

Q4-117

INTERVIEWS

(MATERIAL RECEIVED FROM THE 2nd INFORMATION AND HISTORICAL SERVICE--3 JAN 45)

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16. Gathemo, France. Aug. 1944
17. 8th Inf Div.. 9 July 1944: Brig. Gen. Nelson M. Walker and Co. "E", 121st Inf. Rgt.
18. SIEGFRIED LINE. 1st. Bn, 39 Regt., Co. "A"
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21. *3 overlays dealing with 1st Div's attack on Siegfried Line*

pdfelement

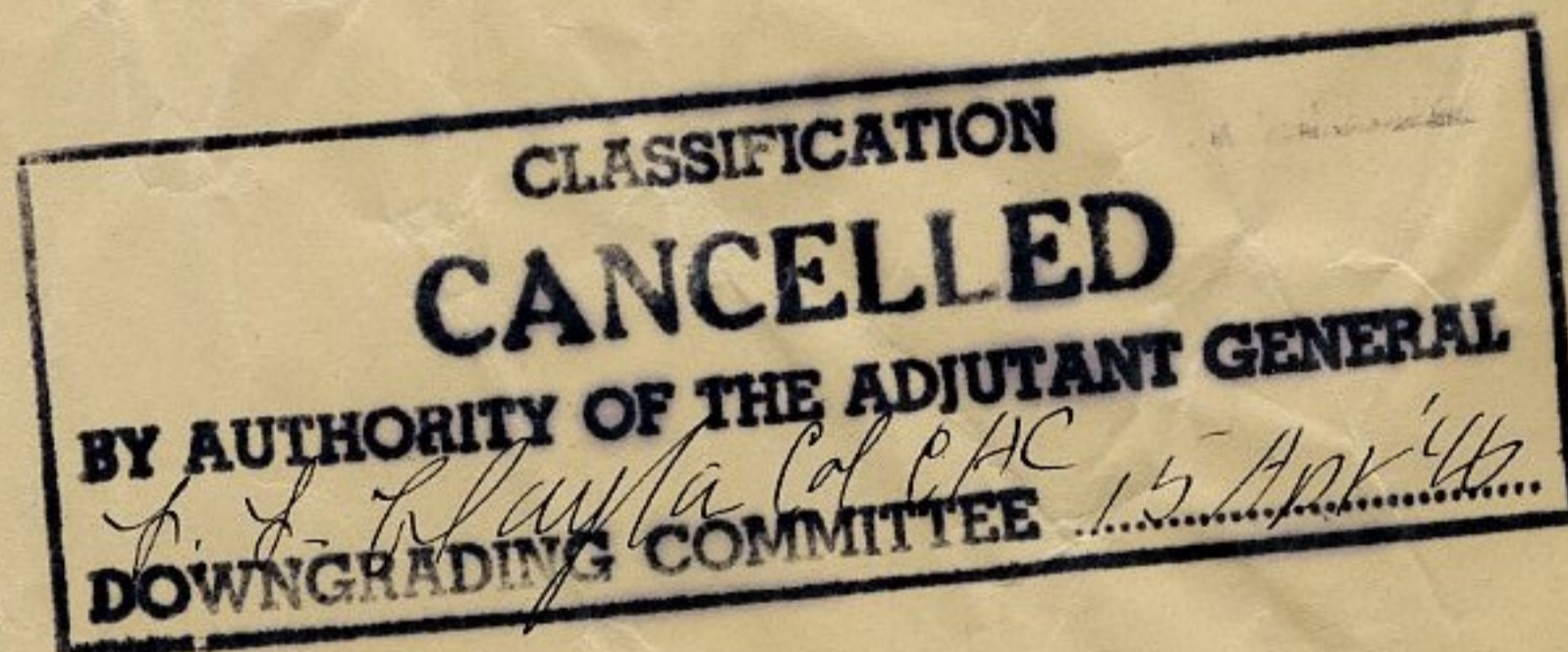
1st Inf Div
Battle of Aachen
8-22 Oct 44

An assortment of interviews on slow and bitter fighting, principally by one regiment. A fairly full story of operations down to battalion, with considerable detail of small unit combat. Descriptions of conditions in the city. Overlays and maps.

Narratives, based on numerous interviews:

16th Inf Regt 7 pages
18th Inf Regt 42 pages

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VII Corps	G-3 & others	6
Co B, 634th TD Bn	Group	7
Co B, 745th Tk Bn	Group	2
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Co F, 33d Armd Regt	CO	2
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~~SECRET~~

Attack on G and I Companies of 16th Infantry Regiment
During the Battle for Aachen

During the night of 14-15 Oct the mortar CP of G Co was located in the basement of a house vicinity (889447). It was being guarded by two men, was an extremely dark night, and, in addition, the Luftwaffe was overhead making hearing very difficult.

At about 2200 an enemy assault Engr Plat of about 40 men infiltrated thru the open left flank of G Co. They surrounded the house, killed one of the guards and wounded the other, the latter was still able to make his way to the house and alert the others.

The enemy then placed a pole charge against the house, which had walls almost two feet thick. The charge blew about half the house down. The enemy then entered what was left of the house, striking matches to see their way around. They then set up two MG's, one at the corner of the house and one about 50 yards to the rear.

In the meantime the men in the cellar were still in contact with G Co CP. The latter ordered them to go up stairs and drive the enemy out with their carbines and pistols. After recovering from the shock of the explosion the men went upstairs and drove the enemy out of the three rooms still intact.

About 150400 Oct three squads from G Co were in position to attack the house and surrounding positions. They yelled to the men in the house not to shoot, then rushed it, driving the enemy out.

In the meantime they had been out of contact with the 2d and 3d platoons on the line as the enemy had cut the wires. Contact was reestablished by patrol, and it was learned that they had both been attacked about midnight. The enemy infantry had been driven off by mortar and artillery fire. About 0600 the 1st platoon was moved up behind the gap between the 2d and 3d platoons. (See sketch)

However five tanks remained in front of the left flank of the left platoon, three in front of the right flank of the same platoon and three more in front of the right platoon. Four of the tanks were Shermans, one of which still had the insignia of the 5th Armd Div on it. The others were Mark VI's. About 0500 approximately one Company attacked the right platoon of G Co. Coming thru the woods they reached the position about 0800. Friendly artillery, mortar and small arms fire was placed on them slowing them up. Some were killed within 15 feet of the foxholes and a few right over the holes.

Some would come walking into G Company's positions, while others crawled. The former were killed by rifle and pistol fire while the latter were killed with hand grenades. P'47's strafed the enemy for about a mile. The situation cleared up about noon.

As pointed out before I Co had been placed between G and E Companies and was attached to the 2d Bn. It had no supporting weapons, other than those which could be called through the 2d Bn. G Co had one section of medium tanks, one section of light tanks and one section of TD's (of which only one TD was effective). I Co was divided into only two platoons. The front covered by these two companies was approximately 1,000 yards.

Between 0200 and 0400 at least two tanks and one SP plus a company of infantry were in front of the right platoon of I Co. Much friendly artillery and mortar fire was being laid on them. About 0800 the tanks and infantry enveloped the pillbox between I Co platoons driving the friendly troops out. The enemy infantry then proceeded to occupy the vacated foxholes and to otherwise dig in.

At the same time another attack of about Company strength developed against the right flank of the third platoon of I Company. The attack was definitely repelled, and practically all were killed by 60 mm mortar fire, and grenades and small arms fire. I Co men were "draping them over the foxholes."

The assault began over a ridge which ran parallel to their line about 20 yards to the front.

At about 0855 an artillery observer reported four enemy tankers knocked out in front of the two companies. At about 0900 a TD fired 22 rounds at the two tanks and SP in front of I Co, scoring at least one hit on the Sherman, and causing all three to withdraw. The TD was hit in return.

With the exception of the enemy around the pillbox between the two platoons of I Co this attack was well cleared up by 1100 hours.

From noon till about 1500 both companies had a breathing spell. At the latter hour a light and heavy artillery (~~a light and heavy arty~~) barrage started falling. Tanks (no. 2) to the left of the 2d plat of G Co shelled the Bn OP knocking out the arty observer.

About 1600 hours the attack started on the 3d platoons of both G & I companies. Within half an hour the enemy had reached the position of the 3d platoon of G Co. Capt. Richmond CO of I Co called for artillery fire on our own positions saying: "Put every gun you've got on it." Approximately four battalions of arty responded. The situation was cleared up by nightfall.

About 1800 hours C Co spotted five trucks, one half-track and four tanks moving from QUINX to (896451) where they disappeared from view. That would put them in the wooded area just to the front of I Co 3d platoon.

During the day (15 Oct) the enemy had employed at least two battalions of infantry. Another battalion of infantry had been employed against the 18th RCT, part of which had struck G Co, 16th RCT. In addition 14 tanks had been committed, none of which had penetrated the American position.

All during the day the enemy had kept steady pressure on this front sending small groups of men forward between the large scale attacks. Three small groups of men (10-20) were killed or repulsed. (Communications were out most of the day due to arty fire.)

About 152100 hours G Co, who had been using flares, saw a company of enemy infantry moving thru the assembly area, (wooded area to their front) accompanied by two Sherman tanks. They succeeded in "chasing out two squads", of the right flank of G Co and occupying their positions. The left flank held fast. The tanks were 10 yards in front of the line, firing into the platoon CP.

At 2200 hours, Lt. Day, G Co Ex. Off. was sent to battalion headquarters seeking help. He returned at 30 minutes after midnight with Co B, 26th RCT. One platoon was placed behind the 1st platoon of G Co.

The enemy was using fresh troops with plenty of vigor. They came thru the gap between the 2d and 3d platoons of G Co. They threw hand grenades at the TD crew knocking them out. A bazooka was fired at an American light tank knocking out the suspension system. The other light tank was booby trapped. There was ^{Confusion} general all over the G Co area. Nobody knew what the situation was because the enemy were "in front and on both sides of you".

About midnight the enemy around the pillbox between the two platoons of I Co, about 20 in number, moved in and took the light tank in I Co's area which they ^{hit} with a bazooka. They killed the crew and got in their foxholes. They also placed a pole charge against the side of a TD. The tanks and TD's were not occupied at night.

At the same time two fresh companies of infantry struck I Co. They succeeded in getting into the left flank platoon position and foxholes. During the night friendly arty was called on that portion of I Co position which had been overrun resulting in 40 enemy dead. Within an hour after daylight, 16 Oct, the enemy had been driven out of the foxholes around the light tanks, and out of the I Co 3d platoon position. One man from I Co went out by himself and killed eight enemy, wounded three and captured five in the I Co positions. One Sgt and four men armed with Tommy guns cleaned the rest of the enemy out of I's position and assisted in clearing the area of the 3d platoon of G Co. By 0900

the next morning the remnants of the attacking force had withdrawn.

However, some of the enemy in the preceding attack had dug in around the pillbox and in front of I Co's position (see sketch). These remained in their holes till about 161030 Oct.

By 160955 it was believed the tanks ~~in~~ in front of G Co had pulled back into the woods but 15-20 enemy were still in 3d platoon G Co position.

About 1030 hours the enemy, dug in in front of I Co, began attacking the right flank of the 3d platoon (see sketch). They were supported by two tanks and one SP gun which had moved to within 50 yards of the line and were firing directly into the positions. The men attacked in groups of 10-15 with fixed bayonets about every half hour. Three attempts were made, all of which were repulsed.

In the meantime it was believed the enemy were preparing for an attack. 4.2 mortar fire was called for and it silenced the tanks and the SP, broke up the expected attack.

There was much moaning and groaning out in the wooded area to the front of I Co. A 20 man stretcher team worked two hours evacuating the wounded, during which time 60 mm and 4.2 mortar fire continued to fall. About 1300 the enemy came out with a large Red Cross flag and friendly fire then came to a stop.

At about 161800 hrs Oct G Co opened fire with 60 mm mortars on the enemy occupied portion of their position. For 30 minutes the barrage kept up. At 1830, 14 men from the 1st platoon and 11 from the 2d attacked with fixed bayonets and hand grenades. They killed all the enemy they found but one who was taken prisoner. It was just getting dark and a few of them may have escaped. They then reoccupied the position.

I Co had been unable to get tanks for the purpose of retaking the pillbox mentioned above. Three 4.2 mortars were attached to the company and they "blasted the shit out of everything." During the night much movement of the enemy, apparently to a withdrawal area 500-800 yards to the rear could be heard. But those in position around the pill box remained.

About 0800 hours on the morning of the 17th Oct three medium tanks were attached to I Co. At 1215, a 45 minute barrage by the 4.2 mortars was begun. It was laid on the pillbox and vicinity. All known assembly areas of the enemy were covered by heavy artillery. The enemy were observed pulling back out of the woods.

At 1300 the tanks and the 2d plat of I Co retook the pillbox and the area 200 yards deep in front of the company position. They did not find a living enemy. The SP was found knocked out with 14-15 dead lying around. 45-50 enemy dead were found around the holes they had dug, many of them "blown to bits."

That afternoon a composite platoon from the 3d battalion, 16^RCT reported in and that night moved up and closed the gap between the two platoons of I Co. From then on these two companies had no more trouble, other than the usual mortar and artillery fire.

For 36 days from the 17th Sept. I Co suffered one Officer KIA, four EM KIA, 14 WIA and evacuated, 13 WIA not evacuated, and 36 combat exhaustion cases.

From the 13th Oct to the 3d Nov G Co had four EM KIA, 20 EM WIA, and two EM MIA.

Persons interviewed in connection with the foregoing account:

Capt. Kimball R. Richmond, CO, I Co. 16th Inf. Regt.

1st Lt. Eugene A Day, Ex. Off., G Co. 16th Inf. Regt.

CONFIDENTIAL

Report of Battle Casualties, Men Absent Sick, and
Replacements, Headquarters 2d Battalion, 16th
Infantry, A. P. O. #1, U. S. Army

14 September - 12 October 1944

COMPANY	No. KIA	No. Wounded	No. ABS SK (NBC)	No. Replace- ments	No. MIA
Hq Co 2d Bn	1 EM DOW *	5 EM 1 OFF	3 EM	0	0
"E"	7 EM	27 EM 1 OFF	4 EM	12 EM	4 EM
"F"	6 EM	25 EM 1 OFF	10 EM	6 EM	0
"G"	6 EM KIA 2 EM DOW	57 EM 2 OFF	20 EM	38 EM	2 EM
"H"	1 EM KIA 2 EM DOW	23 EM 1 OFF	8 EM	4 EM	0

13 October - 3 November 1944

Hq Co 2d Bn		8 EM			
"E"	1 EM	5 EM			
"F"		1 EM			
"G"	4 EM	20 EM			2 EM
"H"	1 EM	5 EM			

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GL-117

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However, five tanks remained in front of the left flank of the left platoon, three in front of the right flank of the same platoon and three more in front of the right platoon. Four of the tanks were Shermans, one of which still had the insignia of the 5th Armd Div on it. The others were Mark VI's. About 0500 approximately one ~~Company~~ ^{ough} attacked the right platoon of G Co. Coming thru the woods they reached the position about 0800. Friendly artillery, mortar and small arms fire was placed on them, slowing them up. Some were killed within 15 feet of the foxholes and a few right over the holes.

