

MOSELLE CROSSING 610 Tank Destroyer Bn Towed

Interview with Capt Donald Stewart, S-3; Lt Atkinson, Co C; Capt Stitt, Co Co A; and Lt Lepine, Co B.

From the 12th the general employment of the 610 TDs was in direct support of the 80th Div. Co A was attached to the 318th Inf, Co B to the 319th, and Co C to the 317th Inf. On the 11th Co C was at JEZAINVILLE prepared to cover the crossing and knock out anything holding up the infantry. Co B was in TOUL and Co A was in the vicinity of TREMBLECOURT from the BOIS DE COTE EN HAYE to just South of DIEULOUARD. The Bn CP was with the Division at NAMEY.

The order of crossing was infantry; Co C, 610 TDs; Divisional antitanks; Cannon Cos; Co A, 610 TDs; and then the tanks. Co C was able to cross the half tracks and weapons only at first, later by a few hours the people crossed. Co A was held up at DIEULOUARD a short while; the bridges were being shelled.

When Co C reached the East bank, the 2nd Platoon under Lt Atkinson, occupied the hill South of VILLE AU VAL, the 3rd led by Lt Merrill ascended Hill 380, and Lt Hearn's Platoon proceeded to a wood SE of LOISY (802-307).

Co A, according to the original plan, was to establish road blocks at LOISY, AUTREVILLE, and VILLE AU VAL. Lt Kennedy's platoon did set up a road block N of LOISY. Lt Enich took his platoon half way to AUTREVILLE and set up a roadblock there since the town of AUTREVILLE was still held by the enemy. The 3rd Platoon occupied a position of readiness W of BEZUMONT near the CP, 318th Inf.

At this time Co B was occupied to the South with the 319th Inf clearing the FORET DE HAYE.

On the morning of the 13th the en counterattacked. It had been known that the en had armor in the FORET DE FACQ. For this reason Lts Merrill, Kennedy, and Hearn had been placed so as to counter and block any armored thrust from that direction. Lt Atkinson was placed on the hill S of VILLE AU VAL to protect the open area to the East in the direction of LANDREMONT, BELLEAU, and LIXIERES.

At approximately 0430 the morning of the 13th Capt Stitt received a call from Lt Kennedy, whose platoon was guarding the roadblock N of LOISY, that the en infantry had infiltrated through our lines and that our infantry had taken off. En tanks were moving in their direction and the en infantry had run the TD crews off their guns. Lt Kennedy's platoon had been forced to retreat leaving their guns.

The en thrust worked through LOISY and behind the 1st and 3rd platoons, Co Co One bn, 318th Inf, CP (Bn unknown) took off without notifying the TDs. *Charles D.*

Meanwhile the 3rd Platoon, Co A, 2000 yards due West BEZAUMONT (799-296), SW of the two platoons, Co C (1st and 3rd) was surrounded by tanks and infantry. It was daylight now and the river mists were beginning to clear. It is worthy of note that until 0800 in the morning there was a thick river mist and the enemy utilized this cover to move up on our forces.

At daylight our tanks counterattacked and drove the en back. However the 3rd Platoon, Co A, and the 1st and 3rd Platoon, Co C had held their positions. The counterattacking forces apparently were unaware of this fact, since they fired at and killed some of the TDs. The census: 1 killed Co A, 1 Co C. The total 3 killed, 14 wounded.

Regarding Lt Kennedy's platoon, Co A, which had been forced from its roadblock North of LOISY, at 0410 tanks were heard. Since it had been planned to cross CCA, 4th Armd, shortly after the heavy ponton bridges were available, Lt Kennedy's men withheld fire thinking that the tanks might be part of CCA. The tanks however shot flares blinding in effect. The TDs couldn't see any targets. Also there were no American infantry to hold off the en infantry. Thus a rapid withdrawel was necessitated.

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Interview with Capt Donald Stewart et al. Cont.

On the morning of the 13th the infantrymen knocked out two tks with bazookas on Hill 380. This gave the tks 702nd time to reorganize to counter-attack.

14th. C and A Cos remained in position. Lt Kennedy got his guns back. Lt Hearn's platoon went to MT TOULON and next day 16th, shot way back.

15th. En counterattacked MOUSSON HILL and LOISY. Meanwhile inf had taken MOUSSON HILL. (3rd Plat, A Co. 1st Sect was up hill. 2nd Sect on side. Surrounded by en. Lost two guns, later recovered. Some of crews escaped and swam river.

Simultaneously other attack from ST GENEVIEVE. 3rd Plat, C Co. 2 tks hit and put out of action by bazookas, two by AT fire (TDs). Capt Duchossois CO C Co, wounded in this action.

Afternoon of counterattack (15th) 1 plat, C Co back fr TOULON, swung North. Top Hill 380. Overlooked from hill and saw concentration of en vehicle, just S FORET DE FACQ. Headed S. 1 plat knocked out 8 tks.

Meanwhile Co B at TOUL. Afternoon 15th back to DIEULOUARD. Took up position vic LOISY. 1 Plat S of rd LOISY-ATTON, 3rd in town LOISY, 2nd plat S of LOISY by 800 yards. 1st Plat prot fr N, 3rd fr ST GENEVIEVE, 2nd rt of ST GENEVIEVE from hills.

16th.