

UNCLASSIFIED

AAR# 457 R

847.17

AFTER ACTION REPORT

636TH TD BATTALION

Sept.
~~SEPTEMBER~~ 1943 thru *Sept* ~~DECEMBER~~ 1944, Dec 44

Classification cancelled or changed to **UNCLASSIFIED**
by authority of ~~DAD...DIR...5200.9~~, by **JOHN L. GRANT**
on....., 19.....
Captain, Armor
Ch. Secty & Dgt Branch

9 JUN 1959

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SECRET

24 September 1943
AFO 306

REPORT OF COMBAT, 636th TD Battalion
Operation - Avalanche
Period Sept 1, 1943 to 0800 Sept 20, 1943.

CALENDAR EVENTS:

September 1: At 0030 hours the S-1 was ordered to report to Headquarters Sixth Corps Staging Area and there receive orders for embarkation that morning. Details to ride the Hugh Williamson and David Caldwell were to entruck at 0630, those riding the James Woodrow were to entruck at 0915, and those riding the Duchess of Bedford entruck at 1130. The Battalion was loaded in that manner on the morning of September 1, 1943 and that afternoon moved out into the Gulf of Oran to await the loading of the remainder of the convoy.

September 2: The Battalion layed at anchor in the Gulf of Oran.

September 3: The convoy left the Gulf of Oran at 1515 hours proceeding eastward along the north coast of Africa.

September 6: The convoy arrived at the harbor of Bizerte, Tunisia at 1200 hours. During a forty-five minute attack by enemy planes starting at 2100 hours three men were wounded necessitating their evacuation.

September 9: The convoy left the harbor of Bizerte at 1200 hours.

September 10: At 0820 hours depth charges were dropped by one of the British Corvettes off our starboard bow. Later it was reported that one German submarine had been sunk. At dusk on the same day, a Corvette and two destroyers dropped fourteen depth charges about 1000 yards to our starboard. No report of results was received.

September 11: At 0900 hours our convoy approached the Gulf of Salerno and at 0930 hours there was an enemy air attack during which an American cruiser was hit and damaged. There were repeated air attacks during the day and night.

September 12: The air attacks continued. About half the Battalion succeeded in debarking on the beach at Paestum and moved into an assembly area about five miles from the beach ((26.7-08.0) Sheet 2094 Map 1:50,000). At 1000 the Battalion Commander received orders to make a reconnaissance for our first combat mission and the reconnaissance was completed that afternoon.

September 13: At 0700 the Battalion Commander formed a provisional company composed of twelve M-10's to carry out plans made during the previous night. At 2130 the Battalion Commander and the S-3 left the assembly area and moved with twelve destroyers to the combat area. The Battalion was notified at 1530 that a tank attack was expected south of Persano at the junction of the Calore River and F. La Cosa Creek and appropriate positions were taken. At 1930 the ranger platoon reconnoitered and occupied positions on the bank of F. La Cosa Creek. Sgt Garland G. Humphrey of Company B was killed at 2000 by bomb fragments during an air raid and Pvt Joseph D. Ventresca, Company B, was seriously wounded by strafing. During the 13th the ships continued to unload and twelve more destroyers were ready for action by the following morning.

September 14: At 0030 the Battalion Commander was apprised of a dangerous situation and the twelve M-10's which were received from the ships the previous day were assigned a sector about 1500 yards in width and at 0130 they were guided to their positions. During most of the day the Battalion was under considerable artillery fire and some small arms fire. Company B knocked out seven tanks during the day and Company C destroyed seven tanks. Company C also destroyed one ammunition vehicle. Pvt 1 of Salvatore V. Vinci, Company C, was killed. Ten destroyers from various companies which had been unloaded from the ships were given the mission of guarding the Fifth Army Headquarters.

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September 15: The enemy shelled our positions selected the previous day with ~~the same intensity~~ ~~to the front~~. A number of enemy tanks were reported to be opposite our position across the F. La Cosa Creek and the Battalion fired indirect fire for a considerable period. Our forward observers reported a direct hit on one of the enemy tanks which burst into flames. Artillery fire continued to fall on our positions throughout the day.

September 16: The enemy shelling of our positions continued and Company B fired an indirect fire mission on Persano. During the afternoon a B Company destroyer was struck by enemy fire and began to burn. The fire was extinguished by the Platoon Commander and the Platoon Sergeant before any serious damage resulted and the destroyer was put back in action in a short time.

September 17: At 0100 our intelligence reported a dawn attack by the enemy was imminent. All destroyer crews were alerted and plans made to mass fire on the enemy. Our destroyers were to coordinate their fire with that of the 645th TD Bn. The anticipated attack by the enemy was never launched.

September 18: During the morning of September 18th patrol activity continued by our Reconnaissance Company and the Battalion fired some indirect fire missions with the targets in and near Persano. That afternoon the Battalion Commander led certain elements of the Reconnaissance Company into Altavilla, on a reconnaissance mission for the Division Commander. No enemy resistance was met and the Battalion Commander reported to the Division Commander that it was safe to move troops into the town. Two German Prisoners were taken by our Reconnaissance Company.

September 19: On the morning of September 19th the Battalion Commander led elements of the Reconnaissance Company on a reconnaissance of the area in and around Persano. No enemy resistance was found in this area and the Division Commander was notified that troops could safely be moved into this area. During the night of September 19th and 20th six destroyers of Company C were moved to positions back of the 141st Infantry to support them. (see overlay)

September 20: At 0100 Company C was assigned to Fifth Army as security for the Fifth Army Headquarters and the remainder of the Battalion was detached from the 36th Division and assigned as Corps troops in Corps reserve.

MAP REFERENCE: Italy, 1:50,000.

Attached Annexes:

1. Overlay of positions.
2. Copy of Unit Journal.
3. Personnel casualties during period of battle.
4. Vehicular casualties during period of battle.
5. Enemy casualties caused by 636th TD Bn during period of battle.
6. Recommendations for awards.

For the Battalion Commander:

REAGAN L. DUNCAN
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

OFFICIAL:

Reagan L. Duncan
REAGAN L. DUNCAN
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

SECRET

ANNEX NO. 3

CASUALTY REPORT

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

9 September 1943

WOUNDED

M Sgt Robert H. Hamilton, 20814478, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel.

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

21 September 1943

WOUNDED

Pvt Raymond M. Rand, 32397184, - Seriously wounded by mine explosion.

COMPANY "A"

9 September 1943

WOUNDED

Techn 4th Gr Henry (HEN) Royuk, 37146944, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel in right leg.

Techn 5th Gr Charles W. Trumbo, 15116060, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel in right leg.

14 September 1943

Sgt Roy A. Adams, 38038261, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel.

Techn 4th Gr Lynn E. Mills, 20816096, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel.

Pvt 1 cl Frank (FR) Hesiba, 37145563, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel.

COMPANY "D"

13 September 1943

KILLED

Sgt Garland G. Humphrey, 38037442, - Shrapnel from enemy bomb.

14 September 1943

WOUNDED

Pvt Joseph D. Ventresca, 31257416, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel in left foot.

19 September 1943

Pvt Louis (LO) Filoteo, 38024388, - Slightly wounded in chest by vehicle while in foxhole.

COMPANY "C"

14 September 1943

KILLED

Techn 4th Gr George A. Walter, 38034003, - Killed by shrapnel.

Pvt 1 cl Salvatore V. Vinci, 38209832, - Killed by enemy strafing from the air.

14 September 1943

WOUNDED

Pvt 1 cl Earl A. Surgeon, 38504246, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel.

19 September 1943

WOUNDED

Sgt Sgt Raymond G. Murphy, 38002898, - Slightly wounded in vehicle accident.

Pvt 1 cl Francis A. Murphy, 32379036, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel.

19 September 1943

Sgt William A. Jones, 38025096, - Slightly wounded by shrapnel.

ANNEX NO. 3

Page 1

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ANNEX NO. 4

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VEHICLE CASUALTY REPORT

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPANY</u>	<u>VEHICLE</u>	<u>TROUBLE</u>	<u>WHERE REPAIRED</u>	<u>BACK TO DUTY</u>
9/13/43	B	M-10	Track Thrown	Battalion Maintenance	9/13/43
9/13/43	B	M-10	Track Thrown	Battalion Maintenance	9/13/43
9/14/43	Hq	Half-Track	Track Thrown	Under Fire	9/14/43
9/14/43	O	M-10	Escape Hatch	Under Fire	9/16/43
9/14/43	Hq	3/4 Weapons Carrier	Burned	Replaced	9/15/43
9/15/43	O	M-10	Escape Hatch	Battalion Maintenance	9/16/43
9/15/43	Hq	2 1/2 Ton	Broken Axle	706th Ordnance	9/16/43
9/16/43	O	M-10	Damaged by shell fire	Battalion Maintenance	9/17/43
9/17/43	O	M-10	Motor Trouble	Battalion Maintenance	9/18/43

ANNEX NO. 4

ANNEX NO. 5

DAMAGE TO

DATE

COMPANY

9/14/43

B

Destroyed seven Mark IV Tanks

9/14/43

C

Destroyed seven Mark IV Tanks
Destroyed 1 Ammunition Vehicle

9/15/43

B

Destroyed 1 Mark IV Tank

ANNEX NO. 5

11/11

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #306, U. S. ARMY

24 September 1943

Subject: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star.

To : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #474, U.S. Army. (Thru Channels)

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star be awarded the following named enlisted man: EDWIN A. YOST, 37146627, Sergeant, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion

2. During the day of September 14, 1943, Sergeant Yost, destroyer commander, moved his destroyer to a position under direct fire of enemy tanks and small arms. From that position, the tank destroyer crew destroyed five enemy tanks and one ammunition truck by firing only six rounds of ammunition. In so doing, a grave menace to the safety of American troops was removed. Sergeant Yost's quick thinking and speedy action in causing the tank destroyer to be moved into the open in the face of such odds was a display of courage and determination and was an inspiration to the men under his command. His actions reflect the finest traditions of the Armed Forces and were above and beyond the call of duty.

3. Sergeant Yost, at the time of the action described, was a tank destroyer commander, 2nd Platoon, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion. The undersigned was present during the action described and certifies that he was an eye witness to the heroic accomplishment.

4. Sergeant Yost is at present tank destroyer commander, in the 2nd Platoon, Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

5. Sergeant Yost's entire service from the time he was inducted into Federal Service, February 24, 1942, to the present time, has been honorable. Present address, and address at the time of induction; Gorham, Kansas.

VAN W. BELAND
Lt. Col, Infantry
Commanding

SECRET
HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #306, U. S. Army

24 September 1943

Subject: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star.

To : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #474, U. S. Army. (Thru Channels)

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star be awarded the following named enlisted man: ALVIN B.Q. JOHNSON, 20805648, Technician 5th Grade, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.
2. During the day of September 14, 1943, Technician 5th Grade Johnson, gunner in a tank destroyer, assisted in moving his destroyer to a position under direct fire of enemy tanks and small arms. From that position he destroyed five enemy tanks and one ammunition truck by firing only six rounds of ammunition. In so doing a grave menace to the safety of American troops was removed. His quick thinking and speedy action in destroying the enemy tanks was a display of courage and determination that reflects the finest traditions of the Armed Forces, and were above and beyond the call of duty.
3. Technician 5th Grade Johnson, at the time of the action described was assigned as gunner in a tank destroyer of the 2nd Platoon, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.
4. Technician 5th Grade Johnson, is at present assigned as gunner in Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.
5. Technician 5th Grade Johnson's entire service from the time he was inducted into the Federal Service with the Texas National Guard, November 25, 1940 to the present time, has been honorable. Present home address, and address at the time of induction: Route #2, Granbury, Texas.

VAN W. PYLAND
Lt. Col, Infantry
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #306, U. S. Army

24 September 1943

Subject: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star.

To : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #474, U. S. Army (Thru Channel)

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star be awarded the following named enlisted man: JOSE H R. O'BRYAN, 15484531, Private 1st, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

2. During the day of September 14, 1943, Private 1st O'Bryan, driver of a tank destroyer, caused his destroyer to be moved to a position under direct fire of enemy tanks and small arms. From that position the tank destroyer crew destroyed five enemy tanks and one ammunition truck by firing only six rounds of ammunition. Private 1st O'Bryan's quick thinking and speedy action in causing the tank destroyer to be moved in the open in the face of such odds, was display of courage and determination which reflect the finest traditions of the Armed Forces and were above and beyond the call of duty.

3. Private 1st O'Bryan at the time of action described, was a driver of a tank destroyer, of the 2nd Platoon, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

4. Private 1st O'Bryan is at present a driver of a tank destroyer in Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

5. Private 1st O'Bryan's entire service from the time he was inducted into the Federal Service on July 15, 1942, to the present time, has been honorable. Present address and address at time of induction: Route #1, New Haven, Kentucky.

COPY
VAN W. PYLAND
Lt. Col., Infantry
Commanding

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**HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #306, U. S. ARMY**

24 September 1943

Subject: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star.

To : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #474, U.S. Army (Thru Channels)

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star be awarded the following named enlisted man: CLAUDE H. STOKES, 30463151, Private, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

2. During the day of September 14, 1943, Private Stokes, assistant gunner in a tank destroyer, assisted in moving the destroyer to a position under direct fire of enemy tanks and small arms. From that position the tank destroyer crew destroyed five enemy tanks and one ammunition truck by firing only six rounds of ammunition. In so doing, a grave menace to the safety of American troops was removed. Private Stokes' quick thinking and speedy action in causing the tank destroyer to be moved into the open in the face of such odds was display of courage and determination which reflects the finest traditions of the Armed Forces and were above and beyond the call of duty.

3. Private Stokes is at present an assistant gunner in a tank destroyer in the second platoon, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

4. At the time of the action described, Private Stokes, was assigned as assistant gunner in the 2nd platoon, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

5. Private Stokes' entire service from the time he was inducted into the Federal Service January 14, 1943, to the present time, has been honorable. His home address at present and at time of induction: Route #1, McAlester, Oklahoma.

VAN S. FYLAND
Lt. Col, Infantry
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #306, U. S. Army

24 September 1943

Subject: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star.

To : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #174, U.S. Army (Through Channels)

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star be awarded the following named enlisted man: **CLYDE T. STOKES**, 33463140, Private, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

2. During the day of September 11, 1943, Private Stokes, ammunition passer on a tank destroyer, assisted in moving the destroyer to a position under direct fire of enemy tanks and small arms. From that position the tank destroyer crew destroyed five enemy tanks and one ammunition truck by firing only six rounds of ammunition. In so doing, a grave menace to the safety of American troops was removed. Private Stokes's quick thinking and speedy action causing the tank destroyer to be moved into the open in the face of such odds, was a display of courage and determination which reflects the finest traditions of the Armed Forces and were above and beyond the call of duty.

3. Private Stokes, at the time of the action described was assigned as ammunition passer on a tank destroyer in the 2nd Platoon, Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

4. Private Stokes is at present assigned as ammunition passer on a tank destroyer in Co "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

5. Private Stokes's entire service from the time he was inducted into Federal service January 11, 1943, to the present time, has been honorable. Present home address and address at time of induction: Route 1, Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

6014
J. L. YOUNG
Lt. Col., Infantry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #306, U. S. Army

AG 200

24 September 1943

SUBJECT: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star.

TO : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #474 U. S. Army (Thru Channels)

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star be awarded the following named enlisted man: Oscar G. Sparks, 38035702, Staff Sergeant, Company "B", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.
2. On the afternoon of September 16, 1943 during heavy fighting, an M-10 Tank Destroyer of Company "C" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion was struck by fragments from an enemy shell igniting the destroyer and causing the crew to abandon it. Staff Sergeant Sparks, Company "B" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion accompanied by two other men, ran to the destroyer and in the face of heavy small arms and artillery fire, shoveled dirt on to the burning vehicle which was fully loaded with oil and ammunition, and by his action displayed unusual courage and utter disregard for his own safety. This prompt action above and beyond the call of duty, save a valuable piece of equipment much needed by our troops, prevented serious damage and permitted it to be placed back in use the same day. His courage and gallantry were an inspiration to his command and reflects the finest traditions of the Armed Forces.
3. Staff Sergeant Spark's Platoon was a part of Company "B" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion. The undersigned certifies that he was an eye witness to the heroic accomplishment.
4. Staff Sergeant Sparks is at present Platoon Sergeant, 1st Platoon, Company "B" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and was at the time of the action described. Staff Sergeant Sparks' entire service from the time he was inducted into Federal Service January 15, 1941 has been honorable. Home address at time of induction and at present: 139 West Illinois Street, Dallas, Texas.

JOHN S. BODENMILLER
Capt., 636th TD Bn.
Commanding Co. B.

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #386, U. S. Army

24 September 1943

Subject: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star and Citation.

To : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #474, U.S. Army. (Thru Channels)

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star and a Citation be awarded the following named enlisted man: Raymond G. Murphy, 20802898, Staff Sergeant, Company "O" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

2. During the day of September 14, 1943, Sergeant Murphy, seeing a number of enemy tanks, caused his destroyers to be moved by his crew, to a position under direct fire of enemy tanks and small arms. From that position, the tank destroyer crew destroyed five enemy tanks and one ammunition truck by firing only six rounds of ammunition. In so doing, a grave menace to the safety of American troops was removed. Sergeant Murphy's quick thinking and speedy action in causing the tank destroyer to be moved into the open in the face of such odds was a display of courage and determination and was an inspiration to the men under his command. His actions reflect the finest traditions of the Armed Forces and were above and beyond the call of duty.

3. Sergeant Murphy, at the time of the action described was Acting Section Sergeant, 2nd Platoon, Company "O" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion. The undersigned was present during the action described, and certifies that he was an eye witness to the heroic accomplishment.

4. Sergeant Murphy is at present Motor Sergeant, Company "O" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

5. Sergeant Murphy's entire service from the time he was inducted into Federal Service with the Texas National Guard, November 23, 1940, to the present time, has been honorable. Home address at time of induction: 512 East Nevada Street, El Paso, Texas. Present Home address: 277 Park Street, Jacksonville, Florida.

VAN W. PYLAND
Lt. Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #306, U. S. Army

24 September 1943

AG 200

SUBJECT: Recommendation for the award of the Silver Star.

TO : The Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO #74, U. S. Army (Thru Channels).

1. It is recommended that the Silver Star be awarded the following named enlisted man: ROBERT L. DODSON, 20617189, Staff Sergeant, Company "D", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

2. On the afternoon of September 16, 1943, during heavy fighting in M-10 Tank Destroyer of Company "C", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion was struck by fragments from an enemy shell, igniting the destroyer and causing the crew to abandon it. Staff Sergeant Dodson, accompanied by two other men ran to the destroyer and in the face of heavy small arms and artillery fire, shoveled dirt on to the burning vehicle which was fully loaded with oil and ammunition and by his actions displayed unusual courage and utter disregard to his own safety. This prompt action above and beyond the call of duty saved a valuable piece of equipment much needed by our troops, prevented serious damage and ~~and~~ permitted it to be placed back in use the same day. His courage and gallantry were an inspiration to his command and reflects the finest traditions of the Armed Forces.

3. Staff Sergeant Dodson's Platoon was part of Company "D", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion. The undersigned certifies that he was an eye witness to the heroic accomplishment.

4. Staff Sergeant Dodson is at present Platoon Sergeant, 2nd Platoon, Company "D" 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and was at the time of the action described. Staff Sergeant Dodson's entire service from the time he was inducted into Federal Service with the Texas National Guard, November 25, 1940 has been honorable. Home address at time of induction and at present: 608 North Jefferson Street, Beeville, Texas.

J. H. S. RODEWILLER
Captain, 636th TD Bn
Comdg Co "D"

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Kdy.
12 February 1944

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HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 36, U. S. ARMY

RESTRICTED

OPERATIONS IN ITALY
Dec 43 - JANUARY 1944

94-682

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ANNEX # 21

636TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:	
RESTRICTED	
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL	
15 DEC 26 1944	1945
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE	

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poor quality due to
the poor quality of
the **original**.

REPORT OF HISTORICAL RECORDS, 636th TD Battalion
Period 020001 Oct 1945 to 312400 Oct 1945.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

October 1: Company "A", 636th TD Bn was detached from the Battalion and attached to VI Corps to guard VI Corps Command Post. Reconnaissance Company located a German Artillery and small arms ammunition dump and its location was reported to VI Corps. Reconnaissance movement forward was made.

October 2: Orders for movement to assembly area near Guardia Lombardi were received and road priority beginning at 0600 hours. Post 43 was given. Preparations for movement were made.

October 3: Movement of the Battalion to an assembly area near Guardia Lombardi was effected and a winter defense was established in the new area with the mission of protecting the Corps right flank.

