

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

AFC #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

OCTOBER 1944

CONCLUSIONS OF REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

1. The fighting during the month of October was comparable to jungle fighting, where many of the difficulties incident to jungle fighting arose. Some examples are:

a. Maintenance of direction was most difficult because of the dense forests. This alone resulted in many erroneous reports as to locations of unit and enemy positions. Difficulties arose as orders based on the best available information which was frequently inaccurate, miscarried, and at times resulted in bitter and unexpected fighting. The lesson to be learned is that all commanders must report actual conditions carefully, avoiding all possibility of errors in locations of units and omitting entirely reports based on optimism rather than fact.

b. Forest areas must be mopped up thoroughly. Small well dug in enemy detachments if not mopped up will harass supply columns, and present difficult problems of liquidation because of our inability to use our supporting weapons inside our lines. This problem can be solved by using skirmish lines as advances are made, and in effect "dragging" the area traversed as the attack progresses.

c. Sometimes the enemy deliberately let us get as close as seventy-five or one hundred yards to him before disclosing his presence with fire, and on occasion let the leading elements pass by. This reduced the fight to a small arms fight with the enemy enjoying the advantage of good cover. This frequently denied us use of artillery and mortar fire. The only solution in a case such as this is to withdraw only sufficiently far to keep the enemy in his holes but far enough back to permit the use of artillery with delayed fuses and mortar fire on him. These fires can be easily adjusted if the observers will throw their first rounds well over the target and then pull them in onto the target.

2. While the well proven concepts as to terrain apply in fighting in wooded mountains the concepts must be practically applied. Holding the top of a hill or even what is ordinarily termed the military crest of a wooded hill does not necessarily give us control of the surrounding terrain. We must require all units engaged in capturing a hill covered with forests to continue down the forward slopes until the open country is under small arms fire and artillery observation.

Paul D. Adams
PAUL D. ADAMS
Colonel, 11th Infantry
Commanding

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

On 1 October 1944, the 143 RCT protected the left flank of the 36th Infantry Division and held a line in the foothills of the VOSGES mountains running from one thousand yards northwest of FAYS, FRANCE (213554) south to the outskirts of LEPANGES, FRANCE (209532); the Third Battalion at MONTAGNE DU VILLAGE (205558); the First Battalion on Hill 576 (203544) overlooking LEPANGES; the Second Battalion on the southwest outskirts of LEPANGES. Contact and security patrols operated between battalions and with the adjacent units, the 141st Infantry Regiment on the right at LEPANGES and the 179th Infantry Regiment of the 45th Infantry Division on the left in the vicinity of MONTAGNE DU VILLAGE.

Confronting and opposing the 143 RCT, and with good observation, the enemy was dug in on high ground in the woods northwest of LEPANGES and east of PREY (2253). The German forces were composed of varied and miscellaneous personnel grouped to form two main combat teams, Combat Team AHRENS and Combat Team STENGEL. Supporting and attached hostile forces in contact were identified as being from 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 14th Companies of the Second Battalion, 726th Grenadier Regiment (regimental strength, four hundred); the 14th Company, First Battalion, 326th Grenadier Regiment, 198th Division; and from the 2nd Company, 934th OST Battalion.

At the beginning of October 1944, the 143 RCT was no longer pursuing the enemy. The Germans had reached easily defendable areas in the foothills of the VOSGES mountains, and faced with determined resistance the 143 RCT at close range. Proximity to home bases allowed the Germans to make more frequent use of aircraft, not only to observe our positions and movements, but also to strafe and harass the movement of traffic and artillery positions. With ample supply, the Germans were able to use their artillery to best advantage and to focus fire on our channelized routes of approach. The slowing of our advance enabled the enemy to increase his use of mines and booby traps.

The 143 RCT October operation was consistently a tactical battle for terrain. The most significant factor affecting tactical developments during this period was this unfavorable terrain together with adverse weather conditions. The weather was very changeable with heavy fall rains making unpaved roads muddy and often impassable for larger military vehicles. At first sight, the roadsides and fields appeared to be firm but on the contrary, were treacherous and often vehicles bogged down.

Misty to heavy rain and low hanging clouds frequently formed, limiting vision on the ground and completely obstructing visual and photographic reconnaissance from the air. When the sky was overcast, the fog and haze remained in the air for several days at a time, but on sunny days it was usually dissipated by noon. Artillery observation was materially affected by these conditions.

While the autumn rains did not prevent the fording of streams in the area drained by the MOSELLE River and its confluent streams, of which the LA VOLOGNE River was one, the changeability of the gravel river bed necessitated reconnaissance. During heavy rains the streams in the BRUYERES area rose rapidly, often became torrential for several days at a time, and caused shifting of the river bed frequently removing previously existing fords. In general, the ground on river banks was good, and the river bed was solid enough for tanks.

The forests in this section were mixed pine and hardwood. While there was little or no underbrush in the pine woods area, there was a tangle of vines and brush in the hardwood areas which limited vision and resisted penetration.

Preparatory to changing sectors with the 141st Infantry on 1 October 1944, the First and Third Battalions, 143d Infantry, moved to an assembly area vicinity of CHARMOIS (150529), and then to the northeast slope of Hill 728 (230-484). Patrols sent out to the wooden bridge at 232488 reported it intact and one platoon secured the bridge for the night of 1 October 1944.

The First Battalion occupied an assembly area on the northwest slopes of Hill 728 and sent patrols to the IE BARBA River running northwest and emptying into the LA VOLOGNE River at DOCELLES (169502). The stream in the vicinity of LAVELINE-du-HOUX was reported to be knee to waist deep and very swift.

At the same time, the Second Battalion moved from its position vicinity IEPANGES and closed into assembly area seven hundred yards southeast of XAMONTARUPT (198482).

The 36th Infantry Division Operations Instructions issued 302100 September 1944, ordered the 143d Infantry to move, one battalion at a time, by truck to vicinity XAMONTARUPT in preparation for an attack at 020630 October 1944, with two regiments abreast, the 141st Infantry on the left and the 143d Infantry on the right; the boundary line between sectors being the HOUX-HERPELMONT road, with the line of departure the existing front lines. The 143d Infantry with Reconnaissance Company, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion; one Platoon Company C, 111th Engineer Battalion; Company C, 111th Medical Battalion, and directly supported by the 133d Field Artillery Battalion and Division Artillery, was to attack with the First and Third Battalions abreast and the Second Battalion in reserve, to clear all enemy resistance within its zone and to seize initially the high land masses (241505) and Hill 763 (252-504), and then prepare to resume the attack to seize the 143d Infantry Regimental objective, Hill 676 (259518) and to protect the right flank of the 36th Infantry Division.

The Second Battalion in Regimental reserve moved to an assembly area on the northwest slopes of Hill 728 and prepared to be employed on the right flank of the regiment, or to fill in the gap between the First and Third Battalions as the First Battalion advanced beyond the Third Battalion objective,

Hill 808 (258489).

After establishing a road block midway between LAVELINE-du-HOUX and REHAUPAL in the vicinity of 242480, the Third Battalion directly supported by Cannon Company and Antitank Company, 143d Infantry, protecting the right of the regiment and maintaining contact with the First Battalion on the left, was to seize and hold Hill 808.

As scheduled, the assault battalions jumped off at 020630 October 1944, in the face of machine gun and artillery fire coming from BOIS de LONGEMORE (235498), the First Battalion advanced west of LAVELINE-du-HOUX (242499) to the high ground overlooking LE ROUGE CHATEAU (245498) and set up defensive positions for the night making contact with the Third Battalion on the right and at 2300 hours with the 141st Infantry on the left. Patrols advanced one thousand yards to the front without enemy contact.

On 3 October 1944, Companies I and L attacked from Hill 728, crossed LE BARBA River by the wooden bridge at 235487, meeting small arms fire, to LAVELINE-du-HOUX, cleared the town by 0800 hours, and while continuing on, met stubborn resistance from enemy entrenched on their left flank. Company L hit a manned German road block eight hundred yards southeast of LAVELINE-du-HOUX (241485) and after a brief skirmish and with the assistance of Company K, cleared it at 1730 hours and established a road block in the same position. The companies dug in for the night in the area east of LAVELINE-du-HOUX. By probing to the front, patrols found the enemy line to run from the crest of the wooded hill facing west from LE ROUGE CHATEAU to approximately 244480.

The Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, now changed the objectives of the 141st Infantry and the First Battalion of the 143d Infantry. After the 141st Infantry had taken its initial objective, it was to continue to seize Hill 676 (259518) formerly the First Battalion, 143d Infantry objective. The boundary between the 141st Infantry and the 143d Infantry became the saddle between Hill 676 and Hill 763, each regiment to mop up in its zone of action. The First Battalion, 143d Infantry, was to secure the line of departure for the subsequent attack on Hill 808 on 4 October 1944, by the Second Battalion, 143d Infantry.

After making necessary reconnaissance, the Second Battalion on 4 October 1944, was to attack Hill 808 from the direction of Hill 763.

The Third Battalion, 143d Infantry, was ordered to mop up its area and the area south of LAVELINE-du-HOUX, the open ground and southern slopes of Hill 690 toward REHAUPAL.

On the afternoon of 3 October 1944, the First Battalion held positions in the BOIS-de-LONGEMORE (241502) overlooking LE ROUGE CHATEAU and extending to the base of Hill 763 where the Germans occupied dug in positions. The Third Battalion, 143d Infantry, in line along the 24 Easting was confronted at a

distance of two hundred yards by the 7th Company, Second Battalion, 726th Grenadier Regiment, which held with automatic weapons a line of supporting strong points forming with interlocking fire a strong final protective line. From these positions and from Hill 427 the enemy directed small arms, automatic weapons, mortar and artillery fire on our troops. During the afternoon fully two hundred and seventeen rounds of artillery landed in the Third Battalion area. In spite of this opposition, the Third Battalion advanced to positions southeast of LAVELINE-du-ROUX. Company I attacked an enemy road block three hundred yards southeast of their own road block (243482) and were fired on by an entrenched enemy along the road at 242481. Although Company I was forced to move off the top of Hill 690 by enemy artillery fire, Company K worked down toward LE ROUGE CHATEAU. All Third Battalion units consolidated their positions until relieved by the Second Battalion at 040200 October 1944, and then moved to assembly area on the northwest slopes of Hill 720.

The morning of 4 October 1944, Company A supported by tanks and tank destroyers moved to the south to clear out LE ROUGE CHATEAU and to assist the attack of the Second Battalion on Hill 808.

Southeast of LE ROUGE CHATEAU in a draw extending from 240490 east to 243495, our patrols had observed considerable hostile activity. After establishing strong defensive positions in houses the Germans had brought in self-propelled mounts which had been placing harassing fire on our positions.

On 4 October 1944, Cannon Company, 143d Infantry, augmenting the fires of the 133d Field Artillery Battalion and 141st Field Artillery Battalion laid a twelve-minute barrage (from 1130 to 1142 hours) on this draw and on the woods along its sides. Following this barrage, Company D mortars walked up the draw ahead of a Company A mop-up platoon; all enemy were cleared from this area and Company A occupied LE ROUGE CHATEAU the night of 4 October 1944.

At 1500 hours, 4 October 1944, Company C followed by Company D, advanced up Hill 763 in the face of scattered small arms and artillery fire, and reached the top at 1800 hours where it received self-propelled mount fire. First Battalion patrols, engaging enemy patrols in a fire fight, found the Germans in strength occupying the area around BRECHLOSSE (256505). Maintaining contact with the 141st Infantry on the left and the Third Battalion, 143d Infantry on the right, Company C proceeded to clear the north and northeast slopes of Hill 463. The First Battalion took up positions on the outpost line of resistance, physically blocked all roads, and established observation posts to observe and fire on the SOUS-SPEIMONT-JUSSARUPT area. In the sector south of BRECHLOSSE Company B contacted approximately sixty Germans going into position. After a brief skirmish Company B withdrew, taking two prisoners, one from the 721st FLEIEGER Regiment and one from the 726th LAUSCHESSTZEN who reported that the enemy was digging in between the First Battalion's position and the village of PLATICOTE (207505).

In Regimental reserve, the Third Battalion on the northwest slopes of

Hill 728, with Company K holding the hill, moved to an assembly area at 241502 preparatory to an attack on Hill 808.

The Germans commanded observation from Hill 808, on which two self-propelled mounts were firing toward LAVELINE-du-HOUX and LE ROUGE CHATEAU and on Hill 827 (238462) which controlled the REHAUPAL-LAVELINE-du-HOUX road. Company G leading the Second Battalion elements, advancing slowly on Hill 808 ran into twenty-five entrenched enemy about four hundred yards northwest of REHAUPAL who were protecting a dug in antitank gun backed up by a Mark IV tank. This area was immediately interdicted by our artillery.

On the left of the Second Battalion, the Third Battalion contacted the enemy near houses at 253494 at the western base of Hill 808. Although the Germans laid a sizeable concentration of artillery on the Third Battalion area, Companies L and I advanced abreast to the base of Hill 808 to run into approximately one hundred and fifty entrenched enemy. While Company L momentarily withdrew, Cannon Company poured in a twelve-minute barrage. Immediately Company L and other Third Battalion units advanced and seized Hill 808 at 061135 October 1944. Positions were organized and consolidated.

On 6 October 1944, the 143 RCT held a line extending on the left flank from Hill 763 held by the First Battalion, through Hill 808, occupied by the Third Battalion, to the REHAUPAL-LAVELINE-du-HOUX road at point 249476 defended by the Second Battalion. Operations Instructions were issued 061530 October 1944, ordering the 143 RCT to establish, organize, and maintain defensive positions along the present front line. Each battalion was ordered to maintain contact with adjacent units. Mortars and automatic weapons were so sited as to cover all open areas, and fields of fire were prepared where wooded areas could not be avoided. Mortar and artillery concentrations were registered in to cover all routes of approach. Outpost lines were manned from dark to daylight. Company C, 111th Engineer Battalion, improved battalion supply routes and assisted in mining and booby trapping enemy routes of approach.

During the period 6-13 October 1944, prolonged rains made the serpentine secondary roads through the hills tenacious mud trails. Forest paths became heavily mired. While the forward progress of the regiment was slowed, the enemy mined and blocked all approach routes and then struck with all available artillery strength.

Holding a relatively straight line, the 143d Infantry extended from vicinity BRECHILLOSSE through Hill 808 to a point west of REHAUPAL, with the First Battalion to the north holding the regimental left flank, the Third Battalion in the center, and the Second Battalion on the regimental right flank holding the southern anchor of the line. On this defense line, all of the battalions dug in for protection against the sporadic enemy shelling of all areas and carried on active patrolling to the front and flanks. An artillery duel developed as each side harassed the front lines and rear areas of the other. Making no attempt to counterattack, the Germans sought simply to amass all

information as to our strength and positions by active patrolling, aerial reconnaissance, and observation from key points on commanding terrain.

On the night of 6 October 1944, patrols to gain information as to enemy positions and strength went out to CHAMPDRAY (270488), to REHAUPAL, and to PLATICOTE. At the latter town, considerable enemy traffic was reported, noticeably horse-drawn vehicles and foot troops moving north. Moving from the Second Battalion area on the high ground overlooking REHAUPAL from the northwest, combat patrols smashed a German road block at 246478 on the REHAUPAL-LAVELINE-du-HOUX road, cleared it with the aid of the Engineers and established one in the same site. A second hostile road block west of CHAMPDRAY (at 264490) was attacked by Company K the morning of 7 October 1944. Since the Germans had reinforced this position during the night, Company K encountered very strong resistance, pulled back and directed mortar and artillery fire on this enemy position.

Having been relieved from its positions on the forward slopes of Hill 808 by the Second Battalion at 1530 hours, the Third Battalion reverted to regimental reserve and assembled northeast of HOUX (233501). Following this change of position, the Second Battalion on the regimental right held the line extending generally west of REHAUPAL to the north side of Hill 808 (249475 to 260492), Company F on the left, Company G on the right, Company E in reserve.

The evening of 7 October 1944, a formidable hostile patrol was sighted approaching Company G's well-concealed positions. This patrol was permitted to advance within sixty or seventy-five yards (to 255478) when Company G riflemen, machine gunners, and mortar men opened with vicious fire. The Germans suffered severe casualties and withdrew at 2030 hours with many wounded.

The night of 8 October 1944, brought especially active patrolling. Each hour patrols from Company E travelled down a ravine to the road block at 249475. Seeking enemy information and prisoners, other Second Battalion patrols went out with strict orders to by-pass resistance, work well into REHAUPAL and listen for enemy activity. A Company F patrol from its position at the road junction (266488) heard Germans talking and armor milling around in CHAMPDRAY. Another patrol heard from around BRUYERES a railroad locomotive which was thought to be pulling the long range railroad gun that had been firing during the day. After Cannon Company fire had stopped German mortar firing at 082040 October 1944, a German combat patrol's attempted attack was frustrated by our illuminating flares.

At the Second Battalion road blocks, mines were laid while units of Company C, Third Chemical Battalion, set up 4.2 mortars to fire on road junction 253473, and harassing fifty caliber machine gun fire was sprayed on enemy positions. As a result of this fire, at 082250 October 1944, a driverless horse-drawn German wagon was captured and found to contain ammunition, hot food for troops, mail from Germany, administrative papers, and letters from the company clerk for the signature of the Commanding Officer, 2nd Company, 326th Grenadier

all costs, a state of indifference and hopelessness had penetrated deeply among the officers, most of whom wanted to end what they considered a dishonorable and futile struggle.

As a result of this information, 4.2 mortars scored four direct hits on a house where the enemy had been particularly active at 264480, as well as on the command post of the 3rd Company, 326th Grenadier Regiment at 257477.

At the time the 143d Infantry was relieved by the 142 RCT on the afternoon of 13 October 1944, the line extended from west of PLATICOTE (258508) across the crest of Hill 808 overlooking CHAMPDRAY to the REHAUPAL-LAVELINE-du-HOUX road. After the regimental relief had been effected, the Second Battalion moved to FAUCOMPIERRE, the First Battalion to CHENIENIL, and the Third Battalion vicinity XAMONTARUPT preparatory to maneuvering into position for the assault on BRUYERES on 15 October 1944.

VI Corps now ordered a push forward to take BRUYERES, a manufacturing city, railroad terminal, center of supply, and heart of resistance of the German forces in this area. From its position in the LA VOLOGNE River valley, BRUYERES controlled the natural approaches to the strategic city of ST DIE approximately twenty kilometers to the northeast.

While the 45th Infantry Division moved to sweep across the heights north of BRUYERES through BROUVELIEURES (grid square 2560) toward BELMONT (280589), the 36th Infantry Division in conjunction with the 45th planned to attack at 150800 October 1944, in the direction FAYS-BRUYERES to occupy the high ground northwest of BIFFONTAINE-Les POULIERES.

Attached to the 36th Division was the 442 RCT composed of Japanese-American troops who were to attack BRUYERES from the west after seizing the high land mass Hill 555 while protecting the left flank of the 36th Infantry Division and maintaining contact with the 45th Infantry Division.

Prior to the arrival of the 143 and 141 Infantries in their positions, the FELBER Blocking Force consisting of armor from the 753rd Tank Battalion and the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion held the line and blocked the roads between PREY and FAYS. While the Second Battalion, 143d Infantry remained at FAUCOMPIERRE in Division reserve, the remainder of the 143d Infantry supported by 753rd Tanks, a platoon of the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and Company C, Third Chemical Weapons Battalion prepared to attack in a column of battalions at 150800 October 1944, with the road running north from FAYS as the line of departure, to clear enemy resistance in its zone, to capture LAVAL (230555) and CHAMP le DUC (246555), and to block the three main approaches to BRUYERES at 258560 on the LAVAL-BRUYERES road, at 247556 on the CHAMP le DUC-BRUYERES highway, and at 256557 on the road from BRUYERES to Les POULIERES at 298558.

Crossings on the LA VOLOGNE River within its zone were to be secured and contact maintained with the 442 RCT on the left while protecting the latter's

Regiment. The letters were addressed to relatives of Germans buried in the MONTELLIMAR area and showed location of graves. While First Battalion security patrols made constant contact with the Second Battalion on the right and the 111st Infantry on the left, five trees were felled and emplacements dug to establish a road block under the north shoulder of Hill 808 (at 257492).

On 10 October 1944, the First Battalion moved to an assembly area northeast of HOUX, while the Third Battalion took over positions with Company I on the right, Company L on the left, and Company K in reserve.

As of 10 October 1944, all patrolling was coordinated by Regimental S-2. Each rifle company was ordered to send either patrols or raiding parties with the express mission of harassing or destroying enemy positions and taking prisoners. Approaching CHAMPDRAY, a Company F patrol observed the muzzle blast of a huge cannon at 262482, approached the position, placed and set off explosive charges with unobserved results. At 2100 hours a Company E raiding party composed of fourteen men, five men to place the explosive charge at each house with four men to cover their movements, left to destroy two houses at 264480 and 265479 sheltering units of the Second Battalion, 326th Regiment of the 198th Division. Screams of wounded Germans were heard after the resulting explosions, and the raiding party withdrew spraying with fire the woods vicinity 262484 - 261481.

At the same time eight men from Company G, four men as a demolition squad, four men covering with a base of fire, raided a building at 253475. Two twenty-pound charges placed in the basement windows destroyed the house and started a huge fire. Another Company G patrol approaching buildings at 254478 ran into a German outpost. After a brief fire fight in which they captured a member of the 13th Company, Second Battalion, 326th Grenadier Regiment, they returned to their company positions at 0530 hours.

Retaliating for our destructive raids on their positions, a six man German patrol fired rifle grenades into outpost positions of Company G. Other enemy patrols were also active seeking our troop dispositions only to be repelled by fire. When German units attempted to dig gun emplacements at 252473, Second Battalion fifty caliber machine gun fire drove them off.

Identified as being from the 3rd Company, Second Battalion, 326th Grenadier Regiment, a prisoner taken by the Second Battalion gave valuable information about the morale, disposition, and strength of the enemy. He reported that his company of forty to fifty men manning seven machine guns each with seven hundred rounds of ammunition was only two or three hundred yards to the front. The company command post occupied by the Commanding Officer was located at 257477. This company was flanked on the west by the 2nd Company and on the east by the 4th Company, each of approximately the same strength and armament as the 3rd Company. All companies well dug-in in the forest, were fairly well protected against our heavy artillery fire. Supplies were ample and received in good time. However, because the men had been ordered to hold the line at

left flank. Following the capture of CHAMP le DUC, the First Battalion was to prepare immediately to continue the attack to capture the south end of BOIS de BOURMONT (275357) on order. Company C, Third Chemical Weapons Battalion, one platoon in the vicinity of LERMOUES and one in the vicinity of PREY, was given priority for preparation fires commencing 150800 October 1944.

VI Corps knew that the German 716th Infantry Division and the 198th Infantry Division with attached units had a carefully organized defensive system established to the south and west of BRUYERES. A battery of 88mm cannon stood in a small bent-arm shape patch of woods at 234569 and a line of German infantry ran from 224575 to 246577 along the southern shoulder of Hill 555 west of BRUYERES. German troop concentrations were also reported west of LAVAL at Hill 479 (224556). Numerous pill boxes, antitank guns, and automatic weapons emplacements were interspersed with mined areas, abatis, and road blocks to make penetration of this area difficult. Factory buildings were either organized as strong points or strewn with mines and booby traps. To the south of the city, a barrier was created by the network of streamlets forming the LA VOLOGNE River.

Flanking BRUYERES on its northern edge were two tree-covered hills, Hill 555 (238576) on the west and Hill 595 on the east. A steel lookout tower standing on the latter offered one of the best observation points in the entire area. From this point, the Germans could direct artillery fire to cover the entire BRUYERES area and its approaches were protected by heavily mined areas. Northwest of BRUYERES stood Hill 476, defended by the crack 19th SS Troops, two hundred strong, reinforced by one hundred and fifty Luftwaffe troops and engineers. Our intelligence sources had stated that these troops were scheduled to attack through the 2359 grid square on the afternoon of 15 October 1944. The night of 14 October 1944, patrols found that a group of approximately two hundred enemy had moved from BRUYERES to the LAVAL area and had taken positions on both sides of the road just west of LAVAL at 226552.

As scheduled, the attack on BRUYERES and surrounding areas began at 150800 October 1944, with a fifteen-minute hammering by attached artillery units. Jumping off from the north-south road leading through FAYS, the First and Third Battalions advanced abreast, the First Battalion contacting the 442 RCT on the left while the Third Battalion, 143d Infantry joined with the 141 RCT on the right. At the outset, Company A faced little opposition, but as they climbed Hill 479 (223556) west of LAVAL they received self-propelled mount fire from LAVAL and engaged enemy infantry in a fire fight. Company C advanced to the left rear of Company A, while Company B stood fast maintaining strong contact with the Third Battalion.

The Third Battalion (Company L in Regimental reserve) moved around the southwest shoulder of Hill 479, through the draw to the east side of the hill meeting small arms and moderate artillery fire. While 4.2 mortars from Company C, Third Chemical Battalion, poured a smoke curtain on the western edge of LAVAL, Companies I and K fought into the center of the town protected on

the left by the First Battalion units five hundred yards north of LAVAL. At this point Company A pushing to cut the BRUYERES-LAVAL road engaged in a fierce fire fight astride the railroad tracks, receiving 20mm fire from a flak wagon in LAVAL. Cracking this opposition, the First Battalion mopped up sixty prisoners including the Commanding Officer. Acting as infantry, these over-age Germans were inferior troops from the 58th and 28th Artilleries; 2nd Company, Battalion JAECKEL; and from other scattered and miscellaneous units. Although better equipped than German troops encountered in the past, many were ready to surrender because of the mission they were assigned, a last-ditch stand. From their Commanding Officer, Captain HAMMER, of the 4th Company, 736th Grenadier Regiment, 716th Division, a sketch was taken showing the enemy defensive plan for the area south and east of BRUYERES. This sector was equally divided among the four companies of the Second Battalion, 736th Regiment, the axis of defense running on a northeast-southwest line. The southern boundary of this defensive system ran approximately to point 239552 on the road between LAVAL and CHAMP le DUC, while the northern boundary extended on a line from BRUYERES to the northeast.

During the entire day, the Germans sought to break the 143rd's hold on the approaches to BRUYERES by heavy concentrations of mortar and artillery fire. Not only did shells land in the face of advancing troops but at the 143 RCT Command Post in LEPANGES as well as on the 155 Field Artillery positions and the Second Battalion, 143d Infantry area near FAUCOMPIERRE, which, in the forenoon alone received one hundred and twenty rounds. Our artillery retaliated, flattening those parts of BRUYERES that the Germans had sought to defend. Eight-inch howitzer fire was trained on the railroad tunnel at 242568 which had been sheltering the enemy.

During the night patrols proceeded to CHAMP le DUC and BRUYERES. Second Lieutenant O'DEAN T. COX, O-2055220, of Waco, Texas, a Company K Platoon Leader, led his patrol into CHAMP le DUC, observed thirty enemy and engaged them in a small arms fire fight. After killing or wounding four Germans, this patrol crawled to and knocked out a machine gun position with hand grenades. A second machine gun position guarding the road junction at 246552 was located as well as German riflemen in defense lines along the river at 241554-244552, and guarding the LAVAL-BRUYERES highway at 238558 and 241559. The further activities of this patrol were terminated when light enemy mortar fire concentrations forced the patrol to return.

Scouting to within two hundred yards of the outskirts of BRUYERES, a Company I patrol clashed with a German eight man patrol scattering the enemy with M-1 and fifty caliber fire. A second Company I patrol reached a wooded ridge overlooking BRUYERES from the west and observed a huge fire burning in that town. While the Germans continued to pound LAVAL with artillery, an infantry holding force with armor under Major MARCUS W. ADAMS, O-359273, of Danville, Kentucky, Third Battalion Executive Officer, moved into the town.

Although receiving fire from the woods 235568, the Third Battalion by

early morning 16 October 1944, had completely cleared all points of resistance in LAVAL, taken fourteen prisoners, knocked out an antitank gun, and prepared to resume the attack. The First Battalion was occupied by clearing well-fortified houses on the BRUYERES-LAVAL road and along the railroad tracks.

Throughout the day 16 October 1944, the Germans concentrated their mortar and artillery fire on all road junctions south of BRUYERES and on 143d positions around LAVAL. Self-propelled mount fire came in from BRUYERES and from Hill 595.

Because of these enemy fires the 442 RCT moving northwest of the city had made slow progress and in addition had received German counterattacks in company strength. Not only did the 155th Field Artillery lay concentrations on these enemy firing positions but also a sweep of four Spitfires dive-bombed and strafed Hill 595.

At 1150 hours, Company I in a column of platoons supported by two tanks and one tank destroyer attacked from the south toward CHAMP le DUC followed by Company K. A blanket of German mortar fire and bursts of fire from at least four heavy machine guns located in the houses on the edge of CHAMP le DUC made the advance slow and difficult. The armor was held up by mines at German road blocks. At dusk the southern edge of CHAMP le DUC was blasted by the enemy - eight large-caliber shells landing at a time, proof of long range heavy battery fire. As a result of this stubborn resistance, the Third Battalion held up short of CHAMP le DUC the night of 16 October 1944.

On the morning of 17 October 1944, the German defense line extended in an arc north and east of CHAMP le DUC. At the road fork north of the town, a German artillery battery fired a fifty-round barrage. The First Battalion, responsible for clearing the enemy south of the railroad which curved at BRUYERES and swung to the southeast, and for maintaining strong contact with the 442 RCT, fought to clear the houses along the railroad tracks and along the BRUYERES-LAVAL road.

Until routed out by our artillery, snipers and approximately forty men of the 736th Grenadier Regiment with machine guns stood in the houses south of BRUYERES and maintained a blaze of fire to prevent removal of mine fields. Following our artillery barrage, Company C, 111th Engineer Battalion, cleared the mines and allowed the passage of armor.

Protected from direct enemy observation from Hill 595 by the screen of buildings in CHAMP le DUC, the Third Battalion resumed the attack northward. After a fifteen-minute artillery preparation Company I in a column of platoons, followed by Company K attacked CHAMP le DUC at 0815 hours. Company L worked up on the left flank over terraced terrain to the northwest, and held two platoons on the hill overlooking the town. On the extreme left, Company C protected the flank with heavy machine guns and cleared the enemy from the woods

vicinity of 235570. The attack was also supported by Antitank Company fire from 57mm cannon and from fifteen fifty caliber machine guns. Trained to harass the enemy area east of CHAMP le DUC to the wooded heights of BOIS de BOREMONT, this fire created the impression that the main attack effort was being exerted from the south, while actually the main effort was to be exerted from the north by the Japanese-American troops of the 442nd Infantry. Supported by Division and Corps Artillery and chemical 4.2 mortars these troops were to assault Hill 576 and the small knoll directly north of BRUYERES and then to smash into the city. During the entire afternoon the Third Battalion, 143d Infantry was engaged in bitter house to house fighting in CHAMP le DUC.

In preparation for the 143 and the 442 RCTs' attack on 181000 October 1944, Division placed forty 37mm anti-aircraft guns between FIDENIL and BEAUMENIL in support of the attack, to fire on the large nosed hill part of BOIS de BOREMONT, moved up tanks, poured smoke from 4.2 mortars, while Cannon Company, 143d Infantry threw three hundred rounds of supporting fires to wreck buildings protecting the enemy.

By 1140 hours, the Third Battalion was caught in a cross fire of enemy machine guns reinforced by fires from mortars and self-propelled mounts which held up the approach over exposed terrain of our armor.

At noon, Company A had reached the factory area of south BRUYERES and were mopping up in spite of the severe enemy mortar barrage. The savagery with which the Germans fought was illustrated by the fact that they would not permit 143d aid men to administer first aid or evacuate the wounded.

A German tank that had been in a well-concealed position at 256549 moved to the burned shell of a house, the walls of which were still standing near the road junction at 255553 and fired into CHAMP le DUC and BRUYERES. Almost immediately our supporting artillery scored four direct hits on this enemy vehicle.

In the face of air bursts fired by self-propelled mounts, the Third Battalion, in an attempt to cross an open area, resorted to feints to hide the actual advance. Smoking the area of advance and then holding back while the Germans, thinking our units were moving up, poured heavy mortar concentrations, the Third Battalion got across the open ground before the enemy could again lay down fire.

By 1600 hours, the First Battalion had swung away from the cheese factory where it had been receiving fire and had moved under the protection of a ridge to reach the road junction at 245572 in the heart of BRUYERES.

Although the 442 RCT had been held up by machine gun fire coming from BRUYERES, it made physical contact with Company C, 143d Infantry at the road junction 245572 in the heart of BRUYERES.

At 1900 hours, Company L with two tanks had cleared the cheese factory sector and had elements moving up the railroad.

Positions were secured for the night of 18 October 1944, with Company C at 246571, Company A near the road junction at 248573, Company B in the barracks area in the vicinity of 244566, Company L at 247565 with two tanks and a platoon of Company K outposting the railroad tracks. While the remainder of Company K stayed in LAVAL, Company I spent the night in CHAMP le DUC.

Misty rain obscured visibility and hampered artillery observation the forenoon of 19 October 1944. During the forenoon, Third Battalion units moved forward in their sector of advance despite enemy artillery and mortar fire. After fire from AA guns was put on the edge of BOIS de BOREMONT and along the houses there, patrols cleaned out the small village of FENURE (254549) while rubble from demolitions obstructing the road vicinity 251556 was removed by a platoon of engineers.

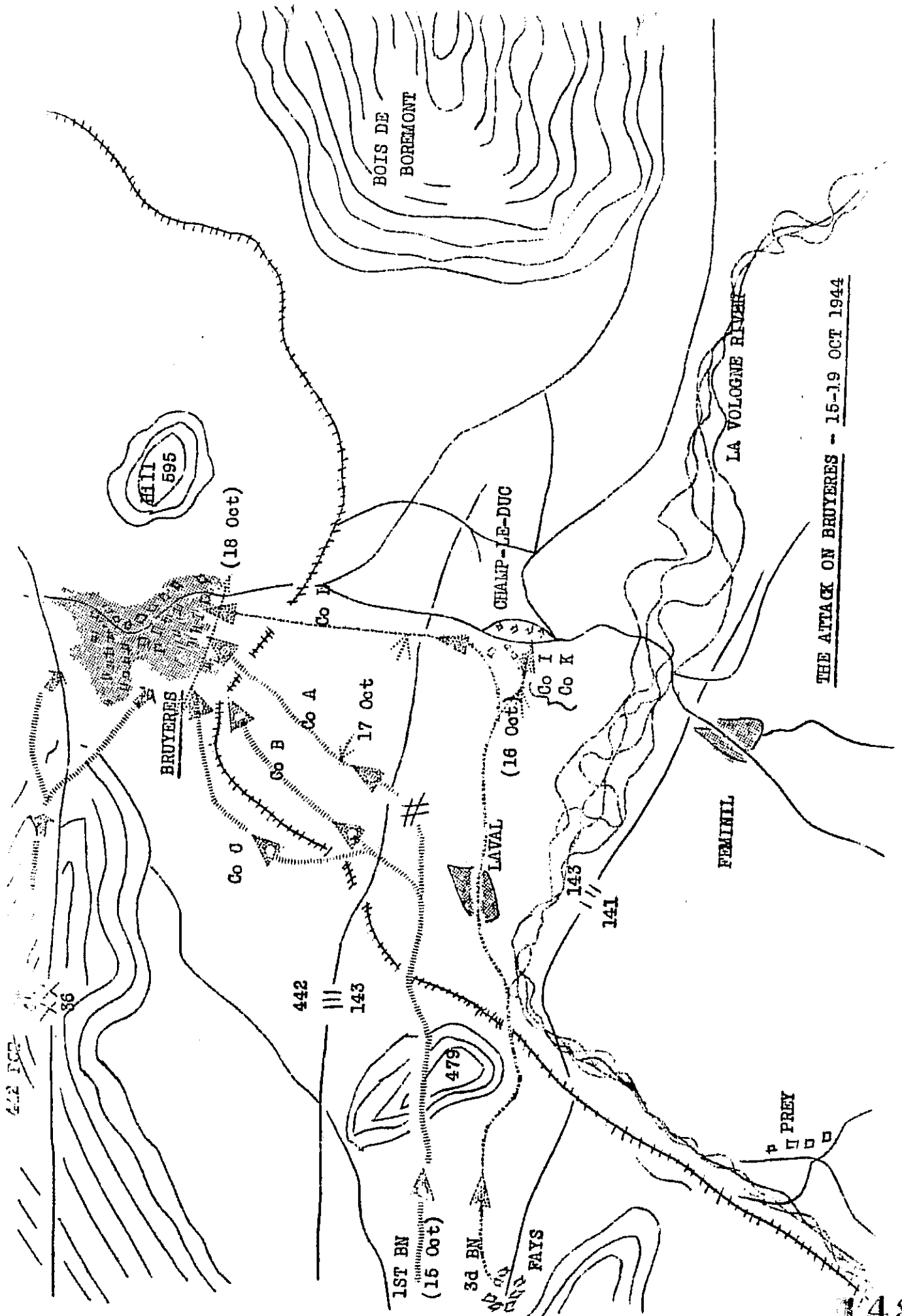
Meanwhile the First Battalion was moving through BRUYERES, mopping up the buildings protecting itself against the possibility of counterattack, clearing the town by 1130 hours. Part of the forty-five prisoners taken by the First Battalion had the new identification, Battalion STREUBELT. These Germans reported that their supply route from BIFFONTAINE (309574) had been virtually cut by our artillery fire. In spite of heavy shelling of their areas, the enemy, in companies of forty to fifty men, had not been driven from their positions and casualties had been only moderate because of good entrenchment. Our planes and especially our armor did demoralize and did often cause the Germans to surrender.

On Hill 595, the enemy was dug in twenty-five to one hundred yards into the tree line and the attack by the 442 RCT was forestalled by self-propelled mount fire coming from the road junction at 275584 to 280488. Division Artillery laid fires starting at the observation tower on the top and working down the side of the hill. Following this, at 1230 hours, the 442d Infantry occupied the hill against only sniper resistance. In the afternoon, the enemy also withdrew from Hill 528 (234589) shelling it with 88mm cannon as our troops occupied it.

Thus ended this phase of our operations and with the towns of BRUYERES, LAVAL, and CHAMP le DUC occupied and secured, the task of clearing the enemy from its positions in the BOIS de BOREMONT and to the east towards ST DIE commenced with Operations Instructions being issued committing the Second Battalion, 143d Infantry in conjunction with an effort to the east by 442 RCT, which was to be immediately to our north.

As of 200015 October 1944, the Second Battalion, 143d Infantry had closed in an assembly area vicinity of BRUYERES moving from its position in Division reserve in FAUCOMPIERRE by motor to IEPANGES and thence by marching prepared to attack Hill 501 (264551) from the north at 1000 hours. The Division plan

442 F02



THE ATTACK ON BRUYERES - 15-19 OCT 1944

called for heavy concentrations to be fired by Division artillery units at 265551 where intelligence sources reported a company of Germans armed with mortars and light machine guns were in position.

