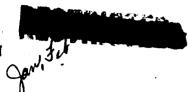


## HEADQUARTERS SILTH TANK DISTRICTER BATTALION APP 403, U.S. ARMY



5 March 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report Against the Enemy, 1 - 28 February 1945.

70 : The Adjutant General, U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.

THRU : The Commanding General, SOTH Infantry Division, APO 80, U. S. Army

Submitted herewith in accordance with paragraph 10, AR 345-105, as exceeded by Ghange 3 and Change 4, reports After Action Against the Enemy for the Elith Tank Bestreyer Battalien, for the garried 1-26 February 1945.

#### a. Administrative Remarks:

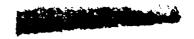
(1) A supply truck (1 1/2 Ten), and ration truck (2 1/2 Ten) should be authorized for Hq & Hq Co, Tank Destroyer Battalian. (2) A supply truck (1 1/2 Ten) should be authorized Ren Co, Tank Destroyer Battalian.

## b. Remarks Tactical:

Buring the menth of February this Battalien was, for the most part, attached to the 80th Inf Div. This Division had already built up an SOP for tank destroyer employment, whereby one company of Tank Destroyers was attached to each Inf Regt. In turn, the Inf Regts usually attached a tank destroyer plateen to each Inf Rm. Such a system of allotment and sub-allotment has been proven many times to be errenessed. In the first place, the Bn Comir Issue control of his battalion. As a consequence, most of his specialised training, knowledge, and experience is not utilised. Likewise, his specially trained staff has no real function under this system. The same, of course, is true of the Go Condr when the tank destroyer company is sub-alletted to Inf Bus. Secondly, it poecs a real limisen problem. Neither the tank destroyer company or plateen have the necessary equipment, or the trained personnel, -necessary to effect the required limisen under such a system. In the third place, a communication problem of some magnitude is introduced. Meither tank destroyers or Inf have radies which will not tegether. Fourthly, the frequent result of such a Practice is grees misuse of the attached unit, due to lack of knowledge of the proper employment of tank destroyers on the part of Inf En Condrs. During this menth three (3) destroyers were lest due to mis-employment. Such lesses due to mis-employment had a decidedly detrimental effect on the morale of the company cencerned.

It is recommended that, in addition to the announced War Department dectrine of indirect fire as the secondary mission for tank destroyers, a secondary mission be given them of <u>direct support</u> of Inf Hogts for two companies, and general support for the third company. Such a mission, and system, places





Ltr 811th TD Bn (5 Mar 45) "After Action Report against the Enemy, 1-28 February 1945".

the tank destroyer company in the same position with respect to the Inf Regt as is now occupied by its' direct support FA Bn. Such a system has many advantages:

(1) The tank destroyer battalion can be permanently placed under Div Arty control, thereby making it a simple matter to switch from one secondary mission to the other.

(2) Places all the cannon of the division under Div Arty

control.

(3) Utilizes the training, knowledge, and experience of the

Bn. Comdr and Staff.

(4) Practically eliminates the probability of mis-employment, since the Co Commrs and Bn Commr remain in command and in control of their commands.

(5) Allows the Bn Comdr to make effective plans for massing

his guns in performance of his primary mission.

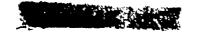
(6) Enables the tank destroyer battalion to most effectively

support the Inf in furtherance of the Div mission.

(7) Enables the En Comdr to institute a policy of rotation of companies, thereby obtaining time for rest, rehabilitation, and maintenance.

