

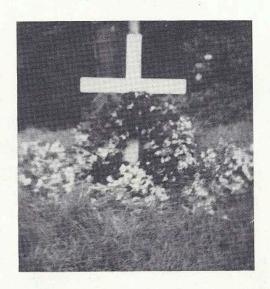
COMBAT HISTORY

of the



137TH
INFANTRY REGIMENT

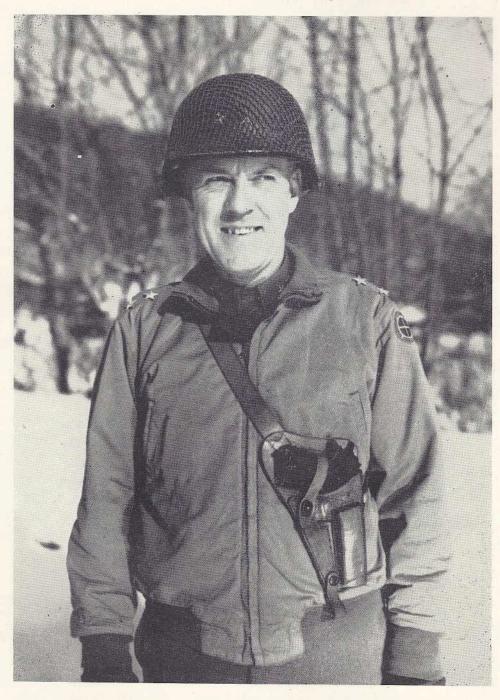
WORLD WAR II



DEDICATION

We never knew how just was our cause until we entered the rotten interior of Germany and beheld for the first time the unbelievable results of Nazi greed and cruelty—the shallow, quick lime graves—the feeble thanks and tears of joy of the emaciated walking dead—the slave laborers, who were former free men in Europe—miserable wretches whose plight might well have been the lot of our own loved ones had we not succeeded.

May this history, then, be dedicated to those who died inconspicuously, but not in vain, that freedom might live.



OUR DIVISION COMMANDER MAJOR GENERAL PAUL W. BAADE

PREFACE

This history has been prepared through the joint collaboration of the following officers and enlisted men:

Captain Jack L. Smith—Representative of Regimental Headquarters and Special Units.

Major Robert L. Stephenson—Representative of First Battalion.

Lt. Col. George T. O'Connell—Representative of Second Battalion.

Lt. Col. Albert M. Butler-Representative of Third Battalion.

M/Sgt. Chester V. Jackson—Regimental Operations Sergeant.

All officers and non-commissioned officers listed above were with the Regiment during the entire action and have religiously edited and compiled all available sources of material to insure a correct and accurate history of the action of the 137th Infantry during World War II.

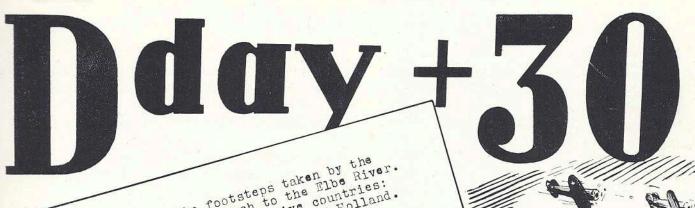
We would also like to express our appreciation to 1st Lt. William Beasley for the work he did in checking and correcting the proofs for this book.

Much credit is due the members of the Regimental and Battalion Operations sections who are no longer with the Regiment for the vast amount of fragmentary information recorded during the heat of battle, which has helped immeasurably in the compilation of this history.





INVASION BEGINS FOR THE 137TH



The map below shows the footsteps taken by the River.

The map below from Omaha Seach to the Countries:

137th Infent fought in a Luxembourg, miles.

The Regiment fought in a Luxembourg, miles.

The Regiment fought in took 8,692 praimout,

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CHAPTER I

PREPAREDNESS

Europe was in turmoil. Our military leaders were not fooled by the cajolerie of Hitler and Mussolini that lulled the world into a sense of false security. On December 23, 1940, almost a year before the infamous attack on Pearl Harbor threw us suddenly and violently into World War II, the 137th Infantry Regiment, as a part of the 35th Infantry Division, was ordered into Federal Service by Executive Order 8605.