The Regiment spent the night 19-20 October 1944 quietly, making no enemy contacts with patrols from the First and Third Battalions and receiving only occasional rounds of enemy artillery fire near their positions. To assist the Second Battalion, the Third Battalion began sending out combat patrols at 0630 hours to clear the area of enemy groups north of LA VOLOGNE River and east of CHAMP le DUC to the 26 Easting. As of 0900 hours, Captain ZERK O. ROBERTSON, O-2055839, of Merkel, Texas, S-3 of the Third Battalion, reported that this mission had been accomplished. Promptly at 1000 hours, smoke and high explosive shells began to fall on the western slope of the BOIS de BORE-MONT in addition to fifty caliber fire from AAA units supporting the attack of the infantry. During this period enemy snipers that had infiltrated back to Hill 595 were causing 442 RCT considerable trouble by their persistent fire. A force was sent by this Combat Team to clear them from their positions. The Second Battalion, under command of Major JAMES C. GENTIE, O-296048, of Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, had jumped off according to plan and supported by tanks was initially making good headway. Elements of this battalion were seen crossing the railroad and in the vicinity of 262562 and 263557 at 1035 hours. Shortly thereafter Company G received moderate small arms fire from position at 263560. Until this time the progress of the attacking force had not been interrupted by enemy fire; now, however, machine gun fire coming from 263560 and enemy artillery held up Company G while Company E continued into the woods at 262556. The artillery fire appeared to come from the direction of BIFFONTAINE (309574) and artillery C-45 planes were instructed to watch this area for gun positions.

Continued heavy machine gun fire from the area to the left of Company G completely stopped its forward progress but other elements of the battalion pressed forward towards the objective and captured eleven prisoners as they advanced. The enemy apparently confused somewhat by the attacks of our Regiment and the 442 RCT, shelled BRUYERES and CHAMP le DUC heavily with long range artillery. Meanwhile Company G, having received heavy small arms and artillery fire, became scattered and it was necessary to hold up until the company could be reorganized. Company E by 1500 hours had reached area of 264553 and 264556, and Company F was moving to assist Company G. Orders were later changed to have Company F pass through Company G and continue the attack moving along the woods line to 267549 while Company E moved around nose of hill to 272551. As of 2200 hours, Company F had moved to positions at 262549 and 263550 with Company E on their left. In moving over Hill 501 our troops captured nineteen prisoners and forced others to retire towards the town of LAVELINE. The remainder of the night was spent in active patrolling by the Second and Third Battalions while the First Battalion in BRUYERES prepared to move to LEPANGES.

With orders to continue the attack and clear all of the southeast slope

of the hill covered by BOIS de MOREMONT, the Second Battalion moved out in an attack at 0800 hours against scattered small arms fire and some light anti-aircraft artillery. Cannon Company, 143d Infantry, fired on targets in buildings reported to house a German command post near LAVERGNE. Forward movement of the infantry was slow due to terrain and enemy fire however, by 1400 hours, leading elements were at 270354. The First Battalion during the morning had moved to LEPANGES for rest, refitting and to get sufficient replacements to strengthen the companies depleted by the attack on LAVERGNE. The Third Battalion maintained its positions protecting the right of the Second Battalion and prepared to move to assist the attacking force if necessary as it advanced towards its objective, the town of Les FOUILLEES.

With darkness drawing rapidly on in the thick woods, the Second Battalion was ordered to organize their positions on the southeast slope of Hill 783 at approximately the 27 Easting, send out patrols towards Les FOUILLEES, and continue to push on towards their objective on the morning of 22 October 1944. The Third Battalion sent contact patrols to Antitank Company, 143d Infantry, at FIMENIL and to the Second Battalion. Night was quiet and uneventful with little or no enemy activity.

The morning of 22 October 1944, was very cloudy with most of the numerous valleys filled with heavy fog which did not completely lift until well into the morning. This lack of visibility, while hampering our own observation, greatly assisted in facilitating the forward movement of the Second Battalion which had moved to continue its mission to Les FOUILLEES at 0800 hours. The plan of maneuver for this force was to have Companies E and F attack to the northeast, moving around Hill 783 to the north and then proceed to southeast towards the edge of the woods while Company G worked on the forward slope of the hill along the edge of the woods in an eastward direction towards La Fosse. Very satisfactory progress in the development of this plan was made at the start but contact was made with German troops dug-in in the vicinity of 270352 by Company F at 1100 hours and forward movement was held up while an effort was made to dislodge the opposition by a flanking attack.

Meanwhile, Company G had cleared houses on the road to 270356 and had gone south to the railroad. Two prisoners and heavy equipment were said to have been about twenty men and two officers in the woods at 270356, and when Company G were ordered to that area to clear the Germans from their positions.

The efforts of Captain JOSEF C. DINE, C-Company, 143d Infantry, commanding Company F, to dislodge the opposition in front of the tunnel, for by 1300 hours his company had killed two Germans, captured a captured German, at least six others and forward progress was made. At 1400 hours the Second Battalion had moved without more than small arms fire. However, it was reported that the enemy was using some anti-aircraft and a 3.7 inch barreled mortar which fired a number of rounds at the Second Battalion. Continuing poor, artillery fire, both friendly and enemy, was reported. No known registrations.

Seven more prisoners were reported when the combat patrol sent to 275549 returned after engaging in a small fire fight. Evidence further seemed to indicate that the Germans were falling back towards Les POULIERES from in front of Companies E and F and they were also drifting southwest from positions taken by 442 RCT. To take advantage of this, heavy concentrations of artillery fire were placed on LAVELINE and Les POULIERES with good results.

As the afternoon drew to a close the Regimental Commander ordered the Second Battalion to secure its positions for the night and patrol down to the railroad running east and west through LAVELINE and maintain contact with 442 RCT. The Third Battalion was to remain in reserve in the vicinity of CHAMP le DUC and BRUYERES while the First Battalion would move in the morning by trucks to a training area near XAMONTARUPT in Stack Force reserve.

Roadblocks were set out at strategic places by companies of the Second Battalion and contact patrols arranged between all units. Sounds of enemy horse-drawn transportation could be heard going up the road to Les POULIERES and Company E sent a reconnaissance patrol to get more information as to the nature of the traffic.

The night passed uneventfully with only scattered artillery falling in the Second and Third Battalion areas. No contact was made with the enemy by our patrols but they continued active in maintaining contact between the units and fixing the position of the Germans.

In the morning the Second Battalion continued to mop up its area and prepared to organize a defense system in the zone using one company and to establish defenses on its left when it relieved the elements of 442 RCT presently there and also engaged in mopping up small pockets of resistance. A thorough and complete defensive system was envisaged by Colonel ADAMS and instructions were issued by him accordingly.

At 0800 hours the First Battalion entrucked for its new area closing in at 1030 hours, and Third Battalion moved by marching to LEPANGES closing in as Regimental reserve by 1000 hours.

Enemy movement of troops out of LAVELINE was reported and a Cannon Company observer who had observed fire from his guns on a house in LAVELINE informed the Regimental S-3 that he killed or wounded eleven men and knocked out a machine gun by this fire.

As of 1200 hours all enemy had been cleared by the Second Battalion from an area north of the railroad tracks and between the 26 and 28 Eastings. Moderate small arms resistance had been met in this operation. Plans were changed at this time and the battalion was only to relieve Companies E and F of 442d Infantry Regiment and not take over the entire sector as originally ordered until BIFFONTAINE was seized by the 442 RCT.

The Second Battalion continued to move along the southeast slope of BOIS de POULIERES in the direction of BIFFONTAINE meeting little resistance. In the late afternoon a report was received that the 100th Battalion of 142 RCT had taken BIFFONTAINE, and by 2000 hours Company F had gained contact with elements of this battalion at 306569. After this contact was made, the Second Battalion made the necessary security arrangements for the night with the mission of taking over from the 100th Battalion in the BIFFONTAINE area on the morning of 24 October 1944. During the night, patrols into Les POULIERES were met with small arms fire but no contact was made by patrols which worked to the railroad near LAVELINE.

At 0730, 24 October 1944, Company F moved out to begin relief of the 100th Battalion, 142 RCT and captured two prisoners who stated that most of the soldiers in the BIFFONTAINE area were either very young or over forty years old. The men captured were wounded on the Russian front and sent up as replacements and were very discouraged about the war.

Operations Instructions were issued by the Regiment at 1500 hours providing for First Battalion to relieve Second Battalion, 142d Infantry on positions vicinity of HERPELMONT; the Second Battalion to continue its present mission of organizing and holding the area BIFFONTAINE-LAVELINE, maintaining contact with 141 RCT on its left and with Antitank Company, 143d Infantry on its right; the Third Battalion to remain in reserve in LEPANGES and conduct training.

In the early evening the area around LAVAL where the Regimental Command Post was located was shelled by medium artillery. The Second Battalion completed its defensive positions and during the night patrolled vigorously to the front. No enemy contact was made, however, but the battalion was alerted at 0500 hours against a possible enemy counterattack which did not develop.

While the Second Battalion improved their positions the First Battalion closed in a forward assembly area at 0845 hours preparatory to taking over defensive sector held by Second Battalion, 142 RCT. As of 1600 hours changeover was completed and Battalion command post reported as at 250512. Patrols to vicinity of PLATICOTE, and Hill 701, were arranged for the night as well as contact patrol to the Second Battalion.

The Second Battalion was ordered to continue to improve their positions and to patrol to LAVELINE and LA CHAPELLE at night. In view of the active fighting engaged in by 141 RCT on the left of the battalion positions, the Regimental Commander cautioned that all men be on alert to prevent enemy infiltration of positions.

During the night, patrols from First Battalion made no contact with the enemy but those from Second Battalion were able to note enemy activity. From these patrols it was determined that the enemy held high ground east of JUSSARUPT and in the valley wooded hills south of BOIS de BOREMONT. Intelligence

reports estimated enemy strength opposed to our units at about one hundred and twenty men, with additional replacements arriving daily. German morale seemed to be good although prisoners report that they are confused by our attacks and only vaguely know where our positions are.

During morning of 26 October 1944, First Battalion continued to improve their positions and sent out a patrol towards Hill 701 while the Second Battalion was ordered to send an artillery forward observer, with a rifle squad for protection, to a position where he could see the L'APAXE-DEVANT la FEYS valley to fire on Germans harassing First Battalion, 1st Infantry which had been cut off in the woods at 343573. Within about two hours the forward observer party returned, having been fired on by automatic weapons vicinity of 316578.

Conditions changed little in the afternoon with the elements of 1st RCT and 2nd RCT moving through the woods in an easterly direction north of the Second Battalion positions experiencing much small arms resistance in their efforts to reach First Battalion, 1st Infantry. This action kept our Second Battalion alert. The First Battalion contented itself with harassing known German positions with artillery and mortar fire and set an ammunition dump on fire at AUMONTZEY. Plans were made by the battalion to send raiding parties to vicinity of PLATICOTE, Hill 701, and CHAMPDRAY as it was the feeling of Lieutenant Colonel DAVID M. FRAZIOR, O-222230, of Houston, Texas, commanding the battalion, that the enemy occupied their positions during the day and slept in nearby houses at night.

Our Second Battalion sent out patrols to check bridges across the river and to enter LA CHAPELLE. Usual contact patrols were also arranged between companies and adjacent units.

During the morning of 27 October 1944, the Third Battalion moved from LE-PANGES to vicinity of 280570, Company I under command of First Lieutenant EDWARD R. LEWITZ, O-1306863, of St Louis, Missouri, moving to the Second Battalion area in reserve for this battalion as Company F in conjunction with units of 2nd RCT was to attack to the east. The Regimental Commander had assigned Company F the task of clearing the hill in vicinity of 318578 of enemy known to be in position there. At 1400 hours, Company F moved out following patrols previously sent out to locate the enemy. By 1530 hours they were meeting resistance from Germans consisting of small arms and mortar fire in vicinity of 315575. By darkness the company had been unable to advance further and was being troubled by some enemy infiltration on their left flank. Positions were secured for the night after leading elements had withdrawn from close contact with the enemy. During the night, harassing fire from the south fell in the company positions and rocket fire was also reported.

Meanwhile during the day, combat patrols were sent by Companies A and B to Hill 701, but strong small arms and mortar resistance from enemy dug in on the slopes caused several casualties and denied the patrols from completing their missions of reaching the hilltop. The German positions were reported to have

narrow firing slits as two patrol members were shot in the back. When darkness came a patrol was sent to CHAMPDRA and heard loud talking in the town, people moving around and sounds of horse-drawn vehicles moving south out of the town. A patrol toward PLATICOTE ran into quite a bit of small arms fire and returned.

Patrols were sent out by the Second Battalion and while no contact was made with the enemy, many Germans were heard in LA CHAPELLE and south of Les POULIERES.

While the Third Battalion remained in reserve and ready to be committed in case of any enemy penetration on our right flank, the First Battalion continued active patrolling to their front. In the Second Battalion sector, plans were formulated to improve present defensive positions and for an attack on hill, vicinity 317578, to clear enemy from this area. This attack was to start at 1300 hours and to be coordinated with an attack by Second Battalion, 141 RCT on the left. Only Company F was considered necessary to accomplish the mission of clearing the hill.

At 1320 hours, Company F jumped off but progress was slow in the face of intense enemy artillery and mortar fire. By 1530 hours, the company had moved to positions at 313578 and 316578 and Companies E and G were moving from the north to support them. Enemy machine guns from dug in positions were laying down heavy fire on both flanks.

Orders were issued during the day for the Third Battalion to relieve the Second Battalion in their positions and for the Second Battalion, when relieved, to assemble in reserve in LEPANGES. As of 1845 hours, Companies E, G, and H, less one platoon of heavy machine guns, had been relieved by the Third Battalion. However, in view of the situation with Company F, the other companies of the battalion were now ordered by the Regimental Commander to assemble in a nearby area to await further instructions.

During the day, Major LOUIS H. RESSIJAC, O-23454, of Mobile, Alabama, S-2, to preserve security, and as a control measure, instructed all battalions that French civilians forward of the Regimental Command Post were to observe a curfew from sundown to sunrise. Observation posts maintained by members of the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon reported after sunset motor movements on roads in the area held by the Germans. First Battalion patrols were in active contact with the enemy to their front during the night.

Company F continued to press attack on the enemy during the night, meeting heavy automatic weapons fire from four known machine guns. At 0630 hours, the attack was augmented by Company E and two platoons of Company I but forward movement was slow and casualties heavy. Colonel PAUL D. ADAMS, O-17306, of Columbia, South Carolina, commanding 143 RCT, moved to the Company F command post to better follow the action against these tenacious foe. As of 1100 hours, slow progress had been made but assistance was requested of the 141st Infantry

in reducing a strong point at 315580. The strong point was built up of natural rocky formations protected by wire. Gradually the enemy was forced from their positions, or killed as they stood their ground, and by 1800 hours, Company E, under the command of First Lieutenant JOHN R. JOHNSTON, O-1305782, of Montebello, California, was over the ridge and the majority of the resistance on the forward slopes had been cleared up. Intelligence sources have since stated that the German troops who so stubbornly held to this rocky, wooded hill were former Luftwaffe troops who had received six months training as infantrymen and were young, ardent Nazis.

As darkness came the First and Third Battalions initiated vigorous patrolling to their fronts, heard enemy digging in and captured several prisoners. Enemy transport movements on roads in this area continued active with center of movements around LE COURS MOUNTAIN.

Early on the morning of 30 October 1944, Companies E and F again attacked in their sector to clear the reverse slope of the hill taken the night before. Artillery fire and small arms fire from troops to their front was met but the companies moved forward slowly down the hill. Meanwhile in the Third Battalion sector, a combat patrol under the leadership of First Lieutenant GEORGE N. HARTWELL, O-424333, of Madera, California, moved into LAVELINE-devant-BRUYERES guided through the minefields by a Frenchman and after a fire fight with the enemy occupied all of the town, with the exception of the factory district. Several Germans were killed and a number of prisoners taken in this action. A strong outpost was left in the town to insure that the enemy did not return with darkness.

In the difficult fighting in the Second Battalion area, Company G relieved Company E which then reverted to Battalion reserve. In the late afternoon, the enemy counterattacked with fire and our troops fell back to their original positions held in the morning. In realigning of these forces our men took over the sector held by Second Battalion, 141 RCT. Plans were effected in which our Second Battalion would dig in for the night and attack again on 31 October 1944.

Enemy patrols attempting to enter the towns of Les POULIERES and LAVELINE during the night were driven off by alert security detachments left in these towns by the Third Battalion. Active patrolling to the front of First Battalion positions resulted in the capture of twelve prisoners by Company B patrols, near JUSSARUPT. Much traffic was heard by patrols, indicating that the Germans were shifting personnel or bringing up supplies.

At approximately 0900 hours, the Second Battalion again attacked to clear the enemy from their front, using hand grenades and tank fire; however, the enemy firing small arms and machine guns held up any advance by Company F. Company G sent four patrols to their front and three made contact almost immediately with enemy riflemen firing from dug in positions. It was planned for Company G to resume the attack at 1300 hours independently of Company F. When the

attack was launched a limited advance was made but Company G received a heavy mortar barrage and fell back to their original positions.

During the day, the First and Third Battalions continued to improve their defensive positions, fired artillery on targets picked up by observation posts and the First Battalion on order of the Regimental Commander sent patrols to REAUMENIL and FIMMENIL but found no enemy in these towns.

No progress was made during the day by the Second Battalion in reducing enemy positions and efforts were to be made during the night to clear out known enemy positions by stealth. As Company F had been in this bitter fighting for several days, they were taken out of the line and placed in reserve, Company E taking over their positions. Should the night action fail, Lieutenant Colonel CHARLES J. DENHOLM, O-21293, of Poughkeepsie, New York, now commanding the battalion, planned to again attack in the morning aided by a heavy chemical mortar preparation and fire from supporting tanks.

A simulated attack was launched at 2000 hours to harass the Germans and included heavy concentrations of artillery, mortar, machine gun, and rifle fires on known enemy positions. The enemy replied by wild firing of small arms and firing of prearranged artillery, mortar, and machine gun concentrations. Aggressive patrolling towards LA CHAPELLE by patrols from the Third Battalion followed this display.

As the month ended, the Regiment could look back over some hard fighting, in difficult weather, and over terrain most favorable to the defending forces with satisfaction in the knowledge that much worthwhile progress had been made. In making this progress, many lessons were learned which would stand the men of the Regiment in good stead in the days of fighting to come as our forces moved eastward through the VOSGES toward Germany.

Robert L. O'Brien, Jr.
ROBERT L. O'BRIEN, JR.
Major, 143d Infantry
Adjutant

20-31 OCT 1944

2200 Hr-8
2131 Oct

OBJ 2D BN
27 Oct

27 Oct 1966

2200 Hours
23 Oct

THE COURTS

NEUNE
RIVER

1. CHAPETRE

POSTER

LA VELAINE

STREET LES

2200 H
22 Oct

2200 Hours

~~200 Hours~~

1100 Hours

108

102

FORET DES POULIERES

COMPANY COMMANDERS 1 to 31 OCTOBER 1944

FIRST BATTALION

Rassijac, Louis H. October 1 to 9	Major	O-23454	Mobile, Alabama
Frazier, David M. October 10 to 31	Lt Col	O-222230	Houston, Texas

SECOND BATTALION

Denholm, Charles J. October 1 to 15 and 29 to 31	Lt Col	O-21293	Poughkeepsie, N. Y.
Gentle, James C. October 16 to 28	Major	O-296048	Elkins Park, Pa.

THIRD BATTALION

Andrews, Theodore H.	Lt Col	O-365318	Caldwell, Texas
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COMPANY COMMANDERS 1 to 31 OCTOBER 1944

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Cleghorn, Rufus J.	Captain	O-411677	Waco, Texas
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SERVICE COMPANY

Parish, Joe P.	Captain	O-406965	Huntsville, Texas
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ANTI-TANK COMPANY

Stakes, Harry C.	Captain	O-407590	Houston, Texas
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CANNON COMPANY

Stem, Wiley W.	Captain	O-406991	Waco, Texas
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MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B.	Major	O-345134	Camden, New Jersey
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 1ST BATTALION

Burrage, Richard M.	Captain	O-407025	Waco, Texas
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COMPANY A

Brejcha, Thomas L. Captain O-411038 Chicago, Illinois

COMPANY B

Politzer, Frank NMI 1st Lt O-1285296 New York, New York
October 1 to 12
Larson, Peter NMI 1st Lt O-384739 Omaha, Nebraska
October 13 to 24
Chambers, George E. Captain O-373577 Milwaukee, Wisconsin
October 25 to 31

COMPANY C

Simmons, Allen E. Captain O-1293664 Belfast, Maine

COMPANY D

Goad, Roy D. Captain O-407196 Temple, Texas

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 2ND BATTALION

Phillippi, Wendell C. Captain O-1288114 Indianapolis, Indiana

COMPANY E

Johnston, John R. 1st Lt O-1305782 Montebello, California

COMPANY F

Dine, Josef C. Captain O-418284 Worcester, Mass.
October 1 to 9 and 20 to 31
King, Hiram I. 1st Lt O-1285603 Aberdeen, S. Dakota
October 10 to 19

COMPANY G

Vollbracht, Henry L. 1st Lt O-447306 E. Islip, L. I., N. Y.
October 1 to 25
Anderson, Eric C. Captain O-391181 Bozeman, Montana
October 26 to 31

COMPANY H

Hanrahan, David J.

Captain O-1289077

Bronx, New York

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 3RD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L., Jr.

1st Lt O-1289026

Nashville, Tenn.

COMPANY I

Lewitz, Edward R.

1st Lt O-1306863

St. Louis, Missouri

COMPANY K

Merigold, Frank A.

Captain O-411346

Chicago, Illinois

October 1 to 10 and 19 to 31

Ball, Elwood H.

1st Lt O-1296974

Battle Creek, Mich.

October 11 to 18

COMPANY L

Robertson, Zerk O.

Captain O-2055839

Merkel, Texas

October 1 to 8

Reuland, Richard M.

1st Lt O-480406

Aurora, Illinois

October 9 to 31

COMPANY M

Hand, Robert NMI

Captain O-1289075

Seattle, Washington

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

APO #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

NOVEMBER 1944

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

The long, steady campaign from the beaches of Southern FRANCE was continued into the month of November with little rest or relaxation being afforded the men. However, morale remained high as the month started, for men of all ranks realized the importance of constant aggressive action against the enemy. The Regimental Commander constantly sought to better the comfort of the command, being alert to see that hot food was given at every opportunity and warm clothing and the maximum shelter was available under the trying tactical and weather conditions prevailing. Air activity in support of our troops was kept to a minimum by rain, snow, and generally unfavorable weather considerations. For a period of thirteen days at the beginning of November, no air missions could be flown in direct support of the regiment because of unsatisfactory weather. Strategic flights against train and motor movements in the RHINE Valley gave some indirect assistance to our efforts by causing supply problems to German troops operating to our front.

On the morning of 1 November 1944, First Lieutenant GEORGE (NMI) WEINSCHEL, O-1557234, of Dallas, Texas, Regimental Prisoner of War Interrogator, informed the operations group that a new enemy unit, 61st Machine Gun Battalion, was operating in front of our First and Third Battalions, after he had interrogated two Germans captured by a patrol of the Third Battalion.

The early morning hours passed quietly with little activity on either side. Infrequent enemy artillery fire fell near our positions in LAVAL (231555) and BIFFONTAINE (309574). Our patrol from Company "L" to LA CHAPELLE (297545) received heavy machine gun and rifle fire when they reached the edge of the town and retired without having any casualties. The First Battalion continued through the day to improve their defensive positions while the Third Battalion was busy organizing the town of LAVELINE (272541) and planning for future patrols to harass the enemy to their front.

Plans formulated during the night of 31 October - 1 November 1944, by the Second Battalion, called for a resumption of the attack by Companies "E" and "G", against the enemy positions at 1020 hours, supported by mortar and artillery fire. Company "G" was to push down the nose of the hill to the south while Company "E" moved east towards the German strong points at 317577, 318583, and 320579.

Promptly at the appointed time, the Second Battalion attack commenced, and at 1100 hours, progress had been very satisfactory with the entire line moving forward. Enemy positions reached, were found to have been vacated, although Company "G" experienced some trouble with mines in their sector,

and engineers were sent to assist in clearing roads and trails for supply purposes. By 1500 hours, all objectives had been taken and the Battalion was set to the task of organizing the ground for defense against any possible counterattack. Evidence gathered by the attacking companies indicated that the enemy had left these positions during the night of 31 October - 1 November 1944.

Another "Chinese" attack was executed at 1900 hours with fire from tanks, Cannon Company, First and Third Battalions, and the 133rd Field Artillery Battalion, being placed on Hill "703", the towns of GRANGES (296498), IVOUX (321538), and AUMONTZEY (286524), and the base of LE COURS MOUNTAIN (320552). The enemy replied with machine gun, mortar, and small arms fire from vicinity of LA CHAPELLE, LA ROSIERE (284541), and other scattered points.

Patrols were sent out by the First Battalion to Hill "701", CHAMPDRAY (270488), and AUMONTZEY, while the Second Battalion had patrols out investigating river crossing sites, the base of LE COURS MOUNTAIN and the town of LA HOUSSIERE (339553). All patrols from the First Battalion reported making contact with enemy and engaged in several fire fights. Patrols from the Third Battalion saw several German groups but did not engage them.

Intelligence reports received from our own and French sources indicated that German SS troops were being sent into the area in front of the 36th Division to keep men from surrendering and to make them hold their positions against our attack. It was felt that the only plan open to the enemy was to hold their present positions until forced to withdraw by pressure from our troops and to continue to lay mines and build road blocks on roads not used by themselves.

Visibility was very poor on the morning of 2 November 1944, which denied our artillery the opportunity to fire counterbattery on enemy guns intermittently shelling our positions. Other than this artillery fire, the day passed quietly. As of 1715 hours, the Third Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment, was attached to RCT 143 by Division order. Plans were formulated during the day for the Third Platoon, Company C, 753rd Tank Battalion, to move its tanks during the night beyond the town of LES POULIERES (286557), to fire sixty rounds of high explosive shells on LA ROSIERE, LA CHAPELLE, and the nose of Hill "703".

Patrols from all units of the regiment were active during the night, but contact with the enemy was only made at CHAMPDRAY where our patrol drew small arms and machine gun fire from the town. The tank demonstration at 2100 hours, was answered by scattered self-propelled mount fire and two red flares from the vicinity of LE COURS MOUNTAIN. Heavy concentrations of artillery fire were received at BIFFONTAINE during the night and enemy tracks

vehicles could be heard in the LA ROUSSEIERE-IVOUX-LA CHAPELLE area.

The morning of 3 November 1944, passed quietly with the First Battalion continuing by patrols and observation posts to feel out enemy dispositions, while the Second Battalion, having encountered many anti-personnel mines in the BIFFONTAINE area, proceeded with the clearing of them. Plans were also formulated for the Second Battalion to take over the area occupied by Third Battalion, 142nd RCT. Our Third Battalion worked to improve its positions and supply route, made reconnaissance for bridges, and harassed the enemy by fire.

By 1600 hours, all elements of Third Battalion, 142 RCT, had been relieved by our Second Battalion and by establishing strong points the battalion was able to adequately defend its enlarged sector. However, due to the lateness of the hour, the commanding officer of the relieved battalion decided to remain in a nearby assembly area for the night.

Another harassing fire by a platoon of tanks was planned and scheduled for 1900 hours, and one at 0630 hours, morning of 4 November 1944, by Cannon Company, as prisoners repeatedly stated that such demonstrations disrupted supply and ration deliveries and generally upset the defensive routine.

After darkness fell and all during the early evening, our forward positions received harassing fire from enemy artillery and at least one self-propelled gun, which apparently was located behind Hill "703". Patrols from First Battalion observed several fires in AUMONTZEY and captured two prisoners from 3rd Company, 61st Fortress Machine Gun Battalion. Little patroling into enemy areas was done by the Second Battalion as emphasis was placed on getting their enlarged sector properly organized and dug-in. The Third Battalion, however, sent out reconnaissance groups but did not make contact with the Germans.

At 0630 hours, the Cannon Company fired one thousand rounds of caliber fifty and eighty rounds of 75mm ammunition on Hill "703", but received no answering fire in return. The importance of this harassing fire was indicated when four Polish prisoners captured by the Third Battalion stated that these fires had so disrupted the kitchens that they had not eaten for three days.

The morning being bright and sunny after several days of heavy rains, our aerial activity increased greatly and several bombing and strafing missions were flown on LE COURS MOUNTAIN and the town of IVOUX. No enemy air activity, however, was noted in our sector.

Continuing the policy of harassing the enemy as much as possible, the Regimental S-3, Major WILLIAM R. LYNCH, JR., O-384058, of Huntsville, Texas, organized, during the afternoon, a plan for another "Chinoso" attack to be made at 0600 hours, 5 November 1944. This plan envisaged use of flak weapons, Cannon Company, 143rd Infantry, and all the mortars, machine guns, and antitank guns of the Third Battalion. Targets for these weapons were enemy positions in LA CHAPELLE, Hill "703", LA ROSIERE, and Hill "509".

In order to illuminate targets in the valley around IVOUX, arrangements had been made for our airplanes to drop flares during the evening, but this had to be cancelled, as early in the afternoon bad weather again set in and rain and fog made visibility extremely poor. This was an unfortunate turn for greatly increased enemy activity had been noted by our observation posts in this sector.

To secure more definite information as to enemy dispositions on and around Hill "701", patrols had been active during the afternoon and more were scheduled from the First Battalion for the night. From information already secured indications were that the enemy was digging in preparing for an expected attack. The Regimental Commander also desired better information of what the Germans were doing on LE COURS MOUNTAIN; accordingly, the Second Battalion made plans to send three patrols into the area during the night.

A platoon of tanks attached to the Second Battalion from positions near 322572, shortly after midnight, fired at targets in the vicinity of LE COURS MOUNTAIN, and the enemy retaliated with heavy artillery and mortar concentrations which fell in and around BIFFONTAINE.

Patrols from all battalions that operated during the night of 4 - 5 November 1944, found the enemy very nervous and they reacted to our efforts by firing rifles, mortars, and machine pistols. From prisoners captured, it was found that in addition to a company of the 61st Fortress Machine Gun Battalion, the 2nd Company, 305 Grenadier Regiment and 2nd Company, 163rd Reserve Battalion opposed us in our sector. These troops, while of various ages and state of training, were strongly led by young, energetic officers with four to five years of experience in fighting on many different fronts. Moreover, these officers were thoroughly indoctrinated with the ideals of the National Socialist beliefs.

Promptly at 050600 November 1944, heavy small arms and machine gun fire was placed on Hill "703", followed by fire on other prearranged targets with all weapons available for the "Chinoso" attack. Two fires were started several hundred yards east of LA ROSIERE including one in a building in which ammunition was stored. The Germans responded with machine gun, rifle,

and mortar fire and threw heavy concentrations of self-propelled and artillery fire into LAVELINE, and the positions occupied by Companies "B" and "K". This fire disclosed, better than any previous demonstration, the enemy positions.

Under the skillful direction of Captain ALLEN E. SIMMONS, O-1293664, of Belfast, Maine, Company C during the night and early morning had worked a squad onto Hill "523" (278514) and during the day it was decided to increase this force to a platoon of riflemen and one section of heavy machine guns. These men were to dig in and consolidate their positions. On taking this hill, it was learned that the supposition of Lieutenant Colonel DAVID M. FRAZIOR, O-222230, of Houston, Texas, Commanding the First Battalion, was correct, for the enemy did occupy their positions during the day and sleep in the towns at night, as they felt that American troops would not attack in the dark.

In addition to the effort being made by Company C, Company A engaged in a fire fight at a road block near PLATICOTE (vicinity 267503). After forcing this position, Company A was to clean up enemy resistance and occupy Hill "701". However, by nightfall twelve casualties had been suffered and progress, other than to complete the clearing of PLATICOTE, was halted by enemy artillery fire, mines, and booby traps. During the day's operations seventeen prisoners were taken.

The night of 5 - 6 November 1944, was spent in patrolling to AUMONTZEY, LE ROSIERE, Hill "701", and LE COURS MOUNTAIN. No contact was made with the enemy but signs of German activity were noted in AUMONTZEY and LE ROSIERE. Many mines and booby traps were found on Hill "701". The enemy harassed our positions with occasional self-propelled and artillery fire, but did little damage to our troops.

A report from a captured German soldier indicated that a large supply train located at IVOUX had, during the night, moved to the vicinity of GERARDMER (360425) and this seemed to indicate that the Germans were withdrawing, leaving only a delaying force in front of the First and Second Battalions. To further confirm this view, our observation post in the late morning of 6 November 1944, saw a number of Germans leaving the woods west of IVOUX with heavy packs on their backs.

To more fully investigate the town of LE ROSIERE a patrol from Company K under the leadership of Second Lieutenant O'DEAN T. COX, O-2055220, of Waco, Texas, went into the town and after a fire fight captured twenty-seven Germans, killed four and wounded two. Most of these prisoners were veterans of the Russian campaign and seasoned fighters. To hold this position the

town was outposted with twelve men. Lieutenant COX then moved on the houses south of LE ROSIERE and by well coordinated fire and movement of his little force cleared enemy from them capturing six more prisoners, two of whom were wounded, and killed another one. Thus for the day, this enterprising leader and his aggressive soldiers, totaling in all one officer and twelve men, accounted for twenty three prisoners and five dead Germans.

Mines were sown plentifully throughout the area to our front and all day groups of engineers and infantrymen were busy with mine detectors clearing roads and trails necessary for supply routes.

The period of darkness was utilized in sending a First Battalion patrol to AUMONTZEY, where enemy voices and movements were heard, and in the Second Battalion patrols went to 326560, 319556, and 322560. No contact with the enemy was made at these points. In a patrol to AUMONTZEY the Third Battalion captured one prisoner. Other than these patrols, the night was quiet and uneventful.

Daylight patrols were ordered by the Regimental Commander to reconnoiter LE COURS MOUNTAIN and LA CHAPELLE. Active patrolling was considered necessary as the Army Commander felt that many Germans wanted to surrender but were forced to put up a fight, first, to protect their families.

Patrols from Companies "E" and "G" were sent out to investigate LE COURS MOUNTAIN and at 1630 the patrol from Company "E" returned, stating that they had reached one of the peaks of the mountain and encountered no enemy opposition. However, a Frenchman told them there were still a few Germans on the hill. A patrol from Company "G", sent to reconnoiter the western half of the mountain, reached 314562 where they received four rifle shots and returned at about 1745.

Meanwhile, a patrol from the Third Battalion moved towards LA CHAPELLE and after engaging in a small fire fight, returned with five prisoners of war. According to the reports of these prisoners, it was thought that there were between twenty five and thirty Germans still in the town, armed with rifles and two or three machine guns. A combat patrol from Company "L" under the leadership of an officer left at 1800 for LA CHAPELLE, but the river had risen so much from recent rains that they were unable to get across and the mission was cancelled until the eighth.

The First Battalion, using two platoons of Company "A", during the day, felt out enemy positions but met strong resistance from enemy automatic weapons and contented itself with holding original positions. The day's efforts were not without benefit, as much valuable information was secured with reference to enemy installations and fire power.

Night patrolling from the Second and Third Battalion fronts was greatly hampered by the rapid rise in the LA VOLOGNE River and its tributaries. In this section of the VOSGES MOUNTAINS, the rivers have narrow courses of flow with flat, marshy land extending a few hundred yards on either side of the water course. Thus, when heavy rains occur in the watershed, these marsh-lands are covered by as much as three feet of water. Because of these high water conditions, a bridge across the river at LAVELINE was imperative, but mine removing and work on supply roads required all available engineers necessitating a delay in construction of such a bridge.

A patrol from Company "B" to AUMONTZEY went out at 1830 and returned at 2130 after having taken a prisoner. They were fired on by machine guns, vicinity of 286527, and rifle fire from houses near 285528. Other than this, the night passed quietly on all fronts.

Inasmuch as the First Battalion had been fighting for the past several days and received some casualties, the Regimental Commander decided that a well earned day of inactivity was in order for 8 November. The other two Battalions were forced into a temporary lull in their operations because of the flooded condition of the river.

Fires were noted during the day in AUMONTZEY and were reported in GRANGES. Our artillery had been quiet so it was presumed that the enemy was burning the towns. This presumption was given weight by civilian reports.

Continuing their strong patrolling, the Third Battalion sent a patrol from Company "K", under the leadership of First Lieutenant MARTIN W. LEESEBERG, O-1288077, of Duluth, Minnesota, into the town of LA CHAPELLE. After a vigorous fire fight, including the use of handgrenades, the town was cleared, two Germans being killed, two wounded, and twenty six of the enemy in all being captured, including one officer who was commanding the 2nd Company, 61st Machine Gun Battalion. Later in the day after darkness fell, this patrol was augmented to platoon strength in order to hold the town against any possible efforts by the enemy.

In retaliation for the loss of LA CHAPELLE, the enemy fired a heavy barrage into the town and continued during the night to harass its defenders with mortar and artillery fire.

Patrols were again active during night of 8 - 9 November with a patrol from Third Battalion entering AUMONTZEY from direction of LAVELINE and one from the First Battalion towards FRAMBEMENIL which drew enemy fire at RJ 282507. The Second Battalion patrolled towards LE COURS MOUNTAIN but made no contact with the few Germans still remaining on this strategic hill mass because of continued high water in the rivers.

German artillery shelled our Second Battalion positions with large caliber, long range guns but caused little damage as all of these positions were well dug in and protected from overhead fire and tree bursts.

Weather and visibility conditions were very poor on the morning of 9 November, and some snow fell in the valley area. This greatly hampered observation and held up artillery fire on targets in the town of IVOUX where French civilians reported a large number of Germans. To increase the comfort of the men, work continued on dug-outs and shelters under supervision of the engineer troops attached to the Combat Team.

Both the Second and Third Battalions planned patrols for investigation of LE COURS MOUNTAIN, and by 0930 a patrol of one officer and eight men from Company "G" reported by radio that they had made contact with a small enemy group on the mountain. As their mission was one of reconnaissance, the patrol did not engage the enemy but continued to explore the mountain to get a better estimate of German strength and positions.

Towards noon the weather cleared sufficiently to allow our artillery to engage targets in IVOUX and for the Cannon Company to fire several missions in the direction of AUMONTZEY.

Continuing their probing operations, the First Battalion sent patrols towards CHAMPDRAY and to the north slope of Hill "701". A strong combat patrol moved to FRAMBEMENIL on reports from civilians that a party of Germans were still in the town.

