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UNIT REPORT
(After Action Report)

Number 11

FROM: 312400 March 1945
TO : 302400 April 1945

Unit: 702nd Tank Destroyer Battalion
Date: 31 April 1945
Place: Immendorf, Germany (G833978).

MAPS: GSGS 4416, Scale 1/100,000.

I. ENEMY:

1 - 7 April: Reconnaissance elements met scattered resistance throughout the zone of advance. DELBUCK (5752) was held by a strong force of Infantry dug-in at the approaches to the town. Enemy AT fire was received from south of the Lippe River by patrols advancing to the east. Some of the stiffest resistance encountered during this period since crossing the Dortmund-Ems Canal was from dug-in Infantry with panzerfausts, AT guns, some SP guns and tanks along the Autobahn through the TEUTOBOURGER WALD, the Infantry and guns defended from well organized positions, Enemy tanks, although aggressive, appeared uncoordinated.

Approaches to towns were usually defended by road blocks placed at critical positions and supported by well camouflaged, dug-in Infantry placed at the outskirts of the towns.

Small scattered groups of Infantry made some effort to defend the bridges across the Weser with small arms fire on the axis of advance. Attempt was made to destroy the Schulenberg Bridge with 120 lbs of explosives but was not successful. Interdicting and harassing fire was received against the bridge with one direct hit.

The enemy encountered during this period were of inferior type, usually being drafted from the same locality in which he fought. These for the most part were not the "die hard" type, but usually surrendered when the "going got tough".

A large number of allied prisoners of war were freed in the advance of the Division. A large number of foreign workers were also encountered. The latter proved to be a serious problem, especially the Polish. A large number of these foreign workers refused to work any longer and consequently were cut off from their source of food supply and began looting and stealing. It was found necessary to arrest several of these and turn them in through PW channels.

During this entire period, enemy planes were up on strafing, Reconnaissance and bombing missions.

8 - 20 April: Large groups of enemy, isolated and bypassed during the last few days, surrendered with no resistance other than some small arms fire. Several towns in the zone of advance of the Division, surrendered usually without a shot being fired. On several occasions, as was the case in the town of Hildesheim, the town was surrendered by a Medical Captain who stated that there were no troops in the town. The town of Harsum (525025) raised a white flag during an artillery concentration placed on it.

On 11 April, the power of the Division was contested on the Southern part of the sector by light enemy resistance - defended road blocks, small arms and panzerfausts. In the Northern half of the zone, resistance was also light until the built-up area around the Hermann Goering Works was approached. Elements of the Division received heavy fire from dual purpose 88mm guns which appeared in sizeable numbers. Considerable artillery fire was also received in this vicinity.

On 12 April, the Division forced a crossing of the Elbe River. The Division received heavy fire from dual purpose guns, flak guns, 88 mm and 128mm guns from daylight until darkness, from locations generally Northeast of Magdeburg (D6799).

The bridge site (D705923) was largely the area shelled, though roads in the vicinity of the west bank of the river received intermittent interdiction fire. A gun of heavy caliber was also reported active in shelling the crossing.

The Division encountered a heavy volume of direct high velocity fire and artillery fire on the bridge site, which slowed down the bridging of the Elbe River. On the outskirts of Magdeburg, sniper fire was encountered.

After the Division had captured Elbenau East of the Elbe, the enemy launched a vigorous and well coordinated attack to recapture the town. This attack started at dawn, consisting of two battalions of Infantry supported by seven (7) tanks and SP guns. This strong attack, in addition to a direct hit severing the cable of the bridge, forced our troops to withdraw to the West bank of the Elbe River. An aggressive enemy patrol consisting of a US half-track, marked F-5, 41st Armored Infantry, and a tank attempted to break through an outpost of the 82nd Armored Rcn Battalion shortly after midnight of 14 April. The halftrack was knocked out by defensive mines in front of the outpost. The tank by-passed the destroyed halftrack and advanced within 50 yards of an assault gun which it attacked with HE. The tank after firing a few rounds was forced back into Magdeburg. Other outposts of the Rcn Battalion received considerable machine gun fire from the Southern outskirts of the town.

Patrols were active throughout this period. Two enemy patrols were encountered trying to penetrate our lines on the night of 15 April. At dawn, 16 April, the enemy made another determined counterattack on elements of CC"R" elements at Gehrden (9087). This was followed by an equally vigorous assault on Guterluck (9284) by a Battalion of Infantry supported by at least 12 assault guns, five Mk V tanks and several Mk VI tanks. The situation was restored by 1230B with Guterluck cleared, and our forces redispersed in Gehrden.