The Regiment was inducted at the home stations of the component units. Units and home stations in Kansas were as follows:

Regimental Headquarters Company,

Wichita
Wichita
Topeka
Wichita
Cotton Wood Falls
Atchison
Emporia
Council Grove
Dodge City
Kansas City
Holton
Newton
Kansas City
Lawrence
Wichita
Wichita
Wichita
Kingman

Early in January, 1941, the 137th Infantry assembled as a regiment at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas. There it rubbed elbows with its sister regiments for the first time. After receiving filler replacements and undergoing a period of basic training, the Regiment got its first taste of a large scale maneuver in Louisiana. The Regiment drew high praise from the Maneuver Director's Headquarters upon emerging in the early fall of 1941.

Lawrence

From this able nucleus, the 137th furnished numerous cadres and perhaps 1,000 officers from its enlisted personnel during the subsequent expansion of our army. Men trained by the Regiment were distinguishing themselves in Africa, Sicily, Italy, and the far-flung islands of the Pacific, long before the 137th was committed in the invasion of Hitler's fortress, Europe.

With the advent of Pearl Harbor, the Regiment was rushed to the San Francisco Area. These were days of great excitement, rumors, and alerts.

In April, 1942, the 137th was ordered to the Los Angles area, with the dream mission of beach defense embracing Santa Monica, Los Angeles, Hollywood, Long Beach, Newport Beach, Balboa, Carona Del Mar, San Juan Capistrano, and Laguna Beach. Here the Regiment won numerous commendations and was taunted with the unkind name of "Hollywood Soldiers." However, the officers and men won the respect and admiration of the Californians. In addition to normal duties, the 137th was chosen to furnish the honor guards for President Roosevelt and Vice President Wallace, frequently paraded in the streets of Los Angeles, made training films, and furnished troop backgrounds for several war pictures, including "As Thousands Cheer."

Early in 1943 the Regiment again assembled with the 35th Division, at Camp San Luis Obispo, for the first time since Camp Robinson, Arkansas, days. Fresh from its glamorous mission, the 137th was no doubt expected to be the "spoiled brat" of the Division. However, it was quickly proved that the training and discipline of the Regiment had not been neglected.

In April, 1943, the Regiment moved with the Division to Camp Rucker, Alabama, for advanced training. Here the 137th became acquainted with the 219th Field Artillery Battalion which later, in combat, teamed with the Regiment to form the indomitable Combat Team 137. Here the doughboys learned to follow artillery fire closely with every confidence that the able 219th forward observers would keep the fire where it belonged.

During the months of November and December, 1943, and January of 1944 the Regiment underwent toughening in body and spirit in the severe cold of the Tennessee Maneuver Area. The Regiment again won high praise for its brilliant performance.

Following the Tennessee Maneuvers, the 137th moved to Camp Butner, North Carolina, for final training, which culminated in the rugged mountain maneuvers in West Virginia. It was difficult to believe that the human body could endure the rigors of the weather and the long and hazardous marches over mountains and across the deep and treacherous mountain streams, with 90 pounds of ruck sack. However, not a man fell out, although three enlisted men and one officer lost their lives in crossing the turbulent waters of Black Water Canyon.

After the West Virginia Maneuvers, the Regiment was reviewed in a Combat Team Exercise by

M Company ____

Secretary of War Patterson and President Truman, then Senator Truman. The doughboys went under machine gun fire and followed artillery in one of the most realistic and hazardous exhibitions ever attempted by any unit prior to combat.

On May 4, 1944, the 137th moved to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, where every man had an opportunity for a final fling in New York City. After an inspection of men and equipment, the heavily laden troops walked up the gang-plank of the SS Thomas H. Barry and sailed with the ebb tide past the Statue of Liberty on the morning of May 11, 1944, to begin an Odessey of heroic achievement, to end only at the gates of Berlin 15 months later.