The Third Battalion sent combat and reconnaissance patrols to Hill "703", LA CHAPELLE, and vicinity of 289534. A Company "I" patrol captured nine prisoners, three machine guns, and two mortars in a house near 289534, while other patrols engaged the enemy in fire fights near LA CHAPELLE. Later in the afternoon, five more Germans were captured and the patrol to LE COURS MOUNTAIN reported a fire fight with the enemy who were still there in some strength. All prisoners captured were identified as from the 61st Fortress Machine Gun Battalion.

All during the early evening and night, our positions were subjected to harassing fire by enemy long range artillery and mortars but little damage was done, as the Germans apparently did not know very well where our positions were located. LA ROSIERE was the particular target of a heavy German mortar located behind Hill "703", and BIFFONTAINE received the attention of several artillery batteries.

Particularly troublesome to our soldiers was the constant moving through

our lines of French civilians who refused to give up their homes in the towns to our front even when shelling was very heavy. It was feared that some of these persons might disclose to the enemy our positions. To remedy this situation, the Regimental Commander requested assistance from the Division G-2 and C.I.C. personnel.

At 1830, the engineers started construction of a Bailey bridge at LAVELINE, as the river was extremely high and greatly handicapped our operations on the southern shores, inasmuch as we could only get foot troops across. This bridge was finished before morning without the knowledge of the enemy. In addition, engineers also installed a foot bridge at 274526. The night of 9 - 10 November passed with little noteworthy activity on the part of the enemy and continued patrolling by our troops.

The tenth day of November was spent by the Regiment in clearing roads to our front of mines in order not to slow up future operations, in active patrolling, and in general harassment of the enemy through the medium of observed artillery fires. A Company "I" patrol took seven prisoners of war on Hill "703" (293529) after engaging in a fire fight. During the day, some mortar fire fell on our positions in LA CHAPELLE but no casualties resulted.

In analyzing the plans open to the enemy, intelligence reports were carefully studied and the conclusion was arrived at that two plans were suitable for the Germans to put into operation. The first plan would be for them to continue to delay our advance by mines, road blocks, blown bridges, and by strong points in the mountains and villages. Another course of action for the enemy would involve holding their present positions until forced out by our attacks. The first plan appeared to be the most feasible, and under only the most remote possibilities did it seem that the enemy could muster a strong counterattack, in view of their limited reserves.

During the day, plans were developed for an attack by our First Battalion on Hill "701" in order to clear up one of the strongest positions held by the enemy in front of that Battalion. In connection with this effort, the Second Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, the next unit on the right, arranged for a public address system broadcast of propaganda in German to be directed at the enemy known to be in CHAMPDRAY. It was felt this propaganda, which could be heard on Hill "701", might influence some of the Germans there to surrender.

The usual contact and security patrols were on duty during the night and reconnaissance patrols sent out failed to make contact with our crippled enemy. Strength of the 61st Fortress Machine Gun Battalion was now estimated at only one hundred fifty two men.

At 0615 a ten man patrol from Company "L", led by First Lieutenant CLARENCE C. STEARNS, O-1318639, of Gilmore City, Iowa, left LA CHAPELLE and moved to the vicinity of 299538 where they encountered twenty Germans. After a sharp fire fight, during which the patrol was at one time surrounded, the enemy gave ground, losing two killed and one captured. The prisoner furnished information to the effect that his battalion, the 61st Fortress Machine Gun Battalion, was withdrawing in the night and the men just engaged were an outpost to delay our advance.

The First Battalion jumped off to attack Hill "701" at 1115, after a propaganda broadcast and some preparatory artillery and mortar fires. Company "A" attacked on the right with Company "C" on the left and Company "B" held as a reserve to counterattack or support either company, depending how the situation developed. Initially, little opposition was met but as the advance progressed small arms fire and artillery from self-propelled guns caused progress to slow up decidedly. In order to negotiate the enemy mine fields, captured prisoners of war were used to guide our troops. This practice produced good results with few casualties. Fire from the Cannon Company was directed on a particularly troublesome enemy self-propelled gun located in the vicinity of GRANGES. Results were good, for this gun ceased firing. As darkness fell, the attacking companies controlled most of the hill; however, a strong point of Germans still held out between Companies "A" and "C". Plans were formulated to clear this position in the morning, using Company "B" to go through it and proceed on to secure the furthest objective.

Meanwhile, during the day Company "G" relieved Company "L" in its positions, and the Third Battalion continued to patrol aggressively to its front. Several houses were found containing enemy who had wired-in positions around them. These positions were difficult to attack and caused us some casualties in an effort to clear them of enemy. One house in particular, at 292536, could not be reduced before darkness closed in, so plans were made to clear it at daylight. Also in the morning, an attack was to be made on Hill "703" (V-2953) and the town of AUMONTZEY (V-2852). Our men strongly held LA CHAPELLE by night with Company "L" in and around the town.

Our front remained quiet with little or no activity during the night of 11 - 12 November. In the morning at 0630, Company "K" began cleaning up the strong point located around the house previously mentioned, and at 0800, Companies "I" and "L" commenced the attack on their objectives. Considerable small arms, machine gun, and machine pistol fire was encountered and heavy mortar concentrations slowed up operations. The force investing AUMONTZEY (V-2852) moved to the town without opposition.

The river having receded somewhat, Lieutenant Colonel CHARLES J. DENHOLM, O-21293, sent combat patrols from the Second Battalion across the river with the thought that if they could establish themselves on the ground they would remain and be reinforced.

The attack of the First Battalion, halted by darkness the night before, was resumed by Companies "A" and "C" against little opposition, the enemy having apparently left their positions during the night. By 1130, Companies "A" and "C" had made contact and Company "B" was getting ready to pass through them.

Company "K" fought for almost five hours before the house that held them up the previous night was taken. Approximately fifteen Germans in this building resisted savagely, being well equipped with rifles, machine guns, and grenades. Fire from one of our tanks partially demolished the house but the enemy fought the tank until they were overwhelmed. While this fierce engagement was taking place, Companies "I" and "L" progressed slowly up Hill "703" in the face of strong resistance from riflemen and machine guns. All trails were reported mined with trip wires strung across paths in many places. Information was received from a prisoner that approximately thirty men from the 5th Bicycle Squadron arrived during the night to strengthen the 61st Fortress Machine Gun Battalion now engaged against the Third Battalion.

Darkness came early as the weather was cloudy with heavy snow flurries from time to time. Company "B" was on its objective, the town of AUMONTZEY occupied and defenses established, good progress made by the Second Battalion in securing a position on the south side of the river, and, after difficult fighting, a major advance had been achieved by the Third Battalion. In this fighting, seventeen Germans were captured. Thus ended the 12th of November with a tired Regiment able to look back on a task well done and the enemy forced back at every point.

Scattered artillery and mortar fire fell on our positions during the night, but otherwise than this no demonstrations were made by the enemy. Our contact patrols were active between companies and battalions.

Good progress was made by the Second Battalion, now led by Major MARION P. BOWDEN, O-407022, of Bolton, Texas, in moving across to the south side of the river and pushing as far as possible until forced to stop by enemy fire. Arrangements were made to tie the right flank in with Company "L" on the nose east of LA CHAPELLE and the left flank with 142 RCT in the vicinity of the houses at 331554.

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No enemy contact was made by patrols from the First Battalion, and the only contact the Third Battalion had was a light exchange of small arms fire with a few Germans at AUMONTZEY. Many mines and booby traps were found by Company "I" soldiers in this town. Both Battalions spent the day in consolidation of their recent gains.

Continuing their advance, the Second Battalion reached the top of LE COURS MOUNTAIN, having had only one small fight with a group of approximately eight Germans. To provide supplies for the Battalion, now that it was across the river, necessitated the building of a bridge, and at 1600 engineers began work on a Treadway structure at LA SCIERIE. An additional bridge was to be put in at night at LA CHAPELLE. The late afternoon was devoted to consolidation of the newly won positions, establishing of contact with our Third Battalion, and patrolling to IVOUX which was reported clear of enemy but heavily mined. At this time, Company "E" was relieved by elements of the 142nd Infantry Regiment.

Clearing of the LA CHAPELLE - IVOUX road was started by engineers, and at 2145 the bridge at LA SCIERIE was completed. A wounded member of the Company "G" patrol to IVOUX reported back to the Second Battalion Command Post and stated that the patrol had set off a mine in IVOUX wounding several men seriously. Contact between all units was maintained during the night and in the morning it was learned that two men had been killed and four wounded when the mine was set off by the patrol in IVOUX.

Operations Instructions Number 77 of our Headquarters were put into effect at 140830 November and required an attack using the three Battalions abreast, First Battalion on the right, Second Battalion on the left, and the Third Battalion in the center. This attack was coordinated with the other Regiments of the Division, the 141 RCT attacking on our right, and 142 RCT making their efforts on our left. The general mission of 143 RCT was to move forward on a broad front, generally to the east, seize and hold dominant terrain features, and prepare to organize this new line against possible enemy counterattacks. Because of extensive enemy mining operations, all paths, roads, and adjacent areas were to be avoided by advancing elements. The Regimental Command Post was to displace to LAVELINE during the day.

The entire line moved forward during the morning meeting no enemy resistance and being slowed up only by difficulties of the terrain and extensive mining by the enemy of some of the roads. Snow on these roads greatly hindered mine sweeping operations and made probing impractical. By 1600, all units were on their objectives, only Company "E" having met any opposition, but that consisted of only a small fire fight in which five prisoners

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were captured. Defensive positions were quickly organized and contact made with 141 RCT and 142 RCT. Vigorous patrolling to make contact with the enemy was instituted.

During the night, scattered enemy artillery and mortar fire was received in the Second Battalion sector. A Third Battalion patrol to 127400 received enemy rifle fire, and a German fifteen man patrol approached Company "I" positions but was dispersed and one prisoner captured. Plans were completed for the relief of 143 RCT by elements of the 141st and 142nd Infantry Regiments. Our Regiment was to move into reserve for a few days in the vicinity of FAYS, LEPANGES, LAVAL, and FREY.

Patrols sent out by each company were active during the morning of 16 November and contact was made with the enemy by two of them at some distance in front of our present positions. Meanwhile, relief of our units continued and by 1300 the Second Battalion was closed into FAYS and the other Battalions well along with their change-overs. The remainder of the day and all of the period until the afternoon of 18 November was utilized by the First and Third Battalions for rest, relaxation, and cleaning of clothing and equipment. The Second Battalion continued the same general program until the afternoon of 17 November when they relieved the Second Battalion, 442 RCT, completing the relief by 1930. During the night, 17 November, all was quiet. Patrols previously sent to this new area from the First and Third Battalions worked with those of the Second Battalion in vigorously patrolling to the front. No contact was made, but many sounds of Germans were heard.

At 1000 on 17 November, the Division Commander, Major General JOHN E. DAHLQUIST, O-7120, of St. Paul, Minnesota, visited the Regimental Command Post and presented Silver Star decorations to fifteen gallant officers and men of our Regiment. In addition, for heroic achievement, the General presented one officer and three enlisted men with Soldier's Medals. In the afternoon, at another ceremony, the Regimental Commander, Colonel PAUL D. ADAMS, O-17306, of Columbia, South Carolina, presented sixty one Bronze Star awards to men of the Regiment.

The short rest of several days greatly aided our tired, battle fatigued men, for the campaign, which commenced with the landing on 15 August, had been fought with but few periods of rest, and the constant movement and fighting had told on the efficiency of the Regiment as a fighting team.

While the men rested and refitted themselves, the officers of the Regiment were busy on plans for the next operation. These plans called for 143 RCT to relieve 442 RCT in its zone of action. In conjunction with the

103rd Infantry Division on the left and 142 RCT on the right, the Regiment would attack with our First and Third Battalions abreast, First Battalion on the right and Third Battalion on the left. The mission of this operation involved seizing and holding the high ground overlooking ST LEONARD, ANCOULD, CHARGOUTTE, and LA PETITE FONTAINE. This attack was scheduled for 0900, 19 November, and, after the Second Battalion had been passed through by the attacking battalions, it was to become the Regimental reserve.

The night of 17 - 18 November passed quietly for the Second Battalion, and no contact was made with the enemy, although a patrol went out as far as the town of LA COTE and found no one there. In view of the lack of enemy resistance, the Regimental Commander decided to push the Second Battalion towards the east so that, when the main attack took place, the attacking battalions would have less terrain to cover to their objectives. Another tactical consideration that influenced this decision was to keep both flanks in contact with 103rd Infantry Division and 142 RCT, which were already moving forward.

During the morning, elements of the Second Battalion pushed vigorously forward, but remained out of contact with the enemy. A reinforced platoon from Company "F" occupied the village of LA COTE, while another platoon advanced on the VANEMONT - COINGINX road to the cross roads at V-366548 without making contact with the enemy.

In the afternoon, the First and Third Battalions moved by motor to a detrucking point at LANGUESSE and then marched to their sectors. The Command Post of the First Battalion was established at VANEMONT, and that of the Third Battalion at LA PETITE PARIS. The remainder of the period in the early evening was devoted to relieving the companies of the Second Battalion and getting in readiness for the attack scheduled for 19 November.

Patrols of all three battalions reported that the enemy in retreating had left many roads and trails heavily mined and booby traps were found in many houses in the villages to our front. Because of this, no reconnaissance was to be conducted and only security patrols would operate during the night.

During the past three days, on order of General HECKEL, commanding the troops in front of the 35th Infantry Division, a systematic looting of towns and villages was conducted by the enemy after which many were burned in whole or part. Some of the towns and villages burned were ST DIE, AULONTZEY, CORCIEUX, SARUPT, STE MARQUERITE, ST LEONARD, and LA FLANCHETTE. This action by the enemy forced many refugees to travel the roads into our lines and presented a minor problem to combat operations. It is believed

that this policy of destruction of all buildings was done to deny adequate billets to our troops who were to be held up by the formidable defensive line east of the MEURTHE River.

The night having passed without any occurrences of note, the scheduled attack commenced at 190830 November with the First and Third Battalions moving out to seize and hold BOIS de ST LEONARD, BOIS D'ANCOULD, and BOIS de HENNEFETS. No opposition was reported initially, but progress was slowed by enemy mines. By nightfall, all objectives had been reached without any of our elements making contact with the enemy. Patrols were to operate to the front during the night, and, if possible, secure information on potential crossings of the MEURTHE River. In this forward move, scattered artillery fire was the only opposition given by the enemy.

During the night, patrols to the front of each battalion sector were ordered. These patrols reached the villages of PRESOUCHE, LE PAIRE, LE GAUTTE, and ST LEONARD, but found no enemy; however, roads and houses were mined and booby trapped. At these points, the MEURTHE River was ascertained to be between seventy-five and one hundred yards wide, six feet deep in the center, and with a very swift current.

Plans for the twentieth called for the First Battalion to push forward in their sector, the Third Battalion to send security detachments across the river at ST LEONARD and ANCOULD, and for the Second Battalion to assemble in Regimental reserves.

Contact patrols worked between the battalions and also kept contact with the regiments on our right and left. Nothing of consequence developed during the night worthy of reporting.

Early in the morning, the First Battalion again moved out with Company A on the left, Company B on the right, and Company C following Company A. All objectives were reached and the area west of the MEURTHE River in the vicinity of CLEFCY was occupied before noon. A patrol from Company L successfully crossed the river by wading and went into ST LEONARD during the morning, capturing sixteen prisoners who were promptly returned to the rear for immediate interrogation. Company H had a patrol cross the river and enter the town of ANCOULD, but they immediately encountered stiff resistance losing a squad leader and a scout as prisoners to the Germans. During this engagement, approximately twelve Germans were seen taking these two men away with them. By noon, it was reported that one platoon of Company K and one platoon of Company I were in ST LEONARD, and one platoon of Company L was at Y-115555, all platoons being engaged with the enemy.

Upon interrogation, it was found that the prisoners captured in ST LEONARD (V-4157) were taken by surprise. They were considered to be shock troops who had entered the town during the previous night on the assumption that our troops had already occupied it. They had been ordered to leave their Soldbuchs behind, and, if the pressure became too great, to fall back from the town to the high ground to the east.

The Division Commander, upon learning of the vigorous and rapid progress of our battalions in advancing to our objectives and working patrols across the river, ordered that immediate steps be taken to get two companies across the river to secure a bridgehead at ST LEONARD in order that a bridge could be put across the river during the night. Accordingly, the Third Battalion made arrangements to accomplish this mission, but as the men of Companies I and K moved to the east of ST LEONARD, they ran into barbed wire protected by enemy machine gun fire. Twenty millimeter fire was also received from enemy positions. With darkness approaching, orders were issued to hold up and get defensive artillery fires registered for the night. A general attack by the First and Third Battalions was to be planned for the next day. Lieutenant Colonel THEODORE H. ANDREWS, O-365318, of Caldwell, Texas, informed the Regimental Commander that he anticipated having four rifle platoons across the river with heavy weapons support before dark so that the bridgehead could be held during the night.

While most of the attention during the day centered on the activity of the Third Battalion, principally because the town of ST LEONARD was so important to future operations, nevertheless, the progress of the First Battalion was also noteworthy. By the time darkness descended, elements of the Battalion were in ANCOUD (V-4154), Company B at V-425525, Company A on Hill 601 (V-4666), and Company C in reserve in the town of DEVELINE. A fire fight took place during the day in CIEFCY and at 2000 an officer led patrol went into this town and found the enemy had withdrawn.

Because of the many mines on all roads and trails in our sector, only the minimum contact patrols were arranged for the night, but harassing artillery fires were worked out to keep the enemy alerted. To emphasize the many mines laid by the enemy, some of which could not be detected by minesweepers, the First Battalion during the night had five men wounded, one killed, and four jeeps blown up because of mines.

Operations Instructions issued by 36th Division at 201900Z November 1944, assigned the Regiment the task of attacking at 210500Z November 1944, to seize and hold objective line - LA CROIX (V-490573) - LA ROCHETTE (V-470843) - with some action and maintain contact with 1st RCT at the right and 4th RCT on the left. From the standpoint of the sector in which the Regiment was

to operate, this was not altogether an easy assignment, for the Regimental S-2, Major SANFORD H. WEAVER, C-23212, of Kingston, Rhode Island, after analyzing all intelligence sources, concluded that there were two battalions of Germans, the First and Second Battalions, 933rd Infantry Regiment, consisting of approximately six hundred men, opposing our troops from well emplaced positions on dominant terrain overlooking the narrow flat river valley of the MEURTHE River. Moreover, these troops were supported by light and medium artillery and in front of their positions were barbed wire and mine fields.

The Regimental plan of attack called for the First Battalion to attack on the right, using Companies A and C with Company B in reserve, and for the Third Battalion to attack on the left with Companies K and L in the attack echelon and with Company I in reserve prepared to reinforce Company K. Supporting fires from tanks, artillery, .80 and .50 caliber machine guns, and both infantry mortars and 4.2 mm chemical mortars were planned. The Second Battalion was to remain in reserve ready to be motorized.

The attacking battalions moved out at the designated hour and achieved varying degrees of success during the morning. Extremely unfavorable terrain and the difficulty of finding suitable river crossings held the First Battalion up while the Third Battalion, having previously secured adequate crossings, made satisfactory progress against heavy artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire. At 0820, the town of LE SUCHE received a very heavy shelling from at least two batteries firing from a great distance.

By noon, Company A was across the river and held up until Company C could get abreast of them. Company C having had so much difficulty in crossing in its zone of action, it was decided to bring them across behind Company A. In the Third Battalion sector, Company K ran into very stiff resistance but had reached vicinity of V-429530. By 1430, Company I had one platoon across and was engaged in a light fight while Company L was across the river and reported at V-429530.

Because of the supply problem with two battalions across the river and no bridges in, every effort was started to push our troops sufficiently far to the east to secure an adequate bridgehead and permit the engineers to build a bridge at LE SUCHE capable of holding tanks and trucks.

With the coming of darkness, the First Battalion consolidated their gains and reported Company C at V-429550, Company B to the left and a little behind Company C, and Company A at V-424551 maintaining contact with the leading companies. In order to more quickly accomplish the regimental

mission, the Second Battalion was to be committed in the morning between the First and Third Battalions after a suitable artillery preparation was laid down. The Third Battalion consolidated positions for the night with Company K, vicinity of CONTRAMOULIN (V-4158), Company L a few hundred yards north-east of LE SOUCHE (V-4155), and two platoons Company I in the general vicinity of 417566. The enemy held all the forward slopes with their positions dug in and protected by two rows of wire. During the day, Company K was in some particularly hard fighting and was counterattacked three times by groups of up to fifty enemy.

The night of 21-22 November passed with relative quiet. Some scattered enemy artillery fire was received and there were several patrol clashes.

By daylight, the Second Battalion had moved to LE SOUCHE and, at 0730, all three Battalions attacked in their zones of action meeting strong resistance from machine guns, mortars, and artillery. Tanks were moved across the Bailey bridge at ST LEONARD in order to give direct support to the Third Battalion which was now assigned the immediate task of securing Hill 519 (V-4357).

Progress during the day was extremely slow with Company C engaged in a heavy fire fight and the Third Battalion meeting determined resistance in its attempt to take Hill 519. During the morning, the Second Battalion advanced considerably, but just after noon, both Companies E and G were counterattacked and pushed back. Company F, however, assisted in stabilizing the situation. As the afternoon drew to a close, the Third Battalion was practically on Hill 519; the Second Battalion was well organized beyond the first German defenses and had recovered most of the ground previously lost; Company B of the First Battalion had advanced to V-435554, and Company C was in the woods at V-435550. In the course of the day's fighting, many prisoners were taken, including seventy-three by the Third Battalion.

The attack was to continue on the twenty-third, commencing at 0800, with the objectives as follows: First Battalion, Hill 782 (V-471554); Second Battalion, Hill 704 (V-478569); Third Battalion, Hill 691 (V-481576).

The night was spent preparing for the next day's efforts, resting the tired men, and in keeping security and contact patrols functioning.

The combat efficiency of the command was a source of grave concern at this time as the men had been in continuous combat operations since 15 August 1944, and had suffered heavy casualties, both battle and non-battle. Moreover, the lack of time to fully train and assimilate replacements told on combat effectiveness. Furthermore, continuous operations in generally adverse weather and over difficult terrain dissipated the vigor and alertness

of our men.

Elements of 141 RCT relieved Company C at 0700, and at 0800 on the twenty-third, our attack commenced. No resistance developed, except that a small rear guard action, involving our Third Battalion, was fought in the initial stage of our advance. Only rough, hilly, and wooded terrain limited the rate of advance of our men. By nightfall, Companies I and L were well to the east of MANDRAY; Company E was at V-471565; and the First Battalion was at V-467557 and still moving. In reaching the position occupied by Company E, a small fire fight took place, at the last stages of which two enemy vehicles were destroyed, nine men captured, and six Germans wounded.

Instructions were issued by the Regimental Commander that there would be no let up until our troops reached the line LA CROIX (V-490578) - LE CHIPAL (V-486560) and organized the high ground to protect the road running between these points.

The dense forest delayed our advancing battalions during the night 23-24 November 1944, but with the coming of light, all elements moved forward satisfactorily, impeded only by thick growth of trees and small delaying groups of Germans. By 1200, the Third Battalion had secured LA CROIX, the Second Battalion was in ST JEAN, and the First Battalion had occupied LE CHIPAL, but in this latter area, the enemy continued to resist to the east of the town with machine gun and mortar fire.

The next mission given to 143 RCT was to clear all enemy from the high ground east and south of the MANDRAY - LE CHIPAL - LA CROIX - BOIS de LAVE-LINE road who were harassing the supply and armored elements of 142 RCT as it proceeded towards a debouchement from the VOSGES MOUNTAINS near SELESTAT. The First Battalion engaged the enemy in grid square V-4855 with the Second Battalion on the left, north of LE CHIPAL, working south to help the First Battalion. At 1700, Company E was reported to have captured two officers, two machine guns, two horses, and two wagons, and was on objective at V-493565. The First Battalion reported at 1715 that traffic could again move on the main road at LE CHIPAL. The battalions then established contact by patrols and spent the night on their positions receiving a little harassing artillery and mortar fire during the period and some small arms fire from in front of their positions.

In compliance with previous instructions, the Regiment was prepared to move by motor to the vicinity of STE MARIE aux MINES, but at 0940, the First Battalion reported enemy infiltration of their positions and fire on the LE CHIPAL - LA CROIX road plus .20 millimeter fire in the vicinity of V-48552.

Orders were issued for the First Battalion to move out immediately to take the ridge line southeast of LE CHIPAL while the Third Battalion occupied nose of Hill 697 (V-632385). Later in the morning, the Second Battalion moved to Hill 835 to clear out the woods of all enemy. In view of the fact that artillery fire was being placed by the enemy with such accuracy on BAN de LAVELINE and surrounding hamlets and cross roads, it was felt that German artillery observers were directing fire from hills to the southeast of the town. Accordingly, all hills were to be combed by our troops. By darkness, the Second and Third Battalions had pushed farther enough to the east to prevent observed enemy fire on BAN de LAVELINE or the road running from that town to LE CHIPAL. The Regiment at this time received an alert to be ready to move, less the Third Battalion to STRASBOURG at 260930 November, but this alert was later cancelled and movement at 0930 was still contemplated on STE MARIE aux MINES.

Prisoners captured during the day all seemed confused about the general situation and were quite disorganized. However, they still had experienced officers with them who were carrying out the last orders that they had received which required them to delay and harass our advance as much as possible.

At 0505 on the morning of the twenty-six, the First Battalion was relieved by Company C, 141st Infantry Regiment, and moved to the vicinity of LA CROIX. The First Battalion of the 141st Infantry Regiment also relieved our Second Battalion troops during the morning, and by 1100, the Regiment, less the Third Battalion, was prepared to move by motor at 1230 to STE MARIE aux MINES. Meanwhile, at 0800, the Third Battalion attacked east in its sector and moved along throughout the morning with only light resistance.

The Regimental Command Post opened in STE MARIE aux MINES at 1500, and by 1700, the First and Second Battalions had closed in this town. A task force of infantry and tanks, commanded by Major LOUIS H. BESSINAC, 5-23454, of Mobile, Alabama, Executive Officer, First Battalion, took over a road block from the 142 RCT and moved to V-612605 where they met with enemy fire. This resistance was overcome and the block was moved down the road to V-619591, removing five physical enemy road blocks partially mined, in making this advance. Another road block was placed at ECHERY (V-575595) and a reconnaissance patrol moving from this position received enemy fire at V-554570. During the night harassing mortar fire was received at ECHERY.

As this force under Major BESSINAC continued down the road, they received heavy enemy automatic weapons and mortar fire at 2000 hours which resulted in our men being forced from Hill at V-617587. By 0400, this

position was restored, and at 0800, an enemy counterattack, preceded by an artillery preparation, was repulsed. Company A of this force was relieved by Company C during the morning.

During the afternoon, Company B, reinforced, swept the ridges east, south, and west of SUR L'HATE against scattered resistance. By 1800, the company was in position at V-582581, V-587587, and V-575587. An attack to the south was begun at 280800 and an enemy strong point was encountered at V-587579.

From the time of arrival in STE MARIE aux MINES until 272000, the Second Battalion remained in RCT reserve and rested, and reconditioned clothing and equipment. At 272000, the Battalion passed to the control of 142 RCT to be used in the operations looking to the reduction of SELESTAT in the RHINE VALLEY.

The Third Battalion continued the attack to the east to clear the BON HOMME - ECHERY road, encountering moderate automatic weapons, small arms, and artillery fire. By 271700, they were in position from V-535545 to V-549567. Contact was made at 1430 by force moving down towards BON HOMME from northeast and Company I. During the night, a patrol to V-541549 engaged in a fire fight with the enemy and killed two of them. At 0430, an enemy patrol, estimated to number twenty-five, approached our outpost at V-537549, but were dispersed with automatic weapons and mortar fire. At daylight of the twenty-eighth, the Battalion continued to attack to secure Hill 1110 (V-5556) and high ground overlooking FAURUPT and BON HOMME. Resistance was light and only one of three pillboxes located contained enemy troops. As of 1800, elements of the Battalion had established a general line V-536550 to V-547549. During the night of 28-29 November, strong patrols were employed against the Germans and a fire fight developed with the enemy in the vicinity of V-556552. Again this fatigued group of fighting soldiers attacked the enemy on the morning of the twenty-ninth, using Companies I and K, and attacking south and west towards Hill 1110. No resistance was encountered and the area was cleared south to 546 Northing in the sector.

Only scattered reports were received relative to the action which 142 RCT, with Second Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment attached, was engaged. However, from the information received, it was apparent that the men of this Regiment were fighting in an excellent fashion and worthy of the praise given them by the Division Commander.

Operations Instructions Number 88, issued by the Regiment 292400A November 1944, assigned the First Battalion a broad front for the utilization of all companies and the mission to hold this line, and send patrols to six

different points to determine the presence or absence of the enemy, and to capture prisoners for additional information. The Second Battalion remained attached to 142 RCT and the Third Battalion was to be relieved and assembled in STE MARIE aux MINES in Division reserve, prepared to move one company out on one hour's notice, and the entire Battalion to be prepared to move on two hour's notice. Contact was also to be maintained by the Regiment with 103rd Infantry Division to the north of us.

At 0630 on 30 November, the First Battalion moved to extend its front as ordered. This was completed by noon and patrols moved out to gain contact with the enemy. Meanwhile, the Third Battalion began the assembling of its men as the designated battalion from 141 RCT relieved them and by 1500 had completed its move to STE MARIE aux MINES.

As of 2000, Company A was in position with no contact being made with the enemy; Company C on high ground overlooking AUBURE; and a patrol moving down the road to RIBEAUVILLE reported they had reached V-650562 without contacting the enemy, but locating four road blocks of felled trees.

The night passed with only patrol action, no contact being established with the enemy.

During the month just ended, the Regiment had accomplished much, having broken through three distinct lines where the enemy had planned on holding us up for the winter. Seemingly insurmountable obstacles, of exceedingly bad weather, rugged, wild, mountainous terrain, numerous minefields, and road blocks were overcome in record time. Battle and non-battle casualties were many and the combat efficiency of the Regiment suffered greatly, but the results more than offset these factors. Again it was proven that a stubborn defensive force, given all possible advantages, could be defeated and removed from our front by hard, aggressive attacking which constantly applied such pressure that the Germans were continually off balance and could never secure control of the situation. Such tactics augured well for future operations.

Robert L. O'Brien, Jr.
ROBERT L. O'BRIEN, JR.
Major, 143rd Infantry
Adjutant

BATTALION COMMANDERS 1 to 30 NOVEMBER 1944

FIRST BATTALION

Frazier, David M. Lt Col O-222230 Houston, Texas

SECOND BATTALION

Denholm, Charles J. Lt Col O-21293 Poughkeepsie, New York
November 1 to 10
Bowden, Marion P. Major O-407022 Belton, Texas
November 11 to 30

THIRD BATTALION

Andrews, Theodore H. Lt Col O-365318 Caldwell, Texas

COMPANY COMMANDERS 1 to 30 NOVEMBER 1944

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Cleghorn, Rufus J. Captain O-411677 Waco, Texas

SERVICE COMPANY

Parish, Joe P. Captain O-406965 Huntsville, Texas

ANTI TANK COMPANY

Stakes, Harry C. Captain O-407690 Huntsville, Texas
November 1 to 10
Ninnis, Wilfred A. 1st Lt O-1312435 El Cerrito, California
November 11 to 30

CANNON COMPANY

Stem, Wiley W. Captain O-406991 Waco, Texas

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B. Major O-345134 Camden, New Jersey

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 1ST BATTALION

Burrage, Richard M. Captain O-407025 Waco, Texas

COMPANY A

Brzjcha, Thomas L. November 1 to 15 and 22	Captain O-411038	Chicago, Illinois
Kahn, Henry (NMI) November 16 to 21	Captain O-1299245	Allentown, Pennsylvania
Ilijevich, Joseph F. November 23 to 27	1st Lt O-1294312	Akron, Ohio
Dashner, Richard W. November 28 to 30	Captain O-422625	Waco, Texas

COMPANY B

Chambers, George E. November 1 to 27	Captain O-373577	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Larson, Peter (NMI) November 28 to 30	1st Lt O-384739	Omaha, Nebraska

COMPANY C

Simmons, Allen E.	Captain O-1293664	Belfast, Maine
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COMPANY D

Goad, Roy D.	Captain O-407196	Temple, Texas
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 2ND BATTALION

Phillippi, Wendell C. November 1 to 10	Captain O-1288114	Indianapolis, Indiana
Mitchell, Cecil L. November 11 to 30	1st Lt O-1306742	Defiance, Ohio

COMPANY E

Hartwell, George N. November 1 to 27	1st Lt O-424333	Madera, California
Sullivan, Howard J. November 28 to 30	1st Lt O-1303410	Rochester, New York

COMPANY F

Dine, Josef C. November 1 to 26	Captain O-418284	Worcester, Massachusetts
King, Hiram I. November 27 to 30	1st Lt O-1285603	Aberdeen, South Dakota

COMPANY G

Anderson, Eric C. Captain O-391181 Bozeman, Montana

COMPANY H

Hanrahan, David J. Captain O-1289077 Bronx, New York

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 3RD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L., Jr. Captain O-1289026 Nashville, Tennessee

COMPANY I

Lewitz, Edward R. Captain O-1306863 St. Louis, Missouri
November 1 to 23 and 25
November 29 to 30
Hancock, Harold R. 1st Lt O-1294470 Dallas, Texas
November 24 and 26 to 28

COMPANY K

Merigold, Frank A. Captain O-411346 Chicago, Illinois
November 1 to 26
Ball, Elwood H. 1st Lt O-1296974 Battle Creek, Michigan
November 27 to 30

COMPANY L

Reuland, Richard M. 1st Lt O-480406 Aurora, Illinois

COMPANY M

Hand, Robert (NMI) Captain O-1289075 Seattle, Washington

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

APO #36, U. S. Army

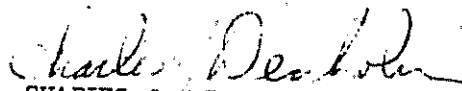
OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

DECEMBER 1944

CONCLUSIONS OF REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

Repeated German counterattacks, sometimes as often as five times in twenty-four hours, proved the mettle of the Division. The tired men fought past all reasonable extremes of fatigue against fresh German troops of good quality.

Troops with heart, properly led, can accomplish almost any end.


CHARLES J. DENHOLM
Lt Col, 143rd Infantry
Commanding

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

Continuing its mission of driving through the mountain passes of the rugged VOSGES, the 36th Infantry Division started the month of December with a drive to clear the enemy from the passes leading to the Alsatian Plain at SELESTAT and RIBEAUVILLE. The 143rd Infantry Regiment participated in both of these efforts, for the Second Battalion continued to be attached to 142 RCT in its attack on SELESTAT, while the remainder of 143 RCT made plans to debouche into the RHINE VALLEY at RIBEAUVILLE.

The first day of the month found our Second Battalion working with 142 RCT and assigned the mission of entering and clearing the town of CHATENOIS (V-7564). At 0630, the Battalion attacked and before noon entered CHATENOIS, after clearing a very heavily mined road block at V-749643. Fighting was heavy during the day, but the town was cleared of enemy before dark. In this engagement, a considerable number of casualties were received. After clearing this town, the Battalion continued on and entered SELESTAT.

While the Third Battalion remained in reserve in STE MARIE aux MINES (V-5960), the First Battalion attacked to secure our right flank at AUBURE (V-6155) preparatory to pushing the Third Battalion along the road from STE MARIE aux MINES to RIBEAUVILLE (V-6955). A considerable force of Germans was known to be in the area between LA POUTROIE (V-5750) and KAYSERSBERG (V-6448) and it was deemed necessary to have our flank reasonably well protected. One company of the First Battalion was ordered to move along the high ground northwest of the FERTRUPT - RIBEAUVILLE road toward hill noses at V-646585 overlooking THANMENKIRCH (V-6759) and maintain contact with 142 RCT. The company selected for this mission was Company A, and by darkness, Company A was in the vicinity of V-648581, Company B astride the FERTRUPT - RIBEAUVILLE road at road junction, V-634569, and Company C occupying the general area V-620562 - V-624561 - V-626564. To accomplish these moves, at least eleven road blocks were overcome, some of which were defended. A physical road block at V-625581 contained fifty schu mines, two box mines, and six ramp mines which were removed by attached engineers.

Contact patrols between units of the First Battalion were active during the night and in the morning this Battalion moved on to clear THANMENKIRCH and engaged the enemy in a heavy fire fight in the outskirts of AUBURE.

At 1200, the First Battalion moved from its assembly area vicinity STE MARIE aux MINES, and, with Company I on the right, Company L on the left, and Company K following, proceeded southeast in the direction of RIBEAUVILLE. Elements of Companies A and C were contacted at 1300. Only scattered small

arms fire was received by these companies until Company I met strong resistance at WALBOURG (V-644563), however, the advance of Company L continued uninterrupted.

Meanwhile, the Second Battalion remained attached to 142 RCT and was engaged all day in a heavy fire fight in SELESTAT (V-7962) in which our men encountered machine gun and small arms fire; booby traps, mines, and trip wires. Their attack was successful, however, for they overran an enemy battalion command post, capturing three German staff officers and sixteen other prisoners in addition to wounding six of the enemy and killing between fifteen and twenty. At least half of the town was cleared by this Battalion under the skillful direction of Major MARION P. BOWDEN, O-407022, of Belton, Texas, its Commander.

As night drew on, the Third Battalion, with Companies K and L astride the RIBEAUVILLE road at V-675559, received orders to continue pushing forward while the First Battalion held positions as follows: Company A at V-659550, Company B at V-630556 and V-637564, and Company C at V-608561 and V-622561 to V-621558.

Our attached engineers, Company C, 111th Engineer Battalion, were given orders to work through the night clearing the roads of mines and fallen trees in the direction of AUBURE and RIBEAUVILLE up to the most advanced infantry positions.

An interesting prisoner, a German officer of the name of Captain FISHER, was captured by men of the Third Battalion, and he stated that he commanded one hundred and thirty men who, after resisting our advance, were ordered to pull back to a position at V-662559 where they were to reform. He further stated that his unit, plus SS troops, were commanded by a Major MULLER whose command post was in RIBEAUVILLE.

During the night and early morning 2-3 December, the Third Battalion moved slowly down the road towards RIBEAUVILLE, and by dawn Company L had reached V-675560 and Company K had positions in the vicinity of V-674556.

To clear the numerous road blocks, consisting of from fifteen to thirty trees per block, it required a force of sixty engineers, with a tank dozer and engineer dozer, all of a night of hard work.

The town of AUBURE continued to present a difficult problem to the First Battalion, requiring the utilization of all troops to clear it of many German strong points. However, by noon Company C had cleared the town and Companies B and C were to the south and north of the built-up area. Armor was moved in, road blocks were established, and arrangements made during the remainder of the day to hold this important position.

