

S E C R E T

UNIT REPORT
~~DOWNGRADED~~
(After Action Report)

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
No. 4

From: 012400 A Sept 1944
To : 302400 A Sept 1944

Unit : 702nd Tank Destroyer Bn
Date : 30 September 1944
Place: Versilienbosch, Holland

Maps: GSGS, Rosieres Sheet 114; GSGS France & Belgium Sheet 11, 1/100,000, Sheet 67, 1/100,000, Sheet 7, 8, & 9, 1/100,000; Tiriemont & Diest Sheet 46 & 57, 1/50,000, Sheet 58, 1/50,000, Sheet 48, 1/50,000.

I. ENEMY: 1-2 September 1944: Contact with elements of the 17th and 18th GAF Divisions was maintained during period. These elements were completely disorganized, and lacked effective support. Those artillery units which were still encountered had only three or four guns per battalion. At the crossings over the Somme River the enemy used some 88mm guns for both direct and indirect fire. These guns were, however unable to cover all possible sites for crossings. The presence of three 7.5 PAK from the 14th Co, 33 Regt., 17th GAF was reported by PW's but those guns were not encountered by this unit. Also reported was the 2nd Battalion Werfer Regt. 84 with three batteries of two guns each remaining. The last resistance was encountered on the afternoon of the 2nd September 1944.

2 - 12 September: No contact.

13 - 16 September: Company "A", operating to the North of the Albert Canal near Hasselt, Germany (K617315), did not make contact with the enemy front line as the company was in CC "A" reserve. Large pockets of disorganized troops were encountered and taken. The enemy units most active in this area were Dutch SS Battalions.

Fire delivered by Company "B" against blockhouses overlooking the Albert Canal (K409621), did reveal that these pillboxes were not occupied. They had been used on previous days by the enemy for observation and sniping. These particular pillboxes were pierced by the shells of the 3" gun as long as the angle of impact did not exceed 30°.

17 - 20 September 1944: During the advance from Maastricht, Holland (K560520), to the German border near Gangelt, Germany (K780675), no major units were encountered. The numerous prisoners taken belonged without exception to reserve and "odds-and-ends" units such as battalions composed of men with some particular physical defect. The enemy caused considerable delay by blowing all bridges across creeks and railroads, and defending the bridge sites with AT guns and small arms fire. The number of 88mm guns encountered in that drive exceeded that ever found in an area of comparable size. Some heavy artillery (up to 240mm) was also used by the enemy. The stubbornness of the enemy's defense, especially in the Sittard, Holland (K690683), area, formed a surprising contrast to the inferior quality of the troops involved.

21 - 30 September: Contact was made with elements of the 176 and 183 Inf Division. The enemy's morale seems to be fair at best, but his equipment seemed better than in the past. He placed at least a battery of SP guns, considerable AT guns, about 24 Mark V and 14 Mark IV tanks in Geilenkirchen, Germany (H865540) with possible tank reserves further east. The 343 Regt of the 183 Division appeared to be composed principally of Austrians and Alsations with comparatively little military training.

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II. OUR SITUATION: September 1, 1944: The Battalion moved at 010900B Sept 1944 from the vicinity of Bois de Rotibequet, France (N138117) to the vicinity of Herbucourt, France (N89576). The battalion less Company "A" was attached to CC "B" and moved in two columns as CC "B" reserve. Company "B" operated with the right column, Company "C" operated with the left. Company "A" was attached to CC "A" in mobile reserve. The Battalion prepared to move across the Somme River on order. At 011400B Sept, Company "B" fired direct fire across the Somme River in support of the bridge head established near Herbucourt, France (N489526) destroying six 88mm guns and three light vehicles. Artillery fire observed by Commanding Officer of Rcn Company, 702nd TD Bn was credited with the destruction of numerous enemy vehicles and personnel and of seriously disrupting enemy activities.

September 2, 1944: The Battalion crossed the Somme River in two columns at 020200 Sept. The Battalion less Company "A" moved in the right column of CC "B"; Company "A" in the left column with CC "A". Company "B" assisted the crossing by placing one platoon of destroyers as anti-tank protection of the bridge head at 020130. Companies "B" and "C" at 020900 placed direct fire on enemy activity in the vicinity of Fechain, France (H798049) where the Germans had set up guns to protect destroyed bridges across the canal in that vicinity. Company "B" destroyed two pillboxes; one light artillery piece; one ammunition vehicle; three machine gun positions; and captured twenty-five prisoners in that operation.

September 2 - 5, 1944: The Battalion less Company "A" and Company "C" maintained road blocks at Auberchicourt (N800020); Pecquencourt (N788072); and Manchennes (N836102), France throughout the period of 2 Sept to 5 Sept 1944. Company "A" attached to CC "A", in the same vicinity, established road blocks for AT protection to the Northwest. Company "C" attached to Division Reserve maintained road blocks on the main supply route through Pecquencourt, France (N788072) until 5 Sept 1944.