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H. D. CONDRON
1st LT - INF
2D INFO & HIST SV.

3.

Penetration of the Siegfried Line by the 16th Inf. Regt.

GL-117

At 111420 Sept the 1st Bn was ordered to move out of HERVE, and take HENRI CHAPPELL and the high ground surrounding it. Moved out with the HERVE AACHEN road as the boundary between "A" Co on the left and "C" Co on the right deployed two platoons abreast. "B" Co was following "C" Co.

One platoon of medium tanks was following "A" and a platoon of light tanks was following "C". The tanks were moving across country. Two TD's were supporting each platoon of tanks.

The Bn arrived in the vicinity of HENRI CHAPPELL by 1800 and went into defensive positions there.

On the 12th Sept. the I and R platoon was given the mission of preceding the 1st Bn from HENRI CHAPPELL into the woods in the vicinity of square (82-38) just inside the old German border.

They used trails rather than roads because the latter were frequently under observation by the enemy who had them zeroed in. Their mission was to find possible routes of advance for the troops that followed.

In the vicinity of (798356) they were fired on by seven rounds of what appeared to be an AA battery. No casualties were inflicted, but the jeeps were moved back about 500 yards while they took up an outpost and observed for about an hour.

The platoon then circled to the left of the point where they had been shelled and dismounted vicinity (817366). Sgt. Stockwell and four other EM moved about a mile north to (818378) observing two enemy tanks. They then made contact with the 1st Bn about 1930 hours.

The same day the 1st Bn still leading the 16th Regt moved out with the objective of taking the high ground in the vicinity (8238). Were deployed the same as the preceding day until they reached a point in the vicinity of (743333) where they left the road and moved across country to RJ (793360). They then followed

the road thru HERGENRATH, turning north to EJ (801373), turning right across the RR tracks across country to their objective, arriving about 2000 hrs. (See overlay) The 1st Bn had crossed the German border vicinity (812377) by 1630.

They encountered small pockets of resistance, most of which was along the HERVE AACHEN road. While going into position "A" Co overran an 88mm flak battery of four guns.

At 2100 hrs "A" Co was counterattacked on its front and left flank by a company of about 80 men. The enemy marched right into machine gun fire and were "mowed down". The attack followed a "tremendous artillery barrage," which began again and continued all night long and into the next morning.

At 0830 the same day (12 Sept) the 3d Bn was assembling in square (7229). Moved out column of companies. I Company was in the lead riding on one platoon medium tanks, one platoon light tanks and one platoon of TD's, plus one platoon heavy machine guns. Behind "I" Co came the Bn AT platoon of three 57mm towed AT guns. Then came "M" Co and the jeeps, followed by "L" and "K" Cos, each mounted on five 2 1/2 ton (kitchen) trucks.

From LANTZEN they followed the road northeast of RJ (799346) where "I" Co turned right going to EYNATTEN where they spent the night. The rest of the Bn moved toward HAUSET where "K" and "L" Cos dismounted vicinity (8235). "K" went into positions vicinity (822352) while "L" Co continued northeast to vicinity (830360).

The Bn had a quiet night except that Corps' artillery laid down a barrage on "I" Co area, wounding eight men from "I" Co, killing two and wounding two from "M" Co and wounding one from Hdqts Co.

In the meantime the 2d Bn had moved to vicinity (784338) where they spent the night without incident.

On the 13th Sept. the I and R platoon remained in the vicinity of regt. CP near HAUSET, cleaning and repairing equipment.

The 1st Bn had "the hell shelled out of us" and "casualties were streaming into the CP." At 1000 hrs "C" Co was counterattacked by a company of about 80 men, attacking their right flank from the east and northeast.

The enemy attacked, yelling and screaming, thru the thickly wooded terrain and got right into their positions. One BAR man was later found dead beside his gun, his magazines all empty and 12 enemy dead around his position. About 1045 hrs two light tanks were moved up and "blasted" into the enemy with their 37mm gun and machine guns. By noon the attack had been repulsed and 12 P5W had been taken. During the 24 hours preceding the Bn had suffered 78 casualties.

At 1300 the 3d Bn of the 26th Inf Regt began to relieve this Bn, who reassembled in the vicinity of HERGENRATH.

The same day "I" Co moved north out of EYNATTEN on the road riding on tanks to RJ (838362), where they dismounted and went into an assembly area. Patrols were sent out to the northeast to pick probable tank routes.

The company deployed in a column of platoons, the tanks following, prepared to move up on call. They followed the route shown to (845375) where they made contact with the enemy. They engaged the enemy with light machine gun and rifle fire while making reconnaissance for the use of the tanks.

The three rifle platoons were deployed abreast. The platoon of medium tanks, the light tanks and TD's were deployed right with the rifle men. An intense five minute artillery barrage was laid down on the enemy, after which every weapon in the company opened fire; following this ~~after which~~ not a shot was returned by the enemy. Yelling and screaming, the company attacked. Everybody in three pillboxes and surrounding entrenchments surrendered. (Capt Kimball R. Richmond, then CO of "I" Co believes that yelling boosts the morale of the men, while demoralizing the enemy.)

In the meantime "L" Co moved up the EUPEN-AACHEN road. The company moved in a column of platoons with a point 300 yds to the front. A platoon of heavy

machine guns and a platoon of 81mm mortars from "M" Co were attached.

At about (837373) the point ran into small arms fire coming from (838375) and the emplacements to the west. They also began getting fire from three 88's in position along the road (east to west) just north of the ~~Dragons Teeth~~.

One platoon was deployed south of the ~~Dragons Teeth~~ just along the border, while another platoon attempted to push up the road but without success so were brought back and deployed on a line with the other platoon. In the meantime, two TD's were brought up to fire at the emplacements. As attempt was then made to work a platoon around ~~the~~ ^{through} the edge of the woods on the left and flank the enemy. This platoon was pinned down by enemy fire in vicinity (832374). They were withdrawn under cover of mortar fire. The company remained in the position for the night.

After "I" Co cleared RJ (838362), "K" moved east to the EUPEN-AACHEN road, then going north, into position vicinity (839367) for the night.

That afternoon Lt. Wm. S. Joseph, Communications Officer of Hdqts Co, moved forward to lay wire to "I" Co. A guide met them at RJ (843374). With the Lt. were six jeeps belonging to the Hdqts Co and "I" Co. The guide turned left instead of right and led them into the enemy position.

The enemy allowed the party to advance until they were well surrounded; ~~and~~ then an 88 opened fire, scoring a direct hit on the lead jeep, in which Lt. Joseph was riding. No casualties were caused, but the jeep was knocked out.

All the men in the jeeps immediately sought cover. Finding himself and his men surrounded, Lt. Joseph surrendered. Friendly artillery was falling in the area and the Americans kept hitting the ground. When one sergeant didn't get up fast enough to suit the enemy he was shot.

The captured group was then marched to a pillbox. The capture was seen by friendly troops and almost immediately fire from our artillery and from two TD'S fell on the pillbox.

Lt. Joseph told his captors that they were surrounded and to give up. Nine or ten were willing but two enemy sergeants (both "plenty mean") wouldn't let them. When the sergeants left the box, the lieutenant led these nine or ten men out carrying a white flag.

The men on the two TD's, seeing the procession, got out of the vehicles to assist. Just as they did, enemy machine gun fire opened on all of them, captors and captured alike, but causing no casualties. The TD men jumped back on their vehicles and blasted the pillbox with their remaining ammunition.

The sergeant who had been shot died that night while being evacuated to the rear. It was a pitch black night, and the jeep carrying the wounded man was led down the trail by Lt. Joseph on foot.

(Sidelight: There were three 81mm mortars mounted on half-tracks, which belonged to the tank battalion, in addition to those of "M" Co. All the mortars were generally kept under company control and were fired mostly in battery. There were usually two units of ammunition available, which was not enough. A unit consisted of 175 rounds per gun. In addition enemy ammunition was used. Since coming to France "M" Co estimates they have fired 20,000 rounds of enemy mortar ammunition.)

In the meantime the 2d Bn had been ordered to move behind the 3d, 16th *Regt*, thru HAUSET and to take the ground in the vicinity of (8339) square.

When they arrived at the 3d Bn CP (819349) they found the road blocked. At the same time, 1050 hrs., they were given a ~~new~~ new mission, that of taking BRAND and the ground between (886392) and (890403).

After being held up at the 3d Bn ~~CP~~ CP for a while, the 2d turned right along the road to EYNATTEN then northeast on the main road to BRAND. The 3d A D claimed they were using this road and could not give the 2d clearance to use it. When the latter arrived in LICHTENBUSCH they found a platoon of A I and one of tanks belonging to the 3d A D.

They went into bivouac west of LICHTENBUSCH as shown. Contact established with the 3d Bn on the left but not on the right. The tanks (one platoon medium and one light attached to E Co) set up road blocks southwest of LICHTENBUSCH at CR (858359). Sporadic artillery fire which was being ~~being~~ directed at the 3d A. D. fell through the night.

On the 14th Sept. this Bn was given the mission of occupying the woods and ridge in the (8641) square and cutting the AACHEN-BRAND road. They jumped off at 0800 with the road (see overlay) as the boundary between E and F Companies, E on the right, F on the left. Each company moved in an attack formation, the light tanks leading, and the mediums tanks following along the road. G Co moved ~~into~~ into "F" position until ordered forward.

After clearing the house on the border (855373), both assault companies got into a fire fight at RJ (855374) about 0915 hrs. At the same time both friendly and enemy artillery was falling on them, causing 23 casualties in "F" Co but none in "E" Co.

The ground to their front was wide open, and in addition "E" Co had to make a sweeping move in order to keep its left flank on the road which made a sharp bend at this point. Also "E" Co was receiving considerable small arms fire from east of the ~~Dragons Teeth~~. They called for mortar and artillery fire on it, which was not very effective.

In the meantime the tanks had been moving up the road in column formation. A gully ran east and west just south of the border. Lt. Donald M. English, tank commander, had planned to work his six medium tanks up the right of the road toward the heaviest expected resistance, but now with the infantry pinned down on both sides of the road, he swung his tanks across the road to the left. They then wheeled abreast across the open terrain, blasting the pillboxes as they went. They then wheeled northeast across the main road LICHTENBUSCH to AACHEN

firing into the woods behind the ~~Dragons Teeth~~ on the right flank.

A road block just north of the RJ, which had previously been inspected by Lt. English (on foot) was bypassed. The tanks then turned northward across the open terrain, firing to their front. The light tanks followed the mediums during ~~the fight~~ this maneuver.

After one of the tanks had fired at the pillbox (857379) a Frenchman walked out and surrendered. He was informed that he could surrender if he would go back to the box and get the others to give up. He accomplished his mission, returning with three other PSW and a girl.

With the enemy fire on the right flank silenced and the pillboxes also quiet, the two assault companies were able to move.

"E" Co called for smoke on the edge of the woods to the right. Under cover of the smoke they advanced to the ~~Dragons Teeth~~ (on the double) behind the tanks without trouble. In the meantime the 2d platoon had been sent into the woods to sweep it clear. They got into a fire fight, ~~and~~ caused six casualties and drove the others off.

During the same time "F" Co switched platoons. One had suffered about 50 percent casualties during the shelling mentioned above. One platoon was sent thru the edge of the woods on the left, while the other advanced over the open ground to the ~~Dragons Teeth~~. The platoon moving thru the woods had been expected to halt on line with the ~~Dragons Teeth~~ but instead moved on until they hit a trail vicinity (851383). Here they halted and waited for the balance of the company to move up.

Both "E" and "F" Companies moved north to the edge of the woods to provide protection for the Engineers to blow the ~~Dragons Teeth~~. When they first attempted to blow the obstacles they found their charge much too small. Eventually they used 150-160 pounds of dynamite to blow seven teeth. A tank dozer filled in the ditch and a path over the blown teeth some 20-30 yards to the right of the road ~~which~~ ^{through} which the tanks moved. The road had been badly cratered in front of the

teeth, so a route to the right required considerably less work.

In the meantime "G" Co had moved into position in vicinity (855374), where they saw some enemy moving around to the right of them. A squad was sent to investigate, taking with them the Frenchman captured above. The Frenchman was to call to the enemy to surrender, but the squad leader was dissatisfied with his enthusiasm, so a member of the squad who spoke German took over that assignment. One PW surrendered. The squad inspected four pillboxes and two shelters. They found the lights still on in one of the shelters and machine guns set up in one of the boxes. Fearing the latter were booby trapped, they did not touch them but returned. (None of the boxes inspected caused a patrol from the ~~1st~~ 1st Bn any trouble when it passed them later in the day.

At the bridge (856385) "E" Co found a 47mm AT gun which had been knocked out and a 20 mm AT gun which apparently had just been pulled out of a pill box and had shrapnel thru the recoil mechanism. (Lt. English reported that a 47 and a ~~77~~ 77 mm gun had been abandoned in the same vicinity, both having had their breeches blown.)

"E" Co moved northwest along the road to (856386) where they turned right to (859389). They reached this point about 1300 and were ordered to hold up. They established an all-around defense and sent a squad up the road northwest on reconnaissance. The squad advanced about 400 yards and ran into a fire fight. It was then recalled and 4.2 mortar fire was laid on the area, causing the enemy to depart. In the meantime, "F" Co had moved up on line with "E" Co. One platoon was moved over to the right of the main road and the other just left of it. The right platoon had worked up about 100yds while the left stood ~~fast~~ fast. About 200 yards up the road was a road block; ~~in~~ in back of it was an SP gun later identified as a 77 mm. "F" Co CO thought it had been put out of action and that the platoon to the right of the road had checked it. The executive officer was curious, however, and took out his glasses to inspect it

more closely. (Both officers were at the aforementioned RJ). Just about that time the enemy weapon fired one round which struck the pavement near the officers, both of whom dived for cover. Artillery was called on the gun, but most of it fell to the right of the road. (In a way it was fortunate that it did, because the 3d Bn 26th was off in the woods not far to the left.) The gun then withdrew but not far. The two machine guns which were protecting it withdrew also.