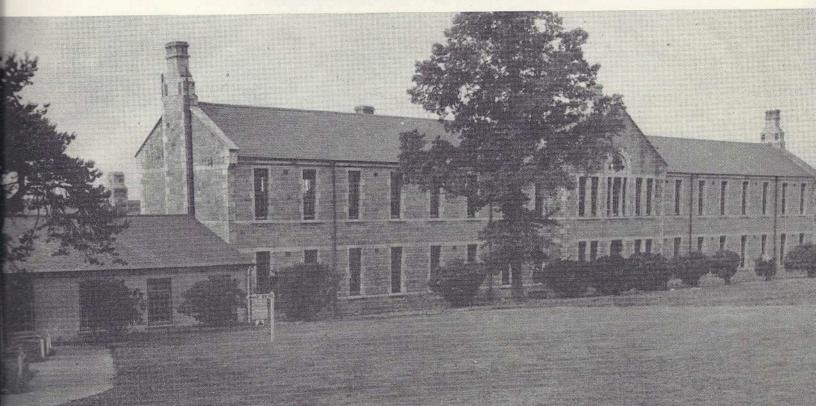
The good ship docked at Avonmouth, England, on May 24th, and the men of the Regiment were swished speedily by train through Exeter to Bodmin Road and Newquay. There, for two months, they kept in fighting trim in the moors of Cornwall, the same moors that were the haunts of the Hound of the Baskervilles, for the home of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes stories, was in Newquay. Regimental Headquarters, the Special Units, and Third Battalion were housed in the ancient barracks of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry Brigade. Here in the shadow of Jamaica Inn and other famous English sites, one could not help but dream of our English forebearers and wonder what the people were like hundreds of years ago.

The Regiment was inspected by General Eisenhower and General Patton, while in the final phases of preparation for the invasion. General Eisen-



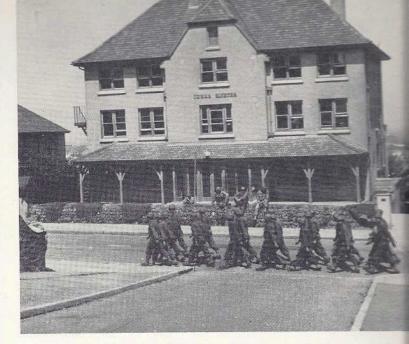
Beach at Newquay, England, used by men of the First and Second Battalions







General Ike and Colonel Layng inspecting troops of the Third Battalion and Special Units at Bodmin



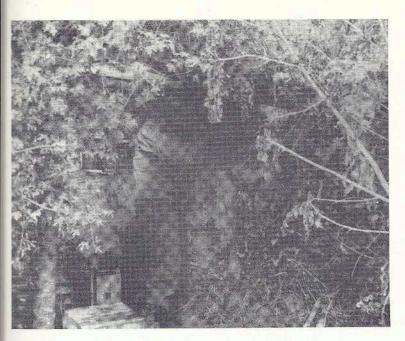
Barracks of Company A, Newquay, England

hower walked along the ranks and talked inspiringly to the men.

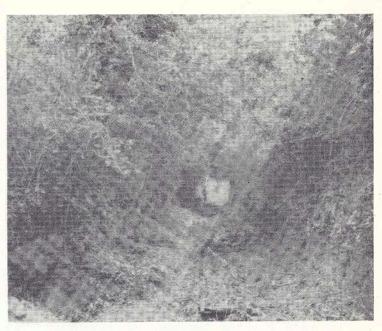
The doughboys of the 137th saw the invasion get under way on June 6, 1944, and champed at the bit while awaiting their calling. It came soon enough, for on July 4, 1944, the Regiment was suddenly rushed to Plymouth and Falmouth. After spending a day in the marshalling areas, the Regiment sailed, part from Plymouth and part from Falmouth, on 6-7 July, 1944, and landed on French soil at Omaha Beach near Colleville-sur-Mere on 7-8-9 July, 1944.



General Ike and General Patton reviewing Troops at Bodmin, England



Scene within a hedgerow



A sunken road bordered by two hedgerows inside the German position. The complete cover permitted freedom of movement within the position and afforded excellent protection against our artillery fire.

NORM *ANDY

CHAPTER TWO

A fitting finish for one of Hitler's Supermen



St. Lo



CHAPTER II

NORMANDY

Normandy at last! Atop the steep slopes rising sheer above the shelving Omaha Beach, one could view the terrible wreckage of the invasion. Broken and battered ships and landing craft, enough for a fair-sized navy—the path marked with engineer tape, along which one must pass in order not to be blown to bits by the hidden dangers of the mine-infested beach—the German pillboxes, crushed like plaster of Paris models, and their once formidable guns battered and broken as if made of tin—the dirty and dazed German PW's—the barrage balloons, protecting what seemed to be the most incredible collection of wreckage imaginable—the fresh graves of the many Americans who had already died to force this entry into Hitler's domain.

Looking inland one beheld the beginning of the hedgerow country, scarred and still hot from the heat of battle as the invasion troops pressed in to expand the beach-head. One could plainly hear the rumble of artillery and estimate the fury of the not-too-distant front. Overpowering emotions filled the heart of every soldier—bewilderment at the stark reality of war—the unbelievable cost already—the unthinkable cost as yet to come. The future held little promise—grim and foreboding.