September 6, 1944: The Battalion less Companies "A" and "C" moved from vicinity of Pecquencourt, France (N788072) 060800 Sept in three columns to the vicinity of Hulsen, Belgium (T267568). Company "A" was attached to CC "A". Company "C" remained in Division Reserve. All companies maintained road blocks during halts to protect Division assembly areas and supply routes. On the march close liaison was maintained with higher headquarters for possible use as flank protection against a hostile tank threat.

September 7, 1944: The Battalion less Companies "A" and "C" moved to the vicinity of Hulsen, Belgium (T267568) in two columns in support of CC "B", and placed road blocks to protect the Division assembly area and supply routes. Company "A" under control of CC "A" moved to the vicinity of Herck La Ville, Belgium (K195635) on the 8 Sept 1944. Company "C" under control of Division Reserve Commander followed the two combat commands protecting the rear installations and replacing road blocks during the advance of the two combat commands as the Division displaced forward.

September 8 - 13, 1944: The Battalion remained in the 2nd Armd Division area in the vicinity of Herck La Ville (K195635), Belgium accomplishing maintenance of radios and vehicles from 8 Sept to 13 Sept 1944. The Battalion less Companies "A" and "C" under control CC "B" moved from vicinity of Hulsen, Belgium (T267568) to vicinity of Ker Berg, Belgium (K404492) on 13 Sept 1944, assisting in the attack south of the Albert Canal. One pillbox was destroyed by direct fire of Company "B". Several MG positions and other strong points were encountered and destroyed. Twelve prisoners were taken during this action.

September 14 - 16, 1944: Company "A", 702nd Tank Destroyer Battalion, attached to CC "A" moved across Albert Canal to assist in mopping-up operations North of the canal from the 14 to the 16 Sept 1944. Seventy-two prisoners were taken by Company "A" on the 15 Sept 1944 in the vicinity of Lanaeken, Belgium (K585565).

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Company "C" remained in the vicinity of Herck La Ville, Belgium (K195635) during this period protecting supply routes of the Division and prepared to move to the assistance of either combat command on order.

Battalion less Companies "A" and "C" moved to the vicinity of Masstricht, Holland (K560520) on the 16 Sept 1944. Company "B" was placed on secondary mission of indirect fire on targets across the Maas River in support of the Division artillery from 161400 to 170900 Sept 1944.

Company "A", attached to CC "A", crossed the Maas River into Holland 15 Sept 1944, in two columns. Company "A" less two platoons (1st platoon attached 2nd Bn 66th Armd Regt, 2nd Platoon attached to 2nd Bn 41st Infantry) placed on indirect fire mission 16 to 17 September inclusive, in the vicinity of Sibbe, Holland (K657503) under control of the 14th FA Battalion.

September 17, 1944: Two platoons Company "A" moved on Valkenburg, Holland (K659535) in support of CC "A" on September 17, 1944. Company "A" minus two platoons placed on road blocks on road fork north of Valkenburg 17 and 18 September during which operation Capt Mauro, Company Commander was seriously injured in a mine field.

On the afternoon of Sept 17 Company "B" by direct fire, destroyed one Mk IV tank, four 88mm guns, one SP gun, and captured one officer and twelve enlisted men. One M-10 Tank Destroyer temporarily out of action due to hit by enemy artillery shell. At 170900 Company "B" was relieved of secondary mission by Company "E" and rejoined 67th Armd Regt.

Company "C" returned to Battalion control on the 16th September in the vicinity of Masstricht, Holland (K560520) and were placed on indirect fire mission 17 Sept to reinforce fires of CC "B" artillery. Company "C" remained on indirect fire mission until 180900 September.

September 18 - 20, 1944: Battalion less Company "A" moved to vicinity of Geleen, Holland (K667661) 18 September assisting in advance of CC "B", by protection of flanks and securing of crossing over obstacles. The Battalion less Companies "A" and "C" moved to vicinity of Zwelkhuizen, Germany (K679635). Company "C" attached to 113th Cavalry 19 September 1944 and remained in the vicinity of Geleen, Holland (K667661). Company "B" during advance into Germany destroyed by direct fire two machine gun positions and killed approximately sixty enemy. Twenty-seven prisoners were taken.

Company "A" under control of CC "A" moved in three columns on the 19 September 1944 into Germany at Niederbusch (K869658) attacking and securing the objective of the Gangelt-Geilenkirchen road. One platoon attached 1st Battalion 66th Armd Regt; one Platoon attached 2nd Battalion 66th Armd Regt and 3rd Platoon attached 2nd Battalion 41st Infantry. One SP gun was destroyed by 2nd Platoon, Company "A" during the attack. Two M-10 Tank Destroyers were destroyed by an enemy Mk IV tank during the attack at Gillrath, Germany (K835662).