"F" Co CO sent the left platoon up astride the road. The squad on the left side knocked out the machine gun but did not find the gun. The one on the right saw the machine gun on their side of the road but did nothing about it. Upon their return they were immediately ordered out to put it out of action, but they reported that it was gone when they returned.

At 1605 both companies were ordered forward. "E" Co CO requested his tanks to follow him. Moved to RJ (856400) without incident. They passed right by a burning ammunition dump (mortar and 105 mm ammunition) at RJ (858391). At the first mentioned RJ they halted, waiting for "F" Co. While waiting on "F" Co they heard enemy artillery fire off to the northwest. A patrol was sent to the vicinity (853400). From this position the patrol could not see the enemy artillery but could see enemy activity in BUSCHLISH. Artillery and mortar fire was called for and stopped some of the activity. As the patrol was also being shelled by friendly 81mm mortar fire, it returned.

At 1755 hrs "E" Co had definitely located an enemy battery at (857400). They requested a battery of 155's to fire on it and adjusted their fire. Three minutes later they adjusted fire on enemy at (847408), silencing both batteries at least temporarily.

In the meantime "F" Co had started to move up the main road and had run into heavy fire being exchanged between the enemy and the 3d Bn. So instead of following the main road north as planned, they turned right at CR (853393), joining "E" Co at 1845.

At 1920 hrs both companies moved out, "E" Co turning right up the fire-break between (857402) and (863411) stopping at the latter point for the night.

"F" Co followed the road to RJ (855404) where they turned right, the left guiding on the road on the edge of the woods. As they passed the open area left of the road they notice barracks with lights on. A reenforced sqd was sent to investigate and found the barracks on the near side empty. (These were the only ones inspected).

They had been ordered to occupy the orchard in the vicinity of SCHOLTHAL, but an advance patrol found it already occupied by the enemy. By this time it was fairly dark, so the company CO ordered the tanks to move in and clear up the area. The lead tank had just gotten to the vicinity (858410) when an enemy AT gun scored two direct hits, which penetrated the tank, almost instantly killing the asst. driver, taking off the gunner's foot and seriously wounding two others. The other tanks immediately deployed in the woods to the right.

"F" Co then went into defensive position just inside the northeast edge of the woods, setting up a 360 degree defense and tying in with E Co on the right.

"G" Co split, part of it following E Co and the other part following F Co thus providing protection (against infiltrating enemy) for the TD's. Buttoned up southwest of the other two companies in the vicinity (858407)

That same afternoon the I and R platoon made its first patrol into the Siegfried Line, moving northeast thru the woods to RJ (855381) which had previously been cleared by the 2d Bn. They followed the road to RJ (869387), where they were fired on. Here they waited until the 1st Bn came up.

A foot patrol of eight men moved northeast, about half-way through an open field to vicinity (872390), meeting no resistance. At this point further advance was impossible due to the open ground, replete with barbed wire entanglements, and commanded by a pillbox. They then returned to the regimental CP.

The 1st Bn moved from ~~their~~^{its} bivouac area in the vicinity of HERGENRATH to STEINHAUL, which was ~~their~~^{its} assembly area. At 1530 they moved out along the same road taken by the 2d Bn to (856381). There they were to turn right to HIRTVELD with the objective of taking the ground north and east of the town. They moved out in a column of companies, the tanks in the rear. When they turned north at RJ (858359), "B" moved off the road to the right and "C" Co moved to the left. The two lead companies moved forward two platoon columns abreast on each side of the road.

In order to protect the right flank, a combat patrol of 12 men moved out at 1500. They went thru LICHTENBUSCH to the next crossroads where they turned left, thence to EICH, where they again turned left, meeting the Bn CO in HIRTVELD. The patrol had moved ~~thru~~^{through} fairly open terrain past several fortifications, including ~~Dragons Teeth~~ and had met only scattered enemy, capturing two while suffering no casualties.

The Bn met no enemy resistance along the route but was heavily shelled by enemy artillery, causing 15 casualties. They closed in the area shown at 2000 hrs.

(The balance of the story of this Bn's penetration of the Siegfried Line was written by Lt. Hadsel in connection with the 3d AD.)

The 3d Bn had practically no action during the day. "L" Co was originally ordered back to the assembly area north of HAUSET at 1330. The order was then changed and they were ordered to move north along the main road. The company advanced column of platoons to RJ (840384), encountering no opposition whatever. Here they deployed across the road and "buttoned up" for the night. The other two companies remained in place.

(The weather had been miserable; the Bn was, for the most part, deployed in thickly wooded area and ~~was~~^{was} cold, wet and uncomfortable. Jeeps were getting stuck when they got off the paved roads. According to the regt. journal, the gasoline situation was quite acute, also the expenditure of ammunition was cut

considerably).

The 15th Sept the I and R platoon had the mission of reconnoitering the area northwest of BRAND. Their five jeeps proceeded in column to the RR crossing in BRAND (887405).

One jeep took a route to the right of the BRAND-AACHEN road to the vicinity (878422) where it turned left to what was to have been the assembly point at CR (871417). It was unable to reach the latter because of small arms fire, so an OP was set up and the men remained in observation.

The scout (2d) jeep went to (880411) where ~~they~~^{it} drew small arms fire. They inspected all the barracks at this point, finding them empty. They then proceeded to CR (871417). Here they were met by heavy small arms fire, causing them to beat a hasty retreat. They notified the point of the 26th RCT (C Co), who went into position around that point.

The 3d jeep turned northwest from BRAND, going across-country to vicinity (876405), thence to (884409) without incident. They then returned to BRAND.

The same morning "G" Co was the assault Co for the 2d Bn. Reinforced by three medium tanks, 3 light tanks and two TD's, it was given the mission of taking EILENDORF. The town was less than two miles from their position as the crew flies but was over three times as far by the route they had to take in order to have their right flank protected by the 3d A.D., ~~who were~~^{which was} moving up to the east of BRAND. They passed the IP RJ (856400) at 0900 hrs.

Meanwhile the rest of the Bn remained in place, trying to dry themselves out. Gasoline for the tanks had to be hand-carried part of the way, and they were somewhat hard to start. They had been running continuously the preceding day.

"G" Co moved out in column formation, deployed on both sides of the road, the column about a half mile long. The tanks did not start quite so early and were expected to catch up with the foot troops at NIEDER FORSTBACH, but did not catch them till BRAND.

Two platoons then mounted the tanks and rode for about a quarter of a mile.

The 3d A. D. was using the same route from NIEDER FORSTBACH to RJ (896423). By this time they had come under enemy observation and were receiving small arms fire. The terrain was flat and open, offering little protection, so the foot troops dismounted and sprinted about 1500 yards across the wide open terrain into EILENDORF. All the time they were receiving machine gun fire from the high ground east of EILENDORF, but there were no casualties. The three platoons set up defensive positions just south of the RR tracks.

The balance of the Bn passed the IP about 1430 after having been held up by the 1st Bn, ^{which} had priority on the road. They also passed a Bn from the 26th (going in the opposite direction) ^{which was} relieving them. There was not too much confusion, but they lost about an hour. The order of march was "E" Co., advance CP, "F" Co., "H" Co and 4.2's. In the rear were the balance of the tanks and organic transportation. They were marching on the road, part of the time double-banked with 3d A. D., whom they were able to avoid in BRAND.

At the crest of the hill (891409) all elements were speeded up so as to cross the open area as fast as possible. The plan was to turn left at RJ (897423). "E" Co in the lead made the turn all right. It was then decided to put a sign at the junction.

Major Wozinski, 2d Bn Ex Off, did not see ^{the} sign so continued on up the road. He got to vicinity (897428) when he realized he was on the wrong road. He turned around and met F Co, ^{which} had not seen the sign either. During this time the 3d A. D. who, ^{was} apparently, ^{was} using the ground just to the east ^{was} receiving heavy artillery fire, and part of it was falling on F Co.

As mentioned before this was wide open terrain offering little cover, but there was a slight draw running toward EILENDORF into which "F" Co was moved immediately to continue toward the town.

Major Wozinski returned to the RJ to be sure the ^{remaining} elements made the turn. He found the sign all right, but the reason neither he nor "F" Co had seen it was because a 3d A. D. EM was leaning against it, thus covering it up.

As he took the left (correct) road into EILENDORF he discovered six to eight Engineers' trucks and about 20 organic vehicles strung out along the road at a standstill in plain view of the enemy. The personnel were digging in for protection from enemy artillery. Maj. Wozinski raced into town and found that in the confusion no one had been instructed to direct the vehicles in town, and the head of the column just stopped.

An officer was immediately assigned the task of locating a spot for them and finally found one at (885430) which offered no concealment from the air but did give defilade from enemy observation. The trucks were routed in and the Bn CP was set up in the same area, by about 1700 hrs. Major Wozinski was amazed that the enemy allowed the Bn to move at all — directly under their noses.

"E" Co was ordered to establish two roadblocks, one at (892435) and the other at (886435), guarding each with a platoon. In the meantime the 3d platoon was engaged in searching the town.

The German civilians were taken so completely by surprise that they hastily improvised white flags, ranging from babies' diapers and adults' underdrawers to pieces of sheets.

"F" Co was ordered to provide flank protection to the west with ~~their~~ its right flank resting on the RR track (which was originally thought to be a road). However, the enemy on the forward slope across the tracks "could look right down our throats." So the "F" Co CO moved his company back to a line which began at approximately (880437) ran southwest to (878433) then southeast to (881432). Why the enemy across the tracks did not fire on the Bn is an unsolved mystery.

"E" Co sent a reenforced platoon to the high ground 300 yards east of EILENDORF vicinity (898440). The platoon was reenforced by a IMG section, and a demolition sqd with orders to seize the highest ground possible. They ran into too much trouble to return, and since the radio was not working, a messenger was dispatched to inform "E" Co CO of the situation. The messenger returned with 4 PSW, reporting the pillboxes clear.

"E" Co CO wanted to take his company up to the high ground but requested additional help. He was ordered by the Bn CO to take one platoon up, leaving the other to guard the BN CP. In addition to the platoon, he took up a section of heavy machine guns and later brought up the mortar section. That night a patrol was sent out to make contact with "G" Co. No contact was made, but the patrol did return with ten PsW.

Just before dark (2000 hrs) "F" Co took over two platoon positions of "G" Co. The latter moved two platoons to positions (888448), cutting the road to VERLAUTENHEIDE, and (896444) on top of the RR tunnel. At least 12 enemy were killed around the pillboxes, and eight PsW taken in this movement. "G" Co had 14 casualties from enemy fire that night.

The same day, 15 Sept., the 3d Bn moved out about 1730. They moved along the road in column of companies, column of platoons. The order of march was I, K and L. The 3d AD was still on the same route and that with the Bn organic transportation made the road crowded. Enemy air was over the road, causing the personnel to deploy but not the vehicles. No hostile act was committed, however. The head of the column reached BRAND about 1905 without incident.

"L" Co deployed in the vicinity (890447), "K" Co (891419) and "I" around the barracks, guarding the 16th RCT, CP and cutting the AACHEN-BRAND road vicinity (875415). The night was quiet.

On the 16th Sep "F" Co moved to a position along the road east between EILENDORF and ATSCH. A platoon was sent out to a pillbox at (911436) as an out-post. The next day it was called back in. "G" and "E" companies remained in place improving their positions.

In the meantime "K" Co moved to EILENDORF without difficulty and occupied much the same positions as those held by "F" and "G" companies the night before. "L" Co moved to a position about a km west of EILENDORF (as shown). "I" Co remained in place.

On the afternoon of the 16th Sept "G" Co sent a platoon up to VERLAUTENHEIDE on reconnaissance. Prior to their reaching the town a friendly tank pulled up to the crest of the hill and fired six rounds on the left (west) edge of the town. They immediately got five or six rounds back which landed "awful close," so withdrew.

Upon reaching town the platoon could see the enemy marching southeast toward VERLAUTENHEIDE in a column of twos "as far as the eye could see." The platoon was then pulled back, suffering 2 K.I.A., 9 W.I.A., and 2 M.I.A.

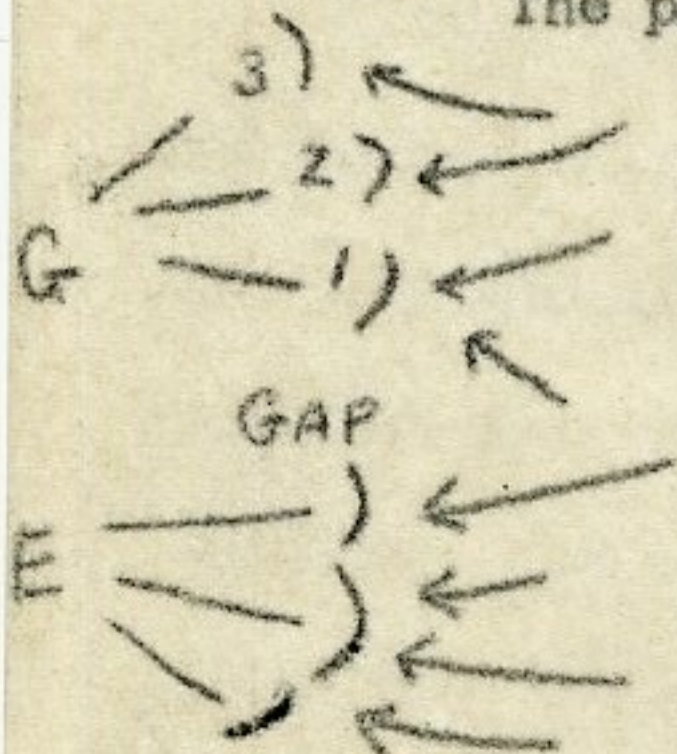
That night "G" Co heard considerable vehicular traffic in the above town. They "threw Div Arty in on it," and may have broken up an attack from the north.

About 170100 Sept an enemy patrol of nine men came into "G" Co's position. Seven were killed and two escaped. About 0530 the enemy mortar and arty barrage began. It extended from EILENDORF eastward, covering the whole of "G" and "E" Companies. It was estimated that 4,000 mortar and another 4,000 arty shells landed in the companies' areas. The arty barrage lasted till about 0600 hrs.

A gap of about 100 yds existed between the two companies.

Immediately after the barrage lifted, two enemy companies attacked with fixed bayonets (the first time this Bn had experienced a bayonet attack.) Each enemy company consisted of about 150 men and were from the 12th Inf. Div. According to the company officers interviewed, it was one of the best outfits the enemy had.

