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(ADQUARTERS, 747TH TANK BATTALION  
APO 339, U. S. ARMY

4 December 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for the Month of November 1944.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

THRU : Commanding General, 29th Infantry Division, APO 29, U. S. Army.

I - Rehabilitation Period, 1 November 1944 to 15 November 1944 Incl.

1. From 1 November 1944 to 15 November 1944, inclusive, the battalion (less Service and "B" Companies) was located at K-843577 in the vicinity of MERKSTEIN-HOFSTADT, GERMANY and conducted training and maintenance of vehicles. Training included tank-infantry exercises which were conducted daily with units of the 29th Infantry Division. Service Company was located at K-788576, vicinity of LICHTENBURG, HOLLAND and conducted specialized training in the service echelons. Company "B" was attached to the 2nd Tank Destroyer Group and the 1st Belgian Brigade and located at K-660875, vicinity of NEERITTER, HOLLAND, until 3 November 1944, at which time they were released from attachment to the 2nd Tank Destroyer Group and reverted to battalion control. Upon return to the battalion, Company "B" also conducted maintenance and training with infantry.

2. During the rehabilitation period, SCR-300 radios were installed in tanks at the rate of seven (7) per company for the purpose of communication with the infantry. Three (3) flame throwers, E4-5, per medium tank company were also installed.

II - Advance to the Roer River, 16 November to 28 November 1944, Incl.

1. The push to the ROER RIVER and the town of JULICH, GERMANY began on 16 November 1944 and consisted of a series of objectives based on all towns and villages, each of which was defended by dug-in infantry, communication trenches and supporting artillery fire.

The battalion was attached to the 29th Infantry Division and during the first day, remained in division reserve with no elements of this battalion committed. On 17 November 1944, the second day of the attack, one (1) platoon of medium tanks was attached to the 175th Infantry Regiment and employed as supporting fire weapons in the attack on SIERSDORF (K-938565). During the first two days our troops had taken adjoining grounds but were unable to take the towns themselves.

2. The tank-infantry attack on SIERSDORF (K-938565) began on 18 November 1944. The tanks were used in direct support of the infantry. The 115th Infantry Regiment, with one (1) platoon of Company "C" attached from the vicinity of BAESWEILER (K-912572) to take the Northern half of SIERSDORF (K-938565). The 175th Infantry Regiment, with Company "A", less 2 platoons, and one (1) platoon of Company "C", attacked from the vicinity of OIÐTWEIFLER (K-913573) to take the Southern half of the town. Both attacks jumped off at 0700 and Lieutenant Bates, with his platoon of tanks from Company "C", reached the Southern outskirts of the town at 0730. In making this quick push upon the objective, Lieutenant Walker, with the 175th Infantry Regiment, lost contact with the infantry, and although he caused the outer defenses of SIERSDORF (K-938565) to break, he lost two (2) tanks by anti-tank fire because he was too far ahead of the infantry. By 0930, both attacking forces had entered the town together with the tanks of this battalion and mopping up operations began. At 1200, all of Company "C" and one (1) platoon of Company "A" was attached to the 115th Infantry Regiment. At 1640, the 115th Infantry Regiment moved North from SIERSDORF to clean out mines at K-937573. The tanks then moved with the infantry to the anti-tank ditch. Coming up on the anti-tank ditch, Lieutenant Shaw, who was in control of tank attachments, moved Northwest along the anti-tank ditch in search of a crossing. He ran into a machine gun strong point which was neutralized and twenty-four (24) prisoners were taken. After evacuating the prisoners, the search for a crossing over the anti-tank ditch was resumed. A foot reconnaissance by Lieutenant Shaw disclosed that the railroad track was a satisfactory crossing.

The platoon of Company "C" and Company "A" (less two (2) platoons) remained in SIERSDORF to assist the mopping up and to set up a defense of the town during the night.

3. The attack on BETTENDORF (K-922553) was carried out simultaneously with the attack on SIERSDORF (K-938565) starting at 0700, 18 November 1944. The attack was made by the 1st Battalion of the 175th Infantry Regiment and supported by one (1) platoon of Company "A" under the command of Lieutenant Wilkes. The tanks led the infantry into the edge of the town and then supported, by fire, the entering of the town by the infantry. By 1715 hours, the town was completely cleared out of all enemy resistance. Our losses in this action were two tanks disabled by mines.