October 4: The area on the Corps right flank was reconnoitered during the day and Destroyer positions were improved. A position for the rear echelon was selected in Guardia Lombardi and trucks were dispatched to bring the rear echelon forward. The rear echelon closed in the new location shortly after dark.

October 5: Reconnaissance of the area was continued and eighteen (18) 2 1/2 ton cargo trucks were furnished to VI Corps for hauling ammunition and equipment.

October 6: Reconnaissance work was continued and the Battalion Commander located a possible area for further displacement forward. No other activity during the day.

October 7: No activity during the morning, but an order for movement to the vicinity of S. Giorgio was received in the afternoon. A warning order was issued by the Battalion Commander.

October 8: The Battalion moved to a position near S. Giorgio and closed in the area at about 1000 hours. Reconnaissance of the area was made during the afternoon.

October 9: No activity during the 9th of October. Positions were improved.

October 10: Considerable reconnaissance by Reconnaissance Company and the staff was made and possible assembly areas in the vicinity of Monte were checked.

October 11: No activity on the 11th of October.

October 12: Liaison with the British Troops on our right flank was established and Corps Artillery Officer recommended that the Battalion be moved to the vicinity of Monte where close support of the forward elements could be made.

October 13: An order from Commanding General VI Corps to move the Battalion to vicinity of Monte on 14 October 45 was received. Reconnaissance of the area was made and the Battalion Commander issued march order for movement to start at 0600 hours the next morning.

October 14: Movement of the Battalion started on the morning of 14 October 43 as planned under the command of the Executive Officer. The Battalion Commander attended the presentation of Awards to members of Company "C" at Fifth Army Headquarters. The presentation was made by Lt General CLARK.

The Battalion closed in its new area near Ponte at 1015 hours. A new location for the rear echelon was selected and plans to move the rear echelon the following day were made.

October 15: Reconnaissance of the surrounding area was made and plans for protecting the rear of Corps were completed. The rear echelon was moved to its new location in Ponte.

October 16: Reconnaissance in the Corps area was continued and liaison was maintained with 645th TD Bn and contact made with the 45th Division.

October 17: Two platoons of Company "B" were moved to indirect firing positions in the 45th Division sector. The Ranger Platoon accompanied the "B" Company platoons. An unexploded aerial bomb was located and taped off near the rear echelon area and a report was made to Commanding General, VI Corps. In the afternoon an order was received to move the Battalion in an area near Telesse. The area was quickly reconnoitered and the Battalion was moved that evening.

October 18: An Observation Post was established from which indirect fire missions could be observed. A notice was received that General LUCA, Commanding General, VI Corps, would present decorations to Staff Sergeant JONES and Staff Sergeant PARKS of Company "B" the following day at 1100 hours.

An enemy mine field was located by the Reconnaissance Company and the mines were lifted by the Pioneer Platoon of that Organization.

A warning order for the movement to the vicinity of Ruviano was received and a route reconnaissance was made that evening.

October 19: Reconnaissance for an assembly area in the vicinity of Ruviano was made and General LUCA presented silver stars to Staff Sergeant JONES and Staff Sergeant PARKS at 1100 hours. A warning order was issued to move on the following morning, but later orders from VI Corps directed that the movement should not be made.

October 20: No activity on this date but late in the afternoon clearance was received to move the Battalion to the vicinity of Ruviano and the order previously prepared was issued.

October 21: The Battalion was moved to an assembly area near Ruviano and closed in the area at 1045 hours. Reconnaissance of the surrounding area was made and camouflage of the installations was checked.

October 22: Reconnaissance of the surrounding area was continued and liaison maintained with the forward units. Buildings for the rear echelon were selected in Ruviano.

October 23: The rear echelon was moved to Ruviano and Liaison with the 401st Tank Destroyer Battalion was established.

October 24: No activity other than reconnaissance for this date.

October 25: Word was received that Company "A" would be released from Special Duty with VI Corps and return to Battalion control. Reconnaissance was made of an area in which to assemble that company. "A" Company moved into the area selected, completing the movement at 1110 hours.

October 26: No activity other than reconnaissance.

October 27: Forward areas were reconnoitered for a contemplated movement of the Battalion. Liaison was maintained with forward units.

October 28: Additional reconnaissance was made for an assembly area in the vicinity of Pietramelara. A French Soldier, who had escaped from an enemy Prisoner of War enclosure, was brought to the Command Post and gave some information regarding German troops and gun dispositions. He was sent to VI Corps for further questioning. A request for the transfer of our Communication Officer to Fifth Army was received.

October 29: The second Platoon of Company "C", which was on duty with Fifth Army Headquarters, was ordered on Detached Service to the Anti-tank Regiment, British 7th Armored Division at Alvanova to instruct in Tank Destroyer principles, nomenclature of M-10 Tank Destroyer and Motor Carriage M-10 and the 3 inch gun. The Battalion Commander issued a warning order for movement of the Battalion to the vicinity of Riardo.

October 30: The Battalion moved to the vicinity of Riardo, establishing Headquarters just south of Pietramelara. All troops closed in the area by 1500 hours. A mined crossing was reported by an Italian Civilian and the information forwarded to Commanding General, VI Corps.

October 31: Plans were prepared for protecting the rear of the Corps and also for reinforcing either of the forward Tank Destroyer Battalions. Reconnaissance of the forward areas was made.

PAR REPORTING: Italy, 1,50,000.

Attached Annexes:

1. Copy of Unit Journal
2. Overlay of positions
3. Personnel casualties during period
4. Vehicular casualties during period
5. Enemy casualties caused by 636th TD Bn during period

For the Battalion Commander:

REAJAN L. DUBOSE
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

OFFICIAL:

Reagan L. Dubose
REAJAN L. DUBOSE
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
Office of the Battalion Commander

APC 36, U S Army
4 December 1943

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Records.

TO : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APC 36, U S Army.

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in Letter, Allied Force Headquarters, dated 20 April 1943, file AG 314.7/389 C-M, Subject: Historical Records and Histories of Organizations, transmitted herewith Operations in Italy, November 1943 of this Battalion.

2. Conclusions:

a. It is believed that where a Tank Destroyer Battalion is available for attachment to two Divisions of a Corps front that it is excellent Tank Destroyer tactics to have a third Tank Destroyer Battalion in Corps reserve maintaining utmost vigilance and aggressive reconnaissance to supplement or reinforce the fires of either of the other Battalions in the event of an armored threat to them. The most suitable location for such a reserve Battalion is near a road net which will permit rapid movement into either Division sector.

Van W. Pyland
VAN W. PYLAND
Lt Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

1 Incl:

Narrative of Operations for the month
of November, with attached annexes

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 36, U S Army

ATTN: 

2 December 1943

OPERATIONS IN ITALY, NOVEMBER 1943

During the early part of November, 1 November 1943 to 13 November 1943, this Battalion operated with the VI Corps and was in Corps Reserve near Pietramelara. On November 1, 1943, word was received that Company "C" of this organization was to be released from Special Duty guarding the Fifth Army Command Post, except for one platoon which had been assigned to instruct British Troops in the use of the M-10 Tank Destroyer. Company "C" rejoined the Battalion 3 November 1943, however, the platoon which was on duty with the British did not join the Battalion until 16 November 1943.

On November 1st, the Battalion dug into positions which they had occupied on order of the Commanding General VI Corps, in the vicinity of Riardo and Pietramelara. These positions were on the extreme left flank of VI Corps, east of the town of Teano, which was still in enemy hands. Upon the capture of Teano by the British and subsequent advance of the 3rd Division, the Battalion remained in these positions with the mission of constant reconnaissance for suitable positions to reinforce the Tank Destroyer Battalions attached to the 3rd and 45th Divisions and to continue to protect the left flank of VI Corps. Throughout this period, contact with the British X Corps was the mission assigned the Battalion.

Vigorous reconnaissance was made throughout the Corps Sector maintaining contact with forward elements of assaulting Battalions of VI Corps by the Commander and Staff of the Battalion. This reconnaissance of two division fronts for suitable positions for Tank Destroyers required long hours by all reconnaissance agencies of this unit. Intelligence reports were sent to Corps G-2 of road conditions and enemy materiel which was found in recently occupied areas. Among other items which were returned, were several anti-tank hand mines, the first discovered on the VI Corps front.

On 14 November 1943, the Battalion was assigned to the II Corps and attached to the 36th Division with orders to relieve the 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion at the same time the 36th Division relieved the 3rd Division in the Mignano Sector. Reconnaissance was immediately made for a Battalion Command Post, and a Command Post was selected near Piccilli. Positions were also selected for the Destroyer Companies from which they could relieve the Destroyer Companies of the 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion.

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Plans were prepared and submitted to the Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division for approval. These plans were approved and on 15 November 1943, relief of the 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion was begun. By 17 November 1943, the Battalion had completely closed in the 36th Division sector and liaison with the Division established.

Plans were immediately begun to support the Division Artillery with indirect fire and the Battalion Commander prepared a recommendation for an Anti-tank Plan for the Division upon the request of the Division Commander. The recommendation was adopted.

During the period 19 November 1943 to 28 November 1943, the Battalion remained in the positions selected near Mignano, fired indirect fire missions which were given by the Division Artillery, and missions located by our forward observers. Our positions were subjected to intermittent harrassing fire and also a number of heavy counter-battery concentrations.

The S-2 section cooperated with the Shellrep Officer of the Division Artillery and the Vocal Counter-Battery Officer of II Corps, in reporting concentrations and probable locations of enemy batteries.

On 20 November 1943, Private Albert B. Anderson, 32767048, Company "B", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, of Iselen, New Jersey, a platoon messenger, was seriously wounded by a shell fragment as he was carrying a message to his platoon Commander. In spite of his wound, he continued on his mission and completed it. For this gallant action, he was recommended for the Silver Star.

From 20 November 1943 to 23 November 1943, inclusive, the Battalion was credited with the destruction of one building, used as a German Command Post, four trucks, three self-propelled guns, one motorcycle, and one machine-gun. The estimated enemy personnel killed was seventy-nine. Of our materiel, a night was damaged on an M-10 and a .50 cal. machine-gun mount was blown from another M-10, one 3/4 ton weapons-carrier and one 1/4 ton truck was damaged. All vehicles have been repaired and placed back into action.

29 November 1943 and 30 November 1943 were used in preparing plans and moving units of the Battalion to locations to support the Division in attacking the Mount Camino Hill Mass, although, later on the afternoon of 30 November 1943, indirect fire was placed on San Pietro Infine to assist the Ranger Battalion, which was attacking that area. Final plans for the movement and support of the Division in the operations against Mount Camino were to be completed at a conference, scheduled for 1 December 1943.

In spite of very disagreeable rainy weather, the fact that the Battalion has been in operations continuously since the initial landing of troops

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in the Salerno operation, and the difficulty of supplying suitable rations to the troops under combat conditions, the morale and spirit of the troops during the entire month has been excellent. It was possible to give the entire Battalion at least one hot meal on Thanksgiving Day, which included turkey on the menu.

During the entire period for which report is rendered, four men were killed in action and nineteen men were wounded in action.

Map Reference: Italy, 1:50,000.

Attached Inneems:

1. Copy of Unit Journal
2. Overlays of Positions
3. Personnel Casualties during period
4. Vehicular Casualties during period
5. Enemy Casualties caused by 636th TD Bn during period

For the Battalion Commander:

Seagan L. Dunson
SEAGAN L. DUNSON
Captain, Infantry
Unit Historian

OFFICIAL:

Seagan L. Dunson
SEAGAN L. DUNSON
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

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ANNEX NO. 3

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

	GRADE	ASN	DATE OF CASUALTY	TYPE OF CASUALTY	PLACE OF RESIDENCE
HEADQUARTERS COMPANY					
None					
MEDICAL DETACHMENT					
MADDEN, EDWARD J.	Pvt	36715685	20 Nov 43	SWA	7481 S. Needles Ave. Chicago, Illinois
RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY					
None					
COMPANY "A"					
HAFERMAN, FRANK H.	Opl	37146998	22 Nov 43	KIA	605 11th St. Auburn, Nebr.
SHOCKLEY, DELMAR L.	Pfc	15104358	22 Nov 43	KIA	226 S. Walnut St. Batesville, Ind.
CRAIG, DYER C.	S/Sgt	38038745	22 Nov 43	SWA	General Delivery Wortham, Texas
THEILER, ROY A.	Tech V	37146965	22 Nov 43	SWA	Elsie, Nebr.
WILLIAMS, LONNIE S.	Tech V	34333867	22 Nov 43	SWA	RFD 3, Boaz, Ala.
JANIK, STANLEY (NMN)	Pfc	36352080	22 Nov 43	SWA	2968 N. Ridgeway Ave. Chicago, Illinois
KARIER, MARK N.	Pvt	36358662	22 Nov 43	LWA	374 N. Avers Ave. Chicago, Illinois
MIKE, JOHN (NMN)	Pvt	32285417	22 Nov 43	SWA	723 W. Court St. Ithaca, New York
THOMAS, WILLIAM H.	Pvt	20816149	22 Nov 43	SWA	Box 306, Mansfield, Texas
COMPANY "B"					
HILBERS, GERALD G.C.	Pfc	37146528	2 Nov 43	LWA	711 S. 11th St. Norfolk, Nebr.
WARE, GLYDE N.	Pvt	33204392	16 Nov 43	SIA	Marydel, Maryland
ANDERSON, ALBERT B.	Pvt	32767048	20 Nov 43	SWA	Trento St. Iselen, N. J.
BYRD, AARON (NMN)	Pfc	34333712	20 Nov 43	LWA	Route 1, Mt Vernon, Ala.
FLORES, RUDOLPH Z.	Pfc	38027457	22 Nov 43	LWA	1802 Comanche St. Corpus Christi, Tex.
SHARON, FRANK L.	Pfc	31105053	22 Nov 43	KIA	1136 Ogden St. Ext. Bridgeport, Conn.
MARLOVITS, FRANK C.	Pfc	33264973	23 Nov 43	SWA	706 Stanton Ave. Millvale, Pa.
TAYLOR, WALTER W.	Pfc	33205877	30 Nov 43	LWA	501 S. Pulaski St. Baltimore, Md.
COMPANY "C"					
MAYO, DURWIN P.	Sgt	38038972	20 Nov 43	LIA	Box 56, Point, Texas
GALLMAN, WILLIAM L.	S/Sgt	20815185	21 Nov 43	LIA	RFD 2, Italy, Texas
CROWLEY, LESTER V.	Pfc	31107792	21 Nov 43	LIA	Huckleberry Hill Unionville, Conn.
HOOTEN, ALEX J.	Pvt	38300239	21 Nov 43	LWA	General Delivery Cooper, Texas
DAVIS, MASON R.	Tech IV	20814939	23 Nov 43	KIA	507 W. Heard St. Cleburne, Texas

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ANNEX NO. 3.

PERSONNEL BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

	<u>OFFICERS</u>				<u>ENLISTED MEN</u>			
	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Captured</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Captured</u>
Nov 2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Nov 16	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Nov 20	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Nov 21	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Nov 22	0	0	0	0	3	8	0	0
Nov 23	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Nov 30	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	4	19	0	0

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ANNEX NO. 4

VEHICLE CASUALTY REPORT

- 1 Sight damaged on 3 inch Gun.
 - 1 .50 Cal. Machine Gun mount blown from M-10.
 - 1 3/4 Ton Weapons Carrier damaged.
 - 1 1/2 Ton Truck damaged.
- All vehicles were repaired within the Battalion
and placed back into action.

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ANNEX NO. 5.

ENEMY CASUALTY REPORT

- Par 1. Total expenditure of 3" ammunition during period was 4,800.
- Par 2. Estimated enemy personnel killed: 79.
- Par 3. Damage to enemy materials:
- 1 Building, German Command Post, destroyed
 - 4 Trucks destroyed
 - 2 Artillery batteries silenced
 - 3 Self-Propelled guns destroyed
 - 1 Motorcycle destroyed
 - 1 Machine Gun destroyed
 - 1 Attack plane destroyed

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
Office of the Battalion Commander

APO 464, U.S. Army
5 January 1944

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Records

TO : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36, U.S. Army.

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in Letter, Allied Force Headquarters, dated 20 April 1943, file AG 314.7/389 C-M, Subject: Historical Records and Histories of Organizations, transmitted herewith Operations in Italy, December 1943 of this Battalion.

2. Conclusions:

a. The action just completed by this organization demonstrates without a doubt the value of the Tank Destroyer as a direct fire Infantry support weapon in the neutralization of pillboxes, machine gun nests and other emplacements. Firing against personnel in houses with delayed fuze high explosive ammunition secures bursts within the buildings and is especially effective. It is also extremely effective against dugouts and caves in the sides of hills. Massed guns in indirect positions can be used with closed sheefs using forward observer methods to traverse and search an area immediately in front of our attacking Infantry. In the action just completed these tactics were employed repeatedly and also proved valuable in breaking up an enemy counter-attack.

Van W. Pyland
VAN W. PYLAND
Lt Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

1 Incl:

Narrative of Operations for the month
of December, with attached annexes

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**HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army**

5 January 1944

OPERATIONS IN ITALY, DECEMBER 1943

On the morning of December 1st, the three destroyer companies were in indirect fire positions well forward in the 36th Infantry Division sector. The Division was, at that time, preparing plans for the capture of the Magliore Hill Mass, the attack to be coordinated with the British 10th Corps, which was planning the capture of Mount Camino and other adjoining terrain features.

The Battalion Commander held a conference with the staff to prepare notes regarding the attack and later in the morning all Company Commanders attended a conference at which our part in the coming operation was explained. Each Company Commander was given a 1:25,000 map of the Mount Camino, Mount Magliore area and a specially prepared air photograph with enemy installations marked on it together with phase lines of the planned operation. Final instructions were given for the movement of A, B, and C Companies into direct fire positions as shown on the attached over-layer to support the attack of the 142nd Infantry with direct fire. Liaison Officers who were to accompany each Battalion of the 142nd Infantry were given their final instructions at this conference. These officers were to carry radios with the 142nd Infantry Battalions as they made the attack and be prepared to direct fire on any enemy installations that threatened the advance of the Infantry.

During the early hours of the night, Companies A and B moved into the direct fire positions which had been selected, and 1,000 rounds of extra ammunition were delivered to the new positions. Three days extra K rations were also issued, since supply in these forward areas would be difficult. During December 2nd, a new OP was established and the S-2 spent most of the day observing the area over which the attack was to be launched and making notes of points which would be helpful in supporting the Infantry with direct fire. The liaison officers joined the Battalions they were to move forward with, and certain changes were made in the phase lines which our destroyers were to use in shifting their fire. Company C moved to its new direct fire position as shown on the overlay attached and three days extra rations

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and extra ammunition were issued during the night. At 2300 hours, Company B reported the capture of one German prisoner. The prisoner was transferred to the Division prisoner of war inclosure. During the early morning hours of December 3rd, very heavy preparation fires fell on the enemy positions and the attack was launched as scheduled. The planned fires were placed on Mount Maggiore and Mount Lunge, both with three inch guns and .50 cal. machine guns. A considerable amount of counter-battery fire fell on our positions and we requested the Division Artillery to place some concentrations on S. Pietro. At 0900 hours, heavy concentration fell on our Company A position, killing one man and wounding three. One half-track was destroyed, one quarter-ton truck was destroyed and one damaged.

Our Liaison Officers with the 142nd Infantry reported in several times during the day, requesting fires on various houses and terrain objects which were giving the Infantry trouble. Fires were immediately placed on these points. Throughout the day, fires were placed on Mount Lunge and other targets, located by our Battalion OP, when special missions were not being fired in response to requests by the 142nd Infantry. At 2000 hours, Company A reported three of their men wounded and also one of their medical aid men wounded. All of our positions received counter-battery fire during the day and it was especially heavy in the Company A area. Our ammunition expenditure in support of this attack for the twenty-four hour period was as follows:

1. Company "A"	1,100 rounds H.E.	
2. Company "B"	970 rounds H.E.	744 rounds AP
3. Company "C"	1,345 rounds H.E.	

On December 4th, the 142nd Infantry continued clearing the Mount Maggiore Hill Mass which was taken on the previous day and no fire missions were requested during the morning. One of our Liaison Officers returned, but two remained throughout the day. Visibility was very poor and consequently no missions could be fired in the valley opposite Mount Maggiore. Later in the day, the 142nd Infantry requested fire at one point where enemy mortars were suspected. Company "B" placed a concentration at that point. Another of our Liaison Officers reported in from the 142nd Infantry that night, leaving one Liaison Officer still on duty with the 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry.

