

HEADQUARTERS
737th Tank Battalion
APO 436

1 Jan 45

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

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C. (Through Commanding General, 5th Infantry Division, APO 5, US Army.)

1. General Situation:

During the early days of December this battalion remained in reserve and performed necessary maintenance. From 5 December to 22 December 1944 it actively supported the advance of the 35th Inf. Div. across the Saar and Blies Rivers and into Germany northeast of Sarreguemines. During the latter part of the month it moved north and supported the 5th Inf. Div. in repulsing the enemy attack in Luxembourg and in forcing the Germans to withdraw to the Northeast banks of the SAAR RIVER in the ECHTERNACH area.

2. Assignments, Attachments, Support and Reinforcing Fires:

a. Battalion remained assigned to XII Corps (Ltr Hq TUSA, File No 322, GNMCC, Subject: Troop Assignment A-23, dtd 13 Aug 44) and attached to 35th Inf Div (Ltr Hq XII Corps, File No. AG 322(G-3), Subject: Troop Assignment A-2, dtd 15 Aug 44) until 23 Dec 44 when attached to the 5th Inf Div. (Ltr Hq XII Corps, File No. AG 322(G-3), Subject: Troop Assignment A-17, dtd 29 Dec 44).

1. 5-17 Dec Co. A attached 134 Inf Regt; 20-23 Dec. attached 320 Inf. Regt; 23-27 Dec. attached 2d Inf. Regt; 27-29 Dec. 1 platoon attached 2d Inf. Regt.
2. 10-22 Dec. Co. C attached 320 Inf. Regt. 23-31 Dec attached 11 Inf Regt.

3. 15-22 Dec. Co B attached 137 Inf Regt; 23-27 Dec attached 10 Inf Regt.

4. 17-23 Dec Bn (-Co C and Co A from 20 Dec) attached 137 Inf Regt.

5. 25-27 Dec. Co. D attached 2d Inf. Regt; 27-29 Dec attached to 11th Inf. Regt.

6. 18-23 Dec. Assault Gun Platoon supported 219th FA Bn with reinforcing fire.

3. Our Operations:

a. Period 1-4 Dec. The entire Bn assembled at BERMERING (Q248374) in 35th Inf. Div. reserve and performed maintenance. No vehicle casualties; no personnel casualties.

b. Period 5-22 Dec. During this period one or more companies actively supported units of the 35th Inf. Div. in the crossing of the SAAR and BLIES RIVERS in the SAAREGEMINES area and in securing a bridgehead on German soil. Co. A cleared BERMERING 50600 Dec and advanced with the 3d Bn, 134th Inf. through ST. JEAN-ROHRBACH (Q377478), PUTTELANGE (Q413504), ERNESTVILLER (Q433520), WOUSTVILLER (Q470532) ROTH (Q490536) and NEUFRANGE (Q506534). On the following day the tanks remained at NEUFRANGE prepared to advance upon the completion of a treadway bridge. On 7 Dec the Co. remained in regimental reserve. During the next two days the platoons of the Co assumed positions on high ground west of the SAAR RIVER.

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The infantry advanced to the river and the tanks fired direct fire at targets designated by the infantry and at targets of opportunity. Communication was established between the infantry and tanks via SCR 300. On 10 Dec the tanks of A Co crossed the SAAR RIVER and assembled vicinity of SARREINSMING (Q541563). On the following day C Co. crossed the SAAR RIVER in support of the 3d Bn., 320th Inf. Regt. and advanced to the RR vicinity (Q592653) while A Co from the high ground West of the BLIES RIVER fired direct supporting fire and at targets of opportunity. During the next two days A Co. continued direct fire support from the high ground southeast of BLIES-EBERSING (Q566578) while C Co in a coordinated tank-infantry attack moved on BLIESBRUCK (Q593577) against strong resistance and heavy fire. On 14 Dec A Co took up positions on high ground South of BLIES RIVER where enemy had observation in order that the tanks would draw artillery fire off of friendly infantry troops and in a position to feint a crossing while the actual crossing took place at another point, and supported the assaulting battalions with fire directed by infantry battalion and company commanders. C Co remained in position vicinity BLIESBRUCK (Q595575) prepared to assist in attack on REINHEIM.

