstacle. The ground to the North and East of LA COUCOURDE was open, rolling and in a saucer bowl shape affording perfect observation for German tanks in LA COUCOURDE and those in position some hundreds of yards North of LA COUCOURDE and west of the highway which was fairly well obscured from our observation by the wrecked German vehicles on the highway. The draws running from the hill mass North-west of CONDILLAC were pretty well covered by German Antitank and tank fire located along the highway. The ridges North of the CONDILLAC road screened the movement of armor fairly well until the bend in the road at 948-635 was reached. Beyond that point, armor moved downhill in the open under direct German observation. The road block of the 141st Infantry was located at approximately 958-630.

The Infantry attack jumped off before daylight, on the 27th, followed by Company "A" 191st Tank Battalion with 4 Tank Destroyers attached. After passing thru the road block its progress was slow due to scattered sniper fire. The assault company was stopped by machine gun fire coming from the houses bisecting the CONDILLAC road 400 yards east of town. A platoon of tanks was sent forward to clean out this pocket. A tank destroyer maneuvering off the road beyond our Infantry road block in order to cover the platoon of tanks going forward hit one of our mines and was disabled.

The platoon of tanks succeeded in cleaning out the nest. The Infantry came forward and searched the houses in the vicinity. As the other Infantry followed up it received tank or SP fire from its left rear coming from the German gun within our lines that the Infantry of the 143rd were searching for.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

At about this time a German attack of Infantry and 3 tanks of the Mark V or VI type was working its way around our north flank. Having the protection of the North ridge our artillery was unable to stop it. Our tanks in the houses east of town were also not in a position to fire on them. A platoon of tanks were placed on the ridge North of the CONDILLAC road. When the German tanks appeared they were taken under fire at a range of 800 yards by our 14's. Unfortunately our shells just bounced off and caused no damage. A tank destroyer was maneuvered around the German right flank. This Tank Destroyer succeeded in knocking out one German tank but was itself knocked out by the remaining two. The other two Tank Destroyers could not be used because of mechanical difficulties. With the loss of this German tank the others withdrew back to the highway.

By 0930 the tanks and Infantry supported by artillery started its attack toward LA COUCOURDE again. As it cleared the row of houses it ran into machine gun, tank and anti-tank fire from LA COUCOURDE and the area North of town along the highway in addition to the harassing fire from the left rear. This bogged the attack down and forced the Infantry and tanks to withdraw to the row of houses. Artillery was again called for on the town and the highway area North of it.

The tank company commander was directed to make a reconnaissance to the flanks to find a means of out-flanking the resistance. This having to be done on foot took some three hours to accomplish. At about 1300 and while the tank company commander was still on reconnaissance German tanks and infantry again attacked our North flank. This was again broken up and dispersed. In the tank fight our tanks succeeded in breaking the track on one of the Mark V's or VI's. This fixed the German tank for the kill. Two of our 14's at a range of 600 yards fired altogether 14 rounds before they succeeded in penetrating the German armor and setting it on fire.

After Colonel Felber made his own reconnaissance he called a conference of the Infantry Battalion Commanding Officer, Tank Company Commander and the Artillery Observer. Verbal orders were issued for a tank platoon to be placed in firing positions on the North slope of hill South of LA COUCOURDE which would cover the highway North of LA COUCOURDE (foot reconnaissance had found a trail feasible for tanks to use to this slope); for three tanks to take position 953-639 and cover our right flank; for the remainder of tanks with one company of Infantry to attack LA COUCOURDE; for remainder of Infantry to follow assault and exploit to North and South of highway; for the Infantry to establish road block on highway using 4 tanks and 1 tank destroyer from Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion then waiting in position 943-630; and for artillery to furnish preparation on LA COUCOURDE and highway from 1830 to 1845 followed by smoke.

Time of attack 1845

CP:- Vicinity of road culvert at 948-635.

While elements of the command were moving into position Colonel Felber returned to inform Group of the dispositions and time of attack. About 1630 when Colonel Felber was returning to his Advanced CP his quarter ton was fired on in the vicinity of 950-630 by the unlocated German gun somewhere between the two hills South of 950-630. This gun was firing high velocity shells with direct observation. The quarter ton was hit and damaged, the driver killed, the Commanding Officer of 141st Infantry and Colonel Felber wounded. Colonel Felber's wound was slight, a small piece of shrapnel lodged in his finger, which required no hospitalization. Colonel Felber proceeded on foot to his Advanced CP.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

At 1830 the artillery laid its concentration on LA COUCOULE. The platoon of tanks located on the North slope of hill South of town opened fire on german tanks again moving off highway north of town to attack our right flank. In this fire fight and at a range of 1200 yards one Mark IV Special was destroyed two damaged. The 3 tanks of ours on the north were not able to spot these german tanks.

At 1845 the attack jumped off. As it cleared the row of houses 400 yards east of town it again met heavy tank fire from the front and right front. In addition to this the German fired shells that from the screech and boom were either rockets or something similar to it. Again the artillery was asked to smoke the area to the north of town. In the meantime six of our own planes which had been circling overhead suddenly dived on our troops. These planes strafed us for 15 minutes in spite of our yellow smoke signal and scattered the infantry and tanks. The tank company commander was wounded, two tanks set afire and damaged. Crews from other tanks rushed over to extinguish the fires on the two tanks ablaze. Other crews had to extinguish brush fires to prevent the leaky gas and oil in engine compartments from being ignited.

By 1945 the attack was again reformed and launched without success. One of our tanks succeeded in setting the Mark VI on fire which was parked on the CONDILLAC road junction with the highway. At 2015 Colonel Felber called off the attack and directed the Infantry Commanding Officer to organize the ground for defense. Tanks were withdrawn a 1000 yards to regas and resupply and then directed to tie in with the infantry defense under command of Infantry Commanding Officer.

Colonel Felber then returned to 1st Provisional Armored Group Advanced CP at CHATEAU CONDILLAC and acquainted the Commanding General of the situation. Plans were discussed for the attack on LOMIOL the next day. See 1st I.A.G Field Order Number 3, 252400 L August 44 (see journal for August).

Orders were received to withdraw the infantry and tanks east of LA COUCOULE back to the CONDILLAC area and prepare for a movement to an assembly area 800 yards east of MIRANDE (980-697). Also to be withdrawn were Companies "B" and "C" of 753rd Tank Battalion and Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion which were initially a part of 1st Provisional Armored Group.

By 0300 28 August 1944 the later part of the order was countermanded. Company "B" 753rd Tank Battalion had to remain with the 141st Infantry; Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion had to leave with the 143rd Infantry the 4 tanks and 1 tank destroyer for the road block, the remainder to join the Felber Force. This left Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion with 2 tanks for the operation. Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion to remain in position with exception of 2 tank destroyers to report to Felber Force. 2 Tank Destroyers were sent from GUST and joined the Felber Force at 0500, making a total of 4 tank destroyers for the Felber Force.

At this time the 753rd Tank Battalion "X" Battery of 6 assault guns, which had been landed a week previously, joined the Battalion.

At 0500 the Felber Force, consisting of 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry (one Rifle Company mounted on tanks); Company "A", 191st Tank Battalion (14 tanks); Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion (2 tanks); 4 tank destroyers; "F" Troop 117th Reconnaissance Squadron (14 light tanks); "X" Battery 753rd Tank Battalion (6 assault guns); and the CP group of 753rd Tank Battalion which consisted of the Battalion Commander with a communications half track and an S-3 who most of the time was at Group Headquarters as Liaison Officer; moved from the CONDILLAC area to the assembly area east of MIRANDE.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

The Battalion Commander with unit commanders met General Butler at 0600 at the crossroads east of MIRLANDE. The entire group proceeded to an O.P. in MIRLANDE which overlooked the terrain to the north. This terrain is quite open and rolling with numerous stream lines and gullies. Appears to be good tank country. Attack of armor would be cross-corridor.

General Butler then issued his order:-

Butler Task Force attack LORIOU from this vicinity earliest moment.

3rd Battalion 157th Infantry (- 1 Company) proceed along high ground north of MIRLANDE to gain high ground overlooking LORIOU.

Armor to proceed to left of Infantry and coordinate its movement with the infantry. 1 Rifle Company to be carried on tanks.

Reconnaissance Squadron to provide screen for movement of infantry and armor. When contact is gained, reconnaissance elements to provide left and rear protection infantry to attack at 0900 - armored at 1000.

93rd Armored Field Artillery and Battery 141 in direct support.

Additional information was given out that the 3rd Division was in MONTELEMAR; the 142nd Infantry 36th Division was moving to CREST; elements of 45th Division going west to LIVRON north of the DROUE RIVER; and a friendly armored force was moving west from GRANE to LORIOU south of the DROUE RIVER.

Colonel Felber called together the armored commanders and issued the following order:-

The armored group attacks to the north at 1000 to assist the infantry to seize the high ground overlooking LORIOU and then to capture the town of LORIOU.

The armor will attack to the left of the infantry which will proceed along that high ground.

Line of Departure: Stream line running east and west north of MIRLANDE.

Company "A" 191st Tank Battalion (- 1 platoon) will spearhead the attack. Its right element to gain, maintain contact, and regulate advance with infantry on our right. Its left element will provide left flank protection. One platoon to be rear guard and follow assault guns at 600 yards. It is responsible for our left rear and rear protection.

Troop "F" 117th Reconnaissance Squadron with 1 rifle company attached will follow attack of Company "A" at 400 yards. If necessary it will support the attack of Company "A" with vigorous tank-infantry action.

Assault guns to follow Troop "F" closely. It will have one section in position to fire on targets on call.

Company "C" 753rd Tank Battalion to furnish one tank to artillery observer 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion. Other tank to be available to Battalion Commanding Officer.

Artillery observer attached to Company "A" 191st Tank Battalion.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

Axis of communication and evacuation: - road going north along foothill of that mountain.

Prisoners to be left under guard on road until collected by Group.

CP along this road.

At 0945 the armor moved out and crossed the Line of Departure at 1000. Although the area was good tank country, difficulty was experienced in crossing the streams and gullies. It was necessary to find fords and by-passes which of necessity slowed down the rate of progress. Small scattered groups of resistance were encountered consisting mainly of machine guns and some 20mm guns. These were quickly knocked out. Contact was gained with the infantry and maintained there after.

By late afternoon the infantry had reached the ridge at 980-735. It pushed out an outpost on trail to LORIOL not shown on map. Infantry Battalion Commanding Officer desired to reorganize in this area prior to pushing on to LORIOL. This was granted by Commanding General, 1st Provisional Armored Group. Armored group deployed for all around defense in square grid 97-96 and 73-74 at 1530 to reorganize for the push on LORIOL.

A conference was held with the Infantry Commanding Officer and decision made to attack at 1830. The infantry to follow the mountain trail into LORIOL, the armor to continue cross country to the southwest of LORIOL.

The area in which the armor was reorganizing was defiladed from highway observation. From the knoll, which provided this defilade, it was easy to see the highway 1200 yards to the west and watch the German traffic streaming to the north trying to get through our artillery fire then falling on the highway. The ground from this knoll sloped downward to the highway. This slope appeared to have abrupt drops and as determined later was found to be steeply terraced. It was open and under perfect observation from the highway and to the west thereof. To the north and over the ground to be attacked the armor had to move out in the open across ridge lines fully exposed to the highway cluttered with destroyed vehicles with German guns and tanks of different caliber well concealed east and west of the highway.

A reconnaissance was made along the hillside to find routes for armor around the streams and gullies that would afford a covered route of approach to LORIOL. No route could be found because of terrain obstacles. This meant an attack in the open with flanking fire from the west and northwest.

The artillery was requested to fire concentrations on the highway and the road on the east that paralleled the highway from 1815 to 1830 followed by smoke. This curtain of smoke to be maintained until armor reached LORIOL.

"X" Battery 753rd Tank Battalion from defiladed positions on the hillside to cover the left flank of the attack by fire.

Prior to the attack "X" Battery spotted an 88 in position west of highway and destroyed it.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

At 1830 the armor jumped off cross country going north. Within ten minutes it ran into a heavy curtain of anti-tank and tank fire from the west and northwest and close in, therefore between the armor and the Smoke Screen. Tanks and tank destroyers maneuvered for position to spot and combat this fire. In the ensuing two hour fight we had lost 3 M tanks and 2 tank destroyers one of which was repairable. Only one Mark 4 was destroyed northwest of our position. Four other enemy tanks of the Mark VI type, although hit numerous times by our M's, were undamaged and withdrew to defiladed positions. Their locations were given to the artillery but the results of its fire is not known. It was determined that these German tanks had been hiding behind the steep terraces just east of the road which paralleled the highway.

Since darkness was approaching a position of defense was taken up. The Infantry was dismounted and outposted the area. At 2200 Colonel Felber reported to the Group CP. There he received instructions that the R.C.T. 143 would begin moving in that night and that the Battalion would support the attack of R.C.T. 143 on LORIOLE and to the south.

Upon Colonel Felber's return he directed the Operations Sergeant to take a detail at daylight and reconnoiter the trail over the hill to LORIOLE for the passage of armor and determine the amount of pioneer work necessary.

At 0630 29 August the Operations Sergeant returned with report that a bulldozer would be needed. Request was made on 1st Provisional Armored Group for reconnaissance to find a route over the mountain to LORIOLE. This was ordered by 1st P.A.G.

Colonel Felber then left to contact Colonel Frazier commander of 1st Battalion of 143rd Infantry who had the 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry attached to him for the capture of LORIOLE. Plans were talked over for the attack. The 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry already had troops in part of LORIOLE. The 1st Battalion 143rd Infantry was to sweep northwest of LORIOLE and drive to the west across the railway embankment and south of the DROME RIVER to establish a strong point astride the highway running west from LORIOLE.

Orders from Commanding General, 1st P.A.G. directed the armor to get into LORIOLE that afternoon including the armor then in a defensive position.

Since the armor was unable to move from its present location cross-country to LORIOLE, it was essential to find some other means of getting there. A reconnaissance section was already engaged in checking the roads over the mountain to LORIOLE. To be sure his Operations Sergeant's report was correct, Colonel Felber walked over the trail to LORIOLE and confirmed the Sergeant's report. Upon his return to the CP the reconnaissance officer conducting the route reconnaissance for tanks reported that there were no roads feasible for tank use, that in fact it had been difficult for quarter tons to get over the mountain. Colonel Felber then went to 1st P.A.G. CP and requested Engineers with a bulldozer be sent up immediately to widen the mountain trail.

At 1745 a telephone call from Commanding General, 1st P.A.G. informed Colonel Felber No Engineers were available and to report to the CP. Company "B" 753rd Tank Battalion and Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyers Battalion had arrived in the Group area and were regassing. Colonel Felber was directed to get armor into LORIOLE with the least practical delay. Colonel Felber then directed the tanks and tank destroyers to assemble in the Felber Force area as soon as regassing was completed. Upon arrival in that area to dismount enough men with avail-

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

able Shovels and picks for pioneer work. A guide at the assembly area would direct them to the trail.

Taking the tank and tank destroyer officers in quarter tons, Colonel Felber and party went over the trail to LORIOL. On the way contact was made with 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry and arrangements made for pioneer platoon to join tankmen in widening the trail. On the ridge above LORIOL the quarter tons were sent back to the area to expedite movement of tankmen up the trail. The officers were oriented on the terrain and missions assigned. They were directed to return to their organizations and have them prepared to move on a moments notice.

The tanks and tank destroyers arrived in the area by 1415. By 1530 tankmen with Shovels and picks were working from the northern tip of the trail working south while the pioneer platoon of infantry started at the southern end working north. Within three hours work was completed. Although the work on the trail was a far cry from what was really needed and a bit risky, it was felt that the urgency of the moment to expedite tanks over the trail warranted the risk.

On the way back Colonel Felber stopped into the Battalion CP of 3rd Battalion 157th Infantry and informed the Commanding Officer that armor was coming through and to stop traffic at the north end. Once armor was on the trail traffic could only be one way. The Infantry Commanding Officer informed Colonel Felber that Commanding Officer R.C.T. 143rd Infantry was in command and issuing orders at his CP at the north end of the trail. Since the Battalion had no telephone communication with R.C.T. 143, Colonel Felber had to ride back up the trail to the R.C.T. 143. Arrangements were made with Commanding Officer 143 to deny traffic on the trail. At the same time recommendations were made for the use of armor which was approved. See Operations Instructions Number 35 R.C.T. 143 in Journal for August.

Colonel Felber returned to the Battalion CP at 1920 informed the tank and tank destroyer Commanders of the change in orders and directed the armor to move immediately. At 1930 armor was moving up the trail. Arrangements were made with the artillery to smoke that part of the area obscuring the trail from German observation.

Driving over this trail with sharp bends called for slow and careful driving. Just one tank to break down or throw a track would block the trail for hours; prevent armor from reaching the infantry in time to participate in the attack; and deny the use of the trail to the infantry who were using it as an ammunition and supply route.

Fortunately Company "I" 753rd with 6 tanks, Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion with 6 tank destroyers and the light tank company with 12 tanks carrying infantry got over the trail. The tank under one light tank gave way turning it over. This fortunately happened in a spot that could be bypassed. Most of the tanks of Company "I" 191st Tank Battalion got through. By this time the trail had been so weakened from the passage of armor that the left side near the north end of the trail gave way. This caused the last two tanks and one tank destroyer to throw their tracks. The tanks were in a position to be easily pulled off the trail. Unfortunately the tank destroyer threw its track at a bend in the trail coming down hill. In spite of everything that was done this tank destroyer could not be moved and effectively blocked the trail the remainder of the night. At daylight the infantry pioneer platoon cleared a passage wide enough around it for quarter ton traffic.

Narrative for Month of Aug. Cont'd.

The armor had taken so long to reach LORIOL that the attack scheduled at 2000 was called off. The armor joined the respective battalions it was attached to and waited for daylight.

At 2300 a message was received from 1st Provisional Armored Group that Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyers was to be released immediately, that Troop "F" 117 Reconnaissance Squadron was to assemble in LORIOL and await orders; and that the infantry company was to rejoin its Battalion which had been relieved.

At 0600 30 August the R.C.T. 143 supported by armor jumped off. The 1st Battalion 143 supported by Company "L" 753rd Tank Battalion attack to the west to the river junction, thence turned south toward their objective on the 70 grid line. The 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry supported by Company "A", 191st Tank Battalion attacked to the south astride HIGHWAY NUMBER 7 to its objective on the 70 grid line. The 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry maintained contact between the 1st and 3rd Battalions.

Resistance was very light and sporadic. The advance progressed slowly because of the house to house cleanup and search in draws and gullies. By 1200 all units had reached the 70 grid line. Contact had been made with the 3rd Division advancing north, this ended the engagement.

At 1250 orders were received to report to Group CP where orders were issued to move the Battalion to an assembly area south of CHABEUIL. Upon arrival there the Battalion came under 36th Division control.

At 1700 all elements of the Battalion scattered over a 50 mile area began moving on CHABEUIL. By 2100 the entire Battalion was assembled. Detachments of other units to the Falber Force rejoined their organizations.

On the 31st August the day was spent in resting and performing maintenance.

During the entire month Company "A" was attached to other organizations and not under Battalion control. For an account of its actions see Appendix Number 4.

JOSEPH G. FELDER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn,
Commanding,

200 ENEMY
(RESTING)

2000 ENEMY

ROAD
BLOCK
(FRENCH)

PREPARED
FOR DEMOLITION

STRONG
POINT →

30 CAL

ITD w/INF

(59 AFA)
(-)

753

143

F 344

753(-)
ATD 636(-)
COLL

80

90

Overlay to Accompany Narrative
for Month of August, 1944.

EXTRACT OF VERBAL ORDER

Inf:

1. To organize and defend ground on hill mass SE of Lalley, and establish road blocks.
2. To organize and defend high ground on left side of pass.
3. To have one company in reserve.
4. To cover entrances to tunnels.
5. To contact French on right and coordinate fire.

TD's:

1. Furnish one TD at gap for road block. Remainder at La Croix de Haute.

Tanks:

1. One platoon in reserve at 651755. Remainder at La Croix de Haute.

Engrs:

1. Positions as shown on overlay. Establish Water Point.

Arty:

1. 59 AFA(-) in direct support.

Med:

1. Collecting Detachment to coordinate with and assist evacuation from 2nd. Bn., 143 Inf. Regt.

CP: 651756.

70

60

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

17 October 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for Month of September.

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army.

During the entire period our tank companies were attached as follows:

- Company "A" to 141st Infantry Regiment.
- Company "B" to 143rd Infantry Regiment.
- Company "C" to 142nd Infantry Regiment.
- A platoon of Company "D" to 36th Reconnaissance Troop.
- A platoon of Company "D" to 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

The Battalion as a whole was faced with two major problems: first, maintenance and second, personnel.

The pursuit from LE MUY to LORRIOL during the latter part of August had placed a terrific strain on all of our tanks, especially on tracks, engines, and bogie wheels. A five to seven day period devoted entirely to maintenance would have been of great benefit during the first part of the month; but parts for repair were not available and the tactical situation demanded that all available armor be with the Regimental Combat Teams in their continued pursuit of the enemy. Fortunately the Division Commander was able to rotate his leading regiments and keep one RCT in division reserve for two to three day periods. This enabled the tank crews and company maintenance sections to maintain an unusually high standard of light maintenance. The battalion maintenance platoon rendered all assistance possible during these reserve periods.

During the second half of the month the parts problem began to clear up and the Ordnance heavy maintenance companies were able to set up far enough forward to take care of the normal ordnance work without too much delay. However, tracks, support rollers, bogie wheels, and engines remained near critical items.

Our second problem, that of personnel, was in many respects more serious than the first. A tank can be replaced but trained and experienced personnel cannot be. During May and June the battalion lost rather heavily in tank commanders and tank drivers. These men were replaced shortly before we left Italy by men who had only two to three weeks training in tanks. However, by "scraping the bottom of the barrel" and shifting personnel we were able to put experienced men in driver and tank commander positions. Since landing in France we have lost 16 tank commanders and 17 drivers. Adequately trained and experienced personnel were not available to take over these positions therefore it was necessary that tanks be deadlined for lack of crews. It is contemplated that when the next increment of replacements report to the battalion we will run a driving and gunnery school in the rear area to qualify them. The school will have no definite time limit, no hour by hour schedule and will be concerned with only one objective - make the soldier a tanker.

The terrain over which we operated varied from rolling to hilly, with an abundance of thick, wooded areas and an excellent road net. The ground itself was usually treacherous, particularly as we came closer to the VOSGES MOUNTAINS. Fields which appeared at first sight to be firm would not support vehicles due to their boggy base. All of these factors made it almost impossible to use more than one platoon of tanks in an area at a time. Frequently the movement of tanks

Narrative for Month of Sept. Cont'd.

was so restricted that a platoon of three tanks could operate more effectively than a platoon of five.

For a detailed account of some of the tank action see the Reports of Companies "A" and "C" attached hereto as Appendicies 1 and 2 respectively.

Joseph G. Felber
JOSEPH G. FELBER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tank Bn,
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

UNIT DIARY FOR MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1944

1 September 1944

Battalion (-) left area vicinity CHABÉUIL at 1030, closing at HOUTERIVES at 1330.

2 September 1944

Company "A" attached 141st Infantry Regiment. One Platoon
"D" Company attached 36th Reconnaissance Troop. One Platoon
"D" Company attached 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.
Company "B" attached 143 RCT. Company "C" attached 142 RCT.
Battalion (-) moved from HOUTERIVES at 1030, closing at 146754 (vicinity
GRENNAY.)

3 September 1944

One platoon "D" Company released from attachment 636th Tank Destroyers.
Disposition unchanged.

4 September 1944

Battalion (-) left GRENNAY at 1000, closing 1 mile North BOURG at 1630.

5 September 1944

Battalion (-) left BOURG at 1030, closing 1 mile East LOUHANS at 1730.

6 September 1944

Battalion (-) left LOUHANS at 1330, closing vicinity ARBOIS at 1730.

7 - 8 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

9 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

Company "A" and Company "C" each lost one tank to enemy action during days operations.

10 September 1944

Battalion (-) closed new area (717727) at 2100. One platoon Company "D" was attached to 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion. Remainder of attachments remain unchanged.

11 September 1944

Companies supported units to which they are attached Battalion (-) closed ANDELARROT at 1100.

Unit Diary Cont'd.

12 September 1944

No change in attachments.

Battalion (-) closed at 857974 (vicinity VESOUL) at 1800.

13 September 1944

Elements this battalion supported units to which they are attached.

14 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

15 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

Two tanks knocked out by enemy action during days operations.

16 September 1944

CP moved to 006141. Remainder Battalion unchanged.

17 September 1944

CP moved to 035210. Attachments unchanged.

18 September 1944

Elements this Battalion supported units to which they are attached.

19 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

20 September 1944

Battalion (-) closed FLOMBIERES (075377) at 1930.

21 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

22 September 1944

Elements this Battalion supported units to which they are attached.

23 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

24 September 1944

Battalion CP closed 160446 at 1545.

Rear elements closed area vicinity REMIREMONT at 1800. Otherwise no change.

Unit Diary Cont'd.

25 September 1944

No change in attachments.

26 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

27 September 1944

No change in attachments.

28 September 1944

Elements this Battalion supported units to which they are attached.

29 September 1944

Disposition unchanged.

30 September 1944

CP VI60446

"A" Company - attached 144 RCT

"B" Company - attached 142 RCT

"C" Company - attached 142 RCT

One platoon "D" Company - attached 36th Reconnaissance Troop.

One platoon "D" Company - attached 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion

Rear Echelon - REMIREMONT.

COMPANY "A"
753RD TANK BATTALION

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "A" FOR MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1944

1 September 1944

Company detached from 141 RCT in vicinity of BOURG DE PEAGE and orders were received from 753rd Tank Battalion Commander to join battalion in vicinity of BEAUREPAIRE for maintenance and reorganization. Company moved from assembly area at 1330 on an administrative march and closed in battalion area at 1600. Personnel tired from constant movement. Company tank strength for combat -- 10.

2 September 1944

Company attached to 141 RCT on order of Division Commander at 0400 and company commander went forward to ~~SEPTEME~~ where regimental headquarters was located for orders. Company ordered to ~~move~~ ~~actively~~. Company moved administratively to vicinity of HEYRIEUX under command of Executive Officer. Company commander ordered to assemble company in RCT area for an attack on LYON from the west. Tanks were to be used to prevent an armored counter-attack. Tanks closed in assembly area 1 kilometer south of JANNEYRIAS after decision was made by regimental commander that tanks could not be favorably employed to any advantage because of fact that terrain was too soft for tanks and visibility was limited by heavy rains throughout day. Remained in area for night - vehicles serviced.

3 September 1944

RHONE RIVER bridges blown in 141 RCT sector and at 1500 hours, the company was ordered to join the 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion on a tactical road march that took column through 3rd Division Sector. Route reconnoitered by executive for bridges that could carry 40 tons and crossing was made at SAULT. Column organized under command of Field Artillery Battalion Commander with 3 tanks and 2 tank destroyers in advance guard followed by command group at 500 yards. 1000 yards behind this group came the main body consisting of balance of Company "A" 753rd Tank Battalion, Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion.

No contact with enemy was made. Enroute orders were received to close the armored group in an area 2 kilometers south of ST ANDRE DE CORCY. Column closed in assembly area at 1900 hours. Vehicles serviced and guards posted.

4 September 1944

0030 hours, company ordered to join RCT column on night tactical march in pursuit of enemy. Tanks in 3rd serial were to be used to transport infantry primarily. 0130 hours company moved from IP at ST ANDRE DE CORCY along route designated by division order to vicinity of MACOM. When column reached REPLONGES orders were changed and column proceeded to SERMOYER - closing in bivouac at 1900. No contact with enemy was made. Vehicles serviced.

5 September 1944

Orders received to move with RCT at 0730 on a tactical road march in pursuit of the enemy in direction of ST GERMAIN DE BOIS. Armor placed in 3rd serial as regimental reserve with mission of carrying infantry. No contact with enemy was made and company was directed to close in an assembly area in vicinity of ST GERMAIN DE BOIS at 1500 hours. Vehicles serviced and maintenance became a primary problem because of rapid movement and wearing out of irreplaceable parts, ie. tracks, bogie wheels, and track support rollers.

"A" Co. Narrative Cont'd.

6 September 1944

1200 hours ST GERMAIN DE BOIS orders were received from 1141 RCT to move with 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion to vicinity of POLIGNY - on an administrative march to carry one battalion of infantry. Company closed in a assembly area at 1700 hours 1 kilometer west of POLIGNY. Vehicles serviced and maintenance performed.

7 September 1944

1200 hours orders received to move as a separate serial with 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion from POLIGNY to BUVILLY to pick up infantry and to proceed to an assembly area in vicinity of AVANNE. Closed in assembly area at 1600. 1930 hours ordered to move to vicinity of ST FERJEUX administratively and company commander went to new area on reconnaissance. Closed in assembly area at 2100 hours for night - guards posted and radio contact with regiment maintained.

8 September 1944

1200 hours orders were received from regimental commander to attach 2 platoons to assault battalion for a regimental attack in direction of FRANCOIS and CHEMAUDIN, latter objective changed to LA FELIE. Tanks moved with main body of infantry with 2nd Platoon on right with "I" Company and 1st Platoon with "L" Company on left. 2nd Platoon crossed a railroad track and took a trail to right and followed in close support of infantry on advance through sparsely wooded area. From positions in the woods, the tanks of the 2nd Platoon covered the infantry in their advance across the open ground towards FRANCOIS. 2nd section of platoon covered advance of 1st section for the woods following the infantry. The town of FRANCOIS was on a ridge that ran cross corridor to our advance and several smaller ridges and ravines had to be crossed before tanks could actually approach town. Infantry and tanks advanced through area that had many small groups of houses and dense woods. Infantry went into woods under support of tanks and wiped out light enemy resistance consisting of small arms and automatic weapons. As the 2nd tank of the section approached a small rock wall in the area an enemy bazooka gunner fired 1 round at the tank and he was killed by the bow gunner of the 3rd tank deployed slightly to the rear. Unnoticed by the tank commander, another enemy bazooka gunner fired one round at the 2nd tank from another rock wall 50 yards from the tank and hit the tank lightly wounding the tank commander and gunner. Personnel were treated by infantry aid men and remained behind tank until favorable conditions for evacuation by our own medics. Tank retrieved by balance of crew and returned to battalion maintenance for repair. Tanks were unable to proceed any further and were ordered to return to an assembly area vicinity of LA CHATEAU FARINE.

1st Platoon could not advance with infantry through heavily wooded area so they moved down main road to a point quarter mile past railroad crossing and they followed tree line on their left in a column with a base of fire covering their right flank. Contact with friendly infantry was made by platoon leader on foot reconnaissance and tanks then advanced with infantry on LA FELIE knocking out small enemy points of resistance as indicated by infantry. Went into town with infantry to mop up town. Terrain in advance was flat and generally open as advance to town was made. Town of CHEMAUDIN overlooked LA FELIE and enemy had observation over our movements. Troops on both sides of main road were constantly subjected to harassing mortar, artillery and SP fire.

1st Platoon was ordered to return to company assembly area vicinity LA CHATEAUFORINE, closing in area at 2000 hours for night.

"A" Co Narrative Cont'd.

9 September 1944

Company received orders to move from LA CHATEAU FARINE to vicinity of POUILLEY LES VIGNES. Closed in new area 1200 hours. Vehicles serviced - company on semi alert status.

10 September 1944

092400 hours. Orders received to move to assembly area south of OISELEY and at 0115 company moved administratively to area reconnoitered by company executive officer. Closed in area at 0330 - awaiting further orders. Received word 1000 that regiment was in division reserve as of 0600 and company was ordered to move to assembly area vicinity of AUXON DESOIS. 1400 company informed that it was relieved of attachment to 141 RCT. 1800 hours received orders from our Battalion Commander to the effect that we were reattached to 141 RCT. Company Commander reported for orders from regiment and was ordered to move as soon as possible to join RCT column in vicinity of OISELAY for a night tactical march in direction of VESOUL.

11 September 1944

Company moved 0115 to join RCT in vicinity of OISELAY as ordered. Moved at rear of column carrying Company "A" of RCT. 0630 advance guard met enemy resistance of undetermined strength and company commander was ordered to move tanks to head of column. Enemy road block was reported to be logs defended by small arms and automatic weapons on southwest edge of MAILLEY. MAILLEY was a small village built up astride main road for about quarter kilometer. Company commander reconnoitered terrain and decided to employ one platoon of tanks. Regiment Commander ordered two platoons to be employed with advance battalion. Tanks moved ahead of infantry with 2nd platoon to right of road echeloned to right and 1st platoon to left echeloned left and quickly neutralized light enemy resistance by fire. Assault guns employed in position to afford base of fire if necessary. Infantry followed tanks and entered town without resistance. The terrain involved in this situation was a gentle rolling valley going downhill in the direction of our advance. High ground on either side could have been used advantageously by enemy for observation but no indication was noted that they were. Valley was approximately 1 mile wide at this point. Ground was reasonably hard and had adequate cover. 2 Platoons moved about 1 kilometer beyond town and remained in position while regiment commander reorganized regiment and issued orders to continue attack. I and R platoon of regiment moved down the road while tanks continued to deploy in line with a platoon on each side of road - guiding on the I and R with the tank destroyers covering the advance as a base of fire from the rear. Assault guns in position to give general support. Received a civilian report of enemy anti-tank gun positions and strongpoint on high ground vicinity of church at ANDELLARE and ANDELLAROT. Quickly moving from the deployed position the tanks and tank destroyers quickly engaged suspected position by fire while at the same time maneuvering to out flank and cut off enemy. Enemy completely surprised in spite of their excellent observation from higher ground and only fired a 20MM AA gun. Enemy losses in equipment destroyed - 1 20MM St gun; 1-75MM AT gun; 1 ammo truck; 1 personnel truck and 5 dead plus 20 prisoners. Our infantry following the tank destroyers quickly moved forward to secure the towns. Terrain continued to be gently sloping downhill valley but beyond towns became narrow and channelized. Tanks were ordered to return to assembly area vicinity of ANDELLARE for night at 1600 and closed in area at 1700.

12 September 1944

0100 Company Commander was ordered to have company in vicinity of NOIDANS at 0630 to support regimental attack on VESOUL by fire if necessary and to remain in position as regimental reserve. Company moved into positions previously reconnoitered by regiment but could not fire because of high railroad embankment about 100 yards to front in direction of the objective. Rigid no-fire lines were indicated by Regiment S-3 because of friendly elements approaching town from southwest, east and northeast. Enemy constantly harassed area occupied with SP guns of a medium caliber - (88mm or 105mm). Reason that tanks were not employed during early stages of attack was that all approaches to the low ground on which VESOUL was located were channelized and subject to enemy observation and anti-tank fire. Infantry could best operate by infiltrating through heavy woods on face of the sharp downhill grade and thus achieve initial assault positions. 1st platoon ordered by company commander to join 3rd Battalion 1 kilometer from VESOUL and to support their assault on the right of the regimental sector. The enemy opposition was mainly small arms and automatic weapons but his positions in vicinity of crossroads were dug in and he took full advantage of the houses in the sector. The tanks operated in line in close support of the advance elements of the infantry and fired on targets indicated by infantry. Enemy in dug in positions were blasted out by direct cannon fire and resistance except for snipers ceased. Infantry entered town and met no resistance. Tanks followed infantry until they came to a blown out canal bridge and platoon leader moved his platoon by another route which was indicated by F.F.I. . Crossed over canal in 3rd Division Sector and began to rejoin his battalion when he was ordered to rejoin company in assembly area south of town.

The ground approaching VESOUL on our side was extremely flat and devoid of cover. Tanks met obstacles in form of small drainage streams and canals and were generally forced to follow the roads. Enemy harassing artillery fire was light but constant.

At 1630 company commander received orders to join RCT column in a tactical march from VESOUL to FLAGY. Tanks were to carry infantry assault battalion and were to be preceded by I and R platoon of Regiment. Column crossed IP north of VESOUL at 1830 and closed in assembly area vicinity of FLAGY at 2030 hours without contact with the enemy. Infantry assembled and outposted regimental area to north.

13 September 1944

At 0630, company was ordered to be alerted when regimental area began to be moderately shelled by SP and horsedrawn artillery fire. Regimental Commander wanted tanks to be on stand by alert status to counter any enemy attack. Regiment area moderately wooded and generally rolling but possibility of tank deployment would be restricted by drainage ditches and soft ground. 0930 - 1 platoon was ordered to join "F" and "K" companies of RCT and 2nd section of 3rd platoon moved to join "F" Company in their assembly area on left of regiment sector and 1 section 3rd platoon joined "K" on right. The mission was to support infantry in their effort to reduce enemy road blocks and resistance.

2nd Section 3rd platoon reported to company commander of "F" company and tanks were to be employed to cover infantry by fire as they crossed open areas and then to follow along axis as best they could. Tanks continued to follow infantry along road until they were told to stop while friendly mortars fired on enemy defending road blocks with small arms. Road block was a series of felled trees in a thickly wooded area that paralleled the road on both sides. Woods were so dense that even infantry could not deploy and outflank the resistance.

"A" Co Narrative Cont'd.

The resistance was reduced by the infantry and the section leader called for the tankdozer which was in the company assembly area. The tank dozer pushed aside the logs to clear the road after they were examined for mines and booby-traps. The tanks continued to follow the infantry along the closely restricted route of advance until they came to a wide clearing in the woods around the objective of LE VAL ST ELOY. The infantry then followed the tree line while the tanks followed an old railroad bed in the direction of their advance. The section leader saw a flash of an enemy artillery piece on the high ground beyond the woods and fired 2 rounds with good effect. The town was occupied by infantry without resistance and tanks with infantry outposts set up a road block beyond town. Tank destroyers followed the tanks at all times but had no opportunity to operate as a base of fire.