Our artillery had few targets to fire on because of limited visibility in this rugged terrain, but shortly before noon Observation Post Number 1 sighted an enemy column leaving RIBEAUVILLE in the direction of ZELLENBENG (V-6952) and succeeded in directing fire on it, destroying one motor vehicle and scattering men and horses in all directions.

Pushing vigorously during the day, the Third Battalion, by late afternoon, had cleared RIBEAUVILLE, overcoming small arm, machine gun, and 20mm fire. Occasional light artillery fire was encountered, being fired from the direction of COLMAR (V-715419). While the Third Battalion secured the town for the night, our First Battalion was relieved by Second Battalion, 141 RCT and upon its relief assembled in an area vicinity of V-6456.

The enemy defended this general area with elements of many units. Prisoners were taken from 13th and 16th Replacement Battalions, Second and Third Companies, 785th Infantry, 11th Company, 223rd Infantry, and Second Company, 30th Fortress Engineers.

The Third Battalion, in defending RIBEAUVILLE during the night, was constantly engaged with small groups of Germans. Company I captured an officer, two enlisted prisoners, and several vehicles. One road block was attacked three times and several of our men wounded by German bazooka fire. Another road block captured an enemy motorcycle and its rider. About 0610, Company I received an estimated thirty - forty rounds of artillery fire from the direction of COLMAR.

The Regimental Commander, anxious to secure the high ground overlooking COLMAR, ordered the First Battalion to move from its assembly area during the morning, pass through elements of the Third Battalion, and attack to secure HUMAUHHR (V-6853) and the high ground to the south.

By 1500, Company C had reached this town meeting little resistance while Company A occupied Hill 938 (V-635545) after driving off an estimated forty Germans, killing one and capturing one.

Company L, during the day, actively engaged the enemy at the railroad east of RIBEAUVILLE, and one platoon from this company, together with Cannon Company mounts and several attached tanks in support, entered BERGHEIM (V-7256) after killing a number of Germans and capturing sixty-three prisoners. Artillery, tank, and Cannon Company fire was delivered with excellent effect during the day on Germans fleeing BERGHEIM and on enemy traffic moving from OSTHEIM (V-729512) to COLMAR.

Company C continued to push on towards RIQUEWIHR (V-6752) while Company B took up positions at V-676531 to block all roads and trails to their front and

to outpost HUMAWIHR. Our Regimental Command Post moved to the west end of RIBEAUVILLE at 1400 and the men of the Regiment, as the day closed, could look with satisfaction to the results which indicated an estimated sixty enemy killed, forty wounded, and seventy-five prisoners captured.

Our tired men had a quiet night, and on the morning of 6 December 1944, they resumed their forward movement with the Third Battalion receiving orders to attack and seize GUEMAR (V-7454) and OSTHEIM and the First Battalion being ordered to move on BEBIENHEIM (V-6951).

This day was devoted to extremely heavy fighting as the enemy resisted in a very stubborn fashion, tenaciously holding the towns of GUEMAR, OSTHEIM, and BEBIENHEIM against our most determined attacks. The fanatic resistance of the Germans reached a new peak when at GUEMAR the enemy were reported to have fired on their own men trying to surrender.

By 1800, Company C had reached the ridge overlooking BEBIENHEIM (V-693518) and was engaged in a fire fight; Company B had patrols south of RIQUEWIHR, while Company B and one platoon of Company C entered BEBIENHEIM. Company A remained protecting the right flank and rear of the Battalion and had contact with 141 RCT further to the west.

Company L, just as darkness came on, succeeded in gaining a firm hold on GUEMAR, although the remainder of the Third Battalion was not successful in forcing the enemy from OSTHEIM. Considerable enemy vehicle movements towards COLMAR could be heard at this time and efforts were made to interdict the roads with artillery fire to break up these convoys.

Prisoners captured during the day stated that they had been expecting reinforcements from across the RHINE as they had been told this bridgehead must be held at all costs. Some of these prisoners further indicated that their Division Command Post was in KAYSERSBERG.

Intermittent heavy enemy artillery fell during the night in GUEMAR and BEBIENHEIM, and a fire fight between Company L and the enemy also took place at GUEMAR. A Company K patrol returned and reported a bridge between OSTHEIM and GUEMAR had been demolished by heavy explosions just before they reached the area. As dawn appeared, enemy artillery and mortar fire increased over the entire sector and the Germans made a small scale attack from MITTELWIHR (V-6950) on Company C positions, but were repulsed.

With the coming of daylight, the whole area was active in small scale fire fights and it was found that approximately sixty Germans had infiltrated on the right flank during the night with bazookas and antitank weapons. The Second

After a heavy shelling, the enemy again attacked Company F positions on Hill 393 and, by 1730, the Germans had succeeded in pushing Company F off of this important position. Company E held positions on the reverse slope of Hill 393 and Company G still on Hill 351. Company A occupied positions at V-691508 and V-691509. Company B was on the left and Company C just to its left at V-711507.

By 1800, a battalion of the RCT was moving to retake Hill 393 to regain ground lost by our Company F.

COMBAT all during the day was strongly attacked by Germans with enemy attempting to infiltrate and causing the river by boats. Prisoners captured here and on Hills 391 and 351 indicated that large groups of reinforcements were coming to COMBAT to eventually attack and retake all of the high ground northwest of COMBAT now held by us.

An attack being expected during the early morning hours of 6 December, the Regimental Commander ordered all battalions to be alert and ready for action at 0430. During most of the night and morning, increasing artillery fire fell in the vicinity of OSTHEIM, ZOLLERSHEIM, and HANAU.

HITTENBERG, being the deepest penetration into our lines by the enemy in any force and having great tactical value to the enemy for possible future attacks, was subjected to heavy tank and 4.2 mortar fire by our troops shortly after 0800.

At about 1030, the enemy laid down a heavy artillery and mortar concentration on Hill 35 and followed this fire with an attack which was largely repulsed. However, again at 1130, the enemy attacked this hill from the direction of LITTEWILDER and HITTENBERG, driving our troops from Hill 351, but being unable to force Company F from its positions on Hill 391. In this engagement, Company F took twenty prisoners, all exceptionally fine looking men. Companies E and G were pulled back to emergency and to prepare to retake positions lost during the morning.

Our first Battalion attacked HITTENBERG. It was killed about twenty-five yards from the outskirts of this village by an intense enemy barrage which dispersed our troops and caused considerable casualties.

Continued efforts at infiltration were made by German patrols. One such group, estimated at between thirty and forty men, tried to force their way through a gap between Second Battalion, 143 RCT and Second Battalion, 141 RCT, but were fired on and dispersed. Plans were then made to close this gap with other troops.

Battalion was alerted and assigned the mission to secure the RIQUEWIHR - ZELLENBERG ridge. At 0900, the leading company, Company E, reached ZELLENBERG.

To assist Company K, which was meeting considerable resistance in the vicinity of OSTHEIM, two tanks with men from Company I, at 0915 moved to this area. Meanwhile, the Cannon Company captured twenty-five prisoners near the railroad at V-716512 who were identified as from the 8th Company, 223rd Regiment. These men gave every indication of possessing great fear of our tanks and self-propelled guns.

Bitter fighting took place throughout the day in many different places for the enemy showed a tenacious and unyielding spirit. However, by the close of the day, GUEMAR was cleared and twelve prisoners taken. The First Battalion continued to fight hard in their effort to overcome strong infantry resistance backed up by tanks and artillery. Company F had encountered enemy at V-674497 and Company G was also fighting in the vicinity of V-682503. BEBIENHEIM was considered clear of Germans by 1900, although constant attempts were made to infiltrate back into the town.

Heavy and frequent patrol activity was scheduled for the night to off-set enemy infiltration tactics. Also planned for the night was the relief of 1st RCT, on our right, by French troops.

The hard fighting of the day gave increasing evidence of the better quality troops our men were facing. Many prisoners captured during this interval were from SS units just moved into the COLMAR area from GERMANY.

The night passed uneventfully although both the First and Second Battalions were alerted to expect a counterattack. Enemy artillery and mortars harassed our positions all during the night causing some casualties.

In the morning, despite our vigilance, some Germans were found to have infiltrated our positions and Company L was sent to drive them off from the vicinity of GUEMAR.

The enemy took our positions on Hill 393 (V-6749) under artillery and mortar fire, and their machine guns and antitank weapons, firing from MITTELWIHR, harassed our men on Hill 251 (V-6950). A prisoner captured during the early morning said that about one hundred and twenty men were to attack these two hills during the day.

Company F, in the vicinity of V-665498, received an enemy attack, but Companies E and G moved to aid in retaining it. Meanwhile, the Second Battalion moved to RIQUEWIHR.

The Third Battalion, during the afternoon, was relieved in the line by other elements of the Division and, by 1915, had closed in RIBEAUVILLE.

A general attack was planned to move off at 0800 on the morning of 9 December with every effort to be made to dislodge the Germans from the positions of advantage they had secured during the past several days.

Our men were beginning to show signs of battle fatigue, which, if not corrected by rest, would seriously impair their fighting abilities. This was particularly true in view of the numbers of fresh enemy troops being used in our sector and also because of the high quality of the enemy and their constant efforts to force us from the dominant terrain.

Very little noteworthy activity on the part of either forces took place on the night of 8-9 December. All of our men were alerted and ready for any situation prior to 0500. At 0640, Company F, 141 RCT, to the right of our Second Battalion, was reported counterattacked after a preparation of artillery and mortar fire. This attack shifted to Companies E and F of our Second Battalion at approximately 0730 and appeared to come from the direction of BENNWIHR. Acting upon this belief, artillery fire of some intensity was placed on BENNWIHR (V-6949). By late evening, activity had almost completely subsided in this area.

Shortly after 0800, the First Battalion again attacked MITTELWIHR (V-6950), Company A attacking from the west, Company C from the east, and Company B supporting by fire from positions on Hill 251. By noon, our troops, supported by armor, were in the town working to clear out buildings where Germans were located, sniping and firing machine guns. Concentrations of artillery and mortar fire were placed on our troops by the Germans who were determined not to lose this valuable town.

Elements of two battalions of 141 RCT also attacked at this time to occupy Hill 393 and Hill 351. Our Second Battalion was relieved by other elements of the Division and by midnight had assembled in RIBEAUVILLE.

Having cleared MITTELWIHR of all enemy by midafternoon, Company A, supported by Cannon Company mounts, continued to attack towards BENNWIHR (V-6949) with Company C, less one platoon, on its left. Progress was very slow, however, in the face of intense enemy fire of all types. Prisoners of war captured in MITTELWIHR reported that BENNWIHR had been heavily reinforced by infantry and armor. As darkness fell, the embattled First Battalion could claim for the day's operations nineteen enemy killed, six wounded, and forty-five prisoners taken. Its own casualties were heavy, principally from artillery and mortar fire.

In view of the coming of night and the difficulty of control in village fighting at night, the First Battalion dug in on the outskirts of MITTELWIHR and called for heavy harassing artillery fires to be laid on BENNWIHR during the hours of darkness. This fire did not commence, however, until 0400 of the tenth because there was some belief that a few of our men were still in BENNWIHR until that hour.

Retaliating for our fire on BENNWIHR, the Germans shelled ZELLENBERG, MITTELWIHR, and OSTHEIM, and at 0730 commenced firing a rocket gun in vicinity of MITTELWIHR at the rate of one round per three minutes. Counter-battery fire was directed at the reported position of this gun.

Little of consequence occurred in our sector during most of the day. Some heavy artillery concentrations were directed by our observers at a bridge at V-717483 and several hits were claimed. An M-7 self-propelled gun of the Cannon Company was reported to have registered two direct hits on an enemy Mark VI tank at V-709485. Around 1520, when we attempted to move tanks in the vicinity of MITTELWIHR, the enemy threw such heavy artillery fire on them that they were forced to withdraw.

In accordance with Operations Instructions issued by the Division, at 1825, Company F relieved elements of Third Battalion, 141 RCT at OSTHEIM and the Third Battalion was marching to relieve the First Battalion. By 2025, Company K had relieved Company A, taking positions at approximately V-686502 to V-692501. Company L relieved Companies B and C positions and the First Battalion went into a reserve position at ZELLENBERG.

The eleventh of December was a relatively clear day for this time of year in the RHINE VALLEY where most days were generally hazy from fog and mist rising off the water. The Third Battalion spent the early part of the morning preparing to attack BENNWIHR and, at 1015, Company K moved out to the west edge of BENNWIHR, receiving no small arms fire, but some direct tank fire. Within one half an hour, they were reported to be occupying the first five houses in the town. Company L, meanwhile, had moved to the vicinity of V-693501.

Our efforts to support the Third Battalion attack with armor were not immediately successful as the enemy had a tank in BENNWIHR commanding the main street and its direct, observed fire prevented entrance of our tanks and tank destroyers into the town. Arrangements were then made to place artillery fire on this area to drive the German tank off.

Meanwhile, infantry fighting had increased in the town and our men slowly advanced, building by building, until they had worked to a street intersection in the north part of the town where they occupied a large building at the corner. A Company L patrol was sent out to look for tanks on the side streets.

From the information received, from small unit commanders, it appeared that by nightfall the enemy had pulled back to the southern part of the town.

Our observation posts reported heavy vehicle traffic in and out of COLMAR during the night. The enemy continued his harassing fire on our positions all through the night. In the morning, it was found that the Germans had infiltrated into BEBLEMHEIM having apparently come up the OSTHEIM - BEBLEMHEIM highway. Company I with two tanks was sent out to clear up this situation. More infiltration was discovered when the Germans fired on our troops from the ridge between BEBLEMHEIM and MITTELWIHR.

In addition to these problems, word was received from Company K that they were being attacked and fire was laid on the southern end of BENNWIHR. Soon, however, the sector quieted down and everything seemed to be under control.

A short time later, approximately thirty Germans were seen in the open ground between OSTHEIM and ZELLENBERG and dispersed towards the east by tank fire. Germans further infiltrated from the west and began shooting into the town of RIQUEWIHR and at a mortar position to the north of this village. These enemy troops drove our reconnaissance elements from Hill 672 (V-6551). Immediately the Second Battalion was alerted to move against infiltrating enemy headed for the high ground overlooking RIBEAUVILLE.

In the town of BENNWIHR, Company K was heavily engaged with the enemy and Companies I and L were attacking the enemy on the hill between BEBLEMHEIM and MITTELWIHR. The Second Battalion, by 1200, was ready for attack around RIQUEWIHR. By 1345, they reported RIQUEWIHR clear, also the road to HUNAWIHR, and edge of woods northwest of RIQUEWIHR.

While all of these engagements were progressing, other elements of the First and Second Battalions were actively fighting off attacks in their sectors.

Company K continued to hold the Germans in BENNWIHR, but Company L on its left was having some difficulty with the enemy and meeting stiff resistance. Fighting continued in this sector all afternoon.

Just after darkness fell, the Germans tried a daring maneuver to destroy some of our artillery pieces and to cut the main supply road for our forces from RIBEAUVILLE to STE MARIE aux MINES. Selected personnel, numbering not more than fifty men, moved north through the woods from KAYSERSBERG, attacking our supporting artillery, the 133rd Field Artillery Battalion, at about 1825 near a sawmill at V-662559. They were armed with machine guns, mines, TNT charges, and rifles. The artillerymen fought them off and dispersed the entire group with little casualties to themselves. A prisoner later captured stated that the mission of

these men was to destroy our guns and put in a road block at V-668559. They were to be joined later by two hundred infantrymen who were to protect the road block.

At 1900, a demolition was set off in the 133rd Field Artillery Battalion area and two companies of the First Battalion were ordered to move to this vicinity immediately and take up positions fifteen hundred yards in the woods south of V-657564 to await any possible move of further German troops into the area of this important road. Quiet soon returned, however, to this section of the road, but everyone was kept ready to move to any other part of this vital road to drive off raiding parties. As further security, two armored cars from the 36th Reconnaissance Company patrolled the road throughout the night and the Division Engineers were organized as a Division Reserve.

The night of 12-13 December was an uneasy one for our troops in view of their tired, worn out condition and the many threats that existed on our front, flanks, and even possible infiltrations to our rear. The town of RIEBAUVILLE was subjected to constant, harassing fire by a long range gun of very large calibre, which fired several rounds into houses near the Regimental Command Post. One of these rounds hit the Cannon Company dump, destroying four jeeps and trailers, the kitchen, and a loaded two and one-half ton ammunition truck.

At 0255, Company L reported receiving a strong counterattack and called for defensive artillery fires. All during the early morning, Companies I and L were heavily engaged and by 0815 the enemy attack had penetrated the Company L positions at the approximate vicinity of V-698504. Germans were further found to have infiltrated behind this company. Tanks and an infantry platoon were sent from MITTELWIHR to work across Hill 251 and down behind Company L.

Meanwhile, OSTHEIM was attacked on two sides, but the situation was reported as secure, and by 0840 the attack on Company I had been repulsed. A few minutes later enemy movement was reported between Second Battalion, 141 RCT and our Second Battalion.

At 1140, after a heavy mortar and artillery preparation, Company K was again attacked by the Germans at ESMWIHR, but the situation was held under control and sixteen prisoners were taken. These prisoners, and others captured during the morning, confirmed the attempt of engineers to attack our artillery positions and establish a road block on the SIE MARIE aux MINES - RIEBAUVILLE road. Information was also received from them that two to three hundred Germans were moving from the vicinity of V-650523, west along trail from KAYSERSBERG. Also, these prisoners admitted that some elements had been given the mission to infiltrate and attack Hill 251.

By 1345, enemy progress in the Third Battalion sector had been stopped, but there was still much activity along our front and a new attack, with tank support, was launched against Companies I and L at 1445. During this action, one German self-propelled gun was destroyed by bazooka fire. First Lieutenant EDWARD H. RAIL, O-1296274, of Rifle Co., Michigan, S-2, Third Battalion, reported that the Germans had been making a series of small attacks all day under the protection of artillery fires. By 1700, the situation was rapidly clearing up and the First Battalion moved into position on Hill 351 and its vicinity.

With the approach of night, the Second and Third Battalion sectors continued quiet. The Second Battalion reported enemy casualties during the day as fourteen killed, twenty wounded. A German Battalion Commander was among those killed.

During the night, it was decided to relieve the Third Battalion with the First Battalion, Company B taking over Company I positions, Company A relieving Company K, and Company C in reserve. Company I was to remain in contact with the Antitank platoon, and the Third Battalion was to be withdrawn to RHEAUVILLE in Regimental Reserve.

Just before 0100 on the next night, an estimated fifty Germans penetrated Company L positions and were reported moving up behind Company A. Company K, which had been relieved, was ordered to move down and tie in with Companies A and L to clear up the situation. Early in relief of Antitank Company, 1st RCT and our Second Battalion were alerted by heavy infiltration between Antitank Company, 1st RCT and Company I of this Regiment.

The situation seemed to be under control at 0200, but at 0430 Company K was reported involved in a fight and contacted Company A. Meanwhile, infiltrators were using machine and machine guns had destroyed a Cannon Company assault vehicle. Japs in RHEAUVILLE on the road between this town and RHEAUVILLE. The situation in RHEAUVILLE was rapidly worse. Companies I and L were being hit by enemy fire and Company I, 1st RCT was attached to this Regiment. The situation was becoming more serious. Company C was moved to RHEAUVILLE as an immediate reserve.

At 1900, Company I was still in a fight, but Companies A and L were still in a critical way in RHEAUVILLE as the enemy had infiltrated all about them. Company I was holding its position and its left flank at V-685498, was in a satisfactory position.

Steady infiltrating by the Germans was keeping all companies busily engaged by 1300 and at this time our air observation reported eight to ten enemy tanks at V-682488 moving north. Our tank destroyers were alerted to prevent a

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breakthrough by this armor and the air observation planes were ordered to keep close watch on this tank formation.

Most of the enemy had been cleared from behind Company A by 1545, but all during the afternoon fighting continued in the entire sector with the attack principally directed at MITTEWILR. In the late afternoon, our tanks were heavily engaged and, at 1835, three of them were reported to have been destroyed by the enemy. At this time, a forward command post was established by the Regiment at V-619522.

At 1945, the Germans were reported moving up the road from BENNWILR and Companies K and L were alerted. Company L remained ready in ZELLENBERG while Company K outposted the town with Cannon Company in support.

At 2200, Company L, 142 RCT was astride the roads of Hill 251 with road blocks set up, a platoon of Company K, 142 RCT was on its right, Company G of 142 RCT held the center, and a platoon of Company A of this Regiment was on the left with tank support. This force proceeded towards MITTEWILR to engage the advancing enemy. By 2325, they were on the edge of MITTEWILR and had not made contact with the Germans.

Some machine gun and machine pistol fire was reported from the direction of MITTEWILR at 0430 and an enemy tank was heard in the town. At 0700, Company G was dug in about twenty-five yards from the first house in MITTEWILR and a plan was developed to encircle the town as a French Division attacked on the right and the 30th Infantry attacked towards KAYSERSBERG.

During the morning, the Regimental sector remained generally quiet except for intermittent small arms fire in MITTEWILR. Our medium artillery fired on BENNWILR and Hill 351 to attempt to deny the enemy continuance of supplies and reinforcements through this vital channel.

At noon, Company A was at FLE BOUX (V-681504) in reserve, Company B had its right flank at V-680495 with two platoons of Antitank Company at V-687498, and the right flank of Company G at V-687500. Our Second Battalion, still attached to 142 RCT, had encountered very little enemy resistance in its sector.

The enemy, after firing concentrations of mortar and heavy artillery, attempted to infiltrate along a trail leading out of MITTEWILR and, by 1600, were successful in penetrating across fire on Hill 251 and the main road. Vigorous efforts of the Germans resulted in a squad being forced from their positions shortly thereafter. The Germans were sent to take back those posi-

With the coming of darkness, the enemy ceased his infantry efforts and throughout the night harassed our entire front with artillery fire. Small arms fire continued to fall on Hill 251.

At 160500 December, our weary troops were alerted, but no enemy demonstration was received. The Second Battalion was relieved by 0855. The morning passed quietly and the enemy artillery activity was considerably diminished, for the day was clear and allowed our airplanes to strafe and bomb at will. One bombing mission each was flown on BENNWIHR and SIGOLSHEIM. Air observation picked up traffic movements on the AMERSCHWIHR - KIENZHEIM road and, at 1115, artillery fire from our guns destroyed three enemy vehicles and blocked the road. Air missions were flown against a chateau at V-721489 reported to house a large command installation. It was twice hit by our medium bombers.

In retaliation for this action, during midafternoon when our planes were temporarily out of the area, the enemy shelled ZELLENBERG, OSTHEIM, and RIBEAUVILLE with but meager results.

To investigate activities in MITTELWIHR, a four man patrol from Company C worked into the first houses in the town, killed one German and captured two others. The church steeple in MITTELWIHR was considered to house an enemy observation post; accordingly, tank and artillery fire scored nine direct hits on it and effectively destroyed its usefulness.

Further bombing attacks during the afternoon were directed by our planes on MITTELWIHR and BENNWIHR.

Night brought temporary quiet to the sector. At 2100, the Second Battalion relieved the Third Battalion of 142 RCT, which became a reserve in RIBEAUVILLE. Considerable heavy artillery fell throughout the area and combat patrols drew fire wherever they went. At 2125, our chemical mortars, firing phosphorus shells, set two houses on fire in MITTELWIHR and a Company C patrol probing MITTELWIHR killed two guards in the first house in the town and drew heavy return fire. Patrols from other companies encountered dug in Germans at V-680495 and V-694497.

The seventeenth of December was a quiet but uneasy day marked by patrol activity on our part and some harassing artillery fire from the Germans.

In the afternoon at 1430, Companies K and L moved to RIQUEWIHR prepared to take over positions vacated by 141 RCT as they moved elements into KIENZHEIM. The Third Battalion, 142 RCT also moved to ZELLENBERG and became Regimental reserve for 143 RCT.

Prisoners of war taken from Hill 251 said that they were part of a force of one hundred men who had the mission of taking the high ground known as Hill 351. Men captured on Hill 351 reported that there were fifty men in the group responsible for holding the hill mass. Other prisoners informed our Interrogator, First Lieutenant GEORGE (NMI) WEINSCHER, O-1557234, of Corsicana, Texas, that there were two companies averaging thirty-five to forty men on the reverse slope of Hill 351.

Our forward companies reported that at 1920 it appeared that the Germans had withdrawn from MITTELWIHR to the vineyards east and west of the town. This change in enemy dispositions was undoubtedly due to intense artillery and mortar fire we were constantly placing on the battered town.

Activity by both friendly and enemy troops was practically non-existent during the night, although one enemy patrol which approached Company F was driven off by sub-machine gun fire. Some intermittent enemy artillery fire was received on our positions during the night, but otherwise it was an uneventful period.

MITTELWIHR, being a constant threat to our positions, was attacked at 1000 by the Second Battalion with Company I attached. If this attack were successful, our men were to move on and clear out BENNWIHR, keeping contact with the First Battalion all of the time. At 1035, Company I ran into two enemy machine guns at V-699502, Company E had advanced two hundred yards, and one platoon of Company G was at V-692504 on the outskirts of MITTELWIHR. Progress continued good and by noon Company E had entered the town with tanks, but Company G was receiving opposition from enemy machine guns in the vicinity of V-686503. The attacking units were in close contact with Company C. Artillery fire was placed on an enemy tank firing on our troops from the road junction just south of BENNWIHR.

A prisoner taken by the Second Battalion reported that two hundred and fifty fresh troops had come from COLMAR during the night and were bivouaced behind Hills 351 and 216 preparing to attack through MITTELWIHR and BENNWIHR on the eighteenth. This was not favorable news, if true, but it did not deter our men, who, by 1700, had taken twenty prisoners and moved down through the town to the last house in MITTELWIHR. Hill 251 had also been practically cleared of Germans.

After darkness came, the Second Battalion was relieved, but this relief was not completed until the next day as only small groups could be changed at a time and enemy harassing fire on MITTELWIHR and Hill 251 caused further delays.

Nothing of consequence took place on the morning of 19 December, but at 1400, an attack by our First and Third Battalions was begun with supporting French armor, with mission to move from KIENTZHEIM to take SIGOLSHEIM while the 15th Infantry of the Third Division cleared Hill 351 of enemy and cut the main

SIGOLSHEIM - BENNWIHR road. At 1750, Company K, with French armor in support, was reported in SIGOLSHEIM receiving small arms and mortar fire. At 1915, the Third Battalion was fighting in the northwest part of the town with Company K in the western part and Company I on the southern edge of town. Occupation of SIGOLSHEIM could not be completed now that darkness had come, so our troops were withdrawn for the night. Several French tanks were destroyed in the fighting and our casualties were moderate. While this action was going on, Hills 251 and 393 had been completely cleared of German troops.

The Third Battalion during the night was withdrawn to KIENZHEIM in preparation for its relief the next day. At this time, it was reported that First Lieutenant DONALD M. BLAUGRAVE, O-475272, of Aurora, Illinois, commanding a platoon of Company I had been cut off in the western part of SIGOLSHEIM with sixteen men by Germans who had forced their way to their rear as the tanks were withdrawn. As nothing more of these men was ever seen, it was believed that they had been either killed or captured.

Inasmuch as our troops were weary and battle-worn and had received heavy casualties in the bitter fighting that had continuously taken place since the debouchement from the VOSGES MOUNTAINS at RIEBAUVILLE, the Division Commander, Major General JOHN E. DAHLQUIST, O-7120, of St. Paul, Minnesota, secured authority to take over the relatively quiet sector on the western bank of the RHINE River at STRASBOURG in order to rest and reorganize our depleted units.

Accordingly, the twentieth of December was largely taken up with realigning the troops in this sector so that 143 RCT could be relieved on the night of 20-21 December. Patrols were sent to attempt to contact any Americans left in SIGOLSHEIM, but enemy fire kept them from the town and it was found that the Germans had re-entered the town in strong force.

By nightfall, the First Battalion had been relieved by the Third Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, and the Third Battalion was planning to move to KIENZHEIM at midnight. Our Second Battalion closed into HUNAWIHR at 1115.

The twenty-first of December was spent moving to STRASBOURG and relieving the 7th Infantry in their defensive positions along the RHINE River. Relief of this Regiment was completed by 1300 and our Regimental dispositions extended along the RHINE from the city of STRASBOURG to KILSTETT (R-090085). Company I was in the vicinity of W-037975; Company K at W-042954; Company L occupying the area near W-040974; and Company M at W-039973. The Second Battalion had its Command Post at LA WANTZENAU (R-066066) with Company E near R-065663; Company G in the vicinity of R-047009, and Company F in the general area around KILSTETT. The First Battalion and the Regimental Command Posts were in the city of STRASBOURG.

The Regiment spent the remainder of the day in organizing its positions as the sector remained quiet.

On the twenty-second, active patrolling was continued on a day and night basis between our units. FFI reports were received that small German patrols had crossed the river, but this information was checked and no Germans were found.

Intermittently our men fired with various weapons at the enemy who were in pill boxes on the other side of the river and the fire was returned but no casualties were received.

The 36th Reconnaissance Troop, which occupied positions on our left flank and was under the control of the Regimental Commander, in patrolling near R-131103 heard voices of about ten Germans and two motor boats early in the morning of the twenty-third near the river; later, they heard friendly and enemy small arms fire.

An enemy agent was believed to have tapped one of our lines and when he was discovered all units were notified to be on the alert when using the telephone.

At 1025, a Second Battalion patrol that had moved northward reported seeing about twenty Germans in the woods in the vicinity of R-126038. Company C was alerted in case active measures were necessary. After an artillery concentration, a Company F patrol went to this position but found nothing. However, the patrol went to the river and found an enemy mortar position at R-13251020 with enemy digging in. As the patrol was of small size, they had an artillery preparation placed on the enemy.

Active patrol measures were arranged after this with all units in the Division area. The FFI took six prisoners at GAMBSHEIM (R-1010) and these prisoners stated that a two company enemy attack was scheduled to take place the next morning. Accordingly, it was considered advisable to alert the First Battalion, less Company A, at 2100 to move on order to this area.


A bridgehead was reported near the road junction at R-132101 and the First Battalion was ordered to attack and clear this position. During the night, the First Battalion moved by motor to GAMBSHEIM and deployed to clear out the German pocket. A battalion from the 142nd Infantry Regiment was ordered up to assist in rapidly reducing this threat. The area being a restricted one and the threat less than was expected, this Battalion from the 142nd Infantry Regiment was released at 1800 on the twenty-fourth of December.

Shortly after nightfall, several men were shot at by snipers and all troops were alerted. Intermittent friendly and enemy small arms fire continued throughout the night while our patrols remained active.

All was quiet in the early morning hours of Christmas, but our patrols fired at several Germans seen in the sector. At 0235, the First Battalion was relieved by elements of the 232nd Infantry Regiment and our Battalion closed into STRASBOURG at 0630. Plans were made for the Regiment to move to the vicinity of CIREY and VAL ET CHATILLON (V-430960) for a much needed period of rest, reorganization, and training. As of 1830, all battalions had been relieved and moved on 26 December to the new area.

The remainder of the month was devoted to attending to the many details of a unit that had been in active combat since 15 August 1944. The spirits of our men began to recover rapidly now that the nervous strain of combat was over for a while. All of the officers and men showed the marks of battle fatigue and well warranted this relief from the vigors of active service.

On 23 December, our Regimental Commander, Colonel PAUL D. ADAMS, O-17306, of Columbia, South Carolina, was transferred to the position of Assistant Division Commander of the 45th Infantry Division, a move which increased his responsibilities enormously but was a well recognized promotion for a leader who had achieved much. The Regiment sorrowfully saw him leave. They were, however, pleased to welcome his successor in command, Lieutenant Colonel CHARLES J. DENHOLM, O-21293, of Poughkeepsie, New York, an officer well known and respected by the members of the Regiment.


ROBERT L. O'BRIEN, JR.
Major, 143rd Infantry
Adjutant

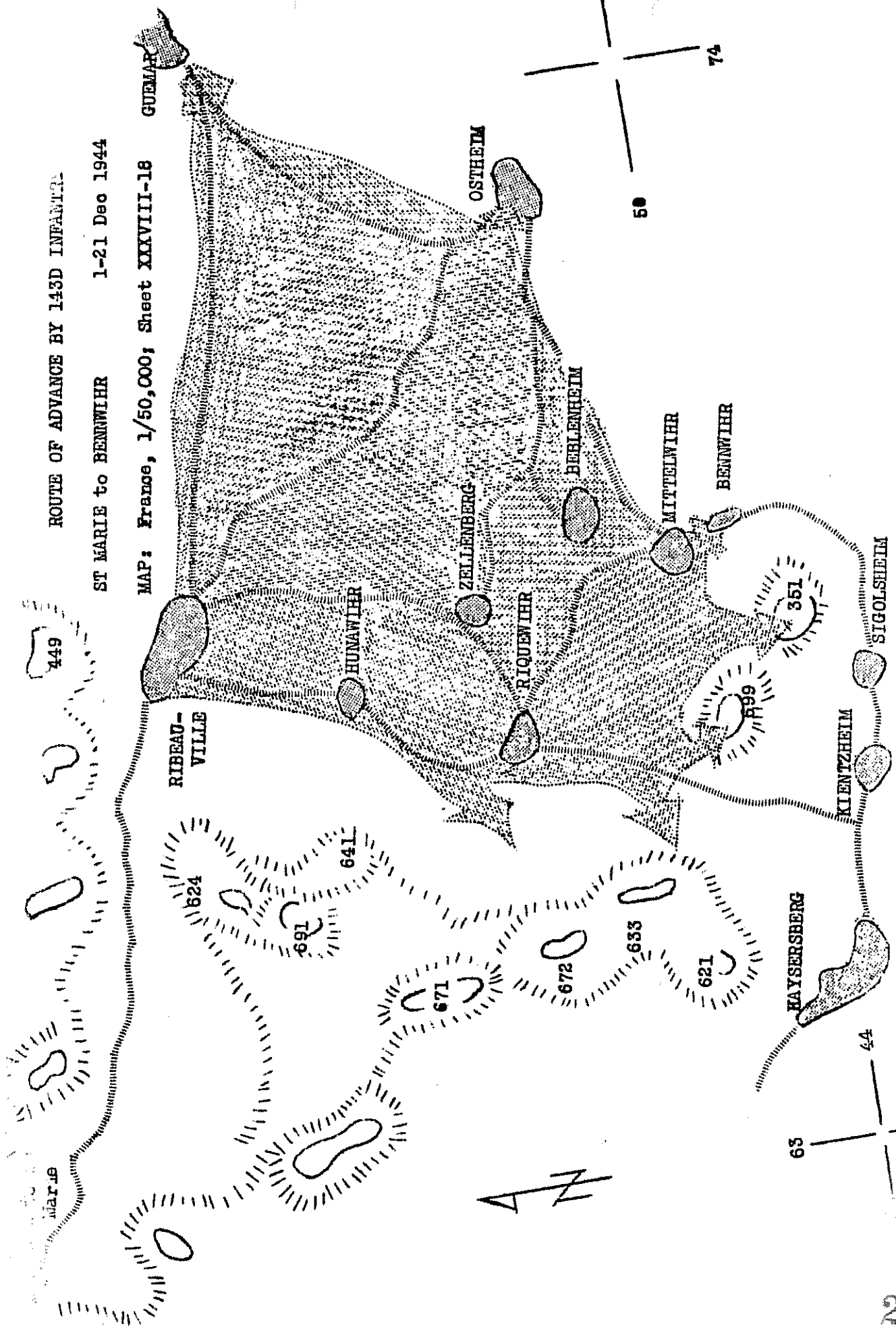
ROUTE OF ADVANCE BY 143D INFANTRY

ST MARIE to BENNWIHR

1-21 Dec 1944

MAP: France, 1/50,000; Sheet XXXVIII-18

GUENAR



BATTALION COMMANDERS, 1 to 31 DECEMBER 1944

FIRST BATTALION

Quazior, David M.
December 1 to 20
Clarkin, Thomas R.
December 21 to 31

Lt Col 0-222230

Houston, Texas

Lt Col 0-19983

St. Paul, Minnesota

SECOND BATTALION

Bowden, Marion P.

Major 0-407022

Belton, Texas

THIRD BATTALION

Andrews, Theodore H.

Lt Col 0-365318

Caldwell, Texas

COMPANY COMMANDERS, 1 to 31 DECEMBER 1944

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Claghorn, Rufus J.

Captain 0-411677

Waco, Texas

SERVICE COMPANY

Parish, Joe P.

Captain 0-406965

Huntsville, Texas

ANTI-TANK COMPANY

Winnis, Wilfred A.

1st Lt 0-1312436

El Cerrito, California

CANNON COMPANY

Stem, Wiley W.

Captain 0-406991

Waco, Texas

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B.

Major 0-345134

Camden, New Jersey

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 1ST BATTALION

Burrage, Richard H.