A. R. BROWNFIELD, Lt Col, FA, Commanding.





Laditum I

المناطئة زحد

## from coul 1 Feb 45 to 2400 28 Feb 45

1-5 February

At beginning of period (1 Feb 45), this cattalion was attached to the 11th armored Pivision, VIII Corps, and was initially in Corps reserve. From 1 Feb to 3 Peb 45, the Patt lion remained in the following assembly areas and conducted maintenance of all vehicles and equipment plus rehabilitation of personnel:

Bn CP, Ren & J Jos - Located at EULDANGE (P7775)

Hq a A Cos - Located at MATTAGAL (P7577)

B Co - Located at AFELER (P8079)

3 - 5 February

Armored Pivision, VIII Corps, and was attached to 80th Infantry Division, XII Corps. at 0800 hours, 3 February 1945, the Battalion left assembly areas and made a road march to vicinity MERSCH, LUXEMBOURG. Upon arrival at Mersch, Companies were notified that they were to relieve the 802d Tank Destroyer Battalion on the line. In accordance therewith, Companies occupied the following positions by 1630 hours, 3 February 1945.

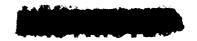
Bn CP & Hq Co - STEGEN (P8737)

Ren Co - MEDERNACH (19035)

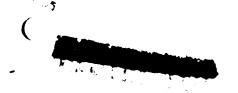
A Co - EPPLEDORF (P9339)

в Co - GILGDORF (P8841)

C Co - BEAUFORT (P9638)







#### 5 - 9 February

Ch preprint 1945, Company C was attached to 319th Inf Regt, SOth Inf Div, and possible direct fire positions in visinity of BETTEMDORF (P909428). Company a way attached to 318th Inf Regt, 80th Inf Div, and moved into direct fire positions visinity 3240 FORT (P900382). Company A was to support the fires of the plath Fa dn, and occupied indirect fire positions in vicinity of EPPLEDORF (F30396). On 7 February 1945, one platoon of Company A was withdrawn from indirect fire positions and attached to Btry A, 558th FA Bn. Mission for the unit was to deliver direct fire on enemy pillboxes.

#### 9 - 12 February

only formingly45, 30th Div Arty Commany assumed coordinator of all fires of all common of Div. Accordingly, Company a, Slith TD Bn, fires were under control of Jloth Fa an with two platoons in indirect positions and one platoon in direct position. Company C, Slith TD Bn, fires under control of 905th Fa Bn, with two platoons in indirect positions and one platoon in direct position.

Antile in these and alternate positions, the companies placed both direct and indirect fire on enemy pillboxes positions. On 11 Feb 45, the letter Companies were again placed under control of the Infuntry Regiments, with Company A attached to 317th lnf kegt, Company & attached to 319th Infantry Regiment, and Company C attached to 319th Infantry Regiment. This attachment continued throughout the minth of reordary. Field artillery mattalions continued to exercise fire control and companies were in indirect fire ositions, with Jlath FA Bn exercising fire control of Company A, 311th TD an.

#### 12 - 19 repru ry

on 12 rebruary 1949, 3d Pl soon, Company C, which was working in conjunction with 3d Sn, 319th Influent crossed the OUR River in vicinity of MALLANDORF on mission of direct fire on enem, pillboxes. On 13 Feb 4





OUR River at vicinity of DILLINGEN. In addition, the remainder of Company C crossed OUR River and occupied direct fire positions in support of the 319th Inf Regt. On 16 Feb 45, Company A moved from indirect fire positions, crossed OUR River to vicinity BOLLENDORF (LOO4) and occupied defensive positions. On 19 Feb 45, Bn CP moved from STEGEN to BETTENLORF (P9043) in order to be of more effective aid to firing companies.

