

HEADQUARTERS
702ND TANK BATTALION
APO 403, C/O POSTMASTER NEW YORK, NEW YORK

20 March 1945.

SUBJECT: Battalion History.
Period from 1 February 1945 to 28 February 1945.

1. Original Unit.
 - a. 702d Tank Battalion (Medium).
 - b. Organized 1 March 1943.
 - c. Organized at Camp Campbell, Kentucky.
 - d. Authority for Organization: 320.2/53 (AP) (R)-GNGCT (1-2-43), and par 1, General Orders Number 14, Headquarters Armored Force, Fort Knox, Kentucky.
 - e. Sources from which personnel was obtained: The Cadre for the Battalion came from the 8th Armored Division, Camp Campbell, Kentucky, and the recruits came from the New Cumberland Reception Center, New Cumberland, Pennsylvania.
2. Principal changes in organization resulted from changes in Tables of Organization and the activation of a light tank company on 19 October 1943. The designation of the Unit was changed from "702d Tank Battalion (Medium)" to "702d Tank Battalion".

3. Strength:

- a. Strength: 1 February 1945:
- b. Net increase to 28 February 1945:
- c. Net decrease to 28 February 1945:
- d. Strength: 28 February 1945:

Commissioned	Warrant	Enlisted
45	3	633
0	0	5
1	0	0
42	3	633

4. Stations of Unit:

- a. 1 Feb 45 thru 4 Feb 45: Vicinity of Godbrange, Luxembourg, P9127. (Map of Luxembourg, Sheet No. 4).
- 4 Feb 45 thru 13 Feb 45: Vicinity of Colmar, Luxembourg, P8235. (Map of Luxembourg, Sheet No. 4).
- 13 Feb 45 thru 24 Feb 45: Vicinity of Diekirch, Luxembourg, P8641. (Map of Luxembourg, Sheet No. 4).
- 24 Feb 45 thru 27 Feb 45: Vicinity of Niedersgegen, Luxembourg, P5946. (Map of Luxembourg, Sheet No. 4).
- 28 February 1945: Vicinity of Ferschweiler, Luxembourg, L0441. (Map of Luxembourg, Sheet No. 4).

5. There were no tactical marches during the month of February, 1945.

6. Battalion engaged principally in Third United States Army drive towards Germany. During this period the main action of the Battalion centered around the Seigfried Line breaching operation carried out by the 80th Division in the vicinity of the Germany town of Wallendorf. During the initial stages of the operation this Battalion did not engage the enemy, and the only enemy activity reported by units of this command was sporadic artillery, mortar, and nebelwerfer fire. An increased use of the nebelwerfer by the enemy to augment his volume of fire was reported throughout the month.

On 19 February 1945, elements of the 2d Panzer Division were contacted by the division on our right. Within a few days all elements of the armored division

ARRBT-702-0.2

27086
Master

Battalion History - 1 Feb 45 to 28 Feb 45 Cont'd.

were contacted by this unit. Although this organization was to be the counter attack force saved to assault any unit able to break through the line, it lacked sufficient power to unfold a real blitzkrieg. The attack resembled an infiltration, and was easily held and thrown back. The basic tank weapon of this unit was the Mark V. A number of Mark Vs were destroyed by their own crews when they were surrounded and out of gas. The enemy evidenced a lack of gas, and often had to use his tanks in "dug in" positions or as an Assault Gun or AT gun would be used. At no time were tanks used in a mass assault.

Throughout the period mines (both AT and AP), tank obstacles, and demolitions were used extensively. Road conditions were also in the Germans favor, for the countryside could boast very few paved or wide roads. This lack of a good road net seems to have been purposeful on the enemy's part, but was not completely effective in halting our advance. The morale of the enemy troops facing us constantly deteriorated throughout the period. But a small minority, generally those in control, clung to the theory that in some manner Germany would win.

7. The period 1 February to 4 February 1945 found the Battalion assembled in the vicinity of Altlinster conducting maintenance of vehicles, troop rehabilitation, and practice firing of reinforcements.

The Companies were located as follows: "A" and "D" Companies at Reuland; "B" and "C" Companies at Burglinster; Headquarters and Service Companies at Godbrange, Mortar Platoon and Battalion CP at Altlinster.

On February 4, the Battalion received Field Order No. 30, Headquarters 80th Infantry Division. The 80th Division Reinforced was to attack at 070200 February 1945, cross Our and Sauer Rivers, breach the Siegfried Line and continue the attack to the northeast. Company "B" was attached to the 318th Regiment; Company "C" was attached to the 319th Infantry Regiment. The remainder of the Battalion was to emplace all available weapons for fire on targets east of the Our and Sauer Rivers.