4. On 18 November 1944, Company "B" was attached to the 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment in the attack on SETTERICH (K-923593) with Lieutenant Page's platoon being employed in the first wave of infantry while the other two (2) platoons were in reserve. The attack proceeded from BAESWEILER (K-912572) in late afternoon until darkness necessitated the tank platoon's return to BAESWEILER, minus two (2) tanks; one (1) having been lost by hitting a mine and the other lost to bazooka fire. The infantry-tank team had established a foothold on the edge of SETTERICH.

At 1800, 19 November 1944, Lieutenant Green's platoon of Company "B" resumed the attack from the infantry's forward position in direct support of the infantry. This infantry-tank team entered SETTERICH and proceeded with the mopping up operations, encountering little active resistance, but many mines and booby traps were encountered.

Company "B" was released from attachment to the 116th Infantry Regiment at 1700 hours, 19 November 1944 and reverted to battalion control.

5. The attack on SCHLEIDEN (K-948550) began at 0730 on 19 November 1944. The 3rd Battalion of the 175th Infantry Regiment attacked from the vicinity of HONGEN (K-926538) and Company "A" of this battalion (less one (1) platoon) attacked from BETTENDORF (K-922553). At 1000 hours, the infantry was pinned down by artillery fire and our tanks, having lost communication, were waiting for the infantry to move up in a defiladed position 500 yards Southwest of the objective. After about an hour of firing from this position, Captain Bulvin, Commanding Officer of Company "A", proceeded East where he joined the infantry with his tank company. He then placed one (1) platoon East of the HONGEN-SCHLEIDEN road and one (1) platoon West of the road. The attack was quickly resumed with the tanks and infantry moving abreast of each other. The main defenses of the town were located on the Southwestern edge and were shattered by the arrival of the tanks. Numerous prisoners were taken from dug-in positions. The tanks gave supporting fire from the edge of town as the infantry moved in to eliminate the remaining resistance. By dusk, all resistance was eliminated in the town and an all around defense was set up. After dark, the tanks were withdrawn from SCHLEIDEN (K-948550) in order to replace ammunition and refuel in preparation for the next day's operation.

6. The attack on Durboslar (K-960573) took place on 19 November 1944 and employed Company "C" and the 1st Platoon of Company "A" with the 115th Infantry Regiment. The tanks left SIERSDORF (K-938565) at 0530, joined the infantry at a coal mine north of SIERSDORF and crossed the LD at 0630 hours. The team proceeded toward Durboslar, entering it at 0730 hours after meeting little resistance. The remainder of the day was spent clearing out the enemy and establishing defensive positions for the night. During the night, a strong enemy combat patrol, consisting of bazooka teams, re-entered the town, forcing one (1) tank to withdraw to the center of town. At 0300 hours, 20 November 1944, one (1) Company "C" enlisted man was killed at the entrance of his C.P. At 0630 hours, eight (8) of the enemy were observed across the street from the C.P. and were fired upon by the guard. On the morning of 20 November 1944, the 1st Platoon of Company "A", supporting the infantry, went through the town again to clear out the enemy who had re-entered during the night. One (1) tank was destroyed by a German faust patrone anti-tank weapon. The Company "C" tanks joined the Company "A" tanks and proceeded to neutralize enemy machine guns, which had infantry pinned down; then moved out across open field to secure the high ground between DURBOSLAR and ENGLESDORF (K-990584) about 2,000 yards to the Northeast.

**SECRET**

While, the 1st Platoon of Compa "D" (attached to Companies I and K of the 3rd Battalion, 115th Infantry Regiment) secured the communications and anti-tank ditch between SIERSDORF and DURBOSLAR. The mission was accomplished by 1630 hours with the tanks remaining on the objective in defensive positions.