At 0600, 15 Dec 2d Lt. Langdon Smith, O1018041, platoon leader 1st Platoon, Co A, made a foot reconnaissance vicinity HABKIRCHEN (Q563593) and was the first member of this battalion to enter GERMANY. At 0800 he led his platoon across the BLIES RIVER between FRAUENBERG (Q557600) and HABKIRCHEN. These were the first tanks of the XII Corps to enter GERMANY. The Co. supported the mopping up operations vicinity HABKIRCHEN. Co. B was attached to the 137th Inf. Regt. and moved to an assembly area vicinity NEUNKIRCH (Q528581) while Co C supported the attack of the 320th Inf Regt on REINHEIM (Q595600).

The next day, 16 Dec, saw A Co supporting the attack on woods (Q9961), lifting the fire as the infantry entered the woods. B Co moved to an area South of BREITERWALD where they fired neutralizing fire into woods, then 11 tanks moved east along South edge of forest, supporting 3d Bn, 137 Inf Regt, advancing to (Q574612) where they were held up by direct AT fire. C Co supported the 320th Inf in mopping up REINHEIM.

The next day A Co continued to support by fire. B Co sent 2 platoons along the West edge of the BREITERWALD toward BLIESMANGEN and the remaining platoon held its position along the Southwest edge of the woods. C Co supported 1st Bn, 320 Inf., attacked and surrounded farm at (Q603613), meeting very stubborn resistance from enemy in and around farm.

On 18 Dec 14 the Bn (-C Co) was attached to 137th Inf Regt. One platoon A Co supported 2d Bn, 134 Inf Regt which was also attached to 137th Inf Regt, and took up positions West of REINHEIM and fired direct fire missions into REINHEIMERWALD while the infantry advanced. One platoon B Co. advanced with 1st Bn., 137th Inf Regt and cleared BREITERWALD of enemy, consolidated positions, and took up defensive positions in the North edge of woods (Q5661) while the remainder of the Co supported the 2d Bn, 137th Inf advance toward BLIESMANGEN. C Co supported 1st Bn, 320 Inf Regt in attack on farm at (Q603613) against stiff resistance. The Assault Gun Platoon, reinforced, (6 M4 tanks w/105 How) tied in with the 219th FA Bn and fired 102 rounds at enemy infantry, AT guns and batteries. On the succeeding day A Co continued to support the attack with fire while one platoon of B Co maintained defensive positions in BREITERWALD and C Co was not committed. The Assault Gun Platoon, reinforced, fired 273 rounds of harassing and interdictory fire. D Co took over the guarding of RR bridges in SARREGUEMINES East of the SAAR RIVER. On 20 Dec the 1st Bn., 134th Inf Regt was subjected to a counterattack and A Co took up defensive positions and supported that battalion.

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Platoon of B Co holding its defensive positions in BREITENWALD was rotated, Platoon which went into forest carried supplies to infantry and platoon which came out evacuated infantry wounded, while the remainder of the Co stood by on a five minute alert. C Co remained at HELNHEIM prepared to support 320th Inf Regt in defense of its zone. D Co continued to guard bridges. Assault Gun Platoon, reinforced, continued to support 219th FA Bn with reinforcing fire, firing a total of 502 rounds of interdictory and TOTs on enemy infantry installations.

On 21 Dec all line units held their positions while relief of the 35th Inf Div was being effected, except Co C which moved out at 1530. All units cleared the BLIES RIVER by 1000 the following morning. The Assault Gun Platoon, reinforced, fired its last round at 0930, making a total of 400 rounds fired on 21-22 Dec.

RESULTS OF OPERATIONS: Operating in unfavorable terrain where the tanks were unable to maneuver, excellent results were achieved in supporting attacking infantry with direct fire. The success of A Co was worthy of commendation. (See ltr Col. Butler B. Miltonberger, dtd 19 Dec 44, annexed as Exhibit "A"). Two enemy tanks were definitely destroyed and 1 possibly destroyed, 2 enemy AT guns were destroyed together with an undetermined number of machine guns and small arms. Three of our tanks were disabled, one of which was a total loss. One officer and 2 EM were evacuated as battle casualties and no personnel were KIA.

c. Period 22-23 Dec. During this period the Battalion temporarily assembled vicinity of DIFFENBACH (Q346452) and HELLER (Q337447) and moved via ST. AVOID (Q250565), METZ (U8758), UCKANGE (U8579), RUMELANGE (7796), ESCH (P7412) and LUXEMBOURG (P842125), to OETRANGE (U935125) and SCHRASSIG (U935135) closing at 230430 Dec.

d. Period 24 - 29 Dec. During this period the battalion supported the 5th Inf. Div. in repulsing the German advance and forcing the enemy to withdraw to the East bank of the SAUER RIVER in the ECHTERNACH area.