With the completion of the operation on Mount Maggiore, on 5 Dec 1943, indirect fire positions were selected near the direct fire positions in the various company areas and companies were registered on base points so that suitable targets could be engaged in the valley and on the Mount Samucro Hill Mass. Enemy activity was noted along the railroad

track at the foot of Mount Lungo and a considerable amount of fire was placed in the draw along this railroad. The three destroyer companies were strafed by enemy planes about noon and our .50 cal. AA guns returned the fire. Company C reported that their AA Sections made hits on at least two of the planes. They began smoking and apparently fell over the hill beyond Mount Rotundo. Our Reconnaissance Company continued to maintain contact with the British. All of our positions were still under considerable shell fire throughout the day. Our Battalion OP reported that several fires were started in the valley between Mount Lungo and Mount Camino, as a result of our fires, but it was impossible to determine the exact result which we obtained. Company "B" fired 357 rounds of 3 inch H.E. and 300 rounds of .50 cal ammunition. Company "C" fired 1,370 rounds of H.E. and 500 rounds of .50 cal. ammunition.

The situation throughout 6 Dec 1943 was comparatively quiet. A number of indirect missions were fired by our forward observers, but no definite results could be noted except that on one mission, fired by Company "B", three enemy vehicles were set on fire. During the day, our ammunition expenditure was as follows:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Company "A" | 92 rounds H.E. |
| 2. Company "B" | 338 rounds H.E. |
| 3. Company "C" | 47 rounds H.E. |

About 2000 hours, our Liaison Officer at 36th Division Headquarters brought a tentative field order, giving information about a proposed operation by the 143rd Infantry, which we were to support.

On the morning of 7 December 1943, plans were completed for supporting the 143rd Infantry, in their attack on S. Pietro and Mount Sammuero and the attack of the First Italian Motorized Brigade on Mount Lungo. (See Field Order attached). The destroyer companies were given points to register on in support of this operation and registration on these points was completed during the day. A conference was held at 1830 hours with the staff and Company Commanders to familiarize them with the coming operation. A Liaison Officer was sent to the 143rd Infantry CP to direct the fire of this Battalion on any targets of opportunity which might appear as the Infantry advanced on its objective.

The morning of 8 Dec 1943, Company "A" moved its 3rd Platoon to the position selected for it, as shown in the field order attached. The scheduled fires in support of the operation were reported completed at 0620 hours. The attack of the Italian Motorized Brigade on Mount Lungo was not successful and at 0658, Division called and informed us to be prepared to meet a counter-attack down the railroad at the foot of Mount Lungo. Heavy shell fire fell in our Company "C" area during the morning.

We placed several concentrations on targets on Mount Lungo and in the afternoon fired missions which were requested by the 143rd Infantry on S. Pietro. Later in the afternoon, several concentrations were placed in the vicinity of S. Vittore and also along the railroad at the foot of Mount Lungo. Our ammunition expenditure during the day in support of the operation was as follows:

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. Company "A" | 402 rounds H.E. | |
| 2. Company "B" | 800 rounds H.E. | 56 rounds AP |
| 3. Company "C" | 741 rounds H.E. | |

On 9 Dec 43, the Battalion continued firing on targets which appeared in the valley between Mount Maggiore and Mount Lungo, on Mount Lungo itself and in the S. Pietro area. The attack by the 143rd Infantry on S. Pietro had not been successful and all of Sammuero had not been captured. The Italian attack on Mount Lungo had been completely repulsed by the enemy, and the 36th Division began preparing plans for another assault on these positions. A mission was given to our Battalion and the Battalion Commander was requested to make a reconnaissance and then prepare recommendations for the consideration of the Division Commander.

The S-3 and a party from Reconnaissance Company made a reconnaissance of the S. Pietro-Venafro road to check the road conditions and to determine the possibility of operating tanks and TD's in that area. The Battalion Commander visited the Commander of the 143rd Infantry to get complete information about conditions in the 143rd Infantry sector. The S-1 and the Company Commander of Company "A" made a reconnaissance of the pass between Mount Rotunda and Montecello.

On the morning of 10 Dec 1943, the Battalion Commander called his staff, the Company Commander of Company "A", and the Company Commander of Reconnaissance Company together to discuss the results of the various reconnaissances. It was the general consensus of opinion that any operation down the S. Pietro-Venafro Road would not be practicable as neither tanks nor TD's could move to the side of the road successfully due to the nature of the terrain and the deep mud which was the result of much heavy rain-fall. The pass between Rotunda and Montecello had been found to be impracticable in its present condition but it was thought that with sufficient engineering work it could be made passable and that the most practical support to the new operation could be given by repairing this pass and placing destroyers in direct position on the forward slopes of Mount Rotunda and Mount Montecello. From such positions, fire could be placed all along the slopes of Sammuero, in the valley between Sammuero and Montecello, in and around S. Pietro, and out into the valley to the West.

At the conclusion of the conference, the Battalion Commander, the S-1, and the S-3 visited Division Headquarters and the Battalion Commander made these recommendations to the Division Commander.

During the day, Company "B" fired on some targets which were located by our forward OP, and at 1430 hours, all Company Commanders reported to the Battalion CP for a conference regarding the coming operation. The mission and the plans were discussed by the Battalion Commander who then decided that two platoons of Company "A" and one platoon of Company "C" were to take positions beyond the pass between Mount Rotundo and Mount Montecello. He also decided that a number of .30 and .50 cal. machine guns would be placed beyond the destroyers to support the 143rd and the 141st Infantry regiments in making the assault on S. Pietra. The remainder of the Battalion was to support the operation with indirect fire, searching the area in front of the Infantry advance and firing on any suitable targets which might appear.

On 11 Dec 1943, the Battalion Commander took the Company Commanders forward into the area in front of the Mount Rotundo Pass to select positions for their destroyers and machine guns, in accordance with the plan which had been made the previous day. The S-2 went to Division Headquarters to secure large scale photographs of the area to assist in selecting targets and in placing the weapons in position. As the operation was to be coordinated with the 753rd Tank Battalion, contact was also made with that unit. At 1440 hours, orders were received to place 12 destroyers in position beyond the pass during the night and that there was to be no firing from these positions until directed to do so by the Division Commander. In addition to the 12 destroyers, 24 .50 cal. machine guns were also put into position on Montecello to assist in forming a base of fire. Indirect fire missions were fired during the day by Companies "A", and "B". Three enemy vehicles were hit but the extent of damage could not be determined.

During the early morning hours of 12 Dec 1943, the 12 destroyers were placed in position in accordance with the Division Commander's order. The two platoons of Company "A" were first in position and were being lead into the area by the Company Commander, Captain Alec P. Pearson, and as the first destroyer left the road, it hit a mine which exploded and wounded Captain Pearson and Sergeant Broussard. The Sergeant was evacuated promptly but, in spite of his painful wound, Captain Pearson remained on duty throughout the night, directing the movement of his unit and was still on duty early the next morning when the Battalion Commander arrived to check the area. The Battalion Commander ordered Captain Pearson to report to the aid station for treatment and told the Division Commander of Captain Pearson's gallant action.

For this conspicuous service beyond the call of duty, General Walker awarded Captain Pearson the Silver Star.

The Division Commander held a conference at 1220 hours, with all the unit commanders who were to participate in the attack to make final plans for the operation and to coordinate the movement of the various units. It was decided that additional time was needed to get all units in position as the 142nd Infantry was to attack Mount Lunge from the flank the night following the assault on S. Pietro and Sammucre. Because of this, it was necessary for those destroyers in direct fire position on the nose of Mount Montecelle to remain concealed throughout that day and the following day. Considerable activity was noted in the valley West of S. Vittore and North of Mount Maggiore throughout the day, as those destroyers that were in indirect fire position fired several indirect missions. Our forward positions were under considerable shell fire throughout this period.

During 13 Dec 1943, our destroyers which were in indirect fire positions completed registration on points that could be used to assist the Infantry in its attack on S. Pietro and Sammucre. Our positions were again under intermittent shell fire. Our OP located an enemy gun position which could not be fired on by our flat trajectory weapons so we called the Division artillery, reported the target, and our OP adjusted the fire of the artillery on the gun position.

The Battalion Commander held a conference with the staff and the Company Commanders during the afternoon and gave the final instructions for our support of the 141st and 143rd Infantry in the attack on S. Pietro. He also stated that the 753rd Tank Battalion was to send one Company of tanks down the S. Pietro-Venafro Road and that our gunners should be alert to lift their fire when the tanks appeared.

During the night our listening posts reported that motors could be heard on the highway in the vicinity of S. Pietro and S. Vittore and also reported that some lights had been observed in these areas. This information was passed on to the Division. An over-lay showing our disposition in support of the operation is attached.

On 14 Dec 1943, it was learned that the attack which had been planned would not take place until the following day, as all troops could not be in position before that time. During the early morning hours, shelling was intermittent throughout the area and the Battalion Commander spent most of the day at the OP checking the area in front of our positions and making final plans for supporting the attack on the position with fire. Our forward areas were dive-bombed twice during the morning and a bomb fragment damaged one of our quarter-ton vehicles.

During the afternoon a heavy artillery concentration fell on one of the platoon positions in front of Mount Montecelle. One shell hit the extra ammunition which was stacked behind one of the destroyers, setting it on fire. The platoon commander with other members of the platoon got out of their vehicles with fire extinguishers to extinguish the flames and prevent them from spreading. In spite of the fact that the ammunition was exploding they continued to fight the fire using fire extinguishers and water and shoveling dirt onto the flames until they were extinguished. Lieutenant Boyss and three enlisted men were wounded while putting out the fire. This officer and all the enlisted men who participated in this action have been recommended to be awarded the Silver Star.

Some indirect fire missions were fired during the day by the platoons that had remained in indirect fire positions.

On the morning of 15 Dec 1943, the Battalion Commander called the Commanding Officer of the 141st Infantry to coordinate operations with him. He also checked with Division Headquarters and 143rd Infantry to ascertain if all were ready for the attack that day. The operation was to begin at 1200 hours and we had Liaison Officers with both organizations. At 0900 hours, 15 enemy planes bombed and strafed the valley in which we were operating and four planes were destroyed by the AA Artillery. No firing was done by our Battalion until the attack started at 1200 hours and then the scheduled fires were laid down. The Tank Company which was to move into S. Pietro on the S. Pietro-Venafro Road, made the assault, but was unsuccessful. Some of the tanks almost reached the town and found that the road had been blocked with vehicles and debris, several had hit mines before reaching the Town and it was decided later in the day to withdraw the remainder of the tanks, since the Infantry had not been successful in moving along with them. Some members of the 141st Infantry had succeeded in reaching the village, but were apparently cut off. No communication was ever established with them. During the early part of the night, the 142nd Infantry moved into position near Mount Lungo and during the night assaulted the Mountain.

The Battalion Commander spent 16 Dec 1943 in the forward area at the Battalion OP. The Commanding Officer 141st Infantry reported that his attack against S. Pietro had not been successful and that most of the Battalion making the assault were casualties. The 143rd had not advanced as far as planned so our destroyers that were in indirect fire positions fired most of the day in the area around S. Pietro, selecting targets which were suspected to contain enemy machine guns and mortars; A fire was started by one concentration and it appeared to be either a fuel or an ammunition dump. The assault by the 142nd on Mount Lungo had been successful and enemy on that mountain were mopped up during the day.

After dark our listening posts reported heavy shell fire northeast of S. Pietro in the 143rd Infantry Sector and shortly thereafter, the 143rd Infantry reported a counter-attack in that area and requested supporting fire. Two concentrations were placed in the area as requested and later information was received that the counter-attack had been broken up and that no further firing was necessary. About 2300 hours, the Division Commander called and reported that it was suspected that the enemy was withdrawing from the S. Pietro area and asked us to have our observers alert.

Most of 17 Dec 1943 was spent in reconnaissance as the enemy withdrew from the S. Pietro-Sammucro area during the early morning hours. Very little enemy shelling occurred during the day and patrols were pushed forward aggressively. It was found that a considerable amount of equipment had been abandoned when the enemy withdrew and that the area had been heavily mined. A few mortars and machine guns had been left to cover the withdrawal but they were mopped up by the Infantry. The early morning of 18 Dec 1943 was quiet and the Battalion Commander went forward to reconnoiter positions for a possible forward displacement of the Battalion. While on this reconnaissance, a German soldier surrendered to the Battalion Commander. He brought the prisoner to the rear and upon questioning him, it was found that he had worked in a Battalion Headquarters and stated that his unit had orders to hold until 17 Dec 1943, and then withdraw to another line. He stated that the enemy had fallen back to S. Vittore area where positions had been prepared. After questioning, the prisoner was sent to the PW enclosure. During the day our M-10's which had been in position in front of Mount Montecello were moved back into indirect fire positions since they could make no further advance in that direction, and were not in suitable positions for indirect fire from that point. Some shell fire fell on our positions during the day, but it wasn't heavy.

19 December 1943 was spent in making reconnaissance of the forward area and preparing plans for displacing forward to give closer support to the Division. In moving one of the Company "A" destroyers, a track was blown off by a mine and one of the mechanics working on the destroyer was injured.

Preparations were made to move the service trains further forward and the Reconnaissance Company was moved to an area which was at the foot of Mount Rotundo. Enemy artillery fire was more active throughout the day.

On 20 Dec 1943, the Battalion Commander left for a reconnaissance just at daylight, to select direct fire positions West of S. Pietro to support Infantry attacking C. Morello. Contact was made with 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry, outposting the line. Just after noon, instructions were received to place a platoon of destroyers Northwest of S. Pietro

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prior to dark. One Platoon of Company "B" was given this mission and a platoon of Reconnaissance Company was also ordered to screen the Company "B" platoon. The other two platoons of Company "B" were ordered to take positions astride Highway #6 North of Mount Lunge near Road Junction #69 and one platoon of Company "C" was placed along the western slopes of Mount Rotunda. Company "A" and two platoons of Company "C" were held in indirect fire positions. It was found that the Company "C" position had been heavily mined so it was necessary for the Pioneer Platoon to carefully sweep the area before the Company "C" destroyers could take up their positions.

On 21 Dec 1943, visibility was very poor and it was impossible to observe fire, so no missions were fired during the day. Patrols were sent out from Company "B" and Reconnaissance Company with orders to move forward as far as road junction 69 and report back each hour. Enemy shelling was fairly heavy throughout the day.

During the early morning hours of 22 Dec 1943, there was intermittent enemy shelling of our positions and enemy patrol activity was heavy. One man was wounded and one quarter-ton was damaged by a shell at about 0500 hours in the Reconnaissance Company area. Patrols were sent out again on the night of 22 Dec 1943 to the vicinity of the road junction 69.

During the early morning hours of 23 Dec 1943, a shell hit near a patrol which had been sent out by Reconnaissance Company and one man was killed and another wounded. An enemy patrol attempted to infiltrate through our positions West of Mount Lunge but was driven off. At about 1300 hours, a shell hit in Company "B" area and killed one man and wounded two others. A conference of Company Commanders was called and the Battalion Commander instructed them to redouble their vigilance and see that the men remained dispersed and under cover.

Enemy patrol activity had been so vigorous that on the morning of 24 Dec 1943, the Battalion Commander decided it would be well to place a strong point in the vicinity of road junction 69 to prevent infiltration by enemy patrols into our area. Plans were made to do this but, since the 15th Infantry was in that sector, it was necessary to coordinate with them before placing a strong point in that road junction.

The 15th Infantry had planned considerable patrol activity for the night, so the Commander of that regiment stated that he would establish a strong point there as the two units operating in the same area would cause confusion. Our Battalion Commander agreed to this and instructed Company "B" and the Reconnaissance Company to continue our usual patrol activity, but to discontinue plans for the establishment of a strong point. Visibility continued to be poor and since the ammunition expenditure had been sharply curtailed, no firing was done.

RESTRICTED

There was practically no activity on our sector during the 25th of December 1943, patrols were maintained during hours of darkness and a conference of Company Commanders and Company Executive Officers was held during the afternoon. There was little shell fire in any of the areas.

On 26 Dec 1943, visibility was good and the Battalion Commander went to the OP to carry out fire missions. Permission was obtained from G-3 to fire in an area South of the North edge of S. Vittore and West of C. Morallo. The Battalion had 20 destroyers registered on S. Vittore and more than 1000 rounds were fired on appropriate targets. A reconnaissance of the area East of S. Pietre was made by the Reconnaissance Company. Considerable firing was done in the vicinity of S. Vittore and in the area North and West of the Town. At 1830 hours, we received orders from Division Headquarters to be prepared to move in the vicinity of Alife by noon 27 Dec 1943 and to have a quartering party report to G-1, 36th Division at 1800 hours 27 Dec 1943. This information was given to all Company Commanders immediately and the quartering parties were formed.

On the 27th of December, the quartering parties left as planned and the Battalion started the movement at 1200 hours. The Battalion closed in its new area at 1635 hours and at 1830, the Battalion Commander held a conference with the staff to make plans for reorganizing the Battalion, and for servicing of all types of equipment. The period 28 Dec 1943 to 31 Dec 1943 was utilized for maintenance work on all types of equipment and a complete ordnance inspection.

Map Reference: Italy 1:50,000.

Attached Annexes:

1. Copy of Unit Journal
2. Overlays of Positions
3. Personnel Casualties during period
4. Vehicular Casualties during period
5. Enemy Casualties caused by 636th TD Bn during period

For the Battalion Commander:

REAGAN L. DUBOSE
Captain, Infantry
Unit Historian

OFFICIAL:

Reagan L. Dubose
REAGAN L. DUBOSE
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 36, U. S. Army

1 December 1943

FO #1
MAPS: Italy 1:50,000

1.
 - a. Germans occupy Mt. CAMINO and Mt. DEFENSA and the valleys to north and south of these hill masses.
 - b. 36th Div. reinf by 1st Special Service Force and 56th British Div. attacks Mt. CAMINO and Mt. DEFENSA hill mass.
 - (1) British 56th Div. attacks Mt. CAMINO and slopes to the SW.
 - (2) 1st Special Service Force attacks Mt. DEFENSA (HILL 960) during darkness the night of D-1 so as to have possession of HILL 960 by daylight D-day. It will then capture HILL 907, occupying and defending both positions.
 - (3) British 56th Div. will relieve 36th Div. when it has seized its objective.
 - (4) See Field Order No. 9, Hq 142 R.O.T., attached, for 36th Div. plan of main effort.
2. This Bn. will support the main effort by fire from positions as shown on operations overlay No. 22 attached.
3.
 - a. "A" Co from positions as shown on operations overlay No. 22 will fire direct concentrations and fires on a phase-line time schedule as shown on operations overlay No. 19 attached.
 - b. "B" Co from positions as shown on operations overlay No. 22 attached will fire direct concentrations and fires on a phase-line time schedule as shown on operations overlay No. 20 attached.
 - c. "C" Co from positions as shown on operations overlay No. 22 will fire direct concentrations and fires on a phase-line time schedule as shown on operations overlay No. 21 attached.
 - d. Call fires from officer observers with 1st, 2nd and 3rd Bns. of 142nd RCT will have priority on scheduled fires. OPs will be set up by these observers on the securing of objectives by the Bns. to which they are attached. All scheduled fires are subject to delay or speed-up on order.
4. SUPPLY:
 - a. Three (3) days Class I supplies in hands of companies.
 - b. All vehicles to be completely filled with fuel and oil prior to D-day.
 - c. All vehicles to be completely supplied with ammunition and extra 3 inch ammunition to be placed on ground in each platoon area on night of D-1.
 - d. Evacuation of wounded to Aid Station located in building on Hwy. #6 (992-113).
 - e. Evacuation of disabled vehicles to be continuous during operation.
 - f. Replenishment of all Classes of supply to be made during hours of darkness during operation.
5. All wire into present Bn. CP will be maintained. Companies will carry forward wire to new areas maintaining contact with present Bn. CP. A forward CP OP will be established on the mountain over company positions. at 01.2-12.2. Wire and radio communication will be established to three (3) firing companies from this point and to Rear CP.

OFFICIAL:

PYLAND
Commanding

AUSTIN
S-3

DISTRIBUTION:

1-33 36th Inf Div
1-36th Div Arty
1-G-3 36th Inf Div
1-GO 636 TD Bn

1-GO 142 RCT
1-GO A,B,C Co's
1-Bn Surg

1-Ea Staff C
1-Journal
1-File

SECRET

CHECK POINT #3
BEND IN ROAD AS IT ROUNDS
MOUNTAIN
CHECK POINT #4
TOWN OF CERVARO

RESTRICTED

CHECK POINT #5
PEAK OF SMALL
HILL

BASE POINT
R.R. STATION
AT JUNCTION OF
RR. + HIWAY

CHECK POINT #2
POINT AT WHICH ROAD
ENTERS S. VILTORE

CHECK POINT #1
JUNCTION OF HIWAYS

A+C Δ

B Δ

OPERATION OVERLAY #23

HQ 636 T.D. BN APO #36

1630 30 NOV 43

MAP ITALY 1:50:000

TENATIVE INDIRECT FIRE PLAN
I SEE ATTACHED PLAN-ANNEX #1

PYLAND
CO

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AUSTIN
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The following
image(s) may be of
poor quality due to
the poor quality of
the **original**.

