

HEADQUARTERS
737th Tank Battalion
APO 436

Auth: CG 35th Inf Div

Initials *R.H.*.....

Date *11 Nov 44*.....
1 November 44

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SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy Report, After After Action Report.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

1. GENERAL SITUATION:

During October the front was stabilized. This Battalion supported the infantry in straightening lines (1, 8-10 Oct), elements remained alerted to repel counter-attacks (2-5, 6-7, 11-31 Oct) and elements performed secondary tank mission of indirect fire (16-31 Oct).

2. ASSIGNMENTS, ATTACHMENTS, SUPPORT AND REINFORCING FIRES:

- a. Battalion remained assigned to 35th Infantry Division, attached 134th Infantry Regiment, 7-8 October.
- b. "A" Company attached 320th Infantry Regiment, 1 October, released 2 October, Attached 134th Infantry Regiment 9 October, released 10 October. Reinforced 219th Field Artillery Battalion 16-31 October.
- c. "B" Company reinforced 161st Field Artillery Battalion, 16-31 Oct.
- d. "C" Company attached 134th Infantry Regiment, 10-14 October. Supported 137th Infantry Regiment 15-31 October. One platoon reinforced 161st Field Artillery Battalion, 28-31 October.
- e. "D" Company remained under Battalion control throughout period.

3. MISSIONS:

- a. 1 October supported infantry in driving enemy from Bois de Gramercey (UV0523).
- b. 8 October supported infantry in advancing north, securing high ground and town of Fossieux (UV 965290) in an attack to straighten lines.
- c. 9-10 October supported infantry and engineers in advancing and destroying bridges vicinity Fossieux.
- d. 16-31 October reinforced Field Artillery Battalion and fired secondary tank mission of indirect fire.

4. TACTICS:

- a. 1 October Battalion ("B" Co.) in support of 137th Infantry Regiment and in direct support of the 2d Battalion of that Regiment. "C" Company, with 2 platoons "D" Company, advanced directly in front of the infantry from the West of Bois de Chambrey and "A" Company, plus one platoon "D" Company moved in the same manner, advanced from the east. "A" Company ran into an extended enemy minefield vicinity QV0623 and moved into position with "C" Company. Units supported by fire from Assault Guns. Tanks advanced to edge of forest, firing neutralizing fire and lifted fire as supported infantry advanced into woods. No tank losses or personnel losses and an undetermined number of enemy were killed and wounded.

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(Action Against Enemy Report, After After Action Report, cont'd)

4. TACTICS (continued):

- b. 8 October Battalion attached 134th Infantry Regiment. "A" and "C" Companies, with one infantry company riding on the rear decks of the tanks of each tank company, crossed the LD, east and west road through Manhoue (UV 975260) at 0615, closely followed by supporting infantry. "B" Company, with no infantry riding, advanced behind "C" Company and was followed by infantry on foot. Visibility was very poor. Heavy fog limited observation to 25 yards. "A" Company advanced from crossroads (UV 977262) along the lower edge of Fossieux Ridge and reached the objective, (VU 950285) at 0952. Prior to reaching the objective, neutralizing fire was placed on Ajoncourt (UV 939284), burning the town, and after the objective was reached the company remained in position supporting the then dismounted infantry in consolidating positions and mopping up until 1530. "C" Company advanced from RJ (UV 980264) parallel and east of "A" Company, along the upper portion of Fossieux Ridge and reached its objective (outskirts of Fossieux) at 1002. Infantry, after dismounting, advanced into the town while the tanks supported the infantry in consolidating positions from the outskirts. Subsequently, one platoon of tanks entered Fossieux and neutralized enemy strong points. "B" Company took up positions on reverse slope of ridge east of Manhoue. Assisted infantry in mopping up woods (UV 973278), ridge southwest Malaucourt (UV 990277) and enemy strong points. At about 1600, with one company of infantry riding the rear decks, the company advanced toward the ridge generally west of Malaucourt with the mission of supporting the infantry in establishing a defensive position along the ridge. The infantry withdrew after dismounting by reason of intense mortar and artillery fire. The tanks took the infantry to the ridge 3 times during this period. On the 2d trip one tank was disabled and on the 3rd trip four more tanks were disabled. "B" Company withdrew after accomplishing the mission at 1830. The Assault Guns placed supporting fire to all companies on call. Tank losses: 5 (1 recoverable). Personnel Losses: 1 Officer, 2 EM, KIA; 9 EM, WIA. One enemy tank knocked out and undetermined number of enemy killed, wounded and captured.
- c. 9 October "A" Company attached 134th Infantry Regiment, advanced about 1645, with infantry and engineers riding rear decks, from vicinity Manhoue, in fog and light rain to point north and west of Fossieux just short of first objective (bridge UV 954297) and were forced to withdraw by reason of darkness. 10 October "A" Company attached 134th Infantry Regiment, advanced, with infantry and engineers riding rear decks, blew bridge (UV 954297) at 1450, then proceeded to advance and blew bridge (UV 950298) about an hour later and proceeded to advance to last objective (bridge UV 967294). Unable to blow 3rd bridge by reason of enemy tank in draw. "A" Company guns could not be depressed sufficiently and fire on target and still keep tanks in defilade position. TD's could not get into position to fire on enemy tank. 240mm could not reach it and 8 inch howitzer did not have ammunition. Tank losses: none, personnel losses: None. Undetermined number of enemy killed and wounded.

(Action Against Enemy Report, After After Action Report, cont'd) .

4. TACTICS (continued):

- d. 16-31 October two platoons of "A", "B" companies fired indirect fire missions.
28-31 October one platoon "C" Company fired indirect fire missions.
All missions given by Artillery. Each platoon averaged 300 rounds per day during period.

5. COMMUNICATIONS:

a. Primary Mission:

Battalion Commanding Officer at front (SCR 508), Executive Officer coordinates action from Artillery Liaison Plane (SCR 610), S-3 at front (SCR 508), S-2 at Regimental Headquarters (SCR 506, 508), S-3A at Battalion Headquarters (SCR 506), Liaison Officer at Divisional Headquarters (SCR 506).

b. Secondary Mission:

Company firing has wire run to them by supported Artillery Battalion. Company lays own wire net to firing tanks by wiring telephone circuit into inter-phone circuit of tanks.

6. MISCELLANEOUS:

The success of the operation of 8 October was attributed to the planning, coordination and cooperation of the tank-infantry team and the close proximity of the infantry on foot. The enemy Assault Battalion, which formerly would not fire at the advancing tanks, but would take their toll of the following infantry, were completely frustrated. The infantry, by remaining close to the tanks, were protected by the tanks and the tanks in turn received not only the protection of the men riding on the rear decks, but from the foot soldiers as well.


JAMES I. WICKENS
Captain, Cavalry
S-3

Incl:
Unit Journal