The enemy resisted the advance of CC"A" into Magdeburg with a determined defense of a road block at von Richthofen Platz where maximum use was made of extremely limited maneuvering space for our tanks. Activity was canalised by the built up areas and debris resulting from the air bombardment during the morning of 17 April 1945. The road block was defended vigorously by air force personnel and Volkssturm who fought from dug-in positions. On the East bank of the Elbe River, elements of the Division received small arms and mortar fire during the day.

21 April. Enemy Force, approximately 4 Mk IV tanks, 1 self-propelled 75mm, 350 Infantry located and destroyed by CC"B" in the vicinity of (Y0509).

22 - 30 April. No contact.

II. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD: The Battalion (less Companies A and C), under Division control, moved from the vicinity of KURRICK, GERMANY (A019498) to the vicinity of ST. VIT, GERMANY (B372568) placing road blocks to protect assembly areas and supply routes upon closing on the 1 April 1945.

On 2 April 1945 the Battalion (-) moved to KANNITZ, GERMANY (B588643) clearing woods in the vicinity of enemy troops and blocking to the South and East for possible enemy attack. From the 3 April 1945 to the 5 April 1945 the Battalion (-) moved from AUGUSTDORF, GERMANY (B688676) to LEMCO, GERMANY (B795817) and then to BERUCH, GERMANY (B003824) under Division control, employing Company "B" and the Reconnaissance Company (- two platoons) to safeguard Division rear areas and South flank. During occupancy of area at Badpyrmont, Germany (B033775) the battalion (-) was given mission of sweeping the wooded area in the vicinity and investigating report of enemy tank and road block to the South. Three Officers and 92 MM were taken prisoner and road blocks reduced. No enemy armor was encountered.

The Battalion (less Companies A And C) moved across the Weser River on the 7 April 1945 and closed in the vicinity of ALFERDE, GERMANY (B352982) with the mission of protecting that town and to be prepared to block to the North or East on Divisional order. Reconnaissance was made of the Division sector in preparation for either mission.

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On the 8 April 1945 Company "A" reverted to Battalion control and Company "B" was placed in support of CC"A". From the 8 April 1945 to the 9 April 1945 the Battalion (minus Companies B and C) remained in ALFERDE, GERMANY (B352982) stressing maintenance and reorganization, prepared to support either Combat Command in the drive East Toward the Elbe River.

The Battalion (-) under Division control moved to BINDER, GERMANY (B685913) on the 10 April 1945. Road blocks were placed to the North to protect CC"R" assembly areas and Division Headquarters.

On the 11 April 1945 Company "B" of the 17th Engineers and one platoon (Flame Throwers) of the 739th Tank Battalion were attached to the Battalion (-) moving with the Battalion as Division Reserve to HORNBERG, GERMANY (C964855) closing in area 111630B April 1945. The Battalion (-) was alerted to support either combat command on orders. One section of Tank Destroyers and one squad of 17th Engineer prepared to occupy positions at coordinates (C975869) on Division order.

On the 12 April 1945 the Battalion (-) plus Company "B", 17th Engineers and one platoon (F.T.) 739th Tank Battalion moved from HORNBERG, GERMANY (C975869) to Kl. WANZLEBEN, GERMANY (C489920). A roving patrol consisting of one platoon of Company "B", 17th Engineers remained in OSCHERSLEBEN, GERMANY (C400870). Road blocks were placed to the North and East to protect the Division area from armored threat from MAGDEBURG, GERMANY (D665000). Company "A" was alerted at 1840 and moved to indirect firing positions at (C675915) prepared to fire missions as ordered by Division Artillery. The 1st platoon of Company "A" was in support of CC"R". On the 13 April 1945 the Battalion (minus Companies B and C) and one platoon of Company "A" moved to the vicinity of BENNECKENBECK, GERMANY (C635945). On the 14 April the Battalion (-) plus one platoon (FT) 739th Tank Battalion and Company "B", 17th Engineers moved to the vicinity of (C605905) closing in area 141730B April 1945. Company "A" (minus one platoon) relieved of indirect fire mission reverted to Battalion control and moved to the Battalion assembly area. Battalion captured 167 Prisoners during this period.

The Battalion (-) remained in the assembly area at coordinates (C605905) until the 16th April 1945 placing road blocks and patrols to the East to protect the Division area and to repel any armored thrusts from Magdeburg, Germany. The Battalion (-) remained on alert to move to any part of the Division area on order.