Captain 0-407025

Waco, Texas

COMPANY A

Dashner, Richard W. December 1 to 8	Captain	0-422625	Waco, Texas
Reilly, Clement C. December 9	1st Lt	0-444932	Bronx, New York
Roche, Thomas K. December 10 to 11 December 15 to 28	1st Lt	0-1310763	Bridgeport, Connecticut
Frost, Albert G. December 12 to 14	1st Lt	0-1307533	Woodbury, New Jersey
Birkhead, Tom P. December 29 to 31	Captain	0-407625	Waco, Texas

COMPANY B

Larson, Peter NMH December 1 to 27	1st Lt	0-384739	Omaha, Nebraska
Chambers, George E. December 28 to 31	Captain	0-373577	Milwaukee, Wisconsin

COMPANY C

Simmons, Allen E. December 1	Captain	0-1293664	Belfast, Maine
Costilla, Fred NMH December 2 to 11	2nd Lt	0-1998721	Deaumont, Texas
Cox, O'Dean T. December 12 to 31	1st Lt	0-2055220	Waco, Texas

COMPANY D

Goad, Roy D.	Captain	0-407196	Temple, Texas
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 2ND BATTALION

Mitchell, Cecil L.	1st Lt	0-1306742	Defiance, Ohio
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COMPANY E

Sullivan, Howard J. December 1 to 2 December 8 to 28	1st Lt	0-1303410	Rochester, New York
Johnston, John R. December 3 to 7	1st Lt	0-1305782	Montebello, California
Larson, Peter NMH December 29 to 31	1st Lt	0-384739	Omaha, Nebraska

COMPANY F

King, Hiram I. December 1 to 18	1st Lt 0-1285603	Aberdeen, South Dakota
Hughes, Nathan A. December 19 to 29	1st Lt 0-1318671	Brooksville, Kentucky
Brigold, Frank A. December 30 to 31	Captain 0-311346	Chicago, Illinois

COMPANY G

Anderson, Eric C. December 1 to 8	Captain 0-391181	Bozeman, Montana
December 11 to 14		
Grousset, Richard J. December 9 to 10	1st Lt 0-1304203	New York, New York
Zink, Edward C. December 15 to 31	1st Lt 0-1294584	Detroit, Michigan

COMPANY H

Hanrahan, David J. December 1 to 10	Captain 0-1289077	Bronx, New York
Spencer, Robert F. December 11 to 31	1st Lt 0-1298148	Charlestown, Indiana

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY 3RD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L. Jr.	Captain 0-1289026	Fort Myer, Virginia
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COMPANY I

Lewitz, Edward R. December 1 to 2	Captain 0-1306863	St. Louis, Missouri
December 30 to 31		
Hancock, Harold R. December 3 to 29	1st Lt 0-1294470	Dallas, Texas

COMPANY K

Ball, Elwood H. December 1 to 4	1st Lt 0-1296974	Battle Creek, Michigan
Norris, William F. Jr. December 5 to 31	Captain 0-365619	Newton, Georgia

COMPANY L

Reuland, Richard M. December 1 to 6	1st Lt	O-480406	Aurora, Illinois
Mesner, Peter W. December 7 and 15	1st Lt	O-1313433	Cleveland Heights, Ohio
Rand, Henry D. Jr. December 8 to 14	1st Lt	O-1316087	Painesville, Ohio
Robertson, Zerk O. December 16 to 18	Captain	O-2055839	Iskell, Texas
Black, William B. December 19 to 31	Captain	O-327444	Hot Springs, New Mexico

COMPANY M

Hand, Robert NMI	Captain	O-1289075	Seattle, Washington
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17TH INFANTRY DIVISION

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO #36, U. S. Army
OPERATIONS IN FRANCE
JANUARY 1945

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION


APO #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

JANUARY 1945

CONCLUSIONS OF REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

Moral spirit, physical well being and fighting capability of a regiment depend greatly on proper rest away from an active fighting front. A rested regiment has two or three times the fighting capability of a tired one.


CHARLES J. DENHOLM
Lt Col, 143rd Infantry
Commanding

FOREWORD

Some officers and men in various echelons of command in combat will say that actually the real story of operations will never be told, or that the prime substance of the story lays deep beneath the surface of what seems to go on during an operation.

We do know that the nearest one gets to realizing and knowing the story, is from reading the Unit Journal. The Unit Journal comes closest in showing through operations orders, instructions and memoranda, operation phone calls between Command Posts, messages sent and received, conversations between staff and command officers, the true "picture" of what goes on during an operation. It shows the beginning, the action, the various phases, the finish and the results of the operation.

The story the Unit Journal tells is not actually what one could call a "Unit History". While the basic actions are covered in the Unit Journal, the History is not told completely.

This, being the Unit History, must then needs be a complete story to tell not only what basically went on during the month, but perhaps that too which lays beneath the surface. It should then contain the feeling of the troops, the emotions involved and evolving in and about the Regiment. Also, the position of the Regiment in relation to the "Big Picture" of European theatre operations.

It is the purpose of this Historian to show by this "Unit History" what is stated above.

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

1945 - a new year was again here. The turn of the year found the 143rd Infantry Regiment in bivouac at CIREY, FRANCE (V-415979) and environs.

A much needed training period, rest from combat, refitting and reorganization was taking place. Actually, no one could dispute the right for, and need of, this period after having been engaged with the enemy for some one hundred and thirty-three days (15 August 1944 to 25-26 December 1944). During that period, the Regiment suffered some two thousand five hundred and nineteen casualties, received approximately one thousand one hundred and sixty-two reinforcements, and participated in such actions as the invasion of Southern FRANCE, the pursuit of the Germans up the RHONE VALLEY, the forcing of the crossing of the MEURTHE RIVER and entry through the BON HOMME PASS of the VOSGES MOUNTAINS, and the vicious fighting in support of the First French Army near RIBEAUVILLE, MITTELWIHR, BENNWIHR and KAYSERSBERG.

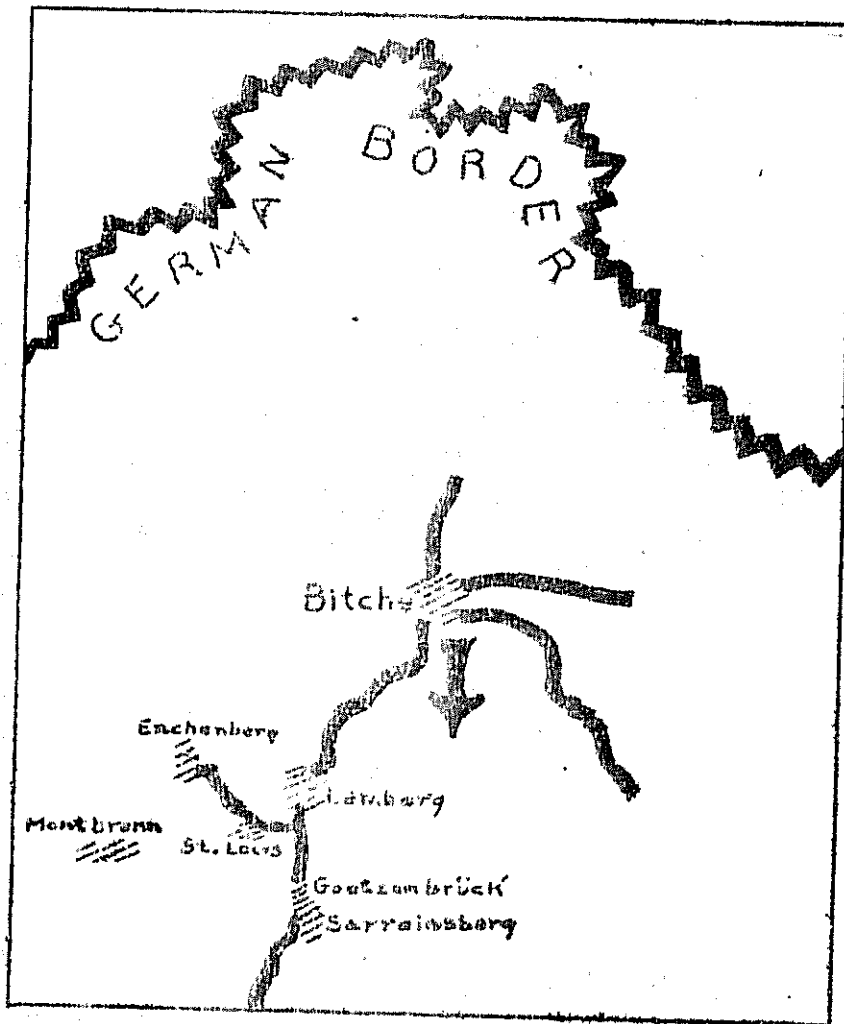
The members of the 143rd Infantry Regiment on welcoming the New Year could proudly and justly say that they were members of a Regiment and Division that had made, and no doubt would yet make, everlasting history in this war in relation to the important operations necessary for our ultimate victory.

The period 1-3 January 1945 was spent in intensive training, preparing for whatever the Supreme Commander had in store for us. As Major General JOHN E. DAHLQUIST, our Division Commander, said, "Wherever there is a tough job to do, the 36th Infantry Division will be called on to do it".

The situation up north in the American First Army sector was at this time still threatening. The Germans, perhaps in an endeavor to keep the Allied Armies from rushing many troops up to this sector from other points along the line, to keep them occupied and to try and find weak spots, pushed elements of the American Seventh Army off German soil and threatened the BITCHE area (Q-7750). The GOETZENBRUCK sector (Q-7442) on 3 January 1945 was being pressed hard by the enemy.

On 031215 January 1945, the Regiment was ordered to effect a previously designated alert plan. On 031400 January 1945, quartering parties of the

U. S. GOVERNMENT



0 5 miles 10 miles

Road Map
Europe Sheet #37
Scale
1/200,000

LEGEND	
	German direction of Attack

Regiment went forward to an assembly area in the vicinity of MONTEBRONN (Q-6844). The Regiment closed in during the early hours of 4 January 1945 with all battalions bivouaced in the vicinity of MONTEBRONN, FRANCE. The cold was bitter and the snow heavy on the ground. There was an inadequate supply of houses to billet the troops. The battalions vigorously dug shelters for the men in the hard, snow covered ground. Morale was high and good health was evidenced by the small number of personnel evacuated because of respiratory diseases and exposure.

The Division Commander's plan on 4 January 1945 was to prepare for offensive action in sector - right flank XV Corps. 141 RCT was under control of the 100th Infantry Division having moved into the sector ST. LOUIS (Q-7243) several days earlier to strengthen the flank of XV Corps. 142 RCT moved one battalion in the vicinity of ST. LOUIS and prepared to attack in 141 RCT sector to restore enemy penetrations in that sector. Our Regiment was to initiate immediate reconnaissance forward to 141 RCT positions, sector LEIBERG - LAIBACH, in preparation to attack east in that sector on order of the Division Commander in conjunction with attack of 142 RCT on right. The enemy was known to have approximately four battalions of one thousand two hundred men in the area of contemplated action. The LEIBERG area was receiving heavy enemy artillery fire during this period. The enemy at this time had United States Army planes they had captured somehow and, with our markings left on, were strafing our positions lightly.

The Regiment commenced training in preparation for the impending tactical commitment. Heavy snow and cold in no way impeded the preparations being made and the intensive training undergone.

During the night 5-6 January 1945, the 141 RCT was relieved in position by the 142 RCT whose mission was the continuation of the strengthening of the sector LEIBERG - GOETZENBUCK.

It was believed that perhaps the enemy might attack from BITCHE, probably with the mission of closing the SAVERNE GAP or attack to the southeast to clear the RHINE VALLEY and isolate a part of the Seventh Army. Small counter-attacks against the Division positions on 4 January 1945 seemed to show a preliminary for a large attack or limited objective attacks to gain key terrain features preventing movement of our reserves. Elements of the German 477th Regiment, 21st Panzer Division, 25th Panzer Grenadier Division, and 245th Infantry Division were known to be in the Division sector.

The period 5-9 January 1945 was spent in training and the improving of shelters. The Regiment remained in the vicinity of MONTEBRONN.

During the night 9-10 January 1945, 143 RCT relieved the 142 RCT in position. The First Battalion occupied the right of the Regiment in positions, vicinity of GOETZENBRUCK; the Third Battalion, plus Company F, the left of the Regiment in positions, vicinity of LEMBERG (Q-7345). The Second Battalion, less Company F, remained in Regimental reserve occupying positions in the vicinity of ENCHENBERG (Q-7446). The Second Battalion's mission as reserve was to set up a secondary defensive line.

On 092205 January 1945, the Commanding Officer, 142nd Infantry Regiment notified Lieutenant Colonel CHARLES J. DEMHOLM, O-21293, of Poughkeepsie, New York, our Regimental Commander, that relief had been completed. After the relief had been completed the companies started vigorous patrolling for the night to consolidate the defensive positions of the Regiment.

The Regimental sector remained undisturbed the night of 9-10 January 1945 except for harassing artillery fire. The morning of 10 January 1945, at approximately 0600 and 0700 hours, the enemy layed a mortar barrage on Company A and attacked in approximate strength of thirty-five men from the northeast. The attack was repulsed inflicting four to six enemy casualties.

Patrols were sent out during the day of 10 January 1945 and defensive fires were registered.

At 101555 January 1945, the Regimental Commander instructed Lieutenant Colonel THOMAS R. CLARKIN, O-19983, of St. Paul, Minnesota, Commanding Officer, First Battalion, that the next day the defensive area would extend in boundary GOETZENBRUCK (Q-7442) - SARREINSEBERG (Q-7441) and that the Antitank Company would be attached to his Battalion for the purpose of helping to cover this front.

Later in the afternoon of 10 January 1945, enemy patrols were encountered and scared off. Companies A and I sent out strong combat patrols to contact the enemy and to determine his strength. During the night of 10-11 January 1945, vigorous patrolling took place and the enemy shelled LEMBERG with harassing fire.

During the morning of 11 January 1945, the Antitank Company, commanded by Captain HARRY C. STAKES, O-407590, of Huntsville, Texas, effected the relief of the Second Battalion, 179th Infantry Regiment on the right of our First Battalion. Relief was completed at 111300 January 1945.

All during the day 11 January 1945, the enemy continued to harass our forward areas with light and medium artillery decreasing as the day went on. The Third Battalion harassed enemy positions with combat patrols and drove off enemy patrols approaching our positions. The enemy was known and seen to be digging in to our front.

There was no doubt that the primary threat in the BITCHE area had been thwarted by the strengthening of the line by elements of our Division. The Division Commander used the Regiments sparingly by committing only one at a time, keeping the others in a high state of readiness and training, thereby having sufficient reserves for whatever occurred. This also gave each Regiment an opportunity to gain rest from combat and maintain complete readiness for commitment.

On 111900 January 1945, the Third Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel THEODORE H. ANDREWS, O-365318, of Caldwell, Texas, successfully pulled off a Chinese attack. The area in vicinity of LEMBERG was heavily shelled by the enemy at the same time. It was evident that the Germans did know our positions but were confused as to our strength and intended actions.

On 12 January 1945, the Division plan received was for our Regiment to be relieved in position by the 141 RCT on the night of 13-14 January 1945. In the meanwhile, 12 January 1945 was generally quiet. Reconnaissance and combat patrols were sent out during the day and night. Enemy patrols were met but were scared off. The enemy was digging in to our front and their actions were generally on the defensive rather than offensive as initially when the Division moved into the BITCHE sector. The only action received from the enemy was medium artillery occasionally shelling the LEMBERG and SARREINSBERG areas heavily.

In the early morning hours of 13 January 1945, aggressive combat patrols were active. A nine man Company F patrol took two prisoners from an enemy machine gun position. Otherwise the night 12-13 January 1945 was quiet. The day 13 January 1945 was spent in preparation of the impending relief of the Regiment by 141 RCT that night. At 132025 January 1945 the Regimental Commander alerted the Second Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel MARION P. BOWEN, O-407022, of Belton, Texas, for one-half hour notice. It had been reported that Germans had dropped one hundred or more paratroopers in the vicinity of ITCH-WILLER (Q-590365). The alert was called off by the Division G-3 one hour later as it had not been definitely ascertained as to whether there were any enemy paratroopers behind our lines. The relief of our Regiment by 141 RCT was completed on 132142 January 1945.

The First Battalion took up bivouac in ST. LOUIS de BITCHE (Q-7243) and commenced training. The Second Battalion took up bivouac in VOLKSBERG (Q-6738), and the Third Battalion in RATZWEILLER (Q-6339). The Regimental Command Post stayed in MONTBRONN.

The Regiment, less the First Battalion, spent the period 14-17 January 1945 organizing and digging "Switch Positions" in the vicinity of their bivouac areas. The First Battalion conducted training and was prepared for commitment in the

141 RCT area. For that reason, the First Battalion was attached to the 141 RCT on 171130 January 1945 by the Division Commander. The sector was quiet; however, the First Battalion constituted a reserve in the sector that was able and ready at all times should the situation warrant it.

In the meantime, the enemy had strengthened his bridgehead above STRASBOURG. It was believed that their push in that area perhaps had the intent of cutting off the troops in the southern sector of the Seventh Army by pushing hard through the HAGUEBAU - BISCHWILLER - WEYERSHEIM sector to the SAVERNE GAP. The enemy had continued to place more reserves in the bridgehead and on 18 January 1945 they were massing troops on this side of the RHINE to possibly make a large attack.

Once again our Regiment was needed to strengthen a weak line. The Regiment moved to an assembly area vicinity NIEDERSCHAEFFOLSHEIM (R-0019) - BATZENDORF (Q-9720) - WITTERSHEIM (Q-9420) on 18 January 1945 and reverted to VI Corps control.

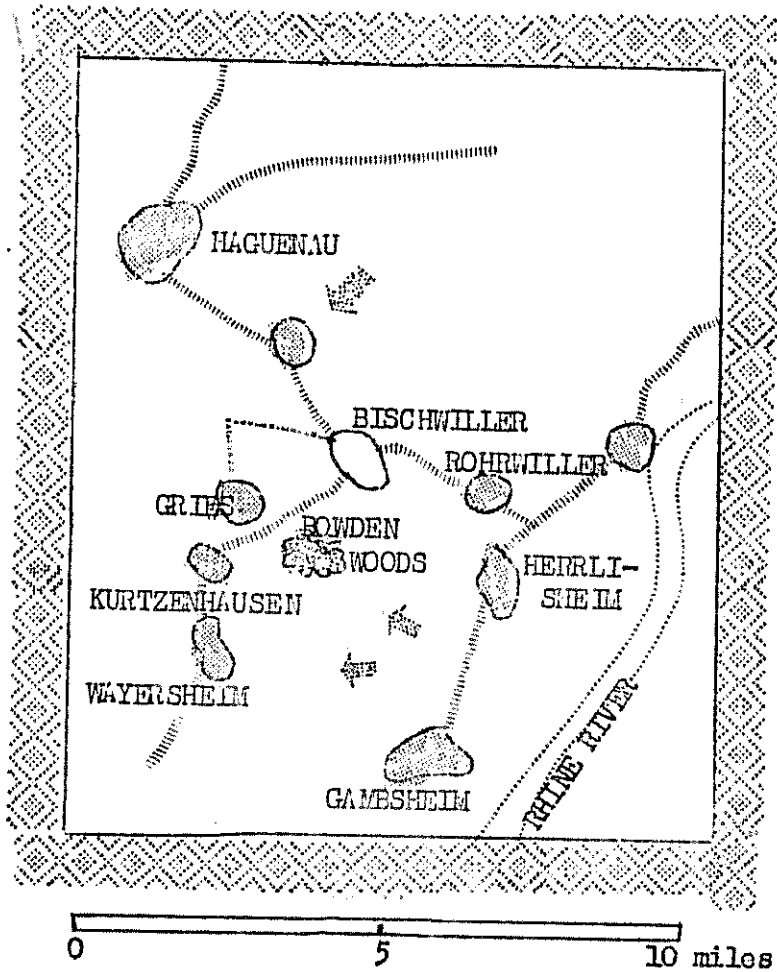
The Regiment didn't stay in an assembly area very long. The situation in the ROHRWILLER (R-1217) - WEYERSHEIM (R-0513) area was serious. The enemy was pushing our line hard and it was wavering. On 182345 January 1945, the Second Battalion and Cannon Company were ordered to move to BISCHWILLER (R-0918) to outpost the town and to prepare to reinforce the 12th Armored Division. The rest of the Regiment was alerted to move forward on orders.

The Second Battalion moved out during the early hours of 19 January 1945 and took up positions as ordered.

The leading elements of the remainder of the Regiment left the assembly area on 191330 January 1945 with the plan to move into BISCHWILLER in a forward assembly in preparation of strengthening the line.

Prisoners captured by other VI Corps units on that day told stories of impending attacks by the Germans on a large scale. With this in view, our Regiment was diverted in its movement into BISCHWILLER to take up positions from ROHRWILLER to WEYERSHEIM for occupation of strong defensive positions. The 753rd Tank Battalion and 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached to the Regiment for this mission.


The Regimental Commander gave his order of battle to all officers concerned in the early afternoon of 19 January 1945, from the Regimental Command Post in BISCHWILLER. The orders were given while the troops were in movement from the old assembly area. The plan was to put our entire Regiment, with one company from each battalion in reserve, into positions before dark. Elements



ROAD MAP

EUROPE SHEET #87

SCALE: 1/200,000

LEGEND
 German direction of attack

of the 79th Infantry Division and 12th Armored Division were presently occupying them. The First Battalion was to hold a line covering the town of ROHRVILLER with the mission of keeping the Germans from access to the road leading into BISCHVILLER. The provisional Fourth Battalion, commanded by Major WILLIAM R. LYNCH, JR., O-384058, of Huntsville, Texas, went into position along the right of the First Battalion; the Second Battalion along the line of woods to the right of the Fourth Battalion, with the Third Battalion covering the remainder of the front to include WEYERSHEIM. The front was generally along a canal. For the most part, the men would be out in the open, the terrain being flat. The Regiment was the only Division element committed in this operation and was the Corps' right southern flank.

The Division Commander's order was to establish a main line of resistance in this position and to stop all infantry following up any group of tanks. German tanks were known to be in groups of ten and twenty (approximately) and approaching ROHRVILLER, the center of our sector, and WEYERSHEIM from enemy assembly areas in HERRLISHEIM (R-1214) and GAMBESHEIM (R-1110) and vicinity of OFFENDORF (R-1312).

That night all positions were consolidated and strengthened. Company C, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, had dug in tank destroyer positions southeast of WEYERSHEIM reinforcing antitank defenses and had several tank destroyers in the woods with the Second Battalion, approximately the center of our sector.

On 200400 January 1945, the Germans attacked Companies E and G positions with a strength of approximately one hundred and fifty men. Twenty-seven Germans were killed by Second Battalion machine guns, four captured, and the rest scared off. The enemy, expecting to find cover in the woods occupied by the Second Battalion, found only strong positions and grazing fire bearing down on them. Because of its center of activity in this sector, this woods was later named as the "Bowden Woods". It was the scene of the Second Battalion's determination to hold the enemy off at all costs.

The remainder of the early morning of 20 January 1945 was quiet. All defensive fires of our supporting artillery, tanks, tank destroyers and small arms weapons were zeroed in. It was believed that within the next forty-eight hours the sector would be the recipient of a large enemy attack. Our Observation Posts were reporting great enemy activity with tanks and track vehicles. Prisoners of war, when questioned, stated that a large attack was planned and would occur shortly. The morale of the troops was high. The snow was heavy on the ground and at times visibility was very limited. Again our troops were fighting under the most difficult conditions with the elements a detriment to the operation.

On 201700 January 1945, the Regimental Command Post moved from BISCHWILLER and opened in GRDES (R-0617). The Regimental sector was generally quiet that day. Our supporting artillery was largely responsible for knocking out enemy tanks in our sector.

Later in the night, enemy infantry attempted to penetrate through the left flank of Company L and succeeded in somewhat bending the left flank of the Third Battalion. However, Company L succeeded in clearing the enemy off of the position. At the same time Company G received a penetration of enemy in the woods on the left flank of the Second Battalion. The enemy was cleaned out quickly and eleven prisoners were taken.

It was apparent that the enemy was now "feeling us out". More of their reserves were known to be entering their bridgehead. Above our sector, the HAGUENAU - BISCHWILLER line was subjected to heavy enemy artillery and small attacks by the Germans. A total of six enemy divisions were identified in the bridgehead. The activity south of our sector was light. The French were conducting strong patrols to their front.

Early in the morning of 21 January 1945, the enemy, trying to gain cover by the darkness, infiltrated our positions in the "Bowden Woods". Cannon Company mounts were brought up and fired at the Germans. The enemy was not cleared of the woods. Later the entire Second Battalion was engaged by enemy infantry trying to penetrate the Second Battalion positions. Enemy tanks were brought up to reinforce the German infantry. The Second Battalion fought fiercely and nobly to clear the woods. At the same time enemy tanks overran the left flank of the Third Battalion in Company L position. A total of eight enemy tanks penetrated the position and fired directly into them. The enemy was trying hard to break our line.

Company A was then ordered to occupy Company K defensive positions, thereby relieving Company K to reinforce Company L and attack to restore Company L positions overrun by the tanks. In the meanwhile, a company of light tanks was ordered to move from the Third Battalion area and one company of medium tanks in Second Battalion sector ordered to move south, thus placing enemy tanks in the center. As Companies F and G continued their valiant fight to hold their positions and clear the woods, Company E was ordered to attack to relieve the pressure in their Battalion sector. On 211435 January 1945, Companies F and G sectors were reported clear of the enemy and Company E continued the attack to the north. The result of the Second Battalion engagement in "Bowden Woods" netted one hundred and sixty-three prisoners, sixty known dead in front of their positions and the capture of numerous valuable documents of enemy orders, strength and general information.

UNCLASSIFIED

The fight on the Third Battalion left flank continued on in the afternoon. Tank destroyer fire knocked out four enemy tanks (Mark IV's) and forced the remainder to withdraw. Company K had attacked in the Company L sector on 211947 January 1945 and retaken the former Company L positions.

The enemy had tried hard to penetrate our lines; however, a determined opposition and vigorous fighting of our Second and Third Battalions reinforced with tanks and tank destroyers had completely thwarted and repulsed the attack.

Relief by the 142 RCT was then effected by 220100 January 1945 and our battalions, after having successfully occupied a previously shaky line and repulsed a strong determined enemy attack, withdrew to assembly areas, vicinity GRIES (R-0617) and GEUDERTHEIM (R-0113), to train and prepare for their next mission.

Beginning 23 January 1945, our Regiment began the organization of a Regimental reserve line that would cover a sector through KURTZENHAUSEN to WEYERSHEIM. Those not engaged undertook intensive training.

At this time the Regiment received approximately three hundred and sixty-two reinforcements. It had been over three months since the Regiment had been given this opportunity to refill its depleted ranks. The Regimental Commander's plan for these reinforcements was to give them a thorough training in battle indoctrination. A reinforcement school was set up under the supervision of Captain RUFUS J. CLEGHORN, O-411677, of Waco, Texas, to prepare these men for combat duty.

So far the battle and non-battle losses for January had been comparatively light. Morale was high in spite of adverse weather conditions.

The enemy had tried hard to crack the BISCHWILLER - WEYERSHEIM line but had failed because of our strength. The enemy 10th SS Division featured mainly in their attack. Not being successful in our sector they next attempted to crack the HAGUENAU - BISCHWILLER line above us. The same results were obtained - nothing. The defense against the German bridgehead across the RHINE was now solid. Intelligence information reported that perhaps one more large attempt would be made by the Germans to widen their bridgehead. However, at this time the Russians started their large offensive on the Eastern Front and enemy attempts to penetrate our lines on a large scale were believed not probable.

On 232120 January 1945, our Third Battalion had relieved the Second Battalion, 142 RCT, in the WEYERSHEIM sector. The 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance

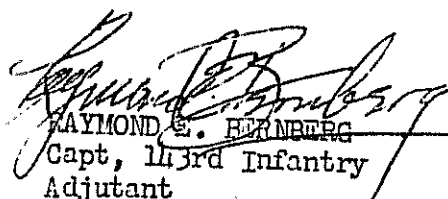
Squadron was attached to help strengthen the position. The 142 RCT was on our left covering the line to BISCHVILLER. No enemy activity occurred during this period. The remainder of the Regiment carried on training and organization of switch positions designated. Our Fourth Battalion remained in the position that had been occupied by them since the beginning of the operation in this sector.

The engineers continued to lay mines and blow bridge in appropriate areas of our sector to strengthen the almost impregnable line our Division had already built. It was now believed that any further attacks in our sector would not occur. The French had come up from the south and had taken KILSTETT. They also had captured a number of prisoners in the GAMBSHEIM area.

From 26 January 1945 to the end of the month our Regiment, in conjunction with the 142 RCT, controlled the BISCHVILLER - WEYERSHEIM sector. Our battalions continued to train, organize switch positions, and relieved battalions of 142 RCT giving both Regiments continuous activity on the line plus time off the line for rest from combat. Vigorous patrolling occurred in an attempt to determine enemy strength in GAMBSHEIM, OFFENDORF, HERRLISHEIM, and ROHRWILLER.

It was now becoming evident that we were in the best position to take the offensive. Large reserves were in back of us prepared to follow us up. The enemy's strength had diminished by large losses of men captured and dead in the Corps sector. It was on this note that the month's activities ended.

In résumé, it is noted that the month of January for our Regiment was light in losses, both battle and non-battle. We had not been given our full opportunity to train and reorganize after one of the longest periods of fighting any regiment in the United States Army had seen. Yet we were called on and fulfilled the mission to stave off two serious threats, one in the XV Corps sector - BITCHE area, and one in the VI Corps sector - BISCHVILLER - WEYERSHEIM area. Once again our Regiment had figured mainly and nobly in operations in the European Theatre of Operations, vital in the eventual destruction of the German Army.


RAYMOND E. BERNBERG
Capt, 143rd Infantry
Adjutant

COMPANY F

Merigold, Frank A.
January 1 to 7
January 15 to 31
Streichor, Wilhelm
January 8 to 14

Captain O-311346

Chicago, Illinois

1st Lt O-380653

Seagoville, Texas

COMPANY G

Zink, Edward C.

1st Lt O-1294584

Detroit, Michigan

COMPANY H

Spencer, Robert F.

1st Lt O-1298148

Charlestown, Indiana

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY THIRD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L. Jr.

Captain O-1289026

Fort Myer, Virginia

COMPANY I

Iewitz, Edward R.
January 1
Hancock, Harold R.
January 2 to 31

Captain O-1306863

St. Louis, Missouri

1st Lt O-1294470

Dallas, Texas

COMPANY K

Norris, William F. Jr.
January 1 to 21
Reynolds, Donald T.
January 22 to 25
Anderson, Eric C.
January 26 to 31

Captain O-365619

Newton, Georgia

1st Lt O-354648

Pueblo, Colorado

Captain O-391181

Bozeman, Montana

COMPANY L

Black, William B.
January 1 to 21
Stearns, Clarence C.
January 22 to 31

Captain O-327444

Hot Springs, New Mexico

1st Lt O-1318839

Newark, New Jersey

COMPANY M

Hank, Robert M.

Captain O-1289075

Seattle, Washington

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

APO #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

FEBRUARY 1945

BATTALION COMMANDERS, 1 to 31 JANUARY 1945

FIRST BATTALION

Clarkin, Thomas R.	Lt Col O-19983	St. Paul, Minnesota
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SECOND BATTALION

Bowden, Marion P.	Lt Col O-407022	Belton, Texas
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THIRD BATTALION

Andrews, Theodore H.	Lt Col O-365318	Caldwell, Texas
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PROVISIONAL FOURTH BATTALION

Lynch, William R. Jr.	Major O-384058	Huntsville, Texas
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COMPANY COMMANDERS, 1 to 31 JANUARY 1945

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Cleghorn, Rufus J.	Captain O-411677	Waco, Texas
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SERVICE COMPANY

Parish, Joe P.	Captain O-406965	Huntsville, Texas
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ANTI-TANK COMPANY

Stakes, Harry C.	Captain O-407590	Huntsville, Texas
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CANNON COMPANY

Stem, Wiley W.	Captain O-406991	Waco, Texas
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January 1 to 16

Brinkley, James O.

January 17 to 31

1st Lt O-1683427	Waco, Texas
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MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B.	Major O-345134	Camden, New Jersey
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY FIRST BATTALION

Burrage, Richard H. Captain O-407025 Waco, Texas

COMPANY A

Birkhead, Tom P. Captain O-407625 Waco, Texas

COMPANY B

Chambers, George E. Captain O-373577 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

COMPANY C

Cox, O'Dean T.
January 1 to 15 1st Lt O-2055220 Waco, Texas
Simmons, Allen E.
January 16 to 31 Captain O-1293664 Belfast, Maine

COMPANY D

Goad, Roy D. Captain O-407196 Temple, Texas

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY SECOND BATTALION

Mitchell, Cecil L.
January 1 to 3 Captain O-1306742 Defiance, Ohio
January 8 to 31

Hunn, Walter L.
January 4 to 7 1st Lt O-482727 Chillicothe, Ohio

COMPANY E

Larson, Peter MMI
January 1 to 8 1st Lt O-384739 Omaha, Nebraska
January 26 to 31

Sullivan, Howard J.
January 9 to 10 1st Lt O-1303410 Rochester, New York

Lindstrom, John K.
January 11 to 25 1st Lt O-1304750 North Walpole, New Hampshire

RESTRICTED

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

February operations were a result of the consolidation of strength of positions made the latter part of January. The elements had made fighting conditions very severe during January and it seemed as if February would be no different as far as weather conditions were concerned. The BISCHWILLER-WEYERSHEIM Line had been strengthened and consolidated. The Germans had been prevented from increasing their bridgehead across the RHINE River. The enemy's large attack had been repulsed and conditions were such that indicated that we would now take the offensive, not the defensive.

The 79th Infantry Division was on the Division's left flank holding the HAGUENAU Line, and the 3rd DIA French Division was now occupying GAMBSHEIM on our right and were patrolling the STEINWALD Woods.

On 1 February, our Regiment was in assembly positions vicinity of GUDERTHEIM-BISCHWILLER. With the mission in mind to clear the Germans entirely out of the bridgehead, the Division Commander's orders for our Regiment were to attack on the right of the Division and clear all enemy resistance west of the RHINE River in our zone of action. The operation was to be for the night of 2-3 February 1945. The 1st Battalion was initially to attack ROHRWILLER and secure it; the 2nd Battalion initially to attack on the right of the 1st Battalion and seize road and railroad junction R-136160. The 3rd Battalion was to remain in Regimental reserve. The 4th Provisional Battalion had one company organizing for antitank defense and the remainder was also in reserve.

The 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, attacked simultaneously on the left of our 1st Battalion to seize positions north of ROHRWILLER.

The attack started approximately at 1900 hours, 2 February 1945, and by 0400, the following morning, the objectives were reached. However, the operation encountered difficulty due to weather conditions. It warmed up, thereby melting the snow, and the flooded streams and roads restricted the employment of armor, reducing the combat efficiency of our Regiment considerably. It had been hoped to completely secure all the ground to the RHINE at this time. Had it been possible to reinforce the 2nd Battalion with tanks this could have been possible. However, the flooded streams and ground made it impossible for armor to move out across the open fields.

On the night of 4 February 1945, the Regiment continued to hold ROHRWILLER and pressed southeast of ROHRWILLER. The Regiment prepared to attack and clean up any resistance west of the RHINE River in our zone of action. The 1st Battalion was relieved by the 4th Battalion with Company A attached.

CONCLUSIONS OF REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

The Regiment after some respite from heavy combat recovered some of its lost spirit. To reach high level of moral success in combat, continuous training and resting of at least three weeks are needed by any unit.

Charles J. Denholm

CHARLES J. DENHOLM
Lt Col., 143d Infantry
Commanding

as their reserve. The 2nd Battalion having moved back to BISCHWILLER remained in assembly positions. The 3rd Battalion remained in assembly area in BISCHWILLER, minus Company I. Company I maintained and defended the bridges after the 2nd Battalion's withdrawal. Except for enemy shelling of forward and rear areas, the combat area was comparatively quiet. Our engineers at this time were continuously maintaining the roads and bridges.

During the period 5-6 February our defensive positions were maintained by active patrols. A patrol to HERRLISHEIM reported the town clear. Company A and a platoon from Company L occupied the town on 060405 February and captured two prisoners of war. The town of HERRLISHEIM was left heavily mined and booby trapped by the enemy. It seemed that the enemy had departed from HERRLISHEIM and moved up to DRUSENHEIM. Our 1st Battalion then moved forward, occupied HERRLISHEIM and relieved elements of the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron at OFFENDORF. The 3rd Battalion relieved the 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, taking up the defense of ROHRWILLER and blocking all enemy approaches. The remainder of the RCT was in reserve.

Patrols were sent into DRUSENHEIM but were forced to withdraw because of enemy small arms and self-propelled fire. Patrols were sent into the woods along the river and met no contact with the enemy. They were restricted to roads due to flooded streams and lowlands.

The operation to clear the Germans along the RHINE River and completely destroying the bridgehead south of DRUSENHEIM could have been accomplished completely the first day of the attack had the weather conditions permitted the use of armor. Our Regiment was now accomplishing its mission slowly because of detrimental weather conditions.

By the afternoon of 7 February our 1st Battalion reinforced, had established outposts in the woods along the RHINE and was maintaining mixed outposts with the 3rd DIA French Division.

On the afternoon of 8 February the 1st Battalion with Company G attacked north in their sector to attempt to completely clear the woods along the west bank of the RHINE. Company A met some enemy resistance overcoming them by reducing pill boxes. Company G had garrisoned and outposted OFFENDORF.

Our 3rd Battalion maintained their positions and patrolled to the west edge of DRUSENHEIM. The patrols received enemy machine gun and rifle fire.

During the afternoon of 9 February our 1st Battalion continued their outposts along the RHINE and attacked to establish a line of departure for the 2nd Battalion's impending attack on DRUSENHEIM. Company A received heavy

fire from front and right flanks. 3rd Battalion maintained previously held positions and patrolled.

The Division Commander's order then was to attack with attachments and seize DRUSENHEIM and clear enemy from area west of the RHINE in our sector.

On the morning of 10 February, 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry, relieved Company G and Company B and all our outposts along the RHINE. Company C continued to attack to clear the woods and took three prisoners of war from a pill box at 166162 and inflicted a considerable number of casualties on the enemy. Company A was forced to withdraw the night of 9-10 February after attacking a heavily defended road block south of DRUSENHEIM. Throughout the night 9-10 February artillery fire was heavy on DRUSENHEIM.

At approximately 0500, 10 February, Company L attacked DRUSENHEIM from the west reaching the edge of the town where they encountered anti personnel mines and machine guns and numerous barbed wire entanglements. The Company withdrew after taking three prisoners of war. One Cannon Company M-8 mount was knocked out.

Our 2nd Battalion with Company E and Company G abreast jumped off approximately at 0600, 10 February. Company E moved forward aggressively seizing the first six houses on the edge of town against strong enemy resistance. They were subjected to heavy machine gun and artillery fire. Company G met resistance to their right flank. A strong road block on the south edge of DRUSENHEIM was encountered and was delaying our progress. Company E with marvelous courage and aggressiveness held their ground.

By noon, 10 February 1945, our 3rd Battalion started laying smoke in preparation to attack again. Company L had been forced to withdraw as the enemy placed heavy fire on these attacking elements. Company G tried to make progress against strong enemy resistance but were unable to do so. Company K attacked northwest of DRUSENHEIM, took 12 houses and 25 prisoners of war. They were well forward in their area when they were counter-attacked by tanks and infantry. They suffered many casualties because of this counter-attack and were forced to withdraw to previously held positions. Company G was unable to advance.

Our 1st and 3rd Battalions prepared to be relieved by the 141st Infantry on the night of 10-11 February and to move to areas vicinity BRUMATH-NEIDER-SCHAEFFOLSHEIM-WEITERUCH-BERNOLSHEIM, with the 2nd Battalion to follow later, and the Regiment to be in Division reserve. The 2nd Battalion was temporarily attached to the 141st Infantry. Relief was completed and the Regiment moved

off the line the night 10-11 February 1945 and into Division reserve. 2nd Battalion was relieved from control of 141st Infantry on the night of 11-12 February and moved to the rear to the Regimental training area.

The Regiment, had, in a heart breaking manner, destroyed the enemy RHINE River Bridgehead south of DRUSENHEIM. Fighting conditions were difficult. We had attacked DRUSENHEIM without success because the enemy stubbornly defended this well fortified town.

