



Hammelburg, 29th march 1945

After Action Report

27th march 1945, since 04:15 h tank alert. 14:20 h observer post Reussenberg (hill 427) reports 12 enemy tanks on the Aschenroth road towards Obereschenbach

Heavy Tank Destroyer Battalion 251, while unloading at Hammelburg station, receives order to attack and destroy the enemy tanks.

Signal Training and Replacement Battalion 10, also unloading at Hammelburg station, is ordered to defend the town of Hammelburg, together with the local Volkssturm (Homeguard/Militia)

15:00 h - Enemy tanks in front of the Saale-Bridge in engagement with Tank Destroyer Battalion 251 and fire towards station and Town. Wire communication interrupted, no more contact to Post Office at Hammelburg. As found out later, 4 enemy Personell carriers and one Jeep destroyed, 3 trucks of Heavy Tank Destroyer Battalion also destroyed.

16:30 h - Some enemy tanks moving into direction of the camp under infantry cover.

17:20 h - Combat reconnaissance under enemy infantry fire reports that a German speaking American requests surrender.

18:00 h - 7 enemy tanks reach the hill, some firing towards the first houses of the camp, own infantry in engagement, enemy infantry is suppressed.

Infantry fire increases, one 2 cm AA-gun is destroyed by a direct hit.

A right flank maneuver of the enemy tanks forces on screening force to change their position.

19:15 h - 3 enemy tanks overrun the wire fence of the camp and move into the prisoner of war camp. 4 tanks move further towards the south-gate into the training area. Contact to the POW officers - tanks continue firing towards camp road and housing area. Own infantry outflanked, firing occasionally towards into the camp.

19:45 h - Tanks moving out towards the dominating hill, straw barn are burning. Tanks were attacked by tank killer squads with Panzerfaust (bazooka) Camp is recaptured.

20:50 h - 4 tanks with riding infantry advance towards the camp gate.

22:00 h – After destruction of one tank with a Panzerfaust (bazooka), the enemy tanks move to the training area west of the camp and maneuvering till 01:00 h. Tank killer squad can't attack because of the good close screening.

After midnight the enemy tanks assemble at the Reussenburg (hill 427) eastward. Some tanks maneuvering close to the camp. During disarming of the POWs inside the camp small incidents: Disarming of POWs by German soldiers, short engagement.

After midnight permanent arrivals of reinforcements, mostly platoon-wise, immediately attachment to district leaders and employment.

00:10 h 1st Battery officer candidate school 17.

Lt Daudelt

00:10 h Fla-Jagdzug (AA-platoon) Schweinfurt, Lt Bartmeier.

00:45 h Mortar company and 2nd Battery officer candidate school 17.

02:00 h 2 heavy companies (12 heavy machine guns) 2 infantry platoons.

During the night introduction into the battle area.

At dawn moving the command post towards the south-camp.

Während der Nacht Einweisung in den Kampfraum.

Constant combat reconnaissance in the enemy territory.

04:00 h – Observer Reussenburg (hill 427) reports: noise of tanks southern direction passing Reussenburg (hill 427).

05:00 h – Observer post Reussenburg (hill 427) reports 10 tanks and 20 other vehicles. Infantry secures the Reussenburg-farm – strength about 120 men.

07:00 h – Commander of Heavy Tank Destroyer Battalion 251 reports, receives briefing. (The Battalion withdrew to Euerdorf after the engagement at Hammelburg, was refuelled and received ammunition at Ebenhausen and reassembled now again near Fuchsstadt)

Liason officer was deployed by the post commander Hammelburg to inform the the Tank Destroyer Battalion to move as quick as possible during the night for the next fight.

07:20 h – General Hipp arrives

07:30 h – Major Eggemann from the HQ of General Steiner (Waffen-SS) reports and offers his assistance (he had already different orders for the employment of Heavy Tank Destroyer Battalion 251 and commands 2 heavy companies, Lt Demme).

08:00 h – Commander of Heavy Tank Destroyer Battalion 251 – Captain Köhl reports and receives briefing.

09:00 h – Advance from Bonmland westward, assembly area at the Michelsberg, Attack towards the Reussenburg (hill 427).

