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HEADQUARTERS
737th Tank Battalion
APO 436

1 April 45

SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy Report, After After Action.

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

1. General Summary:

During the month of March the tanks supported the spectacular advance of the 5th Infantry Division from Bitburg across the Kyll River (1-6 March) and northeast along the north bank of the Moselle River (7-13 March), crossing the Moselle River north of Cochem (L593720). After supporting the infantry in securing a bridgehead and having the 4th Armored Division pass through (14-15 March), the tank-infantry team moved southeast eliminating pockets of resistance and then relieved the 4th Armored Division in their bridgehead south of the Nahe River (16-19 March). The tank-infantry team then moved east, clearing all enemy within their zone east of the Rhine River (20-22 March). On 23 March the tanks were ferried across the Rhine River and supported the infantry in driving the enemy back across the Main River (24-26 March) and the month's action was culminated with the capture of the important city of Frankfurt (29 March).

2. Assignments and Attachments:

a. Battalion remained assigned to XII Corps (Ltr Hq TUSA, File No. 322, GFMCC, Subject: Troop Assignment A-23, dtd 13 Aug 44) until 28 March when assigned to XX Corps (VOCG TUSA) and remained attached to the 5th Infantry Division (Ltr Hq XII Corps File No. AG 322(G-3), Subject: Troop Assignment A-17, dtd 29 Dec 44 and VOCG XX Corps.)

b. The Units were attached as follows:

- (1) A Co: Attached to 11th Inf. Regt. on the following dates:
1-21 March; 22-29 March; 31 March.
- (2) B Co: Attached to 10th Inf. Regt. 1-5 March; 11-21 March;
22-29 March; 31 March.
- (3) C Co: Attached to 2d Inf. Regt. 11-21 March; 24-29 March; 31 March.
- (4) D Co: Attached to 2d Inf. Regt. 19-21 March (1 platoon only),
25 March. Attached 10th Inf. Regt. 16-19 March; 25-29 March;
31 March. Attached 11th Inf. Regt. (-1 platoon) 19-21 March.
- (5) Assault Gun Platoon: Attached as follows:
10th Inf. Regt. 16-19 March; 31 March.
- (6) Bn (-A Co) attached 2d Inf. Regt 5-11 March.

c. Elements of 748th Tank Battalion attached to 737th Tank Bn. and in turn attached to A Co. 22-24 March.

3. Operations:

1 March: The battalion held its positions. Co A at Bitburg (L132535), B Co at Rohl (L173495), C Co, CP Sulm (L166475), 1st platoon Idenheim (L164450), 2d Platoon Dahlem (181469), D Co at Halsdorf (L023487), Serv Co and AGs Stocken (031487). Bn Hq Bettingen (L040501).

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3. Operations (continued)

2 March: Held positions on high ground overlooking West bank of Kyll River and reconnoitered positions to support crossing of Kyll River by 5th Infantry Division. At 2200 hours 4 rocket tanks (3 B Co and 1 C Co) moved to (L165515), fired at 2345. Two platoons C Co went into position vicinity of Idenheim and performed secondary tank mission of indirect fire, firing 5 missions and expending 200 rounds. 4 rocket tanks of A Co supported crossing 10th Infantry Regiment. Assault Gun Platoon fired reinforcing fire for 19th FA Bn. positions at (L165525), firing 77 rounds.

3 March: Two platoons A Co moved into position on the high ground West of Kyll River and supported infantry with direct fire. One tank hit in suspension system. One B Co tank moved into position along west bank of Kyll River and supported advance of infantry in zone by direct fire missions. C Co two platoons continued indirect fire missions from Idenheim, fired 5 missions, expending 177 rounds.