1st Section 3rd platoon joined "K" Company of RCT in their assembly area and orders were received to support infantry by fire. Tanks followed infantry advance along the main road moving forward to knockout machine gun nests twice when called upon. Towns were entered and secured by infantry without great resistance along route of advance. The road was on the forward slope of a hill mass with the valley on the left and high ground on the right and channelized from time to time by dense trees paralleling road. Enemy had observation over our movements but his fire was restricted mainly to long distant harassing fire. Infantry objective along this route of march was NEUREY and when town was occupied, the tanks and tank destroyers were ordered to establish road blocks by fire from within the town, while the town itself was outposted by infantry. Vehicles serviced with gas and ammunition at 1900 hours.

14 September 1944

Company ordered to move administratively to vicinity of MAILLERONCOURT CHARETTE to assembly area for maintenance and servicing of vehicles. Company moved at 1300 less 2nd section 3rd platoon which remained in position at CE VAL ST ELOY until regiment cleared area. RCT now in division reserve. 1700 - 2nd section 3rd platoon joined company and closed in area. 2000 - 1st platoon alerted for movement to vicinity of FAURNAY on an unknown mission with 1st battalion RCT. 2200 - alert was cancelled for night.

15 September 1944

Company in assembly area vicinity MAILLERONCOURT CHARETTE. At 1330 hours 1st platoon alerted and moved with 1st battalion RCT to vicinity of BREUREY LES FAURNAY with mission of eliminating light enemy resistance in that vicinity and to pass across river to FAURNAY to secure bridge and establish road block. When 1st section 1st platoon crossed river with the infantry they found that the town of FAURNAY had not been completely secured by reconnaissance elements as they had been told so they proceeded to cooperate as a tank - infantry team in ferreting out snipers. Town was subjected to moderate shelling by enemy mortars and SP guns. Section established road block with infantry. 2nd section 1st platoon remained in vicinity of BREUREY as battalion mobile reserve.

16 September 1944

No change in company status; - crews performing maintenance and lubrication.

"A" Co Narrative Cont'd.

17 September 1944

Co alerted to move 0700 hours to join RCT in passing through 143 RCT at LUXEUIL to attack and secure town of PLOMBIERES. 1st platoon moved with 1st battalion from FAURNAY to LUXEUIL to take up position of advance guard. Balance of company moved administratively to LUXEUIL with infantry transported. Advance guard point reported enemy road block and undetermined resistance 3 kilometers south of FOUGEROLLES; 1st platoon ordered by Battalion Commander to move with infantry to engage the enemy. Tanks were unable to deploy because of heavy tree growth on both sides of road. Area was being lightly shelled by enemy SP guns and mortars. Infantry outflanked resistance at first road block and column was able to advance about 1/2 kilometer where tanks were able to deploy in sparse woods 100 yards to left of road. From this point to the town of FOUGEROLLES the terrain was generally flat and bisected with irrigation ditches. Ground was too soft to allow for any wide deployment. Enemy had observation of our movements from high ground north and northeast of the town. Tanks supported infantry advance from house to house and knocking out machine gun positions as indicated by friendly infantry - 1 section of tanks moved while the other covered. Platoon leader of 3rd platoon and executive officer made a motor reconnaissance to determine best route to join 3rd battalion RCT which was attempting to outflank enemy resistance by securing high ground to northeast of town - unable to find route cross country and through dense woods that would join us with 3rd Battalion. Trails shown on map were merely mule trails which often gave way to footpaths. 1st platoon entered town with Company "C" RCT and quickly nopped up remaining resistance which consisted of small arms and automatic weapons. Enemy had a few dug in positions along side of road and at edge of woods but generally was not well entrenched. 1st Section 1st Platoon established road block on road leading out of town on north side with one platoon of infantry. 2nd section returned to company area 1 kilometer south of FOUGEROLLES. 1 enlisted man LWA when a booby trap exploded as a road block of logs were being cleared.

18 September 1944

Company in assembly area south of FOUGEROLLES. 3rd platoon ordered to join 2nd battalion RCT in attack on CORBENAY by 0630; moved from assembly area at 0530 and at 0600 joined Company "G" of RCT at LES CHAUNNES. Tanks moved to CORBENAY with infantry on rear while balance of battalion attacked from south of CORBENAY. No enemy resistance and town was secured at 1000. 1600 all elements of company were ordered to return to company assembly area and closed in area at 1700; vehicles serviced.

19 September 1944

Company in assembly area south of FOUGEROLLES; performing necessary maintenance on tanks. Supply and kitchen brought up and personnel had opportunity for shower and change of clothing. Vehicles, guns and personnel were inspected by company officers and in general things were found to be satisfactory except that personnel were tired from constant movement and lack of recreation.

20 September 1944

Company alerted to move 0700 hours on semi-tactical march to vicinity RAON AUX BOIS. 3rd platoon attached to 3rd battalion RCT to carry infantry and to support advance guard if necessary. Column was to be preceded on road by reconnaissance units. Company less 1 platoon attached to 1st battalion for same reason. No contact with enemy was made and 3rd platoon closed in company assembly

"A" Co Narrative Cont'd.

area 1/2 kilometer northeast of town; enroute 1st platoon was ordered to continue with 1st battalion and establish road blocks in their area 1 1/2 kilometers east of RAON AUX BOTS. Company trains closed with 3rd platoon at 1200 hours.

Platoon leaders and company commander went on reconnaissance with their respective battalion staff officers to determine best routes of approach for tanks and infantry to west bank of MOSELLE RIVER. Returned at 1700 and at 2100 company commander attended meeting prior to issuance of field order. Company commander informed regiment commander that trails reconnoitered would not hold tank traffic. Regimental commander divided armored units into 2 groups as follows:

Group "A" ---- 1 platoon tanks (4)
 1 platoon TD's (4)

Group "B" ---- 1 platoon tanks (3)
 1 section assault guns (2)
 1 section TD's (2)

and ordered that tanks move to an assembly area vicinity of ST NABORD on call.

21 September 1944

Group "B" ordered 0700 to join 2nd battalion in vicinity of ELOYES to support their attack in town west of MOSELLE RIVER. Group "B" moved through dense woods on trail indicated by civilian guides to ST NABORD and came out on broad valley running across the front. Taking the main road paralleling river they went generally north towards ELOYES to contact infantry. Enemy occupied high ground across river but observation obscured by heavy ground mist and fog. Infantry contacted and assault guns were put into position on high ground to west of town to engage targets of opportunity while tanks moved into town in close support of infantry. Enemy opposition small arms, automatic weapons, mortar and SP fire, from positions in houses and cemetery on east side of river.

Balance of armor moved 0730 to an assembly position on high ground overlooking ST NABORD to wait further orders. At 1500 company commander made a foot reconnaissance of infantry ford site 1 kilometer south of ELOYES to determine possibility of tanks using same crossing. Ford found to have too steep exit and approaches for tanks and bottom of stream had too many big boulders. Report of findings made to Regimental Commander. Assault bridge would have to be laid by engineers before tanks could cross. RCT mission was to establish division bridgehead in vicinity of ELOYES.

22 September 1944

Company in assembly area vicinity of ST NABORD less armored group "B" which was attached to 2nd battalion RCT. Presence of infantry and tanks in town of ELOYES west of MOSELLE RIVER was a feint to river crossing south of town. 1 enlisted man - SFW serious - evacuated by infantry medics.

Company ordered to move at first daylight to vicinity of bridge to cross river and assemble in an area approximately 2 kilometers south of ELOYES.

23 September 1944

Company moved at 0600 to bridge site and crossed without incident and closed in assembly area at 0830 less 3rd platoon which was still attached to 2nd battalion RCT. 1st section 1st platoon ordered at 0900 to join 3rd battalion in their advance along main road towards ST ETIENNE to the south. Infantry battalion commander contacted at 0930 and platoon leader informed him that tanks could not deploy because of the terrain which in general was a steep grade on his right into the valley and on his left, the high ground covered with dense trees. Platoon ordered to follow infantry and to be available when lower ground around ST ETIENNE was reached to support infantry. Town was reached without opposition and tanks were ordered to establish a road block on road running east out of town.

3rd platoon plus assault guns relieved from attachment to 2nd battalion and moved directly to bridge site to cross river and closed in assembly area at 0930.

At 0900 company was alerted for possibility of enemy infiltration through wooded draw just to the north of our assembly area and often reconnoitering for effective fields of fire we found that 2 of our tanks were in position to fire. Assault guns registered on high ground beyond draw to be in position to give supporting fires if necessary. No contact with enemy was made in assembly area and at 1500 alert was cancelled.

24 September 1944

Company in assembly area 2 kilometers south of ELOYES on east side of MOSELLE RIVER. 2nd platoon alerted and moved at 1130 to vicinity of ST ETIENNE. 1st section 2nd platoon moved to assembly area 1 kilometer east of town to support 1st battalion attack in direction of ST ALLES. Tanks moved down road in a column while infantry deployed to flanks. Terrain was unsuitable for tank deployment because ground sloping on right of road to the valley was too steep for tanks and ground to left of road consisted of draws, knolls and heavily wooded area. Contact with enemy was made 1 kilometer west of ST ALLES and tanks deployed as best they could behind houses. Enemy opposition of 20mm fire pinned down main body of infantry and tanks could not move because of direct anti-tank fire coming from west edge of ST ALLES. Platoon leader 2nd platoon dismounted to reconnoiter for any possibility of firing into enemy positions and found that he could best direct artillery fire on suspected targets. He called for artillery by radio and before effective fire could be laid he was contacted by an artillery field officer who took over the fire missions. The enemy had good observation from the high ground northeast of ST ALLES and from vantage points in towns and high ground on the far side of the MOSELLE RIVER valley to our right. The area was subjected to moderately heavy artillery fire at all times. Our tanks remained with Company "C" of the RCT until 0200 of the next morning when infantry moved forward to attack the town at night.

25 September 1944

At 0200, 1st section 2nd platoon was ordered by regimental commander to return to original area 1 kilometer east of ST ETIENNE for night and when road block into ST ALLES was cleared by engineers at daylight, the tanks were to rejoin infantry to support their mopping up operation. Both sections of platoon moved at 0830 to join Company "C" of RCT and supported them in mopping up the town by fire with good effect. 186 prisoners were taken in the town including the task force commander.

"A" Co. Narrative Cont'd.

2nd platoon was then ordered to join Company "A" of RCT in their mission of establishing road block about 1 kilometer north of town while 3rd platoon was to join Company "C" and continue to support their advance to the east of town and establish a road block. Heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire plus good observation prevented our troops from moving to their objectives and decision was made by regimental commander to hold what they had and to establish road blocks in town. While on reconnaissance for positions for his platoon, the 2nd platoon leader was SHW and evacuated after treatment by infantry aid men. 1st Platoon leader was brought forward to command 2nd platoon. Enemy fire continued to be heavy and any movement on our part brought an immediate reaction of fire. Town was built up on both sides of road and houses seemed to be continuous from one small village to another and enemy was able to infiltrate almost to our positions.

1st Battalion RCT remained in position for night securing town.
1 enlisted man LWA - not evacuated.

1st platoon relieved from road block mission at 1400 and returned to company assembly area now 1 kilometer north of ST ETIENNE.

26 September 1944

Company in assembly area 1 kilometer north of ST ETIENNE less platoons attached to 1st Battalion RCT in ST AMES. Town was harassed continuously by enemy artillery and mortar fire and all troops remained under cover.

3rd Battalion of 15th Infantry relieved 1st Battalion of 141 RCT during day and at 1930 the 3rd platoon of the company was relieved to return to the assembly area. At 2030 armored elements of 15th infantry relieved 2nd platoon and the platoon returned to company assembly area. All vehicles serviced. Kitchen brought up to provide hot food for men.

27 September 1944

Company in assembly area vicinity of ST ETIENNE performing necessary maintenance. Men given opportunity for shower and recreation at facilities of RCT. Morale - good.

28 September 1944

Company moved administratively as a separate serial of RCT to vicinity of CHENIMENIL at 0930 and closed in assembly area at 1400 hours.

29 September 1944

3rd platoon ordered to pass through the unoccupied town of LE BOULAY and join the 2nd Battalion RCT in vicinity of ST JEAN DU MARCHE 2nd platoon was to follow 3rd platoon and to join 1st battalion in their attack on the high ground beyond road from ST JEAN DU MARCHE to LA NEUVEVILLE. Column moved from DOCELLES at 1400 and moved slowly until platoon of infantry from "C" Company joined them for local security. Platoon leader of the 3rd platoon went forward on foot across front of 1st battalion to contact his infantry but when his platoon moved along the route reconnoitered by him they ran into a small arms fire fight. Unable to determine just where our infantry was and unable to deploy because of woods on his right and soft ground to his left he passed through and joined the 2nd battalion at 1800. 2nd platoon following contacted their infantry and supported them by fire while they maneuvered to take enemy opposition. 2nd platoon closed in battalion assembly area at 1900. Moderate harassing and direct SP fire was

"A" Co Narrative Cont'd.

received in vicinity of LE BOULAY - company commanders quarter ton damaged by shell fire.

30 September 1944

Company CP moved to LE BOULAY. 3rd platoon remained in ST JEAN DU MARCHE with elements of 2nd battalion - town was subjected to periods of heavy shelling by enemy. 1st section 2nd platoon and company of infantry moved from area 1 kilometer east of LE BOULAY to vicinity of bridge at LEPANGES without opposition at 1400 hours. Movement was down the road and enemy had observation from high ground 2 kilometers northwest of LEPANGES. 1 tank and 1 tank destroyer with a squad of infantry moved across bridge to secure it from enemy demolitions. Position harassed by light SP and mortar fire. 2nd section 2nd platoon remained in company assembly area.

COMPANY "C"
753RD TANK BATTALION

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "C" FOR MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1944

September 1

Company consisting of two platoons, attached to 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry left CHATEAUNEUF at 0900 hours in tactical formation (column) to VILLETE SERPAIZE. At VILLETE SERPAIZE the 1st Platoon consisting of three tanks, supported by two tank destroyers, Company "A", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, joined 1st Battalion of 142nd Infantry. Mission of tanks was to carry one Company (Company "C") of infantry on tanks to high ground NW of VILLETE SERPAIZE. If the enemy should be encountered, the infantry was to deploy and continue to advance in order to secure high ground with tank support. Mission was accomplished without action. The Second Platoon tanks remained with the 2nd Battalion of 142nd Infantry. Mission was to advance to high ground on left and parallel to the 1st Battalion in a similar manner as the 1st Battalion had done. Mission was accomplished without action; tanks remained with infantry for night on high ground NW VILLETE SERPAIZE.

September 2

At 0700 hours the 1st Platoon supporting the 1st Battalion was to move north along main highway from high ground positions NW VILLETE SERPAIZE and attack MION. Due to heavy rains the night before and during the operation, maneuvering of platoon by sections was restricted; however, visibility was limited and thus the platoon was able to continue in column to within approximately 600 yards of MION. Platoon operating by sections entered MION from SE and SW. The town was taken without action; road blocks were set up by tanks and tank destroyers approximately 400 to 600 yards NW and NE of MION covering all roads and defiles.

Second Platoon with 2nd Battalion remained in position on high ground NW VILLETE SERPAIZE to protect left flank of attacking 1st Battalion. At 1600 hours 2nd Platoon supporting 2nd Battalion 142nd Infantry moved from above position NW with mission to take and hold town of CORDAS which would protect left flank of the 1st Battalion in position in MION and also prevent infiltration of enemy behind 1st Platoon tanks which were to go from MION to LYON. Second Platoon upon approaching CORDAS moved by sections approaching the town in a manner similar to 1st Platoon's approach on MION. No action took place at CORDAS; road blocks were established in such manner to cover defiles and roads.

At 1900 hours the First Platoon and two assault guns (141/3) left road block positions in MION with mission to contact "Town Major" of LYON and give any assistance to Free French that might be needed in order to clear town of enemy. Platoon contacted "Town Major" at 1945 without action. Upon arriving in town, tanks were practically unable to move along streets due to congestion of pedestrians. Upon approaching Town Hall, platoon leader was taken from his tank and carried inside, greeted and guarded by Hordes of Free French. Thus, the platoon remained for the night.

September 3

Platoons remained in above mentioned locations until 1300. At 1300 hours platoons moved east in column via route MEYRIEUX, CREMIEUX, LIDERIEUX to an assembly area at CHATILLON-la-PALUD. No action was anticipated; no action was encountered. Remained in assembly area for night.

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 44 (cont'd)

September 4

At 0130 hours 2nd platoon joined 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry with mission to attack town of MONTEVEL from their present position. Route used would be main road from CHATILLION-La-PALUD through DOURG. Platoon leader (Lt. Golden) and one tank with four tank destroyers, Company "A", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, carried two platoons of infantry on tanks and followed main axis of advance mentioned above; following this combat team was the main body of the 1st Battalion. The second section of 1st Platoon carrying one platoon of infantry, supported by two tank destroyers were to provide left flank protection to main body by following secondary roads parallel to axis of advance. At 0230 hours the 3rd Platoon (Lt Mendenhall) with 3rd Battalion 142nd Infantry left CHATILLION in tactical column following 1st Battalion with mission to assist 1st Battalion in taking town of MONTEVEL by swinging east just before arriving at objective and moving NW into objective.

The 1st Platoon, with 2nd Battalion, remained in CHATILLION with mission to establish road blocks to prevent infiltration of enemy behind advancing 1st and 3rd Battalions.

Upon 2nd platoon's arrival in DOURG plans were changed by Division to move from DOURG to VARENNES disregarding previous mission. Reconnaissance had entered MONTEVEL and found town evacuated by enemy. The 1st Platoon with 2nd Battalion was to move from CHATILLION in column and follow 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment.

All units arrived at VARENNES without action. Remained for night at road block, position covering road net leading into town, providing all around defense of 142nd Infantry Regiment.

September 5

Company left VARENNES at 0700 hours in tactical formation (column) with platoons attached to same Battalions as on the 4th, to move to BLETERRE. No action anticipated; no action encountered. Tanks used on road not entering town as road blocks.

September 6

Company left BLETERRE at 0700 hours in tactical formation (column) with platoons attached to same battalions as on the 4th and 5th, to move to town of MOUCHARD. No action anticipated; no action encountered. At 1930 the 1st Platoon attached to the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry was alerted to become Corps Reserve and be used as best needed; however, platoon remained in MOUCHARD and was not used on any mission. Company remained in MOUCHARD in assembly area. The route of advance of 142nd Infantry Regiment on the 5th and 6th of September had been cleared of enemy several days previous by elements of the 45th Infantry Division. Thus movement was for the purpose of moving to a new sector. It was necessary to follow this route due to numerous blown bridges by the enemy along secondary roads leading to new sector.

September 7

Company remained in assembly area at MOUCHARD until 1700 hours then moved N along main highway in an administrative column to town of DYANS. The platoons remaining with their respective battalions. Movements today have also been over roads cleared previously by elements of 45th Infantry Division.

"A" Co Narrative Cont'd.

9 September 1944

Company received orders to move from LA CHATEAU FARINE to vicinity of POUILLEY LES VIGNES. Closed in new area 1200 hours. Vehicles serviced - company on semi alert status.

10 September 1944

092400 hours. orders received to move to assembly area south of CUSSEY and at 0115 company moved administratively to area reconnoitered by company executive officer. Closed in area at 0330 - awaiting further orders. Received word 1000 that regiment was in division reserve as of 0600 and company was ordered to move to assembly area vicinity of AUXON DESOIS. 1100 company informed that it was relieved of attachment to 141 RCT. 1800 hours received orders from our Battalion Commander to the effect that we were reattached to 141 RCT. Company Commander reported for orders from regiment and was ordered to move as soon as possible to join RCT column in vicinity of OISELAY for a night tactical march in direction of VESOUL.

11 September 1944

Company moved 0115 to join RCT in vicinity of OISELAY as ordered. Moved at rear of column carrying Company "A" of RCT. 0630 advance guard met enemy resistance of undetermined strength and company commander was ordered to move tanks to head of column. Enemy road block was reported to be logs defended by small arms and automatic weapons on southwest edge of MAILLEY. MAILLEY was a small village built up astride main road for about quarter kilometer. Company commander reconnoitered terrain and decided to employ one platoon of tanks. Regiment Commander ordered two platoons to be employed with advance battalion. Tanks moved ahead of infantry with 2nd platoon to right of road echeloned to right and 1st platoon to left echeloned left and quickly neutralized light enemy resistance by fire. Assault guns employed in position to afford base of fire if necessary. Infantry followed tanks and entered town without resistance. The terrain involved in this situation was a gentle rolling valley going downhill in the direction of our advance. High ground on either side could have been used advantageously by enemy for observation but no indication was noted that they were. Valley was approximately 1 mile wide at this point. Ground was reasonably hard and had adequate cover. 2 Platoons moved about 1 kilometer beyond town and remained in position while regiment commander reorganized regiment and issued orders to continue attack. I and R platoon of regiment moved down the road while tanks continued to deploy in line with a platoon on each side of road - guiding on the I and R with the tank destroyers covering the advance as a base of fire from the rear. Assault guns in position to give general support. Received a civilian report of enemy anti-tank gun positions and strongpoint on high ground vicinity of church at ANDELLARE and ANDELLARROT. Quickly moving from the deployed position the tanks and tank destroyers quickly engaged suspected position by fire while at the same time maneuvering to out flank and cut off enemy. Enemy completely surprised in spite of their excellent observation from higher ground and only fired a 20MM AA gun. Enemy losses in equipment destroyed - 1 20MM st gun; 1-75MM AT gun; 1 ammo truck; 1 personnel truck and 5 dead plus 20 prisoners. Our infantry following the tank destroyers quickly moved forward to secure the towns. Terrain continued to be gently sloping downhill valley but beyond towns became narrow and channelized. Tanks were ordered to return to assembly area vicinity of ANDELLARE for night at 1600 and closed in area at 1700.

12 September 1944

0100 Company Commander was ordered to have company in vicinity of NOIDANS at 0630 to support regimental attack on VESOUL by fire if necessary and to remain in position as regimental reserve. Company moved into positions previously reconnoitered by regiment but could not fire because of high railroad embankment about 100 yards in front in direction of the objective. Rigid no-fire lines were indicated by Regiment S-3 because of friendly elements approaching town from southwest, east and northeast. Enemy constantly harassed area occupied with SP guns of a medium caliber - (88MM or 105MM). Reason that tanks were not employed during early stages of attack was that all approaches to the low ground on which VESOUL was located were channelized and subject to enemy observation and anti-tank fire. Infantry could best operate by infiltrating through heavy woods on face of the sharp downhill grade and thus achieve initial assault positions. 1st platoon ordered by company commander to join 3rd Battalion 1 kilometer from VESOUL and to support their assault on the right of the regimental sector. The enemy opposition was mainly small arms and automatic weapons but his positions in vicinity of crossroads were dug in and he took full advantage of the houses in the sector. The tanks operated in line in close support of the advance elements of the infantry and fired on targets indicated by infantry. Enemy in dug in positions were blasted out by direct cannon fire and resistance except for snipers ceased. Infantry entered town and met no resistance. Tanks followed infantry until they came to a blown out canal bridge and platoon leader moved his platoon by another route which was indicated by F.F.I. . Crossed over canal in 3rd Division Sector and began to rejoin his battalion when he was ordered to rejoin company in assembly area south of town.

The ground approaching VESOUL on our side was extremely flat and devoid of cover. Tanks met obstacles in form of small drainage streams and canals and were generally forced to follow the roads. Enemy harassing artillery fire was light but constant.

At 1630 company commander received orders to join RCT column in a tactical march from VESOUL to FLAGY. Tanks were to carry infantry assault battalion and were to be preceded by I and R platoon of Regiment. Column crossed IP north of VESOUL at 1830 and closed in assembly area vicinity of FLAGY at 2030 hours without contact with the enemy. Infantry assembled and outposted regimental area to north.

13 September 1944

At 0630, company was ordered to be alerted when regimental area began to be moderately shelled by SP and horsedrawn artillery fire. Regimental Commander wanted tanks to be on stand by alert status to counter any enemy attack. Regiment area moderately wooded and generally rolling but possibility of tank deployment would be restricted by drainage ditches and soft ground. 0930 - 1 platoon was ordered to join "F" and "K" companies of RCT and 2nd section of 3rd platoon moved to join "F" Company in their assembly area on left of regiment sector and 1 section 3rd platoon joined "K" on right. The mission was to support infantry in their effort to reduce enemy road blocks and resistance.

2nd Section 3rd platoon reported to company commander of "F" company and tanks were to be employed to cover infantry by fire as they crossed open areas and then to follow along axis as best they could. Tanks continued to follow infantry along road until they were told to stop while friendly mortars fired on enemy defending road blocks with small arms. Road block was a series of felled trees in a thickly wooded area that paralleled the road on both sides. Woods were so dense that even infantry could not deploy and outflank the resistance.

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 14 (cont'd)

positions and open fields necessary to cross in order to neutralize the enemy. The infantry company commanders ordered all units to move back to high ground approximately 600 yards to the rear. Tanks covered withdrawal of all units by fire, then tank destroyers and assault guns were to cover withdrawal of tanks. All but the section leader was able to withdraw. His tank due to a failure of the engine was unable to power itself through the soft ground. The crews after pulling to partial shelter at 1900 hours abandoned tank to contact maintenance and recover tank upon arrival of more infantry. Crews decided not to remain with tanks due to infiltrating enemy and approaching darkness. Infantry elements were unable to retake ground until the following morning at which time tanks repaired and returned to combat. Other armor of this section was ordered by the regimental commander to join the 1st section of the 1st platoon supporting advance of infantry east of ALLENCOURT. First section in supporting infantry east of ALLENCOURT had run into numerous enemy withdrawing. In fact so close to the enemy and so many, one tank moving down the road to ST SAUVEUR from ALLENCOURT was given a stop sign by an enemy MP to allow enemy vehicles to continue along the road perpendicular to the advance of troops. A tank destroyer advancing parallel to the tank moving along road was pulling onto road perpendicular to advance when enemy bus loaded with withdrawing enemy ran into gun tube of tank destroyer and stripped traversing mechanism within the vehicle. A tank of the 1st section of 1st Platoon left of the tank destroyer saw the incident as he approached road through woods and destroyed two busses killing and wounding approximately 50 of the enemy. The platoon continued the advance until dark destroying approximately 10 enemy machine gun nests and numerous personnel; set up road blocks 2 1/2 miles S of ST SAUVEUR. Anderson's tank knocked out while setting up road block. No personnel hurt. No map available thus coordinates unknown. Command of platoon taken over by Sergeant Wallace. The 3rd Platoon supporting second Battalion moved from assembly area to SAULX then NE to GENEVREY in tactical column along road. No resistance met at GENEVREY thus column continued to advance to DADENOIT where only straggling enemy were encountered. Platoons remained on road because infantry was able to take the exhausted enemy who were unable to keep up with the main enemy forces pulling out. Column continued to advance to the town of CITEIS and bring forces of the 2nd Battalion on line with the 1st Battalion. Upon approaching CITEIS numerous enemy were encountered. However, the enemy was disorganized, and little organized resistance was met. Tanks operated by sections approaching town from S and W. Fired 75mm on retreating enemy horse drawn artillery and motor column. Approximately 300 enemy were captured and numerous killed, and two anti-tank guns destroyed. Much materiel captured. One tank from 2nd Platoon hit by AT fire and disabled for combat; however, mobility was not affected. Returned to maintenance. Town of CITEIS was not taken; however, contact was made with 1st Battalion on the right. Tanks of 3rd Platoon remained in assembly area for night 3 of CITEIS.

September 15

At 0700 with three tanks combat fit and operating two assault guns 105mm, Lt. Mendonhall joined the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry from his assembly area S of CITEIS with mission to support battalion in attack on CITEIS. Maneuvering of tanks was very difficult due to continued rain; however, rain was advantageous inasmuch as tanks could maneuver through open ground which was high to attain a position to assist the infantry and unseen by the enemy OP's. Same plan was employed as began 14 September. Attack was from S and W. More horse drawn vans were destroyed, approximately 200 of the enemy captured. Town was taken at 1000 hours without great difficulty because the enemy had withdrawn all armor and artillery. Attack continued after cleaning out of houses in CITEIS, NE through FABOURG-De-CITEIS without meeting any resistance. Tanks then moved in tactical

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 44 (cont'd)

formation along road with the 3rd Battalion to DOIS - DERRIERE. Mission after arriving there was to continue to coordinates 065228 and cut highway (highway from LUSILL-LES-DAINES to FANCOGNEL). Platoon continued to move throughout night in column with the 3rd Battalion. Tanks remained about center of column in order to have infantry protection at the front, rear and both flanks. No action encountered during night move.

Morale of company exceptionally low due to continual movements day and night always in assault; whereas the infantry battalions are alternated. Number of tanks far too few and no replacements or repair parts for broken ones. Map reference: 1:100,000 Sheet 15H GERARLIER-LURE, FRANCE.

September 16

At 0001 one platoon of tanks moved with to 3rd Battalion to coordinates 065228 to cut highway. Movement was difficult due to wooded covered trails and continual rain. The platoon, however, reached the above coordinates at 0530 to establish road block. No action encountered until enemy sent a armored car along road which the 3rd Battalion and tanks were covering. The armored car was destroyed and three of the enemy were killed and two wounded. The enemy tank pulled back when the armored car was destroyed without firing or moving to a position that our tanks could fire on it.

At 0700 the executive officer, Company "C", left ESPAS DREST with $\frac{1}{2}$ ton two tanks and ammunition and supplies for platoon with the 3rd Battalion at 065228. At 0745 hours at coordinates 095212 encountered two reconnaissance cars and one Mark IV tank. One reconnaissance car was destroyed and several of the enemy wounded. No infantry was present and the road being bounded by forest, maneuvering of tanks was impossible. Infantry for tank protection in the woods was requested. Reconnaissance squadron arrived at 1100, deployed to flanks and infantry contacted several 20mm guns and machine guns. Tanks advanced firing to get three bursts over the enemy as reconnaissance advanced. Movement continued until met by a company sent out by 3rd Battalion to close in on enemy. The enemy cleared out at approximately 1600. Tanks joined the 3rd Battalion at 1800 hours without further action; remained with the 3rd Battalion until 2300 hours. At 2300 hours the tanks joined the 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, in the town of ST SAUVAUR for the remainder of the night.

September 17

Company combat strength still 3 tanks and two 105mm assault guns, left ST. SAUVAUR with 2nd Battalion in tactical column enroute to FROIDECONCHE which had been occupied previously by friendly troops. Platoon continued NE from FROIDECONCHE through LA CORVERAINE to coordinates 065228 remaining here for the night. Throughout the day the tanks supporting the 2nd Battalion which was following the 1st Battalion in column. No action was anticipated and no action occurred. At 1500 hours three Headquarters tanks, 753rd Tank Battalion, attached to company and used as a platoon commanded by Lt. Golden. Road block was established by this platoon at coordinates 058212 and 070230 to prevent enemy infiltration to our rear as the 3rd Division had moved front right flank of 142 RTC, thus leaving flank and rear exposed. No action throughout the day.

September 18

At 0700 hours platoon with 2nd Battalion, in assembly area in LA CORVERAINE received orders to support 2nd Battalion in attack on RADDON-ET-CHAP-

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 14 (cont'd)

ENDU. Attack would begin at 0730 with axis of advance being main road from LA CORVERAIRE to RADDON. Platoon of tanks in tactical formation supported assault companies by section N and S sides of the road moving by bounds using houses and bushes as concealment. Upon approaching town, infantry entered without action thus platoon moved into town in column, establishing road blocks at 092254 with one section at 100240 with other section. Purpose of road block was to prevent enemy's armor from entering town. Tanks were outposted by squad of infantry with telephone communication to Battalion Headquarters in RADDON. This platoon remained at road blocks without action for the day.

Second Platoon used as road blocks at 058212 and 070230 was relieved of mission at 058212 and this section returned to LA CORVERAIRE in Regimental Reserve. Provided this platoon was committed the road block at 070230 would be taken over by anti-tank company and platoon would operate with the tanks. The platoon was not committed so remained in above position for the day.

September 19

Platoon with 2nd Battalion remained at road blocks established on the 18th until 1700 hours, then pulled back to an assembly area at 050215 coordinates for remainder of day. No longer needed at road blocks because 141st RTC contacted road block at 092254 thus eliminating the enemy's penetration along this route. The road block at 100240 was contacted by the 3rd Division thus eliminating the necessity of block at this point.

At 1450 hours three tanks received from the ordnance joined the company at LA CORVERAIRE under command of Sergeant Steffen. At 1600 hours these three tanks operating as a platoon reported to the 3rd Battalion at 062245, which was assembling on road, with mission to move into REIREMONT and secure bridge crossing MOSELLE RIVER before retreating enemy could destroy same. Town of REIREMONT had been reported clear of enemy by 636th Tank Destroyer Reconnaissance; however, as platoon in support of the 3rd Battalion approached the town of LE HARIOL, enroute to REIREMONT, the enemy was contacted. The platoon deployed to the left of the road in order to support the infantry in clearing the village. Darkness prevented the tanks from giving fire support to the infantry, so the platoon remained in position to prevent counterattack. Under cover of darkness tanks moved out onto the road as road block remaining there for the night.

September 20

Tanks with the 3rd Battalion remained at road block throughout day due to fact that terrain impassable to tanks, stream bed on left of road and forest covered, elevated banks on right side of road. The road could not be followed until engineers removed fallen trees across the road, placed there by the retreating enemy. The trees were cleared by dusk by the engineers, so that the platoon could advance the following morning.

The 2nd Platoon with the 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry, followed secondary roads right and parallel to main routes from RADDON to REIREMONT through LE GIRMONT-VAL D'AJOL. Operation of platoon was limited to following main road not due to thick forest on both sides of road. Inasmuch as the enemy was only leaving covering forces for withdrawal of main forces, this force concentrated on setting up road blocks of fallen trees and defending blocks with machine gun nests. First road block was encountered at VAL D'AJOL. The platoon knocked

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 14 (cont'd)

out approximately 5 machine gun nests, killing approximately 40 of the enemy. The engineers cleared block and the platoon continued with the infantry along road throughout the night.

The 1st Platoon with the 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, followed main axis of advance of regiment. No action for the platoon, due to road block situated in bend of road with forests on one side and marshy valley on the other. It was impossible for tank use due to infiltrating of friendly forces attempting to neutralize block. Tanks remained at 148148 in assembly area for night.

21 September

The 1st Platoon with the 2nd Battalion left the assembly area at 148148 at 0900 hours moving in column along road to assist the infantry. Only two tanks could be used, one firing on the right of the road and another on the left side of the road, advancing with the infantry. The advance was exceptionally slow because tanks could not neutralize all machine gun nests in woods and machine guns held the infantry back. Tanks knocked out approximately 10 machine guns and killed approximately 50 of the enemy.

The 2nd platoon with the 1st Battalion during the nights' move only moved to N side of VAL D' AJOL, arriving at 0100 and establishing a road block. Platoon remained at the road block until 1100 at which time the infantry counterattacked along road N of the town. One section of tanks immediately moved in column along road and encountered the enemy at 179150, capturing 50 and killing approximately 25 of the enemy, destroying 8 machine gun nests. The section continued to move throughout day, firing into woods to get tree bursts as the infantry advanced. At 180393 the platoon set up road block. Anti-tank guns took positions of section remaining at VAL D' AJOL. The platoon remained at coordinate 180393 without action for the night.

The 3rd Platoon with the 3rd Battalion remained at road block until 1100 at which time the platoon advanced along road with the infantry firing on machine gun nests, as the infantry was pinned down. The platoon continued advancing under unobserved mortar and artillery fire until dark at which time they had reached the town of REMIREMONT. Road blocks were established in outskirts of town to prevent enemy infiltrating into the rear of infantry for the remainder of the night.

September 22

The 1st Platoon with the 2nd Battalion under command of 1st Sergeant Daskevich followed with the infantry along main route to REMIREMONT from RADON. It was still impossible for tanks to deploy due to wooded terrain; therefore, tanks continued to move along road, occasionally being able to work 750 to 100 yards from the main road through trees to destroy machine gun nests. During the day's operation, the platoon advanced to 139161 destroying 5 machine guns and 30 of the enemy. Upon arrival of darkness the platoon returned to assembly area at 148148 for the night.

The 2nd Platoon with the 1st Battalion, with no possibility of deploying from axis of advance, continued to move with the infantry along road destroying 4 machine guns and approximately 20 of the enemy. Platoon remained in assembly area at 157214 for the night.

The 3rd Platoon with the 3rd Battalion continued moving with the infantry throughout the outskirts of the town along streets and at approximately 1400

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 44 (cont'd)

entered the main streets of the town. The platoon continued to assist the infantry in removal of machine guns on side streets. At darkness the tanks formed road blocks and Battalion CP protection within the town, inasmuch as only the N part of town had been cleared.

September 23

The 1st Platoon with the 2nd Battalion at 0700 hours left a line of departure at 139161 with mission to drive into REMIREMONT long the road which they were on. Only an occasional enemy was encountered, apparently all the enemy had crossed the river during the night as they were being closed in on from three sides, N by the 3rd Battalion, W by the 2nd Battalion, and S by the 1st Battalion. The platoon entered town at 0845 and moved to the east side of town to prevent any elements of the enemy from infiltrating back into town.