The men of the Regiment needed rest; they needed training. Fighting under conditions of heavy snow, bitter cold, and then flooded fields and overflowing rivers were not ideal fighting conditions. It was hoped that a sufficient amount of time could be spent off the front line to re-equip and train in preparation for future operations.

Our Battalions once again underwent vigorous small unit training. Numerous replacements were received, officers and enlisted men. Our ranks were again being filled.

The Russians had advanced considerably on the Eastern Front. In every man's heart was a hope that soon perhaps this war would end. The big picture up north began to look good as our armies there had started to move forward.

It cannot be said that morale was high. The months of January and February had been difficult.

Now that the weather had warmed up it was hoped that the flooded fields would dry, that fighting conditions would be more in our favor, and that armor could be employed to its full advantage.

The Regiment spent approximately six days at intensive training and was then ordered to relieve the 142nd Infantry, in positions, on the night of 15-16 February, vicinity BISCHWILLER-OBERHOFFEN. The enemy had withdrawn somewhat to the north but were strongly holding positions on the north outskirts of OBERHOFFEN when our 3rd Battalion moved in positions 15-16 February in OBERHOFFEN. Our mission was generally defensive with active patrolling to determine strength and location of enemy positions. The weather had become more favorable. Our forward areas were subjected to much artillery fire.

Our 4th Provisional Battalion had gone into position to the left of our 3rd Battalion, vicinity KALTENHOUSE. The 3rd Battalion took up the sector at

OBERHOFFEN with Company F in position on their right flank. Our 1st and 2nd Battalions, less Company F, remained in reserve conducting intensive small unit training. The only activity was that of patrols for the 16th and 17th of February.

We were once again on the defensive subjected to heavy enemy artillery fire. Mines were laid in front of our positions to strengthen antitank defense. The 141st Infantry was on our right; the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron on our left. OBERHOFFEN continued to receive the bulk of enemy artillery in the sector.

Throughout 18 and 19 February 1945, our Battalions held their sector and maintained contact with adjacent units. Patrolling to the front was very aggressive. OBERHOFFEN continued to receive considerable shelling. Our artillery started fires in enemy held CAMP D'OBERHOFFEN and DRUSENHEIM. The sector remained uneventful until the Regiment was ordered to shift its sector, vicinity HAGUENAU, being relieved by elements of the French 3rd DIA Division.

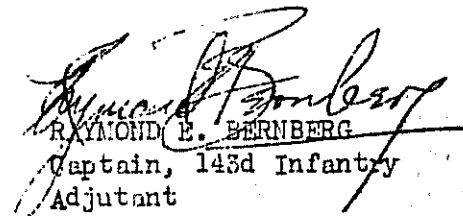
On 23 February, our 1st Battalion relieved the 506th Paratroop Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division in positions along the river in HAGUENAU. The 3rd and 4th Battalions moved in vicinity of HAGUENAU and engaged in training. The 2nd Battalion remained in BISCHWILLER and continued small unit training.

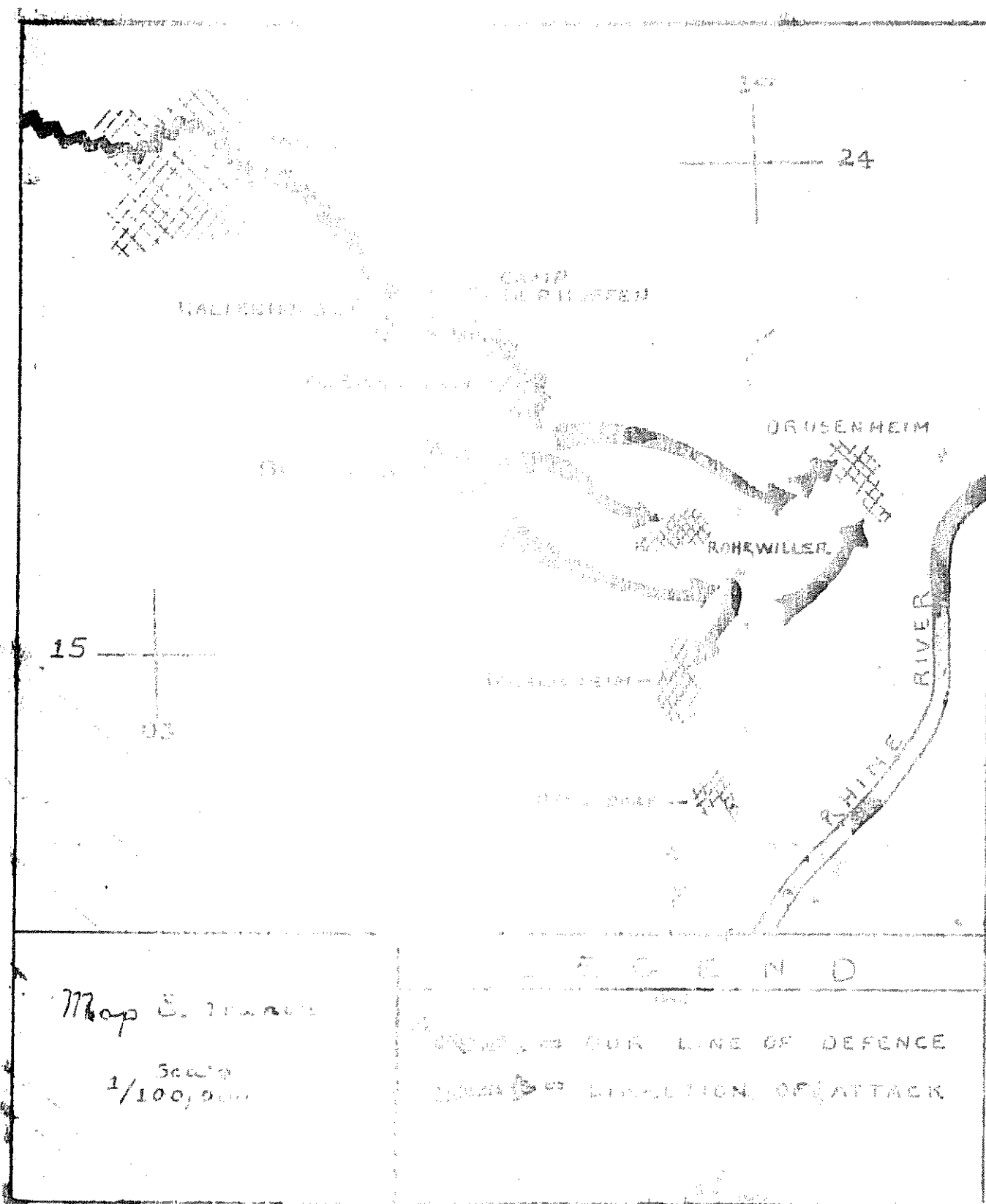
A German patrol attempted to cross the river on the night of 23-24 February in front of Company A; seven were taken, one killed. Enemy artillery shelled the HAGUENAU area continuously, however, there was no other activity besides patrol action.

On 24 February, our 2nd Battalion moved from BISCHWILLER to an assembly area in HAGUENAU and relieved the 327th Glider Infantry Regiment along the river to the left of our 1st Battalion. The remainder of the Regiment continued training. The city of HAGUENAU, which then contained the body of the Regiment, was receiving continuous enemy harassing artillery fire.

For the remainder of the month, through to the 28th, our Regimental Combat Team held their sector with the 1st and 2nd Battalions on the line; maintained contact and vigorously patrolled. Our Battalions not committed continued intensive training in preparation for possible commitment. The city of HAGUENAU, where the body of our Regiment was then occupied, received considerable self-propelled and artillery fire. However, there was no offensive action.

The month ended with the thought in everyones mind that soon our armies would perhaps probe across the RHINE in some large operation. Our armies to the north were rapidly clearing all the areas to the RHINE. And as the month ended, calm came over our sector. Perhaps this was the "calm before the storm" the storm to be our last mighty push to destroy the German Army completely and finally.


RAYMOND E. BERNBERG
Captain, 143d Infantry
Adjutant



BATTALION COMMANDERS, 1 to 28 FEBRUARY 1945

FIRST BATTALION

Clarkin, Thomas R.	Lt Col	O-19983	St. Paul, Minnesota
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SECOND BATTALION

Bowden, Marion P. February 1 to 23	Lt Col	O-407022	Belton, Texas
O'Brien, Robert L. Jr. February 24 to 28	Major	O-308359	New York, New York

THIRD BATTALION

Andrews, Theodore H.	Lt Col	O-365318	Caldwell, Texas
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PROVISIONAL FOURTH BATTALION

Lynch, William R. Jr.	Major	O-384058	Huntsville, Texas
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COMPANY COMMANDERS, 1 to 28 FEBRUARY 1945

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Cleghorn, Rufus J. February 1 to 20	Captain	O-411677	Waco, Texas
Jordan, Earle H. Jr. February 21 to 28	Captain	O-1293600	Auburn, Maine

SERVICE COMPANY

Parish, Joe P. February 1 to 23	Captain	O-406965	Huntsville, Texas
Maskew, Herbert S. February 24 to 28	Captain	O-2055838	Galveston, Texas

ANTI-TANK COMPANY

Stakes, Harry C.	Captain	O-407590	Huntsville, Texas
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CANNON COMPANY

Brinkley, James O. February 1 to 3	1st Lt	O-1683427	Waco, Texas
Prichard, Philip J. February 4 to 28	1st Lt	O-1288119	Thief River Falls, Minn.

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B.	Major	O-345134	Camden, New Jersey
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY FIRST BATTALION

Burrage, Richard H. February 1 to 14	Captain	O-407025	Waco, Texas
Birkhead, Tom P. February 15 to 23	Captain	O-407625	Waco, Texas
Ninnis, Wilfred A. February 24 to 28	1st Lt	O-1312436	El Cerrito, California

COMPANY A

Birkhead, Tom P. February 1 to 8	Captain	O-407625	Waco, Texas
Brejcha, Thomas L. February 9 to 28	Captain	O-411038	Chicago, Illinois

COMPANY B

Chambers, George E. February 1 to 15 - February 28	Captain	O-373577	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Netherton, Thomas H. February 16 to 27	Captain	O-1290796	(TD fr 141st Inf)

COMPANY C

Simmons, Allen E. February 1 to 22	Captain	O-1293664	Belfast, Maine
Costilla, Fred February 23 to 28	2nd Lt	O-1998721	Beaumont, Texas

COMPANY D

Goad, Roy D. February 1 to 22	Captain	O-407196	Temple, Texas
Thomas, Horace A. February 23 to 28	1st Lt	O-1295962	Portland, Maine

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY SECOND BATTALION

Mitchell, Cecil L.	Captain	O-1306742	Defiance, Ohio
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COMPANY E

Larson, Peter M. February 1 to 9	1st Lt	0-364739	Omaha, Nebraska
Lindstrom, John K. February 10 to 23	1st Lt	0-1304750	North Walpole, N. H.

COMPANY F

Merigold, Frank A.	Captain	0-311346	Chicago, Illinois
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COMPANY G

Zink, Edward C. February 1 to 9	1st Lt	0-1294584	Detroit, Michigan
Harris, Albert H. February 10 to 11	1st Lt	0-1295371	Millerston, Pennsylvania
Streicher, Wilhelm G. February 12 to 23	1st Lt	0-380653	Seagoville, Texas

COMPANY H

Spencer, Robert F. February 1 to 3	1st Lt	0-1298148	Charlestown, Indiana
Hanrahan, David J. February 4 to 11	Captain	0-1289077	Bronx, New York
Thornburg, Cyril F. February 12 to 23	1st Lt	0-1310174	Auburn, Nebraska

MAXWELL COMPANY THIRD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L. Jr.	Captain	0-1289026	Fort Myer, Virginia
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COMPANY I

Hancock, Harold R.	1st Lt	0-1294470	Dallas, Texas
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COMPANY K

Reynolds, Donald T. February 1 February 11	1st Lt	0-354648	Pueblo, Colorado
Norris, William F. Jr. February 2 to 10	Captain	0-365619	Newton, Georgia
Cox, O'Dean T. February 12 to 23	1st Lt	0-2055220	Waco, Texas

COMPANY L

Stearns, Clarence C. February 1	1st Lt	O-1318839	Newark, New Jersey
Jackson, Samuel T. Jr. February 2 to 28	1st Lt	O-1304223	Corpus Christi, Texas

COMPANY M

Hand, Robert . February 1 to 22	Captain	O-1289075	Seattle, Washington
Malchow, Allen J. February 23 to 28	1st Lt	O-1301845	Tonawanda, New York

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

APO #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

MARCH 1945

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE AND GERMANY
MARCH 1945

The month of March 1945, for the members of the 143rd Infantry Regiment, will be a memorable one. It was a month of offensive action that brought spirit to a war weary Regiment - a spirit likened to the pursuit of the Germans after our action at VELLETRI, ITALY, and the capture of ROME last Spring.

Operations for March were in four distinct phases: The first being our occupancy of the HAGUENAU sector until relieved by the 141 RCT; second, our penetration of the outer ring defenses of the Siegfried Line through the BITSCHOFFEN Sector that enabled other Division and Corps elements to exploit the breakthrough and reach the Siegfried Line proper; third, our probing and penetration of the Siegfried Line through the mountains, entrance into Germany for our first time at BERGZABERN on the RHINE Plain and pursuit of the enemy to the RHINE, being the first element of the Corps to reach the RHINE; fourth, occupancy of defensive positions at the RHINE River in preparation for further offensive actions.

PHASE ONE

On 1 March 1945, the 1st and 4th Provisional Battalions were occupying defensive positions vicinity HAGUENAU along the MODER River. Elements not on position continued limited small unit training. The sector was quiet except for occasional harassing enemy artillery fire received in the city of HAGUENAU.

On the night of 1-2 March 1945, the 2nd Battalion, commanded by Major ROBERT L. O'BRIEN JR., O-308359, of NEW YORK, NEW YORK, relieved 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron in positions on the Division right flank east of HAGUENAU.

During the remainder of the period in the sector MODER River - HAGUENAU, the Regiment held and improved positions along the main line of resistance. Patrols and raiding parties were active.

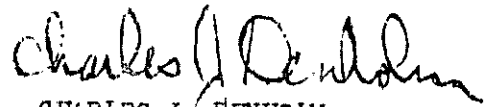
On 3 March 1945, strong patrols of Company C led by 2nd Lieutenant JOHN A BREWER, O-2005949, of BAYAVIA, ILLINOIS, crossed the MODER River in rubber boats at HAGUENAU and occupied ten houses on the east side of the river. This was the first bridgehead established across the MODER River in HAGUENAU.

The Regiment was relieved by the 141 RCT on the night of 4-5 March 1945 and then moved to vicinity WINGERSHEIM, MITTELHAUSEN, GOUGENHEIM, for rest and training.

Things assumed a quietness that presaged big events. Everyone felt that soon a large offensive would take place. Everyone was right! Phase two

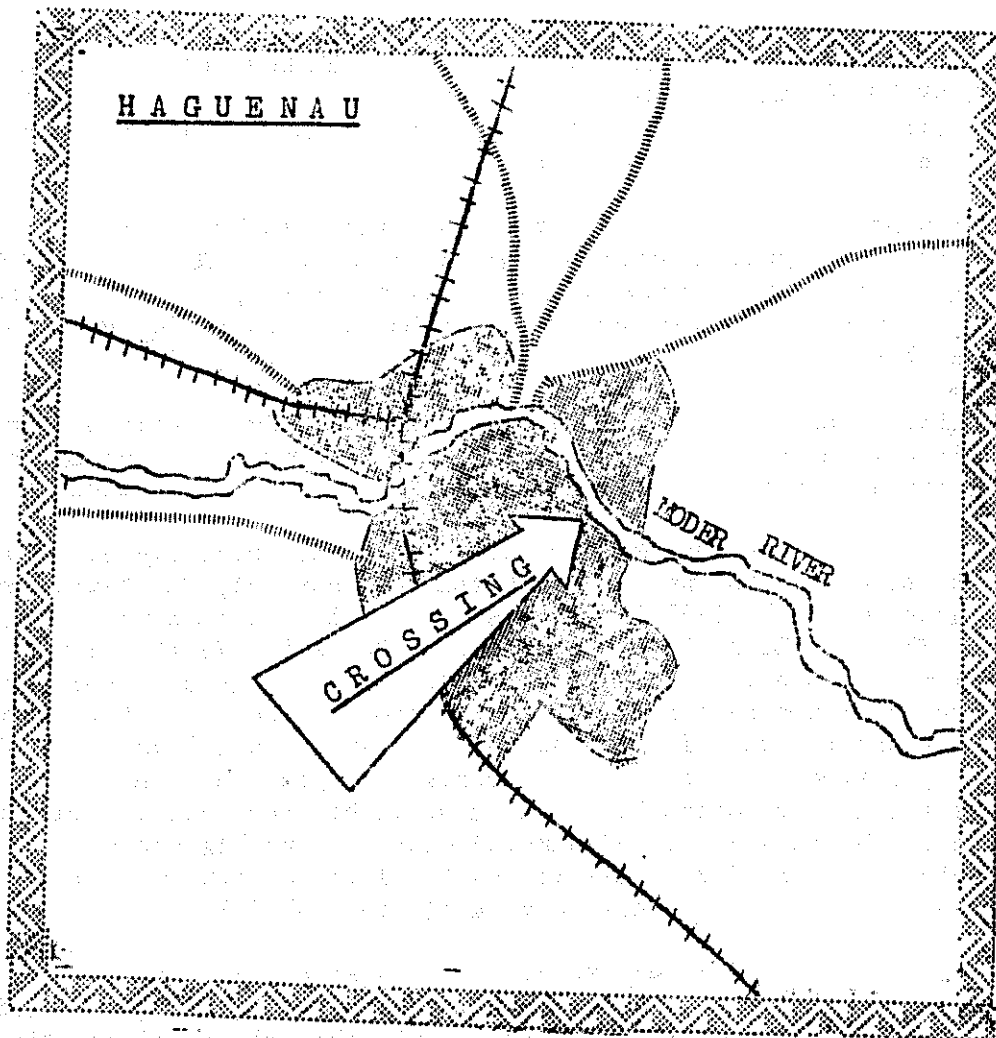
CONCLUSIONS OF REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

The soldier will follow his leader to the end. Results obtained vary almost directly with the courage, aggressiveness and ability of the leader.



CHARLES J. DENHOLM
Lt Col., 143d Infantry
Commanding

PHASE I



Scale 0 1 2 miles

Map: East France, Sheet 38-14

Scale: 1/50,000

occurred after ten days of intensive training in the above mentioned training area.

PHASE TWO

The Division plan was to attack through its present position and positions of the 14th Armored Division to capture WISSEMBOURG and the high ground north of WISSEMBOURG, uncovering the Siegfried Line in that zone and thereafter to penetrate the Siegfried Line, capture BERGZABERN and move east to clear the area of the enemy to the RHINE River.

Our Regiment had the job of effecting an immediate breakthrough by passing through the 14th Armored Division positions on the LA WALCK, BITSCHOFFEN, MIETESHEIM Axis and then to assemble in Division reserve, prepared to continue the attack on order to the north and northeast by rapid follow-up of any further breakthrough.

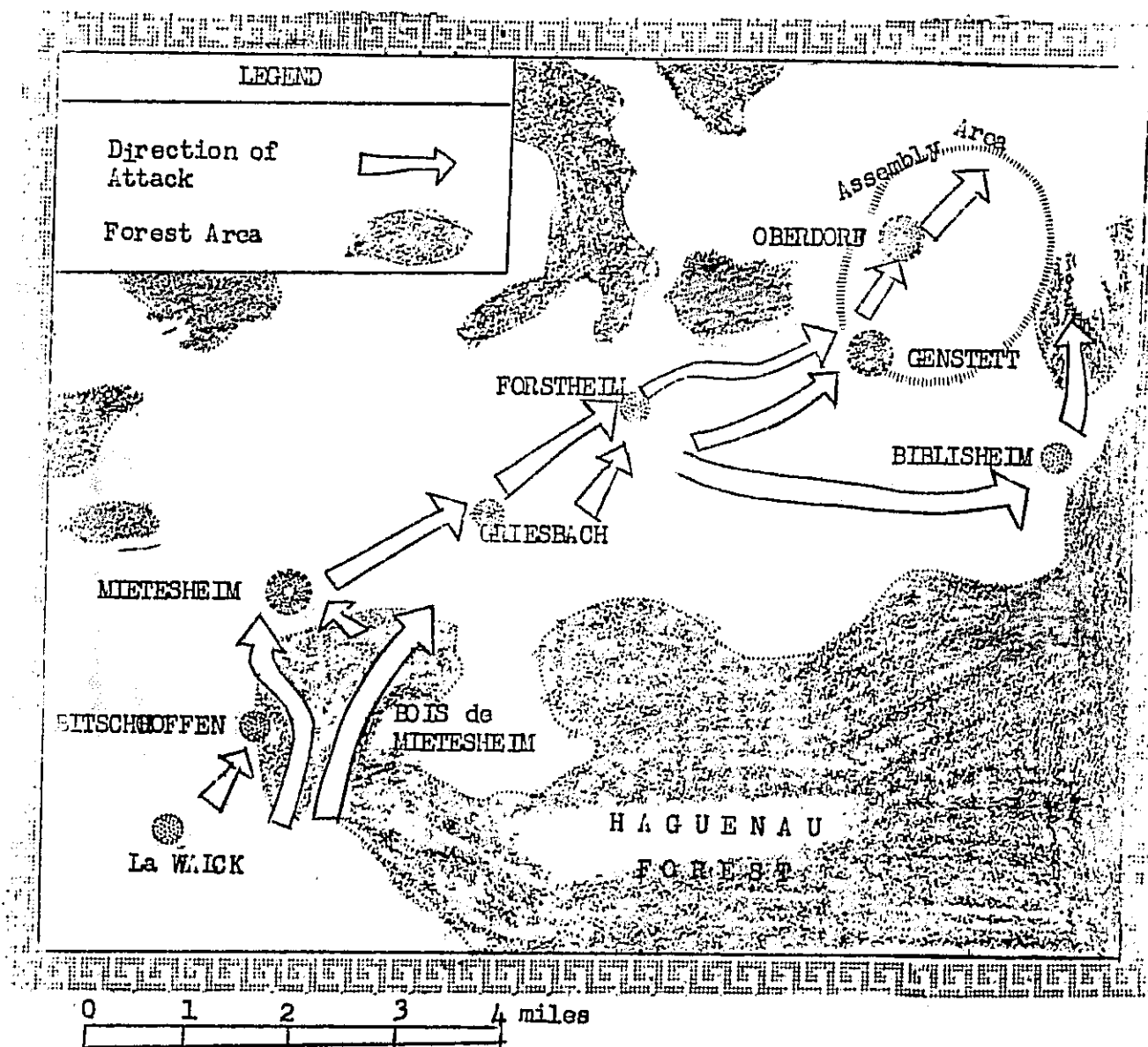
The Regiment was ready. The weather was right. Once again we were to figure in history making action. The men of the Regiment were determined to meet, break through, pursue the enemy to the RHINE and destroy them.

During the early morning hours of 15 March 1945, precisely at 0100 hours, the Regiment attacked with 2nd and 3rd Battalions abreast, 2nd Battalion commanded by Major ROBERT L. O'BRIEN JR., and 3rd Battalion commanded by Lieutenant Colonel THEODORE H. ANDREWS, O-365318, of CALDWELL, TEXAS, on the left, in conjunction with the 142 RCT on the right. A high degree of secrecy was observed throughout the planning phase. The troops were moved into forward assembly areas under cover of darkness, and the attack was launched without artillery preparation to gain initial surprise and penetrate the enemy's main line of resistance before he could assemble his reserves to counter-attack in force. The attack was coordinated with the 3rd DIA (French) on the Division's right and the 103rd Division on the left and extended along the enemy's prepared main line of resistance along the MODER River.

2nd Battalion, initially was to clear the western edge of the BOIS de MIETESHEIM Woods, within the Regiment's zone of action, seizing successive objectives Q-928288, Q-933298, and Q-946307, while the 3rd Battalion attacked along the LA WALCK - MIETESHEIM Road seizing BITSCHOFFEN (Q-9128) and MIETESHEIM (Q-9331) opening the road for armor.

1st Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel THOMAS R. CLARKIN O-19983, of ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, in regimental reserve, remained assembled in PFLAffen-HOFFEN (Q-9027) prepared to pass through either the 2nd or 3rd Battalions and continue the attack to the north and northeast. The 4th Provisional Battalion, commanded by Major WILLIAM R. LYNCH JR., O-384058, of HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS,

PHASE II



MAP: GERMANY

1:100,000

Sheet V-2

Regimental reserve, remained assembled in BUESWILLER (Q-8724) prepared to follow either the 1st or 3rd Battalions in case of a breakthrough, to be employed as a blocking force.

Company E, commanded by 1st Lieutenant FETTER (NMI) LARSON, O-334759, of OMAHA, NEBRASKA, attacked the woods at Q-928228, and during the initial phase of the attack encountered mines and spasmodic machine gun fire, but as the company continued to press forward, the enemy position was overrun and Company E secured its objective at 0635 hours. Company G, commanded by 1st Lieutenant WILHELM G. STREIZNER, O-320653, of SEAGOVILLE, TEXAS, jumped off at 0340 hours, by-passing Company E to the left with primary mission of taking objective at Q-933293. As the company entered the woods, they were engaged in a small arm fire fight but succeeded in capturing their objective without much opposition at 0655. Company F, commanded by 1st Lieutenant ELLER S. WARD, O-1883477, of IVANHOE, TEXAS, jumped off at 0505, by-passing Companies E and G to the left with primary objective at Q-946307. Company F was halted at Q-932298 and organized their positions with Company G, as the 3rd Battalion was having considerable trouble taking BITTSCHOFFEN and to continue the advance would result in 2nd Battalion's left flank being exposed. On the left of the Regimental sector the 3rd Battalion encountered severe enemy resistance. Company K, commanded by 1st Lieutenant O'DEAN T. COX, O-2055220, of WACO, TEXAS, in the assault for BITTSCHOFFEN (Q-9128) encountered at least six enemy machine guns, intense mortar and artillery fire, and numerous scharminofields. The company suffered heavy casualties from mines and enemy fire and was completely disorganized during the initial assault.

The enemy had thoroughly prepared his defenses around BITTSCHOFFEN (Q-9128) with dug in machine gun positions with grazing fields of frontal and flanking fires, prearranged mortar and artillery concentrations, and antitank and anti personnel minofields, as this town controlled a vital communications route, and one that the Division must secure in order to exploit its armor for a breakthrough.

1st Lieutenant O'DEAN T. COX withdrew his company, reorganized, and renewed the attack, supported by five medium tanks. Due to the winter rains the terrain was marshy and a heavy fog limited visibility. Four of the tanks were bogged down. Company K managed to get a foothold on the southern part of the town, assisted by one tank, killing and capturing several of the German garrison, although the enemy still resisted stubbornly. Meanwhile Companies I, commanded by 1st Lieutenant J. H. HEDDER, O-1294170, of DALLAS, TEXAS, and L, commanded by 1st Lieutenant E. J. LARSON JR., O-1291223, of CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS, were alerted and jumped off at 0430 hours, by-passing BITTSCHOFFEN (Q-9128) to the right and attacking the woods to capture BITTSCHOFFEN (Q-9128). One rifle platoon, commanded by 1st Lieutenant J. H. HEDDER, O-1294170, was assigned to the right flank of the attack, and the other platoon, commanded by 1st Lieutenant E. J. LARSON JR., O-1291223, was assigned to the left flank of the attack. The platoon on the right flank was engaged in a fire fight with the enemy, and the platoon on the left flank was engaged in a fire fight with the enemy. The platoon on the right flank was engaged in a fire fight with the enemy, and the platoon on the left flank was engaged in a fire fight with the enemy.

forward against a stubborn enemy, Company K, at 1045, reported the town clear having taken well over 40 prisoners of war. Companies I and L continued to attack toward MIETESHEIM (Q-9331), moving at a fast pace, capturing disorganized enemy groups and annihilating those that resisted. As Companies I and L moved up abreast Companies F and G, vicinity Q-933298, Company F continued the attack to the northeast, swooping through the edge of the BOIS de MIETESHEIM Woods to clear the northernmost tip at Q-946307, meeting light small arms resistance and self-propelled fire. 1st Battalion was ordered at 0917 hours, to move from assembly area in PFAFFENHOFFEN (Q-9027) at 1100 hours to capture bridges at Q-948314 and Q-950316 and continue the attack for GRIESBACH (Q-9532). In the assault for MIETESHEIM (Q-9331) considerable resistance was encountered by Companies I and L entering the town from the south and southwest, so the 1st Battalion was ordered to swing left and enter the town from the southeast. As Companies I and L kept the enemy heavily engaged in the southwestern part of the town, Lieutenant Colonel CLARKIN, commanding 1st Battalion, led two platoons of Company A across an open field, entered the town from the southeast and succeeded in capturing 30 Germans against very light resistance.

By this time the enemy resisting Companies I and L became aware of the attack to their rear and the whole of the German garrison soon collapsed. Companies I and L occupied the town and established all-around security while the 1st Battalion regrouped to continue the attack. Company A moved along the MIETESHEIM - GRIESBACH Road and Companies B and C emerged from the BOIS de MEITESHEIM Woods on the right. Meanwhile the 2nd Battalion had cleared the BOIS de MEITESHEIM Woods within their zone of action and attempted a river crossing vicinity Q-953308 against intense enemy machine gun fire. After several attempts to cross the river at various points, 2nd Battalion withdrew and organized all-around defensive positions at the edge of the woods. The 1st Battalion continued its advance and, at 1845, had crossed both streams with two platoons of Company A and captured the houses at Q-948314. Both bridges at Q-948314 and Q-951316 were blown by the enemy.

The beginning of the second day's battle, 16 March 1945, to clear all enemy opposition west of the RHINE River, found Company A, commanded by 1st Lieutenant JULIAN H. PHILIPS, O-1298919, of HOUSTON, TEXAS, stubbornly fighting off an enemy counter-attack consisting of an estimated 50 Germans, supported by self-propelled fire, with the apparent mission of reducing our small bridgehead across the FALKENSTEIN River, vicinity Q-948314. The attack was continued and 2nd Battalion (Company F) was ordered to establish strong outposts along the river's bank to the right of the 1st Battalion and maintain strong patrol contact to stop any further attempts by the enemy to infiltrate the 1st Battalion's right flank.

At daybreak, Company B pushed out from its small bridgehead across the FALKENSTEIN River with Company A and C following, with the mission of capturing GRIESBACH (Q-9532). The 2nd Battalion, unable to secure a bridge site in

their sector, moved out at 0900 with Company F leading and Companies G and E following, crossed engineer bridges in the 1st Battalion sector, and swung right with the mission of capturing Hill 193 (Q-960312) and continuing the attack to the northeast to secure the ZANG Woods (Q-9731). The 3d Battalion, Regimental reserve, remained in NIETESHEIM (Q-9331) maintaining local security while the 4th Provisional Battalion displaced from BUESWILLER (Q-8724) to PFAFFENHOFEN (Q-9027).

At 1200 hours, Companies B and C, supported by six medium tanks, were engaging the enemy in a fire fight on the southern outskirts of GRIESBACH (Q-9532). Despite the enemy's effort to hold the town, Companies B and C steadily gained ground and at 1303, Company A was mopping up disorganized groups and Company C pushed on through the town onto the GRIESBACH - GUNSTETT Road. Some 75 prisoners of war were taken.

The 2nd Battalion (Companies F and G) attacked Hill 193 (Q-960312) from the west and succeeded in its capture at 1015 hours, against light opposition. Company E moved up to secure the hill, releasing Companies F and G to continue the attack to the northeast with the mission of clearing the ZANG Woods (Q-9731). On entering the ZANG Woods Companies F and G were engaged by the enemy in a fire fight with Company G receiving intense fire to its right flank and rear from enemy positions in GRIESBACH. As the enemy's defenses crumbled, Companies F and E pushed on rapidly clearing two-thirds of the woods by 1507, against scattered sniper fire, Company G having been withdrawn and placed in reserve. Meanwhile Company I had been moved up to occupy GRIESBACH (Q-9532) and the 1st Battalion was organized into a motorized column, consisting of Company C, 753rd Tank Battalion, one platoon of tank destroyers and 15 two and a half ton trucks.

This motorized force moved out at 1745 hours, with the mission of breaking through to SOULTZ (Q-1037), with the 4th Provisional Battalion following as blocking force. Sufficient ammunition, fuel, and rations were provided for two day's operation. Enemy tanks, vicinity road junction at Q-979339, temporarily halted this force, but friendly tanks and tank destroyers deployed and forced their withdrawal. The column again moved forward but at the end of the day it was stopped just south of EBERBACH (Q-9834), vicinity Q-988344, as the enemy had destroyed the bridge at this point.

The 2nd Battalion, after clearing the ZANG Woods, reorganized, and at 1900 hours, launched an attack for FORSTHEIM (Q-9833), preceded by artillery preparation. At 2135 FORSTHEIM (Q-9833) was taken, against negligible resistance with the surrender of eight to ten Germans. The 2nd Battalion outposted the town and assembled for the remainder of the night.

At 0500 hours, 17 March 1945, Company C, 111th Engineer Battalion, commanded by Captain JAMES N. MUELLER, O-462796, of MILCON, CERCIGNA, had completed construction of Bailey bridge at Q-988344 and motorized column continued

its march northeast, but only for a short distance as the enemy, withdrawing just ahead of the column, blew the bridge which spanned the BIEBERBACH River at R-014349 just west of GUNSTETT (R-0235). The delaying obstacle had been anticipated by the enemy as high velocity weapons and machine guns were zeroed in on the crossing site from prepared positions on Hill 224 (R-0235) which afforded excellent observation. Every attempt at bridge construction drew intense enemy fire, and this being the only route for armor as the fields and side roads were marshy or under water, the infantry dismounted and attacked GUNSTETT (R-0235), because the enemy must be driven from the town and Hill 224 before the engineers could construct a bridge.

1st Battalion attempting to establish a bridgehead across the BIEBERBACH River, just west of GUNSTETT, encountered stiff enemy resistance and every yard was gained by fire power. Meanwhile, 2nd Battalion was ordered to move from FORSTHEIM (Q-9833), thence to LORSBRONN (R-0033), and attacked north-east to capture Hill 224, overlooking GUNSTETT (R-0235) and the crossing site, which would relieve the pressure on 1st Battalion and reduce enemy fire on the bridge site. 3rd Battalion was moved from LIETESHEIM (Q-0331) and GRIESBACH (Q-0532) to FORSTHEIM (Q-9833). 4th Provisional Battalion, following 1st Battalion by 1500 yards, established antitank road blocks protecting the left flank.

At 1400 hours, 1st Battalion had gained a good foothold in GUNSTETT (R-0235) and was preparing to smoke Hill 224 with artillery to deny the enemy observation on the town and the crossing site; 2nd Battalion was moving north-east from LORSBRONN (R-0033), and 3rd Battalion had passed through FORSTHEIM (Q-0933) moving due east to capture BIBLISHEIM (R-0433). The 1st Battalion continued to wedge its way into GUNSTETT against mortar and machine gun fire. 3rd Battalion entered BIBLISHEIM (R-0433) at 1700, captured two German stragglers and found the town clear, but received several rounds of enemy tank fire from the northeast. Company G of the 2nd Battalion crossed the BIEBERBACH River at 1700 hours and continued its attack on Hill 224. Companies E and G of the 2nd Battalion reported Hill 224 clear of enemy resistance at 2030, and while one company from the 4th Provisional Battalion moved up to secure the hill, 2nd Battalion regrouped to continue the attack on DIEFFENBACH (R-0337). 3rd Battalion pushed out from BIBLISHEIM (R-0433) to clear the KREUZHECKE Woods (R-0435). During the afternoon the 12th Tactical Air Force had strafed and dive bombed these woods and the 3rd Battalion succeeded in occupying the woods against very light resistance. At 2150, 4th Provisional Battalion had occupied Hill 224 with one company and 2nd Battalion moved forward toward DIEFFENBACH (R-0337). 1st Battalion had completed clearing GUNSTETT at 2220 and dispatched a patrol to move across the open fields toward the 3rd Battalion, in search of scattered enemy groups.

Orders were received for our Regiment to secure its present line as RCT 142 would pass a motorized column through during the night. At 2330, the bridge just east of GUNSTETT had been completed; 1st Battalion had occupied

the town of GUNSTETT; 2nd Battalion was well on its way to DIEFFENBACH; 3rd Battalion was sweeping the KREUZHECKE Woods and preparing to assemble for the night, and 4th Provisional Battalion occupied Hill 224 with one company with the remainder of the Battalion assembled in MORSBRONN.

On 18 March 1945, the 2nd Battalion continued its march across open terrain throughout the night in an effort to seize the town of DIEFFENBACH (R-0337). The sky was overcast with clouds and as the Battalion moved along slowly to maintain control small enemy groups, in dug-in positions, had to be cleared from its route of march. At 0145 hours, elements of Company F had entered the town of OBERDORF (R-0236) and taken ten prisoners of war. Patrols were dispatched to the north to precede the main body by a few hundred yards. 2nd Battalion entered DIEFFENBACH (R-0337) at 0545 and found the town deserted. As the Battalion closed in, defense sectors were assigned and organized, in the event of an enemy counter-attack.

During the morning the 3rd Battalion was marched to KUTZENHAUSEN (R-0837); 1st Battalion remained assembled in GUNSTETT (R-0235); 2nd Battalion assembled in KIEFFENBACH (R-0337) and 4th Provisional Battalion assembled in MORSBRONN (R-0033). Except for local security, the troops were assembled for a much needed rest after continuous offensive operations for three days and nights.