The positions of the platoons were as follows:



Enemy attacks
(Not drawn to scale)

The terrain in front of "E" Co was rather heavily wooded, whereas that on "G's" left front and left flank was quite open.

The heaviest attacks came against the 1st platoon of "G" Co, located on their right flank. The next heaviest was on their center platoon with the 3d (left flank) platoon catching the overflow. On the right flank one squad ran out of ammunition and had to withdraw, the enemy occupying their positions. On the left front the enemy got to within 150 yards of their positions.

On E Co's front the approach, being wooded, was much better covered and the enemy got to within a few yards of their positions.

Friendly (Div) arty, 4.2 mortars, a Bn of tanks, and other supporting weapons fired on the enemy and finally repulsed them. The situation was under control by 0800 - 0830 hrs.

The second assault on "G" Co came about noon. ("E" Co had kept them disorganized in the woods with mortar and arty fire). The strength of the enemy attack was about the same as the first. They were well-disciplined troops and kept coming in spite of their losses. They got almost as close in as they had in the morning and were stopped only after they had become completely disorganized by losses. Artillery and mortar fire, plus small arms, broke up the attack by about 1400.

However, some of the enemy from these two attacks were still in the foxholes on the right flank. About 1600 friendly arty, mortar, MG and rifle fire was laid on the overrun position. One squad attacked by short rushes and a generous use of hand grenades and regained the positions. The few remaining enemy in the foxholes were killed.

About 1800 the third attack was made on "G" Co in about the same strength and in much the same manner as the other two. About 12 enemy reached the position and they were killed by hand grenades. They ^{enemy} could be heard yelling to Attack, Attack but were kept from it by the intense rifle and MG fire of G Co, and the left flank of E Co. One PW said they had never "run up against such devastating small arms fire." The right platoon of G Co averaged six bandoleers of M-1 ammunition per man.

About 2000 hrs the enemy retired, evacuating a few wounded and dead (believed to be officers). Many wounded died in the area in front of "G" and "E" companies. In the wooded area the enemy outpost line was not much over 70 - 100 yds in front of "G" and "E" Co lines.

The casualties suffered by these two ~~cos~~^{were} as follows:

	K.I.A.	W.I.A.	M.I.A.
"G" Co	2 E M	3 Off. 14 EM	0 0
"E" Co	0	14 (lightly)	0

That afternoon "F" Co moved forward and occupied positions along the road from RJ (900437) to trail J (905432). That night "I" Co moved in and filled the gap between "G" and "E" companies, thus closing the gap slightly to the rear. "E" and "G" companies both shifted slightly to the left.

During the night mortar and arty fire continued to fall on "G" Co's position. About 180200 Sept an estimated ~~co~~ of enemy attacked "G" Co. Some of them succeeded in getting into the position but did not penetrate it. One machine gunner killed two enemy with his pistol and they fell across the barrel of his weapon. One enemy platoon was wiped out almost to a man. About 0300 they withdrew. The "G" Co men were "jumpy" and fired at any noise they heard. Sniping continued on ~~the~~ both sides the rest of the night. The same morning about 0530 hrs an extremely heavy mortar and arty barrage fell on "E" Co.

About 0600 one platoon of enemy made a "fanatical attempt" to charge the slope, which was virtually a cliff, in front of the 1st (right) platoon. The men literally "dropped" hand grenades on them as they climbed the slope. Friendly mortar fire was dropping within 35 yards of this position. Only four enemy reached the top of the hill, and ~~thence~~ they were immediately killed.

On the left flank there was a pillbox in the 3d platoon's position at (897442). One squad was defending it from foxholes. Under cover of darkness the enemy worked their way in close enough to drive the men out of their foxholes

into the pillbox. The enemy then attached a beehive to the door, blowing it in, and causing six casualties. The other six men crawled out the embrasure and using rifles and MGs drove the enemy off, inflicting heavy casualties.

By this time it was daylight. One platoon of enemy moved forward out of the woods to avoid American mortar fire and temporarily huddled together in squad groups. A light machine gun section caught them, "killing them all." Those that were wounded were also killed.

By noon this attack was cleared up. The 2d platoon and the MG section expended 30,000 rounds of ammunition. E Co suffered the following casualties: 1 KIA, 10 WIA.

At 1400 hrs another platoon of enemy attacked "G" Co from the front. They got to within 50 yds of the position before they were repulsed. A "G" Co aid man went out to help a wounded enemy when enemy opened fire and he was wounded by "what was believed to be a dum dum bullet." "G" Co suffered seven WIA during the day.

During the hard ~~fighting~~ ¹⁶⁻¹⁷ fighting of ~~16~~ Sept the crews of the medium tanks and light tanks dismounted from their vehicles which were defiladed to the rear and fought on foot with the infantry of "G" and "E" companies, using the machine guns brought from their tanks, and accounting for enemy casualties.

About 1100 of 17 Sept one medium tank from its position at (888448) was sent north up the road to knock out the enemy pill box and house at (887452). An enemy SP gun was behind the house, from which position it was hitting "G" Co infantry positions to the south. The medium tank blasted the pillbox and house, and chased the SP gun; but the tankers were not certain it was knocked out.

Between 16 Sep and 24 Sep "K" and "L" Co's sat tight in the vicinity northwest ^{of} EILENDORF without much trouble, other than mortar and arty fire.

On ~~the~~ 24~~th~~ Sep "K" Co 18th RCT relieved "K" Co 16th RCT, ^{which} ~~was~~ moved to the road west of MUNSTERBUSCH. The following day "I" Co 18th RCT relieved "L" Co 16th RCT, ^{which} ~~was~~ moved to the area to the right of "K", 16th, thus relieving "L" Co 18th RCT. (The map shows the woods incorrectly. The left flank of "L" Co is right along the edge of the woods.)

 pdfelement

Battle of Aachen - 18th Infantry Regiment

GL-117

Explanation: (1) At the time this report was written there had not as yet been an opportunity to contact the commander of Co C, who was in the hospital in Eupen. (2) Due to the need for training for the next operation, the Historical Officer was refused permission to interview the company officers of the 3d Bn. The account of this battalion is taken almost entirely from the Bn Journal.

The following excerpts from FO #30, Hq 18th Inf. Regt., 2 Oct. 44, indicate the general plan of operation of the regimental combat team in the actions to be described:

"1. b. - VII US Corps attacks northeast to form a junction with XIX US Corps northeast of AACHEN. XIX US Corps on our north attacks to the east to breach the SIEGFRIED LINE and cut off AACHEN from the northeast. Time of attack to be announced.

"2. a. - CT 18 attacks to seize high ground northeast of EILENDORF, and, in conjunction with the advance of 30th US Inf Div on our north, to cut off AACHEN from the northeast....

"3. a. - 2d Bn 18th Inf (reinf) attacks through present positions of 3rd Bn 18th Inf and 2nd Bn 16th Inf, seizes and secures VERLAUTENHEIDE to secure a line of departure for 1st Bn 18th inf, and to provide a base of fire.

"b. - 1st Bn 18th Inf (reinf) attacks from positions in vicinity of VERLAUTENHEIDE secured by 2nd Bn 18th Inf to seize and secure CRUCIFIX HILL (Hill 239) and cut HAAREN-BROICHWEIDEN ROAD.

"c. - 3rd Bn 18th Inf (reinf) initially supports attack of 2nd Bn 18th Inf by fire on known targets in vicinity of HAAREN; attacks to seize and secure ridge at 8744 (see Operation Overlay) in conjunction with the attack of 1st Bn 18th Inf on CRUCIFIX HILL."

After an artillery barrage preparation from 0300 to 0400 hours on the morning of 8th Oct, the 2d Bn passed thru the position of G Co 16th Inf and jumped off from the LD just as the barrage lifted. The Bn was supported by ten tanks. (See account of tanks and TD's for details).

The Bn jumped off, E on the left and F on the right, abreast, and C Co in support. F Co moved forward with two platoons abreast, one in support, two squads abreast (in squad column) and one in the rear. Each company had a platoon of HMG's attached.

The mission of Co F was to secure the QUINX vicinity and the northeastern part of VERLAUTENHEIDE. That of E Co was to secure the northwestern portion of the town, while G Co was to secure the southern part.

The Bn followed the barrage as closely as possible in order to get to the area before the enemy came up out of their foxholes.

The first platoon of F Co, on the left flank, succeeded in making a break through the enemy line and got to their objective with very little trouble, except for being disorganized. They followed a depression in the ground and were on their objective before the enemy had time to get organized.

The 2d platoon, on the right flank, got about halfway across the clearing when the mortars of the 16th Inf, which were supposed to keep the enemy in their holes along the road on the right flank, suddenly ceased firing. Enemy machine guns along the road opened fire on the 2d platoon, pinning them down and causing some casualties. The company CO attempted to get mortar fire on them again but was unable to do so.

He then sent the 3d platoon around to the left to follow the 1st. They were a bit disorganized but got into town and on their objective without much trouble.

The platoon leader of the 2d platoon was hit in both legs but kept on going. About a squad finally got thru to QUINX. (The balance had become casualties or had gotten lost in the confusion.) They captured an AT gun, vicinity

(889454) and cleaned out the western portion of QUINX capturing 30 PsW. They then proceeded to their area of VERLAUTENHEIDE.

As soon as the 2d platoon cleared QUINX, the "Ranger" platoon (a composite platoon) was sent in to hold the village and block the road.

The Co CO moved out with the CP group abreast of the "Ranger" platoon. The MG fire, above, split them into three groups, which finally reassembled in the 1st platoon area. While moving to the 2d and 3d platoon area, he got too far out in front and ran into an enemy column approaching VERLAUTENHEIDE from the north. He fired into them (killing 5 or 6) and beat a hasty retreat.

Apparently, the enemy column continued, and were stopped by the 3d platoon with rifle and machine gun fire. The roads were swept for mines and a platoon of tanks called up. One finally arrived about 1000 hours.

E Co, moving abreast of F Co from the ID, had ~~their~~^{its} left flank guiding on the road running south out of VERLAUTENHEIDE. They crossed over the road at RJ (887453) and moved through town with very little trouble. They did not attempt to thoroughly clear the town. They moved to their area and began digging in.

Just prior to daylight about 100 enemy infantry came down from CRUCIFIX HILL and attacked the 1st platoon E Co, who fired 60 mm mortars and MG's at them. Also a few riflemen would fire while the others continued to dig in. By 1000 hours the attack was broken, and 90 PsW had been taken.

During almost the entire day, enemy mortar and arty fire fell on the town.

About 2100 at least a company of enemy infantry, supported by mortar fire, came down the draw to the west of the road leading to WURSELEN, hitting the 1st platoon again. Five succeeded in getting into the position, of whom four were captured and one killed. (12) were killed within 12-15 yards of the HMG position. Four or five others were killed by rifle or MG fire and the attack was broken.

G Co left EILENDORF about 0830, under intermittent enemy shelling. The company moved in column of platoons, extended in depth and followed the approximate route of the other two companies. The 2d platoon was the first to reach VERLAUTENHEIDE. It moved in on the right flank of F Co, cutting the road junction (887454). The entire Company was in the town by 1100 hours and buttoned up, as shown, around the southern part.

The 1st Battalion had the mission of taking Crucifix Hill, and organizing the ground around it for defense. At the same time the WEIDEN-HAAREN road was to be cut by fire, and its use as an escape or reinforcement route for the forces in AACHEN denied to the enemy.

The Bn CO and forward Command Group were the first elements of the Bn to move across the open ground to the jump-off positions in VERLAUTENHEIDE. By this time the enemy was aware of what was going on and had registered heavily on the town, as well as the approach to it from the 16th Inf positions. Orders were given for the Bn to infiltrate into VERLAUTENHEIDE by platoon groups. Moving through "the heaviest artillery and mortar fire encountered by the Bn since the breakthrough at MARIGNY", the companies did not reach their jump-off positions until 1500 hours.

The men were armed with pole charges, satchel charges, flame throwers, and bangalore torpedoes, in addition to their normal infantry weapons, to enable them to knock out the pillboxes that stood in their path. A large percentage of the men making the attack had only had their induction to combat a week or so before. They were not finished soldiers in any sense of the word.

The order to attack was given at 1530, and C Co, reenforced by the "Ranger" Platoon, (a composite platoon) and one platoon of HMG's attached from Co D, moved forward along the crest of the ridge leading to CRUCIFIX HILL.

Successfully knocking of the pillboxes that stood in their way, C Co, led by Capt. Bobbie E. Brown (wounded three times) reached their objective and by 1630

the hill was firmly in their hands.

In moving from EILENDORF to VERLAUTENHEIDE, A Co had suffered 20 casualties from the mortar and artillery barrage, 13 of which were in the 3d platoon.

In the order of attack A Co was echeloned to the left rear of C Co with the mission of clearing out the area south of the sunken road between VERLAUTENHEIDE and HAAREN. The 1st platoon was to clean out the triangle area north of the road running from (883452) to (886454). The 3d platoon was to clean out the area just to the south of that road. The latter platoon had hardly gotten started when the platoon leader and a couple of members of the platoon were killed by an artillery shell. They quickly bogged down due to the loss of their leader, the other losses sustained, heavy enemy fire and darkness. When darkness came the Co CO could find only five or six members of the platoon.

The first platoon made some progress but was held up by observed fire from the west and ~~the~~ the failure of the 3d platoon to push forward. They had not taken pillbox No. 16 by dark. The 2d plat was then put in to the left of the 1st, extending down to just short of the draw, replacing the 3d. During the night five to seven men of the 3d drifted in to the Co CP so the 2d plat was pulled out and the 3d again sent in.

~~The~~ On 8th Oct, B Co was Bn support. They moved out of EILENDORF around noon in single file, subjected to mortar and arty fire. Reaching VERLAUTENHEIDE, they moved into cellars in the southwestern part of the town, tying in with C Co on the left and the 2d Bn on the right. There they remained for the night and the following day.

"At 1330 hrs, the 3d Bn with Cos I and K in the assault pushed forward to seize Hill 192 which extends from AACHEN to CRUCIFIX HILL. The companies received intense mortar and small arms fire all the way to the objective, but the companies closed on the objective so swiftly that the ridge was taken in two hours' time. During the afternoon, one plat of K Co was moved over to the SCHEIDS woods vicinity (886448). The rest of I and K companies shifted ~~from~~ along

the ridge to the right. (from Bn Journal). At 1600 hrs L Co was ordered to clean out the factory town of ROTHE ERDE. This was all street fighting, and by night one platoon of Co L occupied one-half of the large rubber factory (866430) and the Germans the other half. 47 PsW were captured during the day.

