

HEADQUARTERS 805TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464, United States Army

Battalion History, 1 November - 30 November 1943

- 1 November - The main body, 23 officers and 423 enlisted men, was in Staging Area #1, Ciano College, Bagnoli, Naples, after debarkation from Africa.  
1800 - Lt. Henderson, Ralph J., debarked at Naples with 31 men and 26 vehicles, and moved to Staging Area #2, Ilva Steel Works, Bagnoli, Naples.
- 2 November - 1800 - Lt. Thompson and Lt. Levkey debarked in Naples with men, vehicles and 36 guns.
- 3 - 5 November - We suffered with the Staging Area: interior guard, air guard, air warnings, labor parties, etc.
- 6 November - V.C.C.O., First Tank Destroyer Group, alerted us for move to bivouac 2.9 miles north of Dugenta tomorrow.
- 7 November - 0900 - The Battalion marched to Dugenta, (R) N 385851, closing at 1230 hours. (Field Order #2, First Tank Destroyer Group, 6 November 1943)
- 8, 9 November - Preparation for combat.
- 10 November - 1100 - Lt. Col. McConnell landed at Bagnoli by L.C.T. from the H.M.T. "Kosciusko" with 9 officers and 108 enlisted men. Trucks were dispatched and brought them to bivouac at 1600. Thus the Advance Party, including the Battalion Commanding Officer, S-2, S-4, Battalion Maintenance, and others, after 19 days at sea, arrived in Italy 13 days after the Main Body.
- 12 November - Relieved from assignment, First Tank Destroyer Group, assigned to Fifth Army with attachment to VI Corps as of 0001 today. (Radio NR 4532, Fifth Army).
- 14 November - 1100 - Battalion Commanding Officer visited Artillery Officer, VI Corps, and made tentative arrangements for move on 19th to assembly area near Pietravairane with an antitank mission on Corps' left flank.  
1630 - Lt. Sabo, 9 enlisted men and 8 vehicles debarked in Naples. The Battalion is now completely closed in Italy.
- 15 November - Lt. Coleman, Liaison Officer, sent to VI Corps. We were initiated in the difficulties of artillery in Italy by attempting service practice against a mountain. "C" winched a platoon into position, lost all rounds in clouds or crevices, winched themselves out again.

- 16 November - "B" fired, and with better visibility, had better results. Battalion Commanding Officer and Executive Officer attended an all-day conference at Fifth Army for new arrivals. Principal section chiefs extolled their own accomplishments from Africa through Salerno.
- 17 November - Battalion Commanding Officer, in response to a call from G-3, visited Commanding General, VI Corps, for a routine fight talk on saluting. Was also assigned a new area near junction highways 6 and 85. This was an all-day trip, several Volturno bridges having been washed out by flood waters.
- 18 November - "A" fired. With the exception of 3 guns in "C" all 18 received in Oran have been fired. The other 18 were fired 4 October at Sebda.
- 19 November - 0800 - The Battalion marched under movement control, Fifth Army, 25 vehicles each half hour, to Fratello (H 121-062) closing at 1705. Battalion march discipline and distances were excellent, but casual uncontrolled traffic caused many jams at bottlenecks, sometimes bumper to bumper, 3 columns abreast. It was a far cry from early Tunisia. The bivouac is poor: bottomless alluvial mud on the west bank of the Volturno, small and congested, but with good cover. It is within artillery range.
- 20 November - Recon. Officers initiated road reconnaissance. S-3 and Company Commanding Officers reconnoitered for anti-tank positions. Battalion Commanding Officer visited 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion and the 45th Division Artillery. S-3, later, says no more room for indirect fire artillery. Corps amends our mission to include reinforcing fires of 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion.
- 21 - 23 November - Continued reconnaissance.
- 24 November - 1200 - Major Wilbur, Antitank Officer, VI Corps, visited with verbal orders to support 71st Field Artillery Brigade, II Corps, in coming operations.  
1300 - Battalion Commanding Officer visited 71st Field Artillery Brigade who knew nothing of it.
- 25 November - 0800 - Battalion Commanding Officer visited Artillery Officer. II Corps, learned that orders would be issued attaching us to II Corps, and reattaching us to 18th Field Artillery Brigade.  
1100 - Battalion Commanding Officer visited Commanding General, 18th Field Artillery Brigade, who was establishing C.P. and making reconnaissance. By 1745, liaison was established.
- 26 November - We were attached to II Corps as of 1403 yesterday.  
0730 - The Battalion Commanding Officer, with Company Commanding Officers, visited Commanding General, 18th Field Artillery Brigade, and arranged plan of support: "A" Company placed in support of 2nd Battalion, 77th, "B" with 936th, and "C" with 937th. The parent Battalion will provide wire, survey, fire direction and observation.

Plans to establish an advance C.P. with Brigade proved not practicable after Brigade Headquarters plugged their road with wired vehicles.

- 27 November - 1100 - Battalion Commanding Officer, ~~2~~3, and liaison officer opened an advance C.P. with Brigade at (2) H 030045. Plans were made and clearance obtained to move into position tomorrow night.
- 28 November - Battalion and Company markers were put out before dark for the occupation after dark. The march was more or less uneventful; it did not rain (this in Italy was an event). Movement Control failed; at least M.A.'s were not told to expect us. Battalion Maintenance extricated two vehicles forced from the road. At 2000 Highway 6 was cleared; Companies were all night actually getting into their areas.
- 29 November - Companies spent the day emplacing guns. Almost all were winched in; some were put in by bull dozers, some by borrowed A. A. tractors. Usually the tractor or bull dozer bogged down. The 2½ w/winch proved itself last night and today.

Positions are poor due to

- (1) Company Commanding officer's first artillery experience.
- (2) Parent Battalion's first experience with 3" guns.
- (3) Lack of occupiable space and great numbers of guns.

"B" has too much defilade, "C" has none; "C" is hub to hub, no more room. "A" is good.

- 30 November - All guns in and laid. <sup>2nd</sup> Two Battalions, 77th Field Artillery will shoot "A" as 3 batteries, using 3 computers. 936 will converge 3 platoons at mid range, fire them as 1 battery with one computer. 937 will shoot "C" as 2 6-gun batteries. There was some confusion about units of fire. 18th Brigade and II Corps decided antitank unit, 50 rounds, still applied, and that 2 units, 100 rounds, would be placed on the ground. It was not clear how much was allotted. Battalion Commanding officer ordered 2 units placed on the ground; prime movers were used, keeping trains intact. Prime movers were refilled to basic load. Captain Sundstrom, antitank officer, II Corps, visited advance C.P. and stated this mission was solely artillery; no antitank mission.

2 Incls. -

Incl. #1, Battalion Journal, November 1943  
Incl. #2, Annex #2,


Operations, Journal, 805th TD Bn.

S-2 & 3 Reports (submitted)

G-2 Reports, VI Corps & 18th F.A.B (Rec'd)

G-3 Reports, VI Corps & 18th F.A.B (Rec'd)

A.T.O. Reports, VI Corps (Rec'd)

  
GORDON W. MCCONNELL,  
Lt. Col., F. A.,  
Commanding