# 19 - 28 February

From 19-23 Feb 45 the firing companies engaged enemy positions, pillboxes, and tanks from various positions in vicinity of CRUCHTEN (P9845), STOCKIGT (LOC45), KORPERICH (P9448), and OBENSGEGEN (P9449). On 23 Feb 45, Company B placed direct fire on the towns of METTENDORF (P993508) which assisted in its capture. On 24 Feb 45, Company A occupied direct fire positions firing on enemy vehicles and personnel and also into the villages of STEFFESHOF (LO150) and BURG (LO152). Company A's CP moved to FREILINGEN (19947). On same date, Company B CP moved to LAHR (P9650) and Company C's CP moved to GEICHLINGEN (9551). In addition, Bn CP crossed the OUR River and moved into URUCHTEN (P9845). On 25 Feb 45, Hq Co (Rr) moved from STEGEN to BETTENDORF (P9042). Company A remained in direct fire positions with 1st Platoon moving to vicinity of BRIMINGEN (L 018533), and 3d Flatoon moved to METTENDORF (P9951). Company C's 1st Platoon moved to OBERRADEN (P998567). 2d Platoon remained in direct fire position in support of 3d Bn of 319th Inf Regt. On 26 Feb 45, Rcn Company moved to METTENDORF (P9951). Company A's CF moved to HUTTERSCH.ID (LOS56), 1st Platoon moved to vicinity of bIMBLORF (10858), 2. Flatoon moved to MULBACK (1045530), 3d Platoon moved to vicinity of Nilabudar (LOS50), Company B remained in LAHR (P9650), lith exception of 3d Platoon which occupied position No of AMTTIMPORF (LOO5505). Company C's CP moved to ALTSChall (LO458), 1st Platoon vicinity PHILIPPS. THE R (LO562), 2d Platoon vicinity MEIDINGEN (LO358), 3d Flatoon moved to ALASCHEID (LO458). On 27 Feb 4541





Hq Co moved to METTARDORF (P9951). Non Co moved to SIERSDORF (LOSSS). Company als 2d Flatcon moved to vicinity of MESSKANNSDORF (LO755). Company als 3d Platcon returned to Company control and moved to LAHR (P9850). On 28 Feb 45 an CP Moved to METTARDORF (F9951). Company A remained in direct fire positions with Co CP moving to BIERSDORF (LOSSS). Company C's CP and all three platcons in vicinity of MEIDINGEN (LOSS).

During the month, Reconnaissance Company was busily engaged on reconnaissance missions, locating and occupying OPs, and reporting valuable information concerning the enemy. Reconnaissance for routes, stream crossing and CP's were primary mission. In addition, enemy minefields, installations, and location of personnel were reported.

Hq Co continued its role of administration and supply during the period.

Results of the Battalion's operations against the enemy are as follows:

Anemy Half-Tracks - 2 Anemy AT Guns - 7 PW's Captured - 85

Enemy SP guns - 8 Enemy Pillboxes- 12





#### SECTION II

# S-2 Report



# Peried 1-28 February 1945

Maps: Germany - 1/25,000, GSGS No. 4414

Sheets Mumber 5903, 5904, 5905, 6003, 6004, 6005, 6103, 6104, 6105.

Germany - 1/50,000, GSGS Number 4507. Sheets Number 107, 122, 137, 22, 23.

Central Burope - 1/100,000, GSGS Mumber 4416.

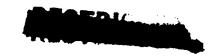
Sheets Mumber S-1, T-1, U-1.

#### 1 - 5 February 1945

After the action of Jammary in the Bastogne-St. Vith area the filth Tank Destroyer Battalion was relieved from attachment to the 11th Armd Div, which was in reserve at the time, and ordered to move to vicinity of STEGEN, Luxenbourg (P875378) on 2 February 1945. Here the unit was attached to the 80th Inf Div whose sector was generally from ROTH, Germany, (P913463) on the OUR River, south to BOLLENDORF, Germany, (LO140) on the SAUER River.

Investigation disclosed that the energy was holding a line fellowing east bank of the CUR and SAUER Rivers with mines, booky traps, anti-tank obstacles and pillboxes manned by the 1st, 5th, 6th and 7th Companies, 915th Regt, 352d VG Div, and 2d Bn of 423d Regt, 212th VG Div. Estimated strength of this helding force was 665 men.

