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HEADQUARTERS 701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464 c/o Postmaster, N.Y.C., N.Y.

**SECRET**  
Per Auth: CO 701 TD Bn.  
Initials: *JED*  
Date: 1 Jan 1945

1 January 1945

SUBJECT: Operations Report.

TO : Adjutant General, U.S. Army, Washington, D.C. (Thru channels).

1. In compliance with the requirements of paragraph 10, AR 345-105, dated March 10, 1943, the following operations report of the 701st tank Destroyer Battalion covering the period 1 December 1944 to 31 December 1944, is herewith submitted.

2. The operations covered in this report are statements from the Unit Journal and Battalion Dairy, and supporting evidence for said statements is attached.

3. Previous operations report submitted covered period up to and including 30 November 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

*John E. Dooley*  
JOHN E. DOOLEY,  
1st Lt., 701st TD Bn.,  
Adjutant.

941.1.152

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OPERATIONS OF THE 701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

Period: 1 December - 31 December 1944.

Locations of 701st TD Bn. beginning of period:

- MAPS: 1/50,000, Sheets 98-I, 106-IV, GSGS 4229, Italy.
- Bn. CP - L-818045. Bn. Trains - L-817044.
- A Co CP - L-857229. 1st Plat - L-85672295. 2nd Plat - L-8562270.
- 3rd Plat - (1 gun)-L-825262; L-828259. (2 guns)-L-829259.
- B Co CP - L-843224. "A" Btry - L-84362250; "B" Btry - L-84702242.
- C Co CP - Q-700766 (Assy. Area)
- Rcn Co CP - L-771123. 1st & 2nd Rcn Plats. -L-795095.
- 3rd & Pioneer Plats. -L-773127.

Period opened with A Company (-3d Plat) in artillery positions attached to First Armored Division Artillery with mission of reinforcing fires of the 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. 3d Platoon of A Company in anti-tank positions attached to 91st Rcn. Bn. in 1 AD sector.

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B Company in artillery positions attached to First Armored Division Artillery with mission of reinforcing fires of the 91st Armored Field Artillery Battalion. C Company attached to First Armored Division Reserve, in assembly area. Hon. Co. under Battalion control with mission of maintaining highway #6527 from L-819043 to L-780190.

1 Dec. - Normal harassing missions fired.

2 Dec. - 3d Plat., A Company, reverted to control of CC"B", 1 AD at 021200A Dec when CC"B" relieved 91st Hon Co in place. 1st Platoon, C Company moved from 700766 to L-830264 closing at 021000A Dec 44, in preparation for relieving 3d Platoon, A Company. C Company (-1st Plat) preparing for movement. Hon. Co. conducted route reconnaissance to Ronzuno and Anconella. A & B Companies fired unobserved harassing missions. 1st Platoon, C Company completed relief of 3d Platoon of A Company in place and 3d Platoon, A Company moved to A Company area at L-85722253 reverting to A Company control.

3 Dec. - No change. C Company (-1st plat) departed area 700766 at 031800A Dec 44, closed in area vicinity L-820235 at 040115A Dec 44. Attached to 1 AD Artillery to reinforce the fires of 129 Field Artillery Battalion.

5 Dec. - C Company (-1st Plat) took up artillery positions. Company CP L-82082345. 2d Platoon - L-82021-23270; 3d Platoon - L-81918-23343.

6-7 Dec. Normal assigned duties by all units.

8 Dec.- C Company (-1st Plat) moved Company CP to L-818231. 2d Platoon to L-819233 and 3d Platoon to 818231.

9 to 25 Dec. - Normal assigned duties by all units.

26. Dec. - 2d Hon Platoon, Hon Co moved from L-795095 to vicinity L-7224; L-8327; and L-8327 for air-ground coordination mission.

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27 Dec. - A Company, B Company, and C Company moved from L-857229; L-845223 and L-818231 respectively closing at L-818045; L-812057 and L-818045 at 271500A Dec. 44, 2d Platoon, Rcn. Co., returned to L-795095 reverting to Rcn. Company control. Preparations by all units for movement to IV Corps sector.

28 Dec. - Battalion departed vicinity L-818045 closing in following positions at 280830A Dec. 44:

Battalion CP - L-144796  
A Company CP - L-141792  
B Company CP - L-143795  
C Company CP - L-144798  
Rcn. Co CP - L-138793  
Bn. Trains - L-139798

3d Platoon, Rcn Company carried out route reconnaissance.

29 Dec. - 31 Dec. - Rcn Company assigned mission of patrolling coastal sector from Viareggio south to south of Serchio River (U-998731). Rcn Company moved and established OPs at: Rcn Company CP - U-004774; 1st Platoon - U-993769; 2d Platoon - U-988792; 3d Platoon - U-999730; Pioneer Platoon - U-004773. Other Companies carried out physical conditioning, training and maintenance program.

Positions at close of Period:

Bn CP - L-144796. Bn Trains - L-139798.  
A Co CP - L-141792  
B Co CP - L-143795  
C Co CP - L-144798  
Rcn Co CP - U-004774. 1st Plat - U-993769. 2d Plat - U-988792. 3d Plat - U-999730.  
Pioneer Plat - U-004773.

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ARNDT

Assaultion Expenditure during period:

3", High Explosive - - - - -	2,248
3", Smoke - - - - -	81
3", Time - - - - -	<u>39</u>
Total	2,418

HEADQUARTERS  
701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 404 U.S. ARMY

6 January 1945.

1. During the period 1 - 31 December 1944 the Battalion suffered the following personnel battle casualties:

Col. George W. Marcoux, 11038900, Co. "A", LWA, Loiano, Italy, 15 Dec 44  
(Hosp).

Pfc 5 John P. Krempa, 32554652, Co. "A", SWA, Loiano, Italy, 15 Dec 44  
(Hosp).

2. The following changes in status of formerly reported personnel battle casualties occurred:

Pvt. Mel B. Kensler, 16073794, Co. "A" - Returned to duty 24 Dec 44.

Lt. Ray F. Hanshaw, 32299080, Co. "B" - Returned to duty 1 Dec 44.

3. Award of the following decorations were published during this period:

a. The Purple Heart was awarded to the following named individuals for wounds received in action against the enemy:

Sgt. Lawrence F. Biggs, 34333008, Co. "C"

Pvt. Clyde Monroe, 35119052, Co. "A"

S/Sgt. James O. Johnson, 35213654, Co. "A"

Pvt. Vernon E. Welch, 37603507, Co. "A"

Pvt. James E. Tweedy, 38084398, Co. "A"

b. The first Oak Leaf Cluster was awarded to Pvt. Kenneth L. Maneely, 6261593, Co. "A" for wounds received in action against the enemy.

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HEAD QUARTERS  
701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464 U.S. ARMY

SECRET  
Per Auth: CO, 701 TD Bn.  
Initials:  
Date: 1 March 1945

1 March 1945.

**SUBJECT: Operations Report.**

**TO : The Adjutant General, U.S. Army, Washington 25, D.C. (Thru Channels)**

1. Submitted herewith Operations Report of the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion for the period 1-28 February 1945, inclusive, in compliance with paragraph 10, AR 345-105, dated 10 March 1943.

2. This operations report is taken from the Unit Journal and Unit Diary and supporting documentary evidence is attached thereto.

3. Operations report covering period through 31 January 1945 submitted previously.

**For the Commanding Officer:**

*John E. Dooley*  
JOHN E. DOOLEY,  
1st Lt., 701st TD Bn.,  
Adjutant.

1 Incl  
Ops Rpt w/allied papers.

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OPERATIONS OF THE 701ST TANK DESTROYSER BATTALION

Period: 1 February - 28 February 1945.

Location of 701st TD Bn, beginning of period:

NAFBI: 1/50,600, Sheds 97 I, II, 104 I, II, 0809, Italy.

Bn CP - 15821260. Bn Truck - 15801118.

A Co CP - 15871247. 1st Plt, 1st Sect. 15801177; 2d Sect. 5871247.

2d Plt, 902138.

3d Plt, 594121.

B Co CP - 0954895. 6 guns - 09570-9009; 6 guns 09570-9036.

8 Co CP - 15570-1260. 6 guns - 5483-1255; 6 guns - 6116-1516; 2 guns -

5480-1266 (8mm)

Bn Co CP 1660183.

The period opened with A Co in direct fire position and C Co in arty

position under operational control of 424 P.A. Group. B Co, attached to 92

Medium Artillery, in artillery positions. G Co manned two (2) 88mm guns for

424 P.A. Group. Bn Co, attached to II Corps and further attached to 81st Bn.

Sq., under reconnaissance of area in vic 16971296.

1 Feb - A Co closed 311700Z Jan 45 at 15871247 in direct fire position

under operational control of 424 P.A. Group. B Co closed 312300Z Jan 45 at

0954895 in artillery position, attached to 92 Div Arty. C Co closed 311615A

Jan 45 at 155701260 in artillery position under operational control of 424

P.A. Group. G Co manned two (2) 88mm guns for 424 P.A. Group.

B Co - A and B Companies - No activity for the period. G Co fired

harassing missions. Bn Co, still defend, conductive mortar school.

3 Feb - A and C Companies normal harassing missions. A Co CP at 5871278 and

trucks. C Co CP at 543126.

4 Feb - Bn Co, attached to 81 Bn Sq, began puller of "P" Troop, 81 Bn Sq at

0954895 Feb, completed at 0954895 Feb, Bn Co CP at 15701296, 1st Plt, 1st Section

at 671207, 2d Section at 676208, 2d Plt at 682208, 3d Plt at 681197, Platoon

Platoon, (3 Mortars) at 681194.

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5 - 6 Feb Normal fire missions carried out by the Companies.

7 Feb - B Co attached 92 Inf. Division 061200A Feb. 1st Platoon, B Co, attached 3d Bn 366 Inf. Bn., 2d Plat attached 370 Inf. Regt. 1st and 2d Platoons supporting 760 Tank Bn. 3d Plat attached 371 Inf. Regt.

8 Feb - B Co supported attack of 92 Inf. Division. 1st Plat. vic 910936 in direct fire position. 2d Plat. vic 934972, direct fire, 3d Plat, reinforcing fires of 599 F.A. Bn. from 957900.

9-17 Feb - A, B, and C Companies continued normal fire missions. Fires observed by A and C Companies OPs. Ran Co continues to carry out security patrols along Nam River in sector.