In compliance with the above Field Order, Companies "B" and "C" moved to the areas of their respective Combat Teams, "B" Company moving to Beaufort; and "C" Company to Bettendorf. Company "A" report to 313th Field Artillery Battalion to reinforce the fire of that unit.

Company "A" reported to Headquarters 313th Field Artillery Battalion on 5 February. Two of its platoons plus one section of 105mm assault guns were placed in indirect fire positions to reinforce the fire of the Field Artillery. The remaining platoon fired direct fire mission on pill boxes located across the Our River from positions southwest of Hoesdorf. The Company continued carrying out the above until 14 February at which time the unit was attached to the 317th Infantry Regiment and assembled in Beaufort, prepared to move across the Sauer River at Dillingen on Regimental Order. The Company moved across the river 15 February to an assembly area in the vicinity of 1008420.

The Company remained in this assembly area until 18 February while the company officers conducted route and employment reconnaissance within the Regimental Zone of Advance.

Battalion History - 1 Feb 45 to 28 Feb 45 Cont'd.

Zone of Advance.

At 0600, 18 February 1945, the Company attacked north from the Sauer River in support of the 317th Infantry. The attack continued until the 25th of February and during the complete operation the company used two platoons working closely with the assaulting battalions while the third platoon mounting the T-34 rocket launchers furnished general support from indirect firing positions. During the drive the Company assisted in clearing the towns of Stockgit, Bollendorf, Muxbaum, Bettingen, Freitingenhole and Failsdorf.

Until the 13th of February Company "B" supported the attack of the 318th Infantry from positions east of the Sauer River in the vicinity of Beaufort. Two platoons plus the Howitzer Section were placed under the control of the 314th Field Artillery Battalion and fired indirect fire missions. The remaining platoon fired direct fire on targets across the river from positions in the vicinity of Bigelback. This platoon destroyed one enemy assault gun and one truck from this position.

One platoon moved from Beaufort on the 10th of February and moved to Dillingen with the mission of protecting the bridge site. The platoon occupied this position until 13 February at which time it crossed the river with the rest of the company.

Upon crossing the river the company placed one platoon of four tanks in direct support of each of the three battalions while the four tanks mounting T-34 rocket launchers remained under Regimental Control.

The Company remained inactive except for two limited objective attacks until the 18th of the month. The first platoon while advancing with the third battalion of the 318th Infantry destroyed an enemy assault gun on one of these attacks.

Company "B", with one platoon subattached to each of the Infantry Battalions, attacked with Regiment north from its Sauer River bridgehead on the 16th of February. The attack continued against determined resistance until the 25th of February at which time the towns of Hultingen, Bettendorf, Freilingen and Niedergeckler had been cleared.

Company "C" assembled in Bettendorf 5 February 1945 and supported the 319th Infantry by fire initially from positions on the east side of the river. Two platoons reinforced the fire of the 905th Field Artillery Battalion while the third platoon supported the second battalion of 319th Infantry by direct fire from positions in Hoesdorf.

The first elements of the Company crossed the river 12 February when one platoon crossed in the vicinity of Wallendorf. This platoon assisted the third battalion in reducing pillboxes northwest of Wallendorf.

The 319th Infantry attacked north from its Sauer River bridgehead 0600, 18 February with the rest of the 80th Division. One platoon of Company "C" subattached to each battalion with the rocket guns in general support.

The drive continued and by the 26th of February the towns of Korperich, Semerich,

Battalion History - 1 Feb 45 to 28 Feb 45 Cont'd.

Geichlingen, Obergeckler, Outscheid, Weidungen, Oberraden, Lahr, and Niedersgegen had been cleared of the enemy. Company "C" had two tanks disabled during this action.

The Battalion received orders from Headquarters XII Corps on 26 February 1945 that it was detached from the 80th Infantry Division and attached to the 76th Infantry Division.

The Battalion was immediately assembled in the vicinity of Niedersgegen and moved to an assembly area near Ferschweiler the night of 26 February. The next morning "A", "B" and "C" Companies were attached to the 385th, 304th and 417th Infantry Regiments respectively, and advanced with them southeast from Ferschweiler to Trier and the Moselle River. This attack was still in progress at the end of the month.

Company "D" had one platoon of light tanks operating with each of the medium tank companies throughout the month.

8. The Commanding Officer in all engagements of the Battalion has been Lieutenant Colonel RALPH TALBOT III, Infantry. The Battalion was part of forces commanded by Lieutenant General GEORGE S. PATTON, JR.