4 March: A Co crossed Kyll River and supported 3d Bn in attack on Badem (192565) against very stiff opposition. The town was captured by 1330 hours. Two German Mk IV Tanks were captured intact, the motor was still running in one of the tanks, and 4 Mk V tanks were destroyed and 118 PWs were taken out of the town. One of our tanks was knocked out. The 1st platoon supported the 2d Bn in capturing and securing the town of Erdorf (L166564), after subduing very heavy enemy resistance. B Co, supporting the 3d Bn advancing in the direction of Dudeldorf (L214534), met extremely heavy resistance from anti-tank fire. 5 tanks destroyed. C Co and Assault Guns not committed. Bn Hq moved to Bitburg (L149539).

5 March: The Battalion (-A Co) prepared to support 2d Inf in coordinated attack of XII Corps to East. After assembling at Metterich (L179539) at 0200 hours the 1st platoon of A Co moved out with L Co toward Orsfield (L204593), where contact was made with the 80th Infantry Division and defensive positions were taken for the night. The balance of the company held their positions at Metterich.

6 March: A combat team consisting of the 2d Inf Regt. and attached units, including this battalion minus A Co., passed through the Kyll River bridgehead and attacked to the East. C Co led Serial #1 with 1st Bn., 2d Inf. moved into position East of Bitburg at 0600. Company in advance guard led by 5th Div Rcn., jumped off at 0900 hours, crossed the Kyll River at Huttingen (L177527) advanced against light to moderate resistance through Gondorf (L1752), Dudeldorf (L2153), Ordorf (L2153), Pickliessen (L2255), Gindorf (L2157), Oberkail (L2460) and continued to west bank of Bier River (L258607) where positions were taken for the night. B Co picked up the 2d Serial at Dudeldorf and led the 2d Serial over the same route. The tanks encountered SP fire west of Oberkail. D Co followed B Co. Assault Guns moved with 1st Serial to position E of Oberkail where they took up firing positions and fired reinforcing fire.

Bn Hq moved with 3d Serial from Bitburg to Oberkail. Bn trains moved with 2d Inf trains to Ginsdorf.

The 1st platoon of A Co., with Co L at 0900 hours attacked Kyllburg (L183609) and then at 1030 hours returned to Orsfield and at 1330 hours rejoined the company at Metterich. At 1000 hours the 2d platoon supported the 2d battalion in clearing the town of Etteldorf (L168597) and Welsecker (L174593). 10 PWs, including 1 officer were captured.

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3. Operations (continued):

7 March: The 1st Bn of 10th Inf was motorized and the 1st platoon of A Co supported the advance to the northeast to Daun (L355778). The balance of the company held positions at Metterich.

B Co, supporting the 3d Bn., cleared the woods North and East of Grandsdorf (L252580), and captured the town. The tanks outposted the town for the night.

1 platoon, C Co. supported the 2d Bn in capturing Schwarzenborn (L267605). Remainder of Co held positions vicinity Oberkail.

During the early morning the enemy attempted to counterattack Schwarzenborn. The attack was stopped by artillery. The AGs expended 193 rounds in reinforcing fire. The trains moved to Pickliessen.

8 March: A Co with the 11th Inf. followed in the wake of the 4th Armored Division and cleaned up pockets left by the Armored Division.

B Co assembled at Hof Gelsdorf (234512) at 0600 hours and later in the day moved to Oberkail where positions were held.

C Co with mounted infantry, attacked through woods toward Manderscheid (L340664), and overran 4 road blocks. Darkness halted operations and tanks held positions in woods at (L295020).

D Co held its position at Oberkail.

Assault Guns moved to the vicinity of Schwarzenborn where the positions they took up were then the most forward artillery positions. The trains moved to Ginsdorf.