During the night Co's I and K sent patrols forward with the mission of determining the enemy strength in and around HAAREN (HAAREN was proposed objective for 3d Bn on the 9th Oct). The Co K patrol got within 500 yards southeast of objective when they ran into an assembly area that the enemy was using to form a counterattacking force. A short but terrific fire fight ensued with unknown results. Our patrol suffered no casualties. Meanwhile, the Co I patrol reached the edge of HAAREN without incident. Forty-seven prisoners were captured during the day. "

The morning of 9th October the enemy "saturated" CRUCIFIX HILL with shell and mortar fire. At 0615 the enemy attempted to retake the hill by storm, and three waves of infantrymen and assault engineers attacked its northern and western slopes. The men of C Co held their fire until the enemy was almost upon them. Then they opened up with a "murderous grazing fire that piled the onrushing Germans in front of their very foxholes. One section of D Co's HMG's particularly distinguished itself, the gunners swinging their guns with free traverse and blazing away at every German in sight. The enemy (or whatever shattered remnants were left) withdrew as suddenly as they had attacked, leaving forty some-odd dead strewn on the bloody slopes of CRUCIFIX HILL. 35 PsW were taken." (from Bn Journal).

During the morning of the 9th Oct A Co moved the 2d platoon (thru) C Co position and just after daylight attacked the group of pillboxes (18-24) from the north. (The latter were generally sited to fire to the south). By 0800 pillboxes No. 17, 19, 22, 23 and 24 had fallen, leaving 18 still occupied by the enemy. The latter could not be taken because it was covered by fire from pillboxes 13, 14 and 15, about 150 yards to the east.

Four boxes, 13, 14, 15 and 16 and the house at (87254530) were still in

enemy hands. The Co CO was unable to get 4.2 mortar or arty fire on them due to the close proximity of friendly troops. He then pulled his plat back and fired a limited no. of rounds of 81 mm mortar around no. 16. In the meantime, he had requested C Co to send some men down to divert their attention. Just after the 81 mm mortar fire, two C Co men made their way to the box without difficulty and placed a pole charge in the embrasure and walked off. Nine enemy came out of the box and were picked up by A Co.

The terrain was very open and ~~was~~ sloped to the south. It was almost impossible to get tanks into position to fire on the enemy strongpoints. The 1st plat was unable to move forward because of them. Late in the morning A Co succeeded in getting two 155 SP's up to (877453) from which position they fired at the boxes still in enemy hands. The 155's smashed one but did not damage the other two. The 2d plat buttoned up around the pillboxes they had taken while the 1st and 3d plats closed in back in the vicinity of the triangle.

Just before dark A Co was ordered to send some men to close the gap between C Co (on CRUCIFIX HILL) and E Co. The Co CO sent up the 3d plat. He then outposted the line held by the 3d with a sqd of men from the mortar section.

Both E Co and the 2d Bn had set up their CP's in the house (88704535) just across the road from the junction of the QUINX road. At 0300 on ~~the~~ 9th Oct an intense enemy arty bombardment woke up both F Co and 2d Bn staffs. At 0400 a Bn of enemy infantry moved up the QUINX road in the attack. They pushed back a G Co platoon in QUINX and a sqd of F Co 1st plat. The enemy had reached the RJ in front of the CP and had control of it.

F Co CO took the remainder of the G Co plat (one squad) one squad of the first plat F Co, the "Ranger" plat and the CP group and built up a fire line in front of the house, tying in with the 1st plat of F Co.

The enemy started a fire in the barn, about 20 feet away, with tracers. A platoon of G Co had ~~their~~ ^{its} CP there. The men had gone down into the (potato)

cellar for protection from the shelling. When the barn caught fire it was imperative for them to get out. T/Sgt. Wm. L. Reed managed to get out of the cellar with a "Tommy gun" which he fired into the enemy, thus allowing the others to get out.

There was a 45-minute lull, and the attack started again. The ^{Germans}~~enemy~~ worked their way as close to the CP as possible, firing ~~to~~ AT rockets completely ~~through~~ the house, some of the ^{Enemy} getting across the street on the same side as the CP, where they were stopped by the fire line built up (above) and the .50 cal. MG from an AT gun.

Just before daylight the Co CO called for the tanks about 150-200 yards to the north. It took an hour for the crews to assemble and the tanks to reach the area. They finally got there about dawn.

Five tanks and one TD were finally in position about (0730), and were given orders "to shoot everything ahead" across the street (see sketch in Tank and TD account). Consequently, both the tanks and the TD "sprayed" the buildings across the street with MG fire and blasted some of them with the 75 mm gun.

Using a plat from E Co, and a sqd from the 2d plat F Co, the F Co CO began a flanking movement clockwise, with the tanks while the enemy turned and ran. The line was restored and the men really dug in in earnest.

A few of the enemy had swung around to the south where they ran into the mortar section and were repulsed by small arms fire. The Bn CO then ordered every house in VERLAUTENHEIDE completely searched for enemy.

The artillery, not knowing just what the situation was, fired on the rear of the enemy column with unknown results.

"At daybreak, 9 Oct, enemy mortars and arty began shelling I and K Co positions. The shelling lasted about one hour; ~~and~~ after it lifted the enemy was seen to be infiltrating forward from pillboxes and a draw which ran along the flank of our position. The enemy was immediately taken under fire by 81 and 60

mortars, in as much as the enemy was too close to our lines that friendly arty fire was impossible. The MG's of Co I firing on the final protective line delivered a murderous cross fire as the enemy came toward the Bn positions. Enemy casualties were very high with 25 known dead and many wounded. Twenty-seven enemy prisoners were taken during this action. The attack was successfully beaten off, and by 1800 hrs L Co had completely cleared the town of ROTHE ERDE, and was overlooking the center of the city of AACHEN. Approximately 1000 rds of enemy mortar and arty fire fell on the Battalion positions during the day. At 1700 hrs Company I was detached from the 3d Bn and attached to the 1st Bn, 18th Infantry, to assist in taking the last enemy-held hill in 1st Division sector (RAVELS B. HILL). Thirty-three prisoners were taken during the day by the 3d Battalion, 18th Infantry."

During the dead of night (9-10^{Oct.}) B and I Co's moved out to take RAVELS B. Hill. B Co, in the lead, was moving in column of platoons, 3d, 1st, weapons platoon plus a section of HMG's, and the 2d platoon. The plan was to slip thru as quietly as possible and get on the hill without a fight.

The head of the column suddenly found itself in front of two enemy held pillboxes (nos. 44 and 46). The enemy could be seen and heard moving around inside them. The column was halted, then retraced its path and moved northeast along the road and turned left again about 50 yards south of the enemy-held pillbox (no 47). Three enemy could be seen sitting on top of the "box" smoking and talking. Six or eight enemy were spotted moving parallel to the column but were lost when they got to the road to the northwest.

The 3d plat got across ^{this} ~~road~~ road when a horse-drawn cart with two enemy came down the road. The column halted, and allowed them to pass without firing a shot. This road was used all night long by infantry troops moving in or out of AACHEN.

The column moved to the north of RAVELS B. ^{HILL} and then swung around to the west and south. They immediately began organizing the hill. Pillbox no. 3 was cleared,

netting two PsW. At daylight no. 6 was cleared, and by 0800 all pillboxes from nos. 1 - 8 had been cleared without firing a shot.

Later in the morning, an enemy detail of four men with chow for 65 men came into the area and were captured. (Part of the chow was eaten by some of the Americans in preference to cold rations). Later in the day eight enemy, who had gone into the chateau (869464), for protection against the shelling, moved over toward the hill. A BAR man opened fire on them, killing an officer and two EM. Two escaped, and a Lt. Col., a first sergeant and a buck sergeant were captured. This was the first fire as yet, but gave away the fact that Americans were on the hill.

During the day B and I companies had eight casualties and had captured 14 enemy, including one officer. That night I Co extended to the east and occupied pillboxes 44, 45 and 46. B Co was able to make contact with the 1st Bn patrol and radio by this time.

During the 10th Oct A Co did not have much planned, as they had nothing to work with. The 1st platoon had lost eleven men and they still had not taken the house (87254530) and pillboxes 13, 14 and 15.

A Co CO was alerted that night and told that he was to close the gap between C Co on CRUCIFIX HILL (878457) and I Co who had moved to pillbox 44 (872462). A Co was to "cut" the road. He was relieved on the east by a platoon of engineers, and on the west by a platoon of E Co.

The Company moved out as soon after dark as it was relieved. The CO had not been on CRUCIFIX Hill himself and was to be guided into position by the CO of C Co. Something went wrong, and the column was halted for three hours until the two company commanders made contact.

It was a pitch black night and C Co CO inadvertently led them over the top of the hill instead of around it. When about 50 yds short of the peak, C Co machine guns opened fire on the column, and a few hand grenades were

thrown. Both company commanders shouted for them to cease firing, which they finally did. When they reached the bottom of the hill they were fired on again by friendly outposts.

Finally reaching their area, A Co CO discovered he had only about 40 men with him. He placed his platoon in and around pillboxes 38, 39, and 40. He requested the C Co platoon sergeant he was relieving to keep his platoon in place until the balance of his company came up. He then dispatched his weapons platoon sergeant back for the weapons platoon and the balance of the company.

The weapons platoon sergeant found the 2d platoon back in the area from which they had departed and the weapons platoon and the balance of the company in their former area farther east. It was not until 1000 hrs the following morning that the whole company reached the position.

At about 0200 hrs on the 10th Oct the enemy arty barrage increased in intensity in E Co's area. At least two enemy companies attacked down the same draw (west of the road) as the attack two days before had done. The enemy got down to the houses just north of E Co's position and a few even got into the courtyard (884456). They were fired on by machine guns (including the 50 cal from the tanks) and mortars. According to E Co officers, they never really made an attack but withdrew, leaving a few snipers in the houses. During the day enemy Red Cross parties were busy picking up their wounded.

During the day five enemy tanks were spotted in the vicinity of WAMBACH and were taken under fire by the TD's and by friendly artillery. The results of this fire were not observed as the tanks withdrew out of sight.

The same day L Co, having moved thru VERLAUTENHEIDE, made a flanking move on HAAREN from the north. They captured the northern outskirts of the town without much trouble.

K Co moved one platoon, reenforced with tank destroyers, across the open ground, striking HAAREN from the southeast. They occupied the lower or southern section of HAAREN without much difficulty, capturing 6 enemy officers and 83 EM. The balance of K Co then moved into the town.

A composite company consisting of the 18th Inf Mine Plat, the I and R plat 18th Inf, and the Recon plat of the 634th TD Bn, had relieved the above companies and was in position of the ridge 192.

"During the 11th Oct the 3d Bn consolidated and mopped up areas captured during the previous day. The battalion was under constant and heavy enemy fire all day. A patrol from Company K attempted to make contact with 30th US Infantry Division pushing down from the north but without success. 70 prisoners were captured during the day.

The same day B Co was able to evacuate its wounded, its Psw and the civilians out of the chateau (869464). ~~was~~ Just before dark two enemy tanks and 20 infantry attacked their positions from the north. Five got into the lines, of whom four were killed and one captured. Friendly arty fire broke up the balance. The tanks withdrew during the night after firing MG's only. The balance of the night was quiet except for the usual artillery fire.

2. In the meantime A Co had sent the 2d plat down the road through ? and HAAREN (where they picked up two tanks from the 3d Bn) and back up the more or less parallel road to the left to pillbox 44, vicinity (871461). Here they set up a road block of mines covered by light machine guns. A burned enemy truck which partially blocked the road formed ~~was~~ a part of the obstacle. Two enemy motorcycles and three enemy wagons with rations for AACHEN were caught. By this time the block had lost its element of surprise due to the wreckage around it.

The 2d platoon, reenforced by the light MG's, ^{was} ~~were~~ on the left. The 1st platoon with the HMG's ^{was} ~~were~~ on the right. The 3d plat (now back to near normal

strength) was in support. The mortars had been set up in HAAREN.

On the 12th Oct around 0800 hrs 12 enemy tanks moved southwest on the road to the west of RAVELS B. ^{HILL} turned right and went into the woods vicinity (861468). Medium and light artillery was fired on them, but no hits were observed. B Co called for "air" but the planes arrived after the tanks had gotten in the woods; ~~and~~ the results were not observed.

The company received heavy artillery fire all day. Just before dark about 100 enemy infantry were observed advancing from the woods where the tanks had disappeared. They were well extended in a column of two's. Artillery and 4.2 mortars fire was placed on them breaking the attack.

A light machine gun squad leader went out to his gun and saw only one enemy infantryman. He shot and wounded the latter, who still was able to escape.

The rest of the night was quiet except for the usual enemy mortar fire.

"On 13th Oct Co L, reenforced by tanks and TD's, captured and destroyed three pillboxes. Co K also captured three pillboxes. Battalion area still under heavy mortar and artillery fire. 7 prisoners captured during the day." (See account of tanks and TD's for another story).

"On the 14th October company K moved up on line with company I, relieving B Co and took defensive positions, on RAVELS B. Hill. Enemy shelled the whole Battalion area, especially company I all day. One platoon from Cannon Company, 18th Infantry, was attached to the Battalion to strengthen our defensive positions. Company K attempted to contact 30th Division but ran into such a fire fight before going 100 yards from their position that they had to return. One prisoner captured during the day."

After being relieved by K Co, B Co moved to the factory district in HAAREN ~~that~~ night. At 150030 ^{Oct.} the Company was alerted to move to support the 2d Bn 18th Inf in case of a breakthrough. Shortly afterward they moved out to EILENDORF ~~where they~~ occupied the cellars by about 1300 hrs. About 1500 hrs one platoon

was ordered up to fill the gap between G of the 16th and G of the 18th. Shortly afterward the rest of the company moved up in back of the other platoon and dug in. Their mission was to counterattack in case the enemy broke through. They did not engage in any fighting, however.

In the meantime a strong enemy patrol had attacked G Co. By 1030 hrs they had gotten past the four houses at (890453). The attack was repulsed by arty, mortar and small arms fire. This was the only enemy infantry action involving the 2d Bn from the 11th to 15th Oct.

^{On}~~The~~ 14th Oct A Co was given the mission of clearing three pillboxes (41, 42, 43) to their front. During the night they laid a 60 mm and 81 mm mortar barrage (30 to 40 rounds of each) on the three boxes and the area around them at twenty-five minutes after the hour. The plan was that the regularity of the barrage would drive the enemy into the emplacements; ~~and~~ they could then be approached at the proper time.

At 0525 three squads were in place around the three pillboxes. The enemy had gone inside apparently expecting the hourly barrage. Two of the squads "goofed off" and did nothing, but the third squad, under the direction of the platoon leader, threw a satchel charge in their pillbox and captured 24 prisoners. The patrol was then withdrawn, leaving the other two boxes in enemy hands.