7. At 0730, 20 November 1944, Company "A" (less one (1) platoon) supported the 3rd Battalion of the 175th Infantry Regiment in an attack on NEIDERMERZ (K-966547). The attack started from SCHLEIDEN (K-948550) with the infantry moving directly toward the objective and the tanks moving along the SCHLEIDEN-ALDENHOVEN Road in order to cross an anti-tank ditch, then swinging South into the objective at 0930 hours. At this time, the infantry entered the town from the Southwest while the tanks, in an out-flanking movement, entered from the North. Three (3) tanks were knocked out by enemy tank fire from the vicinity of OBERMERZ (K-957541). The remaining four (4) tanks were withdrawn at 1230 to SCHLEIDEN (K-948550) to be resupplied with ammunition in order to support an attack on ALDENHOVEN (K-980562).

8. The attack on ALDENHOVEN (K-980562) was begun at 1430 on 19 November 1944. The 2nd Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment, supported by Company "A" (less one (1) platoon) with a remaining strength of four (4) tanks, plus two (2) 105mm Assault Guns, attacked along the road, SCHLEIDEN-ALDENHOVEN toward ALDENHOVEN. The 1st Battalion, supported by one (1) platoon of Company "B", attacked from SIERSDORF (K-938565), moving East and then swinging Southeast to enter the town from the Northwest.

Company "A" was stopped about 1,000 yards East of SCHLEIDEN due to a dug-in Self-Propelled gun, located in the vicinity of K-975555. The tanks were forced to withdraw about 500 yards in to a defiladed position. During the action, one tank, commanded by Sergeant Deaver, was approached by a German Mark VI (Tiger) Tank and started exchanging fire at a range of about 2,000 yards. The shells from Sergeant Deaver's gun were hitting the Tiger Tank but they all bounced off. At the same time, the German tank was also firing but missed Sergeant Deaver's tank. After an exchange of 15 rounds, a round of H.E. in the track suspension system stopped the German tank. Several other hits with H.E. forced the crew to abandon the Mark VI tank and several rounds of smoke set the tank partially on fire. A total of 30 rounds of 75mm was expended to finally knock out the Tiger Tank.

The platoon of Company "B" met very little resistance and supported the infantry up to the edge of ALDENHOVEN (K-980562) and entered the town at 1600. Heavy resistance was met in cleaning out the town. Darkness found the town not cleared of enemy, but our troops had secured a good foothold in the town. During the night, the platoon of Company "B" remained in the town, setting up all around defenses since some enemy tanks had entered the town during the night from the South. At first light, 21 November 1944, Company "A" (less one (1) platoon) joined the platoon of Company "B" and these tank forces, together with the infantry, mopped up the town of ALDENHOVEN in short order. By 1200, the town was cleared of all enemy troops.

9. On 21 November 1944, Lieutenant Page's and Staff Sergeant Hutching's platoons of Company "B" were attached to the 3rd Battalion of the 116th Infantry Regiment for the attack on ENGLESDORF (K-990584), the high ground at K-995581 and KOSLAR (F-003596). The first objective, ENGLESDORF, having been fired on and probed by the first and second platoons of Company "C" and the 1st Battalion of the 115th Infantry Regiment, proved an easy objective. The high ground was next taken with stiffer opposition being met till at F-003582, heavy machine gun fire and mortar fire was encountered. Three tanks of Staff Sergeant Hutching's platoon were disabled around this point by teller mines, but the crews continued to fight the tanks, thus causing many enemy casualties and aiding the other tanks and infantry to move into the Southwestern edge of KOSLAR. In this stage of the battle, Lieutenant Page's platoon lost three (3) tanks to enemy anti-tank guns. Lieutenant Page was killed in this action. The opposition grew extremely heavy here so the infantry-tank team took up defensive positions, there being but two (2) tanks remaining. Lieutenant Bates' platoon of Company "C" relieved Staff Sergeant Hutching's platoon and on 23 November, supported the advance of the 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment by direct fire into KOSLAR and stayed in support until 2100 when they were relieved by one platoon of light tanks from Company "D" who were placed in regimental reserve of the 116th Infantry Regiment until released at 2400, 28 November 1944. While in regimental reserve, the platoon of Company "D" was located at K-988580 in the vicinity of ENGLESDORF.