18 Feb - A Co (-1st Plat) attached 10MT Div and further attached to Division Artillery, 10 MT Division as of 170001A Feb. 1st Plat, A Co, attached to 751 Tank Bn. 170001A Feb. C Co detached operational control from 424 F.A. Group and attached 248 F.A. Bn. for operational control 181200A Feb 45. B Co remains in general artillery support of 92 Division.

19 Feb - A Co, CP at 517129, 1st Plat 588177, 2d Plat, 1st Section, 489151, 2d Section 493141, 3d Plat, 517129. C Co (OP) C-24 at 584182 closed 182000A Feb. B Co, detached 92 Inf. Division 190600A Feb 45, in route to 561155 at close of period. Will revert to Bn control upon closing.

20 Feb - A Co, 1st Plat, 3 guns at 588182, 2d Plat, 2 guns at 483158, 2 guns at 402142, supporting 10 MT Division in artillery role. B Co CP at 5575-1495, 6 guns at 5553-1474, 4 guns at 555-150, 2 guns at 561-155, closed 192250A Feb reverting to Bn control. Supporting BHF in artillery role.

21 Feb - A Co (-1st Plat) in support of 10 MT Division moved 2d Plat vic 545-188, 3d Plat vic 5185-1695, 5190-1699, 5265-1732, 5263-1760. B Co prepared to move to new positions.



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22 Feb - A-24 (OP) closed 212000A Feb 45 and A-24B closed 212000A Feb.

Bn (-1 and Recon Cos) attached to 248 P.A. Bn. for operational control 221800A Feb 45. A Co (-1st Plat) in support of 10 MT Division closed: A-1, 1st Section, at 584-183, 2d Section at 588-182, A-2, 1st Section, 539-184, 2d Section at 545-183. B Co, in support of 10 MT Division moved 6 guns to 555-150.

23 Feb - A Co (-1st Plat) in support of 10 MT Division, 2d Plat at 539-183, 541-183, 544-184, 543-185; 3d Plat at 520-171, 526-178, 524-172, firing on a strong point. 1st Plat, A Co, 2 guns at 587-188, 1 gun at 585-184, supporting 751 Tank Bn. B and C Companies normal harassing missions. Recon Co, still detached, carrying out routine security patrols along Rance River.

24 Feb - C-24 (OP) opened at 588-188 at 231830A Feb 45. A, B, and C Companies normal harassing missions for the period.

25 Feb - A Co (-1st Plat) in support of 10 MT Division moved 1 gun to 586-188 and 2 guns at 585-184.

26 Feb - A Co (-1st Plat), 3d Plat assembled at 500-138, assuming roving gun mission. Firing positions at 588-182, 505-155, 514-167, and at 493-141 which is stationary position for 1 gun. 2d Plat, 1 gun at Jaggie Montans. A Co CP closed 261600A Feb 45 at 5114.

27-28 Feb - Normal harassing missions carried out for the period. Recon Co, still detached, no change. A Co CP closed at 517-126.

Positions at close of period:

Bn CP 1582-180	Bn Trains 1581118
A Co CP 1517-186	1st Plat, 2 guns at 587-188, 1 gun at 585-184
B Co CP 15374-1495	2d Plat at 539-183, 541-183, 544-184, 543-185.
C Co CP 15570-1260	6 guns at 5553-1474, 4 guns at 555-150,
Recon Co CP 1478-196	2 guns at 561-155.
	6 guns at 5580-1225, 6 guns at 6116-1510
	(2 guns at 15597-1261, 88mm)
	1st Plat, 1st Section at 674-207, 2d Section at 676-206
	2d Plat, 680-208, 3d Plat, 681-197, Pioneer Plat (3 mortars)
	681-194.

ANNEX

ammunition expenditure during period:

3", High Explosive - - - - -	14,425
3", A/C - - - - -	20
3", Smoke - - - - -	467
3", Time - - - - -	182
3", Illuminating - - - - -	123
3", Scaled Charge - - - - -	31
30mm, High Explosive - - - - -	<u>295</u>
Total	16,219

HEADQUARTERS  
701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464 U.S. ARMY

March 1, 1945

COMBAT LESSONS LEARNED - 1 - 28 FEBRUARY 1945

1. During recent operations the proper reports on the action and troop disposition of the Companies have not been satisfactory. The reports have been accurate but not on time.

2. In the attempt to determine the cause, the reasons most generally given are:

(1) Not enough time, and (2) Too busy.

3. It is believed that this deficiency can be corrected by devoting more time to the development of the Leader - Radio Operator team. As it stands now the leader, whether he be Chief of Section, Platoon Leader, or Company Commander, lacks confidence in the radio operator. He is regarded as a radio tender or watchman.

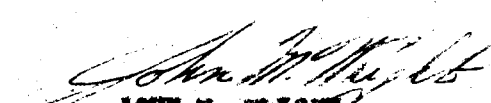
4. The training of radio operators should be divided into two phases.

Phase #1 should be separate training for the radio operators to cover proper procedure, care and operation of the set, use of AF codes, and the use of map reference point code.

Phase #2 should be training in which the leader and the radio operator work together. This training will include paraphrasing the message in the clear to make it conform to the limitations of the code sheet and yet retain the intent of the original message. Another step will have the radio operator repeat the exact words of the leader when transmitting a message in the clear. Too many operators attempt to sub-guess the intentions of the leader and too often are wrong.

5. Once the leader has confidence in the ability of his operator then a minute or two of his time will suffice in the submission of reports.

For the Commanding Officer:

  
JOHN M. WRIGHT,  
Capt., P.A.,  
S-3.

HEADQUARTERS IV CORPS  
THE QUONIAMO GENERAL

27 February 1945

Subject: Commendation

To: Commanding Officer, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion,  
APO 144, U. S. Army

It is gratifying for me to commend you for the offensive efforts displayed by your battalion in the recent offensive operation in Italy.

Your excellent leadership, tank destroyers fought bravely against stubborn enemy resistance on some of the most difficult terrain up to and along Mt. Balvedere and on the Appella di Iannicola, which eventually placed elements of your organization on important commanding ground in direct observation of enemy road nets.

Although some of your elements were employed to support the artillery fires, others were used in the more characteristic tank destroyer role of aggressively engaging the enemy in combat, which role is so vital against an enemy equipped with tanks, armor and self-propelled weapons.

Individual serving tank destroyers along this sector also aided materially in establishing firely out recently won positions.

WILLIS D. CRIVELLO, JR.  
Major General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

*John C. Wooley*  
JOHN C. WOOLEY,  
1st Lt., U. S. Army  
Adjutant.

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ANNEX TO OPERATIONS REPORT

1. During the period, 1-28 February 1945, this organization suffered the following personnel battle casualties:

Pfc	Clyde Merton	38029256	Co "B"	LWA	9 Feb 45
Pvt	John T. Doster	14141918	Co "C"	LWA	13 Feb 45

2. The following changes in status of previously reported personnel battle casualties are reported:

Cpl George W. Marceau 11038900 Co "A" LWA 15 Dec 44 RTD 24 Feb 45

3. During the period, 1-28 February 1945, the following awards to personnel of this organization were announced:

a. Bronze Star Medal

1. 2d Lt KNUTE E. NYSTRÖM, O-1999105, Recon Co., for meritorious services, in support of combat operations, from 20 October 1944 to 24 December 1944, per Sec V, GO No. 14, Hq. Fifth Army, dated 6 February 1945.
2. T/Sgt Laurence J. Fahy, 36009928, Hq & Hq Co., for meritorious services in combat, from 24 February 1944 to 5 June 1944, per Sec V GO No. 14, Hq Fifth Army, dated 6 February 1945.
3. S/Sgt Henry J. Schultz, 35005479, Co "A", for meritorious services in combat from 25 March 1944 to 5 June 1944, per Sec V, GO No. 14, Hq Fifth Army, dated 6 February 1945.
4. S/Sgt James H. Grubbs, 6661575, Co "C", for meritorious services in support of combat operations, from 22 May 1944 to 9 September 1944, per Sec V, GO No. 14, Hq Fifth Army, dated 6 February 1945.

b. 1st Oak Leaf Cluster to Purple Heart.

1. Tec 5 George W. Mangum, 37368178, Co "C", per Sec II, GO No. 10, Hq 1st Armd Div., cs.

c. Purple Heart for Wounds Received in Action Against the Enemy.

1. Sgt Julius J. Fussell, 34208886, Co "C", per Sec II, GO No. 9, Hq 1st Armd Div., cs.
2. Tec 5 Deloss B. Morrison, 37449685, Co "C", per Sec II, GO No. 9, Hq 1st Armd Div., cs.

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Purple Heart for Wounds Received in Action Against the Enemy (cont)

3. Cpl Ernest Albritton, 34057426, Co "C", per Sec I, GO No. 9, Hq 1st Armd Div., ss.
4. Tec 5 George W. Mangum, 37368178, Co "C", per Sec I, GO No. 10, Hq 1st Armd Div., ss.
5. Tec 4 Edward K. Hines, 7041351, Co "C", per Sec II, GO No. 10, Hq 1st Armd Div., ss.
6. Pvt Porter J. Spenser, 7040507, Co "C", per Sec I, GO No. 11, Hq 1st Armd Div., ss.

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701st Tank Destroyer Battalion  
420 454 U.S. ARMY

Per Auth: SGT J. E. W. 1st Lt. TD Bn.  
Initials: JEW  
Date: 1 April 1945

1 April 1945.

Operations Report.

To: The Adjutant General, U.S. Army, Washington 25, D.C. (Para Channels)

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For the commanding officer:

*John E. Wasley*  
JOHN E. WASLEY,  
1st Lt., 701st T.D. Bn.,  
Adjutant.

1 Incl  
Ops Rpt w/allied papers.

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701st Tank Battalion, 3rd Armored Division, 1st Cavalry Division

Period: March - 31 March 1945.