Thirty-eight pillbaces known to be occupied on our front were reported by the 80th Div. A plan of attach was worked out for A and B Companies to fire direct on pillbaces from west bank of the River. Supporting fire by artillety was arranged for the 905th FA Bu with 155mm Houitsers furnishing the covering fire. The plan was for the tank destroyers to fire approximately 10 rounds then nove back. This firing was haspered by min and fog, but in spite of the pour visibility Company A source four direct hits with four rounds drawing no reaction from the enemy.



It was learned from two deserters from the 7th Co, 915th Regt that their company occupied nine bunkers with NOO, and seven men in each.

Enemy mines were generally used all along the River defenses with widely dispersed super-sensitive Regal mines between OUR River and bunker line at Gentingen. In many cases wires were attached to full igniters extending from mine to mine, connected to cause simultaneous explosion.

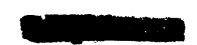
#### 6-10 February 1945

The first appearance of enemy tanks was made on 6 February in the vicinity of AMMELDINGEM entering the town from the ME. The firing Companies continued their mission of direct firing on pillboxes and installations along the line.

On 7 February the 319th Inf Regt, 80th U. S. Div had two and one-half companies across River. Here they received heavy small arms, mortar and artillery fire on the crossing site. The enemy made extensive use of Nebelwefer fire. At 1615 hours the ponton bridge was knocked out by artillery. Heavy shelling with mortars and artillery was received by 80th U. S. Div Engineers while trying to rebuild the bridge.

Company A, Silth TD Bn, was given mission to furnish four destroyers to work in pairs with a direct laying FA Bn. Heavy enemy activity reported east of BETTEL. Apparently reinforcement were brought up by the enemy as they became aware of a determined U. S. thrust on this sector. On 8 February Company C destroyed one enemy rocket position at P983453 and a pillbox located at P945455.

Continued pillbox firing was accomplished by all Companies throughout the initial thrusts by 80th Inf Div to secure a bridgehead. 1st and 2d Companies, 1130th VG Regt identified at P990433, with Bn CP at P9944.





Reconnaissance Company maintained OP's during the month, reporting movements of the enemy and in many cases acting as FA forward observers.

On 10 February 15 men surrendered from pillbex P949445, after firing by Company A, Ellth TD Bm.

The enemy continued his defense by using artillery, mortar (Slam and 120mm) and Nebelwefer fire. There was a noticable lessening of machine gun fire, mainly on the crossing sites.

#### 11 - 15 February 1945

On 11 February the enemy attempted to counter-attack about 1120 hours in vicinity P982446, but was dispersed by our artillery fire. Our observers reported much movement by foot troops and horse-drawn vehicles toward our lines through HOMMERDINGEN, CHUCHTEN, LAHR and OBERSGEGEN. Another counter-attack attempted to form on the morning of 12 February but this was also dispersed with no ground lost by our troops.

The enemy brought up a few tanks and SP guns to bring direct fire on our bridgehead and continued heavy resistance was encountered by our troops from pillboxes and dug-in positions.

Our reconnaissance observed columns of feet troops, horse-drawn vehicles, mortar vehicles, armored cars, and tanks moving south and southeast in the vicinity of LAHR P9650, MEITEMOORF P9950, HOMERDINGEN P9646, and FREILINGEN P992477. Several small counter-attacks were launched vicinity WALLENDORF and South CRUCHTEN on 15 February. Enemy continued to occupy defensive positions on east-west ridge south of CRUCHTEN.

# 16 - 20 February 1945

South and east of BIESDORF and in vicinity of RCHRBACH LOOMA which proved to be the left flank of 352d VG Div, whose CP was in RCHRBACH, became a center



of activity as continued reports of both men and vehicles in that sector, were made. It was near this location that Lt B. C. Sawyer of Company A narrowly escaped capture and reported killing or wounding six of the enemy before his escape after darkness.

PW's continue to report lack of gasoline for their tanks and SP guns. In many cases the enemy was found using such guns as stationary artillery, and in others the vehicles were reported to be immobilised and parked in buildings.