Co A assembled in vicinity of Consdorf (VP994316) 1200, 24 Dec and supported the advance of the 2d Bn, 2d Inf. North through woods (993335) and reached Berdorf (L005368) on 26 Dec. B Co assembled in vicinity of 010302 at 110024 Dec and supported advance of 10th Inf (2 platoons with 2d Bn and 1 platoon with 1st Bn) gaining initial objective, hill 313, inflicting heavy casualties on enemy. On 25 Dec, B Co remained in regimental reserve and on 26 Dec (1 platoon with 1st Bn and 2 platoons with 3rd Bn) advanced to SAUER RIVER west of ECHTERNACH driving enemy to East bank. C Co assembled in CHRISTNACH (VP948331) 24 Dec and supported advance of 2d Bn, 11th Inf, taking high ground NE of WALDBILLIG (VP957339), causing enemy to evacuate the town. Following day they continued the advance, clearing woods at 945355 and took HALLER (P955306). On 25 Dec, D Co assembled in vicinity of ZITTLIG (P996280) closing at 0820 and then moved to CONSDORF (P994316), prepared to support advance of 1st Bn., 2d Inf. on Berdorf (L005368). On 26 Dec, D Co moved to

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to BIRLUCKF and took position prepared to repel enemy counterattack. Following day they moved to CONDORF (P994316), prepared to support 11th Inf. On the following days up to 26 Dec., the tanks held their positions, and remained in reserve prepared to continue attack on order.

RESULTS OF OPERATIONS: Fighting against a determined enemy on the offensive, over snow covered ground, mountainous terrain and with an entirely new unit, the tanks achieved excellent results. 1 enemy SP was destroyed and one probably destroyed, 1 enemy 75mm AT gun, with prime mover was destroyed, several batteries of Nebelwerfers were destroyed, 1 M-7, 105mm How was recaptured (belonging to 10th Armd Div) together with an undetermined number of machine guns and small arms. 3 of our tanks were disabled by enemy action. No personnel were evacuated as casualties.

Period 30-31 Dec. During the last days of the month the Bn (- Co C) assembled vicinity REULAND (P937292) and HEFFINGEN (P925312), performed maintenance and coordinated defense plans with infantry.

James I. Wickens
JAMES I. WICKENS
Captain, Cavalry
S-3

HQ QUARTERS 134TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
APO 35
US ARMY

19 Dec 44

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Commanding Officer, 737th Tank Battalion, U S Army.

THRU : Commanding General, 35th Infantry Division,
APO #35, U S Army.

1. I wish to commend Capt Martin V. Conde, 01017040, Commanding Officer, Company A, 737th Tank Battalion, for the manner in which he accomplished his mission while attached to this Regiment from 4 December to 17 December 1944. Capt Conde, in spite of the extreme hazards, kept a constant reconnaissance forward and thus kept his company in the very best possible firing positions from which they supported the attacking infantry. On one occasion, this support was so effective as to have been, without a doubt, the decisive factor in the capture of a bridge site without which the regimental mission could never have been achieved.

2. The cooperation and willingness to serve so greatly manifest in the actions of Capt Conde and his entire company affords me, as regimental commander, a real satisfaction and I wish it to be a matter of record that this cooperative spirit is duly recognized by the Infantry.

/s/ Butler B. Miltonberger
/t/ BUTLER B. MILTONBERGER
Colonel, 134th Infantry
Commanding

AG 201.22

1st Inf.

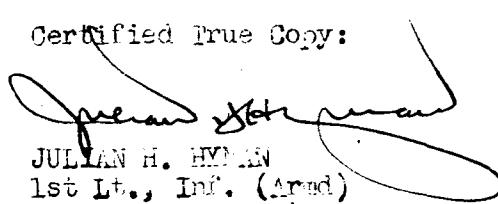
HQ 35TH INF DIV, APO 35, U S Army, 21 December 1944.

TO: Commanding Officer, 737th Tank Battalion, U S Army.

I am pleased to forward this commendation and to add my appreciation of the outstanding accomplishment of Capt Conde and his command.

/s/ Paul W. Baade
/t/ PAUL W. BAADE
Major General, U S A
Commanding

Certified True Copy:


JULIAN H. HYMAN
1st Lt., Inf. (Armed)

EXTRIP "A"