September 21, 1944: The Battalion less three companies reverted to control of CC "A" on the 21 Sept 1944 and moved to vicinity of Gangelt, Germany (K780675). Company "E" remained in attachment of CC "B" in vicinity of Sittard, Holland (K690683) placing road blocks to protect their flank. On 21 Sept Company "C" remained at Geleen, Holland (K668659) under control of the 113th Cavalry prepared to take over positions of Company "B" when relief of CC "B" was ordered. Company "A" reverted to control of the battalion and placed guns to reinforce CC "A" along the Gangelt-Geilenkirchen road.

September 21 - 30, 1944: Company "A", 702nd TD Bn remained in the vicinity of the Gangelt-Geilenkirchen road from 21 Sept to 30 Sept 1944 in support of CC "A". On 25 Sept Company "A" attacked enemy position West of Gillrath, Germany (K835662), and destroyed two M-4 Medium tanks that had fallen into enemy hands. Company "A" was relieved by elements of the 29th Inf Division on 30 September 1944 reverting to Battalion control in Division Reserve near Versilienbasch, Holland (K765577).

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Company "B" under control of CC "B" was relieved of road block responsibility on 22 September 1944 and moved to assembly area in the vicinity of Bulkenburg, Holland (K659535) for maintenance and reorganization. They remained in that location until 29 September in Division Reserve, reverting to Battalion control in the vicinity of Versilienbosch, Holland (K765597) on that date.

Company "C" attached to 113th Cavalry relieved CC "B" in the vicinity of Sittard, Holland (K690783) where they remained on a 1500 yard front until 29 Sept protecting the left flank of the Corps. At 290700 Company "C" supported the attack of 113th Cavalry to the North. Company "C" encountered numerous dug in enemy positions, knocked out 1 SP gun, three machine gun positions, killed 42 enemy enlisted men and captured 29 enemy enlisted men as prisoners.

III. RESULTS OF OPERATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER:

a. By Date and Company

DATE	Co "A"	Co "B"	Co "C"
1 Sept		6 88mm Guns Destroyed 3 Light Vehicles Destroyed 20 Enemy EM Killed	
2 Sept		2 Pill Boxes Destroyed 1 Light Artiller Pc Dest. 1 Ammunition Veh Destroyed 3 Machine Gun Nests " 18 Enemy EM Killed 25 Enemy EM Captured	
13 Sept		1 Pillbox Destroyed	
15 Sept	7 Enemy EM Killed 72 Enemy EM Capt.	2 Machine Gun Nests Dest 12 Enemy EM Captured	
17 Sept		1 Mk IV Tank Destroyed 4 88mm Guns Destroyed 1 SP Gun Destroyed 1 & 12 Enemy Captured	
19 Sept	1 SP Gun Dest.	2 Machine Gun Nests Dest 60 Enemy EM Killed 22 Enemy EM Captured	3 Enemy EM Captured
25 Sept	2 M-4 Med Tanks in enemy hands Dest		1 SP gun Destroyed 3 MG Nests Destroyed 42 Enemy EM Killed 39 Enemy EM Captured
20 - 30 September			

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b. Total by Type

10 88 mm Guns	2 M-4 (in enemy hands) Dest.
3 Pill Boxes	1 Ammunition Vehicle Dest
1 Lt Artillery Piece	3 Lt Vehicles Destroyed
3 SP Guns	1 Enemy Officer Captured
10 MG Nests	186 Enemy EM Captured
1 MK IV Tank Destroyed	147 Enemy EM Killed

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IV. ADMINISTRATIVE:

- a. T/O Strength: 35 Officers, 1 Warrant Officer, 635 Enlisted Men
 Effective Strength: 34 Officers, 1 Warrant Officer, 572 Enlisted Men

b. Casualties

	Hq Co	Med	Co RAH	Co "A"	Co "B"	Co "C"	Total
(1) Killed	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 0	0 & 4	1 & 0	0 & 0	1 & 4
(2) Sick, Gassed & Wounded							
Evacuated	0 & 1	0 & 0	0 & 5	1 & 10	0 & 8	0 & 3	1 & 36
Non Evacuated	0 & 0	0 & 0	1 & 1	1 & 0	0 & 1	0 & 0	2 & 2
(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

- e. Prisoners Captured: 1 Officer 147 Enlisted Men
 d. Evacuation: Normal
 e. Does Not Apply
 f. Status of Supply: 150 operational miles gasoline and oil carried by Battalion at all times. 1-1/3 units of fire carried by Battalion at all times.
 g. Condition of roads and circulation: Movements made by this unit operating with 2nd Armd Division normally carried out on primary and secondary road net. Some cross country movements made during present operation.
 h. Replacements Received: 1 Officer 40 Enlisted Men.

John A. Beall
 JOHN A. BEALL,
 Lt Col., INF.,
 Commanding.

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