MEADQUARTERS 5TH TANK DESTROYER GROUP APO 758, U.S. ARMY



5 December 1944

SUBJECT: Report After Operations Against the Enemy.

- TO Adjutant General, Army War College, War Department, Washington, D.C.
- THROUGH: Commanding General, Seventh U.S. Army, APO 758, U.S. Army (Attention: Historian), and Commanding General, XV Corps, APO 436, U.S. Army.
- 1. In compliance with AR 345-105, dtd 18 November 1929, and change 4, dtd 10 August 1944, and Ltr, Hq ETOUSA, subject: "Handling of Historical Documents in the European Theater of Operations", File AG 312.1 Op History, dtd 14 July 1944, the following report is submitted.
- 2. Arabic numbers following certain statements refer to similarly marked pertinent entries in the attached Unit Journal of this organization. See inclosure 71.
- 3. Report after Operations Against the Enemy, 010001 November to 302400 November 1944.
- 1 Movember, 5th TD Group, assigned to Eq. FTOUSA, and attached to XV Corps, was located in LUMEVILLE, (0899) Sheet 15 H, GSGS 4249, 1/100,000. TD Battaliens in XV Corps were employed as follows: 7/6th TD Bn, EP, N-36, attached to the 44th Infantry Division, was in position supporting the infantry regiments S of the RHING. MARKE CANAL and N of the VEZOUSE. The S13th TD Bn, SP, N-10, was in a maintenance and rest area in the vicinity of VITRIBOHT, 3 kilometers West of LUMEVILLE. At Ollion Movember, the S13th TD Bn reverted from 44th Division to Corps reserve, under sontrol of 5th TD Group, as per Operations Instructions No. 36, XV Corps (11).

In order to protect the life of TD gun tubes, Hq, 5th TD Group, published a memorandum which set rates of fire for Tank Destroyers when employed on the secondary mission of indirect fire. This memorandum was published with the approval of the Gorps Artillery Officer (5).

I Movember, Group Assistant Executive Officer and stenographer left for 773rd TD Battalion, formerly attached to 5th TD Group, to complete the work on decorations for personnel of that unit. These decorations were recommended for action while attached to Mq, 5th TD Group. Group Asst. Executive Officer returned on 3 November (9).

During the rest period 1 November to 11 November, 5th TD Group maintained class limison with the 613th TD Bn. On 6th November officers of 5th TD Group inspected the 613th TD Bn to determine status of training, supply and replacements (122, 125). Following the inspection, a directive was issued to CO, 813th TD Bn, covering the deficiencies noted and which directed further training in driving, gummery, radio operation, bascoka and rifle grenade firing, to end 11 November (159).

6 Movember, at a ceremony at Group Hq., General WARE H. HAISLIP, CG of XV Corps, presented the following decorations to personnel of 5th TD Group (129). Col. L. E. JACOBY, 0-12300, FA, Commanding Officer of the 5th TD Group, received the Silver Star for gallantry in action near CHAMBOIS, France, 20th August 1944 (130).

Major William V. Giles, 0-325475, FA, Group Asst. Executive, was awarded the Bronse Star for meritorious service during the period 14 August to 22 August 1944 in France (131).

Not present at the ceremony, but the recipient of the Certificate of Merit was Capt ALBIRT W. WOLFF, 0-1823449, TD, ALE. This award was given for conspicuously meritorious and outstanding performance of military duty (133).

6th Nevember, Oroup Information and Fducation Officer, accompanied by the I and E officers of the 813th and 776th TD Bms attended a school at Seventh Army Mq. The purpose of the one day course was to give an indoctrination of the army's orientation and education program (145).

Movember, CO, Sloth TD Bn, visited Group CP for a conference on the enent of the Sloth TD Bn is the future offensive operation (177). Major MENAED, and Section, of Sixth Army Group, was also at Group CP and conferred with the unit commanders and CO, 775th TD Bn, on the subject of operations and the relation of group to battalion (179).

In order to control the expenditure of 3" and 90mm TD ammunition, CO, 5th TD Group, began publication of a memorandum which allocated the number of rounds of all types of assumition to be drawn by each TD En in the XV Gorps. This memorandum is published with concurrence of G-3 and Artillery Officer of XV Corps. To enable TD battalions to destroy pill boxes and bunkers more effectively, CO, 5th TD Group, recommended to Gorps Ammunition Officer that all TD Ens be issued AOO, T-105 sonerete piercing fuses. This request was approved and a partial issue was made.

10 November, 5th TD Group received FO No. 11, XV Corps, which direct that XV Corps attack Fast with 44th and 79th Infantry Divisions abreast and 2nd Armored Division (French) in reserve. 776th TD Bn was attached to 44th Division, 813th TD Bn was attached to 79th Division, and 5th TD Group remained in Corps reserve (228).

Effective 110800, 813th TD Bn was relieved of attachment to 5th TD Group and attached to 79th Division (247). CO, 813th TD Bn, continued his reconnaissance of assembly areas in the sector of the 79th Division.

