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HEADQUARTERS
661ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 230, U. S. Army

2 May 1945

AFTER ACTION REPORT

In compliance with AR 345-105 and changes thereto, the following is a report of the operations of the S-1 Section of the 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion for the period 1 April 1945, to 30 April 1945:

I - Strength

The authorized strength of this organization:

Officers 35
Warrant Officers ... 2
Enlisted Men 607
Total 644

Morning report strength 1 April 1945:

Officers 34
Warrant Officers ... 2
Enlisted Men 291
Total 627

Morning report strength 30 April 1945:

Officers 33
Warrant Officers ... 1
Enlisted Men 573
Total 607

Effective strength 30 April 1945:

Officers 30
Warrant Officers ... 1
Enlisted Men 569
Total 600

II - Casualties were reported by this organization for this period as follows:

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted men</u>
DOI	0	0
KIA	0	6
DOW	0	0
SWA	0	1
SIA	0	0
LWA	2	15
LIA	0	4
MIA	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	2	26

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III - Replacements

Replacements requisitioned during the period were as follows:

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted Men</u>
1	30

Hospital returnees received during the period were as follows:

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted Men</u>
0	6

Replacements received during the period were as follows:

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted Men</u>
0	0

IV - Decorations:

The following awards have been published by general orders of the 69th Infantry Division; however, formal presentation will not take place until the results of other recommendations are received, at which time a formation will be held to make the formal presentations:

Captain Robert L. Doupe to receive the Bronze Star for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy from 25 January 1945, to 14 April 1945, in France, Belgium and Germany.

Captain James A. LaDu (then 1st Lieutenant) to receive the Bronze Star for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy from 21 February 1945, to 14 April 1945, in Belgium and Germany.

Captain William J. King to receive the Bronze Star for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy from 25 January 1945, to 20 April 1945, in France, Belgium and Germany.

1st Lt. Herald A. Molin to receive the Bronze Star for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy from 25 February 1945, to 21 April 1945, in Belgium and Germany.

Sergeant Burnell T. Scott to receive the Bronze Star for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against the enemy on 7 April 1945, in Germany.

Pfc Henry G. David to receive the Bronze Star for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against the enemy on 12 April 1945, in Germany.

Copies of the citations are enclosed.

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V - Battlefield Promotions:
None

VI - Commendations:

Commendation to S/Sgt John H. Schoenenberger, dated 15 April 1945.

Commendation to Sergeant Sylvanus P. Baker, dated 15 April 1945.

Commendation to the 2d Platoon, Ren Co, commanded by 1st Lt James L. Carlin, dated 15 April 1945.

Commendation to Sergeants Albert Podolan and Ralph S. Venable and Tec 4s Thomas J. Napfal and Richard A. McKinnon.

Copies of the above commendations enclosed.

VII - Prisoners of War:

Prisoners of war captured and evacuated during month:

Uniformed - 636
Civilian - 1

VIII - Miscellaneous:

Pass Policy

Due to the rapid moving situation during the past month, higher headquarters was unable to allot pass quotas to this organization. A quota of one enlisted man to go the French Riviera was reserved, however. The need for pass quotas as a morale factor will increase if the situation remains stable. This section has been assured by the G-1 section of Division that we will receive prompt attention when future quotas are allotted.

G-1 Reports

Reports were submitted regularly throughout the period; however, extended communication lines often resulted in the reports being a little late. Our tank destroyer companies were attached to the infantry regiments throughout most of the period and it was difficult to get the company reports in promptly. Any member of the Battalion staff or any messenger visiting the companies picked up what reports they could. Radio relay stations were also utilized.

Replacements

No replacements were received by this Battalion during this period. Six men returned from the hospital; however, this was not sufficient to counterbalance the losses through battle and non-battle causes. If the Battalion is committed to further action in the near future, replacements will be badly needed in the destroyer companies. All

[REDACTED]

company commanders are desirous of receiving replacements during the present phase so that they may give them what training they lack if possible before their company is recommitted.