The 2nd Platoon moved into town from 173214 without encountering any enemy elements. The platoon moved to an assembly area in town awaiting orders to move N through REMIREMONT to the MOSELLE RIVER CROSSING.

The 3rd Platoon remained in town awaiting the 1st and 2nd Platoons as the 3rd Platoon was to remain in REMIREMONT and hold the town until the 3rd Infantry Division came in.

The 1st Platoon with the 2nd Battalion left the assembly area in REMIREMONT at 1630 in administrative column following the rear of the battalion. (At 1600 Lt. Hodges from "D" Company reported for duty to command the 1st Platoon). The platoon continued to move with the 2nd Battalion until arrival at river crossing. The tanks were not allowed to cross the river as the engineers doubted as to whether the bridge would support the movement; therefore, the platoon remained in this vicinity for the night.

The 2nd Platoon with the 1st Battalion following the same route was confronted with the same situation, and, therefore, remained with the 1st Platoon for night.

The 3rd Platoon upon departure of 1st and 2nd Platoons established a road block at 160392, remaining there for the night.

September 24

At 0600 hours the platoons received orders that they were to return to REMIREMONT and make crossing over bridge constructed during night to proceed north to town of ELOYES and remain in regimental reserve. At 0800 hours the 1st Platoon's tanks crossed MOSELLE; at 0815 the 2nd Platoon's tanks crossed MOSELLE. Arrived at ELOYES and remained in regimental reserve in assembly area throughout the day.

The 3rd Platoon with the 3rd Battalion, 112nd RCT remained at road block at 160392 throughout day without action.

September 25

The 1st and 2nd Platoons remained in ELOYES in assembly area. At 1700 hours the 3rd Platoon relieved of mission as road block in REMIREMONT and returned to company control in regimental reserve in ELOYES. Arrived in ELOYES at 1730 and moved into assembly area in town.

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 44 (cont'd)

At 2100 hours the company received orders effective 2100 hours that the company was in Division reserve and was to be organized into either mounted or dismounted road block teams consisting of, (1) Dismounted, in which there would be three sections of machine guns, each of which would man an individual road block. (2) Mounted, in which two tanks would man an individual road block and furnish own security from other tanks and Headquarters section. The company was to remain in present position on half an hour alert. Division reserve was to be commanded by Colonel Felber, Commanding Officer, 753rd Tank Battalion.

Procedure ~~taken~~ within the company:

Each platoon leader would furnish two machine guns, 30 caliber with 2000 rounds per gun; three men to man machine guns and supply ammunition. Remainder of platoon to be used as outposts and security armed with Thompson Sub-Machine Guns and hand grenades, each individual to carry with him two meals, either "C" or "K". Each platoon would have one medic attached to road block section. Ammunition trucks would be used to transport personnel to blocks.

26 September

Company remained in ELOYES in Division reserve on $\frac{1}{2}$ hour alert without any action.

27 September

Company remained in ELOYES until 1730 at which time moved out through JARIEUIL, CHENIMENIL, DOCELLES then east to FANCOMPIERRE enroute to TENDON to join RCT 142nd Infantry. The company executive officer, acting company commander, preceded the company to contact the Commanding Officer, 142nd to learn disposition of platoons. Upon arrival at 213480, the Commanding Officer was stopped by road block of the 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry and not allowed to proceed to TENDON because terrain between 213480 and TENDON was occupied by the enemy. Contact was made with the Commanding Officer, 142nd by telephone from road block. He ordered to hold the company in DOCELLES as platoons were not needed until 28 September.

28 September

At 0545 the company left assembly area in town of DOCELLES enroute to RCT 142nd in TENDON. Arrived in TENDON at 0630 at which time the 2nd Platoon attached to 2nd Battalion and placed on road blocks on N side of TENDON, at which time the platoon leader contacted the Battalion Commander to get details regarding attack at 0700; however, attack did not occur until 1000, at which time tanks left TENDON at 215473 in column along trail leading up mountain. It was impossible to deploy due to steep hill, rocky and wooded terrain. The platoon assisted movement by fire to points 223469. Remained at this point for night in an assembly area. It was absolutely impossible to deploy and work through woods on mountain to assist infantry in clearing out woods, so for this reason platoon advanced as far as possible to give support.

The 3rd Platoon was to move along main route from TENDON to THOLY to assist infantry in neutralizing a road block at 215465. Tanks moved to points 213468 then were stopped by the Battalion Commander because tanks could not assist infantry enough to justify the shelling and mortar fire which tanks would draw while moving along road in open. Infantry had not organized the sector surrounding road block enough to fully envelop the block provided the forces moving along the road suffered moderate casualties.

Narrative Co "C" for Sept 44 (cont'd)

The 1st Platoon remained in TENDON in reserve on call to support 3rd Battalion after road block cleared by the 2nd Platoon. The platoons remained in positions for night.

September 29

The 1st Platoon at 0700 continued to move and support by fire the advance of the 2nd Battalion along trail along mountain side. No firing was done during movement through woods; however, the platoon moved into opening on top of hill to fire on houses at 228466. Firing on this sector, the platoon killed approximately 25 of the enemy and relieved 3 Americans captured by the enemy. After firing on these houses the tanks pulled back to 223469 to prevent drawing fire on infantry as the terrain was impassable to movement down forward slope of mountain.

The 2nd Platoon remained in same area as on 28 September without action.

The 3rd Platoon remained in Tendon in reserve without action.

September 30

The 1st Platoon remained in assembly area at 228466 as the infantry was organizing positions on mountains.

The 2nd Platoon remained in position same as 28 and 29 September without action.

The 3rd Platoon remained in Tendon in assembly area.

The company as a whole received heavy concentration of artillery throughout day, but no damage was done

HEAD QUARTERS 75TH TANK BATTALION
APO 754, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE OF THE BULGE FOR MONTH OF
OCTOBER 1944

Incl: 3

**HEADQUARTERS
TOSRD TANK BATTALION
A O 2730, U. S. ARMY**

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR MONTH OF OCTOBER 1944

BU CO

T/4	McCollum, John C.	38040732	DDW	3 Oct 1944
Sgt	Briggs, John C.	38124542	SEA	20 Oct 1944
Pvt	Awe, Melvin E.	37435541	LRA	20 Oct 1944
Pvt	Litchfield, Hart E.	35485539	LRA	20 Oct 1944
Pvt	Perkins, Vance B.	15012547	KIA	20 Oct 1944

Saint Jo, Texas
Marshall, Texas
Hazen City, Iowa
Cadir, Kentucky
Lufkin, Texas

CO "A"

T/6	Young, Owen J.	37363848	LRA	2 Oct 1944
S Sgt	Hausk, Jack P.	37005832	LRA	10 Oct 1944
Sgt	Danson, John L.	16012543	LRA	16 Oct 1944
Sgt	Croissant, Robert W.	38024418	LRA	18 Oct 1944

Colorado Springs, Colo.
Aberdeen, N.D.
Live Oak, Florida
Milledgeville, Illinois

CO "B"

T/6	Lattin, John A.	37 36702	LRA	6 Oct 1944
T/4	Williams, Grover H.	38184217	LRA	19 Oct 1944
Pvt	Marker, Buddy A.	37514754	LRA	20 Oct 1944
Sgt	Jones, Warren J.	16012549	LRA	21 Oct 1944

Des Moines City, Iowa
Shenandoah, Virginia
Thomas City, Missouri
Winchester, Illinois

CO "C"

Sgt	Vecchia, Leonard	35011230	LRA	4 Oct 1944
Cpl	Bryant, Edward P.	30830565	LRA	5 Oct 1944
T/4	Hodges, Walter E.	3801282	LIA	11 Oct 1944
Sgt	Steifen, Eugene E.	3526143	LIA	16 Oct 1944

Cleveland, Ohio
Springfield, Illinois
Coppell, Texas
Lombard, Kentucky

CO "D"

T/6	Nichols, Roy A.	14041596	LRA	15 Oct 1944
Pvt	Johnson, James G.	35374670	LRA	22 Oct 1944
Sgt	Dawson, Andrew O.	6994427	DDW	26 Oct 1944
Sgt	Hamilton, Julian H.	6583408	SEA	26 Oct 1944
S Sgt	Thomas, Willie L.	14022242	SEA	26 Oct 1944
1 Lt	Glincy, Nelson A.	01016119	LRA	25 Oct 1944
T/4	Dalley, Marion J.	37436636	SEA	26 Oct 1944

Live Oak, Florida
Milledgeville, N. Virginia
Hart, Virginia
Griffin, Georgia
Molly Springs, Miss.
Glinn, Georgia
Gillmore City, Iowa

DEAD CO

NONE

1 D DET

Pfc	Martinez, Frank E.	38180565	LRA	15 Oct 1944
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Detroit, Mich.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 753, U. S. ARMY

CONOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT
FOR
OCTOBER 1944

Incident

HEADQUARTERS
3RD TANK BATTALION
APO #700, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 1944

OFFICERS

LWA 1

ENLISTED MEN

KIA	1
DDW	2
SMA	4
LWA	15
LIA	2
	<u>24</u>

OFFICERS	1
Enlisted men	<u>24</u>
TOTAL	<u>25</u>

"C" COMPANY
753RD TANK BATTALION

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "C" FOR MONTH OF OCTOBER 1944

"C" Company operated throughout the month of October by having a platoon attached to each Battalion of an Infantry Regiment. Occasionally a platoon would be attached to another Regiment for a particular operation and upon completion of this operation, the platoon would revert to the control of the Battalion to which it was normally attached.

As Battalions advanced to take new objectives the assault companies of the battalions were rotated, however the personnel of tanks, could not be rotated but could always be with the assault companies. Inasmuch as these tanks were always with the assault infantry companies the crews did not receive sufficient rest to keep themselves physically fit for the most efficient performance. Nor did the tanks receive the proper checks or maintenance necessary to keep them operationally fit. During the latter part of the month, as a result of the above mentioned conditions, only two platoons of three to four tanks each were operated. All operations were confined to either roads bordered by streams and soft terrain, from one small town to another or along trails in densely wooded mountains, thus allowing little chance for maneuvering by platoons for either short action or concentration of fire power. No enemy armor was encountered, but we did find scattered bazooka teams which caused only slight damage. However, the potential danger from bazooka fire is great in heavily wooded areas because the infantry can provide no ground protection to the front due to the prevalence of tree bursts at close range when the tanks use HE ammunition.

If tank platoons were placed in support rather than attached to infantry the platoons commander could then make his decisions and employ his platoon, using one action for fire support or flanking action, as he may deem necessary, and not have to put one tank here and one there as is quite frequently done by infantry commanders who do not know the basic employment of armor.

1. OCTOBER 1944

Company supported the 142 Infantry RCT of 36th Infantry Division attaching a platoon to each Battalion. The first platoon, attached to the 2nd Battalion, remained in TENDON as Battalion reserve. At 1600 the first platoon left TENDON in a tactical administrative column along the main route, TENDON, DOCELLES, CHENEMENIL to an assembly area in CHENEMENIL to become a Mobile Combat Team reserve. This platoon was of no value to the Regiment in the sector in which the Regiment was operating, inasmuch as two platoons could cover the wooded, mountainous Regimental sector.

The second platoon, operating with the 3rd Battalion 142 RCT, remained at road block and defensive position along TENDON, LETHOLY road at 213468 until the Battalion had maneuvered mortars and machine guns into vicinity of 215455. The Battalion planned to remove an enemy defended road block of fallen trees at 220459 by closing in from 214550 and along the road from 213468. The second platoon was to move in column on the road to 216462 and fire on possible enemy machine gun positions as the infantry closed in. The platoon was unable to give other support due to steep banks on the north side of road and forests and swamps on the south side.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

Upon reaching 217463 the lead vehicle was immobilized by mines which blew the track off, and blocked the road. The remainder of the platoon could not continue to the position to bring fire on the road block. The enemy road block was only several hundred yards away but tanks could not fire into enemy because the block was around a curve, concealed by the mountain along north side of road. The remainder of the platoon remained to cover the disabled tank and crew until arrival of tank retriever at dusk at which time the disabled tank was withdrawn. The platoon then returned to 213468 in road block and defensive position for night.

The third platoon, supporting the 2nd Battalion 142 RCT remained in an assembly area at 223469. They were not used by this Battalion to take their objective due to the fact that the platoon of tanks could not maneuver through the forest covered mountains to positions to support the infantry without crossing a wide open area which would bring mortar and artillery fire on the infantry. The third platoon remained at 223469 throughout night without action.

2 OCTOBER 1944

There was no movement or action by any tanks on 2nd October. The third platoon, working with 2nd Battalion, was relieved of attachment to 2nd Battalion 142 and attached to 3rd Battalion 141 RCT which was attached to 142 RCT. Thus the tank platoon remained in the same assembly area planning an operation with 3rd Battalion 141 for 3rd October 1944.

3 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon was in assembly area at CHENEMENIL. It left assembly area at 1700 to join the 3rd Battalion 143 RCT at LAVELINE. Platoon remained there and made plans for an attack for 4th October 1944.

The second platoon remained at 213468 in a defensive position and road block throughout the day. No operation was possible against enemy defended road block at 220459 because engineers were unable to sweep the road clear of mines because of artillery, mortar and small arms fire protecting the road block.

Third platoon moved from assembly area at 223469 to join 3rd Battalion 141 RCT at 223463. From 223463 the third platoon was to support the attack by 3rd Battalion on HILL 827 at 237463. The platoon moved by bounds until reaching 238470. Movement by bounds was discontinued due to open terrain. The second section remained at 228461 to give fire support to the 1st section moving to 238470. The movement of the first section to 238470 was very difficult due to heavily wooded, narrow trails followed by the section. To eliminate the scattered strong points along the east side of HILL 807. The first section had to follow these narrow trails through the forest. After the objective was taken the platoon assembled in the vicinity of 238470 for the remainder of the night without action.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

4 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon, supporting 2nd Battalion 143, left LAVELINE - HOUX at 234489 at 0800 to give fire support in clearing enemy from woods at 245495. The platoon moved northeast from LAVELINE, deploying two sections along both sides of road LAVELINE to LE ROUGE - CHATEAU. The platoon moved by bounds throughout the attack, approaching the town from the northwest at 243498 and southeast at 245495. Upon taking objective, the infantry organized and consolidated then tanks moved to 244497 in mobile reserve against a possible counterattack. The platoon remained here for the night and at 1800 relieved from attachment to 2nd Battalion and attached to 1st Battalion to plan the continuance of the attack on 5 October 1944.

The second platoon remained at 213468 until 1600 at which time was detached from the 3rd Battalion 142 and attached to the 2nd Battalion of the 143 RCT. At 1630 the platoon moved to an assembly area in HOUX at 227495 to remain there for the night.

The third platoon working with 3rd Battalion of the 141 RCT supported by fire and movement the attack from 238470 to objective at 239475. Attached to 3rd platoon were two 105 assault guns which were used to lay down the fire on objective before the infantry moved out - and as infantry was closing on the objective the tanks fired approximately 50 rounds of HE to obtain tree bursts. The objective was taken and the tanks remained in defilade at 236471 to prevent counterattack. The platoon remained at 236471 for the night without further action.

5 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in an assembly area in LE ROUGE CHATEAU until 1700, then moved in a tactical administrative column to the vicinity of 257498. The route to this sector had been cleared of enemy previously; the 257498 sector had also been taken and organized. The mission of the platoon was to fire on enemy held houses at the base of the mountain so that friendly troops could organize the reverse slope of the mountain. The platoon moved to previously reconnoitered positions and fired into the enemy held houses as the infantry advanced. Platoon remained in firing positions until the objective was taken and organized, then returned to LE ROUGE - CHATEAU to resupply and remain in mobile reserve against possible enemy counterattack.

The 2nd platoon remained in the same position as 4 October without action.

The 3rd platoon remained in the same position as 4 October without action.

6 OCTOBER 1944

No action for either 1st, 2nd or 3rd platoons. They all remained in the same position as 5 October 1944.

7 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in the same position as 4 October without action.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The second platoon in support of the 2nd Battalion 143 RCT moved from an assembly area at HOUX at 1600 with the mission to fire on enemy held houses at 256482, then return to their original position in an assembly area at HOUX. The platoon maneuvered to 255485 and fired approximately 20 rounds HE into the houses at objective, then returned to HOUX at 1800.

The third platoon was relieved from attached to the 1st Battalion 142 RCT and then attached to the Task Force Felber at 1000. The platoon left 236471 at 1030 to report to 215539 via route TENDON, ST. JEAN - DU - MARCHE, LEPANGES to establish a road block at 215539. The movement of the platoon was administratively and upon arrival at 215539 the platoon fired on houses which were reported occupied at 219546. They received no report on the firing, nor was there any further action by the platoon. The road block was established and the platoon remained here for the night.

8 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in an assembly area at HOUX without action or movement.

The 2nd platoon at 0800 was relieved from attached to the 2nd Battalion 143 RCT and moved to the Task Force Felber sector at 203543 with the mission to move around in this sector and fire on targets visible to them in the vicinity of FAYS, LAVAL and BRUYERES. The platoon maneuvered around in the above designated area to fire on the above mentioned targets until dusk, at which time they moved DEYCIMONT to resupply and assemble for the night. The third platoon remained in the same position at 216539 as part of the Task Force Felber, with the mission to prevent armored counterattack from this sector. (See Overlay Number 5)

9 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon at 0200 sent second section to join the 1st Battalion 142 RCT at 239472 to assist "A" Company 142 RCT in taking an objective at 472248. This section was guided to the above coordinate by guides from Company "A" 142. It was to give support by fire and movement, however due to mountainous country with forests and gorges, the section was restricted to small trails, nothing but small arms fire was encountered. Approximately 50 enemy were killed or captured and objective was taken by 1400. The tanks remained in a defensive position until objective was organized. At 1700 the section was released from the Battalion and returned to an assembly area in HOUX.

The second platoon remained in an assembly area in DEYCIMONT until 1730 at which time the platoon moved to an assembly area with the 2nd Battalion 141 at 13529 to discuss operation for 10 October in the vicinity of 237535. The platoon remained in this position for the night.

The third platoon remained with the Felber Force at 216539 to prevent an armored counterattack.

10 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in an assembly area in HOUX without action.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The second platoon remained in an assembly area with 2nd Battalion 141 at 213529. The platoon did not move to the area anticipated due to the fact that the engineers had not completed the repair of the trails, which were used as supply routes. The trails were around the mountains and the soil soft due to the excess rain.

The third platoon remained at 216539 with the Felber Force to prevent armored counterattack.

11 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in an assembly area in HOUX without action.

The second platoon with the 2nd Battalion 141 RCT left the assembly area at 213529 to join the Battalion at 234538. The platoon was to select positions to cover RJ at this point and assist infantry by fire and movement on HILL 512 at 230539. The platoon deployed upon reaching 233531 to move into the positions due to the fact that the terrain was open and mortar fire was falling on forward slope of the mountain. As the first section moved out to accomplish their mission they were both immobilized at 233533 by enemy ramp mines. The tanks, though in open, were manned and covered the movement of the second section. In taking the objective approximately 30 enemy were killed and approximately 10 prisoners taken with unknown number of machine guns destroyed. The platoon remained at 233537 for the night in defensive and road block position without action.

The third platoon remained as on 10 October 1944.

12 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in HOUX in an assembly area until 1430 at which time one tank moved to 493235 to register in on-targets for indirect fire. The registration of piece was conducted by 133 Field Artillery Battalion by the use of a Cub Plane. At 1845 the remainder of the platoon moved to surveyed positions, to fire on targets as shown on overlay, using the registration of the gun placed in position at 1430. Harassing fire was conducted throughout the night, firing approximately 200 rounds of HE. One fire started in the vicinity of GRANGES was reported later as being an enemy supply dump.

The second and third platoons remained in the same positions as 11 October without action. (See Overlay Number 6)

13 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon continued firing indirect fire until 0430 and at 0500 returned to the assembly area in HOUX. No counter battery was received during the firing. However beginning at 0900 the town of HOUX was shelled heavily intermittently until 1830 at which time the platoon and Company CP moved in a tactical administrative march to DEYCIMONT.

The second and the third platoons remained in the same areas as 11 October without action.

14 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in assembly area in DEYCIMONT without action.

The second platoon was detached from the 2nd Battalion 141 RCT and returned to DEYCIMONT. With only one tank operationally fit the platoon was deadlined for lack of vehicles to continue the operation as a platoon.

The third platoon remained with the Felber Force without action at 215539.

15 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon at 0600 left assembly area in DEYCIMONT to join the 3rd Battalion 143 RCT in the vicinity of FAYS (213556) with mission to support the attack from FAYS to take HILL 479 at 224555. The objective was taken after heavy artillery concentration with only several enemy encountered. The platoon remained at approximately 222555 during the night in defilade in a defensive position. The tactical movement of the platoon was practically nil due to fact that from selected positions at approximately 213556 the platoon supported only by fire then moved to hill administratively after it was organized by the infantry.

The second platoon remained deadlined throughout the remainder of the month due to personnel and vehicles casualties sustained in previous operations.

The third platoon was detached from the Task Force Felber at 1500 and attached to the 1st Battalion 143 RCT with mission to support the Battalion in an attack on the town of LAVAL. So far as the tactical operations of the platoon the tanks could only operate in a column along the highway from 215539 to the town of LAVAL. The platoon was unable to deploy due to the marshy terrain from Line of Departure to the objective. The platoon gave fire support from the road, firing into buildings, designated by infantry, to remove the enemy strong points. One 20MM was destroyed and several machine guns with personnel. No casualties in either vehicles or personnel were suffered by the platoon. The first section of the platoon placed a road block at 234557 and the second section at 235555. (See Overlay Number 7)

16 OCTOBER 1944

At 1400 the Company CP moved from DEYCIMONT to LEPANGES.

The first platoon just prior to daylight, 0530 moved from their positions on HILL 479 to an assembly area in FAYS to remain there until dark (2000) then move to position 224565 to strengthen the defense of the left flank against a possible counterattack from the town of BRUYERES. The platoon remained here throughout the night without action.

The third platoon at 1300 was attached to the 3rd Battalion 143 RCT for support in an attack on the town of CHAMP LE DUC again the operation was restricted to movement along road, due to marshy terrain. The objective was taken at 1900. Only small arms fire opposition was encountered.

17 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in a defensive position at 224565 until 1300 at which time the platoon joined Company "G" 442 Infantry RCT at 234572. The mission was to assist Company "G" in the attack to clear enemy of woods on HILL 555 at 238576, to clear enemy from houses at 241575 and to establish a road block at this point. The platoon moved into support positions at 234574 and 238573 at 1330 and as the infantry continued to advance the platoon moved to 238574 giving fire support by firing into houses occupied by the enemy at 241575. The objective was taken at 1700, however, the platoon remained in position until road block was established at 2000. At which time the platoon returned to 223573 reverting to 1st Battalion 143 RCT. One tank was immobilized at 225572 by enemy mines which had been cleared and placed along edge of trail. Inasmuch as this tank was in an exposed position the platoon leader had to clear mines around the immobilized tank to allow the remaining tanks to pass, then pulled the immobilized vehicle behind crest of hill so that the enemy would not shell this vehicle and surrounding area occupied by friendly troops. The platoon remained at 223573 without action.

The third platoon remained in CHAMP LE DUC in a defensive position against possible counterattack, with 3rd Battalion 143 RCT.

18 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in assembly area as a mobile reserve at 223564 until 0700 then moved to 230556 to join "A" Company 143 RCT with the mission to attack northeast from LAVAL along main highway to BRUYERES with BRUYERES as the objective. The platoon working in sections advanced parallel to road with sections on east and west sides. The infantry was penned down by enemy machine gun fire from a house at 240583. The house was cleared by tanks firing HE delay into the house. The advance continued, an enemy AT gun spotted at 241564. With section of highway at 238559 giving fire support, the 1st section maneuvered west of highway to 238564 outflanking AT gun and capturing same. BRUYERES was taken, with approximately 50 prisoners accounted for by platoon, at 1800. Tanks had reconnoitered all streets and moved to an assembly area at 242567 to remain for the remainder of the night without further action.

The third platoon attacking from CHAMP - LE - DUC, supporting the 3rd Battalion 143 RCT with mission to secure cheese factory at 247562, an integral part of BRUYERES. This platoon also maneuvered by sections east and west of CHAMP-LE - DUC, BRUYERES road. The objective was taken at 1600 without firing on enemy. The tanks remained at 247562 in a defensive position to prevent possible counterattack from LAVELINE, for the night without action. (See Overlay Number 8)

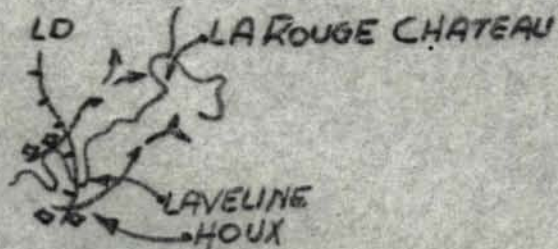
19 OCTOBER 1944

The first and third platoons remained in the same positions as 18 October without action.

20 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon moved from an assembly area in BRUYERES to support 2nd Battalion 143 in an attack southeast to 254558 then northeast to 262559.

+52
30



+48
23

1ST PLATOON SUPPORTING
"A" Co 143

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn.,
4 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
XXXV 18.

Annex No. I,
Overlay No. 1.

52
29



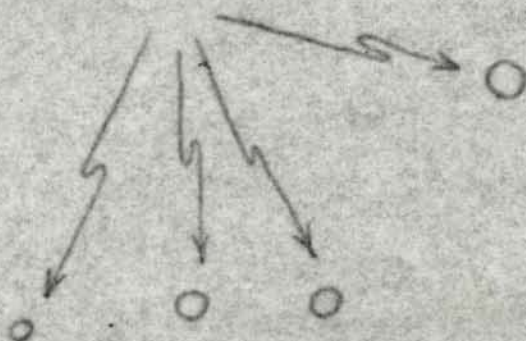
23
47

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
5 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

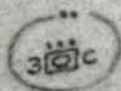
Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 2.

TARGETS



26
— 56



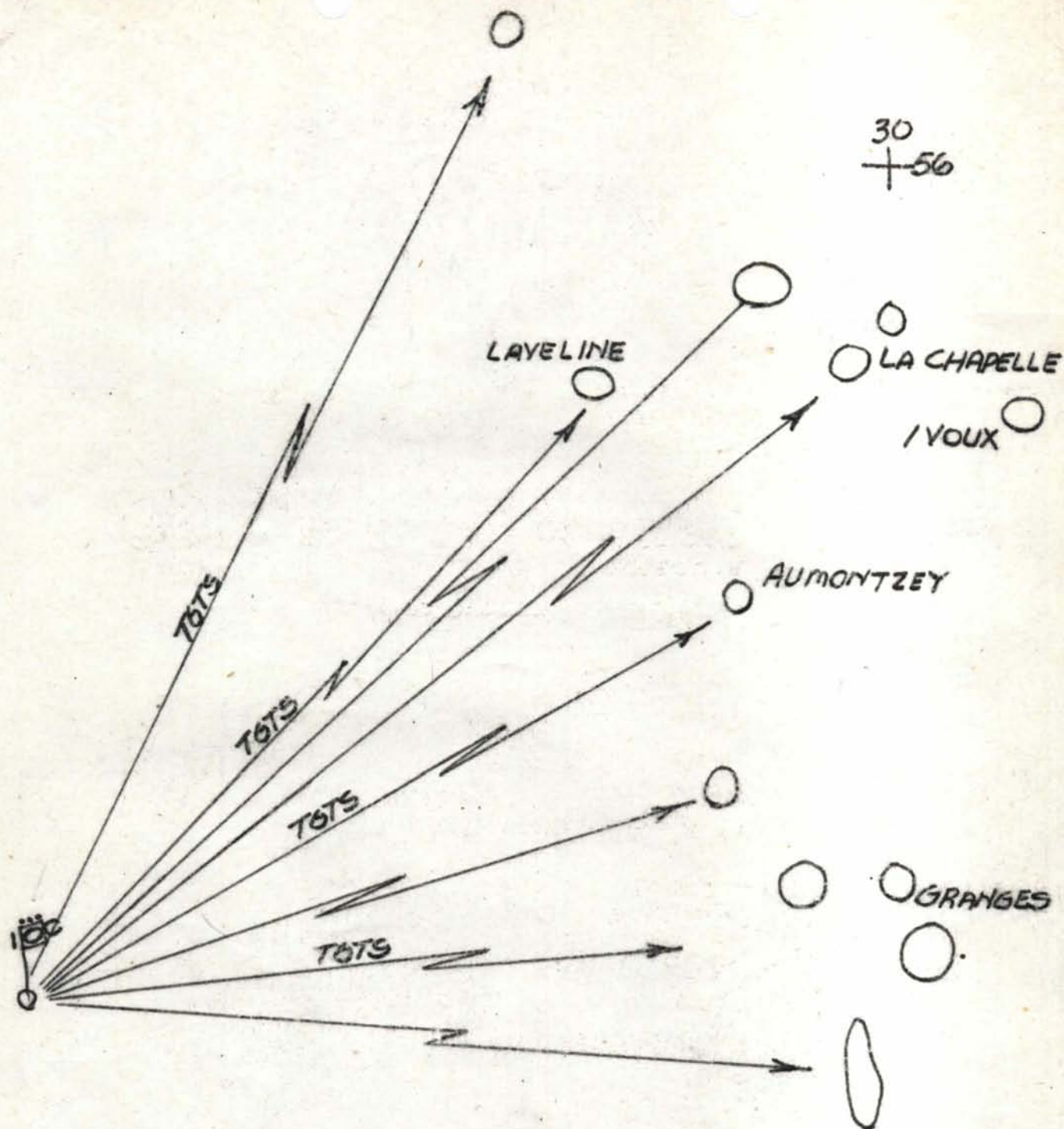
ROAD BLOCK

— 52
— 20

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
8 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

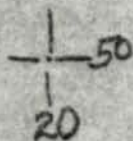
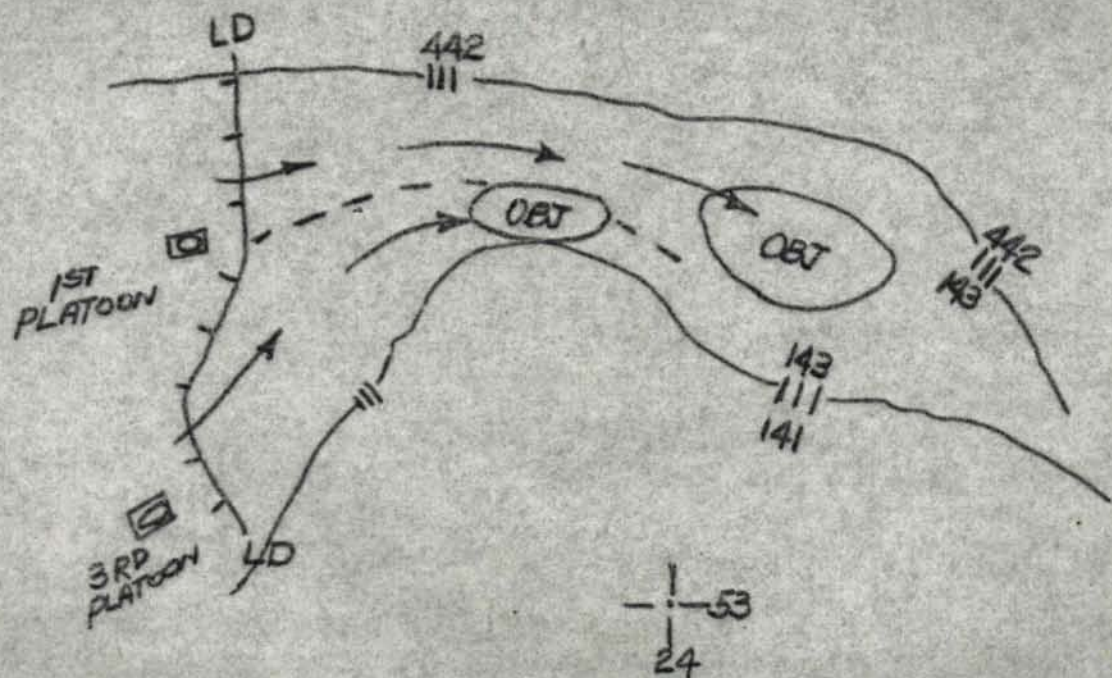
Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 3.



Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
12 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

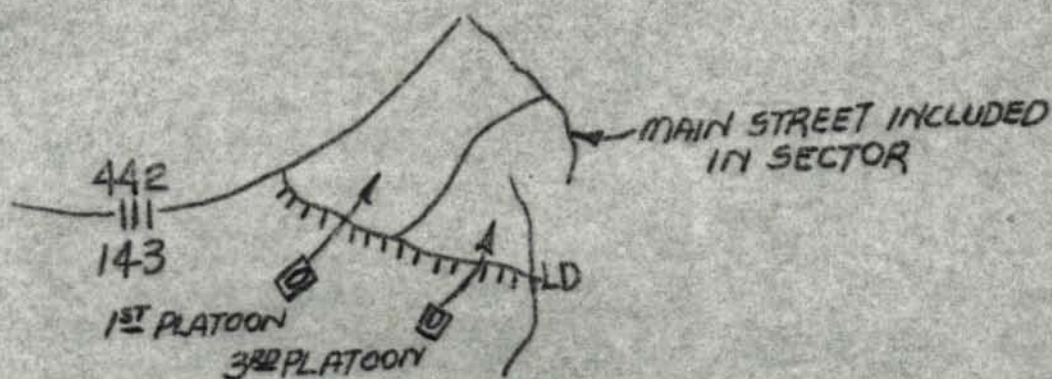


Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
15 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 5.

28
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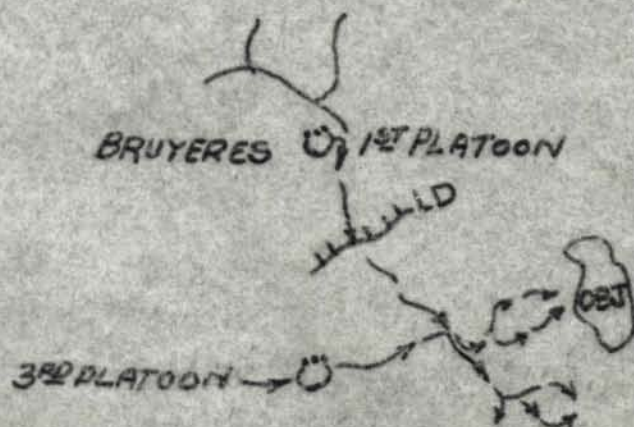
53
22

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
18 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 6.

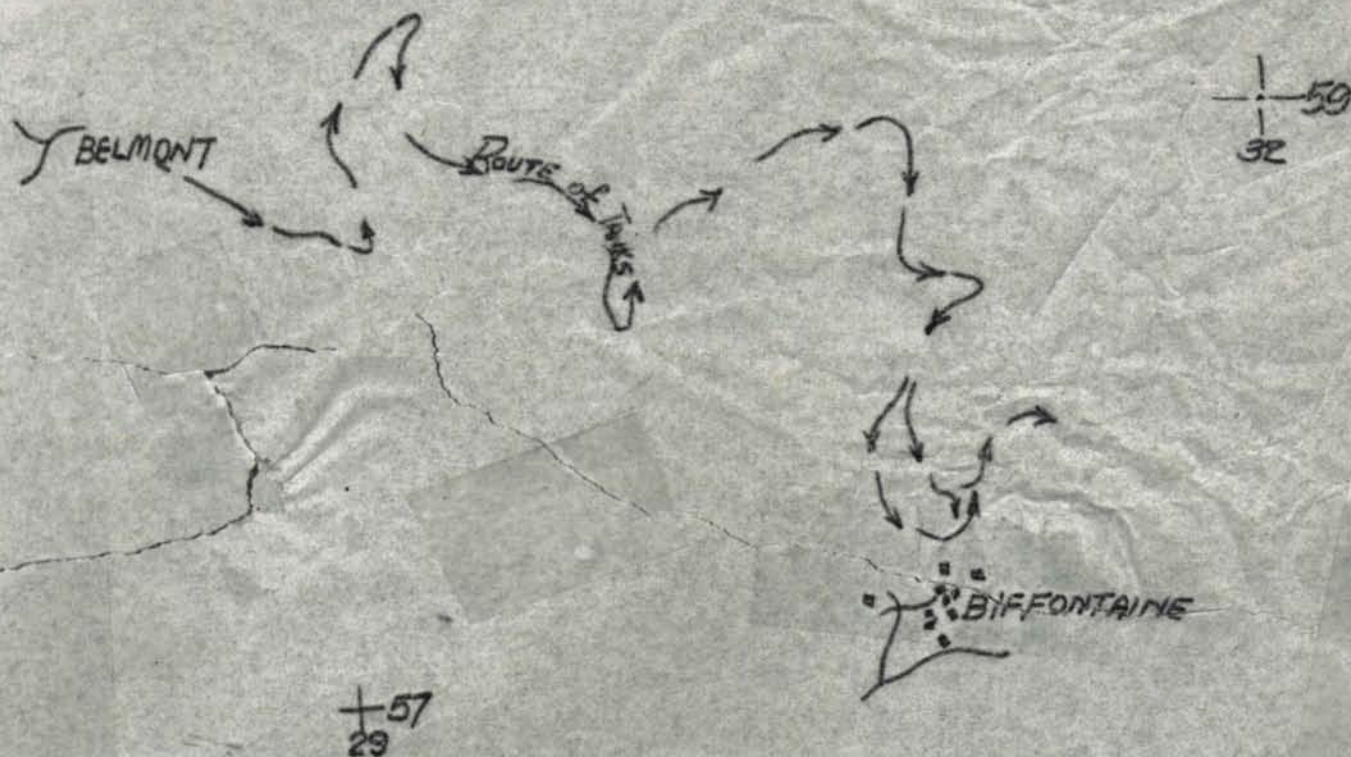
-1-50
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Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
20 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 7.



Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
28 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 8.

So. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The platoon moved along the main road BRUYERES, LAVELINE in column until reaching 254558, due to fact that the terrain along this axis of advance was soft and marshy also more concealment was afforded along the road. Upon reaching 254558 the platoon deployed and moved northeast by bounds until reaching the edge of forest, when the only route of advance was blocked by two tanks sliding off edge of the narrow trail. While these tanks were in stuck position they received fire from friendly artillery. Radioed to Company CP to have the fire discontinued. The Commanding Officer contacted 143 RCT and informed them of friendly fire; the fire was discontinued immediately. No platoon casualties resulted from the fire, however some infantry casualties were sustained. The platoon remained in their position to support by fire until dusk, at which time the vehicles were retrieved. The platoon returned to BRUYERES in assembly area, as the infantry had moved on to mountains and had no need of the tanks.

The third platoon remained in CHAMP - LE - DUC to protect the right flank of the advancing first platoon until 1600 at which time they maneuvered northeast to 254558 in support of 3rd Battalion 143 RCT. From 254558 the advance was south-east along the main road to LAVELINE to road junction at 259553 at which point they fired on enemy held houses at 266551 and 264547. The infantry was then able to move to this position and at dusk establish a road block at 261551. The platoon remained here for remainder of night without action.

21 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in an assembly area in BRUYERES without action.

The third platoon remained at road block as 20 October 1944 without action.

22 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in reserve in BRUYERES with the 2nd Battalion 143 RCT until 1900 at which time the platoon was relieved from attached to 2nd Battalion 143 RCT and attached to the 3rd Battalion 143 RCT to replace 3rd platoon at road block position at 261551. The mission of 1st platoon was to protect the right flank of the 3rd Battalion and prevent possible counterattack from LAVELINE.

The third platoon at 0700 sent one section, with one 636th T.D. section supporting, to a firing position at 263552 to assist 3rd Battalion in clearing the woods at 270550. The tanks, from deflated position, fired into the woods neutralizing approximately 10 machine guns and an unknown number of enemy. Upon completion of this mission the sections moved back to road block position with the other section. At 1330 one section was to go to 267548 and give fire support to combat patrol in clearing houses from 267548 the railroad at 270545. Upon reaching 266549 mines were detected so tanks radioed for engineers who cleared road to point 267548. The tanks then moved to positions, concealed by houses, to support patrol. However, as patrol continued to advance tanks were unable to see patrol so they moved to a position on road at 268547 to support by fire if needed. The section remained here until the patrol was observed returning after completing their mission. The tanks began returning to the road block positions and drew fire, however the mission was completed and no casualties were sustained. The platoon remained at the road block until 1900, at which time they were relieved by the 1st platoon, then returned to BRUYERES in assembly area.

23 OCTOBER 1944

The company was relieved of attachment to the RCT 143 and placed in Division Reserve. At 1800 the platoons went into an assembly area in LEPANGES at 204534.

24 OCTOBER 1944

At 1500 the company was attached to the 141 RCT remaining in LEPANGES on alert, at 1600 the company was detached from the 141 RCT and attached to the 143 RCT.

The first platoon, at 1830, left the assembly area in LEPANGES to join the 3rd Battalion at FANCOMPIERRE. The platoon remained in FANCOMPIERRE, making plans for 25 October operations.

The third platoon left the same assembly area to join the 2nd Battalion 143 to establish a road block that had previously been set up by same platoon at 261552. The mission was to protect the right flank of the Battalion and prevent armored counterattack from LAVELINE.

25 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon moved from an assembly area in FANCOMPIERRE at 2000. The platoon left at this time, due to observation on the positions the platoon was to take up in the vicinity of HERPELMONT. The mission of the platoon was to protect this sector from counterattack by the enemy from the vicinity of LAVELINE or AUMONTZEY. The second section placed at 262521 with fields of fire covering all possible avenues of approach for the enemy. One tank was placed in the town of HERPELMONT to establish CP communications. The first section took position at 256526 with the same fields of fire as the second section. By placing sections in these positions crossfire was established. No further action on 25 October.

The third platoon remained at road block as of 24 October 1944. The platoon leader made a reconnaissance for positions to fire on targets 276537, 285541 and 295535 however no positions were located in the sector desired by the Battalion. The platoon remained at same position as 24 October without action.

26 OCTOBER 1944

Both platoons remained in the same positions as 25 October without action.

27 OCTOBER 1944

The first and third platoons, from positions occupied previously (25 October) at 2000 fired direct harassing fire at enemy possible positions - 296545, 291533, 275543. No counterbattery fire was received. The firing covered a period of from 2000 to 2020, with a total of 60 rounds fired by first platoon and twenty by the third.

Prior to darkness each tank was laid in on targets to be fired on, thus no danger of firing on friendly elements beyond any targets were possible.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

As might have occurred from fire by first platoon firing on 275543; inasmuch as friendly elements were on mountain along this gun target line at 283554.

28 OCTOBER 1944

First platoon remained in the same positions in HERPELMONT vicinity - from these positions the platoon supported by fire, the attack of the 3rd platoon on the town of BIFFONTAINE by firing on targets HILL 709 and HILL at 315552. No reports on the effect of the fire were received. No counter battery fire was received. The platoon remained without further action throughout the night.

The third platoon moved from the position occupied 27 October to join 2nd Battalion 143 RCT in the vicinity of 304588. The route followed was through BRUYERES, BELMONT, and along the trail up the mountain to above position. The entire movement along the road was in an administrative tactical march. Upon arriving at the 2nd Battalion the platoon was to support the Battalion in an attack on the route leading to BIFFONTAINE, with the town of BIFFONTAINE being the objective. So far as the maneuvering of the platoon in this sector is concerned all the movement was restricted to trails, due to dense forests. The platoon gave fire support by firing HE (Super Quick) into trees thus getting tree bursts. It was necessary for the platoon to remain in the front lines with assault infantry in order to prevent firing on or tree bursts from injuring friendly troops. The platoon gave fire and movement to infantry until they reached the position 312578 when darkness prevented further advance of platoon. The platoon then remained in circular defense at this point throughout the night.

29 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained in same positions as 28 October in the HERPELMONT sector without action.

The third platoon attempted to support the 2nd Battalion 143 in an attack on HILL 623 at 315583 but was unable to follow the trail due to narrowness and boulders in trail, also unable to maneuver through the wooded terrain therefore the platoon remained in position as of night of 28 October for day and night without action.

30 OCTOBER 1944

The first platoon remained as 29 October without action.

The third platoon, the trail having been repaired by engineers 29 October, moved to a position in the vicinity of 315584 to give direct fire support on strong points at 316584 and 313585. Though the tanks were unable to deploy and maneuver to obtain shock action the direct fire of HE into strong points eliminated these strong points and allowed the infantry to take these positions as their objectives for 30 October. At darkness the tanks moved to 316583 in a defensive position against counterattack. No action resulted during the night.

31 OCTOBER 1944

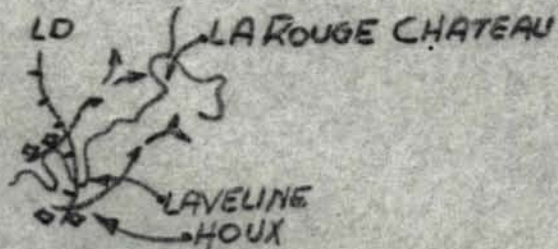
The first platoon remained in the positions as 30 October until 1900 at which time the second section moved from a defensive position at 262521 to an

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

alternate position at 263521 to fire direct harassing fire on targets at 275543, 293547, and 277534. The tank positions were selected during the day and the range and azimuth were determined by use of compass. Aiming stakes were set up for accurate laying after darkness. The fire missions was completed by 2030 without counter battery and tanks returned to their original positions for the night.

The third platoon continued the support of the 2nd Battalion in the mountains North of BIFFONTAINE. The tanks were still restricted to movement along the trails due to the dense forest. However, they were able to move into positions at 313595, and obtain field of fire through trees to eliminate strong points at 313603 and 323598 thus allowing the infantry to attain commanding ground surrounding the town of BIFFONTAINE. The platoon pulled back to 309583 for night without action.

+52
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+48
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1ST PLATOON SUPPORTING
"A" CO 143

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn.,
4 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
XXXV 18.

Annex No. I,
Overlay No. 1.

52
29



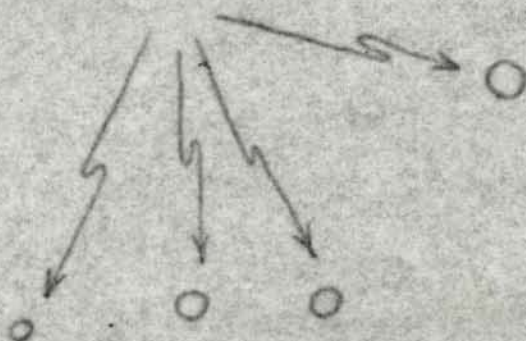
23
47

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
5 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

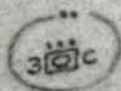
Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 2.

TARGETS



26
— 56



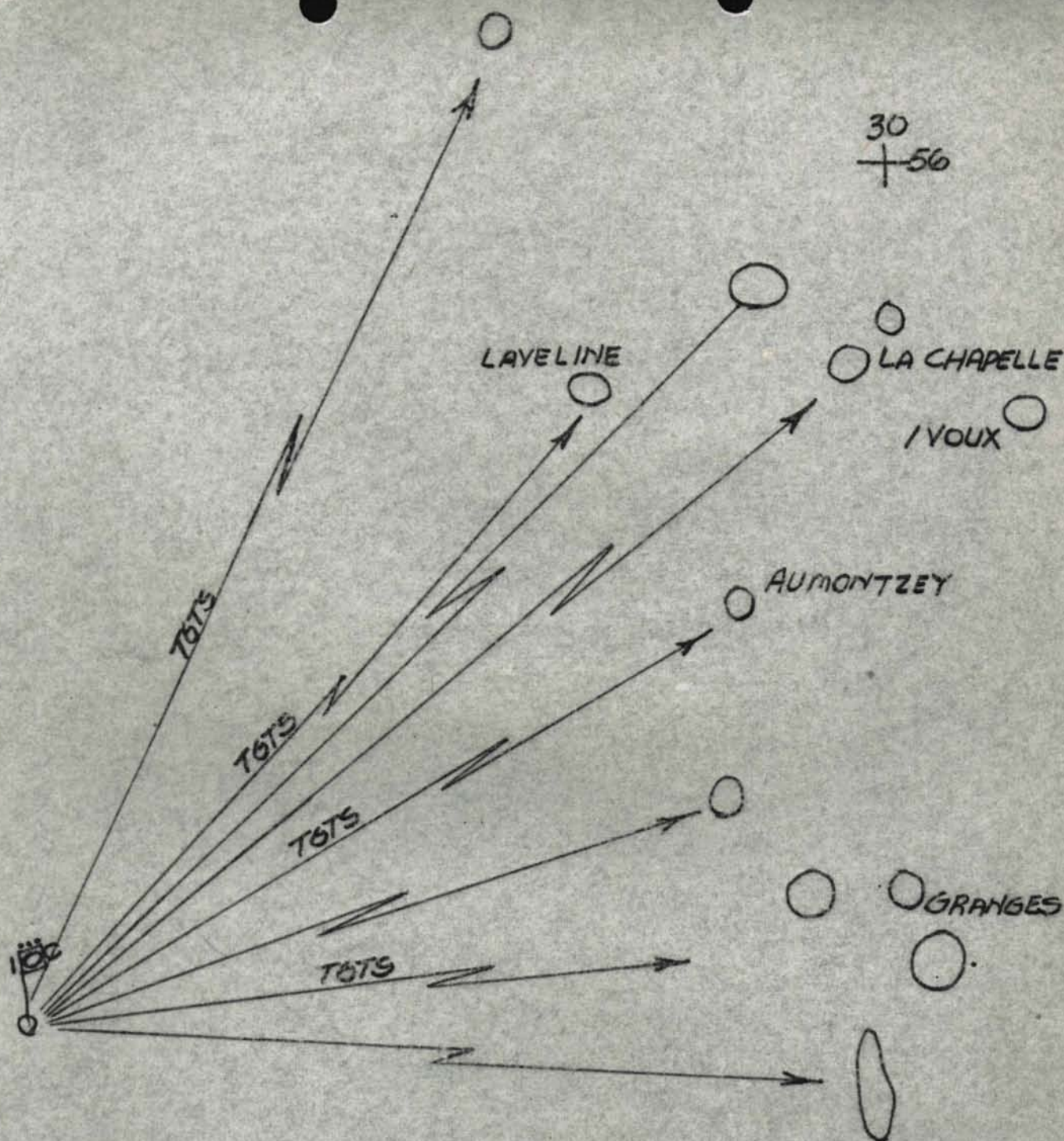
ROAD BLOCK

— 52
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20

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
8 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

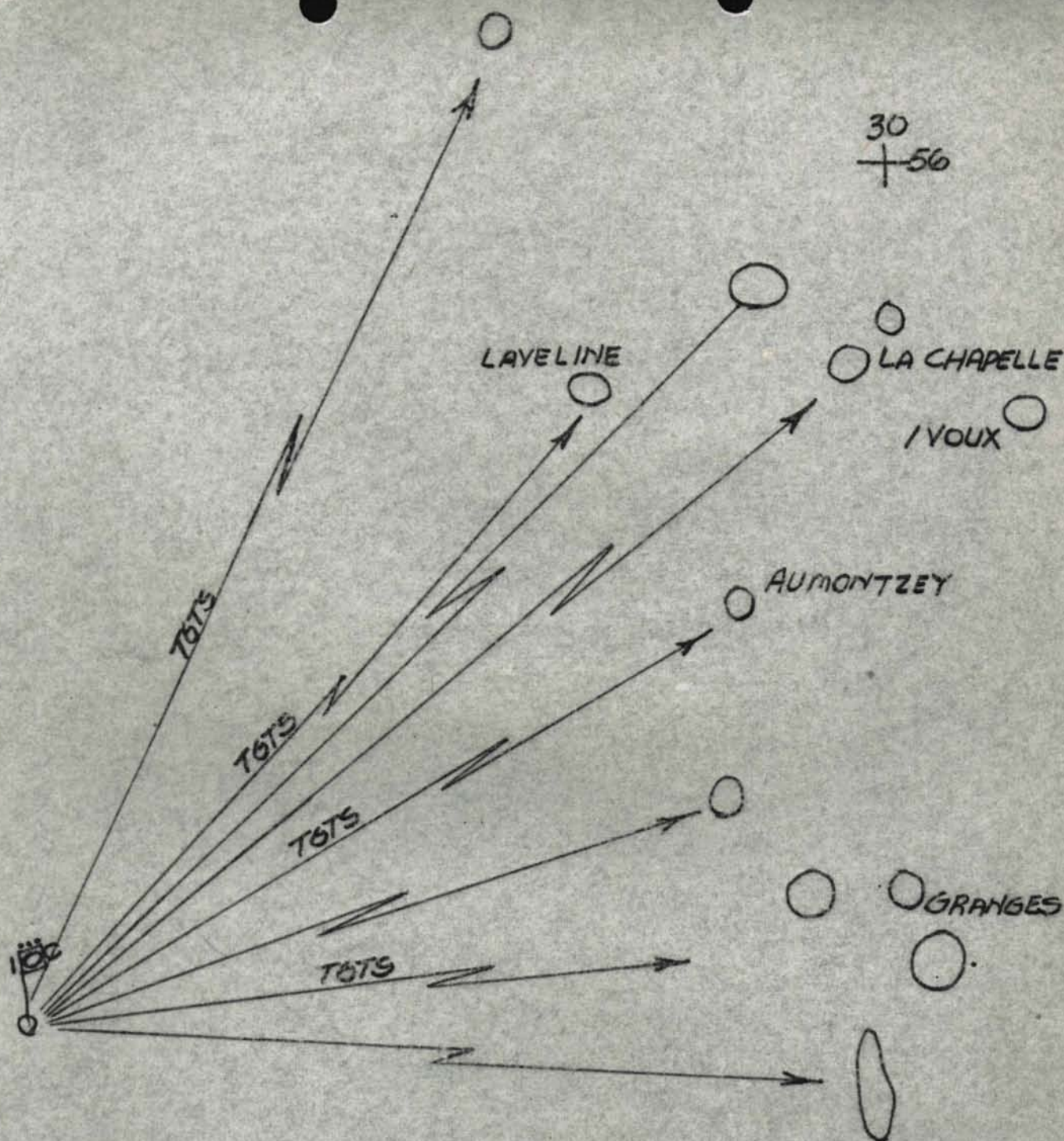
Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 3.



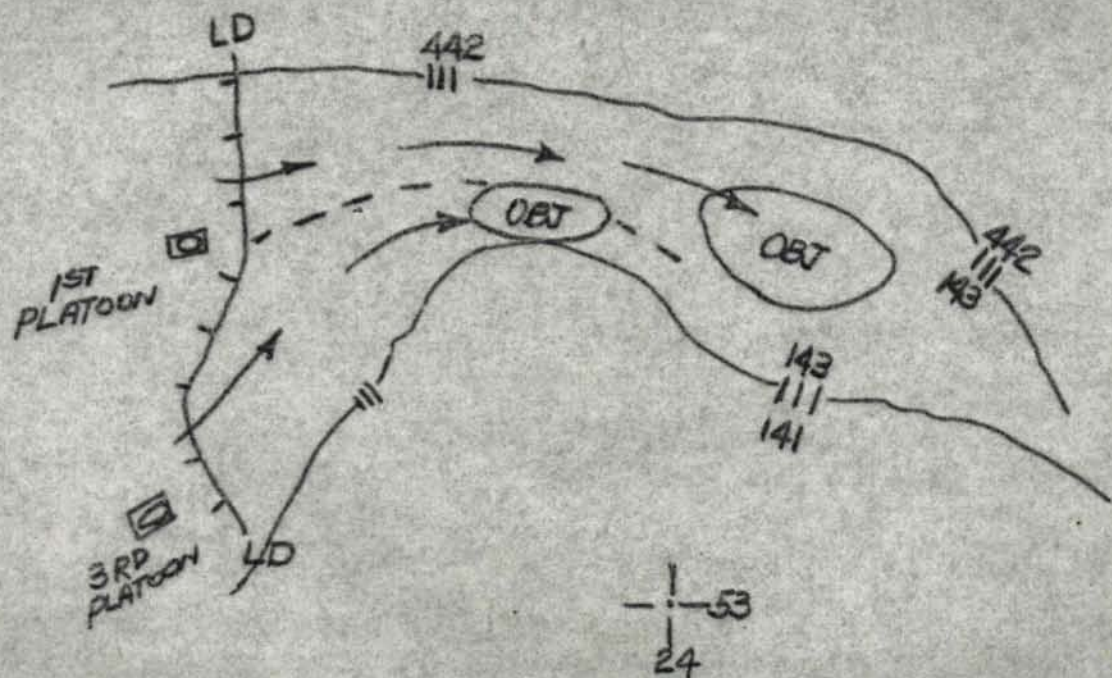
Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
12 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.



Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
12 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

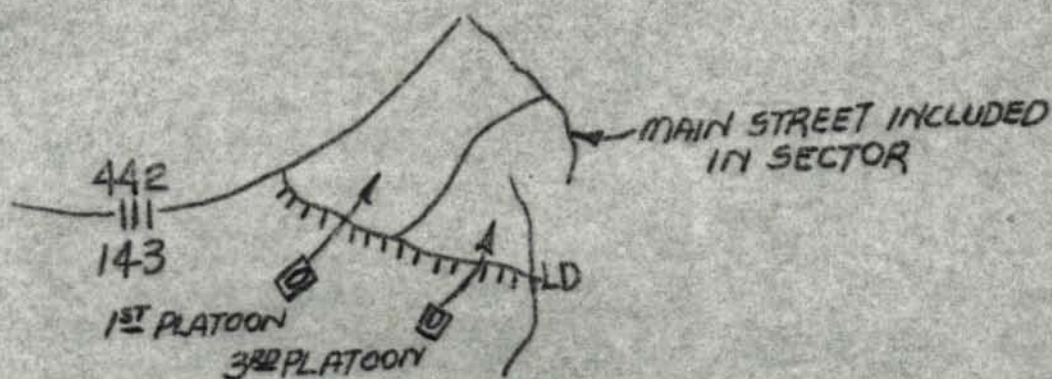


Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
15 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 5.

28
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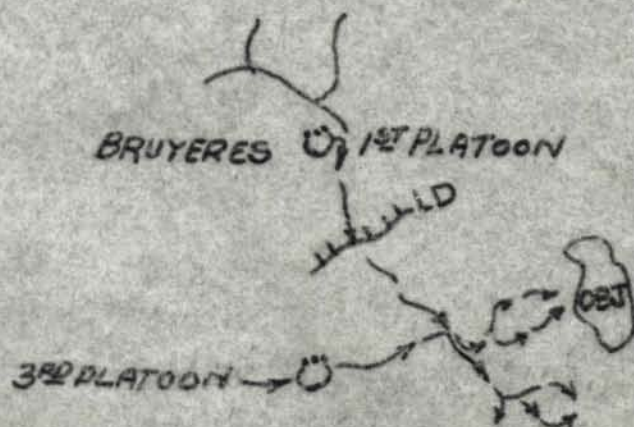
53
22

Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
18 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 6.

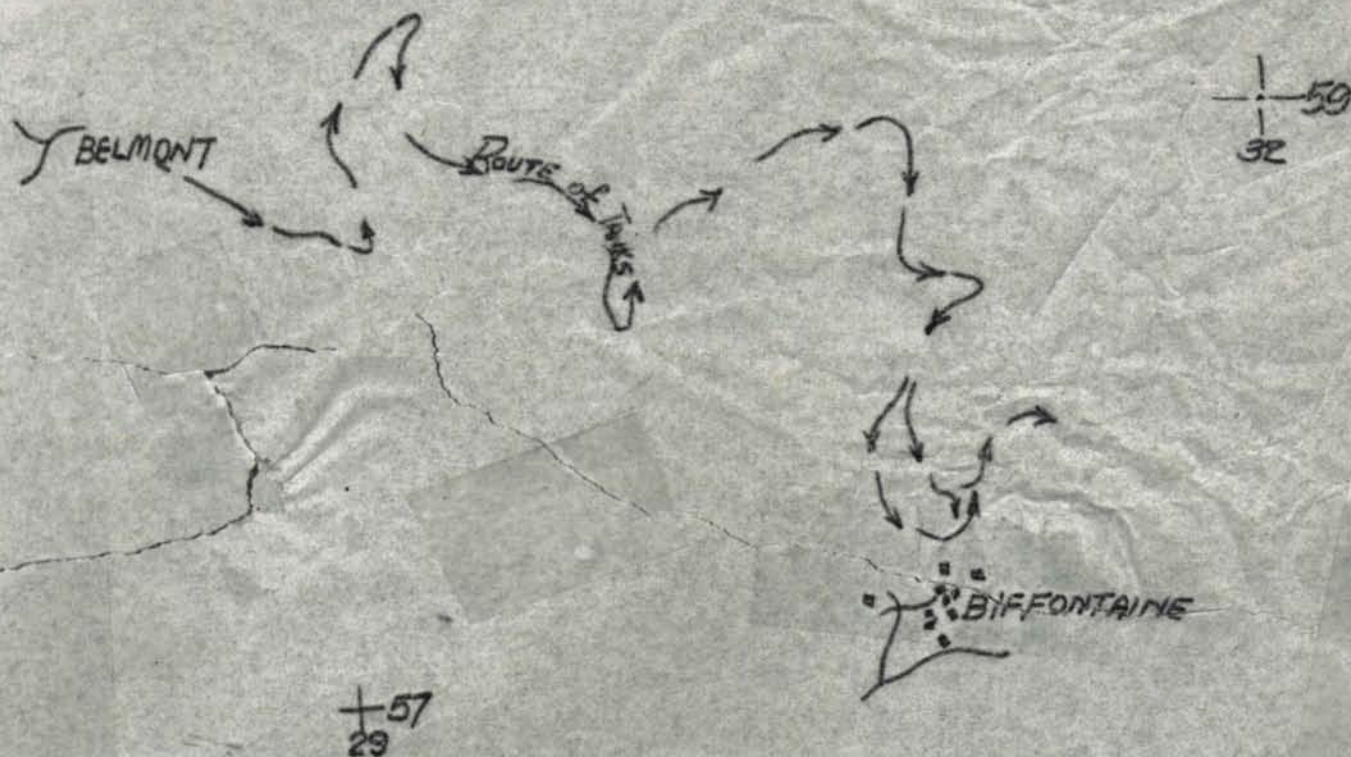
-1-50
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Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
20 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 7.



Company C,
753rd Tank Bn,
28 October 1944.
Overlay to
Accompany Diary.

Map: France, 1/50,000,
Sheet XXXV 18.

Annex No. 1,
Overlay No. 8.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #758, U. S. Army

20 November 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for Month of October 1944

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army

At the beginning of the period the various elements were attached as follows:

- Company "A" to 141st Infantry Regiment
- Company "B" to 143rd Infantry Regiment
- Company "C" to 142nd Infantry Regiment
- One platoon of Company "D" to 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop.
- One platoon of Company "D" to 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.
- "X" Battery (Prov.) to 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion.

On 5 October Colonel Felber was ordered by Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, to assume command of all elements of the Purdy Force, consisting of: 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop; Companies "B" and "C" of 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion; Reconnaissance Company, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion; Company "B" of 753rd Tank Battalion; AT Company (dismounted), 141st Infantry Regiment; and two platoons, Company "B", 111th Engineer Battalion. The mission of the "Felber Force" was to maintain contact between the 36th Infantry Division and the 45th Infantry Division on the left; to hold present positions of the force; to protect the left flank of the 36th Infantry Division; to create the impression by means of aggressive patrols and harrassing fire, that the main effort of the division would come from the vicinity of FAYS; and to be prepared to garrison the woods at V-228539. The initial dispositions and area covered see Annex #1, Overlay #1.

The "Felber Force" sector was divided by the RIVER VOLOGNE VALLEY, about one fourth of the sector being on the southeast side of the valley. The town of PREY, our anchor on the southeast side of the river was at the mouth of a valley that ran perpendicular to the VOLOGNE. The enemy held the high ground (Hill 512) to the northeast with approximately one company of infantry supported by mortars. Friendly troops held the high ground to the south and southeast. The town of FAYS, our anchor for the northern sector was a little better situated. There were enemy outposts on Hill 479, about 1500 yards northeast of the town; but this ridge line was almost bare and observation on it from FAYS was excellent. The FORET DE FAITE extended from FAYS north to the 45th Division Boundary. The FORET was thick enough to preclude the movement of any appreciable number of troops cross country and the enemy had conveniently blocked all of the trails with fallen trees.

Constant physical contact was maintained with the 141stRCT on our right as the unit dispositions were immediately adjacent. Contact with the right flank of the 45th Infantry Division was maintained by scheduled dismounted patrols and by having a radio car with the right flank battalion of that division.

Our force was not large enough to physically hold all of the ground between the two divisions. Therefore the Commanding Officer decided to maintain the strongpoints at PREY and FAYS, the road block at CR 217542, and to establish listening posts at the trail junctions in the FORET DE FAITE. The purpose of these listening posts was to report any enemy activity in the forest.

Historical Narrative for October(cont'd)

The 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop at FAYS was ordered to send out at least three patrols a night to the east and northeast, one of the patrols to have a mission of capturing a prisoner. The troop was also ordered to institute strong counterpatrol measures with emphasis on booby traps and mine fields covered by machine gun fire.

Company "B", 753rd Tank Battalion, was ordered to have two roving tanks operate in the area between LEPANGES and FAYS with a mission of firing on any known or suspected enemy installations. The tanks in indirect firing positions in the vicinity of DEYCLIMONT were given the same mission as were two M-10 Tank Destroyers in position at V223533. All of this firing was done on a time and ammunition expenditure schedule furnished by the Force Headquarters.

On 6 October, Company "B" and Reconnaissance Company (less one platoon) of the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion were released to their parent unit by order of the Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division. This Tank Destroyer Company was in indirect fire positions in the vicinity of DEYCLIMONT and their principle missions were harrassing fires for 36th Division Artillery, so that their loss did not greatly affect the Felber Force. Two platoons of the Reconnaissance Company were in dismounted defensive positions in the vicinity of PREY and since we were losing one of these platoons, Colonel Felber asked that we be assigned an infantry company. This company would be used to replace one of the Reconnaissance platoons and to strengthen our positions between FAYS and the left flank of the 141st AT Company prior to daylight on the 7th.

During the morning of the 7th two platoons of Company "C" were released from the 143rd Infantry Regiment and rejoined the Battalion as Felber Force reserve. In the afternoon one platoon of the AT Company, 142nd Infantry was attached to the Force and were placed so as to strengthen the road block on the LEPANGES-L.V.L. road.

The situation remained essentially the same from the eighth through the tenth. Our patrols reported well dug in enemy in the woods at V228539 and V225545. Our patrols and those of the 141st Infantry reported that the woods vicinity of V236536 were strongly held by the enemy. From the PW reports our efforts in the FAYS area had met with some success; the outposts on Hill 479 had been reinforced by a battalion of 150-200 men. The enemy continued to shell the town of PREY with heavy mortars and medium artillery and to harrass our outposts there with sniper fire. Several of the engineers were killed and/or wounded including two of the best section leaders in the company.

The Force Commander and the Commanding Officer 141st Infantry Regiment completed plans for the Felber Force to mop up and garrison the woods at V228539 (Hill 512) as soon as they were cleared by the 141st Infantry. These woods were reported clear except for a few snipers and anti-personnel mines at 1520 on October 11th. At 1530 Company "H", 36th Engineer (C) Regiment was ordered to move into the woods in accordance with previous instructions.

The woods runs along the top of a sharp ridge and is approximately 700 yards long and 150 to 350 yards wide. There are three trails running north over the ridge that go through the woods and several interior trails to connect the N-E trails; none of these interior trails go the length of the woods. The plan was to have one section of medium tanks with a squad of engineers attached for ground security to move to the western tip of the woods to prevent a counterattack from the woods at V225545; for the company, less one platoon, to move through the short axis of the woods in two columns and to outpost the northern edge of the woods.

Unit Historical Report for October (cont'd)

The tanks and attached engineers reached their objective without difficulty. One platoon (12 EM and 1 Off) entered the woods at V232337. About 50 yards inside the woods they ran into heavy small arms and AW fire, were driven out, and set up a strong point in a house at V233534. The other platoon (25 EM and 1 Officer) entered the woods at V231536. They also met heavy small arms and AW fire and were unable to advance, however they dug in in the vicinity of 229537. During the night this platoon infiltrated to the western tip of the woods. The infiltration process was one of those things that "just happen". Even the platoon leader was unaware of the the process until he made an inspection to find the missing men, so by daylight the entire platoon (-4 dead) were at the western tip.

Both of the groups continued to draw fire during the morning of the 12th. The Force Commander decided that due to their physical, their mental condition, the engineers would not be able to clear the woods without infantry assistance; therefore, during the afternoon both platoons were ordered to disengage and assemble in the vicinity of V235535. They disengaged by 1500 and were all assembled by 1700.

The Commanding Officer of the 36th Engineer (C) Regiment visited the CP on the afternoon of the 12th and Colonel Felber recommended that Company "H" be replaced with a fresh company. Company "I", 36th Engineer (C) Regiment relieved Company "H" prior to daylight on the 13th. Two platoons of this company attacked the woods at 0705A after a 4.2 mortar and artillery preparation. This time the attack jumped off from Road Junction 234537 and moved along the long axis of the ridge. The objective was cleared of the enemy by 1000L and was thoroughly organized for defense by 1300.

From the eighth through the thirteenth the 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troops fired approximately 400 rounds of 81mm mortar, principally at Hill 479 and the woods at V225545. Several artillery battalions established OP's in the vicinity of FAYS and any profitable targets picked up by the troop were fired on by these OP's. The troop continued to improve their positions. Their booby traps were supplemented by trip-flares, these coupled with irregularly fired 60mm flare bombs made enemy patrolling almost nil. During this time it was not always possible to use the roving tanks for direct harrassing fire due to poor visibility, but the fire of the tanks from DEYCIMONT was continued.

Late in the afternoon Company "C", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and Company "B", 753rd Tank Battalion were relieved from the Felber Force and attached to the 442nd RCT. With the woods V228539 secure the loss of the Tank Destroyers was not serious. Colonel Felber requested that the tanks be allowed to remain in position and fire for the Felber Force until such time as it was absolutely necessary that they move to the 442nd Infantry Regiment area. This request was granted.

On the 14th the 36th Reconnaissance Troop passed to the control of the 442nd RCT at 1900L and the Felber Force was relieved of the responsibility of maintaining contact with the 45th Infantry Division.

At 0800L on 15 October elements of the 36th Division attacked through the Felber Force and the force reverted to 36th Division Reserve. All elements of the Force except Company "I" 36th Engineer and one platoon, Reconnaissance Company, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion reverted to control of their parent units. These two elements assembled in the vicinity of LEPANGES. For the 15th October attack by the 36th Division, Company "L" was attached to the 141st RCT, Company "B" to the 442nd RCT, Company "C" to the 143rd RCT, and "X" Battery to the 93rd Armored Field Artillery. Company "D" was under Battalion control in an assembly area in the vicinity of LE ROULIER. (See Annex #1 - OI 141400).

Historical Narrative for October (cont'd)

Company "I", 36th Engineer Regiment reverted to control of the 36th Engineer Regiment on the 17th, and the Felber Force was dissolved.

The Felber Force was reconstituted and attached to the 442nd RCT on 19 October at 1900h. The Force to consist of 753rd Tank Battalion (-"A", "C", and "D" Companies); Company "C" (-1 platoon), 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion; 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop; one platoon, 111th Engineer (C) Battalion; and one platoon (25EM and 1 Officer), Company "A", 100th Infantry Battalion. The mission of the force was to attack and capture BELMONT, reconnoiter the valley to include VERVEZELLE and DOMFAING, block to the north and northwest, protect the north flank of the Division and to maintain contact with the 442nd RCT on the right and the 45th Infantry Division on the left. (See Annex # 2).

The Felber Force assembled in BRUYERES prior to daylight on the 20th and prepared to fulfill its missions in accordance with Operations Instruction, dated 192000 October 1942, attached hereto as Annex #

The valley in which BELMONT and VERVEZELLE are situated is roughly bowl shaped. To the southeast and northeast it is bounded by the steep ridges of the FORET DOMINIE. On the northwest it is bounded by the equally steep FORET DE FAITE. The southwest side does not complete the bowl because it is not closed by a ridge; however, this opening is dominated by two almost equally spaced hills about 590 meters high. The bowl is approximately 4000 meters long and 2000 meters wide. It is generally open except for small scattered wooded areas. The ground formation itself is rolling to hilly. It has been extensively cultivated and the rain of the past few weeks has made cross country operation all but impossible for tanks.

The road leading to VERVEZELLE from BRUYERES is a good country road passable for armor. The road leading to BELMONT from BRUYERES is a good metallic road suitable for all types of transportation. A railroad parallels the eastern side of this road for approximately a thousand yards. The railway overpass crosses the road in vicinity V274583 and is roughly 15 feet in height. From this point to the southwest the railway embankment slopes downward. In vicinity of V271577 the embankment is approximately one and a half feet above road level and suitable for an armored crossing. Beyond this point to the southwest and south the railroad passes through a cut of such dimensions as to make it an armored obstacle. The overpass at 262566 has been blown. The overpass at 274583 is still intact but it is not known if it is prepared for demolition.

As far as can be determined, the wooded areas are thickly populated with big trees making it unsuitable for tank action.

The situation as it existed prior to daylight on the 20th was roughly as follows:

Elements of RCT 442 had taken and cleared the two hill masses east of BRUYERES in grid square 25-57. A battalion of the 442nd RCT was held up in eastern and southern edge of woods south of the BELMONT road, and north of the railroad bend at 265566 by enemy troops east and south of the railroad. The hill mass west of VERVEZELLE in grid square 25-58 was held by the enemy.

Information gained from the infantry and patrols of 36th Reconnaissance Troop disclosed that the BELMONT road and the field adjacent to it from Road Junction at 255569 to 257570 was heavily mined with ramp mines; that the BELMONT road from the hairpin turn at 263573 to 266574 was mined with ramp mines and that the trees along this stretch had been prepared with demolitions for felling. No information was available on the VERVEZELLE road since it was still controlled by

Historical Narrative for October (cont'd)

the Germans.

Because of the above information the engineers were directed to begin clearing the BELMONT road at daylight. It was estimated that this work would be completed prior to 0900.

Earlier in the evening message was received from Commanding Officer 442nd RCT that attack was postponed to 1130; that one battalion, 442nd RCT would attack hill mass in grid square 25-58 at 0800A; and that the attack of Task Force Felber would jump off after the battalion in eastern edge of woods in grid square 25-57 crossed the BELMONT road. This necessitated a change in our OI. The attacking force of the Felber Task Force was directed to wait in BRUYERES until 1130A and then begin its movement on BELMONT. The Reconnaissance Platoon with a section of tanks attached which was to proceed to VERVEZELLE, was directed to wait in BRUYERES until ordered to move. Its movement was dependent upon the success of the attack on the hill mass west of VERVEZELLE. The Mobile reserve was directed to follow the attacking column by bounds.

