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HEADQUARTERS, THIRD TANK DESTROYER GROUP
 TD - AT SECTION
 APO 230 US ARMY

04 February 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against The Enemy, Reports After/After Action Report.

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

(Through Channels)



1. Tank Destroyer Units operating in V Corps during the period 1 January through 31 January, 1945, and attachments were:

<u>TD UNITS</u>	<u>DATES OPERATIONAL WITH CORPS</u>	<u>ATTACHED TO</u>
3d TD Group	1 - 31 January 1945	V Corps
413th AAA Bn (TD role)	1 - 3 January 1945	9th Infantry Division
899th TD Bn (SP)	1 - 31 January 1945	9th Infantry Division
612th TD Bn *	1 - 31 January 1945	2nd Infantry Division
634th TD Bn (SP)	1 - 26 January 1945	1st Infantry Division
Co C, 703rd TD Bn (SP)(90mm)	1 - 2 January 1945	1st Infantry Division
644th TD Bn (SP)(less Co B)	1 - 3 January 1945	2nd Infantry Division
644th TD Bn (SP)(less Co's B&C)	3 - 22 January 1945	2nd Infantry Division
644th TD Bn (SP)(less Co C)	22 - 27 January 1945	2nd Infantry Division
644th TD Bn (SP)(less Co's A&C)	27 - 31 January 1945	99th Infantry Division
Co B, 644th TD Bn	1 - 22 January 1945	1st Infantry Division
Co C, 644th TD Bn	3 - 27 January 1945	9th Infantry Division
Co C, 644th TD Bn	27 - 31 January 1945	102nd Cavalry Group
Co A, 644th TD Bn	27 - 31 January 1945	2nd Infantry Division
801st TD Bn (T)(less Co A)	1 - 5 January 1945	99th Infantry Division
801st TD Bn (T)(less Co's A&B)	5 - 31 January 1945	99th Infantry Division
Co A, 801st TD Bn	1 - 31 January 1945	9th Infantry Division
Co B, 801st TD Bn	5 - 31 January 1945	2nd Infantry Division
814th TD Bn (SP) (90mm)	28 - 31 January 1945	7th Armored Division

* Converted from Towed to Self-propelled M-18 during period 4 - 14 January 1945.

2. During the period, the following enemy targets were engaged by Tank Destroyers of V Corps with the results indicated:

a. Enemy tanks knocked out-----	3
Mark VI-----	1
Mark V-----	1
Unidentified-----	1
Halftracks destroyed-----	1
Strongpoints reduced-----	9
MG Nests destroyed-----	9
OP's knocked out-----	3

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b. Known enemy killed-----78
 P/W's captured-----2

All tanks engaged and destroyed during the period were knocked out by the 76mm guns on the M-18 destroyers of the 612th Tank Destroyer Battalion. With the conversion of the battalion and employment of Company B in support of the attack of the 23rd Infantry in reducing the enemy salient in the Ardennes, the M-18 destroyers were employed for the first time in this Corps. The following comments by the Battalion Commander, officers and enlisted men of the battalion were made on the performance of the M-18 destroyers upon completion of the operations:

- (1) Employment limitations and capabilities:
 - a. The driving sprocket appears to be light. It is believed that a suitable bumper fastened to the front of the carriage will obviate this weakness.
 - b. Capabilities which can be exploited under certain favorable conditions:
 1. Speed
 2. Flotation
 3. Maneuverability
 4. Lack of noise (an excellent point when positions are occupied during darkness).
 5. Speed which the gun may be traversed and fired. These capabilities appear not to depend on favorable conditions. During the one engagement in which the M-18 was used by this battalion, it was moved cross-country through snow approximately two feet in depth without difficulty. Tests indicate that little difficulty will be experienced in negotiating drifts up to five feet high.
 - c. Mobility: Excellent except on ice or icy roads.
 - d. Limitations: The M-18 is difficult to control on ice or icy roads. To give better traction on this type of surface, cleats are being welded to each ninth section of track. Insufficient tests have been made to warrant a conclusion as to whether this will correct the difficulty.
- (2) Opinions of the crew members: (A meeting of officers and men of the company engaged was held after the engagements. The following is a consensus of opinions expressed at that meeting):
 - a. Morale was exceptionally high. This is believed to be due to three factors:
 1. All men felt they had a much better chance to destroy tanks than they had with the towed gun.
 2. All were pleased with its capabilities.
 3. All were strongly impressed by the fact that no casualties resulted when two destroyers ran over and exploded mines.
 - b. Adaptability: No basis for a statement exists since most men had had considerable experience with the M-10 destroyers.
 - c. Comparison with the towed gun: There is no comparison.
- (3) Maintenance including performance of the engine:
 - a. First echelon maintenance was performed in the field during darkness without difficulty.
 - b. The only difficulties experienced in higher echelon maintenance were due to non-availability of parts and tools. It is understood that this will be corrected very soon.

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c. The engine performed well even under extreme climatic conditions.

(4.) Most members of the company engaged had served in units armed with the M-10 and the towed gun. All are convinced that the M-18 is the best Tank Destroyer because of its speed, flotation, maneuverability and power turret.

3. a. Tank Destroyer Units engaged in indirect fire tied in with Field Artillery Units of the Divisions to deliver:

Registrations-----	23
Interdiction missions-----	139
Harassing missions-----	452
Destruction missions-----	89
Illumination missions-----	21
General Support-----	2

firing a total of:

HE Normal Charge-----	4,123	rounds	3-inch
HE Reduced Charge-----	10,925	rounds	3-inch
Star Shell-----	63	rounds	3-inch
HE (90mm)-----	529	rounds	90mm
HE Normal Charge-----	625	rounds	76mm
HE Reduced Charge-----	1,438	rounds	76mm

4. Tank Destroyer losses for the period:

M-10's damaged and repaired by units-----	7
M-10's damaged necessitating replacement-----	3
M-18's damaged and repaired by unit-----	1
M-18's damaged necessitating replacement-----	2
1/4-ton, 4x4 truck destroyed by mine-----	1

NOTE: Replacement M-18's necessitated by lack of spare parts available to effect repairs.

Personnel losses:

Enlisted Men wounded-----	23
Enlisted Men killed-----	1
Officers, missing in action-----	1



Samuel E. Mays
 SAMUEL E. MAYS
 Lt Colonel Inf
 Commanding

- 2 - Incls
- 1 - S-3 Journal, 3rd TD Group
- 1 - Daily TD Operations, 3rd TD Group

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