Location of 701st Tank Battalion: Germany, of period:

Company	582-180	on trains - 582-180
Company	587-186	1st Plat - 539-183 - 2 guns 535-184 - 1 gun
Company	5974-1495	2nd Plat - 539-183, 541-183, 544-184, 545-185 6 guns at 5975-1474, 2 guns at 595-180 2 guns at 561-155
Company	5978-1200	6 guns at 5980-1225, 6 guns at 515-1910
Company	578-196	1st Plat, 1st section at 574-207, 2nd section at 576-200 2nd Plat, 580-208 3rd Plat 581-157 Pioneer Plat (3 mortars) 581-174

The period opened with the formation of two (2) armored forces made necessary by nature of the terrain and mission to be accomplished. Force heading composed of Co (-1st Plat, 701 Tank Bn; 2nd and 3rd Companies 751 Tank Bn (-2 Plats); and Co, 751 Tank Bn as corps troops took an offensive position in support of the 1st. Force heading composed of Co, 700 Tank Bn, 1st and 2nd Companies, 701 Tank Bn., and 1st, 2nd, 701 Tank Bn as corps troops prepared to provide air support to the attack of the 1st Div and elements of the 1st. Company 701 Tank Bn remained initially in arty positions under the operational control of the 3rd Div arty prepared to move to their primary mission on 2 hour notice.

1 - 2 March - Co (-1st Plat) carried out normal direct fire harassing missions. 1st Plat supported 751 Tank Bn. Co prepared for movement to 577-182. Co remaining temporarily in arty posns and ready to move. 1st Div arty, no change.

3 - March - at 03.700, 1st and 2nd Companies, supported 1st Div attack by direct fire from defensive positions in the 1st sector. Fire was placed



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on targets of opportunity and probable ey locations. Ridge lines and draws were well covered. This fire is believed to be largely responsible for ey personnel of approximate company strength to surrender to our forces. Force Madden provided direct fire support while accompanying the attack. A Co CP at 516-129; 2d Plat, 1st Sect - 1 gun at 533-181, and 1 gun at 544-185; 2d Sect at 505-154; 3d Plat, 1st Sect at 489-151, 2d Sect at 492-141. B Co, 701 CP at 573-200. B Co, 751 Tank Bn CP at 517-177, 3 guns at 504-152, 1 Sect at 507-166, 1 Sect at 520-171, 1 gun at 517-177, and 1 gun at 513-133. C Co, 751 Tank Bn CP at 548-168, 4 guns at 521-177, 2 guns at 542-186, 1 Plat at 545-187. 3 tanks bogged down at 550-189, 1 tank at 545-185. D Co, 751 Tank Bn CP at 559-181, 1st Plat at 540-185, 2d Plat, 1st Sect at 537-183, 2d Sect at 537-180, 3d Plat via 541-183. C Co, 701 TB Bn detached 34 Div Arty at 031134A March and atchd operational control Force Madden and moved to assembly area via 571-176.

4 March - A Co (-1st Plat) and B and C Cos, 751 Tank Bn (-2 Plats) and D Co, 751 Tank Bn remained in position supporting attack by direct fire at targets of opportunity and probable ey locations. B Co, 701 in direct support of 10 St Div attack. C Co, 701 atchd operational control Force Madden. B Co, 701 knocked out a German 75cm self propelled at 593-237.

5 March - A Co (-1st Plat) fired normal harassing missions by request of the 387. B and C Companies, 701 continued in direct support of 10 St Div attack.

6 March - Recon Co relieved at 052000A Mar and closed at 603-183 at 060100A Mar. Remaining atchd II Corps and further atchd 81st Recon Sq. 3d Plat, D Co, 751 Tank Bn moved from vic 542-184 closing at 510-157 at 060930A Mar.

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3d Plat, C Co, 751 Tank Bn moved from vic Niola to Lizzano closing at 060115Z Mar. Both platoons stood to B Co, 701 Tank Bn.

7 - March - C Co, 701, moved 2 guns to 494-141 and 2 guns to 4950-1509.

2d Plat, C Co in direct fire positions fired on by mortars, probable by ATs, MGs, mortars, and 75mm guns. 3d Plat in indirect fire positions. C Co, 701, occupied direct fire positions at 1st Plat 564-226, 2d Plat 559-231, 3d Plat 591-238. C Co, 701, CP at 600-252, 1st Plat at 609-251, 2d Plat at 604-255, 3d Plat at 600-254, rear CP at 594-242 and occupied direct fire positions via Castel d'Alcino with the mission of establishing road blocks against possible enemy armored counterattack. Ken Co, still active, stood 4 Tank Bn at 071400Z Mar. CP at 071630Z Mar to Stanco (710-217) to relieve 1st Troop, 91 Recon Bn as an reserve. 3d Plat, C Co, 751 Tank Bn moved from vic Niola to 984-167 closing at 062000Z Mar. 3d Plat, C Co 751 Tank Bn moved from vic Niola to 980-157 closing at 062000Z Mar. Both platoons remained attached to B Co, 701 Tank Bn for operations.

8 - March - 1st Plat, C Co departed from 585-144 closing at 060000Z Mar at 072000Z Mar and is attached to C Co, 701. B and D Cos, 701 continued in direct support of 10 AF Div under operational control Force SADDEN. 3d Plat, C Co, 751 Tank Bn closed at 980-157 at 070430Z. 3d Plat, C Co, 751 Tank Bn closed vic Niola at 071600Z Mar to prevent unit control. B and D companies, 751 continue in a defensive role. 2nd Plat, C Co, 701 in defensive direct fire roles.

9 - March - C Co (-1st Plat) carried out normal harassing missions. 1st Plat, C Co, 701 relieved a plat of A Co, 760 at 610-238 and 600-237, 2 guns at each point, closed at 2100Z. C Co, 701 (-2nd Plat) continued in direct support of 10 AF Div. 2d Plat, C Co, 701, closed at 601-244 for maintenance work.

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10 - March - No change during the period. Normal arty missions carried out.

11 - March - A Co, 701 carried out usual harassing missions. No change in attachments. 3d Plat, B Co, 751 Tank Bn moved to: 1st Sect at 505-172, 2d Sect at 513-153 closing at 102230A War and remained attached to B Co, 751 Tank Bn. 1st Plat, A Co, 701, attached to B Co, 701, moving to new posns at: 1st Sect 505-153 and 2d Sect 543-186.

12 - March - No change in attachments or locations during the period. Normal arty missions carried out.

13 - March - Recon Co, still detached, engaged in security patrolling of forward posns for 4th Tank Bn, and to make combat patrols as ordered. Map study during the day for officers and plat agts of the Vergato area for raid upon Vergato when ordered by the Combat Command. Mortars in Bn support. Concentration area is Vergato.

14 - March - A Co, 701, carried out normal harassing missions during the period. B and C Cos, 701 continue in direct support of 10 AF Div under operational control Force Hadden. D and E Cos, 751 Tank Bn - No activity. B Co, 751 Tank Bn carried out normal harassing missions.

15 - 16 March - 3d Plat, C Co, 701, relieved their 1st Plat at 154030A War without incident. 1st Plat getting maintenance check and oil change. B and C Cos, 751 Tank Bn carried out direct fire missions. A Co, 701 fired on approximately 20 enemy personnel at 458-214. Several persons observed helping others away from area, indicating some had been wounded. B Co, 701 fired on enemy tower ( ) at 558-244 knocking corner off.

17 - March - 2d Plat, B Co, 701, moved from 567-234 closing at 1900A. 1st Plat, A Co, 701, relieved from attached B Co, 701 and reverted control of parent unit

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and moved to vic Iola (568-211) closing at 171800A Bar. No other changes during the Period.

18 - March - 2d Plat, A Co, 701, moved from 5026-1886 to 5068-1370; 3d Plat, A Co, moved from vic Iola (5680-220A) to: 2 guns at 5068-1370 and 2 guns at 505-193. 1st Plat, B Co, 701, moved from 585-225 to 587-243 and 591-243 closing at 2000A. 2d Plat, B Co, 701 closed at 591-235 at 2000A. No other changes for this period.

19 - March - Normal harassing missions carried out during the period. No change in locations or attachments.

20 - March - B Co, 701, moved 1st Plat plus one gun 2d Plat to 6031-2369 closing at 1500A. 3d Plat, plus one gun of 2d Plat closed at 6047-2360 at 1500A. 2d Plat - 2 guns closed at 599-35 at 1500A. 1st Sect, 2d Plat, C Co, 701 closed at 601-244 and 2d Sect at 606-45A at 2000A Bar. B Co, 751, carried out odd fire missions on enemy personnel with good results. C Co, 751, no activity.

21 - March - B Co, 701, defend Force Garden and is under operational control 424 FA Gp. Able and Coy Strys of B Co, 701, fired registration on road junction. C Co continued under operational control Force Garden. No change in locations.

22 - March - B Co, 701 lost fired German 75mm Pak How and found gun operating correctly. C Co, under operational control 424 FA Gp fired harassing, registrations, and illuminating missions during period. B Co, 3d Plat, 751, fired 1 mission on enemy personnel.

23 - March - In redistribution of armor B Co, 751 Tank Co took up the following positions: 1st Plat, 1st Sect at 491-140 - 2 tanks, 2d Sect at 489-143 - 1 tank and 488-145 - 1 tank, 2d Plat, 1st Sect 520-170 - 3 tanks, 2d Sect at 516-176 - 2 tanks, 3d Plat, 1st Sect 507-165 - 3 tanks, 2d Sect 499-166 - 2 tanks, closing at 2145A Bar. Moving from Corona 1 tank hit a mine at 5175-1745 and was completely

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destroyed. 3d Plat, B Co, 751 Tank Bn. moved to: 1 Sect 527-177 and 2d Sect 531-178.

24 March - A Co, 701 test fired German 7.5cm rifle, gun fired very well, no malfunctions. B Co, 701 remains under operational control 424 FA Cp and C Co, 701 remains under operational control Force Madden.

25 - March - B Co, 701, moved 5 guns from 803-236 to 592-237 closing at 242000A Mar. No incidents occurred during movement. A Co, 701, fired German 75cm Pac How with good results. Recon Co, still detached, relieved at 242100A Mar by B Co, 1st Tank Bn and closed at stance (710-219), Pioneer plat in position at 706-231 (3 mortars) attend to 1st Tank Bn.

26 March - A Co, 5 TDs in anti-tank role pull back to indirect fire positions at 507-137 and 509-138 for special missions. B Co, 701, carried out arty missions. C Co - No change. D, E, and F Companies, 751 Tank Bn - No activity.

27 - March - 1 Sect, 3d Plat, B Co, 751 Tank Bn returned to positions at 507-166 after slight move to avoid arty fire. Usual arty missions carried out by A and B Cos, 701. D, C, and E Cos, 751 Tank Bn - No activity.