At daylight the engineer platoon began its work of clearing the BELMONT road of mines. A patrol of the 36th Reconnaissance proceeded on its mission of reconnoitering the BELMONT road from the hairpin turn to the northeast. Elements of the 143rd RCT began passing through BRUYERES to take up their position south-east of BRUYERES.

By 1000A the clearing of mines east of the road junction at 255569 was almost completed. The engineers had been hampered by German sniper fire coming from the woods vicinity 256573, supposedly cleared by elements of the 442nd RCT. Enemy artillery fire also contributed to the delay. One shell hit an exposed ramp mine detonating it and several others and resulted in the loss of a complete engineer squad.

The patrol sent out at daylight was, on its return to BRUYERES, fired on by German snipers in the same vicinity previously reported by the engineers. Engaged in a small fire fight without result. The patrol reported it was not able to pass beyond 267573. It had received small arms fire from the woods to the right and left of the road.

Enemy shelling now became more frequent along the BELMONT road, in BRUYERES, and in the sector occupied by elements of the 143rd RCT.

By 1100 the engineers completed demining the road strip. They were unable to proceed up the BELMONT road because of the sniper fire. They withdrew to the eastern edge of BRUYERES. When first reported, this information had been relayed to the 442nd RCT, which in turn had directed its nearest elements to clean it up.

By this time the battalion attacking the hill mass of VERVEZELLE had gained the hill and was still meeting stubborn resistance.

At 1130A the attacking force of Task Force Felber proceeded on its mission. As the leading elements cleared the road junction at 255569, it received an enemy artillery concentration killing 2 EM and wounding 3 others. Sniper fire was also received from the same point previously reported. One of the tanks following the leading infantry element had skidded off the road and thrown its track.

The infantry commander reorganized his leading elements. Since the sniper fire hadn't been cleared up and in order to by-pass the artillery fire, he withdrew his elements to the cemetery. From that point he circled the nose of the

Historical Narrative for October (cont'd)

ridge and entered the southwestern tip of the woods and proceeded on his mission. He directed his armor to wait in its present location until called for, where it would proceed up the BELMONT road and rejoin the column at the hairpin turn. Shortly thereafter the infantry cleaned up the sniper situation. It had killed three Germans, captured two diarrhea guns and a machine gun. Its further progress through the woods was without incident.

At 1330 message was received from the Commanding Officer 442nd RCT that the enemy infantry and tanks were forming for counterattack south of BELMONT--size unknown. Also at this time word was received that the infantry of Task Force Fulber had reached the hairpin turn and desired the armor to join it. Orders were issued for the supporting armor to proceed immediately up the BELMONT road. Information of the German counterattack forming up was relayed to them.

By this time information was received from the 3-3 442nd RCT that the hill mass west of VERVEZELLE was taken. Orders were then issued to the Reconnaissance Platoon Leader, assigned the mission of proceeding to VERVEZELLE, to move out.

By 1400 the supporting armor had joined the infantry at the hairpin turn. Its progress was halted because the engineers were then engaged in cleaning the food of ramp mines.

All platoon leaders of the attacking force except the Reconnaissance platoon leader proceeded on a foot reconnaissance for routes off the road--a passage thru the woods around the mine field and for suitable firing positions to break up the counterattack. While these officers were gone the attacking force was again subjected to sniper fire coming from vicinity 261574. The Reconnaissance Platoon leader then in command ordered two of his squads to clean it up.

The officers on reconnaissance were unable to find any trails or routes thru the woods for armor to by-pass the mined road and continue on its mission. From certain vantage points the terrain could be observed to BELMONT. No visible evidences could be seen of a counterattack. Elements of the 2nd Battalion, 442nd RCT were contacted and found to be in position along the northeast and eastern edge of the woods south of the hairpin turn. These troops reported hearing German tanks moving around on the other side of the woods in vicinity 266574. Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 442nd RCT had also been contacted in woods northeast of the hairpin turn at 263574. Information received from them indicated that some Germans and a machine gun were in the woods vicinity 265574. Reconnaissance also disclosed that the armor halted in its present position was road bound because of the thick woods on its right and a sharp drop off of terrain on its left.

Since the armor was forced to wait on the engineers until they completed demining the road, the infantry commander decided to attack and clear out the woods vicinity 265574. It is to be noted that the original strength of this infantry platoon when it joined the Task Force consisted of one officer and 25 EM. The shelling received in the morning had reduced him to 20 EM. This attack was successful. Little opposition was encountered and the small patch of woods was cleared without suffering a casualty.

In the meantime reliable information had been received at Force CP from several sources that German tanks reported forming for counterattack were actually moving NW from BELMONT. This was relayed to the Infantry Commander. The two squads sent out to mop up the snipers returned after an unsuccessful search for the snipers.

Historical Narrative for October (cont'd)

While the infantry was attacking the woods in vicinity 266574, the artillery FO had found a vantage point in vicinity of 264571, that afforded him partial observation over the woods to the north toward DOMFAING and perfect observation toward BELMONT. While observing toward DOMFAING the FO thought he spotted something camouflaged in edge of woods vicinity of 566578. He reported this to the armored platoon leader. Attempts were made to get a TD in position to fire, but because of the woods and the terrain, it was impossible to get any armor in position to take this suspected target, believed to be a tank, under fire. He then had his battery fire on the target. This fire dislodged the camouflage disclosing a German tank and another one behind it. Both withdrew to the north and were lost under cover of the woods.

The Reconnaissance Platoon ordered to proceed to VERVEZELLE had, when it reached the vicinity of 253579, come under a heavy concentration of artillery fire forcing it to withdraw to the woods in vicinity 252574. It then dismounted and proceeded on foot to carry out its mission. When it reached the same vicinity of 253579, it again received artillery fire forcing it to withdraw. On its withdrawal it was fired on by snipers from the draw in vicinity of 255576. Upon reaching the woods the platoon leader organized a combat patrol to clean up these snipers. Proceeding in an easterly direction thru the woods to outflank the draw, he encountered elements of the 442nd RCT, whom in turn informed him that Jerry was still holding the ridge northeast of the draw; That they had suffered quite a few casualties and had as yet been unable to clean it up. The Reconnaissance Platoon leader then returned and informed the tank commander of the situation. The tank commander moved his tank along the edge of the woods until stopped by an accident of terrain. The tank commander was unable to fire because of the danger of hitting our own troops in the vicinity and therefore returned.

When the information of the two German tanks spotted by the FO was relayed to the Task Force CP orders were issued to the section leader of the tanks with the Reconnaissance Platoon to push forward to the edge of the woods in vicinity of 256581 and engage the enemy armor. Our three tanks moved out promptly when the lead tank reached point at 255580, it hit a ramp mine and was disabled in the middle of the road. The smoke from this explosion was spotted by German observers and immediately resulted in CP and artillery fire being fired at the disabled tank.

The second tank tried to work around the disabled tank but bogged down in the soft field off the right of the road. It had a great deal of difficulty in extricating itself but finally managed to regain the road. Not being able to go around the disabled tank to the left, both tanks withdrew to their former position. Robert was rendered to Force CP of the loss of the tank. The Reconnaissance Platoon leader was then directed to reconnoiter a route for the armor around the north edge of the woods in grid square 25-57 for a suitable route to VERVEZELLE and then proceed on his mission.

By 1745 the engineers had completed dominating the BELMONT road and report rendered to Force CP. Since it had begun to get dark the attacking force was directed to hold its present position for the night with exception of the Engineer platoon which was to return to BRUYERES because it was being relieved by another platoon from the same organization. This order was misinterpreted and resulted in the entire attacking force returning to BRUYERES. This was rectified immediately. The infantry and armor returned to the vicinity of the hairpin turn and outposted the area for the night.

Historical Narrative for October (cont'd)

By this time the Reconnaissance Platoon leader searching for another route to VERVEZELLE reported he had been unsuccessful. Based on a coming change of plan from division, he was directed to assemble for the night in vicinity of 252574.

Information received from 4-3 442nd RCT disclosed that late in the afternoon, the 100th Battalion of the 442nd RCT, then occupying the hill mass to the west of VERVEZELLE, had sent two companies to clean up the snipers on the ridge north of woods in grid square 25-57. He also disclosed that the 7th Infantry was taking over the hill mass in grid square 25-58 during the night and attacking toward DOMFAING at daylight on the 21st. Mission for Task Force Felber remained the same.

Plans for the continuation of the attack on BELMONT were drawn up, a copy of which is appended as Annex #3.

At 2230 Major Johnston, the Battalion Executive Officer, was ordered to assume command of the group attacking BELMONT and to carry out the mission in accordance with Operations Instructions this Headquarters, dated 231800 October. Major Johnston left the CP immediately for the hairpin turn at 263573 in order to contact the officers of the elements already there. These officers informed him that they could still hear at least one of the enemy tanks running its motor; exact location undetermined, but somewhere north of the hairpin turn. A bazooka patrol was ordered to go out and locate the tank and destroy it if possible. This patrol left about 2330 and returned some two hours later and reported that they were unable to locate the tank. Since the motor noise ceased about 0100, it is assumed that the tank managed to free itself from the mud and departed for parts unknown.

Meanwhile, the plan of attack was given to the various elements of the group. The infantry, Cavalry and Engineer leaders were given ample time to completely brief their men. The combat patrol left the vicinity of 266574 promptly at 0315. Formation of the patrol: the infantry platoon on the left of the road; the reconnaissance platoon on the right of the road, guiding on the infantry; the engineers on the road checking for and clearing mines, approximately 200-300 yards behind the infantry. The infantry platoon carried four rolls of combat wire and a sound-power telephone. This wire was laid as the infantry advanced and served a dual purpose: first, it provided fast, clear communication to the rear, and second, it provided a means of measuring the distance the patrol had advanced.

The patrol moved very slowly partly because of the inky black night and partly because they suspected that the enemy tank was still somewhere on their left flank. However, they met no resistance and at 0625 Major Johnston called the Force Commander, reported that the patrol was in the southern edge of town, and that the tanks and tank destroyers had been ordered to join them as quickly as possible. One tank and one tank destroyer left immediately. The remainder of the tanks and Tank Destroyers moved out as soon as the remainder of the troops in the vicinity of the hairpin turn had climbed aboard and by 0728 these reinforcements had arrived in BELMONT. Meanwhile the patrol had already started checking all of the houses in town. They found ten stragglers, but met no fire. By 0800 hours, road blocks had been established by the tanks and TD's on the four roads to the north and northeast out of the town and a reserve, with armor had been established in the southern edge of the town with a mission of protecting the town to the west. Each road block consisted of either 2 tanks and one Tank Destroyer or 2 Tank Destroyers and one tank with about 12 men to provide ground

Historical Narrative for October (cont'd)

security. There was a very heavy fog and visibility was limited to 75-100 yards. More ground security for the road blocks would have been desirable but the personnel were not available.

At 1055 the S-2 of the 442nd Infantry Regiment called and said that the 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop and the platoon of the 111th Engineers were detached from Felber Force. The 36th Reconnaissance Troop was to report to the Commanding Officer 442nd Infantry Regiment and the engineers reverted to the control of their parent unit. The Force Commander immediately requested a company of infantry to replace the elements we were losing. The request was made to the 442nd Infantry Regiment and the 36th Infantry Division.

Colonel Felber suspected that an infantry company would not be available so he ordered that Headquarters and Service Companies alert every available man to provide a replacement group for the elements the force was losing. At 1305 the Division G3 called and reported that an infantry company was not available to replace the Reconnaissance Troop, but that we could keep the engineer platoon until the morning of the 25th. In all, Headquarters and Service Companies had managed about 65 men. These were moved into BELMONT and took over the security positions around the road blocks. These men gave an excellent account of themselves and on the morning of 26 October they turned in 26 PW's to the 442nd PW Enclosure.

At 1230 on the 24th the Executive Officer of the 442nd Infantry ordered that a platoon of light tanks and the platoon of Company "A", 100th Infantry Battalion attached to the Felber Force, move from Belmont to make contact with the 100th Infantry Battalion. The supply route of this battalion had been cut and they were in need of additional ammunition. By 1300 the 1st platoon of Company "D" had contacted the platoon of Company "A" in BELMONT and at 1310 they left town by way of the road to the east of the town with the infantry riding on the tanks.

The urgency of the situation precluded any prior reconnaissance and the contact group started over the trail selected with only a prayer for guidance. When they reached the 29 Easting they ran into well dug in enemy riflemen and machine guns. The trail itself was not very well covered by the enemy weapons, so the tanks moved on up it with all possible speed and with all guns firing. Surprisingly enough they made it, but their troubles were just beginning.

The trail itself was almost impassable for tanks and utterly impassable to any other vehicle after the passage of a tank. The thick woods and underbrush limited visibility to 75-100 yards at the most and made accurate map ground locations impossible to determine. Lt. Gainey, the tank platoon leader, finally halted the group along the top of the ridge at 1600 and with the infantry platoon leader and two riflemen attempted to contact the 100th on foot. At 1740 he reported that he had been unable to locate the battalion and requested permission to return to BRUYERES before darkness. Permission was granted, and the group returned, along a trail running parallel to the ridge line to the 442nd Infantry CP.

During the entire time the group was in the woods they were subjected to sniper fire and ran into fire fights with small groups of the enemy. Lt. Novak, the infantry platoon leader, reported to the CP at 2100 and reported that he had only seven men left and that two of the light tanks were stuck on the trail up in the woods. During the remainder of the night and the next morning twelve more of his men showed up leaving only four missing. Three of the twelve that returned were wounded.

Historical Narrative for October (cont'd)

At noon the next day (25 Oct.) Lt. Novak requested that he be allowed to take a patrol over the route of the previous day. The request was granted, but the patrol was unable to find the missing men.

After Headquarters and Service Companies' personnel reached BELMONT late in the afternoon of the 24th the situation seemed pretty well in hand so at 2200 the engineer platoon was released to the 111th Engineers.

During the day and night of October 25th the Felber Force maintained the previously established road blocks and sent patrols to contact units on the right and left. Other than occasional harrassing fire on BELMONT there was no enemy activity.

At 0800 on the 26th all units of the Felber Force reverted to the control of their parent unit and the force was dissolved.

During the remainder of the month the elements of the battalion were attached as follows:

- Company "A" attached to 142nd RCT
- Company "B" attached to 141st RCT and 142nd RCT
- Company "C" attached to 143rd RCT
- Company "D" attached to 141st RCT and 142nd RCT
- X Battery reinforcing fires of 93rd AF.

In general the terrain over which our companies operated was hilly to mountainous. The maneuverability of the tanks was lost because they were restricted to the roads. All of the high ground was so thickly wooded as to preclude any cross country operations except a very thorough foot reconnaissance; and the valleys were so boggy, due to the continual rain, that the tanks would mire up even on the shoulders of the roads.

We encountered very little armor in our sector. The principle uses of the tanks were to assist by fire the advance of the infantry; to add additional fire power to MLR's; and to form road blocks in lieu of infantry anti-tank guns.

The replacements we received during the month of September were trained in Battalion school under the direction of Lt. Harrington. For three weeks the drivers drove every day (weather permitting) and gunners practiced sighting and aiming and tracking. During the last week of the month all spent four days at the 1st Armored Group school. The gunners were able to fire their weapons and the drivers learned the necessity for the closest kind of teamwork with the gunners by driving for the replacement gunners. All of the men showed great improvement at the end of the training period and the company commanders feel that after a short acclimation period in the companies they will be ready for combat.

We hope that the establishment of the 1st Armored Group School will obviate the necessity of us having to run a replacement school in the future.

Joseph G. Felber
JOSEPH G. FELBER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn.,
Commanding

Joseph G. Felber

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #758, U. S. Army

UNIT DIARY FOR MONTH OF OCTOBER 1944

1 October 1944

Disposition of Battalion: CP, V165505; Company "A" attached 141st RCT; Company "B" attached 143rd RCT; Company "C" attached 142nd RCT; one platoon Company "D" attached 36th Reconnaissance Troop; one platoon Company "D" attached 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

Company A's tank dozer hit mine and was disabled. One tank Headquarters Company was also disabled by mine.

2 October 1944

Elements this battalion supported units to which they are attached. Rear elements closed new area V1449 at 1800.

3 October 1944

Companies supported units to which attached.

4 October 1944

Company B was relieved from 143rd Inf and attached to the Purdy Force

5 October 1944

Battalion CP closed V208531 in LEPANGES, FRANCE, at 1730, and assumed responsibility for all elements of Purdy Block and Task Force at 2000. These elements consisted of: 36th Reconnaissance Troop; Company G, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion in indirect fire positions; one platoon, Company "A", 753rd Tank Battalion; one platoon Company "D", 753rd Tank Battalion; AT Company, 141 RCT; Company "E", 111th Engineer Battalion; Company "B", 753rd Tank Battalion.

Outpost lines and listening posts were established to maintain contact with 45th Infantry Division on left.

Patrols sent to woods at V230539 and V237535.

Fired direct and indirect harassing fires on woods at V222544, V230539 and V237535.

6 October 1944

Company "A" attached 141st RCT.

Company "C" attached 143rd RCT.

In Felber Force Company "D", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and 3rd Platoon, Reconnaissance Company, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion were released to parent unit.

Patrols sent to woods at V230539, V237535 and V222542, and fired direct fire and indirect harassing fires on same woods.

Unit Diary Oct (cont'd)

Maintained contact with 45th Infantry Division on left and 141st RCT on right.

7 October 1944

Company "H", 36th Engineer Regiment, was attached to Felber Force at 0305. First platoon relieved 3rd Platoon. Reconnaissance Company, 636th Tank Battalion, vicinity PREY. Third Platoon established new position vicinity PREY. Remainder of company placed in Battalion Reserve vicinity LEPANGES.

Placed direct and indirect harassing fires on woods at V222544, V230539 and V237535.

Two platoons, Company "C" were detached from 143rd RCT and rejoined Battalion

One platoon, AT Company, 142nd RCT was attached to Felber Force at 1305A and was placed in position at roadblock at V217541.

AT Company, 141st RCT, was moved to the right to maintain contact with 141st RCT.

Second Platoon, "H" Company, 36th Engineer Regiment, was committed to fill in gap left when AT Company 141st RCT moved to right.

Patrols from "H" Company 36th Engineers were sent to woods at V222542 and V230539.

One platoon of tanks, Company "C", and one platoon Company "G", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached to 141st RCT during afternoon. Tank destroyers on road block at V217541 were replaced with one section tanks from Company "C".

Patrol from 36th Reconnaissance Troops to V215570 took one prisoner.

8 October 1944

Patrol from "H" Company, 36th Engineers, was sent to V236534 during morning; placed direct and indirect harassing fire on woods at V222544, V230539 and V237535.

Patrols to V230539 and V222544 after dark. Patrols from FMS to east and northeast. Fired on enemy vehicular movement vicinity V226552.

Maintained contact with 45th Infantry Division on left and 141st RCT on right.

Company "A" lost one tank during day. One enemy tank was reported damaged at V226552.

9 October 1944

No change in attachments.

Tank Destroyers were moved from V225534 and V222532 into an indirect firing position at V183525. Road junction at V222549 was mined during night. Patrol guarded mines until daylight, then hid them in a ditch and returned.

Unit Diary October (cont'd)

Patrols sent to V220551, V215557, V217555, V224552, and V222544.

Fired harassing fires for Division Artillery and also harassed the woods at V222544.

Maintained contact with 45th Division on left and 141st RCT on right.

10 October 1944

No change in attachments.

Mined Road Junction at V222549 during night

Patrols to V218568, V218558, V220544 and to the east of FAYS.

Placed harassing fires on woods at V222544, and destroyed suspected enemy OP in church steeple at V229555.

Moved one section of tanks and one squad of engineers from PREY to V227538, setting up strong point at that point.

First Platoon, Company "H", 36th Engineers, prepared to move into woods at V232537 when they are clear.

Two men were wounded on patrol to V220544.

11 October 1944

No change in attachments.

First platoon, "H" Company, 36th Engineers (1/2) launched attack against enemy in woods at V229538 at 1500A. One squad entered woods at P3018-V232537, but was driven out by small arms fire and set up strong point in house at P3018-V233536. The platoon entered woods at P3018-V231536, met small arms fire, and took up position at P3018-V229537. Prior to midnight the squad at house at P3018-V233536 infiltrated to P3018-V235535.

Patrols sent to V220568, V215565 and to the east of FAYS. Two tanks Company "C", were disabled by mines during day.

Maintained contact with 45th Infantry Division on left and 141st RCT on right.

12 October 1944

No change in attachments.

Withdrew all elements from woods at V230538 during afternoon. Otherwise situation unchanged.

13 October

Company "I" 36th Engineer Regiment, relieved Company "H", 36th Engineer Regiment, prior to daylight. Third platoon, "I" company relieved 3rd Platoon "H" Company in PREY. First and Second Platoons, "I" Company, sent into positions in woods at V235536.

Unit Diary (cont'd)

First and Second Platoons, "I" Company, 36th Engineers, attacked enemy in woods at V230538. Attack started at 0705A, after artillery and mortar preparation fires. Objective was cleared by 1000A, and was secured during afternoon.

Patrols to V220550, V218559, V218564, V220570 and V213568. Lined road junction at V222549.

Fired interdictory and harassing fires for Division Artillery.

Company "C", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, passed to control of 442nd RCT, and joined that unit prior to 132400.

14 October 1944

36 Reconnaissance Troop passed to control of 442nd RCT at 1900A.

One platoon, Company "B", 111th Engineers passed to control of parent unit at 1900A. Co "B" passed to control of 442nd RCT.

15 October 1944

Felber Block Force passed through at 0800A by elements 141st RCT; was relieved of maintaining road blocks between PREY and FAYS, and reverted to Division Reserve.

Company "B", 111th Engineers (-) reverted to control parent unit at 0800A. Two platoons, AT Company, 142nd RCT reverted to control parent unit at 1130A.

Company "I", 36th Engineer Regiment and one platoon, Reconnaissance Company, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion moved into an assembly area vicinity LEPANGES, in Division Reserve.

Disposition of Battalion: CP - LEPANGES; Company "A" attached 141st RCT; Company "B" attached 442nd RCT; Company "C", attached 143rd RCT; Company "D" in assembly area vicinity LE ROULIER.

16 October 1944

Battalion (-) assembled in Division Reserve vicinity LEPANGES. Companies supported units to which they are attached.

17 October 1944

Company "I" 36th Engineer Regiment reverted to control parent unit at 1500A. No other change in attachments.

18 October 1944

Battalion (-) in Division Reserve. Companies supported units to which attached. Recon Platoon, 636 TD Bn passed to Division control.

19 October 1944

Felber Task Force reactivated at 1900A, consisting of 753rd Tank Battalion, (-"A", "C", and "D" Companies); Company "C" (-1 platoon), 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion; 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop; 1 platoon 111th Engineers (C) Battalion; and one platoon, Company "A", 100 Infantry Battalion. Co "B" reverted to Battalion control at 1900. Co "D" passed to 442nd Inf

Unit Diary (cont'd)

Mission of Felber Task Force to attack and capture BELMONT, reconnoiter valley to include VERVEZELLE and DOMFAING, block to north and northwest, protect north flank of division, and maintain contact with 442nd RCT on right and 45th Infantry Division on left. Battalion CP closed BRUYERES 1740.

20 October 1944

Felber Task Force assembled BRUYERES prior to daylight, and launched attack at 1130 A along BRUYERES-BELMONT road. The attack was impeded by extensive use of mines and stubborn enemy opposition. The horseshoe bend in road at V263573 was reached by dark, and a road block was set up for the night.

The BRUYERES-VERVEZELLE road was reconnoitered as far as V255580, where lead tank ("B" Company) hit mine blocking road.

"K" Battery fired on targets of opportunity in VERVEZELLE-BELMONT area.

Sent contact patrols to 7RCT on left and 442RCT on right.

21 October 1944

The attack along BRUYERES-BELMONT road was resumed at 0900A, and had reached V265573 at dark. Fired on targets of opportunity in BELMONT area during day and maintained contact with 7RCT on left and 442 RCT on right.

22 October 1944

Felber Force attacked and secured BELMONT prior to daylight, and established road blocks on all roads leading out except those to south and southwest.

Fired on targets of opportunity in BELMONT area, and maintained contact with units on left and right.

36th Reconnaissance Troops reverted to division control at 1300A. One platoon 111 Engineers reverted to control parent unit at 2300 A.

During afternoon one platoon Company "D" accompanied by one platoon, Company "A", 100 Infantry Battalion, attempted to open supply route to 100 Inf Battalion from BELMONT to vicinity BEFFONTAINE. Tanks broke through enemy lines and reached edge of woods northwest of BEFFONTAINE, but were unable to contact elements of 100 Infantry Battalion.

Forty-six prisoners were taken during day.

23 October 1944

Occupied BELMONT and maintained road blocks around town.

24 October 1944

At 0830A, Felber Force was dissolved. Platoon, Company "A", 100 Infantry Battalion reverted to control 442nd RCT. Company "C", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion reverted to division control. One platoon, Company "B", was attached to 141st RCT at 1200. Company "A" and Company "B" were attached to Stack Task Force at 0830A. Company "D" was attached to 141st RCT at 0830A. Company "C" in Division Reserve.

Unit Diary October (cont'd)

25 October 1944

Company "A" attached Stack Task Force

Company "B" attached 141st RCT.

Company "C" attached Stack Task Force

Company "D" attached 141st RCT

Battalion CP - BRUYERS.

26 October 1944

Companies "B" and "D" were released from 141st RCT and attached to 442nd RCT. No other change in attachments.

27 October 1944

Companies supported units to which attached.

28 October 1944

No change in attachments. One tank Company "B" disabled by mine. One tank Company "D" destroyed by bazooka.

29 October 1944

Companies supported units to which attached.

30 October 1944

No change in attachments.

31 October 1944

Disposition of Battalion:

Battalion CP: BRUYERS.

Company "A" : Attached 142nd RCT

Company "B" : Attached 442nd RCT

Company "C" : Attached 143rd RCT

Company "D" : Attached 442nd RCT

Rear : LEPANGES.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 750 U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH
OF
NOVEMBER 1944

Incl, 3

**HEADQUARTERS
THIRD TANK BATTALION
APO #50, U. S. ARMY**

RASTER CASUALTIES FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

NOV 01

NONE

NOV 02

NONE

NOV 03

S Sgt	French, Homer J.	4070000	LIA	27 Nov 44	Monroe, La.
S Lt	Flaming, Wyatt A. Jr	4114000	LIA	27 Nov 44	Bugala, La.
Pvt	Lawson, Tony	4080000	LIA	2 Nov 44	Fort Monroe, Calif.
Pfc	Orlin, Robert R.	4080000	LIA	5 Nov 44	Chicago, Ill.
Sgt	Potok, Andrew	4080000	LIA	5 Nov 44	Cleveland, Ohio
Pvt	Rothschneider, Kenneth L.	4080000	LIA	5 Nov 44	Carrollton, N. Dak.
Pvt	Roul, Edward A.	4080000	LIA	7 Nov 44	Chicago, Ill.
Cpl	Harach, John	4080000	LIA	7 Nov 44	Burbank, N.Y.
Pvt	Gonzalez, Angel R.	4080000	LIA	20 Nov 44	East Salinas, Calif.
Pvt	Wilson, Nathan C.	4080000	LIA	20 Nov 44	Wills Point, Texas.

NOV 04

Sgt	Veeble, Lee Ward	4080000	LIA	27 Nov 44	Cleveland, Ohio
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NOV 05

Sgt	McCarroll, James V.	4080000	LIA	2 Nov 44	New Rochelle, N.Y.
Pvt	Whitcomb, Julian Jr.	4080000	LIA	2 Nov 44	Elizabethtown, N.Y.

NOV 06

Pvt	Simon, William P.	4080000	LIA	2 Nov 44	Fort Worth, Tex.
Pvt	Thompson, Homer L.	4080000	LIA	2 Nov 44	Corpus Christi, Texas

NOV 07

NONE

**HEADQUARTERS 75TH TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. ARMY**

**CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT
FOR
NOVEMBER 1944**

Encl: 4

HEADQUARTERS
73RD TANK BATTALION
APO #750, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

OFFICERS

LEA 1

ENLISTED MEN

KIA 2
SMA 3
LEA 4
LIA 2

14

Officers	1
Enlisted	14
Total	<u>15</u>

COMPANY "B"
753RD TANK BATTALION

APO 758, U. S. Army

OUTSTANDING COMBAT ACTION OF TANKS DURING MONTH OF NOVEMBER

Action Report #1

The First Platoon left WISEMBACH with "E" Company, 142nd at 1030:25 November 1944. Due to cloudy weather and heavy fog we were able to make our way up the winding road from WISEMBACH to STE MARIE without being observed by the enemy, although later it was discovered that the enemy had the entire road under his fire. A road block had been reported and upon reconnaissance it was decided to pull a tank around a curve and fire at the block. The first tank pulled out, fired 10 rounds and received some fire of unknown calibre in return. A tank destroyer then pulled out, fired 10 rounds and received fire; then the second tank fired its allotment, and returned. Upon examination of the vehicles it was discovered that all three vehicles had been hit in the tracks and suspension system, disabling one tank outright and damaging the other tank and tank destroyer less severely. The artillery was placed on the road block, and when the infantry finally flanked and took the position, a 75mm Howitzer and an 88mm anti-tank gun were discovered defending the block. The 75mm Howitzer had been disabled by the tank fire and the 88 had been destroyed by its crew.

The terrain was mountainous with steep grades and sharp curves.

The decision to fire at the road block was made mainly to relieve pressure on the infantry and to keep the defenders occupied while the infantry maneuvered to flank the block. It was only possible to use one tank at a time as the enemy were zeroed in on the curve and straight road leading to the road block and it was a little difficult to close in on the enemy guns. In this instance we were copying the German trick of keeping a force busy with an SP gun on one side and flanking at the same time with infantry.

Action Report #2

On 28 November four tanks attached to the Second Battalion, 142nd, moved out of LIEPVRE at 1600 in support of "F" Company, the objective being the town of LA VANCELE. The advance was to be made along the road, since rain and snow had softened the ground to such an extent that cross country movement was virtually impossible. The tanks were to follow mine-sweepers at rear of infantry column. Slight sniper fire on part of enemy was met before column had cleared town of LIEPVRE, but was quickly overcome by rifle platoon of infantry. The advance there continued approximately one mile when a possible armored vehicle was heard by forward element of infantry. No identity other than a heavy vehicle could be made due to darkness. The Commanding Officer of the infantry called for a tank to come to the head of the column and find the vehicle and destroy it. After some discussion by the platoon leader of the tank and the Infantry C.O., it was decided that one tank would move to the head of the column and cover the forward elements as they moved forward and into woods where the enemy vehicle had been heard. Due to the darkness it was impossible for a tank gunner to pick out a point target. The column moved forward, the tank moving with rifle platoon until they reached a road block consisting of felled trees for approximately 200 yards. The tanks were halted to wait on engineers to clear block as there was no way to bypass the obstacle. The vehicle which

had been heard previously had not been located by this time. The forward element of the infantry continued their advance leaving the heavy weapons platoon for tank security. The engineers came forward to clear block and completed same before any action on the part of the enemy was noted. A vehicle was heard moving toward the road in the wooded area on right of the tanks. No certain identity of the vehicle could be made. Tankmen, having previously reconnoitered the area for a possible by-pass, held their fire thinking it could possibly be a friendly vehicle. No effort was made on the part of the infantry to identify the vehicle which by this time had advanced to within 50 yards of dozer clearing the road blocks and stopped. Immediately an enemy bazooka fired knocking out the dozer tank. The lead tank then fired, certain that it was an enemy vehicle, knocking it out. Several bazookas were fired by the enemy but missed their targets; while first and second tanks in column continued to fire until no further action on part of enemy was noted. By this time all contact with forward elements of infantry, which had moved ahead, was lost. Contact was finally made by tank radioing to tank company who telephoned regiment and regiment radioing the forward element ordering them to work their way back to tanks clearing out the enemy who by this time had moved between the forward elements and the tanks. This being done the column then moved into the town of LA VANCELE drawing no fire until it entered the town which was infested with snipers. The tanks took up positions on roadblocks and infantry continued to clean out snipers throughout the night.

As an improvement it is suggested that riflemen and not heavy machine guns be left as tank security. Second, some means of communication between tank and forward infantry must be made. Third, tanks are of no value in night attacks as the gunners are blind.

Action Report #3

On 30 November five tanks and three tank destroyers attached to 1st Battalion, 142nd RCT, moved out of LA VANCELE on main road to the town of HURST. The objective was to cut main road from THANVILLE to SELESTAT. The tanks and tank destroyers were to move along road and infantry on either side to give security to the armor as they advanced with the forward element through the very heavily wooded area. The column advanced approximately two miles when tanks were halted by the usual road block consisting of felled trees. There being no way to bypass the obstacle, the engineers were called upon to clear it. Meanwhile the infantry continued their advance. The dozer that was needed was not with the column but in the town of LIEPVRE, some five miles behind. After quite some time the dozer caught up and cleared the block and again returned to LIEPVRE. The tanks moved ahead to catch the head of the column, but ran into another road block of the same type. A possible bypass was found and used by the armor to reach the road running from HURST to NEUBOIS. The eight vehicles moved along the muletrail to the main road with much difficulty due to the soft ground. Upon reaching the main road, the lead vehicle contacted several enemy foot troops and machine gun nests. The machine gun nests were destroyed and several prisoners were taken. The tanks then continued their advance along the road and again were stopped by a road block. Again the much needed dozer was not present so the tankmen tried to remove the block with their vehicles and towing cables. This proved to be unsuccessful because of booby traps and mines. The dozer was finally called upon to come up again, but it was impossible to follow the trail the tanks had taken so it had to clear the block the tanks had bypassed and several others on the main road to reach the tanks. By this time the infantry had reached their objective several miles ahead of the tanks who were stranded beyond a doubt for the night by the road blocks. Very little security had been left for the armor but the crew members that were not needed to

Monthly Rpt of Co "B" for Nov 44 (cont'd)

of CORCIEUX was heavily mined and bobby trapped. At 1600 hours Company received orders that they were to be relieved with the 142nd RCT effective at once. Company moved to GRANGES.

November 20: Company in GRANGES performing rehabilitation and maintenance.

November 21: Six crews receiving training in M4A3 tanks.

Company in GRANGES performing rehabilitation and maintenance.

November 22: Company alerted at 2330 hours. Third platoon joined 1st Battalion 142nd RCT at 0700 hours in LES POULIERES. ~~to 1st Battalion~~ with attached units were to move from LES POULIERES through LA HOUSIER to SARUPT. First platoon was alerted to join the 2nd and 3rd Battalions at 1330.

November 23: 1st Battalion with 3rd platoon moved from SARUPT to ST LEONARD. Stayed in ST. LEONARD for the night; no action. M4A3 tanks to 1st Armored Group School for driving practice and range firing.

November 24: 1st Battalion moved through HANDRAY. Tanks of the 3rd platoon joined the battalion at LE CHIPAL. The tanks and infantry moved on through to ST CROIX, BAN DE LAVALINE into WISEMBACH and stayed for the night. The tanks of the 1st platoon joined the 3rd Battalion at LA CROIX and also moved into WISEMBACH after the town had been taken over by infantry and tanks.

November 25: 1st Platoon moved out of town with 3rd Battalion, their objective being STE. MARIE AUX MINES, a short distance from WISEMBACH, 526006. Infantry and tanks ran upon a heavily manned road block. The tanks helped a great deal in neutralizing the enemy resistance. The tanks were road bound, and could not deploy off the roads. M4A3 tanks returned to GRANGES from School. Will check tanks and join company tomorrow. See Action Report #1 attached hereto.

November 26: Tanks of the 1st Platoon moved on into STE. MARIE early in the morning meeting no resistance. Third platoon moved into STE MARIE with the 1st Battalion. First Platoon posted on road block out of town. Later in the day these tanks were withdrawn back to town as a Mobile Reserve. The 3rd Platoon left STE MARIE at 0800. Met enemy resistance 200 yards out of STE MARIE. Cleared resistance and moved to ST CROIX and met a heavily defended road block. Tanks and infantry neutralized enemy road block and moved on to STEINBACH for the night.

November 27: Third platoon attached to 2nd Battalion; 1st platoon Mobile Reserve in STE MARIE; 3rd platoon advanced with 2nd Battalion to LIEPVRE, outposted the town. Could not advance because of blown bridge. Mobile Reserve moved to ST CROIX and attached to 3rd Battalion moved to LIEPVRE. By-passed on the south side of town and encountered enemy roadblock at 668634. Could not advance.

November 28: 1st Platoon attached 2nd Battalion 143rd RCT. 1st Platoon advanced down road--object VAL DE VILLE. Encountered stubborn resistance enroute. Road block at 690634 defended by 2 SP guns. Third platoon advanced to LA VANCELLE-- Enemy resistance stubborn. See Action Report #2 attached hereto.

November 29: 1st Platoon advanced to 710640 and held up by enemy road block.

2nd Platoon advanced from LA VANCELLE at 0800; enemy resistance stubborn. Encountered enemy road block at 701648 held up advance.

Monthly Rpt of Co "E" for November 44 (cont'd)

November 30: First platoon advanced from road block, 701648 to CHATELAIN; relieved from 2nd Battalion, 143rd RCT and assigned to 3rd Battalion 142nd RCT. Advanced to KINZHEIL then east to vicinity of coordinates 772602. 3rd Platoon put in Divisional Reserve in ROLACH. See Action Rpt #3 attached hereto.

