

HEADQUARTERS
629TH TANK REPAIR BATTALION
APO 230, U.S. ARMY

3 April 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO : The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington 25, D. C.
(Thru Channels)

1. Transmitted herewith is After Action Report for this organization for the month of March 1945.

Glen Cole

GLEN COLE

Lt. Col., Inf (TD)
Commanding

Includes:

- 1 - Resume of Operations for Month of March 1945
- 1 - After Action Report for month of March 1945
- 1 - Battalion Journal for month of March 1945

101-193.2

6427

34

121

After Action Report, 62nd Tank Destroyer Battalion, for month of March 1945

PHASE OF OPERATIONS:

The battalion was attached to the 97th Infantry Division for the entire period.

Each firing company with a reconnaissance platoon was attached to each of the three regiments for operations. These units crossed the Rhine River with the respective regiments on 11 March 1945. They provided active support to the regiments in securing and broadening the beachhead. In the rapid advance from the Rhine River towards Siegen, Germany infantry troops were mounted on the destroyers for movement to the respective objectives.

During the period the conversion to the 2-16, 88mm gun, was completed. One 88 fell through the Remagen railroad bridge on the Rhine as it was crossing.

After Action Report, 627th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for month of March 1945

1. Summary Period 1 to 6 March 1945.

a. Units in Contact

Elements of the 9th Panzer Division, 36th and 24th Volk Grenadier divisions and 5th, 7th and 17th Infantry Divisions were on our front. The enemy front lines on March 1st extended from F 135726 south east to Neurath, Germany, F 137118 south to Ludwigs, Germany F 132990 southwest to F 126000 south east of F 126000 and northeast to F 122667. On March 1st the remnants of 13th Panzer Lehr Division were contacted and also various miscellaneous units such as 11st Porters of 1st Battalion, 15th Training Battalion, 19th Tank Destroyer Battalion and 157th General Headquarters Tank Destroyer Battalion. At the end of our day advance, the enemy front lines were along the east bank of the Rhine river extending from the left river junction, F 179779 south to F 169430.

There was no contact with the enemy from 7 to 11 March 1945.

Enemy forces opposing us for the period 11 to 12 March 1945 consisted of elements of 3d SS and 9th SS Panzer Divisions, 10th AT Battalion, 26th Volk Grenadier Division and 24th Volk Grenadier Division, 27th Volk Grenadier Division, 2d Company of 10th AT Battalion and 30th AT Battalion of 24th Volk Grenadier Division plus numerous miscellaneous units and combat groups. On the 11th of March the front lines were north to south at F 703196, southwest to F 712117, southwest to F 715160, to F 749216. On the 12th of March the enemy front lines ran north to south F 749216, south along the west river to F 76130, southwest to F 761008 to F 736074.

From 13 to 14 March 1945 no major units were in contact.

b. Reserves

From 1 to 6 March 1945 local commitments of General Headquarters Companies or Alarm units were at the enemy's disposal, although some uncommitted elements of 13th Panzer Lehr Division were available for employment on our front. The enemy showed definite lack of fresh and rested combat troops. The aforementioned reserves were capable of affecting our mission only to the extent of slowing our advances towards the Rhine.

From 11 to 12 March 1945 very few reserves were available to the enemy. Of these the 3d Battalion of the 106th Panzer Brigade was in immediate reserve on the 11th and 12th of March. From the 17th to the 19th of March the 17th and 24th Volk Grenadier Divisions were regrouping on the east side of the Rhine river.

No reserves whatsoever were known to exist in our sector for period 23 to 31 March 1945.

c. Enemy Activities

For the period 1 to 6 March the enemy took advantage of towns and high terrain features by using them as strong points. His mortar and artillery fire during our advance was generally light and sporadic. If fire from tanks or AT weapons was negligible. Small arms and MG fire was the enemy's most effective potent means of defense. During the period 11 to 12 March the enemy harassed with mortar and artillery fire on our front line troops and laid down infantry fire on the roads leading to our positions. Small arms, AT and automatic weapons fire was employed from points of vantage. Laying of mines increased and the road leading to Neudagen was heavily mined. The enemy engaged in

After Action Report, 629th Tank Destroyer Battalion, for month of March 1945

1. Summary (continued)

a. Enemy Activity (cont'd)

digging in and improving his positions on the east bank of the Rhine River. Hardly any resistance was met by our troops during the period from 23 to 31 March 1945. The enemy continued to withdraw hastily and in a disorderly fashion along the entire front.

b. Enemy strength and morale:

From 1 to 6 March 1945 the combined estimated strength of all units opposing us was approximately the equivalent of two divisions. The enemy knew very little of our situation. The morale of his regular combat units was fair whereas the rear echelon troops that were employed as front line infantry bore an indifferent and reluctant attitude towards their new role. Their morale was extremely poor.

From the period 11 to 31 March there was no estimate on enemy strength. The enemy's morale was fair to poor.

c. Plans upon to execute period 1 to 6 March 1945:

(1) To defend his positions using towns and prominent terrain features as strongpoints. This he attempted to the best of his ability.

(2) To launch minor limited objective counterattacks with tanks and infantry before we had fully consolidated our newly won positions. This failed due to his lack of knowledge concerning our front line elements and dispositions. Most of the enemy's counterattacks were broken up by our well placed artillery fire and some even disorganized before they had gotten under way.

(3) To withdraw to the east bank of the Rhine leaving a rearguard force of inferior troops to delay our advance to the river until the armor moved across to the river's western bank. This plan the enemy overruled successfully.