This feeling of futility passed on in a moment as the doughboys marched inland, only to return again and again in the subsequent terrible weeks ahead before the German Back at St. Lo was finally broken.

After a brief reorganization period orders were received to move to an assembly area several miles inland. En route, huge piles of artillery ammunition were observed stored in open fields. Cattle and horses bloated with death lay stiff-legged in the Normandy sun. The air was permeated with the unmistakable odor of carrion, animal and human, a smell of the battlefield, never to be forgotten.

The first night was spent in the open, hedgerow bordered fields. Each man automatically pitched a tent with his buddy. This was the first and last time these tents were ever pitched. Maneuver style foxholes were dug in close proximity to the tents. These foxholes were to become the one and only installation of a soldier bivouac in the weeks to come.

The doughboys, by this time, were reassuring themselves that combat might not be so bad. They no longer flinched at the blinding flash and the reverberating roar of the mighty guns supporting the attack.

Reassurance was shattered in an instant when the sky was suddenly lighted by flares to the sound of the throbbing drone of the Luftwaffe. Hundreds of anti-aircraft guns opened at once, showering sparks upward like great chains of golden beads. The remainder of the night was spent in fitful sleep and improving foxholes.

On July 8, the Regimental organic vehicles were unloaded and brought up to the assembly area. The balance of the 8th and the morning of the 9th were spent in removing waterproofing from vehicles and final conditioning of weapons and equipment before moving into the line. Again the illusion that they were battle-seasoned returned to the doughboys. Again the illusion was shattered by the Luftwaffe. Foxholes were still further improved.

The afternoon of July 9 found the 137th marching forward to relieve elements of the 119th Infantry Regiment of the 30th Division in the vicinity of Le Meauffe, north of St. Lo. That night the 1st and 2d Bns relieved the 119th and now at last were in the line. The 137th had only Germans in front of it.

The positions of the 119th were dug into the Normandy hedgerows. Two weeks of preparation had improved their foxholes to the acme of doughboy refinement. The bedraggled infantrymen of the 119th were deliriously happy to see fresh troops arrive. They had suffered heavy casualties, and had been under continuous shellfire for over two weeks. The men were dirty and jittery, and told the 137th soldiers horror stories that caused a slump in morale. This was not unusual, as the 137th soldiers learned later, for horror stories usually accompanied the relief of a unit under these conditions.

The men of the 137th now learned what it was to be shelled. The Germans no doubt knew the exact location of the American lines and would hurl artillery and mortar at anyone who showed himself. The importance of overhead cover as protection against the deadly tree bursts was apparent.

As daylight seeped over the Normandy countryside one could see that he was definitely in the hedgerow country. These ancient hedgerows checkerboarding the landscape formed seemingly impregnable fortified lines. Many explanations are offered for this Norman phenomenon. Some say that they came about as a result of ancient farmers clearing their fields of rock. Others say they are scars of old irrigation ditches. Still others cling to the theory that they are remnants of fortifications thrown up in medieval times to protect the Normans against the savage Huns. However they came about. they were there, to the front, and occupied by Germans. The story of their origin was immaterial. The job of taking them was the assignment of the 137th. Once again the feeling of futility closed in. At 1500 July 10, 1944, the Division order was issued, and at 1700 Colonel Grant Layng issued to the 137th Infantry officers Field Order No. 1, the first combat order of the 137th Infantry during World War II. The order called for an attack at 0600 the following morning, July 11, 1944, on German positions from the Vire River near St. Gilles, extending southeast through La Pte Ferme toward Le Carillon. On the left of the 137th Infantry was the 320th Infantry and on the right the 30th Division, which was operating along the opposite bank of the river. The immediate objective was to capture the high ground north of the Vire River with an ultimate objective of capturing the city of St. Lo, core of the German defenses in this sector.