On the 18 April 1945 the Battalion (less Companies B and C and one platoon of Company "A") plus one platoon of flame throwers and Company "B" 17th Engineers, moved to LANGENWEDDINGEN, GERMANY (C604899). Preparations made for extensive maintenance on vehicles, weapons and radios. The Battalion (-) moved to SALZGITTER, GERMANY (C810865) on the 20 April 1945 in the Division assembly area. Outposts, road blocks and interior policing force established in the town to prevent hostile attack and to provide military government. Maintenance, rehabilitation and reorganization to be stressed. The Battalion (-) prepared to move to any part of the Division area on order. Twenty one EM taken prisoners during this period.

On the 27 April 1945, the 702nd Tank Destroyer Battalion (- Companies A, B and C) moved to IMBENDORF, GERMANY (C833978) to take charge of seventeen displaced persons and Prisoner of War camps in the vicinity, to collect and billet all Western displaced persons and ship them to entraining points as directed by the Second Armored Division. From the period 27 April 1945 to the 30 April 1945 the Battalion (-) cleaned the camps in preparation for incoming persons; moved approximately 4000 Russian and Polish displaced persons to the South in the vicinity of SALZGITTER, GERMANY (C810865); received approximately 5000 displaced persons and Prisoners of War and transported 2900 to the railheads at OEBISFELDE, KALTENDORF, GERMANY (C309314) and HILDESHEIM, GERMANY (C520970).

Company "A", in support of CC"A" with the three platoons in support of the respective task forces of the 66th Armored Regiment attacked East along the Northern axis of the Division advance toward the Elbe River. Company "A" on the 30th March 1945 was credited with the destruction of one locomotive and five box cars. On the 31 March 1945 Company "A" destroyed, by direct fire, six cargo trucks.

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On the 3 April 1945 Company "A" moved to the vicinity of coordinates (B605700) with the mission of protecting CC"A" assembly area. The 1st Platoon was placed on road blocks at (B561742); 2nd Platoon at (B607698); the 3rd Platoon at (B690661). Company "A", with CC"A", moved to LEMGO, GERMANY (B795817) closing in area 042015B April 1945.

On the 5 April 1945 Company "A" supported the drive of CC"A" across the Weser River in the vicinity of OHR, GERMANY, assisting in the enlarging and protection against enemy counterattacks on the bridgehead. Company "A" after crossing placed blocks along the Innerste River to guard the flanks of the advance on the 7 April 1945. During the two days operations Company destroyed one locomotive, two half-tracks and two light Reconnaissance vehicles by direct fire. Three officers and seventy eight enlisted men were captured.

Company "A" was relieved of attachment of CC"A" and reverted to Battalion control placing road blocks protecting the approaches to ALFERDE, GERMANY (B352982) and prepared to send guns to the North or East on Division order on prepared plans to protect the area from armored attack.

On 10 April 1945 Company "A" under Battalion control, moved from ALFERDE, GERMANY (B352982) to BINDER, GERMANY (B685913) prepared to assist or reinforce either combat command in the event of counterattack. Particular stress was laid on the North flank.

Company "A" moved with the Battalion to HORNBURG, GERMANY (C964855) on the 11 April 1945 placing road blocks throughout the area to protect the Division assembly area. The 2nd Platoon of Company "A" was placed in support of CC"R" to move across the 83rd Infantry Division bridge on order.

On the 12 April 1945 Company "A" minus one platoon moved to indirect firing positions at coordinates (C675915) prepared to fire missions as ordered by Division Artillery. The 2nd Platoon remained with CC"R" to guard the bridgehead from enemy armored attack. One enemy officer and 49 enlisted men were captured. Company "A" fired two-hundred and fifty rounds of harassing fire on targets ordered by Division Artillery on the 13 April 1945. Two hundred and fifty six rounds were expended on the 14 April 1945, after which time Company "A" (-) was alerted for tank attack in the direction of Kl. OTTERSLEBEN, GERMANY and placed guns around that town. No enemy armor was contacted but blocks were continued in the vicinity to protect the Division Headquarters and Division installations in that area.

Company "A" with the Battalion (-) moved to the vicinity of LANGENWEDDIGEN, GERMANY (C604899) prepared for reorganization and extensive maintenance.

On the 20 April 1945, Company "A" under Battalion control moved to SALZGITTER, GERMANY (C810865) in the Division assembly area. Road blocks were placed on bridges in the vicinity and interior posts for the defence of the town and an internal police force was established.

From the 20 April 1945 to the 28 April 1945 Company "A" remained in SALZGITTER, GERMANY (C810865) with the mission of protecting the town and policing. On the 28 April 1945 Company "A" was relieved of mission of guarding the installation and of road blocks by Company "B" and released for maintenance and rehabilitation.

