

HEADQUARTERS 805th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A O 464, United States Army

REPORT OF OPERATIONS

JANUARY 1945

The year opened with the Battalion less a provisional Co A attached to the 88th Inf Div in the Idice river sector astride Highway 6531 leading into Highway 9 SE of Bologna. Co B, less 1st platoon, and with 1st platoon Co A attached is behind Castelvecchio in 9631 square. Co C, less 3rd platoon, is along the Highway vicinity Paccanello (934297) with 2nd platoon at C di Cusi (946316). 2nd platoon, Co A, operating under Bn Hq, is at Savignano (921307). Bn CP is at 935286 near Paccanello. Rcn Co in assembly in Benedetto di Merceto (906219); it is operating Cos at 943321 and 962313. Bn Rear installations are at 915248. Co A with a provisional company consisting of 3rd platoon Co A, 1st platoon Co B, and 3rd platoon Co C is attached to the 91st Inf Div; is assembled near Casoli (875260) on Highway 65 awaiting movement clearance to return to Battalion, except the 3rd platoon Co A, which has already moved into position at 901320 in 88 Div left sector.

- 1 Jan C-1 and C-3 closed at Bn Rear at 1500, reverted to parent Cos; after dark C-1 returned to former indirect fire positions at 949286. A CP opened 909303, resumed command of A-2.
- 2 Jan Because of a disintegrating road, Bn Rear moved to 910220 near Merceto. C-3-1 and C-3-2 moved to 931310, Sanadini, with a good field of fire down the valley.
- 3 Jan C-3-3 moved to 922308, Pietrafitta, and C-3-4 to 921315. Those guns are under mortar and small arms fire, have good defensive but poor offensive positions.
- 4-9 Jan continued reconnaissance and planning for successive defensive lines.
- 10 Jan plans made to fire TD at Savignano unobserved on house at Ca Merla (939328) in support of patrol to take pjs.
- 11 Jan
0930A Corps ordered 1 TD Co attached to 85th Div in sector of 1st BR Div, to move 11 Jan and 3 crews to man the TDs turned over to British at La Costa, near Montecalderaro in November.
- 1145A A-3-4 fired patrol mission, 18 rounds, controlled by C-3 at CP 1st Bn, 349 Inf. patrol reported fire effective but met other resistance, did not complete mission.
- 1600A B attached to 85th Div. This must be a composite Co as only 6 guns of B can move.

11 Jan

-contd

0830A

0900A

Lt O departed for CP, 1st BR Div.

C-1 attempting to move as part of Co B, stuck one, damaged one, threw a track of a third.

0915A

0920A

85th div cancelled TD movement, wished company to remain in place.

2 crews of C and 1 of B ordered to Montecalderaro. R will furnish officer.

2115A

crews relieved those of 11th Canadian Armored Regt at Montecalderaro.

TDs in condition C; radios and battery chargers inoperative..

12 Jan

NTR.

13 Jan

snow, visibility poor. 135 Inf in left sector wants A Co available to fire on call missions. Jerry; ammo now allotted for armored targets only. 1 TD, Co C, returning from Ordnance marooned at Fifth Army CP by slippery roads.

14 Jan

B reports that 337 Inf forbids running engines of B-4 (the provisional platoon at La Costa). 1000 rounds allotted period ending 20 Jan. 34 Div completed relief of 88 Div.

15 Jan

NTR.

16 Jan

visibility poor.

17 Jan

Attempt to register p-1 indirect failed, HE could not be seen. Co TD L-2 returned from Ordnance. B-4 attached 755 Tank Bn for operations. A fired 30 rounds into occupied houses at 917326 and 918323.

18 Jan

ren continued for secondary defense lines.

19 Jan

ren continued. B reverted to bn control.

20 Jan

Reconnaissance Co attached 91st Ren sqdn effective 260800 for an Infantry mission. B registered by time shell on house at 953362, CP 1 observing.

21 Jan

C and B respectively relieved ren on Cps 1 and 2. Ammo allotted to 301800, 930 rounds HL; 45 smoke. This smoke is M88, with maximum range 2000 yards, practically useless. Div arty assigned harassing missions to Co B. 50 rounds on 5 targets between 1700 and 1900. With few changes this schedule continued throughout the month.

22 Jan

ren received instructions from 91st Ren sqdn, established liaison.

23 Jan

B registered on Mt scanno.

24 Jan

A-3 fired 22 rounds into dugout at 913333, scored direct hit on one enemy running from nearby house. ren alerted by corps to move 25 Jan.

- 25 Jan A-3 fired 10 more rounds into yesterday's target. Rcn moved at 1030, closed 1630 at 792178 near San Benedetto.
- 26 Jan NTR.
- 27 Jan B reports TDS at La Costa now in fair condition, though starting engines not yet permitted. A few changes made in his harassing targets, now in 95 & 6, 36 & 7 squares.
- 28 Jan NTR.
- 29 Jan A-2-3 demolished 2 houses for 133d Inf at Ca Verla with 24 rounds. A-3 destroyed an OP at 912341 with 14 rounds. Initiated a plan to weld M-5 tank grousers on M-18 steel tracks.
- 30 Jan Spitfires dropped bombs vic Pascanello. A-2-3 destroyed 2 more houses for 133d vic Ca Verla. A-3 fired 12 rounds at an SP behind a house at 927344. No damage observed but SP never fired again. Div ordered B-3-1 to fire a night mission without registration on parrochia di vignale to cover patrol. P- and H- later.
- 31 Jan NTR.

thus ended the third month in static defense. 19 destroyers are now supplied by rail. 4 to 7 others are probably immobilized by failing roads. On snow and ice the steel tracks are exceedingly insecure. During thaws, flotation fails. The depth of freezes has been disappointing. 1st Echelon Maintenance has kept destroyers operative, but lack of technical inspections has reduced power and insurance against failure. Men are comfortable and morale is excellent.



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