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**HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION**

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 SAUTH: CO 26 Inf Div
 DATE: 1 Jan 45
 INIT: *BYE JMS, ADJ*
 SIXTH TD Battalion

AFD 436 US Army
 1 January 1945

SUBJECT: After action Against the Enemy Report.

TO : Commanding General,
 26th Infantry Division,
 APO 26, US Army.

In compliance with paragraph 10, change 4, AR 345-108 and above subject letter, Headquarters, III Corps, dated 23 November 1944, the following report is submitted for the period 1 December 44 to 31 December 44 inclusive:

1. PERSONNEL:

- a. Total effective strength at beginning of period: 40 0 1 WO 500 KM.
 At end of period: 41 0 1 WO 500 KM.
- b. Killed in action: 3
 Wounded in action: 3
 Missing in action: 0
- c. Replacements received:
 3 0 0 WO 15 KM.

2. ENEMY:

a. Identification:

(1) 1 Dec - 4 Dec METZ Sector:
 Enemy was holding out in number of surrounding forts. Enemy troops consisted of remnants of 20 or 30 units previously identified.

(2) 5 Dec - 20 Dec SAARLAUTERN Sector:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 118 Inf Regt | 8a Starks |
| 818 Inf Bn | Volksstrom SAARLAUTERN |
| 1181 Arty Bn | Landeswehrmotus Bn 1080 |
| 860 Inf Regt | 1186 VO Regt |
| 347 Panzlier Bn | Kampfgruppe Lehr |
| 861 Inf Regt | 21 Pz Div (elements) |
| 817 Pz Bn | 148 Feld Krantz Bn |
| 847 Inf Div (remnants) | Kampfgruppe Weidert |
| 347 Regt Bn | 719 Inf Div (elements) |
| 48 Inf Div (elements) | |

Many other small size groups of company strength or less.

(3) 20 Dec - 31 Dec LUXEMBOURG Sector:

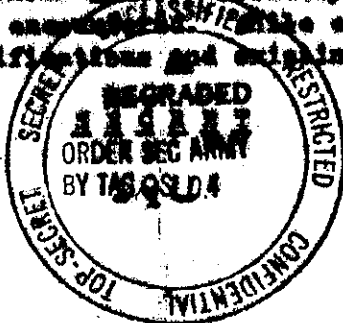
- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 26 Regt) | 5 Para Div |
| 87 Regt - 9 VO Div | 21 of 250 Pz Lehr Div |
| 116 Regt) | 21 of 24 Pz Div |
| Fachrer Gren Brig | 29 VO Div (on our rt) |
| 400 Volks Arty Corps | |

b. Summary of enemy operations:

(1) Dec 1 - 4. Metz Sector. A nice collection of remnants of many units held out in the forts surrounding METZ until supplies were exhausted.

(2) Dec 5- 20. Resistance during the first part of this period was scattered and varied from heavy to none at all. In general it consisted of delaying actions combined with a maximum use of road blocks and demolitions but few mines. A few tanks were used but never more than three or four at one time. Artillery fire was scattered.

In the SAARLAUTERN area enemy resistance stiffened until in the city of SAARLAUTERN it developed into a house by house fight. Many houses were fortified pill boxes of the WISSEFRIED line. Artillery fire in the SAARLAUTERN bridgehead was the heaviest ever encountered. The enemy troops were inferior, maximum use was made of the fortifications and existing terrain. A few tanks were



SECRET

used as assault guns or to dominate main roads and streets. There were several minor counter attacks by small groups of selected troops held out for this purpose.

In the LUXEMBOURG sector enemy resistance was at first very light N of ARLON where contact with enemy patrols was first made. Heavier resistance was met at MARIGNOCH and GROSBOUX where the enemy launched a small counter attack. Heavy resistance was first encountered at FICHENORF then remained moderate to just S of WILTZ where very heavy resistance was encountered from dug-in infantry and a few tanks. In this sector enemy troops were of better quality, and there were increased numbers of tanks and other armored vehicles encountered. These were committed usually in groups of 3 to 6 tanks with armored half tracks. There were used mostly in defensive and delaying action. There were no large counter attacks.

c. Enemy losses - as a result of action of 51st TD Bn only - all figures are confirmed except enemy casualties which are estimated.