Company "B" under Battalion control, moved to the vicinity of ST VIT, GERMANY, (B372568), on the 1 April 1945, placing road blocks throughout the area to protect the Division routes and rear installation. On the 2 April 1945, Company "B" moved with the Battalion minus Companies "A" and "C" to KANWITZ, GERMANY (B588643) placing road blocks at coordinates protecting the assembly area. During the 3 April 1945 Company "B" was placed in indirect firing positions at coordinates (B678686) to fire harassing fire on LEGENLEMO and VETMOLD, GERMANY, assisted by the 65th FA Battalion.

On the 4 April 1945 Company "B" was relieved from the indirect mission and moved with Battalion (-) to LEMGO, GERMANY (B795817) occupying road blocks on order from Division at coordinates (B795831) and (B805829) protecting the assembly area from the Northwest, West and Southwest.

From the 5 April 1945 to the 7 April 1945 Company "B", under Battalion control, moved with the Battalion (-) as Division Reserve following the right route of CC"B" prepared to assist either Combat Command on order, protecting rear installations, and routes as ordered by Division at BRUCH, GERMANY (B003824); BADPYHMONT, GERMANY (B033775) and ALFERDE, GERMANY (B352982) closing in this area 071830B April 1945.

During this period three officers and seventy-nine Prisoners of War were taken and four enemy killed on mopping up operations in the Division rear.

Company "B" was relieved from Battalion control on the 8 April 1945 and placed in support of CC"A" in replacement of Company "A", and moved to the vicinity of SCHULENBURG, GERMANY (B395017) prepared to assist in the attack East across the INNERSTE RIVER. The 1st Platoon was placed in support of Task Force "A". Company "B" (-) under CC"A" control of CC"A" assisted in the attack North toward ALGERMISSEN AND WATZUM, GERMANY. The attack was halted and units returned to SCHULENBURG, GERMANY (395017) by Division order to prepare for the attack Northeast of HILDESHEIN, GERMANY (C520975). During the day Company "B" shot down one ME-109 airplane at JEINSEN, GERMANY (B408045) and captured 20 enemy enlisted men.

From the 9 April 1945 to the 13 April 1945 Company "B", in support of the three task forces of CC"A" assisted in the drive toward the ELBE RIVER, protecting assembly areas, and placing direct fire on AA and AT guns when encountered, moving East to the Elbe River. On the 13 April 1945 Company "B" (minus three platoons) moved with CC"A" as CC"A" Reserve to IRLIEBEN, GERMANY (C565024) to protect that town and secure the area, remaining in that area until the 15 April 1945. Reconnaissance of routes to the 83rd Infantry Division bridgehead was made by the 2nd Platoon, Reconnaissance Company, attached to Company "B", on order from CC"A". During these operations from HILDESHEIN, GERMANY (C520975) to IRLIEBEN, GERMANY (C565024) Company "B" destroyed, by direct fire, four railroad guns (75mm); one half-track; one 1/4 ton vehicle and captured ten enemy enlisted men.

On the 16 April 1945 Company "B" less three platoons, which remained on road blocks under the respective task force commanders along the ELBE RIVER, moved to SCALERBENITZ, GERMANY (C670930) securing the area and policing the town, remaining in this area until the 17 April 1945 preparing for the attack on MAGDEBURG, GERMANY. On the 18 April 1945 Company "B" (less two platoons) in CC"A" reserve moved to GR. OTTERSLEBEN, GERMANY (C625953). All platoons occupied AT positions protecting the flanks of the attacking force and assisted by direct fire against road blocks in the city. On the 20 April 1945, after MAGDEBURG, GERMANY was cleared of the enemy, Company "B" with CC"A" moved to WOLFENBUTTEL, GERMANY (C900115) to repel attack or to meet the enemy armored thrust advancing from the East. Company "B" less two platoons, out-posted the town of WOLFENBUTTEL, GERMANY. Company "B" (minus two platoons) remained in this location until the 25 April 1945 accomplishing maintenance and stressing athletics and reorganization.

On the 26 April 1945 Company "B", less two platoons, under CC"A" control moved to SALZGITTER, GERMANY (C810865) to replace the 702nd Tank Destroyer Battalion (-) in policing and guard of the city, remaining in that location with this mission through the period.

Company "C", in support of CC"B" moved with Combat Command East on the attack toward the Elbe River, moving on the right flank of the division from the 1 April 1945 along the Lippe Canal, to the 6 April 1945. The three gun platoons were placed in support of the three columns and during the attack destroyed by direct fire three Mk V tanks; one Mk IV tank in the vicinity of DETMOLD, GERMANY (B789673) and captured thirty-five prisoners.