"During the 15th October (3d) Battalion was in defensive position near HAAREN, Germany. Some heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire. Patrol from composite company laid a wildcat mine block on the only road leading from AACHEN and destroyed three enemy vehicles. No prisoners were captured."

At dawn of the 16th Oct G Co was attacked by a patrol "in force." The attack was repulsed by small arms and mortar fire.

About 1600 - 1630 hrs G Co was again attacked, this time by 29 infantrymen and two tanks. Artillery fire was called and "did an excellent job." However, the tanks got past the four houses at (890453) and the infantry got inside "G" Co's position. Friendly tanks and TD's swept the QUINX road, and the enemy tanks

withdrew.

It was erroneously reported that G Co was overrun, so one platoon of B Co was sent in to restore the position. They moved in after dark without trouble, since the position was not in fact overrun. Early the next morning the G Co platoon withdrew.

During the engagement the 1st platoon of E Co supported by two tanks moved into G Co's position. One of the American tanks was knocked out.

By this time it was dark and the platoon stayed in position, relieving the 3d platoon of G Co. The following night (17-18 Oct) the 1st platoon of E Co was relieved.

Before daylight the same morning, the 2d platoon commander of F Co called his CO and said there were three enemy tanks right outside his window and that one of them was touching the house (889457) in which his platoon CP was located. Actually there was a platoon of four SP guns and one command tank which had come in under cover of the artillery barrage. Three of them had been knocked out by the mine field at the RJ (890457). The tank crews had left the tanks and had gone into the buildings.

It was a pitch black night, and the company CO asked for a platoon of E Company (Bn support) to move in and help stop the expected attack. According to Capt Alfred E Koenig, F Co CO, it was not an attack, and the E Co platoon was not needed.

The commander of the enemy platoon of SP weapons stated that he had been given orders to meet his company CO in the square of VERLAUTENHEIDE.

At daylight F Co CO saw six enemy tanks to the right of WAMBACH firing at VERLAUTENHEIDE. A few minutes later he saw a column of five or six enemy tanks coming toward his ^{position} ~~position~~ on the military highway.

By this time the TD's were alerted and in position to fire. One scored a hit on one of the enemy tanks, but it was too far away to penetrate. Three tanks then withdrew while those in the vicinity of WAMBACH continued to fire.

Friendly artillery was called on them and there was a lull for a while.

Later in the morning three tanks approached from the north and were lost in a ground depression. At least three others came from behind WAMBACH and joined the attack. Six enemy tanks (with infantry mounted on them) attacked E and F Co from the north. At the same time at least five other enemy tanks approached from the direction of WEIDEN.

The tanks got down as far as the vicinity of (884460) when a TD located in the orchard, vicinity (885455) spotted one and fired 8 rounds on a Mark VI, but the shots "bounced off" the enemy tank's thick front armor.

However, it did stop the tank, and the others also came to a halt at this point. The infantry dismounted and began their attack. F Co opened fire with rifles, BAR's and MG's, hitting at least 30 of the enemy. Friendly artillery and mortar fire also fell on the enemy and assisted in breaking up the attack. Around noon a TD in the same vicinity got within 100 yards of a Tiger tank and fired five rounds point-blank, apparently without effect, for the Mark VI immediately returned the fire. The projectile penetrated the TD, knocking it out, killing the gun sergeant and seriously wounding two others.

However, one Mark V was knocked out in this engagement. During the late afternoon some tanks appeared about 1200 yards to the east. A TD "got" one of them, a Mark V.

During ~~the~~ 17th Oct G Co, which had been relieved by a platoon of E Co and one of B Co, was moved back about 100 yards and became the counterattacking force of the Bn. The 2d plat was sent to HAAREN to support the 3d Bn, where they were placed in pillboxes southwest of RAVELS B. Hill.

The 2d Bn CO sent the "extra" men of B Co to retake the four houses in QUINX (890453). He wanted the 16th Infantry to move up to the orchard and tie in with the 18th but it was never worked out.

(For the account of the attack on K Co 18th Oct., read Enclosure (No) prepared by the 3d Bn, 18th Inf.)

About noon on the 18th Oct B Co was alerted to move, and their CO ordered to report to the 3d Bn CP. G Co returned to their position in the line relieving B Co.

B Co CO was ordered to get one plat to RAVELS B. Hill as quickly as possible. The 2d plat moved to the vicinity of pillboxes (11-14). By the time the Co Commander found out what the situation was it was getting dark. So he placed the 2d plat (the first one to arrive) in K Co's line, who suffered heavy casualties getting into position. The 1st plat occupied pill boxes 15, 16 and 17. The 3d platoon was ordered to RAVELS B. as soon as possible and to report to the company CO in pillbox no. 1.

The enemy had retaken pillboxes 3, 5 and 6. Plans were made for retaking them. B Co was to take no. 3 and K to retake no. 5. B Co equipped a squad with pole charges, bazookas and rifle grenades. The pole charge was used, but not a shot was fired. Eleven prisoners were captured, but the enemy was alerted in nos. 5 and 6 and K Co was unable to take no. 5. The enemy were firing captured HMG's at the American forces.

On ~~the~~ 19th Oct B Co ordered a squad to retake no. 6. For some reason the squad decided to take no. 5 first. They surrounded the box and one man went down to open the door but was shot and wounded. The EM in the "fort" wanted to surrender but the officer wouldn't let them. A bajooka was then fired at the box, after which 16 enemy surrendered. The officer and three enlisted men remained inside. K Co then moved down and occupied the box, capturing those who had remained inside. (The officer was still arrogant). The squad then surrounded no. 6 and the enemy surrendered.

In the meantime K Co CO had ordered ~~some~~ a tank to go around the hill (on the forward slope) to knock out the pillboxes (nos. 5 and 6) on the west of the hill. The tank fired on one box when it was knocked out, by one shot from an enemy weapon. (See account on tanks and TD's).

The two companies then got the hill reorganized. (The first plat of B Co was still in pillboxes nos. 15, 16, and 17). About 1400 the heaviest mortar and mortar and artillery barrage yet, was thrown at the hill by the enemy. All the boxes were brought under platoon trajectory fire and the men in fox-holes around them suffered heavy casualties.

Immediately after the barrage, one or two enemy tanks and two companies of infantry attacked the hill (see sketch). They succeeded in capturing pill box No. 3 (all the B Co men around the box were either killed or wounded. The attack was stopped with the help of friendly artillery. Shortly afterwards K Co retook the box, capturing 17 or 18 prisoners.

Both companies had suffered heavy casualties. ~~and~~ That night at dark the last platoon of B Co was moved into the line.

The 20th Oct L Co was ordered to relieve K. K and B Companies were separated and organized. L Co occupied pillboxes 1, 2, 3, 5 and the high ground to the north and northeast. B occupied the balance of the boxes.

On the 21st Oct companies A and B were ordered to change places. B Co moved what was left of the 2d and 3d platoons back to HAAREN (where replacements were waiting) during daylight. One plat of A Co going into their positions. The 2d plat of B Co became the support platoon, and went into position in the cellars of the house, vicinity (872457) The 3d plat remained in HAAREN all day and then relieved another platoon of A Co, going into position around pillboxes 39 and 40. The latter then relieved the 1st platoon of B Co, who moved back to HAAREN, got replacements and relieved the last platoon of A Co, going into position around pillbox 44 and the ground east of it, and cutting the road from HAAREN to zu WEIDEN. The relief was completed by 0400 the 22d Oct.

By this time the city of AACHEN had fallen and no further serious attempts to penetrate the positions of the 18th or 16th Inf Regts were made by the enemy.

The following persons were interviewed by the Historical Officer in connection with this account:

Maj. Henry V. Middleworth	Regt. S - 3
1st Lt. Astor H. Morris	Regt. Asst. S-3
Capt. Donald Courrier	Regt. S-1
Capt. Edward M. Solomon	Regt. Asst. S-2
Maj. Robert W. Green	1st Bn. Ex. Off.
Capt. Jesse R. Miller	"B" Co commander
1st Lt. Wm. E. Tolbert	"B" Co Ex. Off.
Capt. Bowers	"D" Co commander
1st Lt. Harold P. Monica	"D" Co Ex. Off.
1st Sgt. Odell G. Benedict	"D" 1st Sgt.
Capt. Herbert H. Scott-Smith	"A" Co commander, until 15 Oct.
Lt. Col. John Williams	2d Bn commander
Capt. H. T. Coffman	"E" Co commander
1st Lt. Maxwell A. McCulloch	"E" Co Ex. Off.
1st Lt. James E. Talty	"E" Co Weapons platoon leader
T/Sgt Donald J. Kinney	3d platoon sergeant
T/Sgt. Harry Kelly	1st platoon sergeant
S/Sgt. McDonald Newton	Squad leader
Capt. Alfred E. Koenig	"F" Co commander
1st Lt. Stanley V. Summers	"F" Co Ex. Off.
1st Lt. Freddie T Towles	"F" Co plat leader
Capt. Gordon A. Jeffrey	"G" Co commander
1st Lt. Randolph F. Paulsen	"G" Co Ex. Eff.

~~SECRET~~

Battle of Aachen - 18th Infantry Regiment

Explanation: (1) At the time this report was written there had not as yet been an opportunity to contact the commander of Co C who was in the hospital in Eupen. (2) Due to the need for training for the next operation, the Historical Officer was refused permission to interview the company officers of the 3d Bn. The account of this battalion is taken almost entirely from the Bn Journal.

The following excerpts from FO #30, Hq 18th Inf. Regt., 2 Oct. 44, indicate the general plan of operation of the regimental combat team in the actions to be described:

"1. b. - VII US Corps attacks northeast to form a junction with XIX US Corps northeast of AACHEN. XIX US Corps on our north attacks to the east to breach the SIEGFRIED LINE and cut off AACHEN from the northeast. Time of attack to be announced.

"2. a. - CT 18 attacks to seize high ground northeast of EILENDORF, and, in conjunction with the advance of 30th US Inf Div on our north, to cut off AACHEN from the northeast.....

"3. a. - 2d Bn 18th Inf (reinf) attacks through present positions of 3rd Bn 18th Inf and 2nd Bn 16th Inf, seizes and secures VERLAUTENHEIDE to secure a line of departure for 1st Bn 18th inf, and to provide a base of fire.

"b. - 1st Bn 18th Inf (reinf) attacks from positions in vicinity of VERLAUTENHEIDE secured by 2nd Bn 18th Inf to seize and secure CRUCIFIX HILL (Hill 239) and cut HAAREN-BROICHWEIDEN ROAD.

"c. - 3rd Bn 18th Inf (reinf) initially supports attack of 2nd Bn 18th Inf by fire on known targets in vicinity of HAAREN; attacks to seize and secure ridge at 8744 (see Operation Overlay) in conjunction with the attack of 1st Bn 18th Inf on CRUCIFIX HILL."

After an artillery barrage preparation from 0300 to 0400 hours on the morning of 8th Oct, the 2d Bn passed thru the position of G Co 16th Inf and jumped off from the LD just as ^b the rarrage lifted. The Bn was supported by ten tanks. (See account of tanks and TD's for details).

The Bn jumped off E on the left and F on the right, abreast, and C Co in support. F Co moved forward with two platoons abreast, one in support, two squads abreast (in squad column) and one in the rear. Each company had a platoon of HMG's attached.

The mission of Co F was to secure the QUINX vicinity and the northeastern part of VERLAUTENHEIDE. That of E Co was to secure the northwestern portion of the town while G Co was to secure the southern part.

The Bn followed the barrage as closely as possible in order to get to the area before the enemy came up out of their foxholes.

The first platoon of F Co, on the left flank, succeeded in making a break through the enemy line and got to their objective with very little trouble, except for being disorganized. They followed a depression in the ground and were on their objective beofre the enemy had time to get organized.

The 2d platoon on the right flank got about halfway across the clearing when the mortars of the 16th Inf, which were supposed to keep the enemy in their holes along the road on the right flank suddenly ceased firing. Enemy machine guns along the road opened fire on the 2d platoon, pinning them down and causing some casualties. The company CO attempted to get mortar fire on them again but was unable to do so.

He then sent the 3d platoon around to the left to follow the 1st. They were a bit disorganized but got into town and on their objective without much trouble.

The platoon leader of the 2d platoon was hit in both legs but kept on going. Abot a squad finally got thru to QUINX. (The balance had become cas/sualties or had gotten lost in the confusion.) They captured an AT gun, vicinity

(889454) and cleaned out the western portion of QUINX capturing 30 PsW. They then proceeded to their area of VERLAUTENHEIDE.

As soon as the 2d platoon cleared QUINX, the "Ranger" platoon (a composite platoon) was sent in to hold the village and block the road.

The Co CO moved out with the CP group abreast of the "Ranger" platoon. The MG fire, above, split them into three groups, which finally reassembled in the 1st platoon area. While moving to the 2d and 3d platoon area, he got too far out in front and ran into an enemy column approaching VERLAUTENHEIDE from the north. He fired into them (killing 5 or 6) and beat a hasty retreat.

Apparently the enemy column continued and were stopped by the 3d platoon with rifle and machine gun fire. The roads were swept for mines and a platoon of tanks called up. One finally arrived about 1000 hours. E

E Co moving abreast of F Co from the LD had their left flank guiding on the road running south out of VERLAUTENHEIDE. They crossed over the road at RJ (887453) and moved through town with very little trouble. They did not attempt to thoroughly clear the town. They moved to their area and began digging in.

Just prior to daylight about 100 enemy infantry came down from CRUCIFIX HILL and attacked the 1st platoon E Co who fired 60 mm mortars and MG's at them. Also a few riflemen would fire while the others continued to dig in. By 1000 hours the attack was broken and 90 PsW had been taken.

During almost the entire day enemy mortar and arty fire fell on the town.

About 2100 at least a company of enemy infantry, supported by mortar fire came down the draw to the west of the road leading to WURSELEN, hitting the 1st platoon again. Five succeeded in getting into the position, of whom four were captured and one killed. 12 were killed within 12-15 yards of the HMG position. Four or five others were killed by rifle or MG fire and the attack was broken.

G Co left EILENDORF about 0830, under intermittent enemy shelling. The company moved in column of platoons, extended in depth and followed the approximate route of the other two companies. The 2d platoon was the first to reach VERLAUTENHEIDE. It moved in on the right flank of F Co cutting the road junction (887454). The entire Company was in the town by 1100 hours and buttoned up, as shown, around the southern part.