12th November XV Corps Artillery published the schedule of fires for the artillery preparation. Each TD Bn surveyed in one TD company for the preparation, and combined, they fired a total of 2274 rounds (281). During the night of 12 - 13 November, 813th TD Bn marched by infiltration to the jump-off positions. At 130700 the attack was launched and the TD plateons, working generally in support of an infantry battalion, moved shead with the attack. No tank action was experienced until 151015 November, when "A" Company of the 213th TD Bn intercepted a vehicular movement across their front near HALLOVILLE. 2 Bk IV tenks, 2 BF guns, 2 half-tracks, 2 general purpose vehicles, and 2 staff cars were destroyed (387). On the morning 16 November, El3th TD Bn lest one M-10 due to enemy action.

During the attack, close lisison was maintained with TD Bus in order to keep an accurate picture of the advance. At 181400, 5th TD Group billeting party reconncitered for a new CP in the vicinity of OGENTILLER (441). The billeting party returned and at 210945 November, 5th TD Group moved to ANCERVILLER, coordinates (336920) TRANCE, 1/50,000, XXXV-16, GSOS 4249, travelling 18 miles (455).

During this period, XV Corps advanced rapidly in some, and by 20 November advance elements had reached SAARBURG.

201400, CO, 776th TD Bn, visited CP of 5th TD Group and discussed future operations with the Group Commander (467). Continued lisison with the TD battelions and division headquarters was maintained.

21st November a growing need for TD protection to reinforce the 106th Cavalry Group which protected Corps N flank was seen. The Group Commander recommended that elements of 776th TD Battalion be attached for support. This order was issued by IV Corps on 21 November, and Company "C", 776th TD Bn, was attached (503).

On order of XV Corps, 5th TD Group sent a GP billeting party to SAARSURG 21 Movember (502A). Later that day the CO, 645th TD Bn, attached to 45th Division, conferred with CO, 5th TD Group on the policies, SOP's, and methods of employment of TD's in XV Corps (510). At that time 645th TD Bn (less one TD company) was in a rear area refitting, prior to commitment with the 45th Division on the XV Corps front.

211805 CO, 5th TD Group, was ordered to Corps Hq and conferred with G-3 on antitank situation of the Corps (512).

220855 Revember, Group CP closed at ANCERVILLER and moved to SAARBURG, opening the new CP at 1255 (528). Bn Commander of 776th TD Bn visited Group CP and exchanged infernation with the Group Commander (529).

At 232310, GO, 5th TD Group, was charged with coordinating mess action of sufficient tank destroyers to step the attack of the 130th Panser Lehr Division which had developed since 231700. Company "G" reverted to control CO, 776th TD En, who was charged with mission of supporting either 106th Cavalry Group or 44th Infantry Division, dependent upon action of enemy tanks.

Panser Lehr Division drove south on the Corps N flank and forced in the cavalry sereem. NV Corps dispatched an officer to BLANONT to move the 645th TD Bm (less 2 TD companies) to SAARBURG to sid in stemming the attack (570, 571). "C" Gompany, 813th TD Bm, attend to 79th Division temporarily moved into positions supporting the 44th Infantry Division front. At 241000 the Asst S-3, 776th TD Bm, received orders from the Bm Commander to meet the 645th TD Bm at SAARBURG, where they were intercepted by the 5th TD Group, and put them in position to support the defense against an enemy tank attack toward LIXHEDN (581, 585). One platoon of TD's and one recommaissance platoon, 645th TD Bm, were diverted to SAARALTROFF by GO, 5th TD Group (592). The 645th TD Bm arrived in position about 241200, and at this time "C" Company of 813th TD Bm withdrew to 79th Division concentration area E of the VOSGES. That evening, 776th TD Bm destroyed one enemy tank, and lost 1 M-36 to enemy action.

25th Nevember, 813th TD En was in supporting positions for the 79th Division S and SW of HACENAU. One M-10 was damaged by enemy AT fire. No other tank action was reported in that sector east of the VOEGES MOUNTAINS. However, that morning the 130 Panser Lehr Division launched an attack against the 44th Division, with tanks and infantry (616, 617). The 776th PD En liquidated 7 more enemy tanks in repulsing this attack. Also during the day the Communications Officer of the 645th TD En reported to Group CP and was given signal instructions and codes for use by the battalien (623).

261800 Movember, 645th TD Bn less Company "C" (attached to 776th TD Bn) was relieved of attachment to 776th TD Bn and moved through the VOSGFS MOUNTAINS to the assembly area of 45th Division (669).

27 Nevember, Company "B", 776th TD Bn, East of the VOSGES MOUNTAINS, was attached to 106 Cavalry Group, who had the mission of reconncitering W and ME in Corps some, E of the VOSGES MOUNTAINS. 29 November, "B" Company was detached from the cavalry and returned to battalion control, them in the 44th Division.