Mr IV tanks	4	Fill boxes	1
Mr V tanks	4	Occupied houses	14
Mr VI tanks	1	Enemy GP's	8
Total tanks	9	MG's	8
MP guns	3	Other vehicles	2
Towed guns	2	Fuel dumps	1
Half tracks	2	Mortars	1

Enemy casualties 200

d. Prisoners captured 15.

e. Enemy morale and status of equipment:

(1) In METZ area morale of troops was reported to be low after they were surrounded and they were prevented from surrendering only by their officers.

(2) In SAARLAUTHER area, enemy troops were of poor quality, poorly trained and organized into small groups without much coordination. Most troops were replacements or remnants. Most were old, young, or previously classified as unfit. Morale was reported by PW's to be fair to poor. Ammunition was plentiful, food was insufficient in some cases, mostly because of supply difficulties. There seemed to be plenty of all small items of equipment but a decided lack of transport, prime movers and tanks.

(3) In the LUXEMBOURG sector, enemy troops were of better quality and morale was reported good. Troops were well equipped and there seemed to be more transport available. However, there was a decided lack of artillery, there were reports of food and gasoline shortages because of supply difficulties.

2. OWN OPERATIONS.

a. Forces engaged: From 1 Dec 44 to 21 Dec 44 the Bn was attached to 5th Inf Div, assigned to XX Corps, Third Army. From 21 Dec 44 to 1 Jan 45 Bn was attached to 26th Inf Div, III Corps, Third Army. Until 10 Dec 44, 2nd Regt, 5th Inf Div with Co A, 51st TD Bn remained in vic METZ with 87th Inf Div in immediate vicinity. Remainder of 5th Inf Div during that period had 95th Div on left and 90th Div on right, which was relieved by the 6th Cav Group. From 17 Dec 44 to 21 Dec 44 the 90th Div was on the left and 95th Div was on right. From 21 Dec 44 to 1 Jan 45 the 90th Div was on our right and the 4th Arm Div on our left. During that period 25th Inf Div relieved elements of 4th Arm Div on our left.

b. Reserves: TD Co's normally had one platoon in reserve. Co A had one platoon on secondary mission at METZ doing indirect fire on Forts Briant and Jean D'Arc. From 9 Dec 44 - 17 Dec 44, Co's A and C in reserve in division zone and Co C 502 TD Bn had one pl in Div zone at WINDERSHEIM. During period 17th Dec to 21 Dec 44, 507 TD Bn attached to Div protecting SAARLAUTHER bridge. The organic AT guns of the 5th Div gave additional support to the operations. When battalion was attached to 25th Div, one company was kept in reserve under Bn control. TD Co's in line with Inf Regts had only two pls under their control. The other pl were attached to Div Hq and 25th Bn troops. The organic AT guns of 25th Div gave additional support.

c. Summary of Operations: From 1 Dec 44 to 4 Dec 44 Bn (-Co B) was in vic of METZ securing the city and investing Forts Briant and Jean D'Arc. Co B was attached to 10th Inf Regt and at the start of the period was in vic WINDERSHEIM Q160438 then moved to YARBURG. On 4 Dec 44 Co B pls moved to protecting approaches across German border from FORET DE KARLSRUHE MARKET. Co C in general support with

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Inf Regt moved to via YANIKERS 4193042. Hon Co under Bn control moved to assembly area via CHRYSTAL. Bn CP moved to YANIKERS 4193042. Co A remained in via NETS attached to 2d Inf Regt. On 5 Dec 44 Bn CP moved to CHRYSTAL 4741876. Co C attached to 11th Inf Regt and moved to positions via BIRNEN 429344. Hon Co established CP's providing AT warning net in Div zone. Pl assisted in clearing obstacles from road running NE 4291887 through NEAR FORT. On 6 Dec Co B moved in support of 10th Inf Regt attack towards SAAR River, to DIFFEREN 420717 and 2d pl fired 77 rds M2 and 9 rds APC at enemy troops and a building, obtaining good effect. Co C continued with advance of 11th Regt to E. Co A in via NETS fired 180 rds M2 indirect at Forts Jean D'Arc and Briant. On 7 Dec 44 Co B fired 13 rds M2 in direct support of 2d, 3d, 10th Regt. Pl cleared obstacles from road between WENDEL & LUXEMBURG. Co A fired 180 rds M2 indirect on Forts Jean D'Arc and Briant. Other Co's no change.