On the 7 April 1945 Company "C" moved to BANTEM, GERMANY (B387874) with the 2nd and 3rd platoons on road blocks at coordinates (B515946) and (B549931), remaining in that location through the 9 April 1945 stressing maintenance and reorganization to continue the attack East. Plans and reconnaissance were made for defence of the Combat Command area in event of armored enemy attack.

Company "B", in support of CC"B", moved to coordinates (B798636), with CC"B" on the continued attack East toward the Elbe River, on the 10 April 1945. This attack continued through the 12 April 1945 moving into the vicinity of BADSALZELMEN, GERMANY (C730855). The 1st Platoon was placed at coordinates (C739860); 2nd Platoon at (C887878) and the 3rd platoon at (C640953). Company "B" remained in this location through the 13 April 1945. During this operation Company "C" destroyed four 120mm dual purpose guns; demolished two road blocks; and destroyed two light armored vehicles

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and one cargo truck. On the 15 April 1945 Company "C", less two platoons, moved to BAD SALZELMEN, GERMANY (C735857) with the 2nd and 3rd platoons occupying AT positions at coordinates (C735861) and (C760879), remaining in these locations until the 19 April 1945. During this period Company "C" captured eight enemy officers and two hundred and thirty (230) enlisted men. On the 19 April 1945 Company "C", in support of CC"B" moved to WESTERHUSEN, GERMANY (C700923) with the gun platoons in position along the Elbe River. On the 20 April 1945 Company "C" moved to the town of SCHONINGEN, GERMANY (C215985) to place roadblocks around the town and police the area. Seven road blocks were established to enforce the Division regulations, and a patrol maintained to police surrounding towns and areas. Guards were placed on captured installations and supply dumps. On the 22 April 1945 an enemy hostile armored attack threatened CC"B" area from the North. Two platoons of Company "C" assisted in the surrounding and mopping up of this hostile force. Upon cession of the alert Company "C" resumed operations in the SCHENINGEN area. Maintenance, athletics and rehabilitation were stressed. Six thousand mile checks being accomplished as ordered by Division.

III. Total Enemy Material Destroyed:

a. By date and Company.

<u>Date</u>	<u>"A" Company</u>	<u>"B" Company</u>	<u>"C" Company</u>
1 April 1945	1 Locomotive W/5 boxcars 6 Trucks, cargo.		2 Mk V Tanks
4 April 1945			1 Mk V Tank 1 Mk IV Tank
6 April 1945	1 Locomotive 2 Half-tracks 2 Light Reconnaissance Vehicles.		
9 April 1945		1 ME-109	
10 April 1945		4 Railroad Arty Pieces 2 Railroad AA guns (88mm) 2 A.T. Guns (75mm) 1 Half-track 1 1/4 ton truck	
11 April 1945			4-120mm Dual Purpose Guns 2 Light Arm'd Vehicles 1 Truck, cargo 2 Road Blocks.

b. Total by types:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3 - Mark V Tanks | 2 Locomotives |
| 1 - Mark IV Tank | 5 Boxcars |
| 4 - Railroad Arty Pieces | 7 Trucks, Cargo |
| 2 - Railroad AT guns (88mm) | 3 Half-Tracks |
| 2 - AT Guns (75mm) | 4 Light Reconnaissance vehicles |
| 4 - 120mm, Dual Purpose Guns | 1 1/4 ton Truck |
| 1 - Plane, ME-109 | 2 Road Blocks. |



IV. Administrative:

a. T/O Strength: 35 Officers, 2 WO, and 607 EM
Effective Strength: 41 Officers, 1 WO, 625 EM.

b. Casualties:

	Hq.	Medics	Rcn.	"A"	"B"	"C"	Total
(1) Killed	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0
(2) Sick gassed & Wounded evacuated.	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 2	1 & 3	0 & 5	0 & 6	1 & 16
(3) Captured	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0
(4) Missing	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0

c. Prisoners captured: 15 Officers and 785 Enlisted Men.

d. Evacuation: Normal.

e. Does not apply.

f. Status of Supply: 150 operational Miles of gas and oil carried by Battalion at all times. One and one-third (1-1/3) units of fire carried.

g. Conditions of roads and circulation: Movement made by this unit operating with the Second Armored Division normally carried out on primary and secondary road nets. Some cross country movements made.

h. Replacements received: 1 Officer and 41 Enlisted Men.

Harry H. Hart
HARRY H. HART
Major, FA
Commanding.