9 March: The 2d Inf Regt formed a task force, consisting of the 2d Bn., D Co and Assault Gun Platoon of this Bn., Cannon Co., 1 platoon of 7th Engineers and the 5th Rcn Troop (-1 platoon), known as Task Force Graham. The Task force jumped off at 0800 hours and advanced against light opposition through Steinborn (L208637), Wallernborn (L275734), Oberstadtfeld (310757), Udersdorf (L334733) and Bleckhausen (L315700). Just north of Manderscheid (L340664) enemy armor was encountered. Three light tanks were destroyed and 1 Assault Gun was disabled. A German Jag Panther was destroyed and its entire crew killed. After this resistance was overcome the Task Force captured Manderscheid and then proceeded to Ulmen (L401792).

B Co held their positions at Oberkail.

Two platoons of A Co moved to Darscheid (L398745) and took up positions for perimeter defense of town.

C Co with the troops of the 1st Bn mounted on the tanks jumped off at 0600 hours and continued the attack to the south. The advance was delayed by blown bridge and cratered roads. Positions were held for the night in Udersdorf.

Trains moved to Kaiserich (L577811).

10 March: TF Graham continued the attack to the south, advancing through Sesterbach, and Landkern (583774) and after overcoming stiff opposition occupied the objective, the high ground about 1000 meters north of Cochem (L593720). The town was captured by 1300 hours. Defensive positions were taken and the Assault Guns fired on houses, enemy vehicles and personnel on the south bank of the Moselle. D Co assembled at 2100 hours just north of the town and the Assault Guns assembled at the same time in an area northwest of Landkern (L582775).

A Co, the 1st platoon with the 1st battalion, moved to Mertloch (L696857) and the 3d platoon with the 1st Bn, moved to Forst (L655800), where each platoon took up defensive positions prepared to repulse possible enemy counterattack.



10 March (continued): C Co with troops of the 1st Bn mounted on the tanks continued the attack at 0630 hours against light opposition and captured Gillenfeld (L405702) by 1030 hours. One section then moved to Strehm (L418683) with mission of guarding bridge. Bn Hq moved to Landkern (L583774).

11 March: A Co, less one platoon, assembled at Hambuch (L605809) while the 1st platoon held its positions at Mertloch. B Co assembled at Illerich (L603780). One section, 3d platoon C Co, with 1 platoon of Rcn troops and 1 platoon of infantry cleared the towns of Oberwinkel (L434722), Niederwinkel (L444732) and Dmerath (L444705) with little opposition and took many prisoners. One section held positions in Strehm, one section capturing bridge at (L469706), while balance of company remained at Gillenfeld. Bn Hq moved to Illerich.

12 March: A Co performed maintenance at Hambuch. B Co moved to Haurerth (L548839), performed maintenance and prepared to support 3d Bn in attack to south. C Co, less the 3d platoon, with troops of the 3d Bn riding the tanks, assembled at Greinersberg (L57476) and advanced through Landkern, to Kail (L648761) to Breiden (L662768) arriving at Breiden at 1415 hours. Tanks then moved south to the Moselle River in support of 11th Inf Regt and fired direct fire on targets of opportunity along the south bank of the river. The tanks then assembled at Brieden. One gun of the Assault Gun platoon took up a position on the north bank of the Moselle River vicinity of Cochem and fired 54 rounds at targets of opportunity along the south bank of the river. D Co moved to Hambuch.

13 March: All units held their positions except two platoons of A Co, which moved to Montenich (L688804), performed maintenance and coordinated plans for supporting attack of 5th Inf Div to the south. 1st Lt. Nicholas G. Maslikea assumed command of B Co.

14 March: The 5th Inf Div jumped off at 0200 hours to cross the Moselle River and attack to the south. Companies stood by prepared to cross the river when bridge completed. Two platoons of C Co in support of 2d Inf from positions at (L640770) and one platoon in Garden fired neutralizing and direct fire missions at targets of opportunity.