SUMMARY

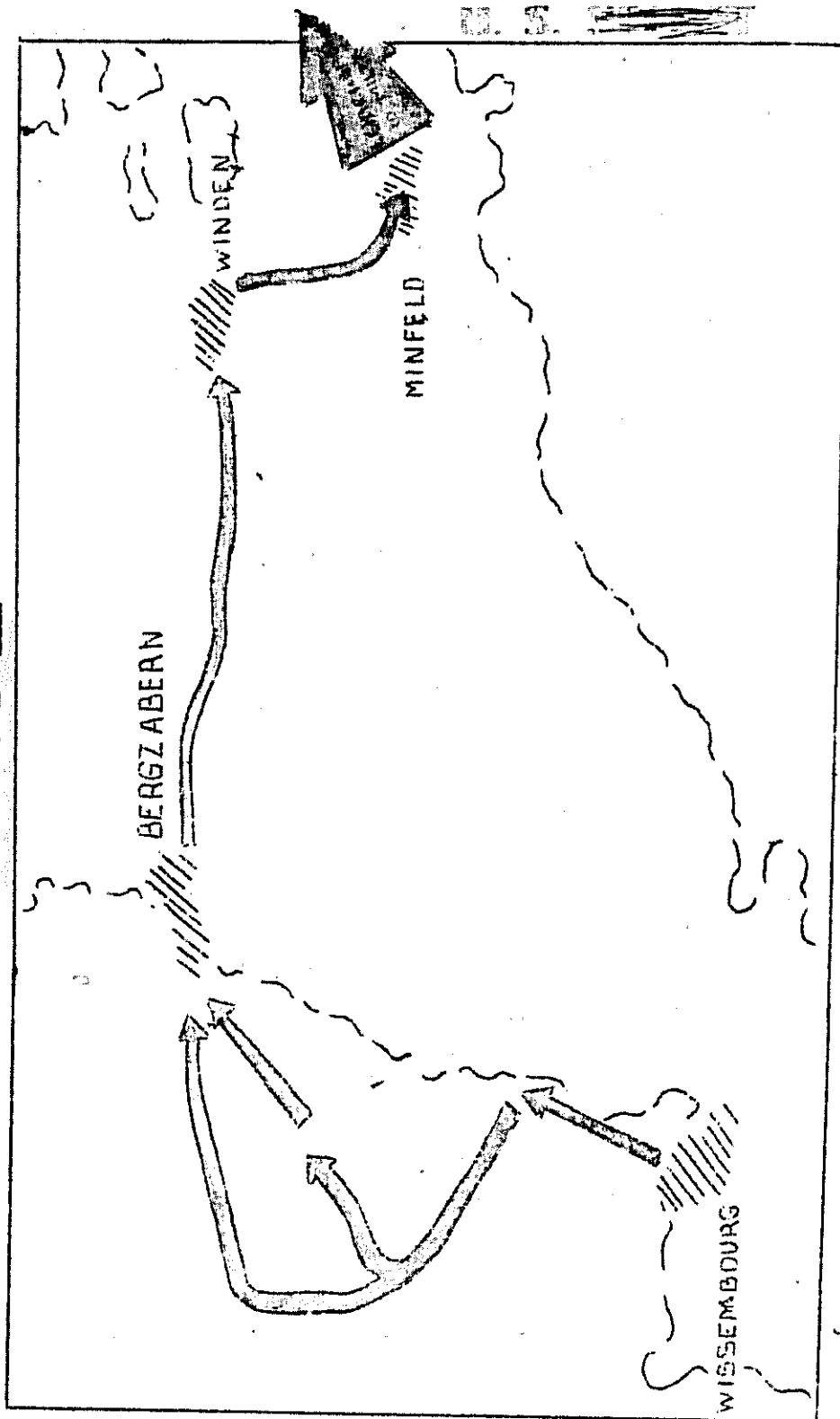
The Regiment, during its day and night offensive for 72 hours, captured ten towns and 567 German soldiers, completely overran the enemy's last defenses west of the Siegfried Line and opened a vital communications route for the exploitation of armored forces.

PHASE THREE

At 0700 hours, 21 March 1945, the 1st Battalion moved out from assembly positions in WISSEMBOURG (R-1548) with the mission of marching up to assembly position behind 142 RCT on the left flank of the Division sector, prepared to push through the Siegfried defenses and capture DORRENBACH (R-1654). Remainder of RCT was put on one hour alert status prepared to move, by motor, in case of a breakthrough. At 1235 hours, the 1st Battalion, marching in a column of companies, had reached a point in the HAUTE FORET DU LEMDAT at R-155535, while leading elements of RCT 142 were fighting just ahead at R-153542. The Division Commander ordered the 1st Battalion, RCT 143 to attack through RCT 142, with two companies abreast to seize the town of DORRENBACH (R-1654).

At 1610 hours, Companies A and B, moving abreast, were passing elements of 142 RCT for the assault on DORRENBACH (R-1654). Heavy resistance, consisting of machine gun fire from well concealed pillboxes, self-propelled fire and pre-arranged artillery and nebelwerfer concentrations, made the 1st Battalion's advance slow and treacherous. Despite the heavy resistance imposed on the 1st Battalion from the cleverly prepared Siegfried defenses, the Battalion continued to wedge its way forward, by-passing and isolating some of

PHASE III



1 2 3 4 MILES

MAP: GERMANY
1/100,000

LEGEND

DIRECTION OF ATTACK

the enemy's positions and destroying those that impeded their advance. Meanwhile, 2nd Battalion was ordered to move from assembly positions in WITTEBOURG (R-1448) to join 1st Battalion at DORRENBACH, prepared to attack toward BERGZABERN (R-1448) during the morning.

During the night of 21 March 1945, 3rd Battalion moved from assembly positions in WITTEBOURG (R-1448) to vicinity Hill 303 (R-1753) and organized for a daylight attack to the north and northeast; 2nd Battalion on its march toward DORRENBACH (R-1654) halted at 0300 hours, vicinity R-17532, while the 1st Battalion continued to infiltrate through the Siegfried defenses throughout the night. However, due to the dense forest and a dark night, daylight found the Battalion 1500 yards south of DORRENBACH (R-1654) vicinity R-164533.

Dawn 22 March 1945 found the entire RMZ, less 1st Provisional Battalion, poised to deliver the final assault on the enemy's Siegfried line with its well concealed, mutually supporting pillboxes and suffering the hazards of heavy nobelwerfer and artillery barrages. By 1200 hours, the 1st Battalion had advanced 1200 yards and was in the vicinity of DORRENBACH at R-170542 having neutralized seven enemy pillboxes and capturing over 50 prisoners.

The 2nd Battalion entered DORRENBACH (R-1455) at 0900 and launched an attack at 1040 hours to seize Hills 301 (R-1754) and 341 (R-1756) and cut the BOLLENBORN - BERGZABERN Road. As the 2nd Battalion moved out from DORRENBACH (R-1455) small arms resistance was encountered and heavy but sporadic nobelwerfer and mortar barrages. However, the opposing enemy was in a disorganized state and Hill 301 (R-1754) was cleared against light resistance at 1200 hours. The Battalion continued the attack for Hill 341 (R-1756), cleared the hill and pushed on to cut the BOLLENBORN - BERGZABERN Road at 1345 hours, vicinity R-170540, and established ambush stations in the woods with Company E.

3rd Battalion, from assembly positions, vicinity Hill 303 (R-1753), launched an attack at 0830 hours with Company I, supported by two medium tanks, attacking due north to seize Hill 343 (R-1354) while Company K attacked north-northeast to seize road junction at R-138544, Company L being in Battalion reserve. From the beginning of the attack, the enemy offered strong resistance firing machine guns from concrete pillboxes, with cleared fields of fire through the forest, and also by firing into Company K's right flank and rear from Hill 469 (R-145540). In the assault for road junction at 138544, Company K suffered three killed and several wounded from machine gun and mortar fire and was forced to withdraw to covered positions. Companies I and K unable to advance were withdrawn for reorganization and a renewed attack. Preceded by a 30 minute artillery preparation, of three Battalions, firing high explosive and smoke shells, with tanks and tank destroyers firing direct fire on Hill 339 using high explosives to neutralize enemy strong points and smoke to obscure the enemy's observation, the 3rd Battalion launched another attack at 1430 hours, with Companies I and K. The resistance was light and Company I suc-

succeeded in getting one platoon on Hill 543 (R-1354) at 1445 with remainder of the company following, while Company K reached the road junction at R-138544 at 1540. Throughout the afternoon the 3rd Battalion continued its advance swinging to the northeast toward BERGZABERN (R-1955).

At dusk, 1st Battalion, from its assembly area in DORRENBACH, and 2nd Battalion on Hill 341 and BOLLENBORN - BERGZABERN Road, vicinity R-170559, organized for a coordinated attack on BERGZABERN (R-1955). The attack was launched at 2200 hours, and as both Battalions closed in on the town from the south and southwest they encountered a stubborn enemy, employing machine gun, self-propelled and mortar fire in a desperate attempt to hold the last remnant of the Siegfried Line.

At the end of the day battle weary soldiers of the 1st and 2nd Battalions were busily engaged in small arms clashes and mortar and artillery duels as they pressed the enemy, block by block, from BERGZABERN (R-1955), while the 3rd Battalion was marching on the town from the southwest, unopposed.

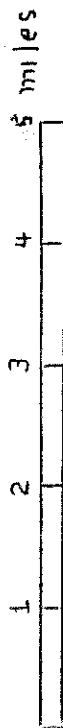
On through the morning hours of 23 March 1945, the 1st and 2nd Battalions pressed the enemy and as the outer defenses of BERGZABERN (R-1955) crumbled both Battalions swept through and at dawn were engaged in mopping up and capturing prisoners of war. The 2nd Battalion then moved on to occupy the village of DRUSWEILER and the town of BERBELROTH against negligible resistance by 1000.

At 0500 hours, the 4th Provisional Battalion, with four M4A3 assault guns borrowed from the 753rd Tank Battalion and manned by members of Cannon Company moved from assembly positions in WISSENBURG (R-1548) to BERGZABERN (R-1955), prepared to move as a motorized task force to secure any route to the RHINE River. 3rd Battalion, at 0730 hours, passed through 1st and 2nd Battalions in BERGZABERN (R-1955) motorized, with the mission of opening the road to WINDEN (R-2755). Organized resistance had ceased and the Battalion moved along at a rapid pace, mopping up enemy stragglers and disorganized groups of sniper. 0807 hours found the Battalion in OBERHAUSEN (R-2355). Pushing on, the 3rd Battalion entered WINDEN (R-2755) at 1015 hours, against light opposition, but was busily engaged in rounding up prisoners of war, overtaken in their disorganized retreat to the RHINE. Here the 3rd Battalion assembled and cleared the road for the passage through of the 4th Provisional Battalion with the mission of continuing the march to the RHINE, capturing LEIMERSHEIM (R-4458) and securing ferry sites at R-458484 and R-457576. At 1210 hours, 4th Provisional Battalion (motorized) passed through WINDEN (R-2755), engaged and overran the enemy in small arms fight at railroad crossing, vicinity R-286542, killing one, wounding two and capturing 32 prisoners of war, but was completely halted outside MINFELD (R-2952) as the enemy had established a road block, supported by self-propelled fire, and a small delaying force. Infantry, supported by tanks and tank destroyers, deployed and succeeded in overrunning the

enemy's positions, taking a toll of 18 enemy killed and wounded, three anti-tank guns neutralized, and 75 prisoners of war. On clearing MINFELD (R-2952) the column continued the march for KANDEL (R-3353) at 1500 hours. As the column moved toward KANDEL (R-3353) tanks and machine guns fired on the retreating enemy. At 1515 hours the tank-infantry column entered KANDEL (R-3353), unopposed, and captured 35 prisoners of war. Halting just long enough for a brief interrogation of the prisoners, the column resumed its march, dispersing and capturing the enemy with tank and machine gun fire, as it moved, and overrunning manned artillery pieces. Head of the column entered RHEINZABERN (R-3957) at 1608, without opposition, capturing more prisoners of war. Here the column was again halted as the enemy had destroyed the bridge across the ERLER River. Reconnaissance was immediately initiated and at 1630 hours a by-pass had been found and cleared and the column resumed the march for NEUPFOTZ (R-4257). On entering NEUPFOTZ (R-4257) at 1645 hours, it was necessary that tanks and infantry deploy and assault the town, as the enemy in its hurried retreat had been caught here and a fight was evident as machine gun and sniper fire was coming from many houses and enemy troops and equipment filled the town. Without hesitancy, though, tanks and infantry rushed the enemy while he remained surprised and disorganized, spraying the town with high velocity, machine gun, and small arms fire annihilating every movable object until the enemy showed evidence of surrendering. The storming of this town might well be termed the climax of a day of victorious warfare. As the din of battle quieted, approximately 700 prisoners of war were rounded up, one battery of 170mm horse drawn artillery, one light tank, one scout car plus a number of light vehicles and miscellaneous enemy equipment captured, amid a burning, half destroyed town. However, the Regiment was not to stop here. 1930 hours found the 4th Provisional Battalion reorganizing, searching the town for scattered enemy, maintaining traffic control posts and clearing the road and streets to permit the passage through of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions to continue the attack and capture the Regimental objectives, LEIMERSHEIM (R-4458) and the ferry sites.

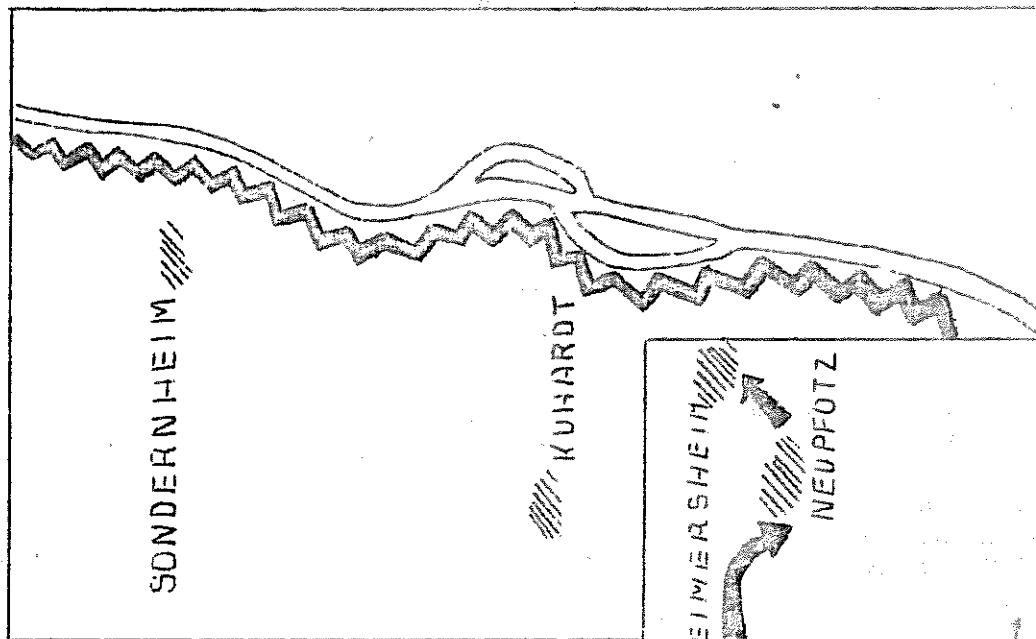
At NEUPFOTZ (R-4257) the RCT motorized column closed up and the troops dismounted. 1st Battalion assembled in the town, as Regimental reserve, and dispatched patrols to comb the Regimental areas for enemy groups, while 2nd and 3rd Battalions organized to continue the attack for LEIMERSHEIM (R-4458) and the ferry sites, R-458584 and R-457576, respectively. 2nd Battalion jumped off at 2235 hours, and captured the town of LEIMERSHEIM (R-4458), against light opposition, at 0415 hours, 24 March 1945, secured the town, established local security and dispatched roving patrols. 3rd Battalion jumped off at 2300 hours with Companies I and K leading and Company L following. Lack of daylight reconnaissance for routes of approach to the ferry sites, resulted in the Battalion having to change its route which caused considerable delay, and, too, the enemy still attempting to get equipment across the RHINE had prepared hasty defenses consisting of prepared machine gun and small arms positions, supported by high velocity weapons, thereby forcing the 3rd Battalion

MAP: GERMANY 1/100,000



LEGEND	
OUT POST	—
LINE	—
DIRECTION	—
OF ATTACK	—

PHASE IV



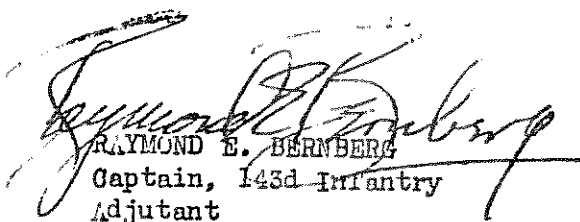
to engage the enemy at several points before reaching the banks of the RHINE River. By 0633 hours, 24 March 1945, the ferry sites had been reached and reported secure. The 3d Battalion, after securing the ferry sites, fanned out to the right and left and established outposts along the west bank of the RHINE River. . .

The third phase culminated the Regimental offensive action. Our Regiment was the first element of the VI Corps to reach the RHINE River. The whole operation commencing with our breakthrough in the BITSCHOFFEN sector to the reaching of the RHINE netted a total of 2886 prisoners, augmented by a large number of dead Germans and enemy equipment destroyed or captured.

PHASE FOUR

During the period 24-30 March 1945, 2nd and 3rd Battalions patrolled and outposted the west bank of the RHINE River covering a 1200 yard sector. 1st and 4th Battalions remained assembled in Regimental reserve and conducted limited training and local security. 1st Battalion attempted two patrol crossings of the RHINE River, but was forced to withdraw on each occasion by enemy machine gun and self-propelled fire. During this period 148 prisoners of war were taken. On 30-31 March RCT 143 was relieved, on position, by elements of 2nd DIM and 3rd DIA (French) and moved to assembly areas vicinity LANDAU (R-2766).

As the month closed the allied armies to the north were speeding east of the RHINE in what seemed to be a complete rout of the German Army. The Regiment felt it had contributed greatly toward the outcome of ultimate victory and destruction of the German Army.


RAYMOND E. BERNBERG
Captain, 143d Infantry
Adjutant

FIRST BATTALION

Clarkin, Thomas R.	Lt Col	O-19983	St Paul, Minnesota
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SECOND BATTALION

O'Brien, Robert L. Jr.	Major	O-308359	New York, New York
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THIRD BATTALION

Andrews, Theodore H.	Lt Col	O-365318	Caldwell, Texas
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PROVISIONAL FOURTH BATTALION

Lynch, William R. Jr.	Major	O-384058	Huntsville, Texas
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COMPANY COMMANDERS, 1 to 31 MARCH 1945

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Jordan, Earle H. Jr.	Captain	O-1293600	Auburn, Maine
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SERVICE COMPANY

Maskew, Herbert S.	Captain	O-2055838	Galveston, Texas
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ANTI-TANK COMPANY

Stakes, Harry C.	Captain	O-407590	Huntsville, Texas
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CANNON COMPANY

Prichard, Philip J	Captain	O-1288119	Thief River Falls, Minn.
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MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B.	Major	O-345134	Camden, New Jersey
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY FIRST BATTALION

Ninnis, Wilfred A.	1st Lt	O-1312486	El Cerrito, California
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COMPANY A

Brejcha, Thomas L. 1 to 12 March	Captain	O-411038	Chicago, Illinois
Philips, Julian H. 13 to 21 March	1st Lt	O-1293919	Houston, Texas
Hartzler, Gordon J. 22 to 31 March	1st Lt	O-1312921	Goodland, Kansas

Chambers, George E. 1 to 20 March	Captain	0-373577	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Brancato, Jacob S. 21 to 29 March	1st Lt	0-1316008	Buffalo, New York
Selvig, Kermit H. 30 to 31 March	1st Lt	0-1296270	Opelika, Alabama

COMPANY C

Netherton, Thomas H.	Captain	0-1290796	Chicago, Illinois
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COMPANY D

Thomas, Horace A. 1 to 23 March - 25 to 31 March	1st Lt	0-1295962	Portland, Maine
Douglass, Darrell V. 24 March	1st Lt	0-1298041	Garden City, Kansas

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY SECOND BATTALION

Mitchell, Cecil L. 1 to 3 March - 9 to 29 March	Captain	0-1306742	Defiance, Ohio
Hunn, Walter L. 4 to 8 March - 30 to 31 March	1st Lt	0-482727	Chillicothe, Ohio

COMPANY E

Lindstrom, John K. 1 to 4 March	1st Lt	0-1304750	North Walpole, N. H.
Larson, Peter (NMI) 5 to 31 March	1st Lt	0-384739	Omaha, Nebraska

COMPANY F

Merigold, Frank A.	Captain	0-311346	Chicago, Illinois
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COMPANY G

Streicher, Wilhelm G. 1 to 16 March	1st Lt	0-380653	Seagoville, Texas
Harris, Albert H. 17 to 31 March	1st Lt	0-1295371	Millerston, Pennsylvania

COMPANY H

Thornburg, Cyril F.	1st Lt	0-1310174	Auburn, Nebraska
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY THIRD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L. Jr.	Captain	0-1289026	Fort Myer, Virginia
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COMPANY I

Hancock, Harold R.	Captain	O-1294170	Dallas, Texas
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COMPANY K

Cox, O'Dean T.	1st Lt	O-2055220	Waco, Texas
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COMPANY L

Jackson, Samuel T. Jr.	1st Lt	O-1304223	Corpus Christi, Texas
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COMPANY M

Malchow, Allen J.	1st Lt	O-1301845	Tonawanda, New York
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RECEIVED TO REBELSIA 10-1-1945

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HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION


APO #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY

APRIL 1945

CONCLUSIONS OF REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

Respite far from the front for three weeks or more removes all trace of battle fatigue from troops and they start feeling fit and capable of fighting and beating anyone.


CHARLES J. DENHOLM
Colonel, 143d Infantry
Commanding

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY
APRIL 1945

The first day of April 1945 found the 143rd Infantry Regiment, with 133d Field Artillery Battalion (105mm) and Company C, 111th Medical Battalion attached, on the march from assembly positions in the LANDAU (Q-2766) area to the ZWEIBRUCKEN (Q-7272) area. As the troops assembled for the move the evidence of battle fatigue was noted among all officers and men, as this was only the second time since the assault landing in Southern FRANCE on 15 August 1944 that the entire Combat Team had been completely withdrawn from the line. However, as the troops moved westward and away from the battle zone, there was an undaunted spirit among all. Rest, relaxation and rehabilitation lay ahead and a brilliant record of victorious warfare was left behind.

The RCT closed in the ZWEIBRUCKEN area at 1300 hours, with 1st Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel THOMAS R. CLARKIN, O-19983, of ST PAUL, MINNESOTA, assembling in NUNSCHWEILER (Q-8369), WINDSBERG (Q-8568) and HONEISCHWEILER (Q-8670); 2nd Battalion, led by Major ROBERT L. O'BRIEN JR., O-308559, of NEW YORK, NEW YORK, in WALLHALBEN (Q-8479); 3rd Battalion, under the command of Major MARCUS W. ADAMS, O-369273, of WHITESBURG, KENTUCKY, in BLIESKASTEL (Q-6571); 4th Provisional Battalion, under Major WILLIAM R. LYNCH, JR., O-384058, of HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS, in MITTELBACH (Q-7168); Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Company in IXHEIM (Q-7270); Service Company in RIMSCHWEILER (Q-7368); 133rd Field Artillery Battalion in HOHENOD (Q-9076) and Company C, 111th Medical Battalion in HOMBURG (Q-7180).

The new area bore all the marks of recent battles and a conquered populace. Many of the towns and villages, except for a few scattered suburbs, were reduced to jagged rubble heaps; the German people, plundering through their destroyed possessions, greeted the occupying troops with expressionless faces and an atmosphere of lost hope. The countryside was scarred with entrenchments, barbed wire, minefields and countless concrete casements. The valleys were dotted and torn with destroyed and abandoned equipment, and even though the war was being pressed into the heart of GERMANY, many miles east of the RHINE, observations clearly outlined another job to be accomplished behind the lines.

The RCT's mission was to occupy approximately 2000 square miles and assist the Allied Military Government in the enforcement of military law and order, which entailed screening the civilian population, salvaging food and equipment for equal redistribution, guarding military installations and maintaining motorized patrols and traffic control posts.

Immediately after the assembly of troops, commanders and staffs initiated reconnaissance of their assigned sectors in preparation for the occupation and enforcement of military order and established local security within Battalion areas.

2 April was a busy day for all. Each Battalion blocked all exits from the towns in which they were assembled with armed guards, made a thorough search for weapons and screened the civilian populace. Motorized patrols were active throughout the RCT sector apprehending suspicious persons, reporting abandoned enemy equipment and supplies and enforcing curfew regulations. Troops not engaged in supporting the Military Government conducted small unit training.

During the period 3-11 April 1945 a systematic plan was inaugurated for the mission of occupation and support of the Military Government. A mobile screening unit was set up which canvassed the sector systematically, comprehensively spot checking pedestrians, houses, refugees, and transients. This unit continually picked up German prisoners of war in small outlying communities and on main routes leading through the sector. Any locality was canvassed on call at very short notice. All towns and villages were posted with Military Government posters and each unit fulfilled the responsibility of enforcing military laws and regulations; motorized patrols visited all inhabited localities in the sector of responsibility at least once during every 24 hour period. 24 hour check posts were established at road network centers with motorized patrols instituted between check points to pick up and transport to the IPW cage for interrogation any persons detained by the check posts. Guards were furnished for all critical installations, both military and civilian, which included Displaced Persons Camps, railroads, bridges, ammunition and engineer dumps, factories and public utilities.

During the day of 11 April 1945 all units continued their mission of screening, salvaging and maintaining military law and order, while commanders and staffs of all Battalions initiated reconnaissance preparatory to the enlargement of their sectors and the relief of elements of Seventh Army Security Command which was maintaining a Prohibited Frontier Zone along the GERMANY-FRANCE Border and guarding military installations.

12 April 1945 found the entire RCT shifting to take on new and larger sectors of responsibility. 1st Battalion displaced to the town of JAGERSBURG (Q-7085) and WALDMOHR (Q-7087); 2nd Battalion displaced to KLSHOFEN (Q-7680) and shifted its boundaries of responsibility; 3rd Battalion, with Battery C, 133rd Field Artillery Battalion attached, remained in BLIESKASTEL (Q-6571), but assumed responsibility for a larger sector, including the relief of Seventh Army Security elements along the GERMANY-FRANCE frontier and the establishment of a Prohibited Frontier Zone consisting of check posts, road blocks and motorized patrols, and took over the guard of the Displaced Persons Camp and military installations in HOMBURG; Battery C, 133rd Field Artillery Battalion took over the security of ZWEIBRUCKEN (Q-7272) and the Displaced Persons Camp in ZWEIBRUCKEN. The military installations guarded by 3rd Battalion consisted of ammunition and engineer dumps, railroad stations, and captured enemy equipment and supplies. The Displaced Persons Camp in HOMBURG contained 7100 Russians and

the ZWEIBRUCKEN Camp contained 7500. For administrative and control purposes, each of these camps, with the assistance of Russian Officers, were organized into three Regiments to include Battalions and Companies. Personnel of these camps, aside from their intra-camp duties and drill, were employed throughout the Regimental sector to repair damaged railroads and assist in the salvage of captured munitions and equipment. 4th Provisional Battalion, now commanded by Major LOUIS H. RESSIJAC, O-23454, of MOBILE, ALABAMA, and occupying a comparatively small sector, remained in MITTELBACH (Q-7168), established local security, enforced military law and maintained motorized patrols; 133rd Field Artillery Battalion (less Battery C) displaced to KOLLWEILER (L-8801), occupied a new sector, organized new patrol routes and continued to screen towns within its new sector of responsibility. All troops of the RCT, not engaged in occupation and in the enforcement of military law, conducted small unit training.

During the period 13-23 April 1945, the RCT continued its support of the Military Government and as the 1st, 2nd and 4th Provisional Battalions and 133d Field Artillery Battalion completed screening their respective sectors it was necessary to maintain only a limited number of guard posts and motorized patrols, thereby releasing a large percentage of each Battalion to participate in an extensive training program in preparation for future operations against the enemy. The 3rd Battalion and Battery C, 133d Field Artillery Battalion were completely occupied in maintaining a prohibited frontier zone and guarding Displaced Persons Camps and military installations. During this period there were two reported incidents of displaced persons (Russians) leaving their confinement areas, organizing into small bands, and raiding nearby towns, taking sheep and chickens for food. Both incidents were thoroughly investigated and the guard strengthened or warned to be especially alert during hours of darkness for persons attempting to leave the camp. A few cases of sniping were reported and all were investigated immediately. No American casualties were sustained.

During the afternoon of 24 April 1945, elements of the 28th Infantry Division (110th Infantry Regiment) started the relief of all guard posts, Displaced Persons Camps and the Prohibited Frontier Zone, as RCT 143 was to be completely relieved of its present mission and prepare for movement east of the RHINE River. The relief program was carried on throughout the night and at 0835 hours, 25 April 1945, all posts and installations had been relieved and responsibility for the sector was assumed by the Commanding Officer, 110th Infantry Regiment. Upon completion of the relief, 3rd Battalion assembled its troops and started a small unit training program. All units of the RCT, concerned only with local security, pursued an extensive training program from 26 to 27 April 1945, inclusive.

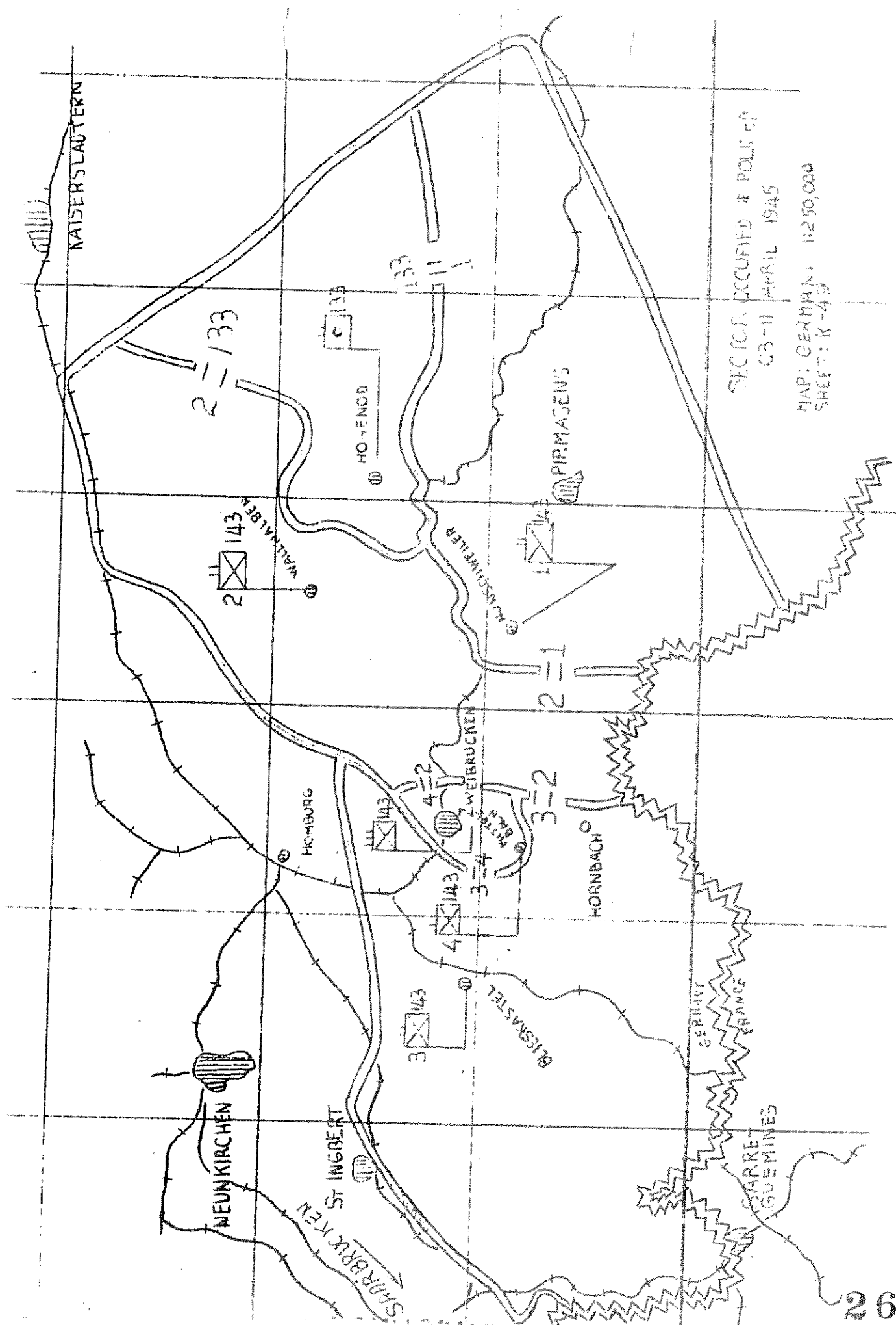
The morning of 28 April 1945 found the entire RCT again on the move. Departing the HOMBURG area at 0700 hours the RCT started a 300 mile motor march for GUNZBERG (X-8787), east of the RHINE River. Upon closing in assembly areas

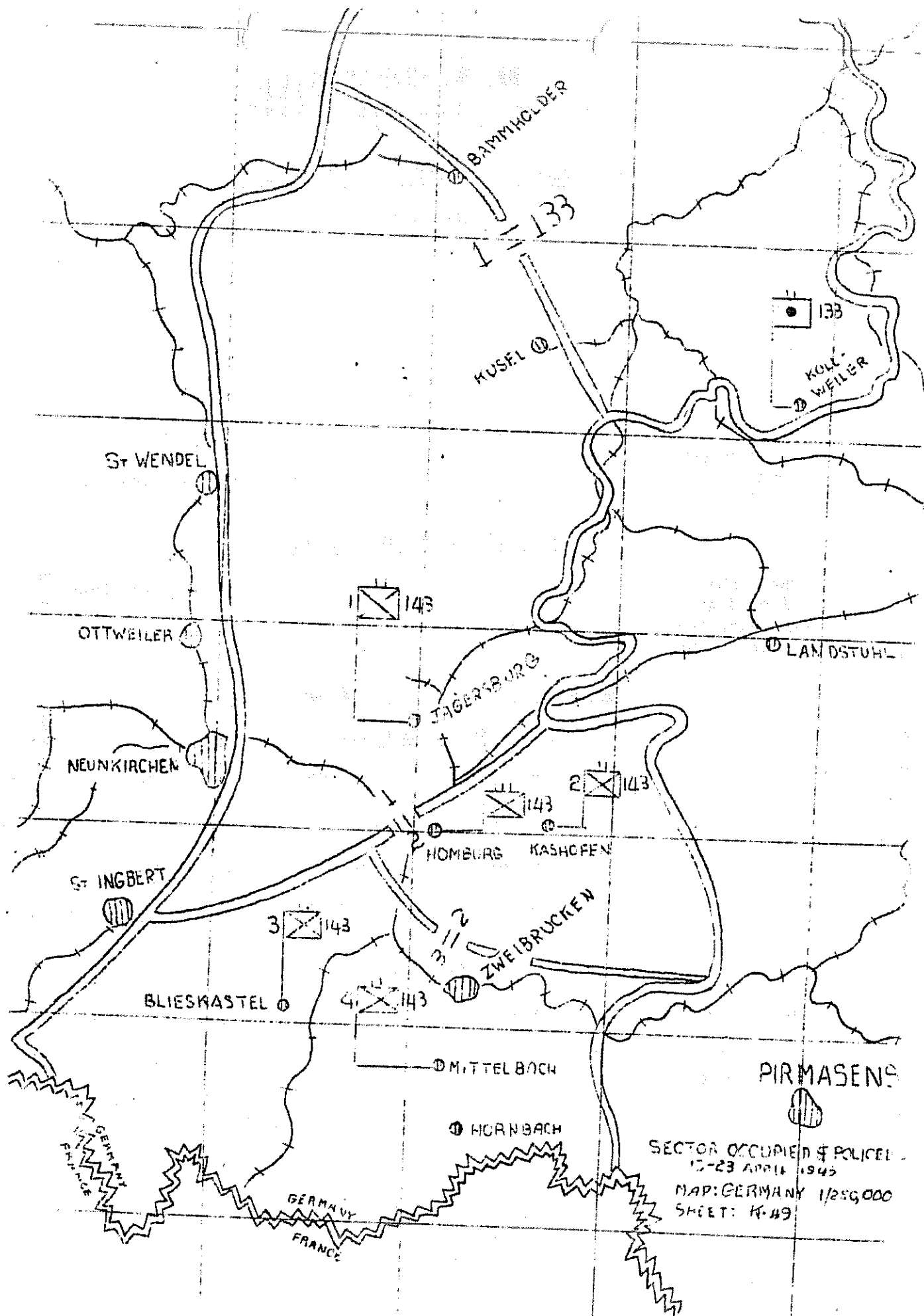
the following morning at 0700 hours, the RCT remained assembled throughout the day in Division reserve, prepared for further movement.

On 30 April 1945, RCT 143 began motor march at 0800 hours from the GUNZBERG (X-8787) area for assembly positions vicinity ISSING (Y-3933). While enroute, 4th Provisional Battalion was halted at 1400 hours, assembled in HURLACH (Y-2851) and given the mission of searching out the immediate vicinity for concentration camps, war criminals and documents that would uncover parties responsible for war atrocities. The search disclosed seven concentration camps and 312 bodies of political internees. 1st Battalion assembled in ISSING (Y-3933) with the mission of investigating the town of ENTRACHING (Y-4540). While enroute Companies E and F were ordered to investigate disturbances in POLLING (Y-5418), but found the town in order. The RCT, less 1st and 4th Battalions, closed in assembly positions vicinity MURNAU (Y-6003) at 1900 hours, established local security, and remained in Division reserve.

As the month ended, momentous events on the battlefronts presaged a speedy termination of hostilities. Rested, trained and cheered by the good news from all fronts, the troops advanced once more toward the combat zone. That this was to be the final effort seemed to everyone a certainty, and in the hearts of all was the fervent hope that the war would soon be over.

Bertram H. Lennis
BERTRAM H. LENNIS
1st Lt. 143d Infantry
Acting Adjutant





U. S. RESTRICTED
HEADQUARTERS 143RD INFANTRY REGIMENT
APO 36, U. S. Army

BATTALION COMMANDERS, 1 TO 30 APRIL 1945

FIRST BATTALION

Clarkin, Thomas R.	Lt Col	O-19983	St Paul, Minnesota
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SECOND BATTALION

O'Brien, Robert L. Jr.	Major	O-308359	New York, New York
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THIRD BATTALION

Andrews, Theodore H. 1 to 9 April	Lt Col	O-365318	Caldwell, Texas
Adams, Marcus W. 10 to 30 April	Major	O-359273	Whitesburg, Kentucky

PROVISIONAL FOURTH BATTALION

Lynch, William R. Jr. 1 to 4 April	Major	O-384058	Huntsville, Texas
Ressijac, Louis H. 5 to 30 April	Major	O-23454	Mobile, Alabama

COMPANY COMMANDERS, 1 TO 30 APRIL 1945

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Jordan, Earle H. Jr.	Captain	O-1293600	Auburn, Maine
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SERVICE COMPANY

Maskew, Herbert S. 1 to 16 April	Captain	O-2055838	Galveston, Texas
McCarthy, Justin V. 17 to 30 April	Captain	O-1285461	New York, New York

ANTITANK COMPANY

Stakes, Harry C. 1 to 4 April	Captain	O-407590	Huntsville, Texas
McCutcheon, John J. 5 to 30 April	1st Lt	O-2055066	Hutto, Texas

CANNON COMPANY

Prichard, Philip J. Captain O-1288119 Thief River Falls, Minn.