28 - March - A Co, 701, 1st Plat (Able btry) at 5918-2307, 2d Plat (Dog btry) at 5027-2357, 3d Plat (Star btry) at 5926-2348, Rear CP at 599-233 and is under operational control 424 FA Cp. B Co, 701 CP closed at 607-252, 1st Plat 606-254 - 2 guns, 2 guns at 611-244, 2d Plat at 566-219, 3d Plat at 609-253, Rear CP at 572-223 closing at 241100A Mar and is under operational control Force Madden.

29 - 31 March - No change in locations or attachments during this period. Normal harassing missions carried out.

Positions at close of Period:

Bn CP L557-150

Bn Trains L581-118

A Co CP L516-129

1st Plat, 1st Sect 489-151 - 2 TDs

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2d Sect 507-137 - 2 TDs - Indirect fire

		2d Plat	505-138 - 4 TDs - Indirect fire
		3d Plat	553-195 - 4 TDs
B Co CP	1607-252	1st Plat	606-254 - 2 TDs
			601-244 - 2 TDs
		2nd Plat	566-219 - 4 TDs
		3rd Plat	609-252 - 2 TDs
			609-253 - 2 TDs
C Co CP	1593-235	1st Plt (Able btry)	5918-2367
		2nd Plt (Dog btry)	6047-2359
		3d Plt (Star btry)	5926-2348
Hon Co CP	1710-219	Pioneer platoon	706-231 (3 mortars)

Positions at close of Period (751 Tank Bn)

B Co CP	1517-129	1st Plt, 1st Sect	493-140 - 2 tanks
		2nd Sect	488-143 - 1 tank
		2nd Plt, 1st Sect	530-170 - 3 tanks
		2nd Sect	516-176 - 2 tanks
		3rd Plt, 1st Sect	507-165 - 3 tanks
		2nd Sect	499-166 - 2 tanks
C Co CP	1548-168	1st Plt	565-227 - 5 tanks
		2nd Plt	572-207 - 5 tanks
		3rd Plt	553-195 - 5 tanks
D Co CP	1558-161	1st Plt, 1st Sect	535-180 - 3 tanks, light
		2nd Sect	537-182 - 2 tanks, light
		2nd Plt, 1st Sect	527-176 - 3 tanks, light
		2nd Sect	531-177 - 2 tanks, light
		3rd Plt, 1st Sect	539-185 - 3 tanks, light
		2nd Sect	540-183 - 2 tanks, light

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REF ID:

Ammunition expenditure during period:

3", High Explosive - - - - -	4,902
3", High Explosive (Reduced Charge) - - - - -	2,236
3", Smoke - - - - -	125
3", Blue - - - - -	58
3", Star - - - - -	94
3", APC - - - - -	76
3", T-105 - - - - -	4

Total 7,577

7.5cm High Explosive (German) - - Rifle	44
7.5cm High Explosive (German) - - How	110

S-1 ANNEX TO OPERATIONS REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 - 31 MARCH 1945

I. a. CASUALTIES:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Co</u>	<u>Date of Casualty</u>	<u>Type of Casualty</u>
Sgt	Richard Wehrley	15042970	C	5 Mar 45	LWA
Pfc	Charles W. Keith	32033603	C	5 Mar 45	LWA
Cpl	Dalce L. Zeigler	34071660	C	6 Mar 45	LWA
Pvt	Lester M. Phillips	6985182	B	6 Mar 45	LWA
Tec 5	William C. King	14004817	C	7 Mar 45	LWA
Pvt	Dale P. Holybee	39833207	C	7 Mar 45	LWA
Pvt	John T. Smith	34442336	C	8 Mar 45	KIA
*S/Sgt	Sterling K. Smith	15042538	C	9 Mar 45	LWA
Sgt	Donald J. Blank	33246805	A	29 Mar 45	LIA
Cpl	Earl E. Gipson	15077722	Rcn	29 Mar 45	KIA
*S/Sgt	Jim W. Hooten	34147207	Rcn	29 Mar 45	LWA

\* Indicates personnel not hospitalized.

b. Changes in Status of Personnel Previously Reported as Casualties:

Pfc	Clyde Merton	38029256	B	LWA 9 Feb 45	RTD 24 Mar 45
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II. AWARDS

a. Legion Of Merit:

T/Sgt	Henry D. Kirsher	37098831	Co B, per GO #51 Hq MTOUSA ca
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b. Bronze Star Medal:

T/Sgt	Howard J. Spaulding	35155475	Hq & Hq Co, per GO #24 1st Armd
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c. Purple Heart:

Tec 5	William C. King	14004817, Co C per GO #18 Hq 1st Armd Div ca
Pfc	Lorenzo P. Ford	13087071, Co C per GO #19 Hq 1st Armd Div ca
Pvt	William J. Novak	35320783 Co C per GO #20 Hq 1st Armd Div ca

III. REPLACEMENTS:

During the period the Battalion received one officer and sixteen enlisted men as replacements.

IV. ROTATION AND TEMPORARY DUTY:

Seven enlisted men departed for the U. S. on temporary duty and seven departed on rotation.



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HEADQUARTERS  
701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464 U.S. Army

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* S E C R E T  
\*Per Auth: CO 701st TD  
\*Initials:                       
\*Date: 10 May 1945  
\*\*\*\*\*  
10 May 1945

SUBJECT: Operations Report.

TO : Adjutant General, U. S. Army, Washington 25, D.C.  
(Thru Channels)

1. Submitted herewith Operations Report of the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion for the period 1 - 30 April 1945, inclusive, in compliance with paragraph 10, AR 345-105, dated 10 March 1943.

2. This Operations Report is taken from the Unit Journal and Unit Diary and supporting documentary evidence is attached thereto.

3. Operations Report covering period through 31 March 1945 was submitted previously.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

*John E. Dooley*  
JOHN E. DOOLEY  
1st Lt, FA  
Adj

1 Inclosure:  
Opns Rpt w/allied Papers

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26 Mar 46 HSD

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OPERATIONS REPORT OF THE 701st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO

30 APRIL 1945.

Location of Troops on 1 April 1945:

Battalion CP.....	L557150
Battalion Trains.....	L581118
Reconnaissance Company.....	L710219
4th Recon. Platoon (3 81mm Mortars) ..	L706231
Company "A".....	L516129
1st Platoon (1st Section).....	L489151
1st Platoon (2nd Section).....	L507137
2nd Platoon.....	L505138
3rd Platoon.....	L553195
Company "B".....	L607252
1st Platoon (1st Section).....	L606254
1st Platoon (2nd Section).....	L601244
2nd Platoon.....	L566219
3rd Platoon (1st Section).....	L609252
3rd Platoon (2nd Section).....	L609253
Company "C".....	L593235
1st Platoon.....	L59182367
2nd Platoon.....	L60472359
3rd Platoon.....	L59262348
751 Tank Bn. (B, C & D Co's Operationally attached)	
"B" Company, 751 Tank Bn.....	L517129
1st Platoon (2 Tanks).....	L493140
1st Platoon (1 Tank ).....	L488143
1st Platoon (1 Tank ).....	L488145
2nd Platoon (3 Tanks).....	L530170
2nd Platoon (2 Tanks).....	L516176
3rd Platoon (3 Tanks).....	L507165
3rd Platoon (2 Tanks).....	L499166
"C" Company, 751 Tank Bn.....	L548168
1st Platoon .....	L565227
2nd Platoon .....	L572207
3rd Platoon .....	L553195

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Location of Troops on 1 April 1945: (Cont'd)

"D" Company, 751 Tank Bn	
1st Platoon (3 Tanks)	.....L535180
1st Platoon (2 Tanks)	.....L537182
2nd Platoon (3 Tanks)	.....L527176
2nd Platoon (2 Tanks)	.....L531177
3rd Platoon (3 Tanks)	.....L539183
3rd Platoon (2 Tanks)	.....L510185

As the period opened the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion and the 751 Tank Battalion were in defensive positions along the entire right of the IV Corps front. Company "C" of the Battalion was in indirect fire positions under operational control of the 424th F.A. Group. Company "B" was under operational control of the 751st Tank Battalion (FORCE MADDEN). Reconnaissance Company was attached to II Corps, sub attached to the 1st Armored Division and in Infantry positions with the 1st Tank Battalion (dismounted). "E", "C", and "D" Cos. of the 751 Tank Battalion were under control of Headquarters, 701st T.D. Bn. (FORCE REDDING).

Reconnaissance Company reverted to Battalion control on the 1st and was moved to the SILLA area (L593136), where the Company was put on their vehicles for the first time in several months. Vehicular and radio maintenance, and the preparation of their vehicles for combat occupied their time for the next ten days. The long winter period as Infantry had resulted in the fact that their vehicles had not had proper preventative maintenance and a long period of work was needed to refit their vehicles for combat.

For the other units of the Battalion the FORCE MADDEN - FORCE REDDING tactical grouping held until the 9th of April, when all reverted to parent unit control. During this period, positions of units

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remained essentially the same, with some few exceptions, and normal observed and unobserved, direct and indirect fires were carried out from static defensive fire positions. While these activities were being carried out, plans were being made for the prospective offensive operation soon to take place. The Battalion (and the 751 Tank Bn) was to be in direct support of the 10th U.S. Mountain Infantry Division (U.S. IV Corps) in the Fifth Army attempt to break out of the apennines into the RO River Valley. The Division Commander had decided that one Tank Company and one Tank Destroyer Company would be attached to each Infantry Regiment for the initial stages of the operation. The attachments (to take effect 1200 hrs D-1) as follows :

- 85th Mt. Inf. Regt. "B" Company, 701st T.D. Bn.  
"E" Company, 751st Tank Bn.
- 86th Mt. Inf. Regt. "C" Company, 701st T.D. Bn.  
"C" Company, 751st Tank Bn.
- 87th Mt. Inf. Regt. "A" Company, 701st T.D. Bn.  
"A" Company, 751st Tank Bn.

By mutual agreement between the 701st and 751st Commanding Officers it was further agreed that each Tank Destroyer Company would send one Platoon to its corresponding Tank Company, and each Tank Company would send one Platoon to its corresponding Tank Destroyer Company. This was done to bolster the firepower of the Tank Company with the 3" gun and to give the TD's the benefit of the automatic weapons of the medium tank. The communications problems in this were nil, due to the fact that both units were equipped with the SCR 500 radio series (a mutual exchange and alignment of crystals was made).

