

HEADQUARTERS, 3rd TANK DESTROYER GROUP
APO 230

8 September 1944

SUBJECT: History of the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group (Period 1 August to 31 August 1944)

TO : Commanding General, V Corps, APO 305, U. S. Army
Attention: Corps Historian, V Corps



1. The month of August saw many moves for the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group. On the 1st of the month the CP moved from GORNOLAIN (T-656651) to TORIGNI-SUR-VIRE (T-609537). A Red Cross Doughnut Clubmobile visited the area and distributed some real, tasty American "sinkers".
2. As of noon 2 August the 116th AAA Battalion was detached from the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group and reverted to an anti-aircraft role. Liaison with the British was initiated by Lt Wheaton-Smith. A British Staff Officer visited the CP to discuss the current allied front lines and boundaries and was given the first of a number of TD Situation Overlays.
3. On the 3rd of August a new CP was opened near GUILBERVILLE (T-592487). On the next day, 4 August, the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group crossed the VIRE RIVER and moved further south to the vicinity of ETOUVY (T-621403).
4. The 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion was attached to the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group from 1 August until 7 August during which time it remained in Corps Reserve. Reconnaissance for positions from which to reinforce front line Tank Destroyer Battalions in case of tank attack was continuous during the period.
5. The 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion was alerted for movement to VII Corps on 7 August and left Group Control on that date.
6. The next move of the Group on 13 August brought the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group farther south to an area near MAISONCELLES LA JOURDAN (T-661269). It was in this area on the 14th of August that Major Warner and Lt Wheaton-Smith proved their joint capabilities as veterinarians. After working laboriously for three and one-half hours their efforts were finally rewarded when the delivery of a dead calf from a wee begone cow was completed. Four days close observation after the operation showed the cow to be completely recovered, definitely establishing the operation a success.
7. On the 16th of August Major Warner and Captain Fuller received orders promoting them to the rank of Lt Colonel and Major respectively.
8. On the 17th of August, Colonel Matthews informed all officers that we would move to the vicinity of ALENCON sometime during the day or on the 18th of August. The route to be followed - SE to GER, SE to LON LAY L'ABAYE, COMFRONT, ALENCON.

9. At 0900 on the 18th Colonel Matthews departed for V Corps whose location was in the vicinity of ALENCON. Movement to the vicinity of ALENCON was made by infiltration in four groups. The column arrived at a new location ten miles north of ALENCON (Z-300997) closing in at 1800 hours. The next day at 191000B the Group made another move to a location near CHAILLOUE on the SEES-CHAILLOUE road. As of 191000B the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group relieved the 5th Tank Destroyer Group which was to remain in the area until released by Army.

10. Liaison between Group and the Divisions in Corps Sector was effected by sending Captain Blackwell to the 90th Infantry Division and Lt Burgess, Liaison Officer from the 893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion, to the 80th Infantry Division.

11. The Tank Destroyers operating with V Corps to close the FALAISE gap near CHAMBOIS were having a "field day" during the three days 19 August to 21 August. Vehicles attempting to break through to the east and eventually to the REICH found themselves attacked on three sides by TD's. It was here that many 3" projectiles from TD Guns found their mark. The TD's operating during the closing of the FALAISE gap destroyed: 9 Mk VI Tanks, 16 Mk V Tanks, 17 Mk IV Tanks, 4 Unidentified Tanks, 126 General Purpose Vehicles, 3 88mm Guns, 3 MG's, 1 MG Nest, 1 75mm SP Gun, 1 Unidentified SP Gun and 8 Unidentified Vehicles, and captured 388 prisoners.

12. At 222000B Colonel Matthews, Colonel Warner, and Lt Wheaton-Smith departed for the 4th Division C.P. to make arrangements for the attachments of the 893rd TD Bn to that Division.

13. Instructions were received from Colonel Warner by radio, for the Group near Echelon to join the 893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion CP in an assembly area west of SEES. Loading of equipment in preparation for the move was done at night and in a drenching rain. The column moved at 230020 to the assembly area near the 893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion. The move to the east began at 231930 and terminated in an area seven miles southeast of ALENCON (U-379815). This was the first of several long moves in the direction of PARIS.