REF: LETTERS 6864th TANK BATTALION 1 ALBANY
A.P.O. 36, U. S. Army

1 December 43

ANNEX #1.

TO : Operations covering #23.

IMMEDIATE INDIRECT FIRE PLAN

1. Following completion of present operation the following indirect fire plan will go into effect upon order of Bn.
2. Bn Base Point as shown: All platoons to register.
3. If base point cannot be fired on due to minimum elevation. Then register company on a check point, beginning on check point No. 1. If that one cannot be fired on, then check point No. 2
4. Check points as shown will be adjusted on by one platoon per Co. Check points to be adjusted on when targets of opportunity are not available.
5. Adjusted data on base point for all platoons and data for one platoon on check points to be reported to Bn as soon as possible.
6. All firings on points, that can be identified on a map, such as cross roads, towns, distinctive terrain features, large buildings, railroads will be reported to Bn, giving adjusted base deflection and range, and coordinates of that point. Firings on points that can not be definitely identified on the map will not be reported.
7. When this plan goes into effect company "A" and "C" will establish an OP on Mt LUNGO if that mountain is in our possession. If it is not OP's will be established on Mt HIGHER.
8. Company "B" will establish an OP on Mt HIGHER as soon as possible.

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ARTILLERY 64th TANK DESTROYER BATTAL
A.P.O. 36, U. S. Army

7 December 43

R. 42

Italy 1:50,000 Sheets 161 III - 160 II.

1. a. German forces continue to occupy Mt. LUNGO, S. MINTO and Mt. MANURICO.
- b. The 143rd Inf begins attack at 0600 8 Dec 43 to capture S. MINTO and Mt. MANURICO.
- c. The 1st Motorized Brigade (Italian) at 0600 8 Dec 43 attacks and captures Mt. LUNGO.

2. Mission of this Battalion is as follows:

- a. Support attack of 143rd Inf from suitable positions.
- b. Prepared to fire missions in support of 1st Motorized Brigade (Italian) on call.
- c. Prepared to cover tank approaches from the west as the attack moves forward.

3. a. Company "A"

1. Third platoon will move during darkness Dec 7 - 8 to positions to be prepared to fire direct into S. MINTO to cover advance of 143rd Inf. This platoon on the alert for any tank movement approaching from S. MINTO.

2. 1st and 2nd platoons will register one (1) gun per platoon during daylight 7 Dec 43. From 0615 to 0800 these platoons will cover area (S. MINTO - 600 yards west). Rate of fire two (2) shots per gun per minute.

3. After completion of scheduled fires the company will be prepared to fire on targets of opportunity and mass fires in area as shown on operations map 24.

4. Company "B"

1. Company will register one (1) gun per platoon or concentration 1 - 1, 1 - 2, 1 - 3, 1 - 4 during daylight of 7 Dec 43.

2. These concentrations to be fired from 0615 to 0800 Dec 43. Rate of fire two (2) shots per gun per minute.

3. Company to be prepared to give direct support to 1st Italian Brigade on call.

4. After completion of scheduled fires and when so directed by 1st Motorized Brigade, company will be prepared to fire on targets of opportunity and mass fires in area as shown on operations map 24.

5. Company "C"

1. Company will register one (1) gun per platoon or concentration 1 - 1, 1 - 2, 1 - 3, 1 - 4 during daylight 7 Dec 43.

2. These concentrations to be fired from 0615 to 0800 Dec 43. Rate of fire two (2) shots per gun per minute.

3. After completion of scheduled fires the company will be prepared to fire on targets of opportunity and mass fires in area as shown on operations map 24.

6. Reconnaissance Company

1. Reconnaissance company to be prepared to move to positions west of routes toward S. MINTO and Mt. MANURICO after receiving orders from 143rd Inf.

2. Reconnaissance company to be prepared to move to positions west of routes toward S. MINTO and Mt. MANURICO after receiving orders from 143rd Inf.

7. a.

1. Companies will be prepared on call to move to positions west of routes toward S. MINTO and Mt. MANURICO after receiving orders from 143rd Inf.

8. a. Change of plans 1 - 8

1. Operation to be changed on 7 Dec 43.

9. a. Change of plans 1 - 8

4. Battalion 31 no change.
5. Battalion and company C's (see operations overlay).
6. Company D's no change.
7. Radio and fire 501.
8. All units will carry yellow smoke for identification of aircraft. At night identification for ground troops, long and short flashlights.
9. H - Hour to be announced later.

ENCLOSURE 2:

- Annex #1 - Operation overlay #24
Annex #2

OFFICIAL

Y. L. L. L.
Commanding

ACCTIN

1 - 3

DISTRIBUTION:

- 1 - 40 36th Inf Div
- 1 - 40th Div Arty
- 1 - 40 36th Inf Div
- 1 - 40 60th T D B
- 1 - 7th Unit
- 1 - Source
- 1 - File

112EAX

RESTRICTED

RE TRAINING
LINE - C 193 ARTY

ANNEX No 2 D F037

FIRE PLAN

HQ 636 T.D. BN APO 38

0900 7 DEC 43

MAP: ITALY 1:50,000

ORDERS:

1. PLAN RE SUPPORT
BY DIV. AND CORPS ART
AS REQUESTED BY HQ
143 INF 636 T.D. BN
TO COMFORM TO PHASE
LINES OF ARTILLERY
PLAN.

2. DIRECT FIRE SUPPORT
ART.

H-30 TO H-20 SEREN

H-20 TO H-10 LINE

H-10 TO H-5 LINE

H-5 TO H LINE

12 H TO H+15 LINE

PYLAND

CO

NOTE: THIS PLAN HAS BEEN
SUBMITTED TO THE
ARTILLERY COMMANDER.
IT HAS NOT YET BEEN

APPROVED.

OFFICIAL:
AUSTIN
5-3

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57

RESTRICTED

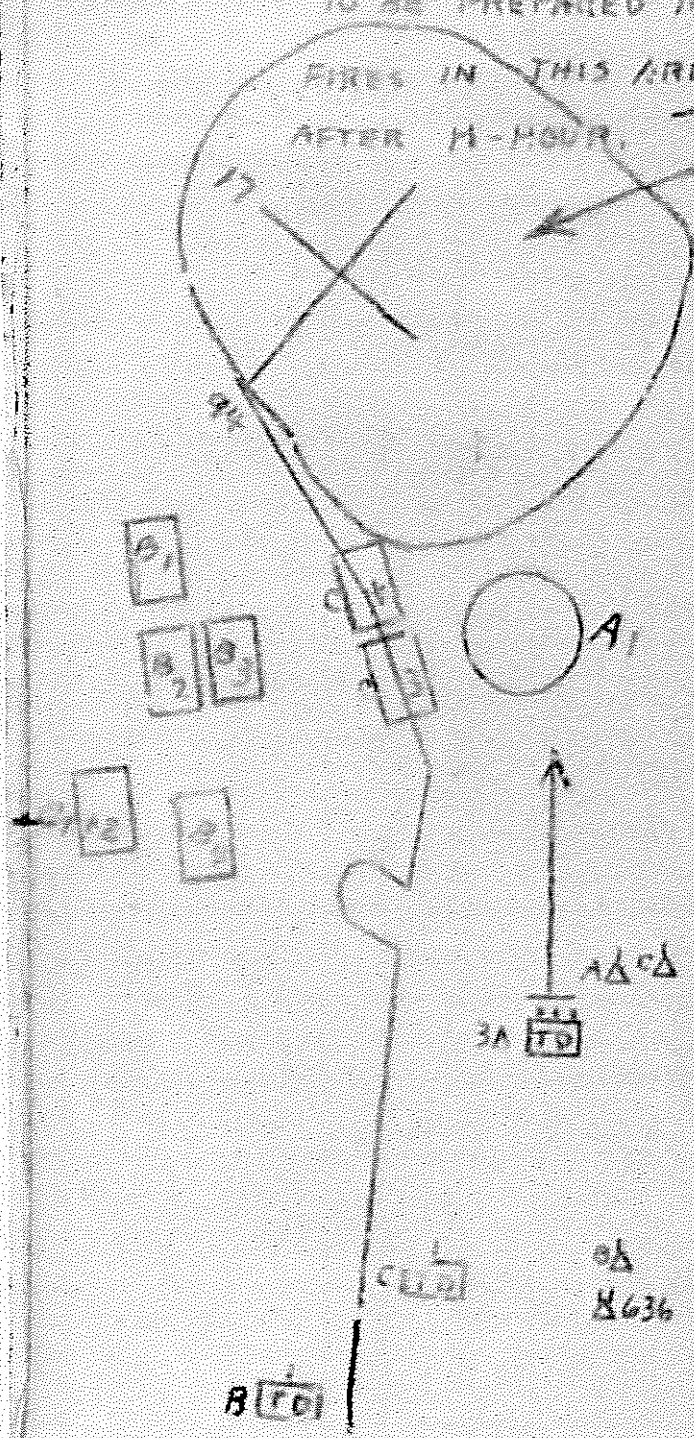
L COMPANIES
TO BE PREPARED TO MASS
FIRES IN THIS AREA
AFTER H-HOUR.

AN EX #3 TO FC #2
OPERATION OVERLAY #4
HQ 636 T.D. BN APO #36
0900 7 DEC 63
MAP: ITALY 1:50,000

ORDERS:
1. SEE FC #2

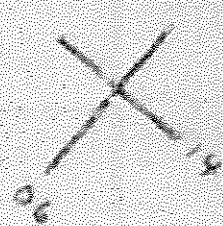
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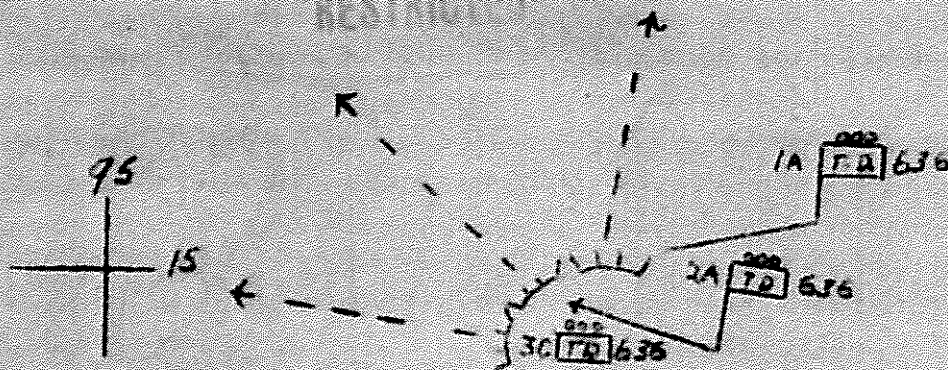
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A (TD) (3RD PLAT)

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OPERATION OVERLAY #25

HQ 636 T.D. Bn. APO #36

1600 10 DEC 43

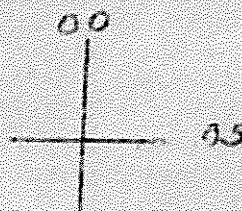
MAP: ITALY 1:50,000

ORDERS:

1. 2ND PLATOON OF "A" AND 1ST PLATOON "C" WILL MOVE FROM PRESENT AREA TO POSITIONS AS SHOWN TO SUPPORT 143 INF AND 141 ST INF IN THE LUNGO + PIETRO AREA
2. MOVE FROM PRESENT AREA DURING NIGHT OF 11-12 DEC 43
3. OTHER COS NO CHANGE.

OFFICIAL:
AUSTIN
5-3

PYLAND
C.O.



58

HEADQUARTERS 36th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 36, U. S. Army

14 December 43

LD #3

LAIS: ITALY 1:50,000 Sheets 160 II - 161 III.

1.
 - a. German forces continue to occupy the Mt. LUNGO - S. PIETRO area.
 - b. The 36th Infantry Division attacks on 15 and 16 December to capture Mt. LUNGO, S. PIETRO, S. VITTORE and the high ground N & E of S. VITTORE.
 - c. By progressive movement during the 13 and 14 December the 36th Infantry Division expects to hold hill 729 (960-180), Hill 687 (967-187) and hill 954 (996-204) by daylight of 15 December.
 - d. 1st Mtad Bgde (Italian) attacks after daylight morning of 16 Dec on Division order to capture, and hold Hill 343, and to mop up slopes of Mt. LUNGO east of 96 coordinate line.
2.
 - a. Mission of Battalion:
 - b. Guns now in position near COLLINA MONTECELLO priority of support to attack of Co "A" 753 Tank Battalion by direct fire on located targets in the S. PIETRO area and the high ground N & E thereof. Thereafter general support of the attacks of the 141 and 143 Infantry Regiments.
 - c. Balance of Battalion general support of attack by 143 Inf, 141 Inf, and Co "A" 753 Tank Battalion by fire on targets North of Hwy #6 and West of S. PIETRO.
 - d. Elements of Battalion prepared to displace to firing positions along Hwy #6 North of Mt. LUNGO on Division order.
3.
 - a. Company "A" (3rd platoon of Co "C" attached):
 - (1) Co "A" (less 3rd platoon) with 3rd platoon Co "C" attached, will fire direct missions in support of the attack of Co "A", 753 Tank Battalion, on S. PIETRO. Fire will be placed on all houses along the road east of S. PIETRO as far east as a North - South line through grid line 98.3. The company will begin firing on these houses and other suspected or possible enemy positions at H-hour.
 - Co "A", 753 Tank Battalion, will cross IP (Road curve at (929-152) at H-hour and advance as rapidly as possible along road to S. PIETRO. Fires of Co "A" 836 TD Bn will be controlled to conform to the advance of the Tanks.
 - 1st Infantry will cross the line of departure (Creek north of Mt. FORTINO) (970-147) to (980-153) at H-hour to advance and seize S. PIETRO.
 - Fires of Co "A", 836 TD Bn, will be controlled to conform to the movement of 1st Inf and when this Regiment reaches S. PIETRO fires must be lifted from that area.
 - (2) The 3rd platoon Co "A" from its present positions will be prepared to fire indirect missions in the S. PIETRO area on call from the Battalion CP.

b. Company "B"

- (1) Co "B" from present positions will register all platoons with closed sheaf on S. PIETRO and at a point on the road east of S. PIETRO where the grid line 98.3 crosses the road during daylight of 14 Dec 43. After this the company is to be prepared to fire indirect missions in the S. PIETRO - S. VITTORE area on call from the Battalion OP.

Co "B" observers will have radio communication with Bn OP. No fires by company observers until released by Bn OP.

c. Company "B" (less 3rd platoon)

- (1) Co "C" from its present positions will check registration on base point (Road junction) at (957-153). The Company will be prepared to fire concentrations (Con #1) in an area in which the base point is the center of a 400 yard square. Rate of fire two (2) rounds per gun per minute for the first 10 minutes and then one (1) round per gun per minute for the next 10 minutes.

Also be prepared to fire concentration (Con #2) with the point (940-172) as the center of a 400 yard square. Rate of fire one (1) round per gun per minute for ten (10) minutes. These to be fired on call from Bn OP.

After completion of concentrations the Company will be prepared to fire on targets of opportunity within its zone.

- (2) At any time after H-hour the company (less 3rd platoon) will be prepared to move on Division order to firing positions North of Mt. LUNGO along HWY #6 to support the attack of Co "C" 753 Tank Battalion on S. VITTORE.

d. Provisional MG Battery (Cal. .50)

- (1) Cal. .50 Machine guns of Company "A", 3, C, Pcn and Ranger Platoon will be emplaced forward of Co "A" in positions to cover the S. PIETRO area.
- (2) Beginning at H-hour Machine Gun Battery will search area S. PIETRO and east to culvert on S. PIETRO road at (982-156). Zone to extend 500 yards North to S. PIETRO road.
- (3) Fires will be lifted from the S. PIETRO area as the 141st Infantry attack approaches S. PIETRO.

e. Reconnaissance Company

- (1) Company to be prepared on call to support the advance of Company "C" into positions North of Mt. LUNGO.

4. a. No change in CLASS I supplies.

b. Ammunition to be dumped on night of 14 December 43.

c. Aid Station, no change.

5. a. Battalion and Company CP's, no change.

b. Company CP's, no change.

c. Battalion CP, no change.

d. All units to have yellow smoke for air identification.

e. H-hour, 1200 hours 15 December 43.

6. TOTAL:

ATTN:
3-3

FYIA
To [unclear]

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ANNEX NO. 3

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

	GRADE	ASN	DATE OF CASUALTY	TYPE OF CASUALTY	PLACE OF RESIDENCE
<u>HEADQUARTERS</u>					
PYLAND, VAN W.	Lt Col	0-236089	17 Dec 43	LWA	2104 Trice Ave Waco, Texas
<u>HEADQUARTERS COMPANY</u>					
WALTER, WILLIAM F.	2nd Lt	0-1824256	17 Dec 43	LWA	2609 Hackney St Pittsburgh, Penn
HASTEN, LEO L.	Techn 4th	36024854	19 Dec 43	LWA	Webster, Ill.
HOFFPAUIR, ALBERT N.	Pvt	38173404	4 Dec 43	LWA	R #1 Box 27 Crowley, La
<u>MEDICAL DETACHMENT</u>					
MILLER, WILLIAM F.	Pvt	37147168	3 Dec 43	LWA	Gen Del Wheatland, Wyo.
<u>RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY</u>					
CARLE, ROBERT L.	Pvt	20815861	7 Dec 43	LWA	2205 Clower St San Antonio, Texas
WILSON, CHARLES D.	Stf Sgt	20815901	22 Dec 43	LWA	1026 W. Craig St San Antonio, Texas
NIXON, STANLEY T.	Pvt 1 cl	37147147	23 Dec 43	KIA	RFD #2 Colome, S. Dak
SALRIN, JOHN E., JR.	Pvt	36554188	23 Dec 43	LWA	4803 14 th St Detroit, Mich
<u>COMPANY "A"</u>					
PEARSON, ALEC P.	Capt	0-394225	12 Dec 43	LWA	Route 5 Waco, Texas
LANDERS, PAUL P.	Cpl	38038566	3 Dec 43	LWA	Box 53 Newsome, Texas
PHILLIPS, WILLIAM H.	Cpl	13087124	3 Dec 43	LWA	133 Wellington Ave Washington, Penn
PARKER, JUDGE O.	Techn 5th	38026133	3 Dec 43	SWA	1928 Ave L Huntsville, Texas
YURKEVICZ, ROMAN (NMN)	Techn 5th	31125952	3 Dec 43	SWA	Garage Road Sunderland, Mass
SWETT, GILBERT L.	Pvt 1 cl	37146913	3 Dec 43	KIA	Endicott, Nebr
BROUSSARD, ERNIE T.	Sgt	20816997	12 Dec 43	LWA	1402 Park Ave Curville, Texas
<u>COMPANY "B"</u>					
SHELTON, GRADY E.	Sgt	20813190	15 Dec 43	LWA	Winters, Texas
DICKEY, H.O. (I.O.)	Cpl	38036608	15 Dec 43	LWA	RFD #1 Kosse, Texas
BAILEY, ELISHA E.	Pvt	37146001	15 Dec 43	LIA	RFD #1 Schuyler, Nebr
HEININGER, JOSEPH E.	Pvt	33142484	23 Dec 43	LWA	2305 Clearfield St Philadelphia, Penn

	GRADE	ASN	DATE OF CASUALTY	TYPE OF CASUALTY	PLACE OF RESIDENCE
<u>COMPANY "B" (Cont'd)</u>					
SILKOWITZ, MORTON (NMN)	Techn 5th	32394805	23 Dec 43	SWA	1878 58th St. Brooklyn, N.Y.
THROCKMORTON, WILSON E.	Techn 5th	37147161	23 Dec 43	KIA	Wheatland, Wyo.
<u>COMPANY "C"</u>					
TULLOS, JOHN G.	Pvt 1 cl	20813730	3 Dec 43	SWA	Gen Del Decatur, Texas
MOBILIO, RALPH J.	Pvt	36422865	3 Dec 43	SWA	322 E. Stuart Ave Flint, Mich.
CORDISCO, NICHOLAS (NMN)	Pvt	33320521	3 Dec 43	LWA	1021 Chestnut St Bristol, Penn.
BOYSA, ALPHONSE J.	2nd Lt	0-1301601	14 Dec 43	SWA	465 Georgia Ave Brooklyn, N.Y.
JORDAN, JOSEPH H.	Cpl	37163668	14 Dec 43	SWA	Route #2 Wayzata, Minn.
WELLBORN, JACK T.	Cpl	38035985	14 Dec 43	SWA	RFD #4, Box 325 Fort Worth, Texas
KING, ERNEST F.	Techn 5th	33348697	14 Dec 43	LWA	Center St Shavertown, Penn.
SEWELL, JAMES E.	Techn 5th	20802556	15 Dec 43	LIA	Route #1 Dale, Texas
RAMEY, ROB R.	Sgt	38039654	17 Dec 43	LWA	Taft, Texas
ANTOLIK, EMIL J.	Pvt	33348166	21 Dec 43	LWA	435 Wilbur St Scranton, Penn.