The Infantry Regimental Commanders were to send one Tank or TD Company with each assault Infantry Battalion. This gave six armored

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Companies with the six assault Infantry Battalions. None of the Armor was to be held in reserve with the exception of the 701st Reconnaissance Company and "D" Company of the 751st Tank Bn. These two Companies were to be attached to a formation known as Task Force PURSUIT under command of the 3rd Bn. of the 86th Infantry Regiment. This force was to be activated upon Division order and was to be used to exploit any major breakthrough made during the attack.

The period 9 - 12 April was spent in readying for the operation. The Tank - Tank Destroyer Platoon exchange was made, and on the 12th all Companies moved to their assembly areas for the attack. At 1800 hrs 12th April, the dispositions were as follows:

Bn C.P.	L590238
"A" Company	L619245
"B" Company	L607252
1st Platoon	L566219
2nd Platoon, 1st Section	L606254
2nd Platoon, 2nd Section	L609252
3rd Platoon	L572223
"C" Company (- 1 Gun)	L637237
(1 Gun, "C" Company)	L602243
Reconnaissance Company	L603237

(The one "C" Company gun at L602243 was for firing "star" shells over given target areas at night for airplanes. This air-ground cooperation in night bombing was used several times with success during the operation).

The scheduled attack by the 10th Mountain Division began at 0700 hours 14 April. All Gun Companies of the Battalion moved in support. Enemy minefields and demolitions held up progress for most of the initial day.

The attack progressed slowly. By the 15th TOLE had been taken, and elements were moving slowly north against scattered resistance.

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Company "A" engaged three enemy tanks this date, and put one of them out of action. Again on the following day, "A" Company destroyed another enemy tank, and Company "C" destroyed 2 anti-tank guns.

The 85th Regiment and Company "B", 701st Tank Destroyer Bn. secured the left flank against counterattack as our attack progressed. This left "B" Company well in our rear for the next few days, and difficulty was experienced in maintaining communications. On the 18th however, "B" Company was detached from the Battalion and attached to C.C."A" of the 1st Armored Division. This Company was destined to remain detached for the remainder of the operation.

The breakthrough into the PO Valley was made on April 20th. Two Infantry Battalions supported by "A" and "C" Companies were out of the Appenines and at 1300 hours the Reconnaissance Company passed through with orders to cut Highway # 9. This was affected by 1400 hours. On this day, Company "C" destroyed one MK IV and one 150 mm gun. Innumerable prisoners were taken. ("B" Company, with C.C."A", destroyed 2 S/P guns in the L6940 grid square at 191200B). Battalion dispositions at 201800B April were :

En CP	751506
"A" Company	752255
"C" Company	733567
1st Platoon	741563
"B" Company	
1st Platoon	680399
2nd Platoon	683396
Reconnaissance Company	772546
1st Platoon	777548
2nd Platoon	778543
3rd Platoon	737563
4th Platoon	774552

The Divisional objective for the next day was to secure the BOAMPORTO bridges intact. "A" and "C" Companies were to support the

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advance of the 2nd Bn. of the 86th Regiment. Reconnaissance Company was to provide a reconnaissance screen for the divisional advance. At 0910 hours one M-8 and one M-20 armored car of the Reconnaissance Company were destroyed by enemy A/T fire. The Platoon Leader of the First Platoon was killed, and his Platoon Sergeant was seriously wounded in action. The Company was forced to withdraw and choose another route of advance.

Enemy resistance suddenly collapsed in this area. With Reconnaissance Company in the lead, the 2nd Bn. of the 86th Infantry (motorized) protected in column by the guns of "A" Company moved along the roads to BOMPORTO at speeds approximating 30 M.P.H. Elements of Rcn Co arrived at BOMPORTO at approximately 1600 hrs., somewhat in advance of the main column, and secured both bridges intact. In the village, however, the 2nd Platoon of the Company became involved in a street fight with German Infantry. One M-8 Armored Car was hit and burned by an enemy bazooka and the Platoon Sergeant was killed. The Platoon was forced to withdraw back across the canal bridge until Infantry and TD's came forward to secure the town. At 211800B April, dispositions of the Battalion were :

Bn CP	L 751506
"A" Company	L 655753
Reconnaissance Company	L 655753
"C" Company	
1st Platoon	L 711603
2nd Platoon	L 717603
3rd Platoon	L 734595

Advances to the North continued the next morning. The 10th Division attacked regiments abreast, the 86th Infantry (Route "B") and the 87th Infantry (Route "A"). Company "A" supported the 86th

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and Company "C" supported the 87th. Reconnaissance Company provided a screen for Route "A". Objective for the day was CALATTA (F5913) on the PO River. Resistance was slight and Company "C" reached the town of S. BENEDETTO (F5811) about 2000 hours in the evening. The column proceeding along Route "B" was not able to reach objective that night but elements of the Reconnaissance Company arrived at CALATTA at 0900 hrs. Road blocks were immediately established along all routes of approach by Companies "A" and "C". Enemy resistance that remained in the area was mopped up.

Infantry units of the 10th Division immediately crossed the river. Companies "A" and "C" supported this operation by direct fire. The crossing of the PO River by Tanks and Tank Destroyers, however, presented a most difficult problem, due to the fact that there were no bridges available. It was not until the 25th of April that elements of this Battalion were able to cross the River to support the Infantry bridgehead. Reconnaissance Company crossed on an L-1 treadway bridge about 251300B April and joined the 86th Infantry Regiment in their advance to the North (objective VERONA). This treadway bridge, however, was not a suitable means for the M-10s to use in crossing, and a captured ferry was utilized in ferrying the Destroyer Companies across. The progress was slow and the method tedious but by 260100B April Company "A" and seven M-10s of "C" Company had completed the crossing. These Destroyers then set about to carry out their assigned mission of flank protection advance. Elements of the Reconnaissance Company were in VERONA with the 3rd Bn. 86 Infantry at 260100B April. Mopping up by all elements continued throughout the day, and at 1600hrs



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Reconnaissance and "C" Companies moved to BUSSOLENCO (F5458) to occupy and defend the town for the night.

The Battalion assembled at 0800 hrs the following morning and moved in support of the advance of the 87th Infantry Regiment along the shores of Lago di Garda. Minor resistance was met during the day, mostly from 88 mm dual-purpose A/T - A/T guns, of which Company "A" destroyed two and Recon Company destroyed one during the days operations. Forward elements of the Battalion reached F4578 at 2000 hours on the 27th when relieved by elements of the 751 Tank Battalion who continued in the advance.

(During this entire period, Company "B" of the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion had been detached from the Battalion and had been in support of the attacking 1st Armored Division. The Battalion was unable to maintain contact with this Company throughout the greater part of the April operations. Company "B" on the 28th of the month was attached to the 81st Reconnaissance Squadron and on this date entered SOMMINO (770540).

Extensive demolitions at F5696 and tunnel destruction in this area prevented further armored advance in a northerly direction. An engineer estimate of the time to construct a passable route was 7 days. In the afternoon of the 28th, Infantry units of the 10th Division made an amphibious operation (by means of "DUKW's") around the demolished road area and proceeded north. The Gun Companies of the Battalion supported this operation by direct fire. When the advancing Infantry was out of effective support range of the Destroyer's guns, the Companies were withdrawn and road blocks were set up throughout the Divisional area. Dispositions remained essentially the same throughout

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the remainder of the period. On the 30th the Battalion prepared to move to vicinity of RIVA (A551044) and TORRELE (A575025) by ferry north on Lake Garda, and thence to continue to the North in the direction of the Brenner and Resia passes to AUSTRIA in support of the 10th Infantry Division, which was assembling to attack.

The last reported location of Company "B" was TREVIGLIO (K5668) on the 29th of April.

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The month had been a period of continual movement. A great valley had been crossed as the Fifth Army advanced from the Appenines to the Alps. A major water obstacle had been crossed, and the German armies in Italy had virtually been destroyed. The spring offensive had been a gratifying success.

For the Officers and Men of the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion this month meant the completion of 35 long, arduous months of overseas service. This was perhaps the most singly important month of them all to us, for at long last the end of the European War seemed in sight. Elements of this Battalion were among the first American ground forces to engage the Nazi enemy in this war. It was a gratifying thought that the end was so near; and that the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion had been a part of that Fifth Army whose privilege it had been to assist in the destruction of the enemy in ITALY.

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Location of Units at the end of the period (302400) :

Bn. C.P.	F 525914
Bn. Trains	F 511939
Recn Company	F 512888
"A" Company	F 525915
1st Platoon	F 512888
2nd Platoon	F 538951
3rd Platoon	F 535945
"B" Company	X 5668
"C" Company	F 535936
1st Platoon	F 511671
2nd Platoon	F 555956
3rd Platoon	F 555956

*Albert B. Morrison*

ALBERT B. MORRISON  
Captain, Inf  
S-3

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S-1 ANNEX TO OPERATIONS REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 - 30 APRIL 1945

