

HEADQUARTERS
823rd TD Bn.

25 October 44

SUBJECT: Unit Data.

TO : Commanding General,
Ninth United States Army,

THRU : Commanding Officer,
Second Tank Destroyer Group,
APO 230, U.S. Army

1. In compliance with letter Headquarters, Second Tank Destroyer Group, 23 October 44, Subject: "Unit Data", the following information is submitted.

- a. Roster of Officers to include name, rank, serial number and branch of service: Attached herewith.
- b. Date of Activation: 25 JULY 1942
- c. T/O & E under which unit is currently operating:
18-36 7 May 43; 18-37 7 May 43; 18-25M 27 Jan 43.
- d. Brief history of unit since activation:
Attached herewith.



STANLEY DETTMER
Lt. Col, Infantry
Commanding

- 2 Incls:
Incl 1. Roster of Officers.
Incl 2. History of Unit.

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>SERIAL NO</u>	<u>BRANCH OF SERVICE</u>
DETTMER, STANLEY	Lt. Col	0-265252	INF
COSTOMIRIS, EDWARD A.	Major	0-408960	FA
LOHSE, ASHBY I.	Major	0-339848	CAV
BARANOV, LESTER	Captain	0-495846	MC
CRISSINGER, BRUCE A.	Captain	0-383332	FA
CURTIS, ELBERT R.	Captain	0-1168621	FA
HALL, WILLIAM E.	Captain	0-296024	CAV
SCHUELLER, MELVIN J.	Captain	0-461550	DC
SITZ, GEORGE W.	Captain	0-1030302	CAV
SWANSON, SAMUEL D.	Captain	0-1030307	CAV
WILTS, FRANCES E.	Captain	0-1030316	CAV
BARRON, JOHN E.	1st Lt.	0-1824704	(NMB) TF
BRANDON, ROBERT W.	1st Lt	0-1821542	(NMB) TD
CONNORS, FRANCIS J.	1st Lt	0-1822368	(NMB) TD
DUE PREE, FRANK E.	1st Lt	0-1030234	CAV
FRANK, PETER R.	1st Lt	0-1291796	INF
JEFFERSON, CARL E.	1st Lt	0-1825133	(NMB) TD
KUSTER, ALBERT J.	1st Lt	0-1823310	(NMB) TD
MALCOMSON, W.H. JR.	1st Lt	0-1168797	FA
MC INNIS, ELLIS W.	1st Lt	0-1030268	CAV
NEEL, LEON L.	1st Lt	0-1823335	(NMB) INF
PFAPF, WARREN R.	1st Lt	0-1030283	CAV
RANEY, THOMPSON L.	1st Lt	0-1030291	CAV
SPRINGFIELD, THOMAS	1st Lt	0-1823227	(NMB) TD
SWILLEY, HARRISON D.	1st Lt	0-401397	INF
WRIGHT, CEPHUS A.	1st Lt	0-1030319	CAV
CHASTEN, LOUIS B.	2nd Lt	0-1825233	(NMB) TD
DE ROSA, JERRY F.	2nd Lt	0-1823711	(NMB) TD
LUFT, WILLIAM S.	2nd Lt	0-1824206	(NMB) TD
MERSEREAU, RUSSELL E.	CWO	W-2131776	NO
* GATLIN, EVERETT L.	2nd Lt	0-887502	(NMB) TD
BRUTON, JOE H. JR.	1st Lt	0-1030225	CAV

* Battle field promotion.



823 T. D. BATTALION

Since the activities of the 30th Infantry Division has been cleared for publication up to the 23 October 1944, the campaigns in which this Battalion has participated may now be mentioned and its many successful actions may now be related.

The 823rd Tank Destroyer Battalion was one of the first Battalions to land in Normandy and immediately went into action in support of the 30th Division, going into our secondary role as artillery. In the vicinity of Isigny on D-plus 18, we fired our first round with our destroyers into German held territory. June 26th we were relieved from the 30th Division and attached to the 29th Division giving close support in the drive for Villers Fossard. We rejoined the 30th Division on July 3rd and prepared for the crossing of the Vire River. Activity was, roughly speaking, in the Carentan-Isigny sector with mostly local hedgerow fighting until July 7th when we made the now famous crossing of the Vire et Taute Canal, that had been no-mans land for about two weeks. In the counter-attacks that followed this crossing our men earned Combat Infantry Badges. Two days later B Company captured our first German prisoner, and the First Reconnaissance Platoon knocked out our first German Tank. During successive days we supported attacks and helped repulse counter-attacks on small but important villages that saw some of the bitterest fighting in the Normandy Campaign, such as St. Jean de Daye, Hts Vents, Pont Herbert. Here the Germans made their strongest attempt since D-Day to push us back to the sea. The following day saw the Battalion in action in support of the operations that led to the capture of St. Lo the main anchor of the German Normandy position.