ANNEX NO. 3.

PERSONNEL BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

OFFICERS

ENLISTED MEN

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Captured</u>		<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Captured</u>
Dec 3	0	0	0	0		1	8	0	0
Dec 4	0	0	0	0		0	1	0	0
Dec 7	0	0	0	0		0	1	0	0
Dec 12	0	1	0	0		0	1	0	0
Dec 14	0	1	0	0		0	3	0	0
Dec 15	0	0	0	0		0	4	0	0
Dec 17	0	2	0	0		0	1	0	0
Dec 19	0	0	0	0		0	1	0	0
Dec 21	0	0	0	0		0	1	0	0
Dec 22	0	0	0	0		0	1	0	0
Dec 23	0	0	0	0		2	3	0	0
TOTAL	0	4	0	0		3	25	0	0

ANNEX NO. 3

ANNEX NO. 4

VEHICLE CASUALTY REPORT

- 1 - Halftrack destroyed 2 Dec 1943 by enemy artillery fire
- 1 - One quarter ton destroyed 2 Dec 1943 by enemy artillery fire
- 1 - One quarter ton damaged 2 Dec 1943 by enemy artillery fire
- 1 - M-10 damaged 12 Dec 1943 by enemy mine
- 1 - One quarter ton damaged 14 Dec 1943 by bomb fragments
- 1 - M-10 damaged 19 Dec 1943 by mine
- 1 - One quarter ton damaged 22 Dec 1943 by enemy artillery fire

All the above destroyed vehicles have been replaced by ordnance and those damaged have been repaired by our Battalion Motor Shop and are back in service.

ANNEX NO. 4

ANNEX NO. 5

ENEMY CASUALTY REPORT

- Par. 1. Total expenditure of 3" ammunition during period was 15,374 rounds H.E. and 800 rounds AP. Total expenditure of .50 cal. ammunition during period was 1400 rounds.
- Par. 2. Estimated enemy personnel killed: Due to the nature of operation of this unit during this period no accurate account of enemy killed can be accounted for.
- Par. 3. Damage to enemy material: Due to the nature of operation of this unit during this period no accurate account of enemy material damaged or destroyed can be accounted for.

ANNEX NO. 5

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK BATTALION
Office of the Battalion Commander

AAC 114, 1. S. Army
9 February 1944

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Records

TO : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, AAC 114, 1. S. Army

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in letter, Allied Force Headquarters, dated 20 April 1943, file AG 114.7/139 C-M, Subject: Historical Records and Histories of Organizations, transmitted herewith Operations in Italy, January 1944 of this battalion.

2. Conclusions:

a. A 3 inch self-propelled gun Tank Destroyer in support of a river crossing presents an interesting study in employment. First the thirty-two ton vehicle must wait for the armor d force bridge or Bailey to be constructed, so the pre-crossing employment of the T.D. will be considered. The high velocity, beautifully accurate 3 inch gun is ideally suited to smash pill boxes, enemy emplacements, and knock down houses near the crossing in which enemy snipers and machine gunners lurk. Contrary to popular belief the guns are most effective when sited in close-up indirect positions with flash defilade and with minimum elevation sufficient to engage close in targets. All thirty-six guns of the battalion must be carefully registered on a common base point and several check points in the target area. Forward observers placed well to wit the Infantry outposts along the river in the zone of the supported unit bring the massed fire of the Battalion to bear on targets of opportunity and on located enemy strong points. These observers can also bring fire to bear on any enemy armor which may be used in the initial stages of the crossing.

Van W. Pyland
VAN W. PYLAND
Lt Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

1 Incl:
Narrative of Operations for the month
of January 1944, with attached annexes

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

7 February 1944

OPERATIONS IN ITALY, JANUARY 1944

The first fourteen days of January 1944 were spent in a rear area, in the vicinity of Piedmonte D'Alife (289040), where the Battalion reorganized in accordance with the new Table of Organization, and underwent a short training period with the new organization. On January 14th, the Battalion Commander received a warning order to move the Battalion to an assemble area between Mount Lungo and Mount Porchia, from which it could support the 36th Division in an operation against the German line across the Rapido River, near S. Angelo.

The Battalion Commander took the staff forward on January 14th to reconnoiter an assembly area. Upon completion of the reconnaissance the Company Commanders were ordered to report to the Battalion CP the following morning prepared to go on an all day reconnaissance with the staff to select assembly areas.

The following two days, 15th and 16th January, were spent in the reconnaissance and preparation of the assembly area which had been selected. The 17th and 18th of January were spent in moving into the assembly area. The positions selected were as follows:

Battalion CP	(978145)
Reconnaissance Company	(973148)
Company "A"	(940157)
Company "B"	(935154)
Company "C"	(930154)

At 1400 hours on the 18th of January, the Battalion Commander held a meeting of the Staff and Company Commanders to orient them on the present situation. Information was exchanged which had been obtained from the various reconnaissances, which had been conducted during the day. At the conclusion of the meeting, Staff members guided Company Commanders to forward areas which they would most likely occupy to support the planned attack. After supper that night another Staff Conference was held to complete plans which the Battalion would follow. A message was sent to

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the Company Commanders directing them to report to the Battalion CP the following morning.

At 0800 hours, 19 January, the Staff and Company Commanders assembled and the Battalion Commander issued orders which resulted in the movement of the Companies to their combat positions from their assembly areas. The Battalion Commander also directed that Reconnaissance Company supply two officers to maintain Liaison with the two assaulting Infantry Battalions of the 141st. The Company Commanders were also informed that the Battalion mission was to support the 141st Infantry in the assault on the Rapido River defenses.

The Destroyer Companies moved to indirect firing positions in the vicinity of (901164) during the night 19-20 January beginning the movement at 1700 hours and completing the movement prior to daylight. The following day the Battalion Commander selected direct fire positions for Company B and the light tanks of Reconnaissance Company on La Pieta Hill in order to give direct support to the 141st Regimental Combat Team in its Rapido River crossing operation. Lt Colonel Pyland then ordered the Pioneer Platoon to clear a mine field located on the right side of the hill on which Company B was to place part of its guns. Four men of the Pioneer Platoon were wounded in clearing this mine field by anti-personnel mines.

During the morning of this same day the Battalion Commander selected a forward CP at a house just in the rear of La Pieta Hill and located an OP on this hill. Another CP was located on Mount Trocchio and manned by observers from Companies A and C. Company B manned and operated an OP on a small hill near the boundary between the assaulting Regimental Combat Teams and near the Rapido River.

Liaison Officers were sent to the Regimental Headquarters and to each of the assaulting Battalions of the 141st Infantry. Visibility was poor all day, but the Companies in indirect fire positions succeeded in registering on a bare point on the north edge of S. Angelo. The Division Field Order was received at 1109, and it was found that one Destroyer Company was to follow the Infantry across the River at a point north of S. Angelo as soon as a Bailey bridge was completed. Reconnaissance was immediately made to check the route and ground to see if it would be possible for the Destroyers to use it. This reconnaissance was made by Captain Kinnison, the Battalion S-2. Company A was ordered to be prepared to make the crossing as soon as the bridge was completed, preceded by the six light tanks of Reconnaissance Company. Captain Pearson of Company A, with Lt Wilson of Reconnaissance Company, who was to lead the light

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tanks, went forward to make a reconnaissance of the route to be used.

At 1930 hours, the Battalion began its preparatory fire with the Companies that were in indirect fire positions and 2030 hours, the preparatory fires were completed. As the assault progressed, our Liaison Officers kept the Battalion Commander posted on the situation and called for fire on suitable targets.

On the morning of Jan 21st, it was found that the Bailey bridge had not been constructed, so Company A remained in its indirect fire positions. At 0715 hours, Company C reported a direct hit on one of its destroyers, killing one man and disabling the destroyer.

Constant contact was maintained with the assaulting Regiment through our Liaison Officers in order that close support might be given. As soon as it was learned that our troops had gained only a small foothold across the River, Companies A and C fired missions on S. Angelo and areas beyond S. Angelo.

At 1100 hours, 1st Lt John C. Campbell, O-1168196, our Liaison Officer to the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry called and stated that the 2nd Battalion was going to attack, and as there was no Liaison Officer from our Battalion with it, requested that he be permitted to report to the 2nd Battalion. The Battalion Commander gave his consent and Lt Campbell reported to the Battalion Commander, 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry.

At 1130 hours, a message was received stating that the attack was to be resumed at 1400 hours. The Company Commanders were called in and given the new situation by the Battalion Commander. The Battalion Commander directed that Companies A and C continue to lay harassing fire on the enemy positions beyond the area held by our troops at the bridge site. Due to the smoke and haze it was impossible to observe the fires.

During the conference word was received that an allied force had landed south of Rome. At 1306 hours word was received that the attack would not be launched until 1500 hours and the Companies were immediately notified of the change. At 1730 hours, word was received that the hour of the attack had been changed to 2200 hours and the Companies were notified.

During the early part of the evening it appeared that the crossing was proceeding according to plan and one Platoon of Company A moved into position in the vicinity of (893168), prepared to follow the Infantry as soon as the bridge was constructed. A considerable amount of enemy

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artillery fell in the Destroyer Companies' positions during the night, but no damage was done, and counter-battery fire was placed on the enemy positions by Company C.

By 0640 hours, 22 January, most of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 141st had crossed the Rapido, but the Engineers were having difficulty in constructing the bridge due to mines and heavy artillery and mortar fire, but reported they expected to have the bridge constructed by noon. At 0735 hours, it was learned that the 141st Infantry was being held up by very heavy enemy mortar and machine gun fire. Heavy enemy artillery and Nebelwerfer fire was falling at the site where the bridge was under construction. Company C, which was still in indirect fire positions delivered fire on Nebelwerfer positions. Later in the morning, fire was also delivered on S. Angelo and other targets in that vicinity. The 141st Infantry requested that we continue to fire on the Nebelwerfer positions to keep them silent. Prior to daylight heavy artillery (170 mm) had fallen in the Battalion Service Echelon area and the Battalion Commander directed the Executive Officer and the Adjutant to select a new area for it.

At 1027 hours, a report was received that 1st Lt John C. Campbell, O-1168196, Liaison to the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry, was killed at 1000 hours by an enemy mortar shell. The Sergeant assisting Lt Campbell on his mission reported that Lt Campbell had left his foxhole to telephone a report to Lt Colonel F. Land, the Battalion Commander, and that the shell exploded just to the front of Lt Campbell, as he telephoned.

At 1055 hours, Division Artillery requested that we keep two guns firing on the Nebelwerfer which we had located, as it remained inactive as long as we placed fire on it.

Enemy artillery fire on the entire area was quite heavy making it very difficult for wire communications to be maintained. It was necessary for wire crews to work on the lines almost constantly.

Since it was found that the bridge would not be completed during the day Company A was moved back into indirect fire positions in order to support the operation with its fire.

The Commanding Officer, 141st Infantry called during the afternoon of 22 January and reported that the Battalion's fire was very helpful and seemed to be highly effective. The Battalion Commander assured the Commanding Officer, 141st Infantry, that we would continue to fire on every target that appeared and on those reported to us by the Infantry.

Late in the afternoon the Service Echelon was moved to a new location closing in the new area (933156) at 1615 hours.

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At 1655 hours, Company B reported that another man had been injured by shell fragments from a concentration that had just fallen in its area.

Throughout the morning of 23 Jan, Companies A and C fired on targets opposite the sector of the 141st Infantry and also fired several counter-battery missions on enemy Nebelwerfers and artillery positions. At 1146 hours, we received information from the 141st Infantry that a demonstration would be staged during the night and that our destroyers would participate.

At 1500 hours, our Liaison Officer, with the 36th Division visited the CP with information concerning the demonstration which was planned. The Battalion Commander received permission to move the Company B destroyers, which were in direct fire position to indirect fire positions in the vicinity of Companies A and C, in order that their fire might be better used to support the Infantry. At 2200 hours, the Battalion participated in a Division demonstration, firing 288 rounds of 3-inch HE on targets assigned by the Division Artillery. At 2340 hours, information was received from the 36th Division that there would be no smoking of the valley the following day. Smoke had been so heavy during the last few days that it was impossible for the Artillery observers to adjust fire on the enemy.

Orders were received on 24 January to participate in another demonstration that was planned for that evening. The Battalion Commander ordered Reconnaissance Company to move forward to take part in the demonstration and plans were made to use .30 cal. and .50 cal. machine guns, and light tanks in the demonstration. One platoon of Company B was also ordered to move back into direct fire positions to assist in the demonstration.

The Battalion continued to fire harassing missions and also observed fire on selected targets across the Rapido all during the day.

The Division Artillery gave the rate and time of fire to be used during the demonstration. Just at dusk, the light tanks and machine gun crews of the Reconnaissance Company moved to the forward slope of La Pieta to take up positions for the demonstration that night. The .30 cal. and .50 cal. machine guns were emplaced about 100 yards in front of the light tanks. One Platoon of Company B with its .50 cal. machine guns also took position on La Pieta, prepared to fire during the demonstration. The remainder of the Battalion fired indirect fire missions.

The machine guns participating were ordered to carefully dig in their positions as it was anticipated that heavy mortar and artillery fire would fall on these forward positions as soon as they began firing. The

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demonstration was staged at three different hours during the night and the light tanks, machine guns, and destroyers on La Pieta received considerable counter-battery fire. After firing the last demonstration, about 20 minutes was allowed for the machine gun barrels to cool and the counter-battery fire to lift. The tanks, destroyers and machine guns were then withdrawn to their regular positions just prior to daylight.

At 0842 hours, Division Artillery alerted the Battalion to be prepared to meet any counter-attack which might be launched against our positions down Highway #6 or up from the Junction of the Rapido and Carigliano Rivers.

The Battalion Commander received word that the Division was going on the defensive and that the Battalion was to support the 143rd Infantry. A direct telephone line was laid to the 143rd Infantry and defensive fires were planned for this work. It was not necessary to move any of the Companies as the entire 143rd Infantry sector could be easily covered from the positions the Companies occupied. Our Liaison Officer to the 141st Infantry was instructed to report to the 143rd Infantry.

For the first time in several days the weather was clear, and the visibility was good on the morning of 26 January. Our forward observers were alerted to be especially watchful for any targets that might appear opposite our sector. All organizations were cautioned to be particularly careful about camouflage discipline.

The 141st Infantry located a cave in the vicinity of (858141) where enemy activity was noticed and requested fire to be placed on it. The target was adjusted on by our forward observer and no further activity was seen near it.

About noon, the Company C area was heavily shelled by the enemy with 150mm and larger shells, and some extra ammunition was set on fire. It was necessary to move some of the Destroyers to save them from burning. As counter-battery continued to fall in the Battalion area, the Battalion Commander requested that smoke be laid to obscure the enemy observation.

During one of the enemy counter-batteries in the Company B area, a shell fragment knocked the sight mount from one of the Destroyers.

The Battalion continued to fire on Nebelwerfer positions and other enemy targets throughout the day. Several Nebelwerfers were silenced by this fire.

The Battalion was directed to participate in the Division demonstration

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that was to be staged during the night. Enemy dispositions were taken under fire during the demonstration. Due to the restriction on ammunition, it was not possible to fire as many rounds on harassing and other missions as requested by Division Artillery.

At 1900 hours, enemy track vehicles were reported in S. Angelo by Division Artillery and harassing fires were placed in this area. The 143rd Infantry reported this fire was effective. At 2005 hours, the 143rd Infantry reported vehicles on the road south of S. Angelo and harassing fire was placed in that area.

At 0050 hours, 27 January, word was received from Division Headquarters that the remaining demonstration fires had been postponed until 0600 hours and our destroyer companies were notified accordingly. The 143rd Infantry called at 0815 hours and reported that no enemy activity was observed opposite that sector during the night and the Division Artillery requested that our CP's check the area around S. Angelo carefully for evidence of damage caused by the firing on the previous night. Throughout the day the enemy installations opposite our sector of the River were systematically shelled and all suspicious buildings were fired on. An enemy machine gun and mortar position was located by a 143rd Infantry observer and Company C took it under fire. The Infantry observers reported the enemy installation destroyed. One of our observers located an enemy pillbox at (859148) and Company C layed on it. Several HE shells with delay fuse made direct hits but apparently had no effect, so APC shells were used and excellent effect was observed. The pillbox was penetrated and ammunition or other explosives inside the pillbox were ignited causing a large explosion completely demolishing the installation. The S-2 of the 143rd Infantry requested information regarding the type of ammunition used in destroying the pillbox and this information was supplied.

The Division planned another demonstration during the night and requested that our Battalion participate in it. The hours and rate of fire were given to the Destroyer Companies as well as targets to be fired on. On 28 January, the Battalion was requested to support the 34th Division with fire and this was co-ordinated with the 36th Division Artillery. All guns were checked to determine what fire could be placed in the 34th Division sector.

During the morning, enemy Nebelwerfer fire fell in the Battalion area

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and shell reports were turned in on it. The Battalion did some firing in the 34th Division area and continued to cover known and observed targets opposite our sector. By noon the visibility became poor and it was difficult to determine the results of our fire. Another enemy pillbox was located and Company B fired on it until smoke began pouring from the door indicating that ammunition or equipment inside had been set on fire. The enemy evidently began sucking the valley to obscure our observation.

At 1430 hours, the enemy fire on our destroyer positions became very heavy and it was estimated that around 300 rounds fell in the three company positions during the afternoon. A direct hit on the house in which the Company A CP was located destroyed it and slightly injured the Company Commander, Captain Alec P. Pearson and his Executive Officer, 1st Lt Robert E. Graham. An enlisted man of the Company CP, Tec 5 Henry B. Behr, was slightly injured. In the Company C area, a white phosphorous shell ignited two camouflage nets. Shell reports were turned in on this shelling and it was noted that the largest shells that had been used on our positions fell in this concentration, as there were about 40 shells in the Company A area which made craters six feet deep and twenty-four feet in diameter. One hole made by one unexploded shell measured thirty inches in diameter. All of this information was given to G-2 of the 34th Division. Lt Colonel Island, the Battalion Commander had these measurements verified.

At a conference with the Staff during the evening, the Battalion Commander directed that alternate positions be located the following morning so that the Destroyer Companies could be moved as it was evident that their positions had been located by the enemy and that they were well registered on them.

The Battalion Command Post received some shell fire during the afternoon and the Headquarters Company Mess Sergeant and one cook were lightly wounded.

On the morning of 28 January, the Battalion Commander, with the Company Commanders of the Destroyer Companies and members of the Staff made a reconnaissance for alternate positions for the destroyer Companies. After checking the area, the Battalion Commander directed that Company A move to a new location at (923146) and that Companies B and C shift their positions one or two hundred yards and disperse more, but remain in the same general area that they had occupied previously. All these changes were made during the day and all Platoons re-registered on the base point. Only a few destroyers were moved at a time and the Battalion continued to fire on targets which appeared opposite the Division sector and those

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called in by the Infantry and Artillery. All the areas received some enemy shelling during the day and night but no heavy concentrations fell in the new areas such as those which were received during the previous day.

From about 0100 to 0130 hours and from 0501 to 0530 hours, heavy artillery shells estimated to be 170mm or larger fell near the Battalion CP. The craters indicated that the fire was coming from two different positions, one opposite the 34th Division sector and one opposite the 36th Division sector. There were no casualties from this fire. The Executive Officer made a shelling report giving all the facts that could be obtained to assist in locating the long range guns, which were doing this shelling.

Visibility was poor during the day but it was possible to engage several targets. Harassing missions were assigned by the Division Artillery.

The Battalion Commander attended a conference with the Division Commander. Upon returning, held a meeting with the Staff and Company Commanders. The Battalion Commander explained the situation and gave the plan of a proposed attack on S. Angelo. The attack was only to be made if the 34th Division was successful in making a break through.

All Companies were alerted to take part in the attack if it materialized and were assigned missions to fire on the town and the vicinity just back of the town to cover the advance of the Infantry.

The Battalion Commander attended a conference at the Division Artillery to learn just what fires were expected from this Battalion and found that the firing would take place as a demonstration whether an attack was actually launched or not. Upon returning to the Battalion CP, the Company Commanders were given complete information about the firing for the night and the missions were carried out as scheduled. As the break through was not effected, the Infantry did not make the proposed attack that night.