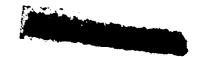
On 18 February the enemy front lines on the 80th Div sector were generally NIEDENSGEGEN, KEMENIG, FREILINGEN and NUSBAUM. The enemy began using combat teams at this time composed of remnants from various outfits, whose mission was to defend to the last man. As a result of this our forces met stiffened resistance on all sections. The new HETZER type SP AT Guns were first encountered in this area on or about 19 February. The 610th AT Bn which previously was identified on the 5th Div sector moved ever to 318th Regt, 80th Inf Div front.

Our firing Companies, A, B, and C centimed their missions attached to the three Inf Regts of SOth Div, and pushed the attack to north and east. By 20 February the enemy was defending along a line north of ROTH, OBERSGREEN, LAME, GENELIEGAN, METTEMPORF to DETTINGEN.

# 21 - 24 February 1945

Enemy stabbornly resisted with fire from S/A, tanks, SP and AT guns. 16 tanks, 3 SP guns, 4 towed guns (3 77mm and 1 88mm) were knocked out 21 February 1945. Combat team SCHWIRT4, remnants of 276th VG Div, and teams Team MORRING, elements of 276th VG Div were identified on this sector. Only isolated groups in terms were remaining west of Prem River.





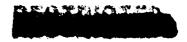
# 25 - 28 February 1945

By 26 February 1945 the enemy appeared to be disorganised by our advance and was making efforts to withdraw to east of KYLL River to establish a defensive line there. The enemy front lines were from the northern boundary of 80th Div in vicinity of MAVEL on the Prum River to HAMM then east to LIESSEM, (L101591), at the end of the month. The 1st Bn, 694th VGR, 340th VG Div, and the 4th Co, VCLESSTRUM RIFEL were identified on this line. The enemy continued to make use of mines, AT ditches, roadblocks, abbatis, and dug-in positions to delay the advance through the Westwall.

#### KNOWN ENERT EQUIPMENT DESTROYED By Slith ID Bn Month of February

	Ron		B	<u> </u>	Total
Tanks, Mk V or VI			2	2	4
Half-Tracks		2			2
SP Gans			7	1	8
MG Nests			1	1	2
AT Guns			1	6	7
Fillboxes		2	2	8	1 <b>2</b>
Rocket Sites			_	1	1
Prisoners	5	31	1	48	85

Killed and Wounded (estimated) - 150





#### SECTION III



#### S-4 REPORT

#### 1 - 28 February 1945

During the month of February all classes of supplies except Class III were drawn from the 80th Inf Div.

Supply lines were generally short, but road conditions were bed and comsiderable time was spent traversing said roads.

Following is a breakdown by classes of supply:

#### Class I

Class I supplies were easily accessible. Considerable amounts of emergency "K" rations were consumed by the firing companies during the initial River crossing. All companies received rations every day. A ration vehicle should be authorised for a TD Bn.

#### Class II

Class II supplies were plentiful.

#### Class III

All Glass III supplies were drawn from Army and Corps dumps. This necessitated long hauls over very bad roads. Gas and oil was not drawn from the Div because of their inability to maintain adequate reserves.

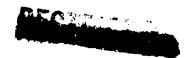
#### Class IV

All Class IV supplies were generally available.

#### Class V

During this period considerable Class V supplies were expended. ASP's were centrally located. Considerable CPT-105 fuses were expended.