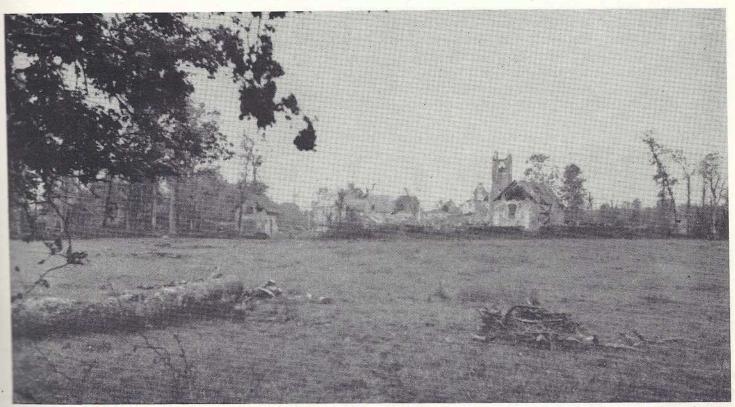
At 1920 on July 10, 1944, the Regiment's first casualty as a result of enemy fire occurred. Eight rounds of 88mm artillery fire were poured into the area occupied by Company H, and Private Owen J. McBride was killed. Private Robert G. Reason and Private First Class Robert Waugh were wounded at the same time.

During the night of July 10-11, the 1st and 2d Battalions were in position for the attack with Company G in reserve. The 3d Battalion was held as Division reserve due to their late debarkation and arrival in the area. In the early morning, both the 1st and 2d Battalions received enemy mortar fire. In the first actual contact with the enemy, Company C encountered a reconnaissance patrol which was driven off. Company F also encountered an enemy patrol during the night.

The following morning the artillery preparation went off at 0540 and pounded known enemy positions for 20 minutes. At 0600 the doughboys rose numbly from their cramped positions in foxholes and stumbled toward the enemy-bewilderedfrightened-expectant. On the right of the regimental sector the 1st Battalion attacked with Companies B and C, Company B on the right. On the left of the regimental sector the 2d Battalion attacked with Companies E and F, Company F on the right. The men advanced, slowly, cautiously, making ghostly figures in the pre-dawn half light. After what seemed an infinity of expectancy, it happened —the ominous ripping sound of a German MG 42 shattered the morning air. Mortar fire smothered the advancing infantrymen. Dead and wounded littered the ground.

In a moment a fanfare of human reactions presented itself—heroism—cowardice—confusion. In an instant this greatest of all proving grounds rated the leaders. Many brave deeds went unnoticed.

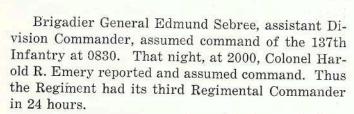
With the attack scarcely begun, Colonel Layng, the Regimental Commander, was wounded in the face and leg by machine gun fire at 0715. The 137th force had encountered a fortified church on Highway 3, north of St. Gilles, and, for most of the morning, was pinned down by heavy machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire. At the time the Regimental Commander was wounded, Lieutenant Colonel Wilson, commander of the supporting 219th Field Artillery Battalion, and Captain Kerr, artillery liaison officer, were killed, and the first platoon of Company C suffered heavy casualties.



St. Lo Area-church in background was German strongpoint



A German Mark V "Panther" knocked out by our TD's



The first enemy prisoners captured indicated that the Regiment was facing elements of the 879th, 898th, and 899th Infantry Regiments, which composed the Kampt Gruppe Kentner (combat team commanded by Colonel General Kentner).

Despite pounding by artillery, the fortified church north of St. Gilles could not be taken, and this, together with a fortified chateau in the same vicinity, held up the 1st Battalion most of the day. The 2d Battalion made advances up to 400 yards, with Company F making the greatest gain until a shortage of ammunition held up its advance.

At 1430 Company G was committed in the gap between E and F. The 3d Battalion reverted to regimental control and was committed at 1830 on the right of the 2d Battalion with a mission of bypassing St. Gilles and cutting the St. Lo-Pont Hebert Road. With the entire Regiment now committed, only small gains were made until the fighting was held up for the night to permit reorganization and resupply.

Casualties in the 137th Infantry for the first day's operations were 12 killed, 96 wounded, and 18 missing in action.

The Regiment again attacked at 0800 on July 12, with 2d and 3d Battalions in the leading echelon. The weather remained cloudy, with intermittent showers. Tank destroyers were attached to the Regiment, and heavy artillery support was continued. Enemy fire continued from the church north of St. Gilles, and at 1045 elements of the 1st Battalion stormed that stronghold and finally took it and the surrounding buildings. The 1st Battalion then moved on and contacted elements of the 3d Battalion which had cut in behind these strong points. The 1st Battalion cleaned out remaining hostile resistance in the vicinity of St. Gilles by 1400.



8-inch rifle used to shell St. Lo

The 3rd Battalion pushed on to Highway 3, southeast of St. Gilles, where they were held up by machine gun fire, mines, and booby traps. At 1600 a strong enemy position was captured about 1,000 yards south of St. Gilles.