Attached:

Action Report #1

Action Report #2

Action Report #3

COMPANY "B"
753RD TANK BATTALION

ARO 758, U. S. Army

MONTHLY HISTORICAL REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 1944

November 1: Company was attached to the 142nd RCT, attached to the 36th Infantry Division. Tanks broke up an enemy counterattack at 564355 launched at 1000A. Infantry and tanks started an attack on an objective 200 yards ahead of 564355 at 1030A. The objective was taken at 1200A with 15 enemy killed and 2 machine gun nests captured. One tank was knocked out by enemy fire.

The tanks were deployed to repulse two unsuccessful enemy counterattacks launched at 1300A and 1600A.

The terrain was wooded and hilly causing very poor visibility. The weather was cold and rainy. Morale of the troops was satisfactory.

November 2: Tanks maintained defensive positions at 564355. Visibility was poor and the weather was cold and rainy. Morale satisfactory.

November 3: Tanks maintained defensive positions at 564355 while accompanying infantry maintained their positions and engaged in active patrolling. Visibility remained poor with the weather cold and rainy. Morale of troops was satisfactory.

November 4: Tanks supported the infantry in a local attack launched at 1630 for the purpose of removing the enemy from the forward slopes of the hill. The tanks destroyed one machine gun nest and then returned to their defensive position at 564355.

The terrain was wooded and hilly. Weather was cold with snow. Morale of the troops was satisfactory.

November 5: The tanks left their position at 0900A in support of an attack by "G" and "I" Companies of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 142nd RCT with the objective of further clearing out the woods on the forward slope of the hill. The attack progressed slowly down a narrow road to which the tanks were limited by the terrain.

The lead tank destroyed 2 machine gun nests and 2 bazooka teams, but was knocked out at 1600A by bullets in the vicinity of 565355. Tanks resumed defensive positions at 565355.

The terrain was wooded and hilly. The weather remained cold with continued snow. Morale of the troops was satisfactory.

November 6, 7, 8: Tanks with infantry maintained defensive positions at 565355. The infantry awaiting relief by the 142nd RCT of the 36th Infantry Division. Weather continued cold with rain and snow. The morale of the troops was satisfactory.

November 9: Two tanks left in position at 565355. The other two tanks returned to Company area at DRUYERES.

November 10: Company was attached to the 142nd RCT of the 36th Infantry Division. Three "A" Company tanks at TENBON were attached to "B" Company. The two tanks

Monthly Rpt Co "B" for Nov 44 (cont'd)

remained in their defensive positions at 565355.

The weather remained cold with intermittent rain and snow. Morale of the troops was satisfactory.

November 11: Two tanks of the First Platoon attached to the 1st Battalion of 142nd RCT located at 352565 report no action on part of these two tanks. Two tanks of the Second Platoon attached to the 2nd Battalion 142nd RCT located at 355589 and 361592 acting as road block. The terrain was hilly and wooded.

November 12: The tanks with the First and Second Battalions remained in position throughout the day. Early in the evening the two tanks with the First Battalion moved to LA HOUSSE on road block. Patrol activity continued on part of the infantry. Little or no opposition was met.

November 13: Infantry patrols very active. "A" and "C" Companies of the First Battalion, 142nd moved on the hill at coordinates 541355 with no resistance. The two tanks remained in LA HOUSSE throughout the night.

November 14: Two additional tanks were brought up for each of the two battalions. The 1st platoon with the First Battalion moved toward hill vicinity 541355 which was occupied by the infantry. Enroute one tank was bogged down; one tank hit a mine; and one tank fell through a bridge. Tanks of the 1st platoon remained in BIFFONTAINE for the night of November 14. Four tanks of the 2nd Platoon moved in and around VANMONT, 571365 to fire on targets of opportunity in the valley surrounding the town of CORCIEUX.

November 15: The four tanks of the 1st Platoon left BIFFONTAINE on or about 0500 to join the Third Battalion. Upon arriving the Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion put the tanks on road block and were to be mobile reserve in addition. The tanks on road block were placed at THIRIVILLE and 3 tanks in VIENVILLE.

November 16: No change in location of 1st platoon or 2nd platoon.

November 17: Tanks remained (1st Platoon) in position at VIENVILLE and THIRIVILLE, 2nd Platoon at VANMONT. Infantry patrolled steadily in and around CORCIEUX and LA NOLLE. LA NOLLE was occupied by the infantry and one company of the 3rd Battalion was on the outskirts of CORCIEUX. After dark 2 replacement tanks were brought to VIENVILLE. The tanks in VIENVILLE were alerted to move to LA NOLLE. These tanks later moved to LA NOLLE to act as road block. The one tank of the 1st platoon still remained in THIRIVILLE. The four tanks of the 2nd platoon remained in VANMONT to fire on targets of opportunity in and around the VALLEY OF CORCIEUX.

November 18: Infantry moved into CORCIEUX while tanks of the 1st platoon remained in their position. Four tanks of the 2nd platoon moved VANMONT and THIRIVILLE to support the 3rd Battalion in an attack on CORCIEUX on the night of November 18. The 2nd Platoon of tanks reached the town and put tanks out as road block on the eastern part of CORCIEUX. The two tanks at LA NOLLE moved - one tank moved to LA CHARMENIL and one to VICHIBUN, two remained in THIRIVILLE. Company issued five more M43 tanks with 76mm guns.

November 19: On the morning of the 19th the four tanks of the 2nd Platoon were in CORCIEUX as road block. The 1st Platoon had tanks in LA CHARMENIL, VICHIBUN, and THIRIVILLE. Infantry pushed on from town of CORCIEUX to high ground east of town 389536 with no resistance. Roads to infantry objective were heavily mined. All

COMPANY "C"
753RD TANK BATTALION

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "C" FOR MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

NOVEMBER 1

The 1st Platoon, supporting the 1st Battalion 143rd Infantry remained in the firing positions of the previous day at 263521; however, no firing was done as enemy opposition was light, and tank support was not necessary.

The 2nd Platoon remained deadlined.

The 3rd Platoon remained inactive at 309583. Attached to the 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry, it remained in Battalion reserve.

NOVEMBER 2

The 1st Platoon remained in the positions of the previous day, in Battalion reserve (1st Battalion 143rd)

The 3rd Platoon left an assembly area at BIFFONTAINE (310573) at 0800 hours, moved southwest along highway, route BIFFONTAINE, LES POULIERES, to positions at 279548 and 286549 to fire on targets at 283540, 295544, and 292537 in support of the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry. The effect of the fire was difficult to observe in the densely wooded hills; however, enemy opposition was scattered and disorganized by the fire, enabling the infantry to seize and hold the objective.

The 2nd Platoon remained in company reserve at LEPANGES.

NOVEMBER 3

The 1st Platoon, still in the same positions, opened fire at 1900 hours on HILL 703, firing on point targets located by OP and reconnaissance, for approximately one half hour.

With the 2nd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry the 3rd Platoon left an assembly area at BIFFONTAINE at 1830 hours and proceeded northeast to positions at 279548, 286549, and 292553 to fire on targets at 283540, 292537, and 295554. The effect of the fire, as usual, was difficult to observe, however, the success of the mission was attested by the successful advance of the infantry to these points. The platoon at 1900 returned to an assembly area at 247563, and remained there for the night.

NOVEMBER 4

The first platoon remained in mobile reserve in HERFELMONT, delivering harrassing fire at night using indirect fire methods.

The 2nd Platoon was in company reserve at LEPANGES.

The 3rd Platoon in Battalion reserve (2nd Battalion 143rd) remained in BIFFONTAINE till 1900, then moving to firing positions at 320575, to cover a platoon of Tank Destroyers moving from the left to the right flank of the Infantry Battalion, as they moved through exposed territory. The platoon returned to BIFFONTAINE at 2000 for resupplying.

NOVEMBER 5

The 1st Platoon remained in HERPELMONT in reserve during the day; at night harrassing fire was directed on targets selected during the day by the platoon leader.

The 2nd Platoon remained in company reserve at LEPANGES.

The 3rd Platoon remained in BIFFONTAINE, serving as a mobile AT defense.

NOVEMBER 6

The 1st Platoon continued in reserve at HERPELMONT, firing Harrassing fire on enemy positions at 260527.

The 2nd Platoon remained in company reserve in LEPANGES.

The 3rd Platoon, in BIFFONTAINE, continued in position as mobile AT defense at 311575.

NOVEMBER 7

The second section of the 1st Platoon, at 0600 in the vicinity of 216519 moved to 277516 to support a combat patrol from Company "A", 143rd Infantry at 276505. The platoon was unable to give supporting fire from this position, so moved to positions at 276513 and fired on enemy held houses in the vicinity of 280508. Neutralizing the targets effectively enabled the patrol to gain its objective at about 1200. The tanks retained these positions till dark, then returned for resupply to 273519. The first section remained in reserve at HERPELMONT.

The personnel of the second platoon were held in reserve in LEPANGES to receive instructions on the M4A3 (76MM Gun) tank.

The 3rd Platoon in BIFFONTAINE serving as mobile AT defense, was held in readiness to harass enemy positions in daylight by direct fire or at night by indirect fire.

NOVEMBER 8

The 2nd section of the 1st Platoon moved at 0600 hours from 273519 to 276513 to support Company "C", 143rd Infantry by firing on enemy machine gun positions at 280508 successful in its mission the tanks remained in this position till dark and returned to 273519. The first section remained in reserve in HERPELMONT.

The 3rd Platoon remained at BIFFONTAINE with no change in its mission. Densely wooded hills, poor roads, and wet weather making operations off the roads difficult, in fact almost impossible, combined to make the use of the tanks in this manner the only practical means of utilizing their firepower. Attempts were often made during this period to maneuver tanks into positions only to have them bog down, causing the company maintenance section to spend the larger part of its time in retrieving tanks. However, tanks were used with success in very difficult terrain by making thorough route reconnaissance, and surprise was often achieved because the enemy did not expect tanks to be used in such terrain, as attested by his lack of anti-tank defense.

NOVEMBER 9

At 0900 hours the 1st Platoon was relieved by the 2nd Platoon, and returned to LEPANGES to be held in company reserve and to receive instruction on the M4A3 tank (76MM Gun).

The 2nd Platoon, relieving the 1st Platoon in HERPELMONT, at 0900 hours, moved the second section from an assembly area at JUSSARUPT to firing positions at 277505 to give fire support and flank protection to Company "A", 143rd Infantry at 274508, and to Company "C", 143rd Infantry at 270489. Enemy held houses at 279502 were taken under fire, but as these houses were not attacked, the extent of damage to the enemy was unknown. The second section took positions for the night at 277507. The first section remained throughout the day in HERPELMONT in position to guard against possible counter-attacks from LAVELINE or AUMONTZEY.

The 3rd Platoon remained in BIFFONTAINE as mobile reserve to present possible counter-attacks from L'EPAXE.

NOVEMBER 10

The 1st Platoon continued in reserve in LEPANGES being trained in the use of the M4A3 tank.

The 1st section of the 2nd Platoon remained in HERPELMONT with the same mission as the previous day. The second section continued to advance beyond JUSSARUPT to the vicinity of 280509. No enemy opposition was encountered, and positions were taken to prevent counterattacks from the vicinity of GRANGES and to protect a bridge at 284507. At 1900 one tank from the section withdrew to JUSSARUPT to resupply, and returned to its former position at 2100 hours, then the other tank of the section returned to JUSSARUPT, resupplied, and returned to position at 2300 hours.

The 3rd Platoon was still held at BIFFONTAINE, its mission unchanged.

NOVEMBER 11

The 1st Platoon continued in reserve in LEPANGES taking instruction on the M4A3 tank while the platoon leader reconnoitered routes for operations in the vicinity of LAVELINE and LACHAPELLE.

The second section of the 2nd Platoon moved into firing positions at 280510 to repulse possible counterattack and to protect the left flank of the first Battalion, 143rd Infantry. The first section moved to positions at 268509 to support Company "A's" advance to its objective at 271501. Firing approximately thirty rounds of HE, 75MM, and 1000 rounds of 30 calibre, the tanks reduced several enemy machine gun nests, and numerous enemy riflemen, enabling the infantry to attain its objective. The first section returned to JUSSARUPT at 1900, as Battalion reserve.

The 3rd Platoon's position and mission was unchanged, while the platoon leader reconnoitered possible routes for use in future operations.

NOVEMBER 12

The first section of the 1st Platoon, supporting the advance of the third Battalion, 143rd Infantry from LAVELINE to AUMONTZEY, moved with the forward elements of the infantry, firing on houses at 281536, neutralizing four machine guns, and capturing eleven prisoners. Further enemy opposition (machine guns, infantry) was encountered at AUMONTZEY, coordinates 286526, where one tank hit an AT mine. Mines impeding further advance the tanks covered the further advance of the infantry from this position. At 1800, the mines cleared from the road, the section moved into defensive positions in AUMONTZEY, to prevent possible counter attack from the vicinity of GRANGES.

The second section moved to LACHAPELLE, at 1200 hours to prevent counter-attacks from the vicinity of the town of IVOUX (310539).

The 2nd and 3rd Platoons remained in JUSSARUPT and BIFFONTAINE, respectively, in Battalion reserve.

NOVEMBER 13

The first section of the 1st Platoon, supporting the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry remained in reserve in AUMONTZEY. The second section of the 1st Platoon assisted infantry in clearing the enemy out of the vicinity of 299537, destroying approximately 15 enemy rifleman, and two machine gun nests, thus allowing the infantry to consolidate our lines on the south side of HILL 709. The mission completed, the second section returned to LACHAPELLE at 1900 for resupply.

The 2nd Platoon moved from JUSSARUPT in support of the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry in its attack toward CHAMPDRAY. Enemy opposition was very light, and tank support was not needed. The platoon took firing positions at 283496, and remained there for the night as mobile reserve to prevent possible counterattacks from GRANGES.

The 3rd Platoon moved from assembly area at BIFFONTAINE (318576) to support the advance of the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry in an attack on LECOURRES MOUNTAIN (318551). The mission successful, the platoon returned to BIFFONTAINE at 1830 for resupply, and remained for the night in Battalion reserve.

NOVEMBER 14

The first section of the 1st Platoon left AUMONTZEY at 0800 supporting the 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry in an attack southeast to the town of GRANGES. No enemy were encountered on the attack toward GRANGES, and at 1130 hours the tanks entered GRANGES, taking two prisoners. Moving to 296496 the platoon took up defensive positions to prevent enemy counterattacks for the vicinity of LES VOIDS. At 1400 the second section of the 1st Platoon left an assembly area at LA CHAPELLE in support of the infantry in an attack on LANAY. No opposition was encountered, the objective being reached at 1700, where the section remained in defensive positions for the night.

The 2nd Platoon supporting the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, advancing northeast from CHAMPDRAY toward GRANGES was to enter the town of GRANGES from the southwest. The mission was not completed however, as the tanks had to await the construction of a bridge at 291498. There was no possible bypass around the obstacle, and the platoon remained there for the night.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The 3rd Platoon moved from BIFFONTAINE at 319576 in tactical march through LES POULIERES to 290552 South to LA CHAPELLE, then northeast to 304549, supporting the advance of the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry to positions at 315554, then south to the town of IVOUX, and southeast to 315525. Two vehicles were stuck in the mud at 314529. The remainder of the platoon remained here for the night, further advance being impractical because of the difficult terrain.

NOVEMBER 15

The First Platoon remained in GRANGES in a defensive position and as mobile reserve until 1100, and returned to CHAMP LE DUC in regimental reserve.

The 2nd Platoon moved at 1230 hours from position at 291498 to CHAMP LE DUC as regimental reserve.

The 3rd Platoon moved at 1200 hours from 314529 to CHAMP LE DUC, also as regimental reserve.

~~After being relieved, Company "C" was withdrawn for one or two days for rest and reorganization.~~

NOVEMBER 16

The company, in regimental reserve at CHAMP LE DUC, reorganized the platoons, provided clean clothes, and a degree of comfort for tank crews who had not been able to be away from their tanks for several weeks. Morale was good at this time, considering the length of time the company had been in combat (since the 15th of August), and the fact that fighting over very difficult terrain made it very difficult to make full use of the tanks fire power and shock action. Enemy morale was also good, mainly because the weather, and the terrain suited his type of defensive warfare.

NOVEMBER 17

The 1st Platoon remained in CHAMP LE DUC, while the platoon leader reconnoitered routes for future operations.

The 2nd Platoon moved to service company to take over 5 M4A3 tanks (76MM guns) and prepare for a three day period of schooling at the 1st Armored Group School.

The 3rd Platoon remained in CHAMP LE DUC, the platoon leader reconnoitering for possible routes for future operations.

NOVEMBER 18

The 1st Platoon, attached to the 1st Battalion 143rd Infantry left the assembly area at CHAMP LE DUC at 0800 hours, moved through BIFFONTAINE on secondary mountain roads to an assembly area at 358588. Arriving at this position at 0930, the platoon was held in readiness while the platoon leader and platoon sergeant reconnoitered routes and positions for an attack on 19th November.

The 2nd Platoon was doing maintenance work and preparing for schooling with First Armored Group.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The 3rd Platoon moved from assembly area at CHAMP LE DUC at 0445 through BRUYERES, LES POULLIERES, BIFFONTAINE, LA HOUSIERE to town of VANEMONT (363560). Routes and positions for the attacks of the 19th were reconnoitered by the platoon leader.

The company headquarters and maintenance section moved to BIFFONTAINE.

NOVEMBER 19

The 1st Platoon, in support of the 1st Battalion 143rd Infantry, moved from 358588 to firing positions at 382592, and remained in this position inactive because the infantry took their objective without opposition.

The 2nd Platoon moved to RAMSERVILLERS for three days instruction on the M43 tank (76MM gun).

The 3rd Platoon supporting the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry remained at 363560 in Battalion reserve, as enemy opposition was so light that it did not call for the use of tanks.

NOVEMBER 20

The 1st Platoon in support of the 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry moved to the vicinity of ST LEONARD (410578) and fired on targets (3 machine gun nests, 1 - 20MM gun, enemy infantry) in the vicinity of 430575. As there need for the tanks as defense in ST LEONARD the platoon returned to SARUPT (398376) for resupply and maintenance work.

The 3rd Platoon supported the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Infantry by fire from high ground west of ANOULD at 395559, where the first section took positions. The second section remained in reserve at LA COTE (374556).

NOVEMBER 21

The 1st Platoon, in support of the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry at 0700 moved from SARUPT to ST LEONARD. The second section moved with the forward elements of the infantry to LE SOUCHE, while the first section remained in ST LEONARD to cover by fire the advance of the second section. The mission was successful without incident, and at 1800 the second section returned to ST LEONARD for the night.

The 3rd Platoon supporting the 1st Battalion, 143RCT, moved the first section to SINGOUTTE where it remained in reserve. The second section remained at 393558 in firing position. No firing was done.

NOVEMBER 22

The 1st Platoon, supporting the 3rd Battalion 143RCT left an assembly area at ST LEONARD at 0630 hours and moved to positions east of ST LEONARD to support by fire the Battalion in reaching its objective at 430575. Firing approximately 15 rounds, 75MM HE reduced two enemy machine gun positions.

The 2nd Platoon returned from the 1st Armored Group School to an assembly area in the vicinity of LA HOUSIERE (350557).

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The 3rd Platoon supporting the 1st Battalion 143, moved from SINGOUTTE to the vicinity of LE SOUCHE (418556), to support by fire the Battalion in taking the high ground East of LE SOUCHE. Firing approximately 170 rounds of HE on enemy strongpoints in houses and 1500 rounds of 30 calibre, the platoon disorganized the enemy, enabling the infantry to attain its objective. The platoon spent the night in VENCHERES (minus one tank which had bogged down trying to maneuver off the roads).

NOVEMBER 23

The 1st Platoon supported the 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry, at 0700 moving from ST LEONARD on road East to MANDRAY (452579). One tank was put out of action (broken track and flattened bogie wheel) by a mine, however no enemy opposition was encountered, and the platoon remained at MANDRAY for the night.

The 2nd Platoon remained in reserve at the company rear, in LA HOUSIERE.

The 3rd Platoon in support of the 1st Battalion 143rd Infantry moved from VENCHERES along trail east through wooded country to 456558. Firing 100 rounds of HE and 2000 rounds of 30 calibre, the tanks killed an estimated 35 enemy infantry. The platoon returned to VENCHERES for the night, as there was no place to get off the road to clear it as a supply route in the forward position.

NOVEMBER 24

The 1st Platoon supporting the 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry moved from positions at 460576 Northeast, encountering no enemy opposition and reached 878580 where they set up firing positions and remained for the night.

The 2nd Platoon remained in company reserve at SINGOUTTE.

The 3rd Platoon, in support of the 1st Battalion 143rd Infantry moved from VENCHERES along trail East to LE CHIPAL. Enemy mortar fire and snipers encountered. One mortar and approximately 10 enemy destroyed. The platoon remained in Battalion reserve for the night in LE CHIPAL.

NOVEMBER 25

The company assembled at 0900 hours at LA CROIX awaiting orders from RCT 143 for an administrative march to STE MARIE - AUX MINES.

The 1st Platoon left LA CROIX to join Company "K", 143rd Infantry at RAUMONT to assist in clearing enemy from houses at 512581 and 510597. The mission was accomplished with 30 rounds of HE, and the platoon returned to LA CROIX at 1730. At 2200 the platoon left LA CROIX to join "I" Company at LA TRUCHE to assist in clearing the enemy from 592584. Enemy strongpoint in a house was cleared by 20 rounds of 76MM HE and AP. The mission was completed at 0200, 26th November, where upon the platoon returned to RAUMONT.

The 2nd Platoon remained at LA CROIX in reserve.

The 1st section of the 3rd Platoon moved to LE CHIPAL at 1200 to assist the First Battalion, 143rd Infantry in clearing the woods 100 yards east of the town. Opposition was lighter than anticipated and the section was not committed, and remained in the town for the night.

NOVEMBER 26

At 1200 hours the company less the 1st Platoon moved in an administrative march from LA CROIX to STE MARIE AUX - MINES, a distance of 11 miles, and closed in the town at 1430 hours.

The 1st Platoon, released from "I" Company 143rd at 1200 hours, joined the company, in regimental reserve at STE MARIE AUX MINES at 1630 hours.

At 1600 hours the 3rd Platoon moved from Company assembly area to establish a road block at 612606 with Company "A", 143rd Infantry, where further advance was impeded by enemy roadblock (abattis covered by 2 machine guns). The machine guns silenced by 5 rounds of 75MM HE, the platoon set up road block awaiting the clearing of the abattis.

NOVEMBER 27

The 1st Platoon, alerted at 1230 hours moved to LE CHIPAL and reported to 141 RCT. Attached to the 2nd Battalion 141, the platoon moved to SARUPT (472544) where they remained for the night.

The 2nd Platoon remained in regimental reserve.

The 3rd Platoon continued the extension of the roadblock, the abattis having been cleared, to 623587. No enemy opposition was encountered to this point.

NOVEMBER 28

The 1st Platoon, in support of the 2nd Battalion 141st Infantry, moved from SARUPT to firing positions at 492523, where one enemy tank and enemy infantry of company strength were encountered. The tanks were unable to locate the position of the enemy tank (or SP) but destroyed 20 to 30 enemy infantry, firing 100 rounds HE and 10 rounds AP, plus 1500 rounds of 30 calibre. The platoon returned to SARUPT for the night for resupply and maintenance.

The 2nd Platoon, in support of the 2nd Battalion 143rd Infantry attacking east along main road East from STE MARIE AUX MINES, STE CROIX AUX MINES, and LIEPVRE, moved from company area at STE MARIE AUX MINES to LIEPVRE where it was stopped by a blown bridge at 2030 hours. The platoon cleared STE MARIE at 1630 hours.

The 1st Platoon was relieved from its roadblock mission with the 1st Battalion 143rd at 1230 hours, and returned to company bivouac area at STE MARIE AUX MINES on a one hour alert as regimental reserve.

NOVEMBER 29

The 1st Platoon took firing positions in the vicinity of 495526 at 0730 hours, remaining in that position until nightfall without incident, at which time the second section was withdrawn to a defensive position at 483531, while the first section was withdrawn to SARUPT to be held in Battalion reserve.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The 2nd Platoon, attached at 0030 hours to the 3rd Battalion 143rd Infantry, moved along trail Southeast to 697606 where it was stopped by an enemy abatis, and remained here from 0530 hours until the next morning while engineers cleared the road block.

The 3rd Platoon was still held in regimental reserve in STE MARIE on a one hour alert.

NOVEMBER 30

The situation of the 1st Platoon remained unchanged.

The 2nd Platoon continued on road leading generally southeast toward KINTZHEIM, meeting no enemy opposition and advancing to 736621, where an enemy roadblock was encountered covered by three or four machine guns and enemy infantry of platoon strength. The enemy opposition at the road block was nullified by 25 rounds of 76MM and 75MM HE, plus 1500 rounds of 30 calibre. The platoon returned to 720613 to resupply, awaiting the clearing of the road block.

The situation of the 3rd Platoon remained unchanged.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #758, U. S. Army

UNIT DLRY FOR NOVEMBER 1944

1 November 44

Disposition of Battalion:

Battalion CP: BRUYERES
Company "A" : Attached 142nd RCT
Company "B" : Attached 442nd RCT
Company "C" : Attached 143rd RCT
Company "D" : Attached 442nd RCT
X Battery : Reinforcing fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.
Service Co. : Vicinity LE PANGES

Each company supported the unit to which it was attached, furnishing close fire support for the infantry, and tanks for defensive position and road blocks.

2 November 44

No change in disposition of the Battalion, and the companies continued to support the infantry.

3 November 44

Company "A" was detached from 142nd RCT and attached to 141st RCT. No change in disposition of remainder of Battalion. Company "D" had one tank knocked out by enemy artillery fire while supporting elements of 442nd RCT.

4 November 44

Disposition remained unchanged, except that one platoon of Company "A" was attached to and joined 7th RCT, 3rd Infantry Division at 1730h.

5 November 1944

Platoon of Company "A" was relieved from 7th RCT and attached to 142nd RCT. Company "B" lost one tank to enemy bazooka while supporting 442nd RCT. Disposition of remainder of Battalion unchanged.

6 November 44

Company "D" lost one tank to enemy artillery fire, and Company "B" had one tank knocked out by an enemy bazooka. No change in attachments.

7 November 44

No change in disposition of the Battalion. All companies continued to support units to which they are attached, firing harassing missions, furnishing close fire support for the infantry, and holding road blocks and defensive positions.

8 November 44

Companies "B" and "D" passed to control of 142nd RCT when 141st RCT was relieved by the former. Company "A" (-) supported 141st RCT, furnishing tanks for road blocks and firing harassing fire mission. One platoon of Company "A"

Unit Diary for Nov 44 (cont'd)

remained attached to 142nd RCT, in regimental reserve. Company "C" continued to support 142nd RCT, furnishing defensive and harassing fires.

9 November 44

Company "A" was detached from 141st and 142nd RCT's and was attached to the 100th Infantry Division. The company assembled vicinity TENDON, in preparation for the move to 100th Infantry Division sector. One platoon of Company "D" was detached from 142nd RCT, and was also attached to the 100th Infantry Division. The platoon assembled in BRUYERES, prior to moving to 100th Infantry Division. Company "B" continued to support 142nd RCT while Company "C" in support of 143rd RCT continued to furnish defensive and harassing fires. Company "D" (-) remained in regimental reserve for 142nd RCT vicinity BELMONT, prepared to move to southern edge of FORET DOMINANT on call. X Battery continued to reinforce fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.

10 November 44

Company "A" still assembled in TENDON prior to moving to 100th Infantry Division area. Company "B" supported 1st and 3rd Battalions, 142nd RCT and Co "C" continued to furnish defensive and harassing fires for 143rd RCT. Company "D" (-) remained in regimental reserve vicinity BELMONT, while one platoon attached to 100th Infantry Division, is still assembled in BRUYERES. X Battery reinforced fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.

11 November 44

Company "A" and one platoon Company "D" closed in assembly area vicinity of BAUGERAT during morning. Both attached to 100th Infantry Division. Company "B" continued to support 142nd RCT, and Company "C" maintained defensive positions for 143rd RCT. Company "D" (-) was detached from 142nd RCT and attached to 141st RCT. The company (-) assembled in BRUYERES prior to moving to 141st RCT sector. One tank, Headquarters Company, moved into firing position vicinity BELMONT and fired 350 rounds harassing fire for Division Artillery. X Battery continued to reinforce fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.

12 November 1944

Company "A" (-) supported elements 100th Infantry Division. Company "B" maintained positions in support 142nd RCT. Company "C" actively assisted elements 143rd RCT in taking and securing AUMONTZEY, causing the surrender of 11 enemy, neutralizing 4 enemy machine guns, and furnishing close fire support for the infantry. The company fired 50 rounds HE and 1,800 rounds of 30 cal. Company "D" attached to 141st RCT in assembly area vicinity TENDON. One platoon Company "D" supported elements 100th Infantry Division, and X Battery reinforced fires of 93rd AFA Battalion. One tank Company "B" knocked out by an explosive charge vicinity AUMONTZEY.

13 November 44

Second platoon Company "A" supported 399th RCT, 100th Infantry Division; third platoon was attached to 117th Reconnaissance Squadron, and one platoon Co "D" was attached to 397th RCT, 100th Infantry Division. First platoon Company "A" (M4A3 tanks) moved to 1st Armored Group School, vicinity RAMBERVILLERS for training. Company "B" continued to support 142nd RCT and Company "C" furnished fire support for 143rd RCT. X Battery reinforced fires 93rd AFA Battalion. Co "D" in reserve at TENDON for 141st RCT.

Unit Diary for Nov 44 (cont'd)

14 November 44

No change in attachments. Company "A" (-) and one platoon Company "D" continued to support elements 100th Infantry Division. One platoon Company "A" remained in school at RAMBERVILLERS. Company "B" still attached to 142nd RCT. One tank was disabled by mine. Company "C" maintained defensive positions in support of 143rd RCT. Company "D" (-) remained in reserve for 141st RCT with one platoon at Tendon and another at LAVELINE. X Battery continued to reinforce fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.

15 November 44

Company "A" continued to furnish close support for elements 100th Infantry Division, destroying one enemy occupied house, and firing harassing fire missions. The platoon of M43 Tanks rejoined the company during the morning. One platoon of Company "B" furnished left flank protection for 142nd RCT from positions vicinity VANEIMONT. Another platoon supported 2nd Battalion 142nd RCT vicinity NEUNE. Company "C" assembled vicinity CHAMP LE DUC in reserve with 143rd RCT. Company "D" (-) continued to support 141st RCT while one platoon remained attached to 100th Infantry Division. X Battery reinforced fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.

16 November 1944

Battalion CP moved from BRUYERES to LAVELINE. Third platoon of Company "A" supported advances of 399th RCT by fire and movement. Second platoon remained in reserve vicinity GLAIRUPT. Company "B" maintained road blocks and furnished left flank protection for 142nd RCT. Company "C" remained in reserve vicinity CHAMPS LE DUC. One platoon started training in M43 tanks.

Company "D" (-) was in reserve for 141st RCT vicinity GRANGES and one platoon supported 397th RCT, 100th Infantry Division. X Battery reinforced fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.

17 November 44

Company "A" still attached to 100th Infantry Division with one platoon attached to 399th RCT; one platoon attached to 397th RCT, and one in Division Reserve vicinity of BACCARAT. Other companies remained in general support of units to which they are attached, furnishing flank protection and maintaining road blocks. X Battery reinforced fires of 93rd AFA Battalion. One tank, Headquarters Company fired 300 rounds harassing fire for Division Artillery during period.

18 November 44

Third platoon Company "A" was detached from 399th RCT and was attached to 117th Reconnaissance Squadron. Second platoon Company "A" was detached from 397th RCT and reattached to 398th RCT. Third Platoon remained in reserve vicinity of BACCARAT. Company "B" continued to support 142nd RCT; one platoon with 2nd Battalion and one with 3rd Battalion; Company "C" (-) moved into firing positions vicinity VENEIMONT to support 143rd RCT. Company "D" (-) remained in reserve for 141st RCT, with one platoon at GRANGES and one at V270462. Other platoon attached to 397th RCT, 100th Infantry Division. X Battery continued to reinforce fires of 93rd AFA Battalion.

19 November 44

Company "A" continued to support elements 100th Infantry Division. One platoon Company "B" vicinity V 359518, supported 3rd Battalion 142nd RCT. One

Unit Diary for Nov 14 (cont'd)

platoon vicinity 325536, supported 1st Battalion 143rd RCT.

First platoon Company "C" moved into firing positions at V375555 to support 1st Battalion 143rd RCT, while third platoon remained in VANEMOUNT as mobile reserve for 3rd Battalion 143rd RCT. Second platoon (1443 tanks) moved to 1st Armored Group School vicinity RAMBERVILLE for training. One platoon Company "D" was relieved from 397th RCT and attached to 398th RCT. Remainder Company "D" in reserve for 141st RCT.

20 November 14

Company "A" remained attached to 100th Infantry Division. Company "B" reverted to Battalion control at 0800 and assembled vicinity GRANGES. Company C (-) attached to 143rd RCT; furnished fire support for elements that unit. One platoon Company "C" in 1st Armored Group School vicinity RAMBERVILLE for training. One platoon Company "D" supported attack of 1st Battalion 141st RCT. One platoon remained in Reserve at GRANGES for 3rd Battalion 141st RCT; other platoons attached to 398th RCT.

21 November 14

Battalion CP at CORCIEUX. Company "A" continued to support elements of the 100th Infantry Division. Six tanks of Company "B" supported 142nd RCT in its drive on ST LEONARD, DE L'AVELINE, and six 76mm tanks were stored prior to movement to 1st Armored Group School at RAMBERVILLE. Two platoons of Company "C" fired 65 rounds at targets of opportunity while assisting the 143rd RCT. These two platoons joined the MEURTHA RIVER. Other platoon (76mm) tanks in 1st Armored Group School. Company "D" (-) remained attached to 141st RCT, with one platoon supporting 2nd Battalion 141st RCT and one platoon in reserve for 3rd Battalion a GRANGES. Other platoon attached to 3rd Battalion, 398th RCT, 100th Infantry Division, I Battery reinforced fires 132nd FA Battalion.

22 November 14

Company "A" still attached to 100th Infantry Division. One platoon Company "B" remained in S. RUPT in reserve for 1st Battalion 142nd RCT, while three tanks prepared to move with 3rd Battalion 142nd RCT. Other platoon moved to 1st Armored Group School for training in 76mm tanks. Company "C" attached 143rd RCT, assisted the advance of the infantry, with one platoon furnishing close fire support for 3rd Battalion, moving down ST LEONARD-MANDRAY ROAD, and another platoon supported 1st Battalion from positions at V445559. The platoon of 76mm tanks returned from 1st Armored Group School and are being prepared for combat. No change in disposition of Company "D", and I Battery continued to reinforce fires of 132nd FA Battalion.

23 November 1944

No change in "A" Company. One platoon Company "D" moved to MANDRAY with 1st Battalion; remained there during night, and rejoined the 1st Battalion at DAY DE L'AVELINE during morning. Another platoon moved to ST LEONARD as reserve for 3rd Battalion, and third platoon (76mm tanks) continued training at RAMBERVILLE. First platoon Company "C" supported attack of 3rd Battalion 143rd RCT toward MANDRAY, expending 8 rounds HE and 500 rounds .30cal. Third Platoon attacked north from VENCHERES to V425563, expending 60 rounds HE and 200 rounds .30 cal while furnishing close fire support for the infantry. Company "C", minus one platoon with 100th Infantry Division and one platoon with 2nd Battalion 141st RCT, closed new area vicinity ANGULD.

Unit Diary for Nov 44 (cont'd)

24 November 44

Company "A" assembled in SENORES for short period of rehabilitation and maintenance. One platoon Company "B" continued to support 142nd in its drive toward ST MARIE AUX MINES, while another platoon remained in reserve for 3rd Battalion 142nd RCT at LANDRAY. 1443 tanks returned from RAIBENVILLERS. Company "C" continued to actively support elements 143rd RCT and Company "D"(-) remained attached to 141st RCT, supporting attack of 2nd Battalion in attack on FRAIZE. X Battery continued to reinforce fires of 132nd FA Battalion.

25 November 44

Company "A" remained in 100 Infantry Reserve at SENORES. First platoon Company "B" attached to 3rd Battalion 142nd RCT, attacked enemy road block at V 549616, fired ten rounds HE at block, destroying at least one enemy machine gun. Two "B" Company tanks were knocked out by AT fire. Platoon moved into STE MARIE AUX MINES when block was cleared. Second platoon moved into STE MARIE with 1st Battalion, 142nd RCT during darkness 25-26 November. Third platoon continued maintenance and stowing of new tanks. Company "C" assembled in LA CROIX with 143rd RCT while two platoons Company "D" continued to support 141st RCT. One platoon attached to 100th Infantry Division reserve at SENORES. X Battery continued to reinforce fires of 132nd FA Battalion, and Battalion CP moved to VERPELLIERE, vicinity BAN DE LAVELINE.