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B. Major O-345134 Camden, New Jersey

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY FIRST BATTALION

Ninnis, Wilfred A. 1st Lt O-1312436 El Cerrito, California

COMPANY A

Hartzler, Gordon J. 1st Lt O-1312921 Goodland, Kansas

COMPANY B

Selvig, Kermit H. 1st Lt O-1296270 Opelika, Alabama

COMPANY C

Netherton, Thomas H. Captain O-1290796 Chicago, Illinois

COMPANY D

Thomas, Horace A. 1st Lt O-1295962 Portland, Maine

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY SECOND BATTALION

Hunn, Walter L. 1st Lt O-482727 Chillicothe, Ohio

COMPANY E

Larson, Peter (NMI) Captain O-384739 Omaha, Nebraska

COMPANY F

Ward, Elmer S. 1st Lt O-1683477 Ivanhoe, Texas

COMPANY G

Harris, Albert H. 1st Lt O-1295371 Millerston, Pennsylvania
1 to 2 April - 7 to 27 April

Merigold, Frank A. Captain O-311346 Chicago, Illinois
3 to 6 April

Boers, Frank L. 1st Lt O-1289030 Lonsdale, Rhode Island

COMPANY H

Thornburg, Cyril F. 1st Lt O-1310174 Auburn, Nebraska

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY THIRD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L. Jr. Captain O-1289026 Fort Myer, Virginia

COMPANY I

Hancock, Harold R. 1st Lt O-1294470 Dallas, Texas

COMPANY K

Gox, O'Dean T. Captain O-2055220 Waco, Texas

COMPANY L

Jackson, Samuel T. Jr. Captain O-1304223 Corpus Christi, Texas

COMPANY M

Malchow, Allen J. 1st Lt O-1301845 Tonawanda, New York

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

APO #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY

1 TO 10 MAY 1945

CONCLUSIONS OF THE REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

With victory ours we are not unmindful of the Supreme Power that guided our leaders, and of the many comrades, no longer present, who by their sacrifices made it possible.

T. R. E. Clarkin
THOMAS R. CLARKIN
Lt Col., 143rd Infantry
Commanding

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY
1 TO 10 MAY 1945

On 1 May 1945, the 143 RCT in Division Reserve with the 133rd Field Artillery Battalion, Company C, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Company C, 753d Tank Battalion attached, was ordered to assume the responsibility for policing and patrolling the sector adjacent to MURNAU, BAVARIA, GERMANY.

While policing and patrolling the sector, 143 units were to check for: (1) pockets of resistance, (2) concentration camps, (3) enemy equipment and supply dumps, and (4) refugee centers. In addition, elements of the 143 relieved elements of the RCT 141 guarding installations; warehouses, bridges, and two trainloads of political prisoners, one at SEESHAUPT Station (Y-658199) and one at TUTZIG Station (Y-543295).

Daily patrols were sent out along prearranged routes thru WEILHEIM (563-211), WILZHOFFEN (578258), MONATSHAUSEN (601289). A cache of elaborate radio equipment was found in a castle in the town of BAIL (5729) and was closely guarded by units of the 143.

In EFFELDORF (683144), 1000 Jews freed from a concentration camp started looting the town. In an effort to keep them from mingling with civilians, and spreading disease, troops of the 3rd Battalion 143, were sent out to control them and get them back into the camp.

During the Regimental screening and mopping up operations on 2 May 1945, 822 prisoners of war were apprehended, while our 2nd Battalion units engaged eight resisting SS troops killing three and capturing the remainder.

The disposition of the units of the 143rd Infantry around the Regimental CP at MURNAU (Y-6003) was as follows: 1st Battalion at ISSING (Y-3933), 2nd Battalion at SEEHAUSEN (Y-5804), 3rd Battalion at OBER EGLFING (Y-5809), 4th Battalion at HURLACH (Y-2851).

Troops of the 1st Battalion, 143, guarded the BERLIN Institute of Technology where valuable instruments and equipment were housed.

Continuing in Division Reserve, all units of the 143rd continued their respective missions of screening, policing, and patrolling their designated areas. During 4 May 1945, 484 prisoners of war were rounded up and marched off to the PW cage.

On 5 May 1945, the 7th Army Radio Station broadcast every 15 minutes until 2000 hours (thereafter every half hour) the following message: "All troops of German Army Group which opposes 7th Army have been ordered by their commander to surrender at 1200 hours, tomorrow 6 May. Forward units of 7th Army are directed to remain in place and cease further combat at once by command of Lieutenant General PATCH".

On this same day Lieutenant General FORCHAS, Commanding General, German Army Group "G", surrendered with strict orders to his command that there would be no further firing. While all enemy troops facing the 143 belonged to this Army Group "G", communication between units was so poor that it was thought that individual elements would surrender not as a group but as separate units. Plans were made for proposing surrender negotiations to the enemy units directly opposing 143 elements along the fluid front line.

Units of the 2nd Battalion relieved units of the RCT 141 in the vicinity of SCHARFEN (024048) along the east side of TEGERNSEE while the 4th Battalion placed a guard on a warehouse containing medical supplies at GEMUND (0013).

As a result of the screening and patrolling activities of 143 units, approximately 500 prisoners of war were processed thru IPW channels.

Meanwhile, the RCT moved its CP from MURNAU to TEGERNSEE, GERMANY (016-099) to open at 2000 hours. In the 1st Battalion area in the vicinity of BAD TOLZ, the troops went into good defensive positions with elements echeloned to their rear to keep the enemy from possible infiltration. During the day 5 May 1945, approximately 500 prisoners were processed thru Regimental PW channels.

In the screening of all Germans only discharge papers issued six months or more ago were honored.

German troops remained under control of their officers under guard and supervision of American soldiers.

All displaced persons were sent to displaced persons centers. Prior to the opening of such centers such persons were gathered together and collected in areas designated by our units.

Because of scarcity of suitable supplies of blankets, mess kits and personal equipment, the surrendering troops were permitted to retain all personal belongings. Food supplies were to be supplied in so far as possible by the local authorities. Strain on food supplies was tremendous since the civilian supply was subnormal.

All during the day of 6 May, our troops were held on position in anticipation of the active surrender of the German XIIIth Army Corps.

On the afternoon of 6 May 1945, the Regimental Executive Officer, and Major SANFORD H. WEBSTER, O-2322, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 143, of KINGSTON, RHODE ISLAND, 1st Lieutenant WILLIAM D. MAC GIBBON, O-508201, Regimental S-2, of PORTLAND, OREGON, with Private First Class FRED POPPER, of NEW YORK CITY, the interpreter, in a jeep under white flags approached a road block manned by the enemy in the vicinity of BAD TOLZ, BAVARIA, GERMANY, in the 1st

Battalion, 143 sector. Accosted by German guards, our men stopped until our mission was explained - that of negotiation for German surrender. Immediately our party was conducted to the German Commanding Officer of the Company in position in this area. This German officer joined our group to act as the guide to escort our party to the Battalion CP. From here they were escorted by my Major KINKE, a Battalion Commander of the 37th SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment of the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division, to Regiment. Passing on foot several heavily defended road blocks and thru innumerable German troops in heavily defended positions, the 143rd party, bypassing Division Headquarters, reached the German XIIIth Corps CP far in the rear of the front lines.

In the XIIIth Corps CP was the Commanding General, Lieutenant General WALTER HAHN as well as several German Wehrmacht Field Officers and SS officers. The status quo of the existing front lines was definitely established and following that, the 143 officers made proposals regarding future negotiations for the German surrender of all units facing the 143. After temporary arrangements for the surrender negotiations had been worked out, our 143 party started back for the front lines escorted by the same German officer guide. Each time a road block was encountered, the group got out of the car, walked around the block while the German officer commandeered the nearest car on the far side of the block and the party would proceed. At several points along the route bridges were blown. At one point the party passed a bridge and looking back they noticed that the bridge was not only carefully prepared for demolition but also that the adjacent areas were heavily mined. Noticing these glances at the defenses, Major KINKE said with a smile, "I fix your panzers!"

At one point where the road had been blown, water, knee deep, splashed against the sides of a precipitous cliff. The combination of rugged terrain, ideal for defense and the defense installations themselves meant that a proposed 143 assault on those German-held positions might bring heavy and severe casualties.

During the entire return trip while our party passed countless numbers of German soldiers, the escorting German officer stood on the car's running board to clear passage and to assure safe conduct of our officers' party. Again reaching the front lines, the escorting officer left our party and the 143 officer party returned to the Regimental CP at TEGERNSEE.

Coincidental with this visit to German headquarters of Lieutenant Colonel CLARKIN, Major WEBSTER, and Lieutenant MAC GIBBON, a German Volkswagen under twin white flags passed thru Company F outposts. Its occupants included a German colonel, a German captain, and a first sergeant interpreter who were conducted by 1st Lieutenant ELMER S. WARD, O-1683477, Commanding Officer Company F, 143, of IVANHOE, TEXAS, to the Regimental CP at TEGERNSEE, BAVARIA, GERMANY. The German colonel, speaking for the German XIIIth Corps Commander conferred with Colonel JOHN J. ALBRIGHT, O-7305, Commanding Officer, 143rd Infantry Regiment, of COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, who represented the

7th Army Commanding Officer, and during the next three hours plans were formulated for the formal surrender of the entire XIIIth Corps at 1300 hours 8 May 1945.

Previous to the arrival at 143 Regimental Headquarters of these German Corps representatives, troops of the 2nd Battalion, 143, found that a super-elite group of 500-600 German troops, mostly SS, facing them across a road block south of TEGERNSEE, wanted an officer to negotiate their surrender. Accordingly, Major ROBERT L. O'BRIEN JR., O-308359, Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion, 143, of NEW YORK CITY, with the aid of an interpreter and his driver rode into the SS lines, bypassed the road blocks before them, were accepted by the Commanding Officer of this sector, and were subsequently guided to the German Regimental CP where the German Commanding Officer immediately directed them on back further to the CP of the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division. All along the way enemy troops from several units including German WACS were everywhere in evidence. Suddenly here far behind the lines, two Americans - a lieutenant and a private ran out to Major O'BRIEN'S car. From the MP Platoon of the 141st Infantry Regiment, this American officer and enlisted man have been captured the week previously while nailing up advance party road signs.

Continuing on, Major O'BRIEN and his party arrived at the Division CP, and were met by a powerfully built, black-haired, fanatical appearing SS officer, who was Colonel BOCKMAN, Commanding Officer, 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division, our party dismounted and entered the CP. Wearing many decorations including the Iron Cross, Colonel BOCKMAN was not the least bit interested in surrender, knowing full well the excellent defense positions held by his forces. Moody and surly about the proposed surrender, BOCKMAN was not well supported by his staff officers, who as a group were very anxious that the surrender go through, and they started talking immediately about possible surrender arrangements. When surrender preliminaries had been gone over, Major O'BRIEN, taking the 141 officer and enlisted man with him, returned with proper escort to our lines.

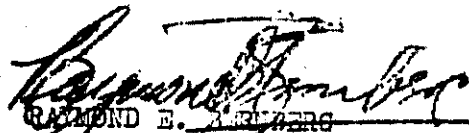
At 1300 hours 8 May 1945, the designated day of surrender, of the German XIIIth Corps convoy, headed by an escort of six motorcycle military police preceding the Commanding General, XIII Corps approached the predetermined surrender line. Lieutenant General WALTER HAHM, a stern, stiff-necked soldier of the old school, dismounted and approached the staff officers of the 143. Erect and with great dignity Lieutenant General HAHM with his staff, and Division Commanders made formal surrender to Colonel ALBRIGHT. It was learned that the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Commanding Officer had committed suicide with one of his staff officers. In an atmosphere of cold business, the surrender was formally completed within 15 minutes and the flow of surrendering German forces started across the surrender line. First the German staff officers, followed by the troops of the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division riding on wide assortment and description of vehicles (any that could offer

transportation) and finally remnants of the Wehrmacht Divisions. All vehicles were escorted into a field where a motor pool of captured vehicles was formed. At this point, the German troops detrucked, assembled into their various units and began the two kilometer march to the PW cage. As the troops marched by designated points, they placed their equipment in piles - arms, ammunition, gas masks, etc. Actually more equipment had been thrown away or abandoned in the hills than was assembled in the small orderly piles. So much enemy equipment had been overrun that little was left for the enemy to turn in. Illustrative of the desperate straits of the German forces was the fact that when surrender negotiations started, the troops of the XIIIth Corps had only a two day food supply. The 12th Labor Battalion turned in one minesweeper and two lengths of rope. Their plight clearly showed the lack of capacity of the enemy to continue longer resistance.

The surrendering units included a vast assortment of various and sundry units of all types of troops. Some definite units were clearly definable, and three of five infantry divisions identified were units that had formerly opposed the 143rd Infantry in combat within FRANCE. The 198th Infantry Division had fought at MONTELMAR, FRANCE. The 16th Infantry Division had furiously struggled against our advance at the German proposed "Winter Line", at the MEURTHE River. The 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division had been active opponents in the BITCHE, FRANCE, Area. The remaining two infantry units were the 407th and the 19th Infantry Divisions. Other miscellaneous units were: the 21st Flak Division, 1st Company, 84th Werfer Artillery, 12th Labor Battalion, (most of whom were boys, 15 to 17 years of age), 269 GHQ Artillery Battalion, an engineer company, railroad workers, and a special state police unit. In addition to this amalgum, there were many stragglers from the units which had retreated before the Allied 5th and 8th Armies in ITALY. Among the personages taken prisoner and in addition to the strictly military personnel was Herr DORSH who carried the equivalent rank of Lieutenant General and was one of the organizers and executives of Organization TODT. Total German military personnel surrendering to the 143rd Infantry was 1107 officers and 15,937 enlisted men. Captured enemy equipment included 985 assorted vehicles and trucks, 16 AA guns, one armored car, 10 artillery pieces, 88mm standard field guns, 11 ton and a half truckloads of small arms ammunition. Both men and equipment appeared to be of inferior quality, while their officers appeared to be arrogant, overbearing, demanding of strict discipline from their men. This was best evidenced by the manner in which the men jumped at the command of their officers.

All the next day the surrendering troops continued to come in and from this date up thru 13 May details on the assimilation of the PW's and their equipment kept our units busily occupied.

V-E Day, starting at 0001, 9 May 1945 was soberly spent in the 143rd area. All were indeed thankful that the business of the war was over but none forgot the task that lay ahead and the waiting necessary before decisions would be reached concerning the future dispositions of the men of this Regiment. The war in Europe was over - the war against JAPAN was reaching new heights in the hope that soon her resistance would be broken.


RAYMOND E. BERNERS
Captain, 143d Infantry
Adjutant

BATTALION COMMANDERS, 1 to 10 MAY 1945

FIRST BATTALION

Clarkin, Thomas R. 1 to 3 May	Lt Col	0-19983	St Paul, Minnesota
Webster, Sanford H. 4 May to 10 May	Major	0-23222	Kingston, Rhode Island

SECOND BATTALION

O'Brien, Robert L. Jr.	Major	0-308359	New York, New York
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THIRD BATTALION

Adams, Marcus W.	Major	0-359273	Whitesburg, Kentucky
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COMPANY COMMANDERS, 1 to 10 May 1945

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Jordan, Earle H. Jr.	Captain	0-1293600	Auburn, Maine
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SERVICE COMPANY

McCarthy, Justin V.	Captain	0-1285461	New York, New York
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ANTITANK COMPANY

McCutcheon, John J.	1st Lt	0-2055066	Hutto, Texas
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MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B.	Major	0-345134	Camden, New Jersey
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CANNON COMPANY

Prichard, Philip J.	Captain	0-1288119	Thief River Falls, Minn.
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY FIRST BATTALION

Ninnis, Wilfred A.	1st Lt	0-1312436	El Cerrito, California
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COMPANY A

Hartzler, Gordon J.	1st Lt	0-1312921	Goodland, Kansas
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COMPANY B

Selvig, Kermit H. 1st Lt 0-1296270 Opelika, Alabama

COMPANY C

Netherton, Thomas H. Captain 0-1290796 Chicago, Illinois

COMPANY D

Thomas, Horace A. Captain 0-1295962 Portland, Maine

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY SECOND BATTALION

Hunn, Walter L. 1st Lt 0-482727 Chillicothe, Ohio

COMPANY E

Larson, Peter NMI Captain 0-384739 Omaha, Nebraska

COMPANY F

Ward, Elmer S. 1st Lt 0-1683477 Ivanhoe, Texas

COMPANY G

Beers, Frank L. 1st Lt 0-1289030 Lonsdale, Rhode Island

COMPANY H

Thornburg, Cyril F. 1st Lt 0-1310174 Auburn, Nebraska

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY THIRD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L. Jr. Captain 0-1289026 Fort Myer, Virginia

COMPANY I

Hancock, Harold R. Captain 0-1294470 Dallas, Texas

COMPANY K

Cox, O'Dean T. Captain 0-2055220 Waco, Texas

COMPANY L

Jackson, Samuel T. Jr. Captain 0-1304223 Corpus Christi, Texas

COMPANY M

Malchow, Allen J. 1st Lt 0-1301845 Tonawanda, New York

HEADQUARTERS 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

APO #36, U. S. Army

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

11-31 MAY 1945

CONCLUSIONS OF THE REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

Although the shooting phase of the Nazi war is over, American troops marching forward in the Far Pacific remind us that our war will not be ended until the remaining enemies of our United States have joined their ancestors or capitulated.

T. R. Clarkin
THOMAS R. CLARKIN
Lt Col., 143rd Infantry
Commanding

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

11-31 MAY 1945

The momentous occurrence of V-E Day had now passed. It had long been sought by the members of this Regiment. Few Divisions could claim as long, arduous, sustained combat toward that end as ours.

The work continued, accepting the surrender of the German Forces and enforcing its unconditional terms. However, in everyone's mind loomed the thought: what now?

Immediately following the unconditional surrender, SHAETF released the pair system involving the principles of discharge and release from the service for enlisted men. Soon after, some of those with high points in the Regiment started home. These were mainly men from National Guard days of mobilization of this Division whose combat record dated with Salerno and all along the way to the end of the war; and men with children to boost their adjusted service rating scores.

Nevertheless, without any idea of what our future would be, i.e., occupation, combat in the Far East, going home, etc., the Regiment settled down at once to do the job on hand.

On 11 May 1945, the Regiment less the 2nd Battalion maintained guards on military installations and prisoner of war enclosures and conducted limited training. The 2nd Battalion commanded by Major ROBERT L. O'BRIEN JR., O-30835 of WASHINGTON, D.C., remained in the TEGERN SEE Area enforcing unconditional surrender terms and maintaining control over units of the XIII German Army Corps.

Operations instructions from Division Headquarters received late on 11 May 1945 indicated relief of our Division in the present area by the 42nd Division and elements of the 10th Armored Division. We had now been relieved from attachment to XXI Corps and attached to the VI Corps. We were alerted for the move to a new area.

On 12 May 1945 a party of the 10th Armored Division contacted the Regiment in preparation for the imminent relief. The elements of the 10th Armored Division were to relieve our Regiment while the rest of the Division was to be relieved by the 42nd Infantry Division. That day 1400 prisoners of war were transferred from the PW cage in BAD TOLZ, to the PW cage in SCHLIERSEE. Orders were then received by Division that relief would be effected by 14 May 1945. The Division would then move into the KAUFBEUREN-LANDSBERG sector. The Regimental sector was to be the LANDSBERG-MERING Area.

The principles of responsibility in the new sector were as follows:

- a. Protection of supply installations, supplementing as necessary the installation guards and coordinating security measures.
- b. Security of railroads, MSRs, petroleum pipe lines and critical signal installations.
- c. Protection and disposition of captured enemy materiel and supplies as directed by current Administrative Orders.
- Disarming and police of civilian population.
- e. Support of Military Government.
- f. Disciplinary control of all troops in sectors, including members of all Allied Forces not under direct command of VI Corps.
- g. Maintenance of road blocks to prevent unauthorized movement of civilians or German military personnel. Utilize selected road blocks to check proper use of motor vehicles and to report uniform and equipment violations.
- h. Establishment of security of occupied towns, employing troops located in the towns. Security posts will require all personnel to identify themselves by pass word or credentials.
- i. Maintenance of continuous security patrols to check security of military installations, arrest suspicious individuals and arrest civilians violating control regulations.
- j. Coordination with adjacent commanders.

The Regimental CP was installed in LANDSBERG on 15 May 1945; the 1st Battalion vicinity MERING, 2nd Battalion vicinity MAMMENDORF, 3rd Battalion vicinity LANDSBERG Airport, 4th Provisional Battalion vicinity LANDSBERG.

The Regiment assumed the responsibility of securing and guarding the following installations in our area:

- a. 143 RCT:

INSTALLATIONS

LOCATIONS

Small arms factory

Y-319450

INSTALLATIONS

20 boxes of radar equipment
Ordnance depot with tank repair parts
Army clothing store
German military hospital
Hospital
Enemy demolition dump
Berlin Institute of Technology
RR bridge
DP camp
13 RR cars - signal equipment
generators
Warehouse containing kitchen equipment
Installations at 9th Evacuation Hospital
at airfield

LOCATIONS

TURKENFELD (Y-4951)
LANDSBERG (Y-3443)
LANDSBERG (Y-3443)
GRUNTERSHOFFEN (Y-4850)
GRIEFENBERG (Y-496468)
Y-315545
SCHURFING (Y-380434)
KNUFERING (Y-340480)
LANDSBERG (Y-3443)
Y-455503

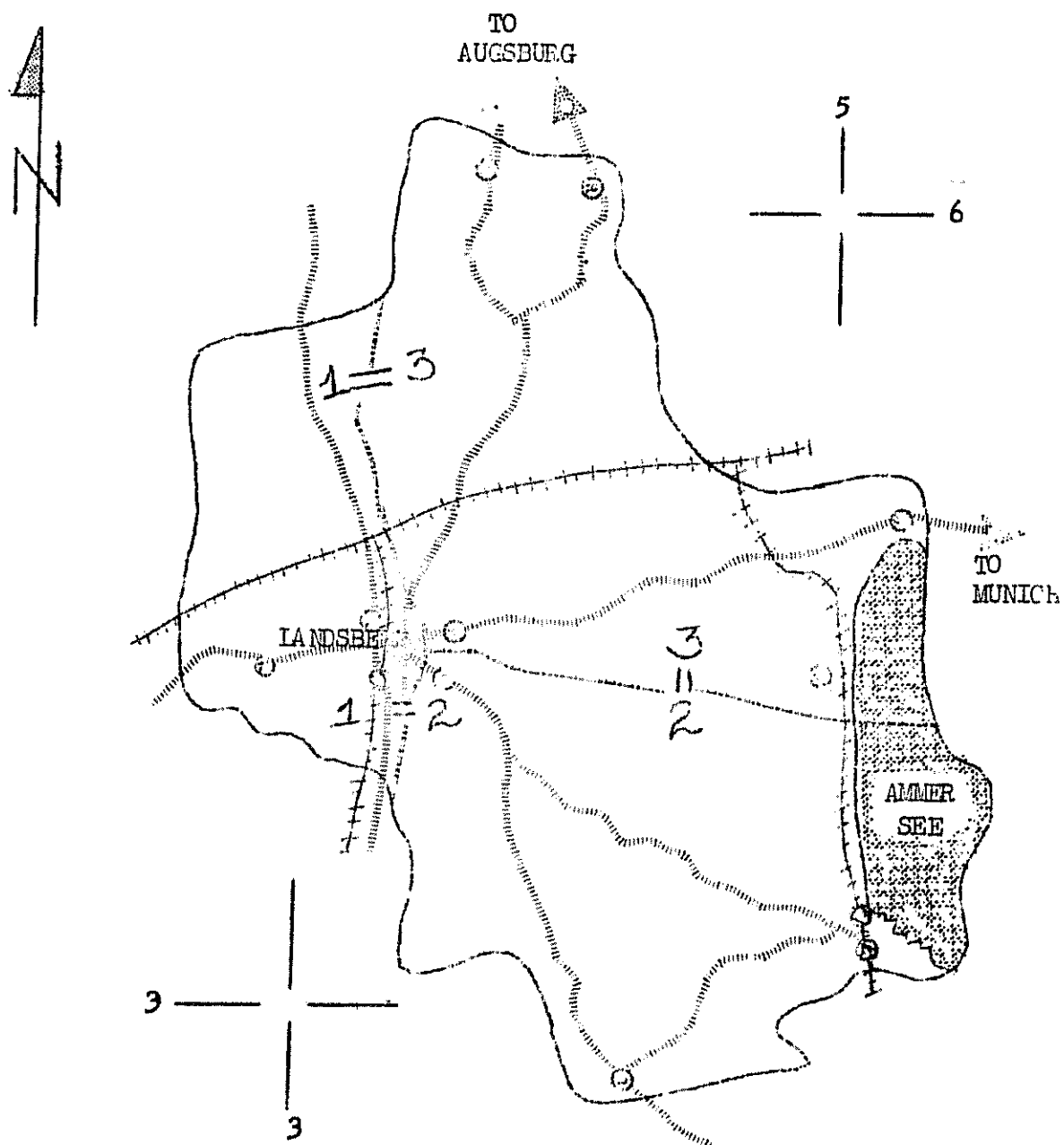
Check posts were set up in our sector under the supervision of the Regimental S-2 (see sketch).

The Battalions immediately made reconnaissance of their installations they were to guard; training and recreational areas were set up; local security was formed for the areas.

The Regiment now directed its energy in fulfilling the present mission. A training program was set up to involve three and a half hours of military operational subjects each morning, one hour I & E activities, organized athletics, recreational periods, formal inspections, parades and ceremonies in the afternoon.

The training objectives were to:

- a. Obtain the highest standard of military courtesy, uniform dress, and discipline.
- b. Rehabilitate personnel.
- c. Obtain the highest standard of maintenance of arms, vehicles, and other equipment.
- d. Correct deficiencies noted in recent operations.
- e. Perfect offensive and defensive action of small units.
- f. Maintain a high esprit and morale within the command.



MAP SHOWING ROAD CHECK POINTS IN 143D INFANTRY SECTOR, LANDSBERG, LANDKIRCHEN

SCALE: 1.250,000, GERMANY

- () Road Check Points on Main Routes
- Main Routes
- Battalion Boundary

On the 18th of May our Regiment was relieved by elements of the 45th Division in the TRIEDBERG-FURSTENFELDBRUCK-KREISE Area. The plan was to assume the responsibility of the part of the LANDSBERG-KREIS now occupied by the 2nd DB (French) approximately 25 May 1945. This area included the beautiful ALGER SEE. Much anticipation was experienced in receiving this area as the recreational possibilities were many.

The Provisional 4th Battalion, commanded by Captain PHILIP J. PRICHARD, O-1288119, of THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA, was relieved by the 1st Battalion, commanded by Major SANFORD H. WEBSTER, O-23222, of KINGSTON, RHODE ISLAND, on 21 May 1945 in the responsibility of guarding installations G-1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The 1st Battalion moved in the vicinity LANDSBERG on 21 May 1945.

On 21 May 1945 our deployment lists of standing security guard posts were as follows:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>MISSION</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NO. OF POSTS</u>	<u>TOTAL EM EMPLOYED</u>
Co B	Museum	Y-535706		9
Co G	Browery (guarded between 1600 and 2100 hours)	MAISACH (Y-6163)		3
Co F	German military hospital	Y-4859		12
Co K	Berlin Institute of Technology	Y-380434		1 sqd
Co K	Installations at 9th Evacuation Hospital (at airfield)	Y-360470		1 plat
3d Co 4th Bn	Small arms factory	Y-319450		13
3d Co 4th Bn	Enemy demolition dump	Y-315545		8
Cn Co	RR bridge	Y-340480		12
1st Co 4th Bn	Ordnance depot with repair parts	LANDSBERG (Y-3443)	9	62
	Army clothing store			
	DP camp			
3d Co 4th Bn	Prison	LANDSBERG (Y-3443)		21

On the morning of 23 May 1945, Lieutenant Colonel THOMAS R. CLARKIN, O-19983, of ST PAUL, MINNESOTA, now our Regimental Commander, reviewed the Provisional 4th Battalion, then disbanded all units of it to return to normal T/O and E. The 4th Provisional Battalion had served its purpose well in combat. Now that we were in garrison its necessity had ceased.

The 45th Division assumed responsibility for the 2nd Battalion sector on 23 May, the 2nd Battalion, with Cannon Company attached, then made preparations for move into their new area vicinity DIESSEN. The 3rd Battalion made reconnaissance for move and adjustment to new boundaries vicinity UTTING offoc-

tive 26 May 1945. On 26 May the Regimental CP displaced to UNTER-SCHONDORF on the ALLER SEE, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions respectively to DIESSEN and UT-
TING on the ALLER SEE.

The new area or rather the new area absorbed by the adjustment of boundaries was in itself a recreational playground. The lake had numerous sail boats, motor launches and various boating and fishing facilities. The adjacent area was very suitable for horseback riding. There was no doubt that morale could not be any higher at a location such as this. All facilities for boating, horseback riding, fishing and excursions were utilized to the utmost. One could say that the 143rd Infantry Regiment was happy to the last man in spending these days of occupation on the ALLER SEE. Nowhere in Central Europe could more adequate recreational facilities be provided for combat men.

During this period the Regiment controlled numerous displaced persons centers. They are enumerated as follows:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NATIONALITY</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
LANDSBERG (3444)	Czechoslovakians	12
	Hungarians	8
	Jews	254
	Lithuanians	1
	Polos	44
	Russians	18
	Yugoslavs	4
		<u>341</u>
UNTER-IGLING (293467)	Austrians	6
	Belgians	1
	Czechoslovakians	3
	French	4
	Grooks	2
	Hollanders	2
	Hungarians	93
	Italians	65
	Jews	16
	<u>192</u>	
KLEIN KITZIGHOFEN (258471)	Czechoslovakians	1
	French	1
	Polos	11
	Russians	1
	Yugoslavs	7
	<u>21</u>	

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NATIONALITY</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
GROSS KITZIGHOFEN (271476)	Polos	2
	Russians	10
	Ukrainians	17
		<u>29</u>
HURLACH (289512)	Czechoslovakians	1
	Grooks	1
	Hollandors	4
	Hungarians	1
	Jows	1
	Lithuanians	5
	Polos	56
	Rumanians	1
	Russians	17
	Ukrainians	13
		<u>100</u>
ROTT (417279)	Crimoans	1
	Polos	2
	Slovacs	1
	Ukrainians	10
	Yugoslavs	27
		<u>41</u>
THAINING (403355)	Crimoans	24
	Russians	1
		<u>25</u>
OBER-FINNING (443410)	Czechoslovakians	4
	Ukrainians	3
		<u>7</u>
OBER-MUHLHSEN (432368)	Ukrainians	2
LENGENFELD (380388)	Polos	3
HOFSTETTEN (415397)	Ukrainians	6
ENGENREID (481354)	Yugoslavs	14
HUBSCHENREID (481368)	Croats	9
RETTENHOFEN (454353)	Polos	2

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NATIONALITY</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
RIEDERAU (508370)	(Breakdown undetermined)	35
DIESSEN (510330)	Belgians	1
	Bulgarians	4
	Czechoslovakians	4
	French	7
	Hollanders	8
	Hungarians	1
	Italians	2
	Lithuanians	13
	Polos	20
	Rumanians	3*
	Russians	24
	Swedes	2
	Yugoslavs	3
		<u>92</u>
PORGEN (375412)	Hungarians	6
	Polos	15
		<u>21</u>
UMMENDORF (365397)	Polos	3
PITZLING (347399)	Polos	8
	Ukrainians	2
		<u>10</u>
STOFFEN (364388)	French	1
MUNDRACHING (346337)	Russians	1
STADL (366343)	Belgians	2
PFLUGDORF (376346)	Polos	1
LANDSBERG CASERNE (334427)	Austrians	3
	Belgians	115
	Czechoslovakians	107
	Dutch	123
	French	589
	Greeks	34
	Hungarians	543
	Italians	87

RESTRICTED

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NATIONALITY</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
LANDSBERG CASERNE (CONT'D)	Jews	922
	Latvians	22
	Lithuanians	49
	Polos	896
	Russians	2724
	Spaniards	31
	Swedes	1
	Yugoslavs	137
		<u>6343</u>
LARGER NO. 2 (301432)	(Breakdown undetermined)	92
UDETH (290430)	French	12
	Hungarians	63
	Italians	9
	Russians	335
		<u>419</u>
MULDERS (482455)	Polos	156
ERPFTING (303407)	Russians	63
ST. OTTILIEH HOSPITAL (461496)	(Breakdown undetermined)	1617
HOLZHAUSEN HOSPITAL (275479)	(Breakdown undetermined)	400

Fortunately for our Regiment, few problems existed in maintaining high morale and discipline. Rest camp quotas were small and infrequent, however, the facilities available for recreation in our area more than compensated for the lack of rest camp quotas. Training periods were scaled at the right amount of time to absorb the interest of the troops. Only one problem, that of non-fraternization appeared to be one that needed adjustment in the future, to prevent it from becoming too great a problem.

In its essence, non-fraternization was high principled, but somehow its theory didn't take in the countless children waving at the soldiers, the countless young girls desirous of male companionship, the countless soldiers homesick and desirous of female companionship. The problems and opinion involved are presented herewith by the Regiment's Battalion Commanders:

Major SANFORD H. WEBSTER, O-23222, commanding 1st Battalion:

"The non-fraternization policy means to the average American soldier that

he will abstain from enjoying the pleasantness of the German home and from the companionship of the German women. It is rare for a soldier to be disciplined for fraternizing with German men. The much more common breach of the non-fraternization policy takes place when a soldier's desire for a woman or his inherent friendliness for anyone gets the best of his better judgment. The nature of the American soldier is such that hate of any people - and it takes an emotion as strong as hate to overcome the inborn desires of men for the companionship of any acceptable woman - is foreign to him. Four years of war and fighting have not made the soldier hate the Germans either. The comparatively easy life of occupation certainly will not make him hate the Germans either. The non-fraternization order will be enforced to the best of the ability of all commanders. The majority of troops will obey it, the minority will not."

Major ROBERT L. O'BRIEN JR., O-308359, commanding 2nd Battalion:

"The non-fraternization policy as laid down is extremely difficult to enforce now that hostilities have ceased and soldiers have more opportunity to give vent to their gregarious natures. While it is felt that decrees and fiat pronouncements which tend to legislate the basic human impulses are wrong of themselves, nevertheless there is a definite purpose for the non-fraternization policy which many men overlook. The people of Germany do not feel a sense of guilt, or manifest any feeling of responsibility for creating an unwise government and deliberately fostering a world war. Their ambitious leaders and docile followers to the end of the rainbow of world supremacy can only become aware of their faults by constant reminder, expressed in terms of a non-fraternization policy. But to enforce such a policy on men of varied natures and intelligence requires wise planning and is primarily an educational project, certainly sufficiently important for much publicity to be given to the advantages of non-fraternization. This publicity could well be crystallized in a documentary film for compulsory showing to all officers and men. Moreover, greater effort could well be devoted to educating the German citizens as to just why such a policy has been directed against them. Punitive action to compel compliance with this policy is inherently a sign of weakness and develops in the soldier who is not completely aware of the purpose of non-fraternization the desire to try in clever and devious ways to avoid obeying the decree.

Major MARCUS W. ADAMS, O-359273, commanding 3rd Battalion:

"After a reasonable length of time during combat and after combat experience with the present non-fraternization policy, and after considering all the arguments pro and con I feel sure that the policy as it stands now, will not work over a long period of time. The reasons are many but first of all and mainly it is not natural for a man to be without feminine companionship. If each individual could be sure that he would be leaving the country within a short period of time, then I would expect him to refrain from seeking com-

relationships among the Germans but with troops that are here for a long time or an undetermined length of time then it is only right that the soldier be allowed certain liberties in "picking his company" on off duty hours. My suggestion would be that the fraternization policy be relaxed to such an extent that soldiers could mingle with certain groups of German people who have been screened by AMG or GIC. These people could wear an identification or be organized into social clubs or societies where soldiers could meet them. In conjunction with this suggestion, a strong security program should be initiated in the training of the soldier, with the objective of convincing the individual soldier of the necessity of being able to protect himself and other military personnel against possible sabotage by unfriendly German agents."


RAYMOND E. BERNBERG

Captain, 143rd Infantry

BATTALION COMMANDERS, 11 to 31 MAY 1945

FIRST BATTALION

Webster, Sanford H.	Major	O-23222	Kingston, Rhode Island
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SECOND BATTALION

O'Brien, Robert L. Jr.	Major	O-308359	New York, New York
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THIRD BATTALION

Adams, Marcus W.	Major	O-359273	Whitesburg, Kentucky
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COMPANY COMMANDERS, 11 to 31 MAY 1945

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Jordan, Earle H., Jr.	Captain	O-1293600	Auburn, Maine
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SERVICE COMPANY

McCarthy, Justin V.	Captain	O-1285461	New York, New York
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ANTI-TANK COMPANY

McCutcheon, John J.	1st Lt	O-2055066	Hutto, Texas
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MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Cunningham, Joel B.	Major	O-345134	Camden, New Jersey
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CANNON COMPANY

Prichard, Philip J.	Captain	O-1288119	Thief River Falls, Minn.
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HEADQUARTERS COMPANY FIRST BATTALION

Ninnis, Wilfred A.	1st Lt	O-1312436	El Cerrito, California
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COMPANY A

Hartzler, Gordon J.	1st Lt	O-1312921	Goodland, Kansas
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COMPANY B

Selvig, Kermit H.	1st Lt	O-1296270	Opelika, Alabama
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COMPANY C

Colbertson, Thomas H. Captain O-1290796 Chicago, Illinois

COMPANY D

Thomas, Horace A. Captain O-1295952 Portland, Maine

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY SECOND BATTALION

Hunn, Walter L. 1st Lt O-182727 Chillicothe, Ohio

COMPANY E

Larson, Peter MHI Captain O-181739 Omaha, Nebraska

COMPANY F

Ward, Elmer S. 1st Lt O-1683477 Ivanhoe, Texas

COMPANY G

Beers, Frank L. 1st Lt O-1289030 Kenndale, Rhode Island

COMPANY H

Thornburg, Cyril F. 1st Lt O-1312171 Lincoln, Nebraska
11 to 25 May
Florence, Samuel D. 1st Lt O-2051780 Rockwall, Texas
26 to 31 May

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY THIRD BATTALION

Ball, Martin L., Jr. Captain O-1284826 Fort Myer, Virginia

COMPANY I

Hancock, Harold R. Captain O-1296470 Dallas, Texas

COMPANY K

Cox, O'Dean T. Captain O-2055278 Tago, Texas

COMPANY L

Jackson, Samuel T., Jr. Captain O-1840771 Canyon Springs, Texas

COMPANY M

Malchow, Allen J. 1st Lt O-1840116 Richmond, New York