On 31 January, the Battalion continued to search the enemy positions across the Rapido River selecting known targets and thoroughly covering them with fire. Late aerial photographs were found to be very helpful in selecting targets and the positions located by the Division Photographic Interpreter were pointed out to our forward observers to assist in selecting targets to be fired on.

Wherever possible, every movement was noted by our observers was fired on and in a number of instances, excellent effect was observed.

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When no actual targets could be observed, harassing fires were placed on suspected area and roads. Houses opposite our positions were systematically covered by fire as it was found in the S. Pietro operation that the enemy made a practice of occupying them in most instances.

Five houses were reported completely destroyed that were known to be occupied by the enemy and strong points which had been pointed out by the Aerial Photographic Interpreter, were well covered by fire several times during the day. The harassing fires for the night which had been assigned by the Division Artillery were planned by the Battalion Commander and the Staff assigned these missions to the various companies.

No replacements were received for the period for which this report is rendered.

Map Reference: 1:50,000.

Attached Annexes:

1. Copy of Unit Journal
2. Overlays of Positions
3. Personnel Casualties during period
4. Material destroyed or damaged by enemy action
5. Enemy Casualties caused by 636th TD Bn during period

For the Battalion Commander:

Regan L. Ducose
REGAN L. DUCOSE
Captain, Infantry
Unit Historian

OFFICIAL:

REGAN L. DUCOSE
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

18 January 44

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MAIS: ITALY 1:50,000 - Sheets 160 II - 161 III.

1. a. Enemy holds RAPIDO - GARIGLIANO river line.
 - b. 36th Infantry Division on D-Day will cross RAPIDO river, secure SAN-ANGELO, and establish bridgehead for future operations.
2. a. Mission of Battalion:
 - (1) Occupies firing positions near the E bank of the RAPIDO RIVER W of CESA MARTINO, after 2000 hours 20 January 44, prepared by daylight 21 January 1944 to support the attack by direct fire on definitely located German positions or on tanks attempting to attack the bridgehead; and prepared to execute long range indirect fires in support of the bridgehead after initial objectives are captured.
3. a. Company "A" will move from present position to indirect fire position in the vicinity of 882 - 164 (See Operation Overlay) under cover of darkness 19 January 44. Route (See Operation Overlay attached). "A" Company will register 1 (One) gun per platoon on SAN-ANGELO during day 20 January and be prepared to fire any missions requested by Battalion after registering. CO Company "A" will reconnoiter direct fire positions in area South of LA-FIETA, and be prepared to occupy same on Battalion order.
 - b. Company "C" will move from present position to indirect fire position in the vicinity of 899 - 164 (See Operation Overlay attached) under cover of darkness 19 January 44. Route (See Operation Overlay attached). "C" Company will register 1 (One) gun per platoon on SAN-ANGELO during day 20 January and be prepared to fire any missions requested by Battalion after registering.
 - c. Company "B" will move from present position to direct fire position Southeast of LA-FIETA, at 875 - 165 on Battalion order prior to D-Day, H-Hour. Route (See attached Overlay). Company "B" will be prepared to support the crossing of the 36th Division on targets of opportunity on the West bank of the RAPIDO river.
 - d. Pioneer Company will furnish 2 (Two) Officers to accompany the 1st and 3rd Battalions 141st Infantry as forward observers and liaison officers with those units. Pioneer Platoon Pioneer Company will clear all mines in "B" Company direct fire position and routes thereto.
4. a. Administrative orders later.
5. a. En OP (See Operation Overlay).
 - b. En OP (See Operation Overlay).
 - c. En OP's in company areas.
 - d. Aid Station (See Operation Overlay).

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1 - 36th Inf Div	1 - 36th T D Bn
1 - 36th Div Arty	1 - En Unit
1 - 36th Div	1 - Journal
1 - File	

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OPERATION OVERLAY #28A

HQ 636 TD BN APO #464

1400 23 JAN 44

MAP: ITALY 1:50,000

ORDERS

1. COMPANY "B" WILL MOVE FROM PRESENT
DIRECT FIRE POSITIONS TO INDIRECT FIRE
POSITION SHOWN ON OVERLAY DURING DARK-
NESS 23 JAN 44.

2. BN AID STATION WILL MOVE FROM PRESENT
LOCATION TO LOCATION SHOWN ON OVERLAY

23 JAN 44

15

OFFICIAL

BODENMILLER

S-3

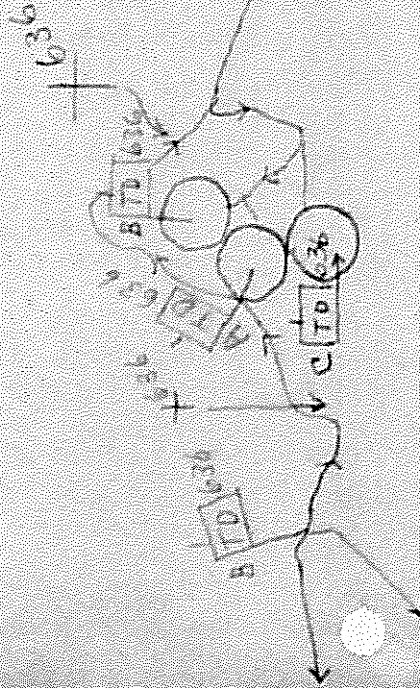
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OPERATION OVERLAY # 288

HQ 636 TD BN APO 464

1500 29 JAN 44

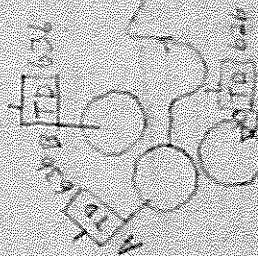
MAP: ITALY 1:50,000

ORDERS:

1. COMPANY A WILL MOVE FROM PRESENT
INDIRECT FIRE POSITIONS TO INDIRECT
FIRE POSITIONS AS SHOWN ON OVERLAY

DURING DARKNESS 29 JAN 44

2. ROUTE OF MARCH, SEE OVERLAY



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OFFICIAL:

BODENMILLER

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ANNEX NO. 3

PERSONNEL BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

OFFICERS

ENLISTED MEN

	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>
18 Jan 44	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
19 Jan 44	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	0
22 Jan 44	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
23 Jan 44	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
28 Jan 44	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	1	5	0	0	1	13	0	0

ANNEX NO. 3

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ANNEX NO. 3

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

GRADE

SSN

DATE OF

NUMBER OF

NAME OF

CASUALTY

COMPANY

ADDRESS

HEADQUARTERS

Officers

KINWISON, PAUL (N.S.)	Capt	0-344051	18 Jan 44	LTA	427 Fulton Ave. San Antonio, Texas
BRUFCKNER, MONTE F.	1st Lt	0-1168100	18 Jan 44	LTA	2005 Fletcher St. Chelsea, Mich.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Enlisted Men

BLOYD, DELBERT F.	Staff Sgt	37147010	28 Jan 44	LTA	836 E. 3rd St. Lincoln, Neb.
STOFER, BERNARD F.	Rec 5	37163330	28 Jan 44	LTA	107 Frank Ave. St Paul, Minn.

RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY

Officers

CAMPBELL, JOHN C.	1st Lt	0-1168196	22 Jan 44	PFA	2406 Lexington St. Columbia, S. C.
RODGERS, REVOLDS D.	1st Lt	0-1288125	22 Jan 44	LTA	126 E. 22nd St. Erie, Pa.

Enlisted Men

STOVER, HERSCHEL C.	Cpt	35213466	19 Jan 44	SWA	607 Harrison St. Newell, W. Va.
LALLMAN, ALVIN H.	Cpl	37146940	19 Jan 44	SWA	Gen. Delivery Arlington, Va.
OLIVER, CHARLES H.	Cpl	37145107	19 Jan 44	LTA	WFO 1, Guilford, Conn.
HARRIS, JAMES C.	Pvt 1 cl	35213572	19 Jan 44	LTA	Route 12 Taverly, Ohio
PENNINGTON, COYNE D.	Pvt 1 cl	37146982	19 Jan 44	SWA	Gen Delivery Humboldt, Texas
SALDIVAR, BENITO M.	Pvt	38027521	19 Jan 44	LTA	619 Grant St. Laredo, Texas

COMPANY "A"

Officers

PEARSON, ALEC P.	Capt	0-394225	28 Jan 44	LTA	Route 15, Box 10 Faco, Texas
GRAHAM, ROBERT E.	1st Lt	0-1168254	28 Jan 44	LTA	11 Broad St. Sumter, S. C.

Enlisted Men

SCHWAKE, ELTON L.	1st Sgt	38050898	28 Jan 44	LTA	420 W. 32nd St. Houston, Texas
PRICE, WILLIAM H., JR.	Cpl	38052856	28 Jan 44	LTA	1235 Columbia St. Houston, Texas
BEHR, HENRY F.	Rec 5	38081636	28 Jan 44	LTA	4242 Travis St. Dallas, Texas

ANNEX NO. 3

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ANNEX NO. 3 (Cont'd)

REF ID: A66666

COMPANY "B"

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>				
SHAW, FERMAN O.	Sgt	38038666	22 Jan 44	LWA	Route #2 Garland, Texas
SHAW, DAVID E.	Tec 5	31206545	23 Jan 44	LWA	17 Mechanic St. Boston, Mass.

COMPANY "C"

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>				
O'BRYANT, JOHN W.	Pvt 1 cl	35358422	22 Jan 44	DOW	Gen Delivery Daleville, Ind.

ANNEX NO. 3

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ANNEX NO. 4.

MATERIEL DESTROYED OR DAMAGED
By ENEMY ACTION

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DISPOSITION</u>
Mine Detector, SCR 625	12 January 1944	Requisitioned
M-10 Tank Destroyer	21 January 1944	Replaced
Circle, Aiming M1	22 January 1944	Replaced
3 - Carbines, Cal .30 M1	28 January 1944	Requisitioned
3 - Gun, Thompson submachine Cal .45	28 January 1944	Requisitioned
Board, drawing	28 January 1944	Requisitioned

ANNEX NO. 4.

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ANNEX NO. 5.

ENEMY CASUALTY REPORT

- Par. 1. Total expenditure of 3" ammunition during period was 17,900 rounds of H.E. and 43 rounds of A.P.C., and 27 rounds of 3" smoke. Total expenditure of 37 mm ammunition during period was 340 rounds of H.E.. Total expenditure of .50 caliber ammunition during period was 30,000 rounds. Total expenditure of .30 caliber ammunition was 15,000 rounds.
- Par. 2. Estimated enemy personnel killed: Due to the nature of operation of this unit during this period no accurate estimate of enemy killed can be made.
- Par. 3. Damage to enemy material: Due to the nature of operation of this unit during this period no accurate estimate of enemy materiel damaged or destroyed can be made.

ANNEX NO. 5.

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**DOWNGRADED TO:
RESTRICTED**

BY AUTHORITY OF TAG H.S.

HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
Office of the Battalion Commander

AFD 464, U. S. Army
7 March 1944

3 Dec 45 H.S.P.
Date Initials

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Records.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Army, AFD 464, U. S. Army.

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in Letter, Allied Forces Headquarters, dated 20 April 1943, file AG 314.7/389 C-M, Subject: Historical Records and Histories of Organizations, transmitted herewith Operations in Italy, February 1944 of this Battalion.

2. Conclusions:

a. Subject: The Dual Mission of the Tank Destroyer.

The primary mission of the tank destroyer is apparent by its name, that is defense against enemy armor. In carrying out this primary mission even in an offensive situation, the tank destroyer seeks by the exploitation of terrain and cover to maintain an advantage over its heavier armored enemy, the tank. Speed in the occupation of positions, fields of fire covering probable avenues of approach, concealed and dug in positions have become the tried and accepted tactics of successful "tank killers".

Now an entirely new field for the tank destroyer has been tried and proven in the campaign in Italy. That is its secondary role as artillery. In that this role is played by the tank destroyer a much greater percentage of its time in this theater, it is well to consider the characteristics of the weapon and how it can be made to fit both its primary and secondary missions.

The greatest danger of the tank destroyer's employment as artillery is that it will not be positioned and used in the path of the enemy armored attack. This is absolutely essential and rightly emphasized as tank destroyer tactics. Yet to place the tank destroyer in this direct fire position immediately is to expose it to unnecessary casualties from enemy fire and to sacrifice its tremendous fire power in its secondary role as artillery.

Now is how the dual mission can be accomplished successfully. The flat trajectory, high velocity 3" gun on the M36 mount must be posi-

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tioned behind very little mask so that the minimum elevation will enable it to fire at close-in targets. The usual artillery piece will occupy a position behind a mask from which a destroyer can only be fired at its maximum ranges. This means that positions suitable for artillery are not usually suitable for the tank destroyer.

On the other hand the destroyer's primary mission demands that it be further forward near good routes and close to its previously selected direct fire anti-tank positions. So it is believed that if careful consideration is given the tank destroyer in the selection of its indirect firing position, that it can perform its secondary role without danger to the successful accomplishment of its primary one. These are the fundamental rules:

(1) That the indirect position be well forward and as near the probable avenue of approach of enemy armor as the terrain permits.

(2) That this position afford at least flash defilade or concealment, but a very low mask in order to exploit the close as well as maximum ranges of the gun.

(3) That good routes lead from the indirect position to the direct position.

(4) That the ammunition requirements of the direct and primary mission be constantly in mind.

(5) That the capabilities of the 3 inch gun fired indirectly by forward observer methods, at fairly close ranges, using delayed fuse, at enemy pill boxes, bunkers, and stone houses be thoroughly understood.

If these rules are known and practiced the tank destroyer can accomplish its dual mission and completely justify its existence and its extremely high cost to our government.

In rule (5) above the registering of one gun of each platoon of the battalion on a common base point and closing the shafts, enables the battalion commander to fire one gun or mass the fires of thirty-six in a very small area with terrific effect.

Van W. Pyland
VAN W. PYLAND

Lt Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

1 Incl:

Narrative of Operations for the month
of February 1944, with attached annexes

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HEADQUARTERS 6364th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO 464, U. S. Army

3 March 1944

OPERATIONS IN ITALY, FEBRUARY 1944

As the month of January 1944 closed the Battalion was in indirect fire positions situated at strategic points on the 96th Division front along the Rapido River, from which artillery missions could be fired and also the primary mission of protecting the Division against an armored thrust, could be performed. Our forces were temporarily on the defense in this sector and consequently the Battalion Commander was utilizing the Battalion to destroy pill boxes and enemy strong points opposite the Division sector by observed indirect fire.

Numerous observation posts, as near the enemy lines as possible, had been established, some of them being coordinated with the front line infantry battalion observation posts in order that the battalion might take advantage of information gained by the infantry patrols.

On the 1st February the Battalion continued its indirect fire on observed enemy targets across the Rapido. The Division Artillery reported that enemy tank vehicles had been observed on the road between Fignatara and Cassino. Harassing fire was promptly placed on this road.

Fire was also coordinated with observers of the 143d Infantry and known enemy strong points opposite that sector were fired on. One of our forward observers located an enemy helicopter and Companies "B" and "C" placed concentrations on these positions.

A plan to support the Division in a river crossing operation, the execution of which depended on the success of the operations in the 34th Division sector had been prepared. At 1435 hours the Division G-3 notified the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Ryland, that the plan would not be put into effect that night.

During the day the Battalion completely destroyed four houses known to be occupied by enemy, silenced several machine guns, mortars and recoilless, and fired a number of harassing missions.

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Due to the appearance of the general situation, the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Pyland, felt that any movement forward would be a highway to be entering the Cassino area. So on 2 February he ordered the Reconnaissance Company, to cause the roads north of Highway 6 toward Cassino and Cairo to be reconnoitered. Captain Rodensiller, the CO, also checked Company positions for camouflage discipline, as visibility was excellent.

During the morning, the Battalion fired on a number of machine guns, mortars, and nebelwerfers, some of which were reported by our observers, and some by Division Artillery and forward infantry elements. The Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Pyland, called Division Artillery late in the day and requested the assistance of an air observer to register the Battalion on points beyond the visibility of our ground observers. Arrangements were made for this work and Division Artillery promised to notify the Battalion when a plane would be available. At 1345 hours Division Artillery called and notified us an observation plane would be available and we promptly alerted Company "A" to be prepared to fire concentrations on enemy tanks that were moving along the road between Pignataro and Cassino.

The observation plane adjusted fire and reported two fires started in the target area. Upon the completion of the first mission the air observer assisted the Battalion in registering on Pignataro and later on an enemy artillery battery. That concluded the missions fired by the observation plane and the Battalion continued to fire with the use of ground observers, placing counterbattery fire on enemy gun positions and harassing fire on other targets assigned by Division Artillery.

At 1642 hours the Company Commander, Reconnaissance Company, returned to the Battalion Command Post and gave Captain Austin, The Battalion Executive Officer, a report of road conditions north of Highway 6, and pointed out on the map several likely observation post positions.

At 2130 hours the Division Commander called Lt Colonel Pyland, the Battalion Commander, and told him that the Battalion would probably be attached to Combat Command "B" of the 1st Armored Division, if the 34th Division effected an immediate break through on the Cassino line.

On the morning of 3 February 1944 at 0150 hours the Division Artillery Commander notified the Battalion Commander that the Battalion should be prepared to move on two hour notice anytime after daylight. All Company Commanders were notified and told to be prepared for a sudden movement order. At 0925 hours the Company "C" forward observer located an enemy vehicle and Company "C" placed fire on it. The Company "C" observer reported the vehicle destroyed by a direct hit. Throughout the morning the Battalion placed concentrations on a number of houses known to be occupied by the enemy and other installations identified by the defense overprint supplied by the Division G-2. The Battalion observation post was shelled by enemy mortars at 1235 hours.

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During the afternoon the Battalion continued to fire on targets located by our observers and those reported by Division Artillery and other units. At 2037 hours the Division G-2 called and reported that 30 enemy tanks had been located in a 1000 yard square the center being at 795203. Companies "B" and "C" were promptly alerted to fire this mission, and during the next 50 minutes, 1,200 rounds were placed on the thousand yard square. The 34th Division was notified that the firing had been completed.

At 0200 hours on 4 February, our Liaison Officer to Division Headquarters brought the Division Field Order No. 45 which contained details of the plan to exploit the bridgehead which the 34th Division was to establish. The Battalion Commander conferred with the Staff to make plans for complying with the Division order.

The Battalion Commander ordered the Destroyer Companies to continue placing fire on all targets that could be picked up by our observers and on such targets that were reported by Division Artillery and the infantry observers. During the day several enemy nebelwerfers were located and concentrations placed on them. Company "B" forward observer reported that a large column of smoke appeared after Company "A" had fired on one nebelwerfer position. Company "B" completely destroyed a house in which enemy had been observed and later placed fire at a point where enemy vehicle motors had been heard. An enemy tank was located at 855157 and Company "B" fired on it. Smoke came from the turret after the concentration was completed.

At 1812 hours our Liaison Officer to the 143d Infantry called and reported that British troops were to replace the 143d Infantry in that sector.

The general situation was such that the Battalion Commander felt sure a movement of the Battalion to positions near Cervaro was eminent, so on the morning of 5 February he took the S-1 forward on a reconnaissance of that area to select a command post site and check for positions for the Destroyer Companies. The area both sides of Cervaro was carefully studied especially the slope of the hill north and west of Cervaro, which faced Cassino and the Monastery Hill. A suitable house for the Command Post was selected and a guard placed in it. A short distance below the house positions were found for two companies and just above the house another company position was located.

While the reconnaissance was being made the Battalion continued firing on targets which appeared across the Rapido. Enemy artillery fire was particularly heavy throughout the day. Telephone lines were destroyed and it was necessary to keep the line crews on them constantly.

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Upon returning to the Battalion Command Post, the Battalion Commander found that the 36th Division had ordered the Battalion moved to the Cervaro area so he ordered the S-1 to take the Executive Officer and S-3 to the points selected by him earlier in the day. The Battalion Commander then ordered the Company Commanders to meet him and he carried them to the sites selected for their companies. The S-4 accompanied the Battalion Commander to the new area also.

After the reconnaissance by the Company Commanders and Staff was completed, plans were made to move the Battalion on the following day. The Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Pyland, ordered the Command Post to be moved by infiltration and directed that the S-4 obtain clearance for the rest of the Battalion.

On the morning 6 February advance elements of the Battalion began movement to the new Battalion area northwest of Cervaro. By 1145 the forward echelon of the Battalion Command Post was established at 918209 and vehicles had been camouflaged. All personnel began digging in well under orders of the Battalion Commander since enemy artillery fire was expected in that forward area.

In the meantime word had been received that no daylight movement was permitted and it was necessary for the Battalion Commander to rescind orders to move the Destroyer Companies during the day. He issued orders for the movement to begin at 1730 hours.