The 1st Battalion had the mission of taking Crucifix Hill, and organizing the ground around it for defense. At the same time the WEIDEN-HAAREN road was to be cut by fire, and its use as an escape or reinforcement route for the forces in AACHEN denied to the enemy.

The Bn CO and forward Command Group were the first elements of the Bn to move across the open ground to the jump-off positions in VERLAUTENHEIDE. By this time the enemy was aware of what was going on and had registered heavily on the town, as well as the approach to it from the 16th Inf positions. Orders were given for the Bn to infiltrate into VERLAUTENHEIDE by platoon groups. Moving through "the heaviest artillery and mortar fire encountered by the Bn since the breakthrough at MARIGNY", the companies did not reach their jump-off positions until 1500 hours.

The men were armed with pole charges, satchel charges, flame throwers, and bangalore torpedoes, in addition to their normal infantry weapons, to enable them to knock out the pillboxes that stood in their path. A large percentage of the men making the attack had only had their induction to combat a week or so before. They were not finished soldiers in any sense of the word.

The order to attack was given at 1530, and C Co reenforced by the "Ranger" Platoon, (a composite platoon) and one platoon of HMG's attached from Co D, moved forward along the crest of the ridge leading to CRUCIFIX HILL.

Successfully knocking ^{out} the pillboxes that stood in their way C Co led by Capt. Bobbie E. Brown (wounded three times) reached their objective and by 1630

the hill was firmly in their hands.

In moving from EILENDORF to VERLAUTENHEIDE, A Co had suffered 20 casualties from the mortar and artillery barrage, 13 of which were in the 3d platoon.

In the order of attack A Co was echeloned to the left rear of C Co with the mission of clearing out the area south of the sunken road between VERLAUTENHEIDE and HAAREN. The 1st platoon was to clean out the triangle area north of the road running from (883452) to (886454). The 3d platoon was to clean out the area just to the south of that road. The latter platoon had hardly gotten started when the platoon leader and a couple of members of the platoon were killed by an artillery shell. They quickly bogged down due to the loss of their leader, the other losses sustained, heavy enemy fire and darkness. When darkness came the Co CO could find only five or six members of the platoon.

The first platoon made some progress but was held up by observed fire from the west and th the failure of the 3d platoon to push forward. They had not taken pillbox no. 16 by dark. The 2d plat was then put in to the left of the 1st, extending down to just short of the draw, replacing the 3d. During the night five to seven men of the 3d drifted in to the Co CP so the 2d plat was pulled out and the 3d again sent in.

The 8th Oct, B Co was Bn support. They moved out of EILENDORF around noon in single file, subjected to mortar and arty fire. Reaching VERLAUTENHEIDE, they moved into cellars in the ^southwestern part of the town, tying in with C Co on the left and the 2d Bn on the right. There they remained for the night and the following day.

"At 1330 hrs, the 3d Bn with Cos I and K in the assult pushed forward to seize Hill 192 which extends from AACHEN to CRUCIFIX HILL. The companies received intense mortar and small arms fire all the way to the objective, but the companies closed on the objective so swiftly that the ridge was taken in two hours time. During the afternoon, one plat of K Co was moved over to the SCHEIDS woods vicinity (886448). The rest of I and K companies shifted ~~from~~ along

the ridge to the right. (from Bn Journal). At 1600 hrs L Co was ordered to clean out the factory town of ROTHE ERDE. This was all street fighting and by night one platoon of Co L occupied one half of the large rubber factory (866430) and the Germans the other half. 47 PsW were captured during the day.

During the night Co's I and K sent patrols forward with the mission of determining the enemy strength in and around HAAREN (HAAREN was proposed objective for 3d Bn on the 9th Oct). The Co K patrol got within 500 yards southeast of objective when they ran into an assembly area that the enemy was using to form a counterattacking force. A short but terrific fire fight ensued with unknown results. Our patrol suffered no casualties. Meanwhile, the Co I patrol reached the edge of HAAREN without incident. Forth seven prisoners were captured during the day. "

The morning of 9th October the enemy "saturated" CRUCIFIX HILL with shell and mortar fire. At 0615 the enemy attempted to retake the hill by storm, and three waves of infantrymen, and assault engineers attacked its northern and western slopes. The men of C Co held their fire until the enemy was almost upon them. Then they opened up with a "murderous grazing fire that piled the onrushing Germans in front of their very foxholes. One section of D Co's HMG's particularly distinguished itself, the gunners swinging their guns with free traverse and blazing away at every German in sight. The enemy (or whatever shattered remnants were left) withdrew as suddenly as they had attacked, leaving forty some-odd dead strewn on the bloody slopes of CRUCIFIX HILL. 35 PsW were taken." (from Bn Journal).

During the morning of the 9th Oct A Co moved the 2d platoon thru C Co position and just after daylight attacked the group of pillboxes (18-24) from the north. (The latter were generally sited to fire to the south). By 0800 pillboxes no. 17,19,22, 23 and 24 had fallen leaving 18 still occupied by the enemy. The latter could not be taken because it was covered by fire from pillboxes 13, 14 and 15, about 150 yards to the east.

Four boxes, 13, 14, 15 and 16 and the house at (87254530) were still in

enemy hands. The Co CO was unable to get 4.2 mortar or arty fire on them due to the close proximity of friendly troops. He then pulled his plat back and fired a limited no. of rounds of 81 mm mortar around no. 16. In the meantime, he had requested C Co to send some men down to divert their attention. Just after the 81 mm mortar fire two C Co men made their way to the box without difficulty and placed a pole charge in the embrasure and walked off. Nine enemy came out of the box and were picked up by A Co.

The terrain was very open and ~~was~~ sloped to the south. It was almost impossible to get tanks into position to fire on the enemy strongpoints. The 1st plat was unable to move forward because of them. Late in the morning A Co succeeded in getting two 155 SP's up to (877453) from which position they fired at the boxes still in enemy hands. The 155's smashed one but did not damage the other two. The 2d plat buttoned up around the pillboxes they had taken while the 1st and 3d plats closed in, back in the vicinity of the triangle.

Just before dark A Co was ordered to send some men to close the gap between C Co (on CRUCIFIX HILL) and E Co. The Co CO sent up the 3d plat. He then outposted the line held by the 3d with a sqd of men from the mortar section.

^B Both E Co and the 2d Bn had set up their CP's in the house (88704535) just across the road from the junction of the QUINX road. At 0300 on the 9th Oct an intense enemy arty bombardment woke up both F Co and 2d Bn staffs. At 0400 a Bn of enemy infantry moved up the QUINX road in the attack. They pushed back a G Co platoon in QUINX and a sqd of F Co 1st plat. The enemy had reached the RJ in front of the CP and had control of it.

F Co CO took the remainder of the G Co plat (one squad) one squad of the first plat F Co, the "Ranger" plat and the CP group and built up a fire line in front of the house, tying in with the 1st plat of F Co.

The enemy started a fire in the barn, about 20 feet away with tracers. A platoon of G Co had their CP there. The men had gone down into the (potato)

cellar for protection from the shelling. When the barn caught fire it was imperative for them to get out. T/Sgt. Wm. L. Reed managed to get out of the cellar with a "Tommy gun" which he fired into the enemy, thus allowing the others to get out.

There was a 45 minute lull and the attack started again. The enemy worked their way as close to the CP as possible, firing ~~to~~ AT rockets completely through the house, some of them getting across the street on the same side as the CP, where they were stopped by the fire line built up (above) and the .50 cal. MG from an AT gun.

Just before daylight the Co CO called for the tanks about 150-200 yards to the north. It took an hour for the crews to assemble and the tanks to reach the area. They finally got there about dawn.

Five tanks and one TD were finally in position about (0730), and were given orders "to shoot everything ahead" across the street (see sketch in Tank and TD account). Consequently, both the tanks and the TD "sprayed" the buildings across the street with MG fire and blasted some of them with the 75 mm gun.

Using a plat from E Co, and a sqd from the 2d plat F Co the F Co CO began a flanking movement clockwise, with the tanks while the enemy turned and ran. The line was restored and the men really ^{dug} in in earnest.

A few of the enemy had swung around to the south where they ran into the mortar section and were repulsed by small arms fire. The Bn CO then ordered every house in VERLAUTENHEIDE completely searched for enemy.

The artillery, not knowing just what the situation was, fired on the rear of the enemy column with unknown results.

"At daybreak, 9 Oct, enemy mortars and arty began shelling I and K Co positions. The shelling lasted about one hour and after it lifted the enemy was seen to be infiltrating forward from pillboxes and a draw which ran along the flank of our position. The enemy was immediately taken under fire by 81 and 60

mortars, in as much as the enemy was too close to our lines that friendly arty fire was impossible. The MG's of Co I firing on the final protective line delivered a murderous cross fire as the enemy came toward the Bn positions. Enemy casualties were very high with 25 known dead and many wounded. Twenty-seven enemy prisoners were taken during this action. The attack was successfully beaten off and by 1800 hrs L Co had completely cleared the town of ROTHE ERDE, and was overlooking the center of the city of AACHEN. Approximately 1000 rds of enemy mortar and arty fire fell on the Battalion positions during the day. At 1700 hrs Company I was detached from the 3d Bn and attached to the 1st Bn, 18th Infantry, to assist in taking the last enemy-held hill in 1st Division sector (RAVELS B. HILL). Thirty three prisoners were taken during the day by the 3d Battalion, 18th Infantry."

During the dead of night (9-10) B and I Co's moved out to take RAVELS B. Hill. B Co, in the lead, was moving in column of platoons, 3d, 1st, weapons platoon plus a section of HMG's, and the 2d platoon. The plan was to slip thru as quietly as possible and get on the hill without a fight.

The head of the column suddenly found itself in front of two enemy held pillboxes (nos. 44 and 46). The enemy could be seen and heard moving around inside them. The column was halted, then retraced its path and moved northeast along the road and turned left again about 50 yards south of the enemy-held pillbox (no 47). Three enemy could be seen sitting on top of the "box" smoking and talking. Six or eight enemy were spotted moving parallel to the column but were lost when they got to the road to the northwest.

The 3d plat got across said road when a horse drawn cart with two enemy came down the road. The column halted, and allowed them to pass without firing a shot. This road was used all night long by infantry troops moving in or out of AACHEN.

The column moved to the north of RAVELS B. and then swung around to the west and south. They immediately began organizing the hill. Pillbox no. 3 was cleared

netting two PsW. At daylight no. 6 was cleared and by 0800 all pillboxes from nos. 1 - 8 had been cleared without firing a shot.

Later in the morning, an enemy detail of four men with chow for 65 men came into the area and were captured. (Part of the chow was eaten by some of the Americans in preference to cold rations). Later in the day eight enemy, who had gone into the chateau (869464), for protection against the shelling, moved over toward the hill. A BAR man opened fire on them, killing an officer and two EM. Two escaped, and a Lt. Col., a first sergeant and a buck sergeant were captured. This was the first fire as yet, but gave away the fact that Americans were on the hill.

During the day B and I companies had eight casualties and had captured 14 enemy including one officer. That night I Co extended to the east and occupied pillboxes 44, 45 and 46. B Co was able to make contact with the 1st Bn patrol and radio by this time.

During the 10th Oct A Co did not have much planned as they had nothing to work with. The 1st platoon had lost eleven men and they still had not taken the house (87254530) and pillboxes 13, 14 and 15.

A Co CO was alerted that night and told that he was to close the gap between C Co on CRUCIFIX HILL (878457) and I Co who had moved to pillbox 44 (872462). A Co was to "cut" the road. He was relieved on the east by a platoon of engineers, and on the west by a platoon of E Co.

The Company moved out as soon after dark as it was relieved. The CO had not been on CRUCIFIX Hill himself and was to be guided into position by the CO of C Co. Something went wrong and the column was halted for three hours until the two company commanders made contact.

It was a pitch black night and C Co CO inadvertantly led them over the top of the hill instead of around it. When about 50 yds short of the peak C Co machine guns opened fire on the column, and a few hand grenades were

thrown. Both company commanders shouted for them to cease firing which they finally did. When they reached the bottom of the hill they were fired on again by friendly outposts.

Finally reaching their area, A Co CO discovered he had only about 40 men with him. He placed his platoon in and around pillboxes 38, 39, and 40. He requested the C Co platoon sergeant he was relieving to keep his platoon in place until the balance of his company came up. He then dispatched his weapons platoon sergeant back for the weapons platoon and the balance of the company.

The weapons platoon sergeant found the 2d platoon back in the area from which they had departed and the weapons platoon and the balance of the company in their former area farther east. It was not until 1000 hrs the following morning that the whole company reached the position.

At about 0200 hrs on the 10th Oct the enemy arty barrage increased in intensity in E Co's area. At least two enemy companies attacked down the same draw (west of the road) as the attack two days before had done. The enemy got down to the houses just north of E Co's position and a few even got into the courtyard (884456). They were fired on by machine guns (including the 50 cal from the tanks) and mortars. According to E Co officers they never really made an attack but withdrew leaving a few snipers in the houses. During the day enemy Red Cross parties were busy picking up their wounded.

During the day five enemy tanks were spotted in the vicinity of WAMBACH and were taken under fire by the TD's and by friendly artillery. The results of this fire were not observed as the tanks withdrew out of sight.

The same day L Co, having moved thru VERLAUTENHEIDE, made a flanking move on HAAREN from the north. They captured the northern outskirts of the town without much trouble.

K Co moved one platoon, reenforced with tank destroyers across the open ground striking HAAREN from the southeast. They occupied the lower or southern section of HAAREN without much difficulty, capturing 6 enemy officers and 83 EM. The balance of K Co then moved into the town.

A composite company consisting of the 18th Inf Mine Plat, the I and R plat 18th Inf, and the Recon plat of the 634th TD Bn, had relieved the above companies and was in position of the ridge 192.

"During the 11th Oct the 3d Bn consolidated and mopped up areas captured during the previous day. The battalion was under constant and heavy enemy fire all day. A patrol from Company K attempted to make contact with 30th US Infantry Division pushing down from the north but without success. 70 prisoners were captured during the day."

The same day B Co was able to evacuate its wounded, its PsW and the civilians out of the chateau (869464). ~~and~~ Just before dark two enemy tanks and 20 infantry attacked their positions from the north. Five got into the lines of whom four were killed and one captured. Friendly arty fire broke up the balance. The tanks withdrew during the night after firing MG's only. The balance of the night was quiet except for the usual artillery fire.