On 8 Dec Co's A, B, & C held from attempt to CP A under Bn control to provide anti-mechanical defense of Div zone. Hon Co pl's manning CP's at DIFFEREN 420717, SCHAFFHAUSEN 420718, 420719, and 420720 providing an AT warning net and directing artillery fire on enemy. On 9 Dec Bn CP moved to WENDEL 420717 and Co A moved to 420720 and placed in reserve to do maintenance. All other Co's no change. From 10 Dec to 16 Dec 44 the 5th Div front lines were along SAAR river in its zone and action was limited to patrol work. All Co's remained in same positions providing anti-mechanical defense of Div zone. Hon Co manned CP's and directed artillery fire on enemy targets. On 17 Dec 44 Co A was attached to 2d Inf Regt and Co C was attached to 11th Inf Regt. On 17 Dec 44 5th Div (less 10th Inf Regt) held 95th Inf Div in SCHAFFHAUSEN bridgehead. Co A & C moved to via SCHAFFHAUSEN crossed river and relieved pls of 507th Td Bn. Pl in direct support of Inf Bn in house to house attack on the enemy. Co B in direct support of 10th Inf Regt in via of DIFFEREN 420718. 2d pl Co B fired 18 rds M2 and 8 rds APC direct, at enemy CP in lower 2000 yds distant and CP was destroyed. On 18 Dec Co A & C in direct support of Inf Bn on assault in house to house fighting - no action. 1st pl Co A held in reserve. On 19 Dec, 2d pl Co A fired 18 rds APC and 8 rds M2 at a pill-box in support of Inf. Pill box was not neutralized. 1st pl Co C fired 14 rds APC & 10 rds M2 at a pill box. The pill box was neutralized, obtaining penetration with 2nd rd of APC; 7 men killed & 2 taken PW. 2d pl Co C destroyed house and HQ being used by enemy with 12 rds M2 and 4 rds APC. 1st pl Co C fired at an tk which was part of small counterattack. Visibility was very poor and gun crew unable to tell results but believe tank was hit. This pl later fired 8 rds APC and 10 rds M2 into house held by an and house was demolished. Hon Co established CP's in SCHAFFHAUSEN providing AT warning net. During morning of 20 Dec, 2d pl Co C fired 37 rds M2 and 25 rds APC on an MG's implanted in and around houses in SCHAFFHAUSEN and in all, destroyed 6 MG nests.

Bn alerted to move to via LUXEMBURG on offensive. Bn moved to assist in repelling the large scale German counter offensive on afternoon 20 Dec 1944. Bn moved to assembly area via ELSHEIMTINGEN, Luxembourg and on of 2300 hrs 20 Dec 44 Bn was relieved from 5th Div and attached to 28th Inf Div, III Corps. On 21 Dec Co B (-2d pl) was attached to 104th Inf Regt and moved to positions via 744245. 2d pl attached to 28th Div Arty. Co C (less 2d pl) was attached to 28th Inf Regt and moved to via FINGROEN 744246. 2d pl attached to 28th Div Bn and moved to via WISCHEN 744247 to set up positions for defense of Div CP. Co A (less 1st & 2d pls) placed in Div zone under Bn control and remained in ELSHEIMTINGEN. 1st pl attached to IV A and moved to via 744248. 2d pl attached to 28th Div Hon Tr and moved to via HUISSEN 744249. Hon Co remained in assembly area at ELSHEIMTINGEN under Bn control. On 22 Dec, the 104th and 28th Inf Regts attacked to the north meeting only slight resistance, mainly s/a fire. Bn CP moved to REMANON 744250. Co A 1st pl with 28th Hon Tr moved to HONNET 1st POLSCHEN 744251. 2d pl attached to IV A moved to SAORN, 2d pl moved to REMANON to aid in covering roads around Div CP. Co B 1st pl fired 13 rds M2 and broke up small counterattack at 741020. Co C 1st & 2d pl moved to HONNET 744252. 1st pl fired 8 rds APC and 2 rds M2 and destroyed one enemy CP gun and later fired 8 rds APC at enemy tk but poor visibility prevented seeing results.