Since a night move was anticipated it was necessary to check the route the Destroyer Companies were to take so the S-2 went back over the route that had been selected. At 1500 hours our Liaison Officer to Division arrived with information that clearance had been obtained for a movement during the daylight hours, but it was impossible to get instructions to the Destroyer Companies in time to speed their movement therefor the Battalion Commander ordered the march to continue according to the last plan.

Movement into the new area was personally supervised by the Battalion Commander, S-1, S-2, S-3, and the S-4, and all positions were carefully selected and camouflaged. All companies had closed into their areas by 2400 hours.

On 7 February the Battalion Commander and S-3 inspected the positions occupied by the Destroyer Companies the previous night and the Battalion Commander located an observation post near the Company "3" position. Wire communications were established to all Companies and the new Battalion observation post, and the Destroyer Companies were registered on a base point by the Battalion Commander.

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The Executive Officer obtained permission from Division Headquarters to move Reconnaissance Company into an area in the vicinity of 929203 and that Company had closed into that area by 1420 hours that afternoon.

The S-1 and S-4 made a reconnaissance of the area around S. Vittore, to select areas into which the Personnel Section and Service Trains could be moved. Sites were selected and plans made to move these installations the following day.

The Destroyer Companies fired on several observed targets on 8 February, reporting one house demolished in which enemy machine guns had been active, and two enemy machine guns silenced at another position. Harassing artillery fire fell in several of the areas during the day.

The Battalion Commander attended a conference at Division Headquarters during the afternoon and ordered the Company Commanders to report to the Battalion Command Post for a meeting. At the meeting the Battalion Commander oriented the Company Commanders and Staff on the situation and plan for establishing the Cassino bridgehead. The Battalion was to support the operation by fire from its present positions and move across the river with the armor when the bridgehead had been established.

The Personnel Section and the Service Trains were moved to S. Vittore area during the day.

Throughout the 9th February the Battalion fired observed fires on targets in the Cassino area and further out in the Liri Valley. The Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Pyland, directed the fire from the Battalion observation post. Major General Walker, with his aide, visited the Battalion Commander at the Battalion observation post during the afternoon and observed the firing. Four houses occupied by the enemy were demolished and several concentrations were placed on two machinegun positions, silencing them. Two enemy vehicles, identified as tanks, and one ammunition track were destroyed later in the day.

The morning of 10 February the Battalion Commander requested permission to fire on enemy installations just south of Cassino and it was known that our troops had not reached that point. Permission was granted and observed fire was placed along Highway 6 south of Cassino, and in the area between Highway 6 and the railroad. The 36th Division G-2 called and gave location of several enemy installations on which fire could be placed.

The Company Commander, Reconnaissance Company, reported that the Company area was under constant artillery fire the previous night. There was a

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considerable amount of artillery fire around the Battalion Command Post during the day also. Artillery fire could be observed falling in the Company "C" area and at 1405 one of the shells struck an ammunition trailer, setting the ammunition on fire. Another shell made a direct hit on the Company "C" command post but failed to explode. One man was lightly wounded in the Company "C" area during the shelling.

The visibility was very poor throughout the day and it was very difficult to observe the effect of any fire. Several targets were fired on but results could not be clearly stated.

The Battalion was notified by the Division Artillery Commander that the attack which had been planned was to be launched at 1100 hours, and shortly after receiving this information the Artillery Annex to Division Field Order #47 arrived and from it our preparatory fires were planned.

The Battalion Commander ordered the Company Commanders to report to the Battalion Command Post for orders.

Later in the morning the information we had received indicated that the Battalion would be attached to Combat Command "B" for a future operation was confirmed and Lt Vevers was appointed our Liaison Officer to that organization.

The Battalion Commander conferred with the Staff on the plans for supporting the attack which was to take place at 1100 hours, and when the Company Commanders arrived the Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Pyland, gave the orders for laying down preparatory fires and also ordered that the observation posts be manned to select targets of opportunity as the attack progressed.

At 1000 hours the Battalion began a one hour preparatory fire on the missions assigned by Division Artillery and when this was completed targets were selected from the observation posts and engaged as they appeared. The Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Pyland, located some enemy vehicles moving toward Cassino and reported them to Division G-2. At 1400 hours the Battalion Commander located a number of vehicles moving toward Pontecorvo, and when it was found that our guns did not have sufficient range to engage them, contact was made with Corps Artillery and a battery of 155 mm guns was placed on this target, our observation post adjusting them.

The 36th Division G-2 called and requested the coordinates of the enemy vehicles which had been located.

At 1623 hours the Battalion Commander located some enemy personnel in a house near the south edge of Cassino and a gun appeared to be firing from the house. The Division granted permission to fire in this area as the attack had not succeeded in progressing that far. The house was fired on and destroyed.

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During the day the Battalion destroyed six houses around which enemy action had been noted, and at 2100 hours harassing fire was laid on areas in which activity had been noted. Several enemy artillery concentrations were placed in the Battalion area during the day and night 11 - 12 February.

Shortly after 0600, 12 February, enemy artillery fire began falling near the Battalion Command Post and between 0630 and 0645 a concentrated shelling was placed directly on the Command Post area. One shell made a direct hit on the house in which the command post was located, killing the S-3, Captain John S. Bodenmiller, and the Chaplain, 1st Lt Arvil Tom, and wounding Captain Paul Kinnison, S-2, and Captain Olin W. Cameron, Headquarters Company Commandant. Another shell hit the side of the Command Post truck damaging it by shell fragments while other shells riddled the tarps and shelter tents covering the foxholes of the enlisted men of the Command Post personnel.

Later in the morning the area was repeatedly shelled and the Battalion Commander directed that the Command Post be moved to another location since it was obvious that observed fire was being placed on it.

A new site was selected and at 1100 hours the movement began. By 1500 hours the Command Post group had closed into the new area at 928208. At 2230 hours information was received that the water point that the Battalion had been using had been destroyed by shell fire and two enlisted men, Earl W. Stevens and Joseph O. Phillips had been wounded at that point. The enemy artillery fire was heavier during the night 12 - 13 February.

On the morning of 13 February, Company "C" sent out a patrol to attempt to locate an enemy gun which had been reported by an Italian civilian to be firing from an area behind our lines, being manned by Germans in Italian uniforms. The Company Commander of Company "C" reported, when the patrol had returned, that no gun could be located in that area and the report was evidently erroneous.

Our observation post gave the probable coordinates of a 170 mm gun and the Executive Officer passed the information on to Division Artillery and the II Corps counter-battery officer.

The Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Ryland, attended a conference at the command post of Combat Command "B" and upon returning held a meeting of the Staff to discuss plans for employing the Battalion in the coming operation.

Several observed missions were fired by the Destroyer Companies during the day and one enemy vehicle was destroyed. Enemy artillery fire was light during this period.

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The Battalion Commander and S-2 left for the forward observation post in the early forenoon of 14 February to direct fire. At 0805, 36th Division called and stated that there would be a truce, requested by the enemy, to pick up dead and wounded. This truce was to exist between the hours of 0800 and 1100 hours. The truce was extended later in the morning to include the time up to 1430 hours.

A representative from the 2d Bn, 13th Armored Regt visited the Command Post in the afternoon to discuss with the Battalion Commander coordination of the 13th Armored Regt and this Battalion in the planned armored thrust across the Rapido River.

Visibility during the day was generally poor.

During the forenoon of 15 February, the Battalion Commanders of the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 13th Armored Regiment visited the Battalion Command Post to discuss with the Battalion Commander plans for the coming armored thrust into the Liri Valley. A Company Commanders meeting was held to orient the companies on the present situation. The possibility of the Battalion moving to a rear area was also discussed.

The Benedictine Abbey was bombed by American planes during the early forenoon. Company "B" also fired several concentrations into the Abbey. Shortly after noon several severe enemy artillery concentrations were laid in the Battalion Command Post area and the area occupied by Company "C".

In the early afternoon our Liaison Officer to 36th Division reported with news that the Battalion would be detached from the 36th Division effective 2400 hours, 15 February 1944, and that we would be moved to the vicinity of Mignano upon Corps order.

The Battalion Commander directed the Executive Officer and S-2 to reconnoiter for a Battalion bivouac area in the vicinity of Mignano. After selecting an area the Executive Officer and S-2 visited Combat Command "B" command post to check on the situation. The Commanding General, First Armored Division, informed the Executive Officer that the 36th Tank Destroyer Battalion would maintain its present position on the slopes of Hill 552 to join Combat Command "B" in an armored thrust up the Liri Valley.

During the afternoon our Liaison Officer to Combat Command "B" reported with the information concerning reports that we were to submit to that command.

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During the night, 15 - 16 February, enemy artillery was very active, with a few shells falling in the Battalion Command Post area.

On 16 February the Battalion Commander conferred with the Commanding General of the First Armored Division regarding our part in the Combat Command "B" operation. Company "A", 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion to be attached to the 2d Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment; Company "B", to be attached to the 3d Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment; with Company "C" to be held in reserve. Reconnaissance Company to be used as security and to maintain contact between the flanks. Headquarters Company would establish traffic control posts at pertinent road junctions and river crossings to maintain the proper flow of vehicles during the crossing of the Rapido River. Overlays were made by this Battalion and traffic control posts assigned to officers of Headquarters Company and Battalion Staff. The Battalion Commander was designated to be in charge of all traffic movement.

Visibility was generally poor during the day, however our Battalion observation post reported observing an enemy Nebelwerfer firing from S30163. Corps Artillery placed concentrations on the installation, silencing it. The observation post also reported approximately 45 enemy vehicles sighted in the vicinity of 6816 and 6916.

Most of the day was spent in making plans for the armored thrust across the Rapido and up the Liri Valley.

In the early morning hours of 17 February enemy artillery was very active. Heavy concentrations were placed on friendly positions.

The Battalion Commander and Staff started planning and reconnoitering for positions that could be used as traffic control sites for maintaining the control of traffic of the planned armored thrust across the Rapido. At each traffic control post an officer with a 610 radio set would be placed to maintain communication with the Battalion central post. Traffic control posts with 610 radio sets were established at 932162, 903173, 903181, 872205, 869196, 854200 and at each proposed bridge site. This Battalion made an overlay and plan of traffic control which was submitted to Combat Command "B" by our Liaison Officer. They reproduced this same control plan and returned it to this Battalion. Copies were distributed to officers manning the traffic control posts.

The Battalion Commander held a company commanders meeting to give them the situation. They were told this Battalion would take over the traffic control mission after 0600, 18 February. A message was received by the Battalion Commander from Combat Command "B" at 1746 hours telling us to be prepared to move on two hours notice.

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On 18 February this Battalion remained on an alert status to move on instruction from Combat Command "B". At 0745 hours the S-3, Combat Command "B", notified the Battalion Commander that two bridges had been constructed at 865199 and 967198. Demolition squads and bulldozers had crossed the river and the area was being cleared of mines. The railroad was clear to 862201. No armor had crossed as yet but it was expected that as soon as the mines had been cleared, it would be sent across. Troops crossing the river ran into enemy small arms fire.

The Battalion Commander notified Combat Command "B" that traffic control headquarters would be at 967198.

A bitter struggle took place in the afternoon for the area in which the bridges had been constructed. Friendly troops laid smoke screens to attack behind and visibility in the valley was poor.

The Battalion observer post located twelve gun positions dug in on the slope and crest of Monte Cassino just below the Abbey. Friendly artillery was placing concentrations on these installations.

In the afternoon the Battalion Commander accompanied by his Staff and Company Commanders attended a conference at Combat Command "B" headquarters to plan for the armor thrust across the Liri. The Battalion Commander requested that Combat Command "B" place T-2 recovery vehicles at designated points on Highway 6 and near the bridges on the river.

In the late evening the S-3 of Combat Command "B" called and stated that the Battalion would be on one hour alert status effective 1900 hours 19 February 1944.

The Battalion remained on a one hour alert status on 19 February awaiting instructions from Combat Command "B". At 1035 hours, Combat Command "B" called the Battalion Commander and stated that the Battalion would again revert to a two hour alert status.

In the early afternoon our Company "C" observer called and reported to the Battalion Commander that he had located the enemy artillery battery that was laying artillery concentrations on the bridge recently laid across the Liri River. The Company "C" observer directed fire for the 937th AA Battalion of II Corps Artillery. The enemy battery was located at 842182. Good results were quickly obtained for soon after concentration was laid in this area, a great deal of movement was observed and the enemy set off colored smoke signals and rockets. It was believed several enemy communication vehicles were destroyed.

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At 1645 hours the Combat Command "B" called the Battalion Commander and informed him that this Battalion had been temporarily taken off the alert. Plans were made to move the Battalion less Company "C" to the vicinity of Mignano for the purpose of maintaining vehicles.

The Executive Officer left in the early morning hours of 20 February to attend a conference at Combat Command "B" and to select a bivouac area for the Battalion less Company "C" to move to. At 1021 hours the Executive Officer called the Battalion Commander and informed him that a location had been secured in which to move the Battalion Command Post. At 1200 hours the Battalion Commander left for the new bivouac area after giving the march order. The Battalion closed into the new bivouac area at 0911 at 1800 hours. Company "C" remained at its present position.

Reconnaissance Company and Destroyer Companies "A" and "B" spent the period from 21 - 24 February in a rear area south of Mignano doing maintenance and clean-up work on destroyers and general purpose vehicles, awaiting orders from Combat Command "B" to take forward positions that would enable them to join the armored thrust through the Liri Valley.

Company "C" remained in its forward positions until Combat Command called and requested that the Battalion Commander reconnoiter for direct fire positions for Company "C" to occupy. The Battalion Commander, Executive Officer, and the Company Commander of Company "C" reconnoitered and selected positions at 090210. Company "C" closed into its new positions 231845 February 1944.

On the afternoon of 23 February, Companies "A" and "B" alerted its destroyers for a move forward, but as the attack was postponed the destroyers remained in the rear area.

During the afternoon of 24 February it was uncertain as to whether the attack would come off during the next twenty-four period. The Battalion Commander directed that the destroyers of Companies "A" and "B" move forward and be in readiness in case the attack did jump off.

Combat Command "B" called the Command Post at 241900 February and informed the Battalion Commander that the attack had been postponed until after the 26 February 1944.

During this period the weather was very poor, with heavy rains, cloudy skies and visibility generally poor.

Throughout the last three days of the month, the Destroyer Companies remained in forward positions awaiting the attack order. Due to the inclement

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no attack orders were issued. "A", "B" and "C" Companies received harassing enemy artillery fire in their area during the night of 28 February. No casualties were suffered, as all Destroyers and personnel were well dug in.

To date the officers and enlisted men of this Battalion have been awarded twenty-four Silver Stars and seventy-four Purple Hearts. One Oak Leaf Cluster has also been awarded.

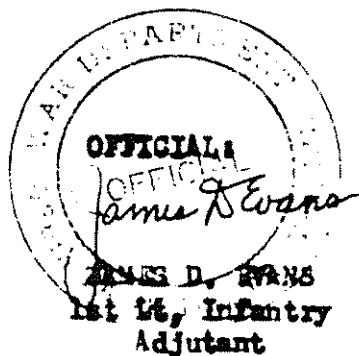
Map Reference: Italy 1:50,000.

Attached Annexes:

1. Copy of Unit Journal
2. Overlays of Positions
3. Personnel Casualties during period
4. Materiel destroyed or damaged by enemy action
5. Enemy Casualties caused by 636th TD Bn during period

For the Battalion Commander:

James D. Evans
JAMES D. EVANS
1st Lt, Infantry
Unit Historian



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ANNEX NO. 3

PERSONNEL BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

	<u>OFFICERS</u>				<u>ENLISTED MEN</u>			
	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>MI.</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>MI.</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>
3 Feb 44	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
5 Feb 44	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
12 Feb 44	2	2	0	0	0	3	0	0
Total	2	2	0	0	0	5	0	0

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ANNEX NO. 4

MATERIAL DESTROYED OR DAMAGED
BY JAPANESE ACTION

| <u>ITEM</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>DISPOSITION</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 - Trailer, armored, M-8 | 11 February 1944 | Replaced |
| 100 rounds - 9" ammunition | 11 February 1944 | Replaced |
| 1 - Gasoline, cal. 30, M-1 | 13 February 1944 | Replaced |
| 1 - Truck, $1\frac{1}{2}$ Ton, 6 x 6 | 25 February 1944 | Replaced |

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ANNEX NO. 4

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ANNEX NO. 5

ENEMY CASUALTY REPORT

1. Total expenditure of 3" ammunition during the period was 11,800 rounds of H.E., 182 rounds of 3" smoke, and 2 rounds of A.P.C.

2. Estimated enemy personnel killed: Due to the nature of operations of this unit during this period no accurate estimate of enemy killed can be made.

3. Enemy material destroyed: During this period this organisation destroyed 14 enemy occupied houses, 2 enemy S.P. vehicles, 3 enemy trucks, and 3 enemy tanks.

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ANNEX NO. 5

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HEADQUARTERS 84th AIRBORNE DIVISION
Office of the Adjutant General

REST

A.O. 164, U. S. Army
7 April 1944

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Records.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Army, A.O. 164, U. S. Army.

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in Letter, Allied Force Headquarters, dated 20 April 1944, file AG 314.7/389 C-1, Subject: Historical Records and Histories of Organizations, transmitted herewith Operations in Italy, March 1944 of this Battalion.

2. Conclusions:

One M-10 tank destroyer of this unit was damaged by a bomb from a friendly bomber during the bombing of Cassino by our Air Force. Only one casualty resulted from this direct hit due to the habit of the destroyer crews digging elaborate foxholes and dugouts near their destroyer in which they live when not actually firing on the enemy. This enables them to take cover during bombing attacks by high level planes. If the planes are watched there is time to take cover when the bomb racks are seen to open and spill their bombs. Friendly ground troops should not be too close to enemy targets when a friendly high level bombing mission is to be accomplished.

Van W. Pyland
VAN W. PYLAND
Lt Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

- 1 Incl:
Narrative of Operations for the month of March 1944, with attached annexes.

DOWNGRADED TO:
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BY AUTHORITY OF TAG *H.S.*

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Date Initials

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
MOC 464, U. S. Army

3 April 1944

OPERATIONS IN ITALY, MARCH 1944

The beginning of the month of March found "A" Company at 913213, "B" Company at 912215, and "C" Company at 920211, all forward positions where they were awaiting the order to attack up the Liri Valley. The first two weeks of weather during the month were wet and disagreeable. The Battalion Commander several times planned to move the Companies back to a rear area but due to the uncertainty of the situation they remained in forward positions.

One request was made to the Commanding General, Combat Command "E", to move companies but it was evidently not favorably considered because no reply was received.

The Battalion Commander and Staff checked the Companies on several different occasions and also spent a good deal of time perfecting plans for the forthcoming operation. Traffic Controls Posts were checked and several Company Commander meetings were held to be sure that all orders and plans were fully understood.

On 14 March at approximately 1930, the Battalion was alerted by Liaison Officer from Combat Command "E", that the attack was to take place the following day. The field order was received and plans for the next days activities were made by the Battalion Commander and Staff.

At 0730 on 15 March, the Battalion Command Group began its movement to the forward Command Post at Cervaro. At 0845 all elements of the Command Group closed into the new command post. A message center was established and communications were immediately set up with our Companies and Traffic Control Headquarters. All officers who were to maintain Traffic Control Posts reported to the CP to be dispatched to their regular stations as they were called for.

From 0835 to 1200 continuous flights of American Bombers bombed Cassino. Some bombs were dropped in the area occupied by our Company "C". One load of bombs was accidentally dropped near Cervaro.

Friendly artillery began its concentration at noon. Companies "A" and "B" reported their missions complete at 1247. Company "C" reported that no targets of opportunity had been picked up consequently they expended no ammunition.

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Orders were received from the 3-3, Combat Command "B" that all traffic control stations up to Co. 1 would be manned by 1800. Forward control posts were to be manned as the situation progressed.

Captain Kinnison, Lt Harsh, Lt Witten, and Lt Gould left the Command post to man their assigned Traffic Control Posts.

The Battalion Commander and 3-3 left the C to occupy Traffic Control Headquarters. While at the Headquarters the Battalion Commander contacted Major Jenkins, the New Zealand Provost Marshal, and personally inspected all traffic control posts on Highway 6.

At 1709 it was reported that the Indians were on the hill west of Hill 193.

At 1825 a message was received from our Liaison Officer that tanks were 75 yards from objective Quisling. Further advance was impossible without engineer aid. Hand to hand fighting and small arms fighting was taking place in Cassino and on Montecassino.

Combat Command "B" called intermittently during the night to give the situation and to keep us posted on any forward movements. Officers manning control posts stayed on duty throughout the night. Their positions were shelled intermittently during the night. During the day the Battalion expended 744 rounds of H.E. on observed targets.