I. a. CASUALTIES:

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Name</u>				
*	Sgt	Russell Simmons	34160213	B	4 Apr 45	LIA
*	Tec 4	Lonnie W. Phillips	15045811	B	11 Apr 45	LWA
*	Sgt	John J. Carroll	31029681	B	15 Apr 45	LWA
	1st Lt	Lawrence V. Burke	01176904	C	15 Apr 45	LIA
	Tec 4	Charles H. Scott	33090791	B	15 Apr 45	LWA
	Pfc	Raymond R. Sturm	33580281	B	15 Apr 45	LWA
*	1st Lt	John NMI Hudson	01307549	C	17 Apr 45	LWA
	T/Sgt	Howard J. Spaulding	35155475	Hq	17 Apr 45	LWA
	Tec 5	Noble H. Midkiff	35482495	Hq	17 Apr 45	LWA
	Pvt	Joseph H. Metzeder	37721341	Hq	17 Apr 45	KIA
*	Tec 4	Carlos Snell Jr	34359063	B	18 Apr 45	LWA
	Pfc	Claude A. Crowder	35260250	B	18 Apr 45	LWA
	Tec 5	Robert E. Leasure	37328661	C	18 Apr 45	LWA
	Pfc	Willard J. Cummins	15047888	Rcn	18 Apr 45	LWA
*	Pvt	John T O'Rourke	33026617	C	18 Apr 45	LWA
	Pfc	Rex NMI Meredith	6669903	A	19 Apr 45	LIA
*	Sgt	Robert Dunham	33272551	C	19 Apr 45	LIA
*	Tec 5	Eugene W. Baker	36242848	B	19 Apr 45	LWA
*	Capt	John NMI Hudson	01307549	C	20 Apr 45	LWA
	2d Lt	Joe H. Patterson	01999106	Rcn	21 Apr 45	KIA
	S/Sgt	Anthony G. Schepici	20123378	Rcn	21 Apr 45	KIA
	Tec 5	J. T. (IO) Dial	34194239	Rcn	21 Apr 45	KIA
	Pfc	Norman Vigderhouse	33193261	Rcn	21 Apr 45	KIA
	Pfc	Clayton NMI Anderson	35262612	Rcn	21 Apr 45	MIA
	Pfc	John M. Wiwi	35168871	Rcn	21 Apr 45	SWA
	Sgt	Clyde T. Gephart	33261645	Rcn	21 Apr 45	SWA
	Pfc	Cecil W. Thompson	15010945	Rcn	21 Apr 45	SWA
	Pvt	Eldridge C. King	34914162	Rcn	21 Apr 45	LIA
	S/Sgt	Julius J. Fussell	34208886	C	21 Apr 45	SWA
	Sgt	Alfred L. Parks	20346573	C	21 Apr 45	LIA
	Tec 5	Deloss B. Morgan	37449685	C	21 Apr 45	SWA
	Pfc	Kenneth D. Coleman	35623822	C	21 Apr 45	LWA
	Tec 5	Gordon B. Bernhard	35378260	Rcn	21 Apr 45	LIA
	Tec 5	Donald L. Carrington	35152806	Rcn	21 Apr 45	LWA
	Tec 5	Dallas A. Holcomb	33120105	Rcn	21 Apr 45	LWA
*	Cpl	Alexander Crawford	31244315	C	21 Apr 45	LWA
*	Pfc	Ralph D. Higgins	38341678	C	21 Apr 45	LWA
	2d Lt	John R. Foster	02001723	Rcn	22 Apr 45	LWA
	Tec 5	Marshall R. Nuzum	37205973	B	22 Apr 45	LIA
*	Pfc	Sterling C. Brown	35132318	C	22 Apr 45	LWA
*	Pvt	Claude N. Gilliland	33157667	B	22 Apr 45	LWA
	Sgt	George L. Baldwin	15047931	Rcn	23 Apr 45	LWA
	Sgt	James E. Upchurch	34134349	Rcn	23 Apr 45	LWA
	Pfc	Herman Adams	15055053	Rcn	23 Apr 45	LWA
	Pfc	Roy O Peterson	34053954	Rcn	23 Apr 45	LWA
	Sgt	Tom T. Gunn	34147389	Rcn	23 Apr 45	LWA
	S/Sgt	Oscar E. Swanson	36185161	Rcn	23 Apr 45	LWA
	2d Lt	Earl L. Urban	01999201	C	23 Apr 45	KIA
	Pfc	Arnold A. Asling	37519651	B	26 Apr 45	LIA
*	Capt	John NMI Hudson	01307549	C	27 Apr 45	LIA
*	NONE HOSPITALIZED					

II AWARDS:

A. Purple Heart:

S/Sgt	Herston Childers	3521369C	C	per GO 25 Hq 1st AD
Cpl	Mel B. Mensor	1637379A	A	per GO 25 Hq 1st AD
Pfc	Albert B. Crawford Jr	34133988	Rcn	per GO 35 Hq 1st AD
Sgt	George L. Baldwin	15047931	Rcn	

III REPLACEMENTS:

During the period the Battalion received two (2) officers and eight (8) enlisted men as replacements.

IV ROTATION AND TEMPORARY DUTY:

During the period twenty five (25) enlisted men returned to the U. S. on rotation and eleven (11) enlisted men returned to the U. S. on Temporary Duty.

S-2 ANNEX

EQUIPMENT CAPTURED OR DESTROYED BY THE 701ST TANK  
DESTROYER BATTALION DURING APRIL 1945

"A" Company	8	1	2	1	19	2	100	185
"B" Company	1	1	3		2			
"C" Company	3				3	2	3	7
Res. Company					1			15
	TANKS ALL CLASSES	SP'S ALL CLASSES			A/T GUNS	ARMY PIECES		VEHICLES ALL CLASSES

S-3 ANNEX TO OPERATIONS REPORT

Vehicular losses through enemy action sustained by the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion during the month of April 1945 :

GMC-M10	B1	K2 (b)	K1 (b)	/	K1	K1 (105mm)	C2
M10-AC	K1 (b)	/	/	K1 (b)	/	/	K1
M20-AC	/	/	/	K1 (b)	/	/	/
HT-M3	/	/	/	/	/	B2 (105mm)	/
/	<i>igniter</i>	<i>tires</i>	<i>panther</i>	<i>75mm shells</i>	<i>mines</i>	<i>shelling</i>	<i>other</i>

Legend ~

B-24 lbs.  
C-48 lbs.  
K-destroyer  
(b)-burner

S-4 ANNEX TO OPERATIONS REPORT

ammunition expenditures during monthly period (approximate) :

3", High Explosive	5404
3", High Explosive (reduced charge)	2046
3", Smoke	65
3", Time	0
3", Star	457
3", APC	763
3", T-105	0
Total	<u>8735</u>
.37mm High Explosive	635
.37mm APC	220
Total	<u>855</u>
.30 Caliber	12500
.50 Caliber	2060
Grenades, Hand (HE)	86
Grenades, Yellow Smoke	110



HEADQUARTERS  
701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464 U. S. ARMY

1 May 1945

COMBAT LESSONS LEARNED - 1 - 30 APRIL 1945

During the entire month of April 1945, the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion was in support of the 10th Mountain Infantry Division; with the exception of Company "B" which, during the period 17 - 30 April was under operational control of the 1st Armored Division. Operations, for the greater part, were offensive; consisting of fast-moving Infantry-Tank - Tank Destroyer Combat Teams under Infantry Command. Resistance varied from strong to nil, and the operations covered the entire area from the Appenines through the Po River Valley to the Alps. Terrain varied from flat cultivated valleys with good road nets to high barren mountains where roads were a nonexistent factor. Every conceivable German anti-tank devise from the A/T Grenade and Bazooka to the 88mm gun was contacted by elements of this Battalion.

From the many and varied combat experiences of our personnel during the period, a wealth of combat lessons have been derived. For the sake of simplicity, these Lessons will be discussed under the following headings:

1. Tank Destroyer Gun Companies.
2. Tank Destroyer Reconnaissance Company.
3. Tank Destroyer Headquarters and Headquarters Company.
4. Communications.

## 1. TANK DESTROYER GUN COMPANIES

During the period 1 - 30 April the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion and the 751 Tank Battalion worked in close conjunction supporting the 10th Mountain Division.

Innumerable Tank - Tank Destroyer tactical groupings were attempted, all arranged to meet a given tactical situation. Proper communication enabled each of these organizations to successfully carry out their assigned missions. The two Battalions initially interchanged crystals on all 508 and 528 radios within their respective organizations. This automatically insured communication of any combined groups of Tanks and Tank Destroyers.

Initially in the period each Tank and Tank Destroyer Company interchanged one Platoon. This gave each tank company two platoons of M-4's and one platoon of L-10's, and gave each TD Company two Platoons of L-10's and one Platoon of L-4's. One mixed company was then sent in support of each assault Infantry Battalion. Later in the period all conceivable combinations were profitably used. (Note - The integral Platoon construction always remained unaltered. Exchanges were not made involving units smaller than the Platoon)

The actual assault on enemy positions was carried out as follows:

The Tank Destroyer platoons were used as a base, firing in direct support of the advancing Infantry. The medium Tanks were slightly in rear as a mobile reserve. After the TD direct fire had softened the enemy strong points, the medium tanks came forward, passed through the TD's, and pushed forward to the objective with the Infantry. The TD's continued to over-watch, engaging all targets of opportunity.

In the initial stages of the Divisional attack (vicinity of Castel d' Aiano) some Tank - Tank Destroyer companies had engineers platoons attached. Numerous mines and demolitions were encountered and without immediate engineer assistance the progress of the armor would have been frequently delayed.

. . . . .

In the advance across the Po River Valley, one platoon of Tank Destroyers usually operated with the forward elements of the motorized columns. The remainder of the TD company were interdispersed (by sections) between the trucks of the motorized Infantry to protect the column from roving German self-propelled guns, which after being by-passed, often fired on the trucks in rear of the armor.

TANK DESTROYER GUN COMPANIES (Cont'd)

It has been the policy of this Battalion that Platoon Leaders are on the M-10 for more effective control of the guns and for his own protection. In flat terrain, such as the Po Valley, the fire of all platoon guns are brought on each target (in mountainous terrain this is not always possible). If the Platoon Leader brings the fire of his gun onto the target, he no longer commands a platoon but one gun; if he does not engage the target, but continues to control the fire of his platoon, he loses the fire of one of his guns. One Company Commander suggests the addition of the fifth gun to the platoon (Organization then similar to the tank platoon). Another Company Commander suggests a light tank in the TD platoon as the Platoon Commander's vehicle (in lieu of the authorized M-20).

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It is imperative that Tanks and Tank Destroyers keep moving when roadbound in mountainous terrain when under enemy observation. North of SAVIGNANO three tanks were destroyed by enemy tank and artillery fire when the column jammed and stopped on the road as the lead tank reached the objective. In this connection, it may be said that when operating with dismounted Infantry columns in mountainous terrain, only a small portion of the TD company should be kept forward (possibly a section or a platoon). The column that advanced up the east side of Lago di Gardo ably proved this point in that the entire attached TD company was kept well forward. A blow in the road was reached and the entire armored column was jammed forward (it being next to impossible to get off the road). The entire left column was thus exposed and offered a most promising target to enemy guns across the lake (range 2500 to 3000 yards).

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German anti-aircraft gunners on the dual-purpose 88 mm gun apparently do not make good A/T gunners. The presence of armor seems to make them loose their nerve. Also, trained to taking leads on fast moving aircraft the A/A gunner firing on tanks will invariably overestimate the lead, and fire in front of the tank. Four times in two days enemy 88 mm A/A guns used for A/T purposes fired on armored cars and TD's at ranges under one thousand (1000) yards, and missed. One particular gun fired five rounds, missing each time. Then the crew evidently abandoned their gun when a TD came forward to engage and destroy it.

## USE OF STAR SHELLS

During the past several months the naval shell, Illuminating, 3 - inch M 24, Mod. 1 w/Fuze T & Sg M54 has been used by this Battalion in the following three roles :

- (1) Illumination of targets for night bombing.
- (2) Illumination of enemy strong points to be engaged by direct fire.
- (3) Illumination of targets for Field Artillery observers for night adjustments.