15 March: A Co crossed Moselle River before dawn and supported the 2d Bn in capturing the town of Lieg (L723713). Very heavy resistance was met in capturing the high ground to the southeast. Three 88mm dual-purpose guns camouflaged in haystacks and 2 self-propelled vehicles fired direct fire on the advancing tanks. Three of our tanks were destroyed. The objective was taken by 1800. A total of 9 enemy 88mm guns were destroyed. B and D Companies prepared to advance with the 10th Inf Regt. C Co crossed the Moselle River shortly after midnight. The 1st platoon supported the 2d Bn in the attack to the south, advancing to the vicinity of (L695696). The 2d platoon supported the 2d Bn in advancing to the vicinity of (L665682).

16 March: A Co continued to support the 2d Bn advancing through Lahr (L736696), Zilshausen (L748683), Kerweiler (L772677), Uhler (L784655) and Hasselbach (L793603) clearing all enemy along route of advance.

Task Force Breckenridge, consisting of the 10th Inf Regt, less 1 Bn, companies B and D and the Assault Gun Platoon, a field artillery battalion plus one battery, a reconnaissance troop, a company of tank destroyers and a tank destroyer reconnaissance company moved at 1300 to assembly area south of Moselle River in the vicinity of Mitl Striming (L680660). B Co outposted Reidenhalzer (L700620).



21 March: Assault Gun platoon and D Co (-1 platoon) joined A Co at Wbrstadt. At about 1630 the tanks assembled vicinity of Spiesheim (M282348) and with infantrymen of the 2d Bn riding the rear decks, advanced to Dalheim (M403365), where the infantry was dropped off and the tanks then assembled at Schornsheim (M315387). C Co and 1 platoon D Co assembled at Heimersheim (M252295). Bn Hq and Service Co moved to Lonsheim (M248308). B Co supported the 1st Bn in clearing the towns of Gundersheim (M377217), Bernersheim (M351200), Gindheim (M360194) and Morstadt (M373183), which had been by-passed by the 4th Armored Div. In the afternoon the tanks moved into Worms to support the 3d Bn in the mopping up operations.

22 March: A and D Cos assembled at Bernersheim (M261311). B Co carried infantry from Worms to Wintersheim and then assembled at Heimersheim. The Co then reassembled at Dalheim, prepared to support 10th Inf Regt in crossing the Rhine River.

23 March: A Co tanks commenced crossing the Rhine River by ferry at 1200A hours and supported the 1st Bn in securing and expanding the bridgehead, advancing to the east of Wallerstadten (M515452) where positions were taken for the night. The company trains crossed Rhine River during the evening and assembled at Geinsheim (M473425). While enroute to Geinsheim the trains were strafed by enemy aircraft. A Co, tank commanded by 1st Lt. Langdon Smith, O1018041, and the following crew: Tec 4 Ottis L. Byrnes, 37438743, Cpl James A. Kimbrell, 34603869, Pfc John H. Metley, 34604053, and Pvt. Blair M. Muth, 3376499, was the first tank of the Third United States Army to cross the Rhine.

All combat elements of B Co crossed Rhine River by 1600A hours and supported 1st Bn advancing to Dornheim (M535422), where positions were taken for the night.

C Co assembled at Schwabsburg (M413407) and all combat units crossed the Rhine River by 2000A hours. The company was split into two platoons. One platoon moved with the 3d Bn to Trebur (M483475) where they relieved elements of the 11th Inf Regt and the other platoon moved with the 1st Bn to Astheim (M464485). Several strong counterattacks were repelled during the night. One of our tanks was disabled by bazooka fire.

8 tanks of the 748th Tank Bn were attached to A Co. 28 of our tanks crossed into the bridgehead during the day.

24 March: The 1st and 2d platoons of A Co supported the 2d Bn in clearing the woods at (M535455) and then attacked the city of Gross Geran (M5347) and by 1830 the city was cleared and the tanks took up defensive positions. One AT gun, an armored car and a nebelwerfer were known to be destroyed. B Co jumped off in the morning with the 1st Bn and assisted in capturing Berkach (M537447) and in the afternoon moved with the 3d Bn in capturing Nauheim (M513496). One platoon of C Co attacked Bausheim (M460515) while the other platoon cleared the woods to the north and northeast.