9. Losses in Action:

OFFICERS:

None

KILLED

ENLISTED MEN:

Schaeffer, Cyril H, S/Sgt, 33013400
McCall, Andrew A, Tec 5, 6827225
DeLaurentis, Joseph F, Tec 4, 33596770
Tondreau, James J, Pfc, 36871844
Russell, James T, Pvt, 33850352
Thier, Joseph R, Sgt, 33602214
Wujcik, Charles R, Sgt, 17059347

WOUNDED AND INJURED

OFFICERS:

Taylor, Oliver B, 1st Lt, 0462532
Prestridge, John W, 1st Lt, 01017681

ENLISTED MEN:

Prewett, William H, Cpl, 33596588
Smith, Jr, Walter E, Pfc, 33441436
Stewart, Floyd T, Cpl, 33621537
Abraham, Joseph A, Pfc, 33621589
Smith, Jewel S, S/Sgt, 39314242
Jones, Jr, Daniel E, Sgt, 33621604
Daniels, Jr, Howard, Cpl, 33596716
Williams, George R, Sgt, 33757800
Edwards, Jack G, Cpl, 36974924
Toern, Robert G, Pvt, 33596696
Riley, Frederick E, S/Sgt, 16085457
Dzik, Leo A, Pfc, 33703625
Harmon, Woodrow W, Sgt, 15056736
Clark, Carter C, Cpl, 39839857
Griffin, Homer G, Tec 5, 34197014
Caballero, Ernest E, Pvt, 42073424
Eckman, Frank E, Pfc, 32949642
Butler, Alfred W, Pgt, 42141129
Worden, Louis A, Pfc, 32650204

Battalion History - 1 Feb 45 to 28 Feb 45 Cont'd.

MISSING IN ACTION

OFFICERS:
None

ENLISTED MEN:
None

10. Former and present members who have distinguished themselves in action.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>AWARD</u>
Schroeder, Charles E.	1st Lt	On 24 December 1944 while supporting an infantry attack on Ringel, Luxembourg, Lt Schroeder, tank platoon leader, received fire from enemy tanks on nearby commanding ground. Although two of his tanks had been disabled, Lt Schroeder ordered an attack upon the enemy and led his platoon until enemy fire destroyed his command tank. With utter disregard for his own personal safety, Lt Schroeder stood on the tank and extricated the wounded members of his crew, evacuating them to safety through intense enemy artillery and small arms fire.	Silver Star
Rice, Harold W.	Sgt	On 26 December 1944 in the assault against the enemy-held town of Kehmen, Luxembourg, Sgt Rice while serving as a tank commander, was wounded by sniper fire. Realizing the need for experienced tank commanders in the battle which was increasing in its fury, he voluntarily remained on duty in his tank and capably fought for over three hours. Later when the battle subsided, he agreed to have his wounds dressed while his tank was being serviced.	Silver Star

b. Purple Hearts Awarded:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>DATE OF WOUNDS</u>
Stewart, Floyd T.	Cpl	33621537	8 Feb 1945
Smith, Jr, Walter E.	Pfc	33441436	8 Feb 45
Prewett, William H.	Cpl	33596588	7 Feb 1945
Butler, Alfred W.	Pvt	42141129	9 Feb 1945
Ripley, James H.	Pfc	37466623	14 Feb 1945
Taylor, Oliver B.	1st Lt	0462532	13 Feb 1945
Edwards, Jack G.	Cpl	36974924	18 Feb 1945
Daniels, Jr, Howard	Cpl	33596716	18 Feb 1945
Clark, Cater C.	Cpl	39839357	20 Feb 1945
Griffin, Homer G.	Tec 5	34197011	20 Feb 1945
Thomas, Winfred L.	Cpl	34988681	20 Feb 1945
Sidella, George	Sgt	33621491	19 Feb 1945

Battalion History - 1 Feb, to 28 Feb 45 Cont'd.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>DATE OF WOUNDS</u>
Reppert, Guy W.	Pfc	36886439	22 Feb 1945
Hill, Ernest A.	Tec 4	33621637	22 Feb 1945
Thomas, Albert O.	Tec 4	33441487	22 Feb 1945
Riley, Frederick	S/Sgt	16085457	21 Feb 1945
Caballero, Ernest E.	Pvt	42073424	20 Feb 1945
Dammarell, Howard T.	1st Lt	01017036	20 Feb 1945
Walker, Ivan W.	2d Lt	02000080	19 Feb 1945
Kelly, Robert L.	Cpl	33602114	18 Feb 1945
Butler, Alfred W.	Pvt	42141129	22 Feb 1945
Linchorst, Earl	Tec 4	33621679	20 Feb 1945
Wein, Charles T.	Cpl	15338890	20 Feb 1945
Harmon, Woodrow W.	Sgt	15056736	20 Feb 1945

11. Photographs of personnel, important scenes of events not available up to 28 February 1945.

For the Commanding Officer:

William B. Jacobs
 WILLIAM B. JACOBS,
 Capt, 702d Tank Battalion,
 Battalion Historian.