### Night Bombing:

Our night bombing missions were prearranged by the Air Corps and transmitted to the Battalion through Corps Artillery. We have found that it is necessary to have an officer, familiar with methods of fire direction and simple survey and two guns, with the sole mission of firing illuminating shell. Also several hundred rounds of shell were always on hand at the Battalion dump.

The guns had to be well forward so as to be able to engage efficiently the targets selected by the Air Corps for the night operations. The Battalion was never informed until late afternoon of the locations of the targets (centers of communication, road junctions, etc) which usually were well in front of our lines.

Registration by Air OP or ground OP on area targets is desired but not always necessary. On several occasions, when time did not permit day-light registration, the guns were laid by compass and fired with satisfactory results.

The method of engaging targets by the Battalion was laid down by the Air Corps and IV Corps Artillery.

At TOT (Time over Target) - 2 minutes, an aircraft releases a flare in the target area. This served as an alert notice to the guns which fire two illuminating shells over the center of the target at TOT. At TOT plus 2 minutes, two additional shells are fired over the center of the target. Then from TOT plus 2 minutes to TOT plus 6 minutes both guns fire as many illuminating shells as possible directing them in the

manner: Center of target, three hundred (300) yards left of target and three hundred (300) yards right of target

Engaging Targets with direct fire at night.

At one time during the 10th Mountain Division operation in the Castel d'Aiano sector the enemy was known to be building a strong point about eight hundred (800) yards from our front line. It was planned to have "A" Company, 701 TD En fire star shells over this point and have "B" Company, 701 TD En engage the target with direct fire. Time did not permit registration during day light on the target. The guns were laid by compass and when fired, not having been registered, were off several miles in deflection and instead of lighting up the target, lit up the platoon that was to fire. We never fired this type mission again, but the necessity for registration is obvious.

Registration of Field Artillery by FO at night using Illuminating Shell.

During our operations with the 10th Mountain Division in the Castel d'Aiano sector we used, with some success, illuminating shells for right adjustment of Field Artillery. The method although somewhat crude, is as follows:

Communications with the Artillery were extremely difficult. Mountain artillery can find firing positions without much trouble, while for our gun with its flat trajectory, very few suitable positions could be found. Therefore, distances between artillery and TD's were, as a rule, great, and were impracticable. The SCR510 and SCR 508, due to the mountains were not reliable. So the following method was devised. When the FO picked up or was informed of a target the coordinates were sent to the Battalion which in turn figured the data for the target. The FA would be ready to fire but would not fire until so ordered by the FO and then only after he had seen the star shell over the target area. The area then would be continually lighted until the registration was completed which usually took five (5) to six (6) minutes.

It is felt that some better method could be worked out to insure good illumination using a minimum of shells.

## 2. TANK DESTROYER RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY

During the period the Reconnaissance Company of this Battalion seldom operated under Battalion Control or with or in support of the Gun Companies of the Battalion. None the less, the information they derived would be of general value to all Reconnaissance Troops.

In general engagements between Infantry and Reconnaissance Troops, the Infantry will invariably come off second best. M-8 Armored Cars are used as a mobile base of fire against enemy Infantry while 1/4 ton, 4 x 4, crews of the Reconnaissance Platoon operate dismounted, attacking aggressively under covering fire of the M-8's. Six (6) kilometers south of Bomporto, Italy, one Reconnaissance Platoon attacked some one hundred (100) enemy Infantrymen using the above procedure. By segmenting the enemy Infantry into small groups by wedging the M-8's between them, the Platoon captured, killed or wounded the entire group of enemy without casualty to themselves. This enemy group contained thirteen (13) Officers while the total strength of the attacking Platoon was only seventeen (17) men. (Note - Although all of the enemy group were armed with small arms and machine guns, they possessed no useable A/T weapons).

Under similar circumstances, however, this same Platoon some five (5) days later engaged a similar number of enemy SS Troops near Bardolino, Italy. In this case the Platoon procedure for attack was the same, and a wedge was driven between the enemy. This time, however, the enemy troops withdrew a short distance, working to the flanks, and began to attack the armored cars launching A/T Grenades and Bazookas. This aggressive action by the enemy forced the Reconnaissance Platoon to withdraw, but only after it had succeeded in inflicting an estimated ten (10) to twelve (12) casualties upon the enemy.

In action against enemy Infantry in towns and villages, Reconnaissance troops often do not fare so well. In Bomporto, Italy, there were two river and canal bridges which the Division Commander had ordered to be secured intact, if possible. This Company was the first unit to reach these bridges and found them intact upon arrival. Some fifteen to twenty enemy Infantrymen were on the far side of the bridge, plainly visible. Suspecting the bridge to be mined, the Platoon Leader none the less elected to attack. He ordered his armored cars across the bridge firing upon the enemy as they advanced. The enemy Infantry scattered, and by this aggressive action the Platoon Leader saved the bridge. (Some six hundred pounds of TNT was later taken from the bridge by the Company Pioneer Platoon) The second bridge was in the center of the town. The Platoon Leader advanced swiftly and crossed the second (It too was prepared for demolitions). He had dropped off a 1/4 ton, 4 x 4, and crew at each bridge for protection, and now found that he must advance on

through the town without sufficient personnel to clear the houses bordering the street as he advanced. Enemy Infantry evidently realized this and launched A/T grenades from the houses at the M-8's. One Armored car was hit, set on fire, and the Platoon Sergeant and radio operator were killed. The German Infantry then counterattacked and forced the Platoon to withdraw back across the bridge. From this action it may be said that, against aggressive and determined enemy troops in towns and villages, all houses along the route of advance must be cleared abreast of the advancing armor.

When Armored Cars are compelled to engage Tanks or A/T Guns, the results are usually disastrous. On Highway 9 in Italy one Platoon was heading west toward Modena. This Platoon was engaged by an anti-tank gun firing at a range of three hundred (300) yards. The German A/T gunner evidently realized the limited turning radius of the M-8 for he knocked out the second armored car in the column first, then destroyed the lead M-8 before it could turn away. The Platoon Leader was killed, but the Sergeant in command elected to attack the gun dismounted. He found the gun to be protected by determined German Infantry. Thus, one well placed A/T gun hopelessly blocked a major highway to the Reconnaissance elements and a new route of advance had to be chosen. In this action the Platoon suffered nine (9) casualties while the enemy lost only one (1) man.

Throughout the operation, an armored Field Artillery Battalion used the same 500 series radio channel as the Reconnaissance Company of this Battalion. Thus, without official sanction and entirely by the laws of chance, an all-important and life-saving arrangement was worked out mutually between the air-OP's of the AFA Battalion and the Reconnaissance Platoons. The Observers and Platoon operators gradually learned to distinguish radio voices, and even though the call signs changed daily, each group was able to recognize the other. The Reconnaissance Platoons were habitually in the lead of all north bound columns, and when air-bound the air OP would call the Platoons asking if he could be of any help. The Platoons would reply with their forward location, asking the OP to observe to their front. This resulted several times in the location of enemy tanks and A/T guns to the front and in the passing down of invaluable information to the Platoon from the OP. This procedure was worked many times in the advance to the north, and the possibility of its use in future operations in any theatre should be seriously considered by all echelons of Command.

The Reconnaissance Company, through the above means virtually assured at all times of adequate FA support. At Anzola, Italy, on Highway 9, the Reconnaissance Company was utilized in the defense of the town. At night, German truck columns came west from Bologna to approximately five hundred (500) yards of the forward Platoon outpost, and German Infantry began to detruck. The Platoon leader immediately called for fire from the AFA Battalion. A Battalion concentration immediately broke up the

prospective counterattack.

In retrospect, however, although the damage inflicted upon the retreating enemy by the Reconnaissance Company of this Battalion was beyond measure; Reconnaissance, as befits the name, was a dismal failure. During the entire period, although every Combat Command of the Division used during the period had reconnaissance elements, the Task Force Commander at no time had communication with this reconnaissance. Thus, although the Reconnaissance Platoons ever carried out their assigned missions and were habitually first on objective, they served no purpose than that they were first, for they could not transmit that information which they obtained to the proper authorities. In addition, when the Reconnaissance elements engaged the enemy they were often forced to fight the whole action by themselves, for they were unable to call upon the Task Force commanders for adequate support. This resulted in relatively high casualties in men and equipment and lowered morale among the personnel.

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### 3. Tank Destroyer Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

The Battalion Headquarters of a Tank Destroyer Battalion (and any other Battalion or similar Headquarters) must be prepared to defend themselves in case of attack by infiltrating enemy. This is an easy statement to make, but to execute in fact requires prior preparations and organization. The Headquarters Commandant is the logical person to place in charge of the organization of the headquarters group, and he should be the one to take charge in case of emergency. In the past operation, north of the Ro River, the headquarters of this Battalion became engaged in three fire fights against moving enemy units.

In fast-changing situations it is almost impossible for the TD Battalion to keep close check upon all of its units, for components of the Battalion are usually spread over a complete divisional or often Corps sector. At present writing it is approximately 180 miles from Battalion Headquarters to the Company CP of one of the Gun Companies of this Battalion. Three more platoons (one platoon from each of the gun companies and one Reconnaissance platoon) are more than 145 miles from the Battalion CP. The administrative problems created by these distances are a perpetual strain upon the facilities of the Battalion. During the past winter, the Battalion headquarters and Gun Companies operated in one Corps while the Reconnaissance Company operated in another far across the enemy front. The well-being of these far spread Companies almost completely depends upon the interest displayed in them by the units to which they are attached.

This Battalion began the past Operation with five (5) G.C. trucks on detached service to the provisional IV Corps trucking Company. Most of the time during the operation at least one (1), and usually two (2), Tank Companies were attached to the Battalion. This imposed a supply strain which the Transportation Platoon and the Battalion supply Officer were unable to overcome. Trucks were just not available to haul the required gasoline, diesel, and ammunition. All kitchens, tentage, supply, and other equipment had to be dropped along the way. Due to lack of adequate truckage, it was necessary for the personnel of the unit to forfeit their beer and like rations. Nothing but items of absolute necessity could be carried. Captured enemy vehicles all eviated this shortage for a short time, but Army orders for the turn in of captured vehicles soon put an end to this.