25 March: A Co moved with the 2d Bn, clearing the woods and capturing Merefelden (M596535). The 3d platoon B Co moved to Konigstadten (M512518) at 0600A hours and outposted the roads leading to the town for the 2d Bn. The balance of the company supported the 3d Bn in the attack to the north, capturing Hassloch (M518542), where the tanks outposted the town. C Co with 2 platoons supported the 2d Bn in clearing and capturing Bischofsheim (M445545) and supported the 1st Bn in clearing Ginsheim (M448520) and Gustavsburg (M416555). After capturing the towns, the tanks continued the attack in clearing the south bank of the Main River in zone. D Co crossed the Rhine River at 0545, moved north, joined the 3d Bn in capturing Busselheim (M513575) where they then took up defensive positions.

(Action Against Enemy Report, After After Action.)
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26 March: A Co held their positions in Merfelden. B Co jumped off at 0700A hours supporting the 2d Bn in clearing the woods vicinity (M560603), in capturing Kelsterbach (M560605) and in clearing all enemy along the south bank of the Main River in zone. C Co held its positions during the day and during the evening assembled vicinity (M663661). D Co supported the 1st Bn in clearing woods (Menschwald), capturing the airport (M600600) and Schwanheim (M605655). Bn Hq and Service Co moved to Astheim.

27 March: All line companies assembled in towns south of Main River prepared to cross river upon completion of a bridge and support their respective combat teams in capturing the city of Frankfurt. Battalion headquarters moved to Merfelden.

28 March: C Co crossed Main River on bailey bridge at 2330 and assembled in Frankfurt prepared to support 2d Inf in mopping up operations. Balance of companies held their positions awaiting to cross River. Service Company moved to woods (M645637).

29 March: All of the companies crossed the Main River and supported infantry in mopping up. Bn Hq moved to Frankfurt.

30-31 March: Companies held their positions and performed necessary maintenance on their equipment.

4. Results of Operations:

The tanks of the battalion, battling under fair skies and good tank terrain substantially aided the 130 mile advance of the 5th Infantry Division from Bitburg to Frankfurt. Enemy resistance varied from almost fanatical opposition to a negligible struggle. A vast amount of enemy equipment was destroyed and captured. At least 10 enemy tanks were destroyed and others damaged; many trucks were destroyed, more than 12 dual purpose 88mm guns fell prey to the tanks, a great many nebelwerfers were overrun and destroyed, several batteries of 75mm AT guns were silenced forever, 6 German tanks were captured intact, and undetermined number of the enemy were killed and the capture of a great many prisoners was directly attributable to the action of the tanks. Five major rivers, the Kyll, the Moselle, the Nabe, the Rhine and the Main were crossed. The tanks of the Third United States Army first to cross the Rhine were those of this battalion. Ten medium tanks were destroyed by anti-tank fire, one medium tank was hit by a panzerfaust and burned, one Assault gun was hit in the suspension system and 3 light tanks were hit by anti-tank fire and burned. Two officers and eleven enlisted men were killed, four enlisted men are missing in action. One officer and twenty-three enlisted men were evacuated as combat casualties.

For the Battalion Commander:

JAMES I. WICKENS
Maj., Cav (Armd)
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Incl: Unit Journal.

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HEADQUARTERS
737th Tank Battalion
APO 486

2 May 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against enemy, After After Action Report.

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

1. Transmitted herewith Action Against Enemy, After After Action Report for month of April, 1945.

For the Battalion Commander:

LEONARD M. SHAWLER
1st Lt., Inf. (Armd)
Adjutant

Incls: 5

- Incl. #1 - Action Against Enemy, After After Action Report.
- #2 - Original Unit Journal.
- #3 - Operations Instructions No. 1
- #4 - Operations Instructions No. 2
- #5 - Operations Instructions No. 3

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