On the 25th July the St. Lo break-thru commenced. The heaviest air bombardment of the war followed by a furious artillery barrage, followed up by an Infantry attack, that opened the gap which General Patton's armor poured through for the historic sweep across Brittany. We moved on through St. Giles, St. Romphaire up against Tessy sur Vire. At this time the Luftwaffe started doing the honors each night--bad check Charlie made his schedule call around 2245. He was always on time and followed by bombers--everybody learned in record time to fix good covered foxholes. Once during this period, when Jerry planes had dropped flares and were groaning overhead, one of our A Company men was overheard saying this prayer "Dear Lord-if you are going to do anything, do it now and do it on the double, but don't come down here, cause you'll give away my position".

On August 6th we moved to positions around St. Barthelmy and Mortain after a forty-five mile road march from our old location. Things begin popping soon after--the Germans had a do or die order from Adolf Hitler to make a bread-thru to the sea near Avranches which would have cut the United States Forces in two, isolating the Third Army in Brittany and leaving the First Army cut-off in Normandy. The enemy decided to use his four best Panzer Divisions to make his main effort in our sector at Mortain and St. Barthelmy, but this turned out to be poor judgement for the German General Staff for the Division hung on tooth and nail.

One of our Infantry Battalions, including men of our unit, was lost--cut off and surrounded on an important hill for five days, but they never gave up. After some of the busiest days we had ever seen, we reaped the reward of a job well done, received commendations from higher Headquarters and the confidence and respect of the doughboy, whose life had been saved time and time again by our accurate fire on enemy tanks and Infantry. This battle will never be forgotten by this Battalion. We stayed right with the doughboys, and never gave a foot of ground, fought off savage SS German Infantry with machine guns, rifles and hand grenades who had penetrated within a few feet of our destroyers. We blocked the two main roads leading to Avranches and allowed no German armor to get through. We are proud of our work in this battle, here we set a new Army record for enemy tanks destroyed in one day, and also for the number of enemy vehicles destroyed in one day. After the German withdrew, this French Battlefield was beautifully cluttered with German junk including tanks, self-propelled guns, trucks, motorcycles, bicycles, anti-tank guns, and super-men. Another road march brought us to Domfront where again resistances was encountered, the Germans trying fiercely to prevent the closing of the Falaise Gap. Finally though, contact was made with adjacent friendly troops and the 30th was whisked 112 miles to Brezolle, via Alencon and Mortagne. From then on the advance was fairly rapid and any enemy attempt to stop our troops was quickly taken care of by our well balanced task force. Verneuil, Nonacourt, Evereux, Pacey, Louviers, and Misery were names well remembered from the next operation. The Command Post Group will well remember then little town of Misery. We thought the town had been liberated but it required a two hour fight with help from the First Recon Platoon and elements of B Company to make it safe for a Headquarters. Cooks, clerks, mechanics, and everybody captured prisoners and our own grand total of super-man amounted to sixty-five plus ten killed. On August 27th the Battalion crossed the Seine River near Mantes going into position around Limay and other places in the Seine River Valley. Then northeast to Pontoise, and so we missed going through Paris, we were close enough to see the Eiffel Tower and some parts of the City. After a short stay the Battalion started on its swift race to the Belgium border passing through Roye, Peronne, Cambrai, Valenciennes, and St. Amand. Elements of our unit were among the first allied soldiers to cross the border into Belgium and the enthusiastic welcome of the population lining the roads and streets will never be forgotten by anyone who participated in this trip, when we out-blitzed the Nazi Blitzkrieg covering 180 miles in 72 hours.

Our first day in Belgium was another one of excitement for the Command Post Group. Two of our staff officers were sent out to find a place for our Headquarters. They found a very nice Chateau around St. Maur with adjoining woods for vehicles, but the woods happened to be filled with Germans who also wanted it for an assembly area. With the help of a nearby artillery battery the woods were finally cleaned out and the final count was 91 prisoners including one officer, 16 wounded, and a dozen more including one officer killed. We had a very enjoyable stay here and will never forget the fine hospitality shown to us by the Belgians.