**TOP SECRET**

10. At 1400, 21 November 1944, Company "A" (less one (1) platoon) plus one (1) platoon of Company "B", supported the 175th Infantry Regiment in an attack on BOURHEIM (F-013570). Our operative tanks totalled six (6). The attack jumped off at 1400 hours from ALDENHOVEN. Our tanks moved 500 yards Northeast along the ALDENHOVEN-JULICH Road, then turned Southeast, crossed the railroad track and then started moving East. As soon as the tanks crossed the railroad track, fire was received from dug-in tanks in the vicinity of PATTERN (F-003544), knocking out two (2) of our tanks. Anti-tank fire was also received from North of BOURHEIM. The tanks were forced to withdraw to a point 300 yards Northeast of ALDENHOVEN. The infantry entered the town of BOURHEIM during the night but were forced to withdraw by an enemy counter-attack.

At 0800 hours, 22 November 1944, the attack was resumed. Company "A" (less one (1) platoon, with a strength of two (2) tanks) supported, by fire, from a point 300 yards Northeast of ALDENHOVEN while one (1) platoon of Company "B" furnished direct support by advancing with the infantry. Company "A", 92nd Chemical Battalion, smoked the dug-in tank and anti-tank positions at PATTERN while the platoon of Company "B" moved up to F-007571, about 300 yards from the objective, BOURHEIM.

From there, the tanks could not advance any further due to anti-tank fire coming from North of BOURHEIM. The infantry was held up by small arms fire at the edge of the town where they were forced to establish their defenses for the night. Our tanks also stayed at this point for the night.

At 0630, 23 November 1944, Company "A" and three (3) remaining tanks of Company "B", moved out to join the platoon of Company "B", 300 yards Northwest of BOURHEIM for an attack at 1000 hours. Our tanks were again unable to advance due to anti-tank fire coming from the South and East. At 1130, our tanks were forced to withdraw due to the heavy anti-tank fire.

At 1900, 23 November 1944, the medium tanks were released and moved back to the battalion area in SCHLEIDEN (K-948550). One (1) platoon of Company "D" (light tanks) was then attached to the 175th Infantry Regiment and moved into BOURHEIM under cover of darkness to assist in cleaning up the town and furnish defensive fire power. Heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire was sustained. The platoon of Company "D" remained in BOURHEIM until 27 November 1944. A counter-attack was repulsed at 1630, 25 November 1944.

11. On 27 November 1944, the 115th Infantry Regiment attacked KIRCHBERG (F-027563) from the vicinity of PATTERN (F-003544). One (1) platoon of Company "D" supported the attack by fire from BOURHEIM, then moving Southwest toward PATTERN and turning left, proceeded up the ravine to KIRCHBERG (F-027563). About 300 yards from the objective, two (2) tanks got stuck and Lieutenant Turton, the platoon leader, made a foot reconnaissance for a new route and moved into the objective at 1300, after having retrieved the two (2) tanks. The town of KIRCHBERG was cleaned out with very little resistance. The platoon of Company "D" remained in the town until 1900, 28 November 1944, when it was released and returned to battalion control.

12. During this period, the following units were encountered by this battalion: II Bn, 29th Pz Gren Regt; I and II Bns, 404th Inf Regt; I Bn, 148th Inf Regt; I and II Bns, 352nd Inf Regt; I and II Bns, 330th Inf Regt; 148th Gren Regt, 49th Inf Div; III Bn, 29th Pz Gren Regt; 352nd Volks Gren Regt; 246th Field Repl Bn; 149th Field Repl Bn; 116th Pz Rcn Bn; II Bn, 48th Gren Regt of the 12th Inf Div; Rcn and A.T. elements of the 3rd Pz Gren Div; I and II Bns, 689th Gr; Unit "Exner" of the 246th Inf Div; II Bn, 696th Volks Gren Regt; I Bn, 696th Volks Gren Regt; II Bn, 694th Volks Gren Regt; 1st Co, 340th Pioneer Bn; Fusilier Co, 340th Repl Bn; 6th Co, 695th Gren Regt; Remnants of the II Bn, 694th Gren Regt; Kg Meier with elements of the 694th and 696th Gren Regts; 2nd Co, 694th Gren Regt; 340th Fusilier Co; 1st Co, 340th Engr Bn; and remnants of the I Bn, 696th Gren Regt.