

SECRET

: S-E-C-R-E-T :
:Auth: OG V Corps:
:Date: 11 Jan 45 :
:Init: :

HEADQUARTERS, 3RD TANK DESTROYER GROUP  
APO 230

11 January 1945

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

TO : Historical Section, Army War College, Washington, D. C.  
(Through Channels)



1. The Command Post of the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group remained at 3 Lascheter Feld, Eupen, Belgium until 3 December 1944 when it moved to the Command Post Building of V Corps at Coordinates (K-806260) in Eupen, Belgium. At that time the Anti-tank Sub-section of V Corps and the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group Tank Destroyer Section were consolidated, and the Anti-tank Officer of the Corps moved his office in with the Tank Destroyer Section. This consolidation was made in an effort to correct a duplication of effort that had existed throughout operations in combat. The centralizing of the two agencies afforded chances for closer cooperation, exchange of information, even distribution of duties, and more time for staff members to visit units. In addition, with the two sections combined, the Tank Destroyer Group Commander had under his control all Corps agencies in Tank Destroyer matters. Major Robert I. McKesson, V Corps Anti-Tank Officer, and two enlisted men were placed on Special Duty with the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group on 14 December 1944.

2. On 9 December 1944 Major Fuller, S-3, departed for the 8th Infantry Division sector to assist the Anti-Tank Officer during the period of arrival in assembly area, reconnaissance of position, and occupation of position of the 817th Tank Destroyer Battalion. This unit had not been committed to action at the time of its arrival in the Corps sector and it was felt that a great deal of benefit could be afforded the unit through the right contacts, especially with Tank Destroyer units whom they were to relieve. It was felt that the necessary contacts could be made and coordination effected in a shorter time with the aid of the Group S-3 than the unit could effect alone since they were new both to combat and to the Tank Destroyer units they were relieving. The battalion arrived on the 9th, conducted a reconnaissance on the night of the 9th and during the day of the 10th, began occupation of positions under enemy artillery and mortar fire during the night of the 10th, and completed the occupation before the first light of the morning of the 11th began to show. The fast introduction to combat was made with a minimum of casualties and without the loss of a single gun, although the reconnaissance was conducted in exposed positions and guns emplaced in the locations reconnoitered. By the contacts made the battalion officers of the 817th Tank Destroyer Battalion had an opportunity to talk with all officers and men who had had experience in the sector during bitter fighting there and were afforded the benefit of their experiences and advice without getting it the hard way. The dividends were apparent in the results obtained.

- 1 -

SECRET

SECRET

3. On 11 December 1944 the S-3 of 3rd Tank Destroyer Group left the 817th Tank Destroyer Battalion well dug in in their sector anxiously awaiting Jerry to show himself with keen confidence in the slogan of the 817th, "We can do the impossible". The mission of the Group representative this time was to assist the Anti-Tank Officer of the 78th Infantry Division in setting up his Anti-Tank Section in the Division. Here again was an outfit - new to combat - who might well be benefitted by the advice and help of the officers of the Group who had combat experience. The next four days were spent with the Anti-Tank Officer. All possible aid was given him in his new undertaking as Anti-Tank Officer. A non-com from the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group headquarters was brought down to assist in setting up the actual office setup to take care of such things as maps, mapboards, logs, journals, dissemination of information to the Tank Destroyer units attached to the 78th Infantry Division, and to help train the enlisted personnel of the Anti-Tank Section. The Group S-3 worked with the Anti-Tank Officer and accompanied him on visits to the necessary agencies to establish himself. Policies were put into effect and routine was established. Doubtful points were cleared up and decisions were made. Through the assistance extended, the Anti-Tank Sub-section was established as a working part of the Division in a short period of time. The Group representative was commended for his work during his stay with the Anti-Tank Officer of the Division by the Division Artillery Commander.