Sickness

In general the physical condition of the command is excellent. Four cases of battle exhaustion occurred within the Battalion. Three were returned to duty after a short rest at the clearing company. Two of these men appeared before a Board of Officers convened under the provisions of AR 615-369.

Finance

The payment of troops was conducted over a period of approximately ten days. The agent officer lost 10,000 Belgium francs when his bedroll was rifled by persons unknown in Schlotheim, Germany. The Executive Officer of Company "C" lost the entire payroll of the 2nd and 3rd Platoons of Company "C" during a forced march. The majority of this payroll was later recovered after a liberated British PW found the money in an abandoned German house and turned it in to the V-Corps Finance Officer. In the future troops will not be paid under like conditions.

Red Cross

Helpful service was given members of this organization in locating relatives and notification of deaths and other family matters during the period.

Special Services

The fast moving situation limited the amount of activities under Special Service. Whenever possible movies were shown and after the fall of Leipzig, the 69th Division Special Services presented their "Siegfried Follies" to 250 men of the Battalion. The show was delivered in an excellent manner and was exceptionally well received by the audience. The Division S.S.C. Theater was utilized by many members of the Battalion also.

Postal Activities

The long supply lines caused the mail to come slowly the greater part of the month; however, the Battalion mail orderly made several 200 mile trips to get mail.

Straggler Apprehension

None.

RALPH N. KENT
1st Lt, FA
S-1

10 Incls:
No. 1 - Citation, Captain
Robert L. Doupe

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10 Incls:

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- No. 2 - Citation, Captain James [REDACTED]
 - " 3 - Citation, Captain William J. King.
 - " 4 - Citation, 1st Lt. Harald A. Molin.
 - " 5 - Citation, Sgt. Burnell T. Scott.
 - " 6 - Citation, Pfc Henry G. David.
 - " 7 - Commendation to S/Sgt. John H. Schoenenberger.
 - " 8 - Commendation to Sgt. Sylvanus P. Baker.
 - " 9 - Commendation to 2d Plt. of Ren Co, commanded by 1st. Lt. James L. Carlin.
 - " 10 - Commendation to Sgts. Albert Podolan and Ralph S. Venable and Tec 4s Thomas J. Hapfel and Richard A. McKinnon.