	Ho	Ren	A	B	C	Total
Car, Armd, Utility, M-20	10	0	7	4	0	0
Car, Armi, Light, M-6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carriage, Mtr, 76mm, M-18	0	0	0	3	0	3
Vehicle, Tk Recovery, M-32	0	0	1	0	0	0
Trailer, 1/4 Ton, 2 Wheel						
Cargo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trailer, Ame, M-10, Truck						
1/4 Ton, 4x4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trailer, 1 Ton, 2 Wheel						
Cargo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Truck, 3/4 Ton, 4x4, w/o		.*				
W/12 Volt System	0	0	0	0	0	0
Truck, 1 1/2 Ton 6x6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Truck, 2 1/2 Ton, 6x6	<u> </u>	0	0	0	0	<u> </u>
Total	٥	0	1	3	0	0
IDUAL	~	•	_		•	•

# Vehicular Replacements:

	Ha	Ron		B	C	Total
Car, Armi, Utility, M-20	0	0	ठ	ठ	ठ	0
Car, Arad, Light, M-8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carriage, Mtr., 76mm, M-18	0	0	0	0	3	0
Vehicle, Tk Recovery, 1-32	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trailer, 1/4 Ton, 2 Wheel						
Cargo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trailer, Ammo, N-10	2	0	0	2	3 <b>2</b>	7 11
Truck, 1/4 Ton, 4x4	3	3	3	0	2	11
Trailer, 1 Ton, 2 Wheel						
Cargo	1	0	0	0	0	1
Carrier, Cargo, M-29	ı	0	0	0	0	1
Truck, 3/4 Ton, 4x4 w/c						
W/12 Volt System	1	0	0	0	0	1
Truck, 1 1/2 Ton, 6x6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Truck 2 1/2 Ton, 6x6	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	4	3	3	2		24

# Amenation Expended:

76mm, HB	- 7	<b>,</b> 455
76mm, APC		210
Cal. 50 MG	- 5	,122
Cal. 30 MG	-	0
Cal. 30 Rifle	-	500
Cal. 30 Carbine	- 1	,000
Cal. 45 Ball		100
37mm, HE	-	45
37mm, APC	-	0
37mm, Canister	-	0
Slmm, Mortar, HE	-	0



# Amennition Expended Cont'd:

Rockets, AT, M6A3 - 4 Grenade, AT - 0 Mine, AT, HE, M1A1 - 0 Grenade, Hand, Frag - 0

# SECTET

S-1 REPORT

SECTION IV

# 1 - 28 February 1945

#### TABLE NUMBER 1.

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT BY TYPE OF CASUALTY (Figures taken from Morning Reports up to and including 28 February 1945 for the period 1 - 28 February 1945.)

DATE	KIA	DO	NIA	<u>IIIA</u>	ATV	TOTAL
7 Feb 8 Feb * * *	1* 2*					1 2
10 Feb	1		3	1		5
13 Feb			1			1
15 Feb	1*					1
18 Feb	1					1
20 Feb 21 Feb			1			1
23 Feb			2			2
25 Feb	3*) 1					4
TOTAL	n		8	1		19

\*Previously reported MIA, information received showing men KIA.

TABLE MUMBER 2.

# PRISONERS OF MAR CAPTURED

Date	Pyle
18 Feb 20 Feb 23 Feb	21 39 25
TOTAL	<b>\$</b> 5

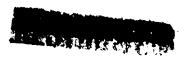




# TABLE NUMBER 3.

# REPLACEMENTS RECKIVED (Including Hospital Returness)

Date	No.
11 Feb	2
14 Feb 18 Feb	<b>8</b> 2
19 Feb 20 Feb	19 1
23 Feb 25 Feb	1 16
TOTAL	49



# TABLE NUMBER 4.

## AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Decorations awarded from 1 Feb 45 to 28 Feb 45, incl.

<u>NO.</u>	
<u>_</u>	Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) Distinguished Service Cross Silver Star (Posthumously) Silver Star
<u>ই</u>	Oak Leaf Cluster to Silver Star Bronse Star Medal Bronse Star Medal (Posthumously)
_	Oak Leaf Cluster to Bronse Star Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal Soldier's Medal
	Purple Heart Award (1st) Oak Leaf Cluster to Purple Heart (2d) Oak Leaf Cluster to Purple Heart