4. On the morning of 17 December 1944 when the beginning of the German attempt to break through was felt, two AAA gun battalions were attached to the 3rd Tank Destroyer Group for employment in the southern sector to prevent an armored breakthrough to the north in the vicinity of Eisenborn and Sourbrodt. The Group S-3 met the Battalion Commanders of the two AAA gun battalions - the 413th and the 134th - at Robertville on the afternoon of 17 December 1944. Areas for employment of the AA 90mm guns in the Tank Destroyer role were assigned and officers of both units departed on reconnaissance. The big guns began to move, and before darkness closed in all were emplaced in position covering all routes of approach to the north from Eisenborn to the dam on the lake southwest of Robertville. Positions were improved and better positions in the vicinity were selected as the reconnaissance progressed on succeeding days. On 20 December 1944 the 134th AAA Gun Battalion was attached to the 1st Infantry Division. None of the positions occupied at the time of the attachment were changed. At the same time the 413th AAA Gun Battalion was attached to the 9th Infantry Division and moved to that sector where they were employed in the Tank Destroyer role.

5. Captain Nelson C. Works, 614th Tank Destroyer Battalion, was placed on Detached Service with the V Corps Anti-Tank Sub-section 24 December 1944.

6. General Order Number 85, Headquarters V Corps, dated 26 December 1944, listed Major Earl H. Fuller as a recipient of the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service.

7. Tank Destroyer Battalions and elements thereof operating in the V Corps sector during the period and their attachments were:

SECRET

SECRET

<u>TD UNITS</u>	<u>DATE OF OPERATIONAL WITH COMUS</u>	<u>ATTACHED TO</u>
893rd TD Bn (less Co A)	1 - 11 December 1944	8th Infantry Division
Co A, 893rd TD Bn	1 - 11 December 1944	102nd Cavalry Group
893rd TD Bn (less Co C)	11 - 22 December 1944	78th Infantry Division
Co C, 893rd TD Bn	11 - 27 December 1944	102nd Cavalry Group
644th TD Bn	1 - 11 December 1944	8th Infantry Division
644th TD Bn (less Co E)	11 - 31 December 1944	2nd Infantry Division
Co E, 644th TD Bn	11 - 16 December 1944	8th Infantry Division
Co B, 644th TD Bn	23 - 24 December 1944	2nd Infantry Division
Co D, 644th TD Bn	24 - 31 December 1944	1st Infantry Division
801st TD Bn	1 - 29 December 1944	29th Infantry Division
801st TD Bn (less Co A)	29 - 31 December 1944	29th Infantry Division
Co A, 801st TD Bn	29 - 31 December 1944	9th Infantry Division
899th TD Bn	1 - 6 December 1944	9th Infantry Division
899th TD Bn (less Co C)	19 - 23 December 1944	9th Infantry Division
899th TD Bn	23 - 31 December 1944	9th Infantry Division
Co C, 899th TD Bn	18 - 19 December 1944	47th Inf Regt, 9th Inf Div
Co B, 899th TD Bn	1 - 18 December 1944	201, 5th Armored Division
Co A, 899th TD Bn	21 - 24 December 1944	201, 5th Armored Division
617th TD Bn	9 - 18 December 1944	8th Infantry Division
Co C, 617th TD Bn	6 - 13 December 1944	104th Inf Regt, 1st Inf Div
617th TD Bn	16 - 31 December 1944	1st Infantry Division
612th TD Bn	12 - 13 December 1944	2nd Infantry Division
612th TD Bn (less Co A)	13 - 29 December 1944	2nd Infantry Division
Co A, 612th TD Bn	13 - 29 December 1944	9th Infantry Division
612th TD Bn	29 - 31 December 1944	2nd Infantry Division
Co A, 612th TD Bn	13 - 16 December 1944	201, 9th Armored Division
823rd TD Bn	13 - 20 December 1944	30th Infantry Division
703rd TD Bn	18 - 20 December 1944	1st Infantry Division
703rd TD Bn (less Co B)	20 - 24 December 1944	1st Infantry Division
Co B, 703rd TD Bn	24 - 31 December 1944	26th Inf Regt, 1st Inf Div
413th AAA Bn (TD role)	19 - 20 December 1944	3rd IG Group
413th AAA Bn (TD role)	20 - 26 December 1944	1st Infantry Division
413th AAA Bn (TD role)	19 - 20 December 1944	3rd IG Group
413th AAA Bn (TD role)	20 - 24 December 1944	9th Infantry Division
413th AAA Bn (less 2try's AAA)	24 - 31 December 1944	9th Infantry Division

For the Group Commander:

JOHN R WALSH  
 Capt., AMB (TD)  
 Historian



SECRET