HEADQUARTERS
661ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 278

1 May 1945

AFTER ACTION REPORT

I. Attack and Movement Phases:

a. Operations for the Period

1. Co "A" Atchd to CT 272 was ordered to patrol city of WETELAR (525169) preventing riot in city, 30 1145A. Co A in conjunction with Co K, 3rd Bn, 271 Inf maintained continuous police and patrol of city, until relief 022000Z. 130 PW were taken while in WETELAR (525169). At 022000Z, moved to assembly area vic (0079706), from which, mounting Co B, 1st Bn, 271 Inf, convoyed to HANDEL (0221057) closing in area 051330Z. 3rd Plt, Bn Co atchd to Co A at 061830Z. Co A reverted to Bn control and moved to LANNEBENHAGEN (292078), closing in area at 062000Z, in preparation for jump-off at 070500Z, with Inf in crossing WHERA RIVER. 13 PW taken, as part of CT 3. At 070430Z, advancing E, carrying Inf on vehicles. During the advance, enemy strong point was encountered vic (350102). Two (2) Tiger Royal Tanks, and one plt of enemy inf. At this point, 3rd Plt, Bn Co, lost one MB and 3 1/4 tons. 3rd Bn Plt reverted to Co control. On 11 Apr 45, Co A, atchd to CT 271 assembled in SIECKENHAGEN (400095) and moved to WITZENHAUSEN (490070). At 091130Z, with 1st Plt, Bn Co atchd, advanced E, to HEIBLAND (0521158), (with inf mounted on vehicles) arriving in area 091330Z. 4 PW taken. Mounting inf on vehicles, Co A advanced E to BORNBERG (722199) at 091845Z and at 102330 advanced E to HIRNBERG (0812105). Moved from HIRNBERG (0812105) to BILLENBA (J599956) closing in area 112100Z. Contacted enemy enroute to BILLENBA (J599956) in vic of REICHLINEN (J499909). From BILLENBA (J599956) Co A advanced E to FETTERSTADT (2093010), closing in area 122000Z. Enemy was contacted at vic BRANDERORA (J843045). Under arty fire, and direct fire for about one hour. Bypassed and received more fire in vic of AINSDORF (J802020). 1st Plt, Bn Co, captured 8 PW. Three men, 1st plt ~~MB~~ killed and one wounded when ring mount on MB, in which they were riding, was hit with H E. While advancing E from FETTERSTADT (2093010) to STORTZ SCH (130952), on 13 Apr 45, some arty fire was received. On 14 Apr 45, 3rd Plt, Bn Co, Co A atchd to 3rd Bn, CT 271, moved to attack town of LUTKEN (075045). Upon approaching town, encountered heavy small arms fire. Fired 8 rds MB at building believed to be CP. Remained in firing positions until dawn and atchd again, finding very little opposition. Arty and AA fire encountered while moving to FEGAU (160949) at 151830Z. 1st Plt, Bn Co, was relieved by 3rd Plt. Co A moved to STORTZ SCH (J130952), at 141800Z, contacting enemy vic of KIRBITZSCH (K246949) and after small arms fire fight occupied town at 142145Z. At 150645Z, moved from KIRBITZSCH (K246949). Contacted enemy vic of ROTH (R292992), bypassed and moved to ZIMMERN (R260022).

AFTER ACTION REPORT (Continued)

a. Operations for the Period (Continued)

(B260022). 3rd Recon Plt lost 1 MG and 1 1/4 ton in enemy counter-attack at 1800 hrs. Eight enemy AA guns destroyed, (four at (B292992) and four at (B265014)). One man wounded. 2nd Plt attached to 2nd Bn, CT 271 at 162130Z moved to SOTHA. (292992) to launch attack on HITHRA (183025) and 2 WNEAU (209007). 3rd Plt attached to 3rd Bn, CT 271 in via PRGAU (169949) fired one IDP mission - 60 rds HE, neutralizing flak position at 170430Z, while in LHMEN (B260022), repulsed counter-attack. One M18 and one Cal. .50 MG damaged. Fired 10 rds HE, 15 rds 81MM mortar, 3000 rds Cal. .50 MG, 800 rds Cal. .30 M1 and 2000 rds Cal. .30 carbine in repelling counter-attack. One man wounded. 3rd Recon Plt returned to company control via PRGAU (154942). Co A moved to EWNIAU (209008) at 181600Z. One axis of advance towards LBIP210 in vic of HARKLESBERG. One American M4A3 Tank, which had been captured and in use by the enemy, was knocked out. Three 40MM AA Guns, four MG nests, one road block, 10 190MM field pieces were knocked out. One GP and 69 PW captured. 1st Plt, Co A assisted in capture of Napoleon's Monument (269118) in LBIP210. At 201645Z, Co A reverted to Bn control and moved to ENDMANSHAIN (372098). Maintenance was performed in preparation for future operations.