14. At 1240 hours on 24 August the Group and the 893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion joined the 4th Infantry Division convoy which was part of a solid convoy marching on PARIS. The Group bivouaced in BOIS-SOUS St YON (R-910105) at 250100 and departed at 1530 hours for ST MICHEL SUR OGRE (R-002166). On the 26th the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group moved again to the vicinity of PONTENAY LE BRIIS (R-903174)

15. On the 27th, the rear echelon departed for a new location at MORANGIS (S-016261) where it joined the forward echelon. The C.P. was located in a chateau abandoned by the Germans, and was approximately eight (8) miles south of PARIS. Various items of Luftwaffe equipment were found in the immediate area. Showers and hot water were available and many of us slept on a bed for the first time since our arrival in France.

16. The last move for the month of August was made on the 30th. Two echelons traveled around the outskirts of PARIS to the northern suburb of ST DENIS (S-083514).

17. Tank Destroyer Battalions operating in the V Corps Sector during the month of August and attachments were:



TD UNITS

DATE OPERATIONAL WITH CORPS

ATTACHED TO

<u>TD UNITS</u>	<u>DATE OPERATIONAL WITH CORPS</u>	<u>ATTACHED TO</u>
3rd Tank Destroyer Group	1 - 31 August	V Corps
116th AAA Battalion (TD Role)	1 - 2 August	3rd TD Group
612th Tank Destroyer Battalion (Towed)	1 - 17 August	2nd Infantry Division
654th Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP)	1 - 5 August	35th Infantry Division
818th Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP)	1 - 3 August	5th Infantry Division
821st Tank Destroyer Battalion (Towed)	12 - 17 August	29th Infantry Division
610th Tank Destroyer Battalion (")	18 - 25 August	80th Infantry Division
607th Tank Destroyer Battalion (")	18 - 25 August	90th Infantry Division
801st Tank Destroyer Battalion (")	23 - 31 August	4th Infantry Division
630th Tank Destroyer Battalion (")	28 - 31 August	28th Infantry Division
628th Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP)	28 - 31 August	5th Armored Division
629th Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP)	1-7, 25-31 August	*3rd TD Group
893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP)	1 - 31 August	**3rd TD Group

* 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion further attached to the 5th Armored Division 28-31 August.

** 893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion further attached as follows:
 2nd Infantry Division ~~1-5 August, 13-16 August.~~
 4th Infantry Division ~~23-31 August~~



18. Special Service activities for the month of August included:

3rd Tank Destroyer Group	August 4	Red Cross Clubmobile
	August 5	Motion Picture "Song of Bernadette"
	August 11	Motion Picture "Up in Mabels Room"
893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion	August 4	Distribution of 14 Decks Cards 3 Boxes of Mints 3 Baseballs 58 Pocket Size Books
	August 11	Hank Ladds USO Show "At Ease"
818th Tank Destroyer Battalion	August 8	2 Red Cross Clubmobiles 2 Motion Pictures Cinemobile 2 Showings of Motion Picture "Shine on Harvest Moon"
	August 6	12 Decks of Cards Distributed 69 Pocket Size Books and 3 Boxes of Mints Motion Picture "Around the World"
612th Tank Destroyer Battalion	August 5	Men were taken to the 612th TD Bn to hear V Corps Band Distributed 79 Pocket Size Books and 2 Boxes of Mints 4 Baseball Gloves, 2 Soccer Balls, V Corps Band
	August 6	V Corps Band
	August 10	Hank Ladds USO Show "At Ease"
	August 11	Red Cross Clubmobile and USO Show from 2nd Infantry Div.

19. As of the 31st of August the strength of the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group was 15 Officers and 65 enlisted men. One enlisted man, included in this total, is at present A.W.O.L. since 29th August. No casualties have been sustained by the unit.

For the Group Commander:



John W. Walsh
JOHN W. WALSH
Captain TD (AUS)
Group Historian