SARBURG. Attached to the division was the S24th TD En (towed). Upon arrival in the concentration area, the 397th Regt, with "A" and "B" Companies, S24th TD En, moved through the VOSGES MOUNTAINS to position in the vicinity of DOSSENHEIN, attached to the 45th Division. The Group Executive contacted the S24th TD En and oriented the battalion commander on the situation, and directed that a reconsissance be made to be able to support the 44th Division with one TD Company. At the end of the day the XV Corps TD situation was as follows: Corps right flank, S13th TD En with 79th Division; Corps center, the 645th TD En (less 1 TD company) with "A" and "B" companies S24th TD En, was attached to the 45th Division; West of the VOSGES MOUNTAINS on Corps left flank, the 44th Division had the 776th TD En in support.

27th Movember, Communications Officer, 824th TD Bn, was issued Corps SOI and eriented on communications set-up (694).

27 November, 5th TD Group received a call that Lt. Colonel Clymer D. Jeffries, CO, 813th TD En, was killed in action near WITTERSHEIM, at soordinates (955205) Sheet 38/15, FRANCE, 1/50,000 (686). Since the vehicle in which Lt. Col. Jeffries was riding at the time of his death was exptured, Group Communications Officer visited the battalion and determined the captured portions of the battalion SOI and reported his findings to XV Corps, whereupon he received a new set of code signs and forwarded them to the battalion (718).

28 November, XV Corps attacked with 3 divisions abreast toward the North and North-east. Tank Destroyers advanced with the infantry, and 645th TD Battalion destroyed an enemy self-propelled gun, while having one Tank Destroyer damaged by a mine and another damaged by anti-tank fire.

29 November, the attack continued at daylight. There were no reports of enemy armor until late afternoon, when 2 tanks were spotted in front of the 45th Division. During the night 29 - 30 November, the enemy counterattacked lightly sgainst the 79th Division using one or two tanks. The 813th TD Battalion was unable to bring fire on the tanks due to lack of visibility. The 3rd platoon of "C" Company, 813th TD Bn, was detached and placed under control of the 106th Cavalry Group by IV Company order. (755)

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Mg, 5th Tank Destroyer Group, received letter orders from Seventh Army relieving the organisation from assignment to Hq, ETOUSA, and assigning it to Seventh Army and further attaching it to XV Corps for operations (741).

The Army Anti-tank Officer visited the Group CP and conferred with the Group Commander. Peints brought up to the Group Commander were the absence of replacement tank destroyers in Seventh Army and the non-availability of more TD Battalions to supply a desired quota of 1 tank destroyer battalion per division and 1 tank destroyer battalion in Gorps reserve (754). Action was taken on 30th Nevember by CO, 5th TD Group, and XV Corps G-4 to obtain replacement Tank Destroyers through ETOUSA channels.

The Group S-1, S-4 visited the 645th and 824th TD Battalions and oriented the S-4's on the supply SOP's in the XV Corps (776). The Group Special Service non-com was sent to 813th TD Bn to show metion pictures.

The Executive Officer of 824th TD Bn visited Group CP and was given information on the present situation (758).

30 November the attack was resumed and the 645th TD Bn destroyed an energy tank and the 813th TD Bn fired on a MK IV tank but could not observe the results.

During the month of November both chaplains of Hq, 5th TD Group, worked with the TD Bas in IV Corps, holding services, making hospital visits, and writing letters to families of the men. The two group destists were attached to the 813th TD Ba and treated 101 cases.

For the period sovered, the Commanding Officer of 5th Tank Destroyer Group served as anti-tank officer for XV Corps. During this period, the XV Corps is credited with knecking out 39 tanks and 5 self-propelled guns, of which 13 tanks and 3 self-propelled guns were destroyed by Tank Destroyers, 5 tanks by air action, and 21 tanks and 2 self-propelled guns by other combined branches. Since the XV Corps became operational at 311600B Huly 1944, the sumulative total of tanks and self-propelled guns liquidated by all troops assigned, attached, or in support of the Corps totals 794. Of this 794 tanks and SP guns liquidated, 89 were aliminated by Eq. 5th Tank Destroyer Group and 773rd TD Bm on temporary detached service with the V Corps during the period 17 August to 22 August 1944.

Daily TD Reports of 645th, 776th, and 813th TD Battalions are attached as enclosures 3, 4, and 5 respectively, in order to show total destruction of tanks by these battalions.

> L. E. JACOBY Colonel, FA Commiding



5 Incls:

Incl. #1 - Unit Journal, He 5th TD Group, 1 Nevember to 30 November 44, incl.

Inel. #2 - Record of MTO, NV Corps, on enemy tanks destroyed

during November 44.

Incl. #3 - Daily TD Report, 645th TD Bn, dtd 30 November 44.

Incl. #4 - Daily TD Report, 776th TD Bn, dtd 30 November 44.

Incl. #5 - Daily TD Report, 813th TD Bn, dtd 30 November 44.

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