

MOSELLE CROSSING 610 Tank Destroyer Bn Towed

Interview with Lt Hearn cont.

Next morning 1st Plat supported bn on second march on MT TOULON. Rain made terrain practicably impassable. The halftracks were roadbound. The wet terrain was too slippery.

Interview with Lt Staib, Plat leader, 3rd Plat, Co A.

The 3rd Bn, 318th, with tanks, AT guns, and TDs, were given the mission of taking MOUSSON HILL. Originally the 1st and 3rd Platoons, Co A, were assigned the job. However the right flank of the hill to the SOUTH of HILL 380 was exposed. The 1st Platoon was sent to AUTREVILLE to guard the exposed right flank.

The infantry moved up and occupied the summit of the hill overlooking PONT A MOUSSON. The march to MOUSSON HILL was under pretty heavy shell fire. The TD Plat remained on the right flank where the inf Major (name not known) feared a counterattack.

The next morning the counterattack came through ATTON. HE and MG fire was received. Couldn't see the en tanks as had moved close to the base of the hill thus masking them from the Americans on top of the hill.

The halftracks had been able to climb only part way up the hill. It was too steep. The TDs were threatened by the approaching en infantry. The order was given to get together equipment and highball it for the top. Two halftracks made it to the top. Some men went to rear and swam river at PONT A MOUSSON finally arriving back at the regt CP. at LOISY. Later 319th moved in. All TD guns later recovered. Only lost three jeeps.

During morning counterattack of 13th, Lt Staib's platoon was on side of hill (380) - reverse slope, reserve position guarding regt CP. En got behind C CO and nothing between en and regt CP 317th. At 0530 surrounded by inf and tanks. Receiving heavy artillery. Lt Staib set up perimeter defense. Extremely foggy. Leveled machine guns at en. Slowed them down until tks (our) got organized to counterattack.

Interview of Platoon Leaders, Co C.

On the first morning Hearn's platoon SE LOISY in woods, Merrill's platoon on Hill 380, and Atkinson's platoon on hill S of Hill 380.

On the third morning the CP group went up the hill and with bazookas (the 1st Sgt and Exec O formed two teams) held the en. The en tks swung to the left up the hill to avoid bazooka fire. In so doing went into TD guns (1st Sect) (3rd Plat) field of fire. Census 5 en tks destroyed. Bazooka fire stopped one of en tks. Crews jumped out and rifle fire took care of them.

On first day Lt Merrill wounded. Lt Juers took over his job.

The en counterattacked with one co of inf and one platoon (5) tanks. They attack in small groups. The infantry accompany the tanks. The infantry shoot mortars to keep our infantry down. Then they overrun our positions with tanks. The apparent intent of the en is for their infantry to take out our TDs, while their tanks take care of our infantry. On the three mornings the en attacked behind a thick river fog. Just as the fog lifted the en would be on our positions.

The infantry would move forward. Flares would light up the way. As soon as an antitank instal ation was sighted, the inf would move around it under cover of darkness. After neutralizing each AT position, the attack would on another hundred yards.