26 November 44

Company "A" reverted to Battalion control and remained in reserve vicinity SENORES. Third platoon Company "B" fired 1200 round .30 cal. while assisting the 1st Battalion 142nd RCT in clearing enemy road block vicinity ST CROIX. Three enemy machine guns were destroyed. Remainder of company stayed in STE MARIE with 3rd Battalion 142nd RCT. Third platoon Company "C" worked with Company "A", 143rd RCT, in clearing road block at V602615. The tanks fired 50 rounds HE and 1000 rounds .30 cal. Remainder of company in reserve 143rd RCT. Company "D" continues to support elements 141st RCT, and one platoon reverted to Battalion control and remained in SENORES with Company "A". X Battery continued to reinforce fires 132nd FA Battalion.

27 November 44

Battalion CP moved to STE MARIE AUX MINES. Company "A" remained in bivouac at SENORES. First platoon Company "B" remained in reserve at STE MARIE for 142nd RCT. Third platoon Company "B", attached to 1st Battalion 142nd RCT, assisted the infantry in reducing a road block at ST CROIX, firing 51 rounds HE 13 rounds AP, and 1000 rounds .30 cal. The tanks knocked out 2 enemy SP guns, 2 machine guns, and an unknown number of personnel. First platoon, Company "C", joined 141st RCT at LA CHIPAL at 1430A. Remainder of company supported elements 143rd RCT. Third platoon Company "D" supported 141st RCT and was at V514536 at dark. First platoon remained attached to 2nd Battalion 141st RCT and second platoon remained in SENORES with "A" Company.

28 November 44

Company "A" closed in assembly area vicinity WISENBACH at 1200 A, and began necessary maintenance and rehabilitation. First platoon, Company "B" moved from STE MARIE to LIEPURE, joining 3rd Battalion 142nd RCT. Three tanks assisted "G" Company, 142nd RCT in clearing road block at V669634, firing 12 rounds HE. The platoon/

Unit Diary for Nov 44 (cont'd)

was attached to Task Force Bordin at 2030A, moving out toward VAL DE VILLE at 2030A. Third platoon Company "B" supported 2nd Battalion, 142nd RCT in attack to LA VANCELLE. Company "C" continued to support 143rd RCT with one platoon attached to 141st RCT. This platoon KOed one enemy tank. Third platoon Company "D", with 1st Battalion, 141st RCT, was engaged in fire fight at daylight with enemy infantry who had infiltrated into position during night. One tank was knocked out by pistols and all outside equipment on another tank was burned. The platoon that was attached to 100th Infantry Division rejoined the Company. X Battery continued to reinforce fires 132nd FA Battalion.

29 November 44

Company "A" continued maintenance and rehabilitation vicinity WISEBACH. One platoon was attached to 142nd RCT at 2400A. Company "B" supported elements 142nd RCT, with one platoon attached to 143rd RCT. Company "C" (-) remained attached to 143rd RCT, with one platoon attached to 142nd RCT. Company "D" remained in reserve for 141st RCT with one platoon attached to 143rd RCT. X Battery continued to reinforce fires 132nd FA Battalion.

30 November 44

Disposition of Battalion:

Battalion CP: STE MARIE AUX MINES

Company "A" (-): Division reserve vicinity WISEBACH

One platoon "A" Co: Attached 142nd RCT

Company "B" (-): Attached 142nd RCT

One platoon "B" Co: Attached 143rd RCT.

Company "C": One platoon attached 141st RCT

One platoon attached 142nd RCT

One platoon attached 143rd RCT.

Company "D" (-): Division Reserve vicinity REMBACH

X Battery: Reinforcing fires 132nd FA.

COMPANY "A"
753RD TANK BATTALION

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "A" FOR MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

NOVEMBER 1

Company assembly area in TENDON (212-472). Retreiver and crew still working in 2nd platoon assembly position with 1/142 RCT to retrieve two tanks which had become bogged down in soft ground after reconnaissance of platoon leader was ignored. Service Company retriever returned to their area after breaking its cable. Engineers were assisting in the retrieving by building a new road to the site.

1st platoon (3 tanks) remained in its assembly position awaiting a support mission with the 142 RCT.

3rd platoon still engaged in roving gun missions in the southern part of the 142 sector delivering harassing a directed fire on the enemy. Results generally unknown because no effort was made to occupy the ground.

NOVEMBER 2

1st platoon and 1 tank of 2nd platoon returned to company area after being relieved due to a change in plans. One tank retrieved in 2nd platoon area and balance of platoon was waiting on road being completed before coming out of area.

No change in 3rd platoon mission and platoon operated on call but did no firing.

NOVEMBER 3

1st section 3rd platoon fired 30 rounds of harrassing fire in support of a French attack in the direction of LE THOLY. Fire was to be a diversion to the main effort of the French. Results of the firing unknown. 2nd section 3rd platoon fired 24 rounds on targets designated by Commanding Officer 2/142 RCT and received moderate counter fire that did no damage. Results of our fire unknown except that POW reported daily tank fire was demoralizing and harrassing.

2nd platoon (3 tanks) moved to V-244-494) at 1630 to an assembly area as a mobile reserve for the holding mission of HOLDING FORCE STACK. Balance of platoon (2 tanks) moved from company assembly area to join platoon.

1st platoon (4 tanks) plus 1 tank of 3rd platoon in company area at TENDON undergoing reorganization and maintenance.

NOVEMBER 4

1st platoon moved at 1600 hours from company area to LES ROUGE EAUX (317-630) to be attached to 7th Infantry RCT in lieu of a platoon from the 756th Tank Battalion that was in position in the new 142 RCT sector and which could not be relieved tactically. Movement from company area was administrative and platoon leader made contact with Company Commander Company "A" 756th Tank Battalion when he closed in area vicinity LES ROUGE EAUX.

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

Section of tanks from 2nd platoon moved at 2000 hours to positions in vicinity of 225-433 to deliver harrassing fire on the enemy when directed by Commanding General STACK HOLDING FORCE.

No change in 3rd platoon positions or status of operation.

NOVEMBER 5

1 section 3rd platoon at 229-472 fired 42 rounds of harrassing fire into town of CHAMPDRAY (269-489) in an effort to destroy enemy observation from steeple of church. Results unknown and section received heavy counterfire in old firing position that was several hundred yards from new position.

1st platoon in support of 7th RCT moved two miles east of LES ROUGE EAUX to join infantry but was held up by craters in the road. Infantry engaged enemy in high ground but tanks could not support them in any way. Platoon relieved at 2000 hours by VOCO 7th Infantry Regiment and reverted to control of 142nd RCT for orders. Platoon withdrew and assembled in 142nd sector for the night.

Section of 2nd platoon at 225-433 was given a direct fire mission of delivering harrassing fire on a hill due north of LE THOLY in conjunction with an attack of the French on LE THOLY but could not fulfill mission due to extremely poor visibility.

NOVEMBER 6

1st Platoon was attached as follows: 1st section to 2/142 and 2nd section to 3/142 RCT by Regiment Commander and both sections remained in battalion reserve. Tanks were unable to be deployed off the road due to extreme terrain conditions. On one side of the road was high wooded ground and on the other low wet valley and the tanks were moved up as the road was cleared of mines and road blocks to prevent enemy armor from harrassing our infantry as they worked their way through the woods.

2nd and 3rd platoons remained relatively inactive on this day due to regrouping of forces and determination of further plans. Company still attached less one platoon to STACK HOLDING FORCE.

NOVEMBER 7

No major change in any of the platoon dispositions and the 1st platoon continued to follow the infantry as previously attached. 1st section 1st platoon moved to 348-604 and 2nd section to 340-607.

NOVEMBER 8

1st platoon sent its number 3 tank to a road block at 365-592 with the mission of reinforcing infantry road block. Balance of 1st section of this platoon remained in assembly at 355-590 attached to the 3/142 which in turn was a part of STACK FORCE.

No change in operations of other platoons.

Action Rpts Co "B" (cont'd)

operate the guns in the tanks helped outpost the area until the dozer reached them. By the time the road block was cleared behind the tanks and the dozer could help their advance, the infantry had no need for armor as they had already taken their objective.

As an improvement it is suggested that in each infantry and armored column a tank dozer bring up the rear to clear the roadblocks that are ever present in this type of country. If this were done the tanks could stay up with the unit they are supporting and not be stranded as was the case in this operation.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

17 December 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for Month of November 1944

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army.

At no time during the month did any of the companies operate under battalion control. Company "A" was attached to the 142 RCT November 1st - 2nd; 141 RCT 3rd - 9th; 100th Infantry Division 10th - 26th (worked with all three RCT's and the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mecz)); 36th Infantry Division Reserve 27th - 30th. Company "B" was attached to the 442nd RCT November 1st - 8th; 142 RCT for remainder of month. Company "C" was attached to the 143 RCT throughout the period. Company "D" was attached to the 442nd RCT 1st - 8th; 142nd RCT 9th - 11th; and the 141 RCT 12th - 30th. One platoon of Company "D" was attached to the 100th Infantry Division the 10th - 26th. "X" Battery reinforced the fires of 36th IDA the entire month being attached to the 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion the 1st - 18th and the 132nd Field Artillery Battalion 19th - 30th.

For an account of the tank actions see the reports of Companies "A", "B", and "C" attached hereto as appendices 1, 2, and 3.

In general the terrain was the same as last month except that the hills were higher and more steeply sloped. Crosscountry operation was almost an impossibility even with track extensions. Much of the low ground was flooded and that that wasn't, was waterlogged. There was considerable snow and fog which made visibility very limited particularly during the mornings.

On November 8th the Battalion was issued 17 M4A3 (76MM Gun) tanks as replacements for M4's. These were broken down 6 to Company "A", 6 to Company "B", and 5 to Company "C". Within the company, two of the tanks were placed in each platoon. Our tanks are habitually used in sections and the commanding officer felt that each section should have its own "tank destroyer" to take care of enemy armor and to reach targets beyond the effective range of the 75MM gun and sight. The fire power telescope in the 76MM gun mount is ideal for point targets at 1000 - 3500 yards and is far superior to the 1.5 power sight in the M4 tanks at any range.

Each of the companies sent the M4A3 tanks and crews to the First Armored Group School area for a two to four day period of driving and range firing under the supervision of a company officer. The crews fired 20 rounds 76MM, 500 rounds 30 calibre, and 100 rounds 50 calibre per tank. Soggy ground prevented any appreciable amount of driving but they were able to do enough to get the feel of the tank. The battalion is indebted to the Commanding Officer, First Armored Group for his cooperation in making the facilities of the school available to the companies.

The biggest criticism we have of the 76MM gun is its excessive muzzle blast. Unless there is a stiff breeze it is impossible to fire more than four aimed rounds per minute because of this blast. However if muzzle brakes are ever available this defect should be remedied.

Historical Narrative for Nov. (Cont'd)

We also received a few sets of track extensions for both light and medium tanks. The medium extension which is an integral part of the track connector is excellent; it improves the crosscountry mobility of the Sherman by at least 50%. The light extension, a bar welded to the outside of a grouser, was unsatisfactory for several reasons. First, they cannot be left on the track permanently because they break and bend too easily in rough terrain. Second, the individual tank can carry only 15 extensions on the tank, which are not enough to help very much if you need them for an occasional mission. Third, the maximum speed of the tank is reduced to 12 miles per hour. Fourth, the extra weight on the track is hard on the transmission and hydromatic clutch. A light extension of the same design as the medium is being manufactured locally and this type should prove satisfactory.

During the latter part of the month we received 20 replacements that had been trained at the Armored Replacement Training Center, Fort Knox, Kentucky. These men proved to be excellent replacements and were well trained. Several of the men were potential tank commanders; however, there were not enough of these to alleviate our shortage in this position. At present we need approximately 15 qualified tank commanders to bring us up to strength in this position.

The number of tanks on deadline rose sharply during the last ten days of the month. This was due partly to the reluctance of Regimental Commanders to allow tanks to withdraw for short periods of preventive and first echelon maintenance and partly to the fact that our old reconditioned tanks were beginning to develop serious ailments.

Supplies during the month were adequate. The remainder of the winter clothing, including shoeboxes, was drawn and issued and we have a promise of sufficient old style combat suits to equip the tank personnel. 76MM ammunition was rationed but in sufficient quantity for our needs. Our greatest shortage is in 30 calibre machine gun ammunition boxes. We have had to reduce the basic machine gun load to 4000 rounds because of this shortage. This problem naturally becomes more acute all the time due to combat losses.

During the month we had ten medium and four light tanks damaged or knocked out due to enemy action.

It is conservatively estimated that we caused the following losses to the enemy:

Enemy Tanks Destroyed:	3
Enemy Machine Guns (30 Cal. & 20MM)	20
Enemy Mortars	1
Enemy Field Piece (75MM)	1
Enemy Captured	13
Enemy Killed	200
Enemy Wounded	500

Joseph G. Felber
JOSEPH G. FELBER
Lt. Colonel, 753rd Tk Bn.
Commanding.

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

NOVEMBER 9

All elements of the company relieved by VOOG 36th Division for attachment to the 100th Infantry Division and platoons closed in company assembly in TENDON at 2000 hours. Company Commander went to RAMBERVILLERS to 100th Division CP and received instructions.

NOVEMBER 10

6 tank crews went to Battalion Service Company to draw 6 M4A3 76mm tanks and period spent in cleaning up and checking equipment for operation. Men and equipment were to await orders to proceed to 1st Armored Group Training School for training in and firing of new gun.

Balance of company performing necessary first and second echelon maintenance in preparation for movement to 100th Division assembly area vicinity BACCARAT.

New personal winter equipment issued to men on basis of 75 percent of total strength.

NOVEMBER 11

Company moved administratively from TENDON at 0715 and closed in town of BACCARAT at 1000 hours. One tank dropped out of column for maintenance and had to be towed to Battalion Maintenance for repair.

3rd platoon attached VOOG 100th Division to 117th Reconnaissance Squadron at 1600 and moved to MERVILLERS at 1800. Mission of platoon was to give general support to the squadron in their mission of protecting the left flank of the Division.

1 platoon of light tanks attached to the company by VOOG 753rd Tank Battalion joined the company enroute at BRUYERES and closed in our area at BACCARAT. Platoon attached for operations to 397th RCT.

NOVEMBER 12

Light tank platoon joined 397th RCT in BERTRICHAMP and was attached to the 1st Battalion for operations. Moved to heavily wooded area at 307-814 to support infantry and closed with them for night without direct contact with enemy.

2nd platoon moved at 0900 to vicinity of 399th RCT CP and platoon leader reported to S-3 for instructions. 2nd section moved to 307-844 at 1200 and 1st section to same area at 1300 - both sections in regiment reserve.

3rd platoon moved to an unnamed town at 307-975 at 0700 in support of elements of the 117th Reconnaissance Squadron and remained in position without contact. Town lightly shelled whenever armor of any type moved around.

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

NOVEMBER 13

2nd platoon moved to 276827 in accordance with operations instructions, 399th RCT, of 121200 Oct and remained in reserve of the regiment.

3rd platoon was detached from 117th Reconnaissance Squadron and attached to 399th RCT and was ordered to close in area at 267-827 at 1130. At dark this platoon moved to 329-838 for the night.

2nd platoon fired 40 rounds harrassing fire on town of PAON L'ETAPE and high ground above the town.

Light tank platoon moved with elements of 397th RCT to 311-816 in reserve and closed for the night in BERTRICHAMP without direct contact.

NOVEMBER 14

3rd platoon remained in reserve assembly area at 329-838 without activity.

1st section 2nd platoon moved from BERTRICHAMP at 1400 hours to CLAIRUET (324-804) to support infantry in mopping up the town. Two enemy machine gun positions were fired on and silenced. 2nd section remained in BERTRICHAMP in reserve.

Light tank platoon remained in BERTRICHAMP for period in regiment reserve. Infantry could not use armor in their assault and infiltration efforts through the woods.

NOVEMBER 15

All attachments and positions remained the same.

NOVEMBER 16

1st section 3rd platoon moved from assembly position at 342-831 at 1100 in support of the operations of the 3/399th RCT along a trail beginning at 346-824 and running generally northeast to the battalions objective for the day in vicinity of 363-825. Operations were restricted by narrow confining wooded trails typical of the mountains of the sector. Tanks followed infantry as close as possible but were forced to stop frequently while engineers swept road for mines and cleared road blocks. When infantry reached their objective, this section was established as a road block until they were relieved by unit anti-tank guns and tanks closed in vicinity of battalion CP for the night for servicing and battery charging.

2nd section 3rd platoon moved from same general assembly area at daybreak to support operations of the 1/399th RCT and joined the battalion in vicinity of 347-810 where the section leader received orders. Black top road had several log road blocks which slowed the progress of the tanks to the assembly area. Section leader received orders to divert attention of the enemy from the infantry advance to the east by moving forward to fire from a position at 349-805 on targets to be chosen by section leader. Mission cancelled when battalion commander decided to have tanks follow his advance through heavily wooded area that was not suitable for tank operation. Tanks moved along trail at 347-808 which ran

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

generally north and east from this point. Tanks were unable to continue to infantry objective because they could not cross a deep ravine and river bed. Battalion commander notified of this fact. Infantry engaged in small arms fire fight at 1415 and tanks could not move forward to give them support and could not fire from their position because of the close proximity of friendly and enemy troops. Battalion commander gave tanks permission to withdraw in the vicinity of his CP for servicing and necessary tank maintenance.

1st section 2nd platoon moved from BERTRICHAMP where they spent the night to CLAIRUPT at daybreak and received orders from the Battalion Commander 1/397th RCT to proceed up trail to a point at 392-838 where they would remain in battalion reserve. Platoon leader made frequent reconnaissance during the day to determine the most feasible route to follow up and support infantry in their local advances. General condition of the ground and topography of the terrain limited the movement of the tanks and they remained in reserve. Section returned to BERTRICHAMP for the night.

2nd section 2nd platoon moved to CLAIRUPT from BERTRICHAMP at 1215 after 1st section cleared town to take up their positions. Section remained in position for the day and were ordered to remain there for the night to support road blocks.

Light tank platoon remained attached to 397th RCT and in reserve in BERTRICHAMP.

NOVEMBER 17

Tanks remained relatively inactive during this period except for regrouping of the platoons. At 1000 hours 3rd platoon relieved from attachment to 397th RCT and attached WCC 100th Division to 117th Reconnaissance Squadron in general support of their road block at 332-845. Platoon moved from 397th area and closed at above coordinates at 1230.

2nd platoon and light tank platoon ordered to reassemble in vicinity of BERTRICHAMP at 1515 by Company Commander. Both platoons attached to 398th RCT for operations. Unit S-3 contacted and orders were received to close in area vicinity of 330-845 for the night. 2nd platoon given general support mission by establishing firing positions in vicinity of grid square 350-800 during early morning hours of 18 November.

Light tank platoon attached to 3/398th RCT with mission of direct support on operations beginning on the 18th November.

NOVEMBER 18

3rd platoon attached to 117th Reconnaissance Squadron moved from their positions on a road block at 332-845 at 1330 into the town of NEUMAISSON with elements of the Reconnaissance Squadron to occupy the town. Town outposted and secured without enemy contact. Tanks remained in position on road blocks for the night.

2nd platoon moved from assembly area at 330-845 at 0715 to join 398th RCT and to carry out mission of general support fire on call of the regimental commander. At 1300 platoon was attached to 1st Battalion with mission of supporting their river crossing of the PLAINE RIVER at 370-800 and platoon moved out on

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

a previously reconnoitered route. Communication and liaison with Battalion Commander established and method of attack explained. Tanks were to support and follow infantry through woods until the clearing and then the battalion commander wanted the tanks to support his movement by fire. During the operation over mountain trails and generally confining terrain the number 4 tank was knocked out and destroyed by enemy bazooka fire when the infantry failed to follow the tanks closely or screen them from the front. The tank sustained three bazooka hits and was totally destroyed. Platoon relieved from attachment at dark and ordered to reassemble in BERTRICHAMP for the night and to report to 397th RCT for further operations. Platoon closed in BERTRICHAMP at 2100 for reorganization and servicing.

Platoon of light tanks attached to 3rd Battalion 398 RCT moved to their assembly area at 1400 hours over a supply trail and was given the mission of direct support for their operations and to be able to cross the river in support of them whenever a bridgehead or bridge was secured. At dark the platoon still was not committed and they returned to their assembly area at 348-808.

NOVEMBER 19

2nd platoon moved from BERTRICHAMP at 0715 to join 1/397th RCT in vicinity of RAON L'ETAPE. The mission of the battalion was to secure the ground beyond the road junction to ST. DIE and this platoon was to operate in sections supporting the assault companies by fire. Infantry was pinned down by very cleverly concealed strongpoint positions throughout the day and the tanks were unable to move forward without security and maneuver into a position to destroy the enemy forces. Enemy resistance was mainly small arms and automatic weapons with a few bazookas interspersed but their displacement and employment was sufficient to prevent our troops from moving forward. The terrain was generally uphill and devoid of cover in any great quantity but at the same time the ground was not feasible for tank deployment. The ground was soft and recently cultivated and crisscrossed with small stone walls that impeded tank progress. The platoon reassembled in RAON L'ETAPE for the night for security and servicing.

3rd platoon began period in NEUFMAISON attached to 117th Reconnaissance Squadron for general support and at 0900 1st section moved to town of PEXONE. At 1200 1st platoon relieved 3rd platoon in position and 3rd platoon returned to company assembly area at BACCARAT for maintenance and reverted to company reserve.

Platoon of light tanks attached to 3/398th RCT in direct support but during afternoon was ordered by Battalion Commander to return to an assembly area when he felt that tanks were drawing artillery and mortar fire. At 1715 tanks returned to their original assembly area for servicing and minor maintenance.

NOVEMBER 20

2nd platoon moved at 0800 from assembly in RAON L'ETAPE to support advance of 1st Battalion 397th RCT towards the town of ST. BLAISE (358-765). The infantry deployed stride the road and with their left flank on the high ground and their right flank to the edge of the embankment overlooking the MEURTHE RIVER. Infantry met little resistance and tanks gave them fire support on targets indicated to them. At 1600 assistant Division Commander ordered tanks to make physical contact with elements of the 3rd Division in the town of CLAIREFONTAINE. Infantry support

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

was not to be had and tanks were ordered to proceed without any support or prior road reconnaissance for obstacles or mines. Tanks moved out without incident and made contact with elements of the 30th Infantry in the town who were not aware of their coming and having made contact with them asked the platoon leader to support them in mopping up the town. Platoon leader assisted the infantry until dusk and then was ordered to return to ST BLAISE for the night. On the return trip the tanks were ambushed by bazooka fire and round fell between the number 1 and number 2 tank. The round missed and the platoon proceeded without further incident to its assembly area. Company Commander reported happenings of the day to the Regiment Commander and explained that tanks would need infantry support on further operations such as these. Tanks serviced for the night with 300 gallons of gas and with ammunition.

1st platoon attached to 117th Reconnaissance Squadron remained in positions of previous period throughout the day and after dark the second section moved from NEUFMAISON to PEXONE to join 1st section.

Platoon light tanks remained uncommitted in assembly area.

NOVEMBER 21

2nd platoon attached to the 1st Battalion 397th RCT in support of their operations. Infantry moved out from their positions at ST. BLAISE in the direction of the town of MOYENMOUTIER and the Battalion Commander ordered the platoon to stand by as his reserve. The infantry met negligible opposition from the enemy and the tanks remained in assembly area. At 1100 hours orders were received to proceed from the town of MOYENMOUTIER in the direction of the regimental objective with infantry on the rear of our tanks and preceded by jeeps of the Regimental B & R Platoon. The platoon was divided into sections to cover the high and low road of the valley and moved out. The section on the high road moved without major incident to the second phase line when orders were received to stop for the night. The section on the lower road was stopped about 400 yards from the outskirts of the town by a mine field of about 10 mines that required engineers. During this road march the section on the high road plus their infantry was lightly shelled by artillery and mortar fire which from all indications was our own. The platoon reassembled for the night in the town of MOYENMOUTIER for reestablishment of their basic ammunition load and rations.

2nd section accompanied elements of 117th Reconnaissance on road from PEXONE to PIERRE PERCEE. Held up by undefended road blocks. 1st section remained in position covering. 2nd section returned at dusk, and assumed original positions.

Light tanks attached to 3rd Battalion 398th RCT remained in their assembly area until 1500 hours when they returned to the company assembly area in RAON L'ETAPE with liaison being maintained with the 398th by wire.

NOVEMBER 22

Company less one platoon attached to the TASK FORCE DOORS whose mission was to attack and secure the town of ST BLAISE LA ROCHE. Company moved from assembly in RAON L'ETAPE to MOYENMOUTIER to join the TASK FORCE. The platoon of light tanks were attached to the reconnaissance element of the force and moved at

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

0900 hours towards SENONES. The town was not yet secured by the infantry regiment operating in this sector and the road column was held up by a lightly defended road block just short of the town. Infantry secured the town and the engineers removed the block that was mined. Tanks passed through the town with the leading reconnaissance elements and had to wait for a road block to be cleared by the engineers on the other end of the town before proceeding to LE PETIT RAON. Section of medium tanks supported elements of the 397th RCT until this town was secured and then returned to the town of SENONES where the Company and Armor of the Task Force assembled for the night.

1st section of 3rd moved to town of FENVILLER at approximately 1200 hours and took up outpost positions without incident. After getting in position, town was subjected to sporadic artillery, mortar and SP fire. An enemy Mark IV Tank was observed in woods to right of town digging in and was forced to move by our artillery fire. Our tanks were unable to observe enemy tank after moving. Remained in position for night.

NOVEMBER 23

Task Force moved out from the town of SENONES in the direction of the objective and took the route that passed through LE PUID and LE VERMONT where the reconnaissance ran into elements of the 3rd Division proceeding towards the same objective. Column remained in that town for most of the day until 1600 when it started out of town by a series of roads which were to take the force to the objective. Company Commander made a jeep reconnaissance of the route and found it generally practical for armor but that it eventually came out into the 3rd Division sector again. The 3rd Division was stalled on the road because of enemy resistance at the head of the column and this information was reported to the TASK FORCE COMMANDER. Column remained in the general vicinity of LE VERMONT for the night.

1st section remained in FENVILLER, 2nd section in SENONES.

NOVEMBER 24

The TASK FORCE was dissolved on the 24th and the company less one platoon reverted to division control and was ordered to proceed to an assembly area in the vicinity of SENONES for rehabilitation of personnel and vehicle maintenance.

1st platoon accompanied elements of 117th Reconnaissance thru woods to PIERRE PERCEE, encountering road blocks and mines. Tanks were used to tow fallen trees off the roads. No physical contact with enemy. Proceeded to town of CELLES SUR PLAINE and took up outpost positions for night.

NOVEMBER 25

Company, less platoon of medium tanks attached to the 117th Reconnaissance Squadron in support of their operations, spent this period in Division Reserve in SENONES performing vehicle maintenance. Radios checked and repairs made and general conditions found to be satisfactory.

1st platoon accompanied elements of 117th Reconnaissance to town of RAON SUR PLAINE and took up defensive positions. No contact. Remained for night.

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

NOVEMBER 26

Company, less one platoon, in Division Reserve. At 2200 hours relieved from attachment to 100th Division and reverted to control of Commanding Officer, 753rd Tank Battalion.

1st platoon with elements of 117th Reconnaissance. Left RAON SUR PLAINE at 1900 hours and proceeded to town of WASSELLONE without incident. Arrived at 0200 hours and bivouaced for remainder of night.

NOVEMBER 27

Company in SENONES - Company Commander went to Battalion CP to receive orders - Company Executive Officer followed up 117th Reconnaissance with gas truck to notify them that they were relieved and to proceed to WISENBACH on following day.

1st section of 1st platoon attached to 1st platoon Troop "B", 117th Reconnaissance, 2nd section of 1st platoon attached 2nd platoon same troop. Proceeded on reconnaissance mission along different routes northeast of STRASBOURG. Missions of both sections accomplished at approximately 1500 hours. No contact. Set-up road blocks on roads northeast of STRASBOURG for night.

NOVEMBER 28

Company, less 1 platoon, moved from SENONES on administrative road march. Route - SENONES, ST BLAISE, ST. DIE, WISENBACH. Arrived at 1100 hours.

1st platoon left STRASBOURG at 0800 hours arrived in WISENBACH at 1200 hours.

NOVEMBER 29

Company remained in WISENBACH performing maintenance. In Division Reserve.

NOVEMBER 30

2nd platoon moved at 0600 hours to LIEPVRE and joined 2nd Battalion 142nd RCT. Platoon moved with 2nd Battalion to HOTEL SCHANZEL. Battalion mission was Regiment Reserve. Platoon used to reinforce road blocks. Balance of company remained in WISENBACH performing necessary maintenance.

COMPANY "A"
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

OUTSTANDING COMBAT ACTION OF TANKS DURING MONTH OF NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 19th

Incident Number 1: The 2nd platoon was given a mission of supporting the advance of the 1st Battalion 397th RCT. The mission of the infantry was to secure the ground Sourtheast of RAON L'ETAPE and the road junction leading to ST DIE.

Estimate of Terrain: The terrain was generally uphill and void of cover in any quantity except what might favor the enemy. The enemy took advantage of what was reported as an old world war wire entrenchment and also an old quarry. The ground was recently cultivated and criss-crossed with stone walls that impeded tank progress.

Enemy was estimated as having a small holding force which was favored by the terrain mentioned above and by observation. Enemy was known to have small arms, automatic weapons and a few bazooka guns.

Our infantry was new and relatively inexperienced in this type of fighting and was pinned down by the enemies defense throughout the day. The terrain didn't favor tank action and the ground was not able to be secured without complete tank - infantry cooperation. The platoon was deployed with a section with each assault company astride the two roads leading from the town. The tanks in each section could, at best, go down the road to the infantry outpost line and fire into positions indicated by the infantry by the use of tracer fire.

In an attempt to crack the situation a tank and a squad of infantry were ordered to pass through the center of the Battalion sector then move cross-country in an attempt to flank the enemy position. The ground was extremely soft making it impossible for the tank to maneuver quickly. The stone walls were so strong that in order to get through each one it was necessary to fire six (6) to nine (9) rounds of HE and start a breach. This quickly depleted the HE ammunition load of the tank. Eventually the tank reached a terrace that could not be climbed so the group withdrew to the Battalion area. The group drew no fire and the infantry squad at all times provided local security for the tank.

It is believed that in this type of terrain, without the walls, tanks might operate in support of the infantry after a thorough reconnaissance was made and responsibility for cooperation between tank and infantry is placed with the basic unit - a tank and a minimum of a full squad of infantry with the tank commander commanding the troupe.

NOVEMBER 20th

Incident Number 2: The 2nd platoon in support of the 1st Battalion 397th RCT was given the mission, late in the afternoon, of establishing physical contact with elements of the 3rd Division who had crossed the MEURTHE RIVER into the town of CLAIREFONTAINE.

Co. A - Outstanding Combat Action Cont'd.

Terrain: The terrain was very flat on the left of the road and a railroad embankment running parallel to the road about 50 yards to the right. Ground was marshy and criss-crossed with drainage ditches, alongside the road were many houses and at the outskirts of town were heavy woods.

The enemy situation was obscure in the region between forces. The enemy had adequate anti-tank defense throughout the area over which we were operating.

Our troops were not in contact with the enemy and the Assistant Division Commander ordered the tanks to proceed without infantry. The platoon proceeded without incident to the town and made contact with elements of the 30th Infantry in the town.

The infantry had not been informed of contact coming their way and especially did not consider any thought of tanks being used to make contact and therefore were in position to counter enemy tank action. Proper recognition of our vehicle prevented any disastrous action.

The platoon remained in town in support of the infantry in an effort to mop-up the town until dusk and were then ordered to return to ST BLAISE.

On the return trip the tanks were ambushed by enemy bazooka fire but no damage was done.

The Company Commander attempted to get some infantry support with the tanks to provide ground security in the event of enemy action. The Assistant Division Commander did not see fit to give the tanks this infantry.

It is believed that tanks alone should not be used on a purely reconnaissance mission to establish contact over an unreconnoitered area.

NOVEMBER 30th

Incident Number 3: The 2nd platoon in support of the 2nd Battalion 142nd RCT was given the mission of supporting their road block on high ground in vicinity of V-700600. The Battalion was given the mission securing this high ground while in Regimental Reserve.

Terrain: The terrain was extremely wooded mountains and any movement of the tanks would be confined to the roads and at any point an opening in the woods appeared this movement would be vulnerable to observation and fire.

In this immediate area our forces were not in contact with the enemy and anti-tank guns, properly sighted, could have more satisfactorily defended the area.

This platoon was so divided on separate road blocks that effective control by the platoon leader was not possible.

It is believed that tanks under the conditions mentioned above should not be placed on road blocks especially when anti-tank guns available and contact with the enemy not eminent.

COMPANY OFFICERS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Tanks attached to infantry should be considered as a supporting weapon. Infantry officers should give some consideration to the recommendations of tank officers and non-commissioned officers, as to the most effective employment of the attached tanks.

2. Tank platoons are very often attached to the infantry during the night and are committed before there is time to make any sort of effective reconnaissance. Tanks cannot be employed to the best advantage until the tank commanders are thoroughly familiar with the terrain over which they are to operate and infantry officers do not consider this in their orders for the next day's operations.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758. U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT FOR MONTH
of
DECEMBER 1944

Incl: 3

HEADQUARTERS 76TH TANK BATTALION APO #756, U. S. ARMY

RASTER QUALIFICATION FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1964

RASTER

LTJG L3 ~~Winters, Walter H.~~

00100000

11A

14 Dec 64

Houston, Texas

CD 1A

Pvt Heston, James H.
E/4 Long, John J.
Pvt West, Harold H.
S Sgt Walters, Clarence J.
Cpl Harris, Julius D.
E/6 Young, Owen J.
Pvt Perry, Felix A.

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1 Dec 64
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14 Dec 64

La Grange, Ill
Cleveland, Ohio
Petersburg, N.Y.
Atwood, Kansas
Georgetown, N.Y.
Oslo, Springs, Colo.
Larson, Texas

H/4 Vojtek, Jr. George J.
Cpl Hodgson, Alton C.
Pvt Brady, Allen E.
Pvt Basch, Arthur J.
E/6 Friedman, Raymond (H/4)
E/6 Durnham, Joseph A.
H/4 Ward, Edward C.
Pvt McCormally, Donald G.
Pvt Conley, Linzer B.

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8 Dec 64
8 Dec 64
2 Dec 64
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21 Dec 64
2 Dec 64
12 Dec 64
14 Dec 64

Cleveland, Ohio
Hart, Vermont
Pittsford, Texas
Tulsa, Ill.
Van Buren, Calif.
Irvington, Iowa
Hudson, Indiana
Elkhart, Iowa
San Antonio, Texas

CD 2A

S Sgt White, Don H/1
Pvt Ogles, Harold A.
Cpl Arneson, LEO (H/1)
P/6 Solas, Lawrence P.
LTJG Golding, William H.
LTJG Dambrosky, Anthony F.
E/4 Ables, Richard G.
E/4 Lindemann, Harold G.
P/6 Baerwald, Arthur L.
P/6 Murray, Nelson W.
P/6 O'Brien, Howard E.
LTJG Paulsen, Ralph H/1
E/4 Brown, Austin D.
E/4 Denny, Vernon A.
Cpl Pottling, Ray A.
P/6 Antkowiak, Gustave A.
P/6 Dandberg, John (H/1)
P/6 Vesterberg, Harold V.

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Houston, Tex.
Hercules, Tenn.
Phil. Penn.
Brown, N.Y.
Granby, Kansas
Hartford, Texas
Hawthorn, N. Y.
Galveston City, Texas
Amelia, Ohio
Huntsville, Conn.
College, Illinois
Crystal Springs, Miss.
Barnes, D. C.
Illness, Mo.
Pittsburg, Kansas
Pittsburg, N.Y.
Granby, Pa.
Lamb Springs, Missouri

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944 (CONT'D)

CO "G" (Cont'd)

Pvt	Nelson, Ben L.	57045499	MIA	14 Dec 44	Truro, Iowa
Pvt	Willey, Norman H.	54850908	MIA	14 Dec 44	
Sgt	Barnick, Walter J.	56183261	LWA	15 Dec 44	Chicago, Ill.
Pvt	Gibbons, Daniel A.	55877874	LWA	15 Dec 44	Pittsburgh, Pa.
S Sgt	Palmer, Noel B.	20800424	LWA	14 Dec 44	Glenn Ellyn, Ill.
Pvt	Haling, John W.	37612625	LWA	14 Dec 44	Salisbury, Mo.
Pvt	Archuleta, Emanuel G.	5549580	MIA	14 Dec 44	Surto Po, New Mex.

CO "D"

NONE

SENY CO

NONE

RED DIST

NONE

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 738, U. S. ARMY

CONSOLIDATED BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT
FOR
DECEMBER 1944

Incl: 4

HEADQUARTERS
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO #758, U. S. ARMY

BATTLE CASUALTIES FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944

OFFICERS

KIA 2
LMA 2
4

ENLISTED MEN

KIA 6
DOW 1
MIA 9
SUA 1
LFA 20
LIA 1

II

Officers 4
Enlisted Men 31

COMPANY "C"
753RD TANK BATTALION

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "C" FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944

DECEMBER 1

The 1st Platoon was with the 2nd Battalion of the 141st Infantry, the 1st section remained at the Infantry Battalion CP at SCARUPT. The 2nd section remained at (483531).

The 2nd Platoon moved from position (720613) to KINTZHEIN. They moved from there at 0800 hours, to support the 2nd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry. The Platoon moved North to CHATENOIS, taking road leading East from southern edge of town. The 1st section of the platoon moved to (778621) where it was stopped by enemy road block. Nineteen (19) rounds of 76MM HE were fired to reduce enemy opposition at road block. The 2nd section of platoon was also stopped by enemy road block at (780628). Mortar, artillery, and small arms fire was encountered. One mortar and numerous enemy personnel were destroyed.