2. Co "B", Co "B" with 2nd Recon Plt attached to CT 272 in position DYMEN (B525169) until 3 Apr 45, at which time Co moved to KLENN (022998), closing in area 031900Z. At 041800Z, Co B moved to ISTHA (041018), closing in area 041930Z. On 6 Apr 45, Co moved to WACHLAG (319031), closing in area 061800Z. 1st Plt supported 1st Bn, CT 272, took up firing positions and fired 2 rds APC and 6 rds HE at enemy inf in building in WACHLAG. 2nd Plt moved to BAHNEN (327043) at 060700Z and took up firing positions. Fired 9 rds HE at enemy inf, in buildings via WACHLAG. 3 PW taken and 5 known enemy killed. After fire fight advanced E to BRUNNEN (449085). During the attack on BRUNNEN, 7 Apr 45, 2nd Plt knocked out one half-track personnel carrier, and one MG nest. During attack on WITTSCHAUSEN (490070), 1st Plt knocked out one personnel carrier. 11 PW taken and 11 known enemy killed. Co B advanced with one Co of 1st Bn, CT 272 on destroyers, and assisted in the capture of WILHELMSTADT (666113) and closed in BERTHLE (734069) at 092030Z. At 102000Z, Co B closed in KORN (991965) awaiting orders to advance E. Mounting companies B and C of 1st Bn, CT 272, Co B advanced to WACHLAG (490905) on 11 Apr 45. Advanced E to WITTSCHAUSEN (151931) at 131900Z. 1st Plt fired 2 rds HE and knocked out MG nest in railroad signal tower via (138936). 3rd Plt fired 2 rds HE and knocked out one 88MM dual-purpose AA gun, ground mount, via (119909). 5 PW captured. At 141730Z, 2nd Plt, Co B, in support of 2nd Bn, CT 272, attacked one enemy 88MM flak gun via (125907). The enemy position was completely taken by force at 142045Z. The enemy position contained over 20 88MM guns on dual-purpose ground mounts. All were neutralized. Over 500 PW taken by the attacking force. Four PW processed by Co B.

AFTER ACTION REPORT (Continued)

a. Operations for the Period (Continued)

114 rds 76MM HE and APC were expended in the operation. At 150000Z, 3rd Plt joined 3rd Bn, CT 272, via THEISEN (060855), supporting tanks and inf, atd an 88MM AA gun position via UFFERSCHWITZ (079849). Approximately 25 88MM guns were neutralized. Over 300 prisoners taken by the combined force. 5 accounted killed by 3rd Plt Ldr. 3rd Plt returned to Co 151230Z via ELSTERSCHWITZ (151931). Fired one mission, over 50 rds HE and APC. Co B moved to PCKENSEN (400045) 16 Apr 45. 1st Plt supporting 1st Bn, CT 272 attached HERRONFELD (358136) and ALTHEN (330151) and met no resistance. Co assembled in vic of EVERSURTE (351158) 16 Apr 45. 1st & 2nd Plts supporting the 1st & 2nd Bns, CT 272, attacked LEIPZIG 18 Apr 45. After the fall of LEIPZIG, Co B assembled in FAHNSDORF (2716) and reverted to Bn control 201645Z and moved to vic ALBRECHTSHAIN (365115). On 21 Apr 45, Co B joined 271 Inf in assembly area vic of FAUCHA (310195) to form Task Force to clean out city of ALLHEURS (399300). At 1700, Co moved from assembly area to firing pos. via HEMPA (371204) and fired at dug in inf via WILSBURG (392285). 3rd Plt fired at observation tower in center of town. Unable to destroy it, set fire to surrounding area to obscure vision. Five MG nests knocked out, and one known enemy killed in operation. Co was relieved of support of 272 Inf and returned to Bn control 221000Z in vic ALBRECHTSHAIN (360115). Maintenance and preparations made for future operations until 26 Apr 45. Received orders to move to MOCKENHA (523355), closing in area 261000Z. 1st Plt supporting 1st Bn 272 Inf via TORGAU (649415). 2nd Plt supporting 2nd Bn, 272 Inf via MOCKENHA (523355), and 3rd Plt supporting 3rd Bn, 272 Inf via NE of WILSBURG (418301) with mission to provide defense along WILSBURG - TORGAU ROAD. Co B remained in pos until 302100Z, at which time Co reverted to Bn control. On 1 May 45, Co B moved to vic ALBRECHTSHAIN (372098). Maintenance being performed in preparation for future operations.