Heavy enemy mortar and artillery fire continued, and snipers were active. Casualties for July 12 were seven killed, 74 wounded, and seven missing. Ist Lt. John T. Graham, Jr., Platoon Leader of Company F, was the first officer of the Regiment to give his life in this conflict. On this day many Germans were killed and three were captured.

On July 13, the Regiment attacked at 0800, with the 3d and 2d Battalions again leading. Visibility was poor, and aerial support was called off, but the artillery support remained excellent.

The 3rd Battalion moved 500 yards before being held up by machine gun fire. The 2d Battalion, on the right, received heavy shelling and made no marked advance. These forces received heavy fire from enemy 88mm artillery regularly during the day, although at 1145 our own batteries knocked out two enemy mobile 88's. Time burst was also used for the first time by the Germans. It was evident that the hedgerows so common in Normandy were being used to the maximum in the plan of the German defense.

Forty-seven prisoners were taken during the day. Some of these surrendered as a result of broadcasts to them across the enemy lines by means of a loud-speaker, encouraging them to give up the fight. Propaganda leaflets had also been dropped over the enemy lines during the night, which may have had some results. The prisoners were mostly of Polish, Czech, and Austrian descent, and appeared glad to be out of the fighting.

After being held up in the early part of the day, the 2d Battalion broke through for a gain of 500 yards. An enemy counterattack forced the 3d Battalion back to its original position at 2200.

Our casualties on this day were the heaviest yet, with 21 killed, 87 wounded, and 17 missing in action.

On Friday, July 14, the Regiment attacked again at 0800, with one platoon of medium tanks in support of each battalion. By 1300 the 1st Battalion had advanced up to 300 yards, but was meeting stiff resistance at La Pte Ferme. By 1630 the 1st Battalion was attacking the enemy stronghold at La Marel, where German troops had assembled in the stone buildings in that area. The 3d Battalion, on the right, had established contact with enemy forces on the strongly held road junction of Highways 2 and 3. All elements were encountering heavy minefields and 88mm fire.

Casualties in the Regiment totaled 127. Of these, 17 were killed, 106 wounded, and four missing. Forty prisoners were taken; some of them reported that many German soldiers wanted to surrender, but were being closely watched by officers and non-commissioned officers.

On July 15, the Regiment attacked, for the fifth consecutive morning, and were met by heavy artillery fire. With the 3d Battalion established 200 yards north of Highway 2, main road to St. Lo, Company K pushed forward to the road at 0910, but was held up there by machine gun fire.

No large gains were made by any battalion during the day. The main effort for the Division was made by the 134th Infantry, on the Division left, which was committed for the first time. The 1st Battalion turned back a strong German counterattack at noon.

The loudspeaker method of contacting the enemy troops was again used, and 25 prisoners were taken. The 137th lost 16 men killed, 100 wounded, and one missing in action on this day.

On Sunday, July 16, the battle slowed down considerably. The week's attack and the heavy artillery pounding were beginning to tell on the enemy forces, and reports began to come back of their units attempting to operate with a drastic reduction of men, with no replacements; of a shortage of food, water, and ammunition; and of extensive use of horse-drawn vehicles due to lack of gasoline.

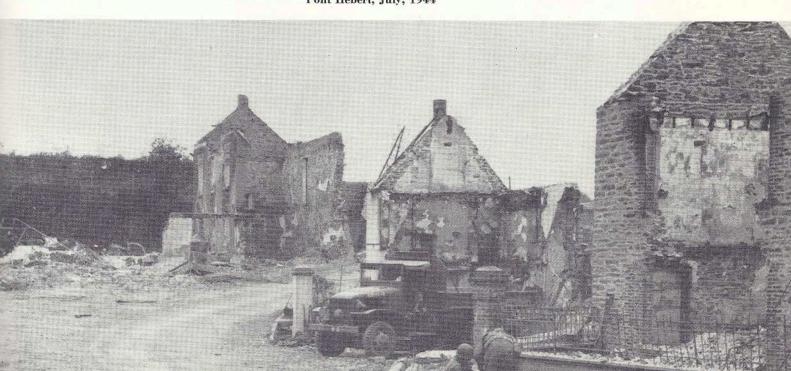
Our forces consolidated and strengthened their lines during the day. The 2d Battalion, operating in the vicinity of Le Carrillon, advanced 600 yards at one point.

