

Myron M. Piper
1718 Country Club Place
Marshalltown, IA 50158
12 July 1999

Scott Gibson
3546 E. Cecelia Ln.
Yuma, AZ 84365

Dear Mr. Gibson:

I'm sorry it's taken so long to send you something on the 634th Tank Destroyer Battalion. My wife and I went on a trip and following that I got ill.

I've enclosed the history of the 634th, and photocopies of a couple of pictures. The M8 armored car was the main battle vehicle of reconnaissance companies in tank destroyer battalions during WWII. This is the only picture of an M8 that I could find. The M8 carried a 37mm gun in a turret, and a .50 cal. machine gun ring-mounted on the top. If your father was a machine gunner in Recon Co., it's likely that one of these 50's on an M8 was his weapon.

This picture was copied from the book Tank Destroyer Forces WWII, published in 1992 by Turner Publishing Company, P.O. Box 3101, Paducah, KY 42002-0121. It may still be in print.

The other picture shows M10 tank destroyers of A Co., 634th TD Bn. in Aachen, Germany. This was copied from the book U.S. Tank Destroyers in Combat 1941-1945. I think this book is out of print. There are no pictures of M8 armored cars in it.

The 634th was attached to the 1st Infantry Division throughout most of the European war. The platoons of Recon Company moved quite often from unit to unit within the 1st Div depending on where they were most needed.

I've also enclosed part of the After Action Report for the 634th for Dec 1944. When the Germans broke through the American lines Dec 16, 1944 (the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge), the 1st Div. and attached units were in a rest area east of Liege, Belgium. The division was immediately moved south to counter the attack. The CO of the 634th, LTC Henry L. Davisson, was placed in command of a special task force. Recon Co. of the 634th was a part of Task Force Davisson. This Dec 44 AA report tells about some of the action of Recon Co. during the first days of the battle. TFD worked so well that it wasn't dissolved until mid-March, 1945 - two months after the end of the Battle of the Bulge.

I've also enclosed the After Action Report for May 1945. It reports on activities for the last 7 days of the war, and also shows the battle record for the 634th. It also reports on the

capture of Capt. James Barrow (the CO of Recon Co) and two others. Capt. Barrow was released a few days later after the German surrender. It turned out that a German general was concerned about how he would be treated by the Americans if he surrendered to them rather than to the Russians, hence the general ordered a patrol to capture an American officer for questioning. Capt. Barrow was the unlucky officer.

I did not know your father. The only living member of Recon Company for which I have an address is Lt. Lewis, who was one of Recon's platoon leaders. He may know the whereabouts of other Recon vets:

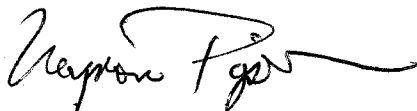
Morgan E. Lewis
5200 W. Oakton St. Apt. 404
Skokie, IL 60077

Capt. Barrow may still be living. The last I heard he was living in Athens, Georgia. He was an attorney and was a judge in the Georgia court system after the war.

I was 1st Sgt. of Headquarters Co. when we landed on Utah Beach. I later became Battalion Sgt. Major, and then got a battlefield commission just before the Bulge. I was also in Task Force Davisson as task force communications officer.

Please give me a call or write if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Myron M. Piper". The signature is written in dark ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Myron M. Piper