On 23 Dec 44 Co A 1st pl was relieved from IV A, attached to IV BANILEON and moved to WILFOND at 740434. 2d pl destroyed an an tk M2 IV and one half track at 744337 with 2 rds APC and 8 rds M2. Co A (less 1st pl) was attached to 101st Inf Regt. Co B 1st pl fired 75 rds M2 at enemy packets N and NE of PRATS inflicting many casualties. 2d pl attached to 28th Hon Tr and moved to via HONNET 744253. 3rd

SECRET



SECRET

pl moved north in support of Inf attack and fired 9 rds HE destroying an enemy full track light armored vehicle at F710430. 5 en troops were killed and 5 taken prisoner. Later pl fired 18 rds APC and 8 rds HE and destroyed one en tk Mk IV. Co C moved in support of 328th Inf attack to WARE F688390. Rem Co placed on 24 hr road and bridge patrol within Div zone, and also manned OP at GROSBOIS F728322. On 24 Dec Co A 1st pl in support of HAMILTON attacked to the north and moved via HIRRENK F708423; 2d pl moved to KOSTASIKTER F683385; 3d pl to via MOYERT LEE POLCHENTY F688360. Co B 1st and 3d pl moved to via WEINERSCHNID F737445. 2d pl with 26th Rem which was protecting W flank, moved to ROOBY F688345. 3d pl fired 6 rds HE and destroyed one enemy vehicle. Co C 2d pl fired 7 rds APC & 3 rds HE at an en VI and left it burning, and from position at F688436 fired 7 rds HE causing 12 en casualties. Rem Co continued on road and bridge patrol and manning OP. On 25 Dec Co A supported 101st Inf Regt in attack on ESCHDORF. HAMILTON dissolved and 1st pl relieved. 2d pl Co C was placed in protection of Div OP under Div control. Co B supported 104th Regt attack to north on ESCHDORF. Co C 1st pl from position near ARSDORF fired 22 rds HE into house and barn in ARSDORF. House was a fuel dump as it exploded. Estimated 30 en troops in building. Co C placed in Corps Reserve and moved to via GROSBOIS F728350. On 26th Dec, Co A 2d pl fired 22 rds HE at an infantry at F688418 and destroyed 1 MG nest 4 killed, and later knocked out an enemy mortar, killing 4 of its crew. 1st pl moved to GROSBOIS F728379. Co B moved to via WEINERSCHNID L WEINERSCHNID F730428 in support of 104th Inf Regt.

On 27 Dec 44, Co A moved in support of 101st Regt on town of WICKER-BUN-KRODT F688487 and fired 22 rds HE, 3 rds APC & 500 rds SO cal, destroying one Mk V tank and one 88mm AT gun. Co A in via LIEFRANGE F688473. Co B supported crossing of SURE river by 104th Inf Regt, platoons remaining via ESCHDORF F707450. Rem Co maintained security patrol of roads and bridges and manned OP's at F688448 & F688487. On 28th Dec, Co A in support of 101st Regt moved to KAUNDOF F688483 & fired 60 rds HE, destroying one half track armored vehicle, one self-propelled gun and one Mk V tank and killing an estimated 40 enemy foot troops. En attack toward KOTHUM 2d pl in support of attack destroyed one Mk V tank, killed 12 and took 7 prisoners. Co B in support of attack of 104th Regt east of KAUNDOF fired 10 rds HE, 200 rds SO cal and 500 rds MO cal at en foot trps inflicting many casualties. Co C still in positions in and around GROSBOIS & WERLIG. Rem continued on road and bridge security patrols in Div zone. On night of 28 Dec, 2d pl alerted for expected enemy counter-attack from NE, which never materialized. 2d pl Co A destroyed one en tk Mk IV and one Mk V tk in via of KOTHUM. 1st pl Co A moved to via BAYIGNE F688488. 3d pl destroyed one Mk IV tk EN of KOTHUM. On 29 Dec Div remained in defensive dug-in positions expecting heavy enemy counterattack with 7D Co's in position. Co C 1st pl stood to 328th Inf Regt and moved to ESCHDORF F708445. 2d & 3d pl's took positions on N and S of WERLIG to cover road net to NE & E. Rem Co OP's maintained close observation for an armor. On 30 Dec 44, Co A remained in same positions. Co B 2d pl in support of attack of 104th Inf took up positions on hill overlooking BOWLINGEN at F688480. One sec of 2d pl with 26th Rem Tr moved to BAYIGNE F688485. Co C 1st pl moved with 328th Inf Regt to via BAYIGNE F688486; 2d & 3d pl's moved to ESCHDORF. Rem Co continued manning OP's and securing roads and bridges in Div sector. On 31 Dec remainder of Co C 2d & 3d pl's stood to 328th Inf Regt at 0935 hrs and moved to via BAYIGNE F688488. 1st pl moved to KAUNDOF F688483. Co A 2d pl moved to position at F691504. Remainder of Co A no change, no action. Co B remained in same positions. No action. Enemy counter attack during morning but was repulsed. No armor was encountered. Rem Co 1st pl relieved from road and bridge patrol at 1700 hrs. 2d pl continued on road security patrol between Div & Regt's OP's. 3d pl manning OP's via WICKER-BUN-KRODT, WEINERSCHNID, & KOTHUM.