(4) To employ in as great a force as he could muster, his much depleted Luftwaffe in an attempt to disrupt our supply and communication routes, hence slowing us down, relieving the pressure on his crumbling flanks and giving him time to form segments of a defense line before the river. This was not successful due to the excellent air support afforded our ground forces by our bomber and fighter planes.

Period 11 to 31 March 1945

(1) To defend five towns and communication routes using them as strongpoints. This he attempted but our forces were successful in capturing all his defenses.

(2) To withdraw to the Rhine River and form a defense line which was accomplished.

(3) To counterattack in battalion or company strength using armor support before our armor could be concentrated.

(4) To knock out the bridge over the Rhine by bombing, a large force of artillery fired at the cutting off our supplies and isolating our troops in the last stronghold. No success was attained in any of these objectives.

Period 1 to 31 March 1945

Enemy's state of confusion and disorder led him with no alternative but to retreat. No plans were left open to him.

After Action Report, 62nd Tank Destroyer Battalion for Month of March 1945

2. GENERAL SITUATION

a. During the period 1 March 1945 to 31 March 1945 front lines moved along the southern bank of the Ruyt River to the Rhine River from F28804 to F38515. During the period 11 to 31 March 1945 the front lines north and south along the Rhine River in vicinity of Remagen (F645199), then along the Nied River, then to vicinity of Giessen (G660310) and north to vicinity Gannan (G865045).

b. Location of Battalion CP's as follows: 1 March 1945—Hilsmiller (A97424), 2 to 4 March 1945—Gelsenwerk (F187996), 5 March 1945—Neurath (F218733), 6 to 9 March 1945—Tublerath (F276002), 10 to 11 March 1945—Arndorf (F543236), 12 March to 23 March 1945—Linn (F673184), 24 to 25 March 1945—Wdr. Brattbach (776140), 26 March 1945—Stressenhaus (F644157), 27 March 1945—Niederder (G089105), 28 March 1945—Beranhausen (G357183), 29 to 31 March 1945—Krodt-Glaberg (G636245).

c. The Battalion was attached to the 99th Infantry Division for the entire period.

d. During this period the unit received the M-36 tank destroyers to replace the M-10 tank destroyers. This equipment was received during the period the unit was in action from west of the Moser River to east of the Rhine River. The firing companies supported the Infantry regiments of the 99th Inf Div with direct fire support in an assault gun role as well as furnishing antitank protection for the division. Co A was attached to the 99th Inf Regt, Co B to the 99th Inf Bn, Co C to the 99th Inf Bn. Reconnaissance Company was operative for the most part with one platoon attached to each firing company. Very little armor was contacted during the period.

e. Companies A, B and C with their attached Recon platoons, moved across the Rhine River, in Remagen, with the regiments to which they were attached on 11 March 1945. These units were active with elements of the 99th Inf Div in securing and processing the Remagen beach head. In the advance to the Nied River each platoon provided active support to the respective battalions in the attacks on all objectives.

f. After the Nied River was crossed the advance was rapid. In order to speed the clearing of all towns and suspected strong points, Infantry troops were loaded on the destroyers and the tanks for rapid movement to those places. This method of advance aided the Infantry with their transportation problems under this particular situation.

g. Combat efficiency—excellent.

h. During the month of March 1945 the following known damage was inflicted on the enemy: 111 personnel killed, 4 AF guns destroyed, 4 machine gun nests destroyed, 12 strong points neutralized, 5 M IV tanks, 3 M V tanks and 1 M VI tank destroyed, 4 anti-aircraft knocked out, 2 barges sunk, 5 aircraft shot down, 1 base tank eliminated, and 2 AF guns and 2 AF vehicles destroyed. Because of the fast moving situation it was often impossible to check all areas taken under fire for damage inflicted.

After Action Report, 6.9th Tank Destroyer Battalion for month of March 1945

3. Administration (Cont'd)

Unrecorded Officers during period Covered by Report

En Jnr	1st. Col. Glenn Cole, Inf.
CO Hq Co	Capt. Francis M. Dethman, FA
CO Pan Co	Capt Henry L. Morris, FA
CO Co A	Capt Charles M. Grimshaw, Inf.
CO Co B	Capt Edwin H. Stewart, FA
CO, Co C	Capt Anthony G. Greville, All
CO Med Det	Capt Donald A. Bessie, M.C.

CASUALTY NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF AN ARMY

DAY	WTA	WTA	WTA	WTA	WTA	WTA
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	0	0	0	0	0	0
22	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	0	0	0	0	0	0

After Action Report, 627th Tank Destroyer Battalion for month of March 1945

3. Administration (continued)

During the month of March this organization drew all Class I supplies from the 99th Infantry Division.

Class II and IV supplies were drawn from Army depots through the 12th of March. During the remainder of the period these supplies were drawn from the 99th Infantry Division. Class III and V supplies were drawn from Army depots.

All controlled items of Ordnance equipment were drawn on III Corps allocations.

Thirty (30) - Carriage, motor 90mm gun, M36 were drawn on First Army Allocations to replace 30 Carriage, Motor, M30; and seven (7) - Truck, 1 ton, 4 x 4, were drawn on First Army allocations to partly fill shortage due to change in T/E. One - Carriage motor, 90mm gun, M36 was also drawn to replace a battle loss. (One M36 fell through floor of Amagosa railroad bridge as it was crossing.)

Basic loads of Class I, III and V supplies were maintained at all times. Road conditions were fair, many roads being narrow and suitable as one-way roads.