In the meantime A Co had sent the 2d plat down the road thru Haarberg and HAAREN (where they picked up two tanks from the 3d Bn) and back up the more or less parallel road to the left to pillbox 44, vicinity (871461). Here they set up a road block, of mines covered by light machine guns. A burned enemy truck which partially blocked the road formed ~~xxx~~ a part of the obstacle. Two enemy motorcycles and three enemy wagons with rations for AACHEN were caught. By this time the block had lost its element of surprise due to the wreckage around it.

The 2d platoon, reenforced by the light MG's were on the left. The 1st platoon with the HMG's were on the right. The 3d plat (now back to near normal

strength was in support. The mortars had been set up in HAAREN.

On the 12th Oct around 0800 hrs 12 enemy tanks moved southwest on the road to the west of RAVELS B., turned right and went into the woods vicinity (861468). Medium and light artillery was fired on them but no hits were observed. B Co called for "air" but the planes arrived after the tanks had gotten in the woods and the results were not observed.

The company received heavy artillery fire all day. Just before dark about 100 enemy infantry were observed advancing from the woods where the tanks had disappeared. They were well extended in a column of two's. Artillery and 4.2 mortars fire was placed on them breaking the attack.

A light machine gun squad leader went out to his gun and saw only one enemy infantryman. He shot and wounded the latter, who still was able to escape.

The rest of the night was quiet except for the usual enemy mortar fire.

"On 13th Oct Co L reenforced by tanks and TD's captured and destroyed three pillboxes. Co K also captured three pillboxes. Battalion area still under heavy mortar and artillery fire. 7 prisoners captured during the day." (See account of tanks and TD's for another story).

"On the 14th October company K moved up on line with company I, relieving B Co and took defensive positions on RAVELS B. Hill. Enemy shelled the whole Battalion area, especially company I all day. One platoon from Cannon Company 18th Infantry was attached to the Battalion to strengthen our defensive positions. Company K attempted to contact 30th Division but ran into such a fire fight before going 100 yards from their position that they had to return. One prisoner captured during the day."

After being relieved by K Co, B Co moved to the factory district in HAAREN ~~THAT~~ night. At 150030 the Company was alerted to move to support the 2d Bn 18th Inf in case of a breakthrough. Shortly afterward they moved out to ELLENDORF ~~where they~~ occupied the cellars by about 1300 hrs. About 1500 hrs one platoon

was ordered up to fill the gap between G of the 16th and G of the 18th. Shortly afterward the rest of the company moved up in back of the other platoon and dug in. Their mission was to counterattack in case the enemy broke through. They did not engage in any fighting however.

In the meantime a strong enemy patrol had attacked G Co. By 1030 hrs they had gotten past the four houses at (890453). The attack was repulsed by arty, mortar and small arms fire. This was the only enemy infantry action involving the 2d En from the 11th to 15th Oct.

The 14th Oct A Co was given the mission of clearing three pillboxes (41, 42, 43) to their front. During the night they laid a 60 mm and 81 mm mortar barrage (30 to 40 rounds of each) on the three boxes and the area around them at twenty-five minutes after the hour. The plan was that the regularity of the barrage would drive the enemy into the emplacements and they could then be approached at the proper time.

At 0525 three squads were in place around the three pillboxes. The enemy had gone inside apparently expecting the hourly barrage. Two of the squads "goofed off" and did nothing, but the third squad, under the direction of the platoon leader threw a satchel charge in their pillbox, and captured 24 prisoners. The patrol was then withdrawn leaving the other two boxes in enemy hands.

"During the 15th October (3d) Battalion was in defensive positions near HAAREN, Germany. Some heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire. Patrol from composite company laid a wildcat mine block on the only road leading from AACHEN and destroyed three enemy vehicles. No prisoners were captured."

At dawn of the 16th Oct G Co was attacked by a patrol "in force." The attack was repulsed by small arms and mortar fire.

About 1600 - 1630 hrs G Co was again attacked, this time by 29 infantrymen and two tanks. Artillery fire was called and "did an excellent job." However, the tanks got past the four houses at (890453) and the infantry got inside "G" Co's position. Friendly tanks and TD's swept the QUINX road, and the enemy tanks/

withdrew.

It was erroneously reported that G Co was overrun so one platoon of B Co was sent in to restore the position. They moved in after dark without trouble since the position was not in fact overrun. Early the next morning the G Co platoon withdrew.

During the engagement the 1st platoon of E Co supported by two tanks moved into G Co's position. One of the American tanks was knocked out.

By this time it was dark and the platoon stayed in position relieving the 3d platoon of G Co. The following night (17-18 Oct) the 1st platoon of E Co was relieved.

Before daylight the same morning, the 2d platoon commander of F Co called his CO and said there were three enemy tanks right outside his window and that one of them was touching the house (889457) in which his platoon CP was located. Actually there was a platoon of four SP guns and one command tank which had come in under cover of the artillery barrage. Three of them had been knocked out by the mine field at the RJ (890457). The tank crews had left the tanks and had gone into the buildings.

It was a pitch black night, and the company CO asked for a platoon of E Company (Bn support) to move in and help stop the expected attack. According to Capt Alfred E Koenig, F Co CO it was not an attack and the E Co platoon was not needed.

The commander of the enemy platoon of SP weapons stated that he had been given orders to meet his company CO in the square of VERLAUTENHEIDE.

At daylight F Co CO saw six enemy tanks to the right of WAMBACH firing at VERLAUTENHEIDE. A few minutes later he saw a column of five or six enemy tanks coming toward his position on the military highway.

By this time the TD's were alerted and in position to fire. One scored a hit on one of the enemy tanks but it was too far away to penetrate. Three tanks then withdrew while those in the vicinity of WAMBACH continued to fire.

Friendly artillery was called on them and there was a lull for a while.

Later in the morning three tanks approached from the north and were lost in a ground depression. At least three others came from behind WAMBACH and joined the attack. Six enemy tanks (with infantry mounted on them) attacked E and F Co from the north. At the same time at least five other enemy tanks approached from the direction of WEIDEN.

The tanks got down as far as the vicinity of (884460) when a TD located in the orchard, vicinity (885455) spotted one and fired 8 rounds on a Mark VI, but the shots "bounced off" the enemy tank's thick front armor.

However, it did stop the tank, and the others also came to a halt at this point. The infantry dismounted and began their attack. F Co opened fire with rifles, BAR's and MG's, hitting at least 30 of the enemy. Friendly artillery and mortar fire also fell on the enemy and assisted in breaking up the attack. Around noon a TD in the same vicinity got within 100 yards of a Tiger tank and fired five rounds point blank, apparently without effect, for the Mark VI immediately returned the fire. The projectile penetrated the TD knocking it out, killing the gun sergeant and seriously wounding two others.

However, one Mark V was knocked out in this engagement. During the late afternoon some tanks appeared about 1200 yards to the east. A TD "got" one of them, a Mark V.

During the 17th Oct G Co which had been relieved by a platoon of E Co and one of B Co was moved back about 100 yards and became the counterattacking force of the Bn. The 2d plat was sent to HAAREN to support the 3d Bn, where they were placed in pillboxes southwest of RAVELS B. Hill.

The 2d Bn CO sent the "extra" men of B Co to retake the four houses in QUINX (890453). He wanted the 16th Infantry to move up to the orchard and tie in with the 18th but it was never worked out.

(For the account of the attack on K Co 18th Oct., read Enclosure (No) prepared by the 3d Bn, 18th Inf.)

About noon on the 18th Oct B Co was alerted to move, and their CO ordered to report to the 3d Bn CP. G Co returned to their position in the line relieving B Co.

B Co CO was ordered to get one plat to RAVELS B. Hill as quickly as possible. The 2d plat moved to the vicinity of pillboxes (11-14). By the time the Co Commander found out what the situation was it was getting dark. So he placed the 2d plat (the first one to arrive) in K Co's line. ^{They} ~~was~~ suffered heavy casualties getting into position. The 1st plat occupied pill boxes 15, 16 and 17. The 3d platoon was ordered to RAVELS B. as soon as possible and to report to the company CO in pillbox no. 1.

The enemy had retaken pillboxes 3, 5 and 6. Plans were made for retaking them. B Co was to take no. 3 and K to retake no. 5. B Co equipped a squad with pole charges, bazookas and rifle grenades. The pole charge was used but not a shot was fired. Eleven prisoners were captured but the enemy was alerted in nos. 5 and 6 and K Co was unable to take no. 5. The enemy were firing captured HMG's at the American forces.

On the 19th Oct B Co ordered a squad to retake no. 6. For some reason the squad decided to take no. 5 first. They surrounded the box and one man went down to open the door but was shot and wounded. The EM in the "fort" wanted to surrender but the officer wouldn't let them. A ba^zooka was then fired at the box after which 16 enemy surrendered. The officer and three enlisted men remained inside. K Co then moved down and occupied the box capturing those who had remained inside. (The officer was still arrogant). The squad then surrounded no. 6 and the enemy surrendered.

In the meantime K Co CO had ordered ~~the~~ a tank to go around the hill (on the forward slope) to knock out the pillboxes (nos. 5 and 6) on the west of the hill. The tank fired on one box when it was knocked out, by one shot from an enemy weapon. (See account on tanks and TD's).

The two companies then got the hill reorganized. (The first plat of B Co was still in pillboxes nos. 15, 16, and 17). About 1400 the heaviest mortar and mortar and artillery barrage yet, was thrown at the hill by the enemy. All the boxes were brought under ~~platoon~~^{flat} trajectory fire and the men in fox-holes around them suffered heavy casualties.

Immediately after the barrage, one or two enemy tanks and two companies of infantry attacked the hill (see sketch). They succeeded in capturing pill box no. 3 (all the B Co men around the box were either killed or wounded). The attack was stopped with the help of friendly artillery. Shortly afterwards K Co retook the box capturing 17 or 18 prisoners.

Both companies had suffered heavy casualties and that night at dark the last platoon of B Co was moved into the line.

The 20th Oct L Co was ordered to relieve K. K and B Companies were separated and organized. L Co occupied pillboxes 1, 2, 3, 5 and the high ground to the north and northeast. B occupied the balance of the boxes.

On the 21st Oct companies A and B were ordered to change places. B Co moved what was left of the 2d and 2d platoons back to HAAREN (where replacements were waiting) during daylight. One plat of A Co going into their positions. The 2d plat of B Co became the support platoon, and went into position in the cellars of the house, vicinity (872457) The 3d plat remained in HAAREN all day and ~~and~~ then relieved another platoon of A Co, going into position around pillboxes 39 and 40. The latter then relieved the 1st platoon of B Co, who moved back to HAAREN, got replacements and relieved the last platoon of A Co, going into position around pillbox 44 and the ground east of it, and cutting the road from HAAREN to zu WEIDEN. The relief was completed by 0400 the 22d Oct.

By this time the city of AACHEN had fallen and no further serious attempts to penetrate the positions of the 18th or 16th Inf Regts were made by the enemy.

The following persons were interviewed by the Historical Officer in connection with this account:

Maj. Henry V. Middleworth	Regt. S - 3
1st Lt. Astor H. Morris	Regt. Asst. S-3
Capt. Donald Courier	Regt. S-1
Capt. Edward M. Solomon	Regt. Asst. S-2
Maj. Robert W. Green	1st Bn. Ex. Off.
Capt. Jesse R. Miller	"B" Co commander
1st Lt. Wm. E. Tolbert	"B" Co Ex. Off.
Capt. Bowers	"D" Co commander
1st Lt. Harold P. Monica	"D" Co Ex. Off.
1st Sgt. Odell G. Benedict	"D" 1st Sgt.
Capt. Herbert H. Scott-Smith	"A" Co commander, until 15 Oct.
Lt. Col. John Williams	2d Bn commander
Capt. H. T. Coffman	"E" Co commander
1st Lt. Maxwell A. McCulloch	"E" Co Ex. Off.
1st Lt. James E. Talty	"E" Co Weapons platoon leader
T/Sgt Donald J. Kinney	3d platoon sergeant
T/Sgt. Harry Kelly	1st platoon sergeant
S/Sgt. McDonald Newton	Squad leader
Capt. Alfred E. Koenig	"F" Co commander
1st Lt. Stanley V. Summers	"F" Co Ex. Off.
1st Lt. Freddie T Towles	"F" Co plat leader
Capt. Gordon A. Jeffrey	"G" Co commander
1st Lt. Randolph F. Paulsen	"G" Co Ex. Eff.

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GL-117

EXPERIENCES OF TWO AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR
HELD IN AACHEN, GERMANY

(The following is the story told by two American soldiers, S/Sgt Ewart M. Padgett and PFC James B. Haswell, of Co "B", 238th Engr Combat Bn, who were held prisoners of war in AACHEN, GERMANY, for four days, from 17 Oct to 21 Oct 1944 . . . from First US Army G-2 Periodic Report No. 154, 11 November, 1944.)

At 0700, 17 Oct 1944, I (S/Sgt Padgett) was told by 1st Sgt Arthur A. Strauch that I was to take a combat patrol into the city of AACHEN with the mission of contacting the enemy, capture a prisoner, if possible, and then return.

We reported to the company CP at 0930 and were briefed, given the mission and the route we were to take by the company commander. However, we could not leave until we received clearance from our Battalion, since a friendly artillery barrage was being laid on our route.

At 1020 we departed with the patrol with PFC Haswell and I the leading men. We moved very slowly and cautiously, observing very carefully in order not to be ambushed and to avoid mines and booby traps. We moved along the east side of the RR track and by 1130 we had reached the third underpass in the edge of town. About 150 yards beyond this point on our south side of the track was an open field that led the remainder of the distance into AACHEN. At the point where this clearing began, there was a small building on the opposite side of the tracks with a hedgerow leading to within 50 yards of the first buildings in town. We crossed the railroad at the small building and then continued to follow the hedgerow to the clearing. There were a number of buildings about 150 yards to the left of the clearing which all seemed to be deserted at the time, so we proceeded across the opening to the first building. As we approached the first building, and the first man behind us entered the clearing, we were fired upon by rifle fire coming from the adjacent building. We took cover behind the building and signalled to Pvt Ando, the next man behind us, to go back; at this time the Jerries opened up with a withering cross-fire of light machine guns.

We started back across the opening, taking what cover possible behind the few trees and logs available. We reached the last log and started to make a dash across the opening about 20 yards away to take cover in the shallow ditch and hedgerow where Pvt Ando was waiting us. As we started across this clearing, machine guns opened up again and a line of tracers passed by from our head to the ground level, so we again dived behind the log we had just left.

I shouted to Pvt Ando and told him to take the remainder of the men and get the hell out of there before the Jerries started combing the hedgerow with machine gun fire. We immediately started returning the fire in order to draw the fire of the machine guns so that the rest of the men could withdraw successfully.

There were two machine guns in the building to our front, one in