3. Co "C": Co "C" atd to CT 273. At 012000Z, Co moved from AUMHAU (367007) to BALGON (048983) and occupied assembly pos. Elements of inf were mounted on vehicles during move. Cos coordinated defense of BALGON with inf, as Regt of 88 troops and 15 tanks had been reported NE of town - no action encountered. Plan and recon of area for firing positions were made to be occupied in event of enemy counter-attack. The town of MARTINSHAGEN (081998) and BRITZKEACH (100995) were taken over. Three MG from Co C and 3 MG from 1st Bn, 273 Inf captured 17 PW via ALBENBERG in woods NE of town. Assistance was given in the capture of PWs by French slave labor which had been set free 31 Mar 45. One gun section and security section of 3rd Plt fired on AA positions and houses via (097000). 10 rds HE expended. 8 rds were fired into edge of woods where enemy troops retreated from their AA position. AA gun silenced. Co moved to SO THORNDORF to WIMMERSHAUSEN (240009), closing in area 051900Z. Co carried Co L, 3rd Bn, 273 Inf on vehicles. Very light resistance met while enroute. 2nd Plt fired 2 rds HE at multiple-purpose gun in vic OSERV-LINAK (220009). Gun was knocked out and 25 PW taken. Co moved from WIMMERSHAUSEN (240009) to LAUBEN (292078) being held up enroute by 88MM guns emplaced on hill "427", also under enemy observation and tank fire. Co then moved to HETTERBERG (310100).

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A PTIS ACTION REPORT (Continued)

Operations for the Period (Continued)

One section, 3rd Plt, engaged 1 Tiger Tank, 1 Mark IV and one field piece by fire - results - one hit on Mark IV. Enemy tanks smoked pos and withdrew to N. Co closed at LUTTERBERG (310100) at 2200 hrs, initiating therein, anti-mechanized defenses. Co. C moved from LUTTERBERG (310100) at 070030Z as part of Combat Team "H", to assist Inf in crossing the Terra River. Road block was encountered at underpass via 323096. Road block was cleared and pulled in assembly area via 372137 and immediately took up firing pos to place fire on LAUBACH, LIPPOLDSHAUSEN, and WEISHAUSEN. 50 rds HF fired into LIPPOLDSHAUSEN so that Inf could move in. 41 rds. were fired at 3 general purpose veh, 3 arty pieces, and 1 SP gun via 306160 - all were knocked out. 7 known enemy killed and 4 captured. 2 Men 1st Plt. Sen. Co. were killed and 1 wounded in via 340096 on Sen. mission. Co. C adv E to assembly pos via HOLLERFELD (470140) closing in area 091138. At 101200Z, mounting 1st Bn. CT 273 on veh, closed in assembly pos via HEILIGENSTADT (670120). 2nd and 3rd Plts. atchd to CGA and GCR, 9th Armd Div respectively adv E. Under CT control, Co. C less 2 Plts mounting Inf. departed HEILIGENSTADT (110300) and closed in SCHLOTHEIN (040000) at 120700Z. Co. moved to SAUBACH (040000), closing in area 120300. Co. less 2nd and 3rd Plts moved to TEUCHERN (990000) closing in area 121500. Remained in via TEUCHERN until 17 Apr 45, at which time Co moved to BOMBA, closing in area 171400. On 18 Apr 45, Co moved to LIBERTWOLKWIPE. 3rd Plt with GCR, 9th Armd Div located via SLASTEN (4796). 2nd Plt atchd CGA, 9th Armd Div, was relieved of atchmt and moved to 273 Inf control, via LIBERTWOLKWIPE. 1st Plt optd 1st Bn in attacking HOLLERHAUSEN (110000). Co less 3rd Plt, awaited orders to move to SP sector LEIPZIG. 2nd Plt, Co C atchd to SP "H", which consisted of 2 plts tanks, 1 plt Tns, 1 Co Inf, 1 Aslt Sen Plt and 1 tank section, entered LEIPZIG on night of 19 Apr 45, with Inf mounted on destroyers. Speed of destroyers was 30 - 40 MPH. Upon entering the city, small arms, MG and Panzerfaust fire became very heavy. A destroyer went out of control, when a wounded Inf fell across the periscope of driver and obscured his vision. A MG and 20 MM AA Gun were overrun, by destroyer before throwing track. 1 Off and 3 M of Co wounded in action. 2nd Plt assisted in capture of City Hall of LEIPZIG. 100 PWs taken via of 1st Plt CP at 191700Z, by 2 M, 2nd Plt and 3 infantrymen. Some PWs tried to make a run for it, but were shot by 1st Plt machinegunner. 5 known enemy killed. 3rd Plt located in COLBITZ (545593) with GCR, 9th Armd Div. 1 M wounded in action. Co reverted to Bn control at 201645Z and moved from LEIPZIG to assembly area via of ANKELSHAIN (417100). 3rd Plt returned to Co control at 220930Z. Maintenance performed and preparations made for future operations.