E. Results: At beginning of period Co A supported 2nd Inf Regt around WERT when two forts were holding out. Ft Driant surrendered. Co B & C supported rest of Div in its attack to SAAR river in via DIFFERTEN-LUDWILLER, providing anti-mechanized defenses and supporting Inf Bns with direct fire. No en tks were encountered. In SAARLAUTEREN bridgehead, Co's A & C closely supported Inf Bns with direct fire in the assault of pillboxes and house to house fighting. During this period 1 pillbox, 2 houses & 2 MG's nests were destroyed and an unknown number of casualties inflicted on the enemy. Co B in support of 10th Inf Regt in DIFFERTEN sector destroyed one en OP located in a town. During period that Bn was attacked

SECRET



SECRET

to 26th Inf Div besides providing an anti-mechanized defense in Div zone. Companies were in close support of Inf Bns and destroyed 2 self-propelled guns, 4 M4 IV tanks, 4 M3 V tanks, 1 M4 VI tank, 1 M37 mortar gun, 2 half tracked armored vehicles, 1 full tracked armored vehicle, 1 wheeled vehicle, 1 MG, 1 mortar, and 1 fuel dump. Many casualties were inflicted on enemy and a number of prisoners taken. Only enemy armor encountered was 1 to 3 tanks with foot troops.

4. SUPPLY AND EVACUATION

a. Summary of supply activity during period and factors affecting flow of supplies.

(1) During the time covered by this report the Battalion was attached to the 5th Infantry Division from the 1st of December to the 20th of December inclusive; and the 26th Infantry Division from the 21st of December to the 31st of December. Both Divisions operate similarly with their attached units. The various supply agencies of the divisions supplied the Bn with the necessities of Class I and Ordnance Class II, which were obtained from the assigned Corps or army installation. During the attachment to the 5th Infantry Division all Ordnance repair and replacement was handled by the 256th Ordnance Heavy Tank Company of the 103rd Ordnance Battalion. Ordnance requisitions and repairs were handled by the 256th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company in all emergencies. The period of the 21st to the 31st of December all Ordnance was handled by the 251st Heavy Tank Company of the 16th Ordnance Battalion. The remainder of the month the Bn was assigned to the 252nd Heavy Tank Company of the 24th Ordnance Battalion.

(2) The above mentioned Ordnance units provided 3rd echelon maintenance. First and 2nd echelon maintenance was performed by the Bn Maintenance pl and company motor sections.

(3) Rations for the month averaged 60% (10 in 1) and 25% "D". Rations was issued to the Co's daily. "D" rations were consumed by all companies when conditions warranted. All Co's consumed the 20% "D" ration for Christmas.

(4) Co's requisitioned on the Bn for all supplies which was secured as rapidly as possible from the proper supply agencies. Motor maintenance and parts supply was handled by the Bn Motor Officer. The critical status of tires 7150 x 20 for truck, 2 1/2 ton GMC, used up during this period. The Bn has 100% of these type tires. The tires 5100 x 16 for truck 1 ton and remained very critical, the Bn is short 21 at this date. Four blankets were drawn and issued each individual in lieu of sleeping bag which has not been received.

(5) Ammunition: Basic load maintained by replacement as expended.

b. Status of Supply and Evacuation at close of period.

(1) BRANCH	ON HAND
Ordnance	20%
Quartermaster	64%
Medical	100%
Chemical Warfare	100%
Engineer	100%
Signal	64%

(2) Major critical items short: None.

5. Recommendations based on battle experience include tactics and use of equipment: None.

C. L. Hail

C. L. Hail,
Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry,
COMMANDING.