Casualties in the Regiment showed a marked decrease as the action slowed down and as the men became more battle-wise. On the 16th five men were killed, 23 wounded, and two missing in action.

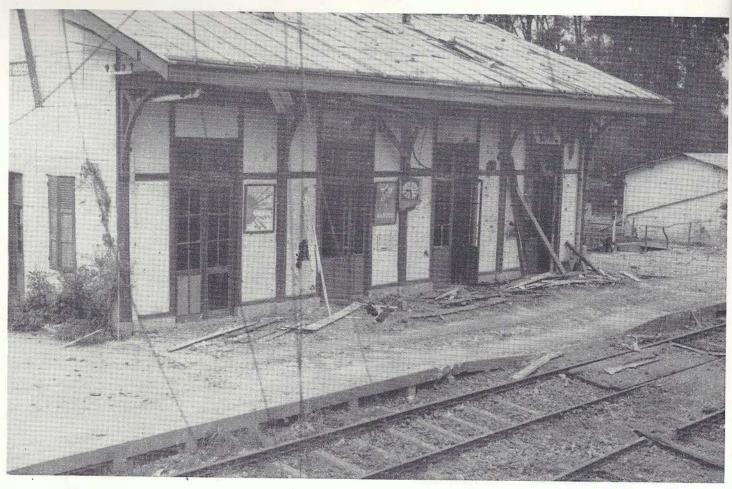
At the close of the first week of combat, the 137th Infantry was still operating with the 30th Division on the right and the 320th Infantry on the left.

On Monday, July 17, the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 137th jumped off at 0430, an earlier hour than had been customary previously. The 3d Battalion remained in reserve in a switch with the 1st Battalion shortly after midnight.

Poor visibility made the going slow for a time, although it was soon apparent that our forces were reducing enemy resistance by constant artillery and small arms fire. Company B gained the highway leading southeast from Pont Hebert at 0615. Company C encountered some machine gun fire, and called for Tank Destroyers to take out blockhouses which they spotted.



Pont Hebert, July, 1944



Pont Hebert Railway Station, August, 1944

At 0945, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander, 1st Battalion Commander, was wounded, and Lieutenant Colonel Stowers assumed command of the Battalion.

At noon Company A knocked out enemy strong points at the west edge of Pont Hebert. Reports of enemy tanks southeast of that battered town shortly after noon proved false, and by 1800 the 1st Battalion had moved 700 yards south of the highway. At this time the 3rd Battalion, which had been held in reserve during the day, was alerted to move into position to attack southeast and seize the high ground near Les Anges, with one company to block the vital St. Lo road.

Thereafter the 1st Battalion advanced rapidly along the east bank of the river, and shortly after midnight was reported to be on the Division objective. The Battalion Commander officially reported his position at 0733 Tuesday morning as being in the bend of the river south of Rampan.

The 2d Battalion, on the left of the 1st, was held up until 1435 by a machine gun strong point near La Capelle. The 3d Battalion in the meantime was mopping up in the area north of Rampan and La Capelle.

By the evening of the 18th the entire Regiment had crossed the vital St. Lo-Pont Hebert Road, and was firmly entrenched on the high north bank of the Vire River, a stone's throw west of St. Lo. The city of St. Lo, deep in the valley of the Vire, was untenable due to the positions of the 137th, and was actually no longer a military objective.

The following day St. Lo was entered by a task force from the 134th Infantry Regiment of the 35th Division and a task force from the 29th Division. In spite of the publicity which accompanied the official entry of St. Lo, due credit must be given to the valiant infantrymen of the 137th who crashed through the German main line of resistance, first of the Division on the Division objective, and were overlooking St. Lo at the time it was entered.

Casualties of the 137th Infantry for the two days' fighting were 13 killed, 57 wounded, and seven missing on the 18th. Prisoners taken numbered 22 on the 17th and 29 on the 18th. The Germans, in their rapid withdrawal, left behind great quantities of weapons, ammunition, and assorted materiel.

With St. Lo taken in eight days of fighting, the 19th of July was a period of patrolling rear areas and cleaning out scattered Germans, clearing minefields, and reorganization of forces for defense of areas occupied. The Germans, from their positions across the river, continued to shell our troops with mortar and artillery fire, and shortly before 2300 Wednesday night, single-engine bombers flew over the regimental area dropping flares and butterfly bombs.

On this day losses were nine killed, 11 wounded, and one missing. Clearing the area boosted the number of prisoners captured to 54 for the 19th. On this day also the Corps Commander issued a commendation for the fine showing of the 35th Division in their part of the operation.