4. a. Sen Co under Bn control, made run of routes to be used by Bn. While displacing to the E, the Co captured approximately 75 PWs during the period.
5. a. Bn Hq displaced fwd with assault elements so as to facilitate control, operations and movement of companies. Approximately 50 PWs taken and two killed by members of Bn Hq. 150 German soldiers capitulated to 2 Bn messengers, after msgrs had been held prisoner for 6 hours. Strong forces of the 2nd Inf Div approached SCHERTAN 16 town in which they were located. Prisoners were turned over to the 2nd Inf Div.

ACTION REPORT (Continued)

b. Assigned Units: None

c. Attached Units: None

d. Detached Units: 190430B - 2nd Plt Co C, with 2nd Bn 273 Inf attached to CCA, 9th Army Div at BARKLEPACH, GERMANY.

100430B - 3rd Plt Co C, with 3rd Bn 273 Inf attached to CCA, 9th Army Div at BARKLEPACH, GERMANY.

191600B - 2nd Plt Co C relieved of attachment to CCA, at FOMELWITZ, moved to 273 Inf control, via of LINDENFELD (296000)

230900B - 3rd Plt Co C relieved of attachment to CCA, at GOLDITZ, moved to company control via AMERLEHAIN (427300)

2nd Plt Co C attached to TF 47, 18 Apr 45 in area of LEIPZIG

Summary: During the period covered, Cos A, B, & C supported the attack of Combat teams 271, 272 & 273 respectively. The T. Co Cos operated in two ways, either as a company supporting the combat team or platoons supporting the Inf Bn. 2nd Plt Co were attached to the gun cos to perform fire and security missions.

Organic transportation was utilized to carry assault Inf elements close to the objectives. At this point, the T. Co deployed and took up firing positions to furnish direct fire in support of the attacking Inf elements. CP's, machine gun nests, earth works, occupied buildings, occupied wooded areas, and other targets of opportunity were brought under fire. In addition, many multiple purpose guns, arty pieces, and self-propelled weapons were destroyed.

In addition to transporting Inf, the employment of our destroyers in the battle of LEIPZIG was most effective in producing both shock action and destructive fire.

During our operations several indirect fire missions were also accomplished.

In one instance, two T. Co platoons operating with CT 273 reinforced CCA and CCR of the 9th Army Div.

Time, when available, has been utilized in performing maintenance and preparing for future operations.

III. Conclusion

During the period, 601 TD Bn accomplished all missions in an excellent manner, the majority of which, were close-in support by direct fire, of Inf elements and combat teams. Indirect fire missions were accomplished on call and assigned areas policed and secured.

AFTER ACTION REPORT (Continued)

II. Conclusion (Continued)

The following were destroyed by elements of the Bn:

- 4 - half-tracks
- 1 - AP Gun
- 1 - Arm'd Car
- 6 - AT Guns
- 10 - 150MM Field Pieces
- 42 - 82MM Guns (AA - dual purpose)
- 3 - 40MM Guns " "
- 1 - 20MM Gun " "
- 10 - MG Hests
- 2 - CP's
- 42 - Known enemy killed
- 656 - PW's taken

For the Commanding Officer

WILLIAM A. CONNOLLY, Jr.
Capt., Inf.
S-5