#### 4. COMMUNICATIONS

This Battalion had so long operated with the 1st Armored Division where communications and communications problems have been successfully mastered that the difficulties encountered in operating with an Infantry Division brought about almost unsolvable situations. Adequate communication was not insured between the component elements of the Infantry-Tank-Tank Destroyer forces and the situation of each often became obscure to the other.

The Tanks and Tank Destroyers both used the 500 series radios and a mutual exchange of radios and crystals insured proper and adequate communication between them. Neither, however, had adequate communication with the Infantry they supported. For this reason, Infantry Commanders in the excitement of battle, having no communication with Tank or Tank Destroyer Commanders would attempt to seize control of individual guns often ordering them into impossible situations all without the knowledge of the Armored Platoon Commanders. Confusion and antagonism were the only results of these situations; all unfortunate and inexcusable but understandable. In the same manner, Tanks and Tank Destroyers were often required to fire in support of Infantry actions when they did not have an adequate knowledge of the situation, and the resultant support fires were somewhat ineffective.

Communications between small Tank and Infantry units could have been properly arranged for the Tank - Tank Destroyer Platoon Leaders all possessed 300 series Infantry radios, but were never informed of the unit channels of the organizations that they supported.

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The 528 radio has been suggested as the standard set to equip L-10's in lieu of the present 510. This would give the Tank Destroyers a set-up equivalent to that of the Medium Tanks, would allow a greater range of communication, and would enable a Tank Destroyer unit, which is subject to a change of attachment within a Division, to carry integrally the proper channels for the major units within the Division.

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Air-Ground Tactical communication is still extremely unsatisfactory; the "Rover Joe" and "Rover Pete" organizations are not the answer to this acute problem.

Air-Ground communication should be under the control of the foremost echelon commander of a given Task Force (not the Force Commander, but the commander most forward who has adequate communication with the components of the force). This would normally be either the commander of the Reconnaissance elements or the commander of the Advance Guard.

COMMUNICATIONS (Cont'd)

In the past operation, the Reconnaissance Company of this Battalion was strafed by American P-38 aircraft and one M-8 Armored Car was knocked out even though the vehicle was plainly marked by the maximum display of the prescribed yellow panels issued for identification purposes. Two other times the column was mistaken for enemy, and strafing by P-47 aircraft resulted.

P-47 aircraft at one time worked some 300 yards in front of the lead vehicle of the Reconnaissance Company strafing enemy Infantry, and as the Company approached Highway 9, P-47's strafed an enemy group some five hundred (500) yards to the left rear. With proper communication, this case could have become the rule rather than the exception.

Without exception, the most singly important tactical consideration in any proposed military operation is proper and adequate communication between all component elements of the given command. Three years of Overseas operations by this Battalion have proven this statement to be true.

ALBERT B. MORRISON  
Captain, Inf  
S-3

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**UNCLASSIFIED**

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(Submitted by Colonel W. F. Millice, FA, Army Ground Forces Board, MTO)

HEADQUARTERS  
701ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 464 U. S. ARMY

8701 TD  
14 May 1945 103

ARMOR IN SUPPORT OF INFANTRY ON LAGO DI  
GARDA, ITALY (F5090)

(AN AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION)

During the latter part of April 1945, the 10th Mountain Infantry Division was attacking north against light and scattered resistance along the east shores of Lago Di Garda. The 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion (-"B" Company), with "C" and "D" Companies of the 751st Tank Battalion attached, was in support of the division attack; which progressed north along the single road paralleling the lake. Thus, on the left of the attacking forces was some thirty-five hundred (3500) to twelve thousand (12000) yards of water, while on the right was an impassable barrier of hills up to 1034 meters in height. The area was entirely impassable for armored or other vehicles except along the main road to the north.

Initial enemy demolitions were encountered at F543943 early on the morning of April 28th. This caused some delay to the armor but the infantry proceeded on to the village of Navene (F545947) which they occupied and awaited support of armor. When the engineers had completed the fill, the TD's proceeded on forward to the village, where at its north edge an armored car of the reconnaissance company was taken under fire by enemy 4.2 inch gun. The infantry proceeded on forward, but found further demolitions at F556958. At this point they suffered considerable casualties from enemy twenty (20) mm. fire from the mouth of a tunnel on down the lake. When TD's were brought forward, the crews of the enemy 4.2 and 20mm guns evidently deserted their guns, for not a round was fired.

The demolitions at F556958 put an end to further advances to the north. The road had been dropped into the lake for a distance of some one hundred and fifty (150) feet and just beyond, the road tunnel mouth (where the road passed through the steep mountainside that ran down to the water edge) had been closed where the extensive demolitions had dropped the tunnel roof onto the floor. This tunnel was one of many between Navene (F545947) and Torbole (F578023) on the lake shore road. Engineer estimates were seven (7) to ten (10) days to clear the road.

As visual reconnaissance proved the other tunnels to be still intact, the division commander decided upon an amphibious operation to go around the demolished area to secure the other tunnels intact.

"DUKW'S", being available, were immediately brought forward and a battalion of infantry was landed in the vicinity of F5698. This landing was supported by the direct fire of "C" Company of the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion.

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When this landing had been secured, (the remaining tunnels were taken intact), support troops were landed, and an attack was launched to secure the towns of Riva (A552044) and Torbole (A578023). It was then that the commanding general decided to attempt to use barges to ferry tanks and tank destroyers north on the lake to support the advance of the infantry; or if this were not possible, to advance on to the north with the infantry after it had reached the initial Riva - Torbole objective.

Unfortunately, the necessary "QUONSETT" barges were not immediately available for the operation, and the infantry was on objective (Riva - Torbole) long before the first of the armor arrived.

A ferry point was established at F547950, and by afternoon of the 1st of May the "QUONSETT" barges were in the water and ready to receive.

It was decided by agreement between the commanding officer, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion and G-3, 10th Mountain Infantry Division to move the armor in the following order:

- 1 a - - 2 M-8's (701 Rcn)
- 2 M-10's (A/701) - RIVA
- 1 b - - Engineer Equipment. - RIVA
- 2 a - - 2 M-8's (701 Rcn)
- 1 M-5 (D/751) - TORBOLE
- 1 M-4 (C/751)
- 2 b - - Engineer Equipment. - TORBOLE
- 3 a - - 2 M-10's - RIVA
- 4 - - All remaining armor to TORBOLE in the following order:  
Medium tanks, light tanks, TD's of "A" and "C" Companies, 701st TD Battalion, and 701st Reconnaissance Company.

This order was brought about by the fact that the vehicles in classes 1, 2, and 3 were to be used initially on road blocks in the Torbole - Riva area.

Two unforeseen factors entered the picture. First, although the "QUONSETT" barges were said to be of the seventy (70) ton class, their actual load limit was not in excess of fifty (50) tons. This meant twice the originally scheduled number of runs. Next, the motor on the "QUONSETT" was not mechanically operative, and it was necessary to propell the barge by tying "dukw's" to the port and starboard side and using the "dukw" power to move the "QUONSETT." This added to the minimum time limit of each trip up the lake.

Nonetheless, the ferry was in operation by 1430 hours, 1 May, and by 1715 hours the first load had arrived at Riva. (The entire ferry trip consumed some two and one-half (2½) hours time. This meant a maximum of twelve (12) tanks could be handled each day). The ferry continued in operation throughout the night, and by 021700B May the following vehicles had arrived at destination:

- 1st Platoon, Rcn. Co., 701st T.D. Bn.
- 3rd Platoon, Rcn. Co., 701st T.D. Bn.
- 1st Platoon, "A" Co., 701st T.D. Bn.
- Co. Hq's, Rcn., 701st T.D. Bn.

- 2 Medium Tanks of "C" Co., 751 Tank Bn.
- 1 Light Tank of "D" Co., 751 Tank Bn.
- 4 Quonsett loads of heavy engineer bridging equipment.

This list shows that the contemplated schedule of movement was not followed to the letter. It was learned that although the barge could not handle two (2) tanks each trip, it could nonetheless carry additional light vehicles. A model load was one (1) medium tank and one (1) M-8 armored car. 1/4 ton, 4 x 4's of the reconnaissance company could also be added to the load as available. Thus, the vehicles of the reconnaissance company presented no problem.

A change in the priority of equipment was made the next day in that engineer equipment was given load priority over the armor, so that by 031800B May only five (5) additional medium tanks of the attached "C" Company, 751 Tank Battalion had been ferried.

No further trips were made with the armor. The road to the north was opened at 0800 hours on the 4th of May and the ferry was put out of operation.

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Although the quonsett barge was only in operation for a matter of four (4) days, and although only a portion of the available armor was transported by this ferry, the operation was nonetheless deemed a success. The use of quonsett barges in such operations is tactically a sound proposition, and their use in future operations by commanders faced with similar circumstances should be seriously considered. The operation just described could have been carried out in the face of enemy fire and, had the quonsett barges been available, tanks and tank destroyers could have landed with the infantry.

X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X

In any similar operation, the following factors must be taken into consideration:

1. Effective control must be exercised at the embarkation point. Only vehicles to be immediately available for loading must be in the area. (This battalion placed an officer at the embarkation point with radio and telephone contact with battalion headquarters. The loading officer then called for vehicles as desired for loading).

2. Effective control must be exercised at the debarkation point. When only a limited number of quonsett barges are available, small portions of armored units may become lost after debarkation.

3. When quonsett barges are to be used to carry armor in the assault a thorough map-study must be made of the landing area, to insure adequate landing points.

4. Quonsett barges are engineer equipment that are used only for short periods of major operations. For this reason, through long standing without use, the power motors are liable to become inoperative. Two motors were tried

in the last operation, and neither one worked. If such a heavy piece of engineering equipment is worth hauling all the long way up Italy, it is worth being kept in an operative state.

5. A sufficient number of the quonsett barges must be made available to the armor. In the past operation, it would have taken two (2) weeks to ferry the combat vehicles of this battalion. The use of quonsett barges for units larger than battalions is almost out of the question.

6. In assault operations, some form of protection from enemy fire must be afforded the crews of the quonsetts.

7. In operations in which it is contemplated to use tanks in quonsett barges in the assault, it must be planned to land as soon as possible after daylight. Tanks on the slow moving quonsetts present a most favorable target to enemy gunfire.

8. When it is contemplated to use quonsett barges in an operation, some forethought must be given to the matter, and the quonsetts must be kept far enough forward to be immediately available. In the past operation three (3) days were lost because the barges were not on hand.

/s/ Albert B. Morrison  
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