

MOSELLE CROSSING 610 Tank Destroyer Bn Towed

Interview with Lt Hearn, Platoon Leader, 1st Plat, Co C.

On crossing this platoon took up position in a patch of woods just above LOISY (804-309).

At 0400 morning 12th, en small arms fire was received from hills above TDs (Hill 380). The fire passed overhead. Continued for about 45 minutes. Heard tanks from vicinity LOISY. The tanks appeared to be at a distance of about 400 yards. It is believed that the tanks came down from ST GENEVIEVE some taking the approach to BEZAUMONT, others leading toward the river and LOISY. These tanks in LOISY were firing. Only when they fired could they be seen. After firing they would immediately move about 20 yards stop and fire, or fire while moving. Thus it was extremely difficult to draw a bead on them. Right behind the tanks came the foottroops accompanying the tanks with small arms fire.

At LOISY the en turned left and took the road paralleling the river and headed southward. The tanks proceeded past Lt Hearn's position and then swung Eastward going up the hill.

It was just starting to turn light.

The tactics of the enemy consisted of the use of blinding flares to light the way. If anything appeared the infantry would go ahead and clear the path for the tanks. The tanks would spray any suspicious looking clump of bushes. It was reconnaissance by fire. An artillery preparation preceded the attack. It was always possible to locate the avenue that the attack would follow because the artillery preparation would cover that exact area.

The 1st Platoon occupied a fringe of wood on the slope of hill above LOISY. Apparently the en was unaware that the TDs occupied the slope. The en planned to flank from the West the forces on top of Hill 380. Two en tanks swung around the LOISY up the hill, three moved from the LOISY-ST GENEVIEVE to the south in a small scale pincer. Some of the crews of the 1st Plat were separated from their guns but some got back to town of LOISY. At noon our tanks and infantry counterattacked and cleaned the place out.

The 1st Plat rec much fire from friendly troops. Information flow with friendly troops very poor. Cav units (which ones unknown), Med tks CCA fired into BEZAUMONT AND LOISY without regard or knowledge that TDs had held their positions. (Probably 2nd Cav referred to above). The 2nd Cav 600 yards from LOISY fired at TDs. Census 6 wounded, 1 killed.

That evening the TDs (1st Plat) remained in position. Fired HE into town blasting buildings where Germans seen. Also fired into woods between LOISY and ST GENEVIEVE. Two en came out and surrendered. Night quiet.

Next morning, 14th, the 1st Plat given mission of protecting 1st Bn, 317th on march to Mt Toulon. On that march destroyed 40-50 Germans on foot, one 88 towed, and 1 field piece. Destroyed foot troops at 3000 yards.

During march guarded right flank. No tanks on march. The tanks came later. The TD platoon covered infantry. Proceeded by leaps and bounds. TDs covered flanks. Inf occupied Mt TOULON. TD guns set up perimeter defense on top of mt mount.

The next morning, 15th, at 0600 the bn set out back toward the river. The TD platoon again protected the flanks. Fired into several groups of ~~inf~~ infantry. Fired at en arm'd vehicle proceeding from ST GENEVIEVE to PONT A MOUSSON.

The 1st Platoon took up position on Hill 380 along forward slope facing East and Northeast. (822-309). At 1300, 15th, saw 15 tks just out of woods N of ST GENEVIEVE, just South of FORET DE FACQ, (815-321). These tks seemed to be headed straight for the position 1st Platoon. An inf AT gun opened up at 1800 yards and gave away the position. The TDs destroyed 11 before the Jerries got away into the FORET DE FACQ. Later in the afternoon joined sect of 3rd Plat in shooting at 3000 yards at unknown number of vehicles heading South west toward corridor toward ST GENEVIEVE.