At 0541, 16 March, Combat Command "B" called and said that the bridge on Highway 6 had been finished and that certain reconnaissance elements had gone across.

The Battalion Commander and 3-3 spent most of the day at Traffic Control Headquarters keeping up with the situation. Traffic Control posts were relieved and re-manned to give the officers needed rest.

At 1100, a flight of 3-25 American Bombers dropped bombs in Company "C"'s area. One man was injured, Sgt James T. Boyd, 38060677, one M-10 was damaged to the extent that it had to be evacuated. The tank was evacuated during darkness and a replacement sent in the following day. During the day Co "B" expended 21 rounds of H.E.

The Battalion Commander and 3-3 spent most of the day, 17 March 1944 at Traffic Control Headquarters. From this point in the early afternoon they directed "A" and "B" Companies fire on an enemy nobelwarfer.

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At 1700 the Battalion Commander and S-3 returned to the Battalion Command Post. Traffic Control Posts on Highway 6 were subjected to intermittent shell fire during the day.

At 1715 the Company Commanders reported to the Battalion Commander where the Battalion Commander ordered that the Company Commanders should stand more time with the gunners. He stressed that Company Commanders should emphasize the closing of sheafs.

Before the Company Commanders returned to their Companies an enemy artillery shell struck the Command Post. Several others were close-in. No one was injured.

The Liaison Officer to Combat Command "B" reported that four friendly tanks had gone to Cassino. Their approach to Cassino was observed by all Battalion OP's. Two were witnessed burning from the Battalion Command Post by the Executive Officer. No exact reports were to be had concerning the situation. The Battalion expended 1,631 rounds of A.P. and 48 rounds of smoke on observed targets during the day.

The following morning the Battalion Commander and S-3 took station at the Traffic Control Headquarters. Traffic Control Posts were manned all during 18 March by our officers. The Battalion Commander and S-3 remained at Traffic Control Headquarters throughout the day and on different occasions fired the companies on observed targets. The Company Commanders were called to Traffic Control Headquarters to observe the fires of their Companies and to make adjustment whenever necessary. Intermittent shell fire fell all along Highway 6 during the day. Captain Kimmison, manning Traffic Control Post #3, was subjected to heavy artillery concentrations.

At 0906 hours enemy aircraft dive-bombed friendly frontline positions. The 1st Armored Group forward Command Post suffered casualties from the bombing in both human lives and material destroyed. The Battalion Commander observing the bombing of the group headquarters from his post some 400 yards away made arrangements with the Companies to provide transportation to evacuate the 1st Armored Group personnel to the rear for reorganization.

Several enemy air raids took place during the day. The enemy planes usually strafed Highway 6 in the vicinity of Traffic Control Post #1 located at the Cervaro and Highway 6. Sgt Hipskind, Tec 5 Novelli, and Pvt 1 cl Helms, manning two .50 Caliber machine guns on the Battalion Commanders and S-3 vehicles, stuck to their posts and fired on all enemy planes despite their strafing and bombing.

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The Battalion silenced enemy nebelwerfers and destroyed one enemy S.A. gun by direct fire from Company "C". During this action the Battalion expended 795 rounds of M. 2, and 38 rounds of smoke.

The following morning the S-3 called Combat Command "B" to obtain information on the situation. The only information received was that the enemy had counter-attacked on Hill 193 but no results as to their success had been received. The Battalion Commander, S-3, and S-2 studied recent S-2 reports and maps for possible targets.

The Battalion Commander and S-3 left the S-3 for Traffic Control Headquarters. In the afternoon the Company Commanders were called to Traffic Control Headquarters to witness firing of their Companies.

Several enemy air raids took place during the day, 19 March. There was much bombing and strafing of Highway 6 in the vicinity of Traffic Control Headquarters. Our .50 Cal. machine guns were fired at enemy planes that were within range during the day.

At the end of the day 19 March, the enemy held Hill 165 and our forces were still holding Hill 193.

Enemy artillery fire was active during the night.

Combat Command "B" called the S-1 to report that a telegram had been received stating that Sgt Sgt Dale of Company "C" and Sgt Sgt Reeves of Company "A" had been promoted to 2d Lieutenants.

During the morning of 20 March, word was received that Hills 193, 435, and 432 were in hands of Allied troops.

The Battalion Commander, S-3, S-2, and Company Commanders spent most of the day at Traffic Control Headquarters directing fire at observed targets. The Battalion expended a total of 836 rounds of M. 2, and 50 rounds of smoke on these fires.

Traffic Control Post #4 manned by Lt. Rank and Traffic Control Post #10 manned by Lt. Witten were subjected to heavy enemy artillery fire during the night. Throughout the night enemy artillery was very active.

In the early morning hours of 21 March, enemy artillery dropped large high velocity shells in the Battalion Command Post area and Reconnaissance

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Company area. One of the shells struck the building in which the Battalion CP was housed wounding three New Zealand Officers in an adjoining room. The Battalion Commander and Staff decided it best to move the command post and the Battalion Commander and S-3 reconnoitered a new position. The new position selected was at 927206.

The Battalion Commander and S-2 left for Traffic Control Headquarters. There they were called to Headquarters, 5th New Zealand Armored Brigade where they conferred with the Commander, Brigadier Burrows. Brigadier Burrows asked Lt Colonel Ryland if it would be possible for the Battalion to lay fire safely within 200 yards of Friendly Troops. Lt Colonel Ryland, the Battalion Commander, stated that he could do so as the Battalion was registered on a building very near the spot on which fire was wanted.

A telephone line was laid from this Battalion to the New Zealand organization and plans were made to support with observed fire the following day.

During the early morning hours of 22 March enemy artillery was heavy in both the forward and rear areas. The visibility was very poor. Lt Gould, one of the Traffic Control Officers, called and stated that his headquarters had been shelled. The house was knocked down over the cave entrance to his Command Post. It was necessary for him and his crew to retreat. Lt Gould was slightly wounded by falling debris. The Traffic Control Headquarters occupied by the Battalion Commander, S-2 and S-3 was again subjected to enemy artillery and enemy air raids several times during the day.

From 1100 to 1745 hours the Battalion Commander directed fire into the Continental Hotel in Cassino with great effect. Lt Colonel McGaffey, in a tank near the Continental Hotel, also helped adjust the fire. The Battalion's expenditure of ammunition on this mission was 200 rounds of H.I. and 25 rounds of smoke.

In the afternoon Combat Command "B" called to state that the Battalion was temporarily relieved of Traffic Control duties. No further information could be obtained.

The Executive Officer and S-3 attended a unit commanders meeting at Combat Command "B" at 1800 hours. The meeting was called to discuss the general policy of military courtesy and discipline within the Combat Command "B".

A snow storm covered the area during the forenoon of 23 March. Visibility was very poor.

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Company "B" was shelled out of their Command Post during the night. A personnelist resulted. The S-3 called Combat Command "B" and told them about the shelling. Company "B" remained in its position although the Command Post was moved to the rear end of the building formerly occupied.

At 1915 hours Combat Command "B" called the Battalion Commander and told him that he was to send four M-10's into Cassino to knock down some buildings and drive enemy tanks out. The Battalion Commander and S-3 discussed with General Allen the feasibility of this plan. The Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Ryland, stated that it was against all principles of Tank Destroyer tactics to use M-10's in this manner. He did state however that from the Battalion's present positions he believed the job could be done. Lt Colonel Ryland was ordered to contact General Parkinson, New Zealand Division Commander, for instructions. General Parkinson ordered Lt Colonel Ryland to make arrangements with Brigadier Burrows of the 5th New Zealand Brigade for our M-10's to go into Cassino to perform this mission. Lt Colonel Ryland and the S-3 drove to the 5th New Zealand Brigade Headquarters and conferred with Brigadier Burrows. Combat Command "B" called later in the evening to tell us the plan had been discarded and that we were removed from alert status until 0800 hours, 27 March.

During the day, 24 March enemy artillery was active, harassing both forward and rear areas. No firing was done by the destroyer companies.

Our Liaison Officer reported from Combat Command "B" in the evening hours of 24 March that the Battalion would move back to the vicinity of Jambigliano. The Battalion Commander decided that it would be best to move to the vicinity of Piccilli in order to reorganize and get all elements of the Battalion together. Permission was given by Combat Command "B" to make this move. All Companies were alerted to the fact that they would move at daylight, 25 March.

Reconnaissance Company furnished personnel for AA crews from 20 March to 24 March inclusive. During this time 450 rounds of .50 Cal. ammunition was expended.

Movement began at daylight with Company "B" moving out first. "B", "A", Reconnaissance Company, and the Battalion Command Post moved in that order. The Battalion closed in at the Piccilli area at 1230 hours. At 1545 hours our Liaison Officer to Combat Command "B" reported in and stated that effective 1500, 25 March, we were detached from Combat Command "B" and would revert to control of our parent organization, the 36th Infantry Division.

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The 24th and 27th March were spent in making preparations for the Battalion's movement to an area in the vicinity of 280000. The Battalion Commander, Staff Officers, and the Company Commander were notified, and selected a suitable bivouac for the Battalion north-west of Radfoloni.

The first elements of the Battalion started their movement to the Radfoloni area at 0800 hours. The Battalion was closed in the area at 280776 at 1100 hours.

During the last three days of the month the Battalion devoted its time to maintaining vehicles and the cleaning of personal equipment. All personnel were sent through a shower and clothing-exchange unit. The Special Service Officer arranged for certain recreational activities.

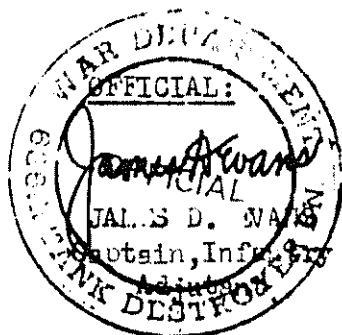
Map Reference: Italy 1:50,000.

Attached Annexes:

1. Copy of Unit Journal.
2. Overlays of Positions.
3. Personnel Casualties during period.
4. Material destroyed or damaged by enemy action.
5. Enemy casualties caused by 4th TD on during period.
6. Awards and Decorations.
7. Officers' Roster.

For the Battalion Commander:

James D. Evans
JAMES D. EVANS
Captain, Infantry
Unit Historian



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ANNEX NO. 3.

PERSONNEL BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

| | <u>OFFICERS</u> | | | | <u>ENLISTED MEN</u> | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|
| | <u>KILLED</u> | <u>WOUNDED</u> | <u>MIA</u> | <u>CAPTURED</u> | <u>KILLED</u> | <u>WOUNDED</u> | <u>MIA</u> | <u>CAPTURED</u> |
| 16 Mar 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 Mar 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 Mar 44 | <u>0</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Total | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

ANNEX NO. 3

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ANNEX NO. 3

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

| GRADE | ASN | DATE OF CASUALTY | TYPE OF CASUALTY | PLACE OF RESIDENCE |
|-------|-----|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
|-------|-----|------------------|------------------|--------------------|

HEADQUARTERS

Officers

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------------------|
| GOULD, GLENN E. | 1st Lt | 0-1823729 | 22 Mar 44 | L.A. | RD #1
Turnel, N.Y. |
|-----------------|--------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------------------|

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Enlisted Men

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------|------|------------------------------------|
| LARSON, VAUGHN J. | Pvt 1 cl | 37146523 | 18 Mar 44 | L.A. | 13th Berleigh St.
Yorkton, S.D. |
|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------|------|------------------------------------|

COMPANY "C"

Enlisted Men

| | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|----------|-----------|------|-----------------------------------|
| BOYD, JAMES T. | Sgt | 38060607 | 16 Mar 44 | L.A. | 113 W. Main St.
Lubbock, Texas |
|----------------|-----|----------|-----------|------|-----------------------------------|

ANNEX NO. 3

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ANNEX NO. 4

MATERIAL DESTROYED OR DAMAGED BY ENEMY ACTION

| <u>Items</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Disposition</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| 1 Carriage, Motor 3"
gun M10 | 16 March 44 | Replaced |
| 1 Hood, Car, half track
M-2 | 16 March 44 | Replaced |

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ANNEX NO. 4

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ANNEX NO. 5

ENEMY CASUALTY REPORT

1. Total expenditure of 3" ammunition during the period was 4880 rounds of HE, 135 rounds of 3" smoke and 61 rounds of A.F.C.

2. Estimated enemy personnel killed: Due to the nature of operations of this unit during this period, no accurate estimate of enemy killed can be made.

3. Enemy materiel destroyed: During this period this organization destroyed 21 enemy occupied houses, 1 SF Gun, and silenced 1 artillery battery, and nine nebelwerfer positions.

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ANNEX NO. 5

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ANNEX NO. 6

DECORATIONS AND AWARDS

For the period from 1 September 1943 to 31 March 1944, the following named members of this organization have been awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action:

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>ASN</u> | <u>RANK OR
GRADE</u> | <u>COMPANY</u> |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| PEARSON, ALEC P. | 0-394225 | Capt | Co "A" |
| GOULD, GLENN E. | 0-1823729 | 1st Lt | Hq Co |
| BOYSA, ALPHONSE J. | 0-1301601 | 2nd Lt | Co "C" |
| COLE, WILLIAM H. | 0-1703021 | 2nd Lt | Co "C" |
| DODSON, ROBERT L. | 0-2055900 | 2nd Lt | Co "B" |
| MURPHY, RAYMOND G. | 20802898 | Stf Sgt | Co "C" |
| SPARKS, OSCAR G. | 38035783 | Stf Sgt | Co "B" |
| PATTERSON, ROBERT E. | 38038542 | Sgt | Co "C" |
| YOST, EDWIN A. | 37146627 | Sgt | Co "C" |
| BENTLEY, HESTER L. | 34333328 | Cpl | Co "C" |
| COWAN, JOHN L. | 20817342 | Cpl | Co "B" |
| JORDAN, JOSEPH H. | 37163668 | Cpl | Co "C" |
| LORANCE, CHARLES G. | 20814658 | Cpl | Co "C" |
| O'BRYAN, JOSEPH R. | 35484581 | Cpl | Co "C" |
| STERNER, KEMPS E. | 13031240 | Cpl | Co "C" |
| WELLBORN, JACK T. | 38035985 | Cpl | Co "C" |
| STEDMAN, G. D. (I.O.) | 38177868 | Tec 5 | Co "C" |
| WARD, ROBERT C. | 38039044 | Tec 5 | Co "C" |
| SMITH, ROY C. | 37419335 | Pvt 1 cl | Co "C" |
| STOKES, CLAUDE H. | 38463151 | Pvt 1 cl | Co "C" |
| STOKES, CLYDE T. | 38463140 | Pvt 1 cl | Co "C" |
| ANDERSON, ALBERT B. | 32767048 | Pvt | Co "B" |
| JOHNSON, ALVIN B. Q. | 20805648 | Pvt | Co "C" |
| SCOTT, CHESTER (NRF) | 39324290 | Pvt | Co "C" |

ANNEX NO. 6

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ANNEX NO. 7

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

| <u>Hq and Hq Company</u> | <u>ASN</u> | <u>RANK</u> | <u>ARM OR SERVICE</u> | <u>DUTY</u> |
|-------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| PYLAND, VAN W. | 0-236089 | Lt Col | Inf | Bn Comdr |
| DUBOSE, REAGAN L. | 0-348064 | Major | Inf | Bn Ex O |
| CAMERON, OLIN W. | 0-407591 | Capt | Inf | Hq Co CO |
| DANZI, RICHARD A. | 0-1822375 | Capt | FA | S-3 |
| EVANS, JAMES D. | 0-1294639 | Capt | Inf | S-1 |
| FERGUSON, JAMES R. | 0-418363 | Capt | FA | S-4 |
| KINNISON, PAUL (NMN) | 0-344051 | Capt | Inf | S-2 |
| BROWN, STANLEY G. | 0-1289038 | 1st Lt | Inf | Hq Co Ex O |
| GOULD, GLENN E. | 0-1823729 | 1st Lt | FA | Ln O |
| HACK, HENRY G. | 0-1822567 | 1st Lt | FA | Com O |
| STOFFEL, ROBERT L. | 0-1168483 | 1st Lt | FA | Trans O |
| VEEVERS, FREDERICK O. | 0-1171809 | 1st Lt | FA | Ln O |
| WHITE, ROY D. | 0-403563 | 1st Lt | Inf | Ln O |
| WITTEN, GEORGE R. | 0-1824263 | 1st Lt | FA | Motor O |
| TUCKER, JESSE F. | W-2131525 | WOJG | | Pers O |
| <u>Medical Detachment</u> | | | | |
| BERKSON, ROBERT S. | 0-494240 | Capt | MC | Bn Surgeon |
| BURKHART, JEAN M. | 0-380858 | Capt | MC | Ass't Bn Surgeon |
| <u>Reconnaissance Company</u> | | | | |
| DOWNES, GEORGE W. | 0-1288024 | Capt | Inf | CO |
| BARRY, JOHN J. | 0-1822942 | 1st Lt | FA | Pioneer O |
| CONNELLY, HERMAN (NMN) | 0-1822964 | 1st Lt | FA | Flat Comdr |
| MC KEE, PAUL R. | 0-1823909 | 1st Lt | FA | Flat Comdr |
| RODGERS, REYNOLDS D. | 0-1288125 | 1st Lt | Inf | Ex O |
| WALTER, WILLIAM F. | 0-1824256 | 1st Lt | FA | Flat Comdr |
| <u>Company "A"</u> | | | | |
| PEARSON, ALEC P. | 0-394225 | Capt | Inf | CO |
| DAVIS, VORIS B. | 0-1822376 | 1st Lt | Inf | Flat Comdr |
| GOLDMAN, BERT M. | 0-1168247 | 1st Lt | FA | Flat Comdr |
| GRAHAM, ROBERT E. | 0-1168254 | 1st Lt | FA | Ex O |
| LONG, JAMES W. | 0-1823173 | 2nd Lt | FA | Flat Comdr |
| REEVES, WILLIAM M. | 0-1703022 | 2nd Lt | FA | Flat Comdr |

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ANNEX NO. 7 CONT'D

Company "B"

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|-----|------------|
| BROWN, HENRY P. | 0-1168187 | Capt | FA | CO |
| GROOM, KENNETH G. | 0-1824174 | 1st Lt | FA | Plat Comdr |
| MEIZNER, ELMER J. | 0-1168376 | 1st Lt | FA | Ex O |
| RECTOR, ELMO W. | 0-1307167 | 1st Lt | Inf | Plat Comdr |
| DODSON, ROBERT L. | 0-2055900 | 2nd Lt | FA | Plat Comdr |
| WRIGHT, WILLIAM E. | 0-1703006 | 2nd Lt | FA | Plat Comdr |

Company "C"

| | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------|--------|-----|------------|
| BRUECKNER, MORITZ F. | 0-1168190 | 1st Lt | FA | CO |
| DRISCOLL, EUGENE J. | 0-1175104 | 1st Lt | FA | Plat Comdr |
| GERRINGER, LINLEY W. | 0-1168246 | 1st Lt | FA | Plat Comdr |
| ZIEGLER, MAURICE S. | 0-1168535 | 1st Lt | FA | Ex O |
| BOYSA, ALPHONSE J. | 0-1301601 | 2nd Lt | Inf | Plat Comdr |
| COLE, WILLIAM H. | 0-1703021 | 2nd Lt | FA | Plat Comdr |
| GROMMET, GEORGE P. | 0-462575 | 2nd Lt | FA | Plat Comdr |

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HEADQUARTERS 636th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
Office of the Battalion Commander

APO 464, U. S. Army
5 May 1944

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Records.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Army, APO 464, U. S. Army.

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in Letter, Allied Force Headquarters, dated 20 April 1943, file AG 314.7/389 C-M, Subject: Historical Records and Histories of Organizations, transmitted herewith Operations in Italy, April 1944 of this Battalion.

2. Conclusions:

During the past month this battalion has been in a rear area engaged in training and in servicing and replacement of equipment.

War Department Training Circular No. 2, dated 7 January 1944, has reached us and it broadens the use of Tank Destroyer Units as reinforcing artillery. Our employment during the last operation brought clearly to our attention the need of personnel to operate fire direction centers and since we have followed Training Circular No. 2 in training this need of personnel for a fire direction center has been emphasized even more forcibly.

Actually each company needs some personnel for fire control when firing artillery missions as well as a central control center at battalion headquarters, but any provision that can be made, even if it is only a limited number of personnel to be used at the battalion headquarters, will be an improvement over the present Table of Organization.

Reagan L. Dubose
REAGAN L. DUBOSE

Major, Infantry
Actg Bn Comdr

1 Incl:

Narrative of Operations for the month
of April 1944, with attached annexes

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