The 3rd Platoon, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry assembled at (621592). At 1700 hours they moved to (633569) to reduce enemy road block. Twenty-five (25) rounds of HE were fired. The platoon returned to assembly area at (621592). Map reference: SELESTAT sheet, Number 37-17, 1/50000.

DECEMBER 2

The 1st Platoon was relieved from 2nd Battalion of the 141st Regiment at 0930 hours and attached to the 143rd Regiment. Platoon in Regimental Reserve.

The 2nd Platoon, in support of the 2nd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, was split into two sections. The 1st section at (777621), and the 2nd section at (780628), advanced with the Infantry to (785623). Numerous enemy RB's were encountered plus artillery and sniper fire, and one Mark V tank, firing from position North of platoon position in the town of SELESTAT. Approximately 150 rounds of HE 76 and 75MM ammunition were fired plus 2500 rounds of 30 caliber. Objective was to control main roads leading into SELESTAT from southeast and northwest. Objective was taken at 1600 hours.

The 3rd Platoon, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, continued on road leading Southeast through FERTRUPT toward RIBEAUVILLE. The advance of the platoon was held up by road blocks along the route.

DECEMBER 3

At daylight the 1st Platoon moved from (623586) to an assembly area at (611580). The platoon was attached to the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, and was on the alert to support Infantry attack on the town of AUBOURN. They were relieved by the 1st Battalion and assembled at (623586) where they remained for the night.

The 2nd Platoon was in the same position as the previous day guarding strategic points in SELESTAT.

The 3rd Platoon, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, moved Southeast along main road to OSTHEIM at 0730 hours. The platoon was stopped by a road block at (728516). Artillery, AT, mortar, and small arms fire were encountered. During the day the platoon fired approximately 400 rounds of 75 and 76MM ammunition at the RB and enemy positions in town. At 2200 hours the platoon returned to the East edge of RIBEAUVILLE for supplies. They remained here for the night.

DECEMBER 6

At 0815 hours the 2nd section of the 1st Platoon supported Company "A", 143rd Infantry, in an attack to retake West half of BEBLINGHEIM. Street fighting lasted throughout the day. Approximately 30 of the enemy were killed, and 20 captured. One (1) tank of the 1st section was at position (682517) to protect the right flank of the advancing 2nd section. This tank fired 20 rounds of HE. The tank remained in this position till 1445, then moved to position (691510) with the same mission. At 1630 hours this tank reported to Company "B" of the 143rd to support an attack on HILL 251 (684505). About 10 of the enemy were wounded or killed.

* The 2nd Platoon in support of the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry ("L" Company) in attack on GUEMAR. They moved from assembly area at RIBEAUVILLE at 0700 hours East along road into GUEMAR. Street fighting lasted till 1300 hours, at which time the town was cleared of the enemy. Approximately 100 rounds of 75 and 76MM ammunition were fired, plus 2000 rounds of 30 caliber. 30 of the enemy were killed. When the mission was completed the platoon returned to RIBEAUVILLE (1600 hours). After the platoon had resupplied, it was attached to the 2nd Battalion of the 143rd. At 1800 hours the platoon moved to an assembly area at RIQUEWIHR where it remained for the night.

At 0800 hours the 3rd Platoon supported "K" Company of the 143rd in an attack toward OSTHEIM. The 1st section moved down main road Southeast from RIBEAUVILLE. The 2nd section attacked East from ZELLENBERG. The platoon took up a position in the vicinity of (728513) and remained throughout the day, firing 300 rounds of 75 and 76MM HE and AP at targets on East side of river running through town. (Houses in town and 6 enemy tanks in East edge of town). The advance was limited because of blown bridge at (728513). Effect of the fire could not be observed. The platoon returned to ZELLENBERG to resupply and for maintenance.

DECEMBER 7

The 1st Platoon, attached to the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, remained in reserve throughout the day at BEBLINGHEIM.

The 2nd Platoon, with the 2nd Battalion of the 143rd, moved at 0630 hours from assembly area at RIQUEWIHR South in attack to gain and hold high ground North and overlooking RIENZHEIM. The 1st section reached a point at (666503) where further advance was held up by mined roads. From this position, at 0700 hours, the section helped repulse enemy counterattack of Battalion strength. Twenty rounds per tank were fired and 20 to 30 of the enemy were killed or wounded.

The counterattack came again at 1530 hours and high ground in vicinity of (499670) was retaken. The tanks were unable to maneuver off the road and mines blocked advance forward. All this limited the field of fire so that effective fire could not be brought on the enemy. The 2nd section took up positions at (683504) at 0700 hours and remained in reserve for counterattack throughout the day.

DECEMBER 10

The 1st and 2nd Platoons, attached to the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Infantry at MITTELWIHR, attempted to attack BENNWIHR at 0920 hours. The attack was unsuccessful due to enemy road block. The second section of the 1st Platoon and the 1st section of the 2nd Platoon moved to firing positions to support attack, but were unable to reduce enemy resistance. Another attack was made at 1630 hours. This attack was also unsuccessful. At 1730 1st and 2nd Platoons were attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry. The 1st Platoon remained in defensive position in the vicinity of MITTELWIHR for the night. The 2nd Platoon, attached to the 2nd Battalion of the 143rd, assembled in ZELLENBURG on 1 hour alert. Enemy killed and captured unknown.

Lieutenant Laskevich, Sergeant Bartnick, and Tec. 4th Grade Abels, and Landmesser were wounded when an artillery shell struck the house in which they were eating. The house was in the vicinity of MITTELWIHR.

The 3rd Platoon remained as the day before until 1900, then the section at (733593) rejoined the rest at (721512). The platoon was attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry. They remained here for the night.

DECEMBER 11

The 1st Platoon, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd in defensive position at MITTELWIHR. One tank moved to 690500 to fire on houses at (693499). Five houses were fired into by the tanks. Return fire that the tank received put its gun out of action. Another tank fired on town from position (694501); effects of fire could not be observed. One section of tanks was on the MITTELWIHR-BENNWIHR road, unable to move forward due to enemy tank fire coming from BENNWIHR and area in vicinity of (698496). Concentrations of artillery and mortar fire were brought to bear on our tanks here. The platoon fired 30 rounds of HE during the day's operations.

The 2nd Platoon remained in ZELLENBURG, attached to the 2nd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry in combat team reserve.

The 3rd Platoon at (721512), attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, was in support of the 1st Platoon and reinforced rifle company. Tanks fired on East side of river in OSTHEIM, destroying one house occupied by the enemy. They also fired into BENNWIHR. 80 rounds of HE, and 20 rounds of AP were fired during the day's operations.

DECEMBER 12

The 1st Platoon, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, attacked South from MITTELWIHR to BENNWIHR, advancing about 400 yards. An enemy counter-attack on HILL 251 forced the 3rd Battalion to withdraw to former positions. The platoon supported the battalion by helping repel several enemy counter attacks during the day. The platoon remained in MITTELWIHR for the night.

The 2nd Platoon, in reserve in ZELLENBURG, was called out at 0715 hours to counterattack and help regain ground in the vicinity of HEBLENHEIM lost to the enemy early in the morning. The platoon made three separate attacks during the day, each one successful. They returned to ZELLENBURG for the night.

Co. "C" Narrative Cont'd.

The 3rd Platoon was inactive; two tanks were withdrawn to support the 1st and 2nd Platoons.

Lieutenant Coston was killed and nine enlisted men were MIA from the vicinity of MITTELWIHR.

DECEMBER 15

The 1st Platoon attached to the 1st Battalion of the 143rd; two tanks remained in defensive position at (684504).

The 2nd Platoon: Three tanks remained in regimental reserve at ZELLENBERG.

The 3rd Platoon: Two tanks attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd in defensive positions at OSTHEIM to guard against counterattacks from the South and Southwest.

DECEMBER 16

The 1st Platoon, with the 1st Battalion of the 143rd, remained at (684504) till 1800, at which time they were relieved by the 2nd Platoon. They returned to ZELLENBERG as regimental reserve. (1st Platoon: 3 tanks)

The 2nd Platoon remained in regimental reserve in ZELLENBERG till 1800 hours, at which time they relieved the 1st Platoon. They remained in defensive position at (684504).

The 3rd Platoon: (3 tanks) Same as previous day.

DECEMBER 17

The 1st Platoon held in ZELLENBERG as Battalion reserve, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry.

The 2nd Platoon, attached to the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, remained in defensive position at (684504) until 1500 hours, at which time 2 tanks attacked MITTELWIHR with the 2nd Platoon of Company "C" of the 143rd Infantry. Their mission was to take prisoners. Fourteen prisoners were taken, two, wounded; and an unknown number killed. At dark they returned to their former position at (684504). The prisoners were turned over to the Infantry.

The 3rd Platoon, attached to "Adam's Force", remained in defensive position in OSTHEIM. They brought harassing fire to bear on enemy positions on the east side of town.

DECEMBER 18

The 1st Platoon, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry, remained in defensive position in the vicinity of ZELLENBERG in regimental reserve.

The 2nd Platoon, attached to the 1st Battalion of the 143rd, remained in defensive position in the vicinity of MITTELWIHR at (686503).

DECEMBER 22

The CP section, with the 3rd Platoon, left assembly area at LINGOLSHEIM at 1330 hours and moved to (031988) by road convoy. Total distance traveled: approximately 4 miles.

The 2nd Platoon joined the rest of the company at (031988).

The 1st Platoon made no change.

DECEMBER 23

The 1st Platoon: No change.

The 2nd Platoon: Remained in reserve at company CP.

The 3rd Platoon: Alerted at 2345; remained on alert at end of day.

DECEMBER 24

The 1st section of the 1st Platoon was at CHATEAU, firing on enemy positions for harassing effect. The 2nd section made no change.

The 2nd Platoon: On alert, attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry.

The 3rd Platoon: The 2nd section moved out in support of 1st Platoon of "B" Company to check woods at 0930 hours. They moved northwest to (100115); then northeast through woods. Road block was encountered at (111118), also at (112118); they were unmanned. The infantry continued to the east edge of woods; no enemy was encountered. Infantry returned to tanks, mounted and all elements returned to assembly area at 1130 hours. At 1630 the 2nd section moved out to replace the 1st section which needed ammunition the second section took up the same position that the 1st section had held (131102). They remained here for the night.

DECEMBER 25

The company was relieved from the 143rd Infantry. The 1st and 3rd Platoons returned to the company assembly area at 1100 hours. They remained here with the rest of the company until 1530 hours, at which time the entire company moved to a new assembly area at REICHSTEDT. Mode of travel was by road convoy; the distance traveled was 7 miles. All platoons were attached to the "Task Force Linden".

A company formation was held at 1200 and the Battalion Commanding Officer presented the following Officer and Enlisted Men with the Purple Heart Medal, or an oak leaf cluster in lieu thereof: Lt. Thompson, Sgt's. Armentrout, and Marsh, Tec. 4 Willis, Cpl's. Morrow, and Kancar, Tec. 5 Bates and Banuelos, and Private Angelotti.

DECEMBER 26

The 1st Platoon, (4 M-4 tanks) set up for indirect firing in the vicinity of REICHSTEDT. (01543-05072).

COMPANY "C"
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758. U.S. Army

OUTSTANDING COMBAT ACTION OF TANKS DURING MONTH OF DECEMBER

DECEMBER 9

The attack on MITTELWIHR and BENNWIHR from the 9th through the 14th of December encountered some of the stiffest opposition the company had yet encountered and is described as the outstanding combat events for the month.

On the 9th, the First and Second Platoons, supporting the 1st Battalion 143 RCT, attacked the town of MITTELWIHR from the north and west, the Second Platoon forming the attack echelon, moving in from the west on two parallel roads, the First Platoon forming the base of fire, moving in on the town from the north.

The attack started at 0805 hours, two infantry companies attacking with the Second Platoon, and one with the First. Delayed until 0835 hours by friendly mines which had not been removed, the Second Platoon moved into the town on the heels of a half hour artillery preparation. Progress was slow, due to the fact that the infantry cleaned up each house thoroughly before moving on. Initial opposition was light, but this slow progress gave the enemy an opportunity to send in reinforcing infantry and tanks. At 1130 hours the attack had progressed to (693500) (road leading south to BENNWIHR) when the lead tank of the Second Platoon encountered a Mark V Tank. An exchange of fire brought two (2) hits on the enemy tank, which was not damaged. The enemy tank fire was not accurate and caused no damage. Forced to back behind a building for cover further advance was impossible for either side, as there were no alternate routes of advance and avenues of approach were well covered by tank fire from both sides.

The failure to take the towns with dispatch this day was due to the fact that the advantage of surprise was not utilized to the fullest. First the infantry methodical advance gave the enemy time to rush in reinforcements and second, our own infantry, depleted in manpower and morale lacked the aggressiveness necessary to push the attack to the fullest.

DECEMBER 10 - 14

Continuing the attack on BENNWIHR at 0920 hours, progress was again impeded by enemy tank fire covering all avenues of approach. One section of each platoon moved to firing position on the high ground North of MITTELWIHR, but were unable to place fire on the enemy tanks due to the buildings and dug-in positions of the enemy tanks. At 1630 hours another attack was made but was also unsuccessful for the same reasons.

During this period the enemy commenced attacking by infiltration. Small groups of infantry and numerous bazooka teams continuously attempted to penetrate our lines and were often successful because our infantry had not sufficient strength to out-post the town properly, and the tendency to congregate in houses for protection against the continuous artillery and mortar barrages.

COMPANY "D"
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. ARMY

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "D" FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944

DECEMBER 1

Maintenance and supply sections arrived in ROMBACH at 1000 hours. 3rd Platoon attached to 3rd Battalion 142nd and ordered by Regimental S-3 to report to 3rd Battalion Commanding Officer at TREMBACH. Left Company area at 1400 hours and arrived at TREMBACH but could not find CP 3rd Battalion 142nd there. Stayed night at TREMBACH.

DECEMBER 2

Lieutenant Burkett returned to ROMBACH at 0900 hours and reported to Regimental S-3, 142nd and found that he had been given the wrong location at which to report the day before. 3rd Platoon relieved from 142nd and put in Division reserve at ROMBACH at 1000 hours. Sergeant Thomas and Sergeant Ealy with two tanks accompanied Lieutenant Coston as tank support in intended attack on small village of GRANDMONT. Left Company area at 0730 hours. At 0830 hours the two tanks were sent back to company area by Lieutenant Coston because of the impossibility of using the trails leading into GRANDMONT. At 1200 hours Lieutenant Gainey and Lieutenant Tillotson ordered by Battalion Commanding Officer to take five tanks and 25 men as infantry support and go to the relief of Company "A", 143rd at (651561). Left company area at 1400 hours and proceeded with the aid of French guide to vicinity of (675605). At 1700 hours ordered to return to company area as Company "A", 143rd had been relieved. Closed in on company area at ROMBACH at 1800 hours and placed in Division reserve.

DECEMBER 3

All platoons in Division reserve at ROMBACH. Commanding Officer visited company at 1500 hours. Men sent to showers at STE MARIE. Dance for enlisted men at ROMBACH in evening.

DECEMBER 4

On Division orders, company was attached to 142nd at 1900 hours. Company ordered to SELESTAT at 2200 hours by order of Commanding Officer 142nd. Commanding Officer reported to Regimental S-3 at 2300 hours. Company minus supply, mess, and maintenance, left ROMBACH at 2400 hours.

DECEMBER 5

3rd Platoon attached to 1st Battalion 142nd Infantry. Platoon Leader reported to Commanding Officer 142nd at 0200 hours, ordered to return at 0800 hours. This he did and was told where to place his tanks, 1st section, 3rd Platoon at (786625), 2nd section, 3rd Platoon at (795627), 2nd Platoon attached to 1st Battalion 142nd, Reported to S-3 at 1000 hours, 1st section, 2nd Platoon placed in defensive position at (793619). 2nd section, 2nd Platoon at (788623) in defensive position. Company "D" tanks forming ring around SELESTAT with TD support. Company stayed in factory buildings on out-skirts of SELESTAT the night of the 5th. Moved CP to (788624) at 1200 hours. Company supply, mess, and maintenance moved into SELESTAT from ROMBACH.

Co. "D" Narrative Cont'd.

of company in 1st Battalion 142nd reserve in SELESTAT. Continued heavy shelling of all parts of town thru-out the day and night. Private Romines slightly wounded in leg by shrapnel during artillery barrage.

DECEMBER 12

2nd section, 3rd Platoon helped infantry of "B" Company, 142nd repel German counterattack near RJ (799026) at dawn. 12 rounds of HE and 2000 rounds of 30 caliber ammunition were fired. 30 Germans were captured and 15 killed. No casualties sustained in tanks. Lieutenant Burkett and his section of two tanks supported two infantry attacks by "C" Company 142nd, one at 1000 hours and one at 1500 hours. The morning attack was directed at a RJ near (795635). The afternoon attack was on the factory buildings near (792637). During the attacks, 4000 rounds of 30 calibre ammunition and 25 rounds of HE were expended. The infantry with help of tanks captured approximately 50 enemy and estimated 20 were killed after the attacks. Lieutenant Burkett's tanks pulled back to defensive position near RJ (794634) for the night. Lieutenant Gainey with four tanks was ordered out to support "B" Company 142nd in attack along road (795628 - 795635) along which route two companies of Germans had taken up positions in the houses along road. The 1st Platoon worked up road neutralizing the enemy positions in houses. The attack lasted two hours. An estimated 150 Germans were captured and 50 killed. Ammunition expended; 70 rounds of HE, 10 rounds of AP, 15 canister, 5000 rounds of 30 calibre. After the attack the 1st Platoon pulled into position to defend RJ at (795635) with three tanks. No casualties were sustained in tanks. One of 1st Platoon's tanks was stuck at (795628) at beginning of attack. After dark, Company Maintenance tried to retrieve tank with T-2, but could not get it out because of the intense shelling and direct SP fire that was thrown at them. In a concentrated German counterattack with tank supported infantry, all of our forces at (799026) were forced to pull back to (795628). Sergeant Romberg was forced to abandon his tank at RJ. During the action Sergeant Thomas was hit in chest by debris during artillery barrage, was evacuated, but returned to company area the next morning. Sergeant Romberg took command of Sergeant Thomas's tank and remained at RJ (795628) during night. 1st section, 2nd Platoon remained in defensive positions at (793619). The 2nd section remained at (783613). Rest of company in 1st Battalion 142nd, in SELESTAT.

DECEMBER 13

Continued heavy shelling of SELESTAT. Company supply sent back to Service Company at STE MARIE, at 1000 hours. Sergeant Thomas took replacement tank and with Sergeant Romberg went into defensive position at (795625). Attached to "B" Company 142nd. Lieutenant Burkett and 1st section attached to Company "C", 142nd attacked factory district at (792637) at 1900 hours and patrolled district until 2400 hours. Ten (10) rounds HE and 1500 rounds of 30 calibre ammunition were expended. One (1) of 1st Platoon's tank hit by artillery fire at 1000 hours and brought back to company area. Company CP remained in center of SELESTAT.

DECEMBER 14

1st section, 3rd Platoon attached to Company "C" 142nd, remained in defensive position covering RJ at (794634). 2nd section, 3rd Platoon is attached to "B" Company 142nd in support at (795625). 1st Platoon maintained road block at (795635). 1st section, 2nd Platoon with Anti-Tank Company, 142 in defensive position at (783613). 2nd section remained in defensive position covering RJ and bridge at (793619). Company CP at SELESTAT. Lieutenant Tillotson attached to Company "C".

DECEMBER 22

Company moved from ORSCHWILLER at 0730 hours and arrived at LINGOLSHEIM at 1100 hours. En route, one tank, thru failure of left lateral, hit a French woman, killing her and plunged into building. This accident occurred at KINTZHEIM. 36th Division MP's investigated case. Company CP at LINGOLSHEIM. Company under Battalion control.

DECEMBER 23

Company remained in bivouac area under Battalion control at LINGOLSHEIM. Company CP at LINGOLSHEIM.

DECEMBER 24

Company in bivouac area at LINGOLSHEIM. Company CP at LINGOLSHEIM. Company under Battalion Control. Company notified by S-3 of attachment to 242nd Infantry at 2300 hours.

DECEMBER 25

Company Commander reported to Commanding Officer 242nd at 0900 hours. Company Commander and Executive Officer made reconnaissance of Regimental area south of STRASBOURG during the morning. Commanding Officer, 753rd Tank Battalion visited company at 1300 hours. A company formation was held and awards of Croix de Guerre and Purple Heart were presented by the Commanding Officer. Christmas dinner was served at 1500 hours. Company and Company CP remained at LINGOLSHEIM. Company attached to 242nd Regiment in Regimental reserve.

DECEMBER 26

Company moved to vicinity of (002942) during the morning. Platoon Leaders made reconnaissance of Regimental area immediately south of STRASBOURG and west of the RHINE RIVER. All platoons alerted. Company in 242nd Regimental reserve. Company CP at (002942).

DECEMBER 27

Company remained in attachment to 242nd Regiment in Regimental reserve in vicinity of (002942). Commanding Officer visited Regimental CP and battalion CP's of 242nd. Company CP at (002942). Company on six (6) hour alert to return to 36th Division.

DECEMBER 28

Company attached to 242nd Infantry. Platoons alerted. Company on six (6) hour alert to return to 36th Division. Company in Regimental reserve at (002942).

DECEMBER 29

Company in Regimental reserve at (002942) with 242nd Infantry. Platoons alerted. Company on six (6) alert. Alerted to return to 36th Division. Company CP at (002942).

COMPANY "A"
753RD TANK BATTALION

NARRATIVE OF COMPANY "A" FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944

DECEMBER 1

2nd Platoon attached to 2nd Battalion 142nd RCT with the mission of supporting and reinforcing road blocks in vicinity of SCHAEZELL HOTEL at (696705). At 1000 hours two (2) tanks were ordered to support a company of infantry in an attack on the town of THANNENKIRCH. Tanks proceeded with the infantry down the road and made no contact with the enemy until they reached a lightly defended road block at (686598). Infantry outflanked the road block, consisting of logs, and after the engineers cut the steel cables the tanks overrode the block. Tanks remained under cover and in position to cover the infantry in their advance. The ground at this point was an extremely exposed point. As the infantry approached a factory at (680594) they began to draw 20MM fire. The Section Leader in a M4 Tank moved out from under cover to a point at (682595). to engage the enemy weapon and destroyed same with good effect. As the tank accomplished its mission it began to draw anti-tank fire at a point (683586). As the tank began to backup to maneuver out of fire the tank commander was killed by shell fragments and unknown to rest of crew the tank was virtually out of control. The tank continued to backup until it overturned at (682595) and was unable to be retrieved even to the extent of getting the tank commander out. The supporting tank of the section moved forward to engage the anti-tank gun and fired ten (10) rounds results of which are not known. Balance of the platoon was relieved from their missions as road blocks to assist the infantry in THANNENKIRCH to help mopup the town but because of the confusion in orders and the widespread dispersion of the platoon it took an hour before the section could join the infantry. In the mean while the town was secured by the infantry and the tanks were ordered to assemble in the vicinity of the Command Post. One (1) tank went into a position on a road block at (678595).

The infantry received orders to push on to a point at (704572) to establish a road block but because of enemy resistance through a strong combat patrol and information of at least three (3) strong road blocks the mission was cancelled and tanks were informed that they were to be relieved by a platoon from Company "B" at 2400 hours and that they were to return to the Company Area at ROMBACH for maintenance and servicing.

3rd Platoon attached to 1st Battalion 142nd RCT in vicinity of THANVILLE where they had assembled during the night until road blocks from THANVILLE to a point at (V-744657) could be removed by engineers. Tanks moved at 1300 hours to the assembly area of the battalion with mission of Battalion Reserve.

1st Platoon in Company Area at ROMBACH as Division Reserve.

DECEMBER 2

2nd Platoon relieved by platoon from Company "B" at 0100 hours and returned to ROMBACH for necessary maintenance and servicing. Platoon closed in Company Area at 0230 hours.

3rd Platoon relieved from attached to 1st Battalion 142nd RCT at 0800 hours and received orders to rejoin company.

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

Company moved from ROMBACH to SELESTAT on Battalion order at 1530 hours and closed a new area at 1630 hours. 1st Platoon joined company at 1830 hours. Company in Division Reserve and communications established with Battalion by radio and wire.

DECEMBER 7

Company began the period in Division Reserve in vicinity of SELESTAT performing necessary maintenance and radios were being checked by a detachment from a Corps Signal Company. All tanks were in fair combat condition.

At 1800 hours one (1) platoon was ordered to be attached to 2nd Battalion 141st RCT. Platoon Leader and Executive Officer went forward to the battalion for orientation as to its mission and to receive instructions. Platoon moved at 2200 hours to HUNAWIHR (684534) where it was serviced and from there moved to RIQUEWIHR (673522) closing in RIQUEWIHR at 080200 hours.

Balance of company in Division Reserve in vicinity of SELESTAT.

DECEMBER 8

Platoon Leader reported to Battalion Commander at 0200 hours that his platoon was in assembly in the town and he received instructions to send one (1) section to the vicinity of (663496). At 0430 hours the mission of this section was support of the infantry against possible enemy counterattack through the saddle at 663496. Infantry furnished guides for this section and led them into positions previously reconnoitered by them during daylight hours. No contact with the enemy was made and this section was ordered to return to the town of RIQUEWIHR at 2000 hours. 1st Section remained in Battalion Reserve for the period.

2nd Platoon attached to 1st Battalion 141st RCT at 2100 hours and Company Commander and Platoon Leader went forward to contact Battalion Commander and received orders to assemble the platoon at HUNAWIHR at 2400 hours. Platoon closed in assembly at 090130 hours.

Balance of company in Division Reserve in vicinity of SELESTAT.

DECEMBER 9

2nd Platoon moved initially to RIQUEWIHR from where they were to proceed to Battalion sector for operations. Battalion sector of operations was on the left of the Regimental sector and consisted of a general up-hill sloping vineyards culminating in a hill mass known as HILL 351 and HILL 393. The sector to the left of the Battalion was doubtfully held by our own troops and movement of tanks was completely exposed to enemy fire and observation. While moving forward in vicinity of forward Battalion Command Post platoon was taken under fire by relatively heavy artillery fire and enemy tank fire with the results that one (1) M4A3 76MM Tank was destroyed by enemy tank and burned with no casualties. Platoon was unable to take this fire under fire because of the difficulty of picking out the enemy weapon in the valley to the left. Observation on our part was complicated by heavy ground mists. Platoon had no alternate approach route forward to assault companies because of terrain channelization and specific directive of Battalion Commander. Positions were occupied and throughout the rest of the period were heavily harassed by enemy artillery. Platoon closed in vicinity of Battalion Command Post for the night.

DECEMBER 12

3rd Platoon attached to 2nd Battalion 141st RCT with the same mission.

2nd Platoon sent 1 Section forward to positions occupied previously. 2nd Platoon now attached to 3rd Battalion.

At 0930 hours Germans infiltrated from hills West of RIQUEWIHR and counter-attacked in strength. The Company "A" Command Post was one of the first to notice the infiltration around the town and immediately set-up a defense by fire while higher headquarters were notified.

1st Platoon was notified to proceed directly and promptly from HUNAWIHR to the Company to support the action against the counterattack. 1st Platoon Leader was wounded by enemy sniper fire enroute from HUNAWIHR and balance of platoon (3 tanks) had difficulty in proceeding into town of RIQUEWIHR because of enemy force in strength that intercepted their route. When one vehicle attempted to run into town the vehicle was knocked out by panzer faust and crew forced to abandon the tank. No casualties.

One man was killed when enemy sniper fired on a patrol of our men who went to investigate the feasibility of retrieving the tank and allowing the road to be cleared.

The section remaining with the 2nd Battalion 141st RCT was permitted to withdraw from their forward position in order to be serviced and charge batteries.

The section with 3rd Battalion 141st RCT was ordered to withdraw to vicinity of Battalion Command Post for battalion security.

DECEMBER 13

Period began with the 3rd Platoon attached to 2nd Battalion 141st RCT in defensive position East and South of the town of RIQUEWIHR.

2nd Section of 3rd Platoon supported Fox Company's efforts to breakup the enemy infiltration in their rear by fire from their defensive positions. Tanks and infantry received heavy artillery during the day. At dark this section was alerted to possible enemy tank attack from KIENZHEIM which didn't materialize.

At daybreak 1st Section of 2nd Platoon moved from their defensive positions in vicinity of RIQUEWIHR to the 3rd Battalion area at (682502) and remained in reserve while 2nd Section moved to a position at approximately (678497) to support the infantry against possible enemy counterattack.

1st Platoon was broken up to reestablish the 3rd Platoon to full strength.

DECEMBER 14

This period began with all vehicles alerted for enemy counterattack and we had the 2nd Platoon attached to 3rd Battalion 141st RCT in position with one tank in vicinity of (679500) to support the infantry by fire against enemy counterattack. One tank was ordered to support a platoon from "I" Company in an effort to clean-out enemy infiltration in vicinity MITTELWIHR. Tank moved into town, supported

DECEMBER 16

2nd Platoon attached to 3rd Battalion 141st RCT had one section in forward position which directed fire on targets of opportunity. Tanks were also in position to repulse any counterattack attempts. One (1) tank sent with a squad of infantry to attempt to ferret out enemy sniper using a machinegun. Firing on suspected targets with unknown results. Platoon closed in vicinity of Battalion Command Post for the night.

3rd Platoon attached to 2nd Battalion of 141st RCT had one (1) section on HILL 393 in support of the infantry. One tank sent on a mission of ferreting-out enemy machinegun positions. This tank fired on the enemy position after drawing fire and silencing gun but whether it was knocked-out was not definitely known.

At 1500 hours this platoon was ordered to fire direct harassing fire on towns of KIENZHEIM and SIGOLSHEIM and fired forty-eight (48) rounds without known effect. Intervening ground features and poor visibility prevented firing on SIGOLSHEIM.

All platoons serviced and reammunitioned in all positions.

DECEMBER 17

2nd Platoon attached to 3rd Battalion 141st RCT had one (1) section operating on HILL 351 in support of the infantry and assisted them in mopping-up snipers. One (1) vehicle fired into the town of SIGOLSHEIM to support our infantry and harass the enemy. This section remained in position for the night to continue their mission in the morning. One (1) tank was hit by artillery fire on the idler and was replaced in position. 1st Section moved from Battalion Reserve to the town of KIENZHEIM to be able to deliver fire on SIGOLSHEIM from the West and also the southern slope of HILL 351. This section ran into a congestion of French Armor in KIENZHEIM and was unable to fulfill its mission for the night and closed with elements of the 2nd Battalion. Platoon Leader reported the destruction of an enemy tank by his fire after the tank had opened fire on the French Armor.

3rd Platoon attached to 2nd Battalion 141st RCT moved with one (1) section from a position on reverse slope of HILL 393 to vicinity of Road Junction 270 to support George Company in their efforts to clear the enemy from the ground above KIENZHEIM. Section and infantry moved with major opposition.

At 1230 hours elements of CO5 passed through our troops and assaulted the town of KIENZHEIM. At 1500 hours this section was ordered to proceed into the town with the infantry and was engaged by enemy tanks as they were entering the town. Tanks and infantry closed in KIENZHEIM for the night. One (1) tank was hit on the left suspension which broke the track but did not destroy the tank and it will be recovered at the first available opportunity.

DECEMBER 18

All attachments and positions of ours remained the same at the beginning of this period as they were at the end of the last period.

Co. "A" Narrative Cont'd.

Platoon Leaders made reconnaissance of Task Force sector to gather information for tank action against possible attack across the RHINE RIVER in Task Force sector.

Eleven tanks in operation. Company reorganized with two (2) Platoons consisting of five (5) tanks each. One (1) platoon on paper pending drawing of new equipment. Company in Task Force Reserve.

DECEMBER 24

1st Platoon went with 255th Infantry and the 2nd Platoon went with the 253rd Infantry and patrolled the Regimental Area. The purpose of the patrol was a show of strength.

DECEMBER 25

Company in Task Force Reserve. A company formation was held at 1000 hours and awards were made by Battalion Commander.

Command Post was visited by Commanding General of the 7th Army and he extended Holiday Greetings to the Company and made a short inspection of the personnel.

DECEMBER 26

2nd Platoon went with 253rd Infantry on a patrol of the roads and town of the Regimental Sector. Left Company Area at 0900 Hours and returned at 1130 hours.

1st and 3rd Platoons received radio operator and maintenance instructions from Communication Sergeant.

Company Officers were in contact with the Infantry Units in preparation for training.

DECEMBER 27 - 31

During this period Company relieved from attached to Task Force Harris and attached to Task Force Herron performing same mission. Company Officers in contact with Headquarters. Company always on fifteen (15) minute alert.

Received tanks and Company divided into three (3) four (4) tank Platoons. One platoon moved to the town of SELTZ, one platoon to AUNEHEIM and the other to ROPPENHEIM to screen movement. Platoons returned to Company area at SOUFFLENHEIM for the night.

COMPANY "A"
753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U.S. ARMY

OUTSTANDING COMBAT ACTION OF TANKS DURING MONTH OF DECEMBER

I

SINGLE TANK IN ACTION

11 December 1944:- A single tank under command of the Commanding Officer and an infantry squad of four (4) men moved forward from vicinity of 1st Battalion Command Post, 141st RCT to breakup an enemy counterattack that was in progress between the saddle of HILLS 351 and 393. The purpose of the infantry was to give the tank security against enemy bazooka fire and at the same time point out targets to the tank crew. The tank and infantry moved forward into the saddle aggressively and took the enemy under fire. Heavy tank fire and aggressive action brokeup the the enemy counterattack and forced them to withdraw with heavy loss.

The demonstration of infantry-tank cooperation successfully proved the necessity for such a team, that one without the other, under certain conditions, could not operate effectively against the enemy,

II

TANKS SUPPORTED BY INFANTRY USED TO COUNTERATTACK

12 December 1944:- When the enemy succeeded in infiltrating, in strength, through the high ground West of the town of RIQUEWIHR the tanks were all committed to action and actually no armor was present to assist in breaking-up the counterattack. The reserve sections of the two (2) forward platoons were called to return to the town and after a quick explanation over the radio of the enemy situation began to force the enemy to withdraw under the pressure of direct cannon and machine-gun fire.

It is believed that the tanks actions were responsible for the time that was necessary for our infantry to organize and counterattack. Because of the nature of the terrain tanks could do little more than support by fire. When the day was done and the counterattack repulsed the enemy well knew the destructive fire-power and courage of our tankers. The enemy losses were heavy and consisted of OCS Candidates many of whom never received their commission.

TANK USED AS AN OBSERVATION POST

9 December 1944:- From the 9th December to the 11th December 1944 the commander of a tank disabled by an enemy mine used his forward exposed position as an observation post. He maintained this post in spite of enemy infiltration and artillery fire and by calmly observing all that went on before him he was able to direct friendly artillery on enemy mortar and artillery positions. His uncanniness in pickingout probable gun positions was instrumental in our delivering effective counter-fire.

HEADQUARTERS 753RD TANK BATTALION
APO 758, U. S. Army

24 January 1945

SUBJECT: Historical Narrative for Month of December 1944.

TO : Commanding General, Seventh Army, APO 758, U. S. Army.

During the month the companies did no fighting under Battalion control, with two minor exceptions. On 2nd December a section of light tanks and the Reconnaissance Platoon were ordered to investigate the report that there was an enemy patrol in a town well behind our lines. They searched the area thoroughly but found no enemy.

The same day at 1230A two platoons (one dismounted) of Company "D" were given the mission of reaching Company "A", 143rd RCT, which was reported cut off in the vicinity of V-650565. The one platoon was dismounted in order to furnish ground protection for the tanks since no regular infantry was available. The platoons encountered an enemy road block defended by at least six machine guns in the vicinity of V-667598. During the fire fight that ensued it was reported that the pressure on Company "A" had been relieved and the platoons were ordered to return to their assembly area in ROMBACH.

From December 1st - 21st the companies actively supported the 36th Infantry Division and elements of the 3rd Infantry Division in the fierce fighting in the SELESTAT - RIBEAUVILLE - KAYSERSBERG area. On the 20th the Battalion moved to the STRASBOURG area with the 36th Infantry Division, by the 22nd the movement was completed. Company "A" was attached to Task Force Harris on the morning of December 22nd and moved to SOUFFLENHEIM that same day. The Battalion (- Company "A") was attached to Task Force Linden at 2359A December 24th. This Task Force relieved the 36th Infantry Division in the STRASBOURG area. Company "D" was attached to 242nd Infantry Regiment of Task Force Linden, the remainder of the Battalion was held in Force Reserve in indirect firing positions. Company "A", 781st Tank Battalion, was attached to the Battalion on December 30th and was placed in indirect firing positions in the vicinity of LINGOLSHEIM. For a detailed account of the companies actions see the reports of Companies "A", "C", and "D" attached hereto as annexes 1, 2, and 3.

While the Battalion was in the STRASBOURG area we were able to do a limited amount of training. The training consisted primarily of driving and gunnery, with the emphasis on driving since ranges were not available. The driving was principally cross country for the first time in months since the ground was frozen and would readily support the weight of the tank. The gunnery training was limited to manipulation of the turret, assembly and disassembly of weapons, and sight adjustments. Our greatest training need is still four to six weeks in an area where we can have everything together and run schools and problems for tank commanders and platoon sergeants; then two to three weeks combined tank-infantry training with the infantry with which we are to fight.