On July 20, the 1st and 3rd Battalions strengthened their positions north of the river, with the 2d Battalion in a reserve status. At 2200 the 2d Battalion relieved the 1st Battalion, which reverted to reserve.

Aside from artillery and mortar fire, the 137th Infantry encountered no enemy action from July 29th to 30th. Accordingly, the casualties were very light with one killed, five wounded, and two missing on the 20th, none killed, seven wounded, and one missing on the 21st, none killed, four wounded, and none missing on the 22nd, and one killed, eight wounded, and one missing on the 23rd.

On the 20th eight prisoners were taken. On the 21st two German soldiers swam the river to give themselves up, and on the 22nd another prisoner was taken.

With the tempo of the battle decreasing, acts of heroism and miraculous achievements by individuals and units of the 137th Infantry began to come to light. High among these was the heroic action of Technical Sergeant Frank A. Gonzales, a platoon sergeant in Company I. On July 12, after his platoon leader had been killed, Sergeant Gonzales took command of the platoon, which had been under heavy mortar and machine gun fire. Using sound judgment and quick thinking, Gonzales commanded an attached tank destroyer, the crew of which had been reduced by enemy fire, and blasted out a gun nest. When this TD bogged down, Gonzales returned to bring up another which pulled the first to safety. The sergeant then blasted out the remaining nests and his platoon was able to advance. For this act he was recommended for battlefield promotion to the rank of second lieutenant.

Also recommended for battlefield promotion to the rank of second lieutenant was Technical Sergeant Claude A. Hupp, a platoon sergeant of Company M. On July 13, after several unsuccessful attempts of his platoon to cross a wheat field which the Germans had well covered with machine gun fire, and after his platoon leader was killed, Sergeant Hupp determined the location of the enemy emplacements, obtained a light machine gun, and firing from the hip, killed three Germans. This neutralized the first nest. He then led his platoon to clear out the remaining two nests. The entire Battalion was then able to advance.

Private First Class Howard G. Nichols and Technical Sergeant Richard E. Blair saved the lives of three men during the afternoon of July 13 southeast of Le Meauffe. These two members of Company A observed a disabled tank in an area in which they knew an artillery barrage was due to fall. A

wounded member of the crew was still in the tank, and Staff Sergeant Volk and Sergeant Blankenship, also of Company A, both lay wounded near the tank. Ignoring the imminent danger of artillery fire, Sergeant Blair and Private Nichols re-entered the danger zone and removed the wounded men to a place of comparative safety behind the tank before the barrage fell. Private Nichols was wounded during the barrage, but after he and Sergeant Blair evacuated the three wounded men Nichols joined his platoon in the attack until ordered to the aid station by his commanding officer.

Drawing praise and commendation from every officer and man in the army are the combat medics. Showing unequalled courage and utter disregard for their own safety, countless lives were saved by these men, litter bearers, technicians, and surgeons. These brave soldiers, unarmed, carry out their work of rescue, attention, and evacuation of the wounded. Working in the front lines, and not waiting for the enemy fire to cease before going to the soldiers' assistance, these men were subjected to every hazard of the infantryman. Cases of individual heroism include those of Sergeant Earl V. Spengler, and of Corporal Peter Seiwert.

Sergeant Spengler, attached to Company F, at 1000 on the 11th of July, ignored enemy machine gun and sniper fire and left the concealment of hedges to follow a wounded soldier and remove him from an open field, undoubtedly saving the man's life.

Corporal Seiwert, during the night of July 15, braved an enemy barrage to go to the aid of two wounded officers. While administering aid, he himself was hit by shrapnel, but continued to treat their wounds and remained with them for an hour in the midst of artillery fire until they were evacuated.

Private 1st Class Leonard L. Coffman and Private 1st Class Cofford S. Goza, both of Company M, rescued an injured soldier of the 219th Field Artillery Battalion who was enveloped in the flames of a burning quarter-ton truck after a direct hit from enemy artillery. After removing the helpless man from the vehicle, they smothered the flames of his burning clothing, working in the face of continued enemy shelling. This incident occurred on July 11 near St. Gilles.

With the first action, in which the Regimental Commander was wounded, 1st Lieutenant Harry C. Simpson (later promoted to captain) distinguished himself by saving the life of a wounded officer. After being pinned down by deadly machine gun fire for over two hours, Lieutenant Simpson saw his opportunity when an artillery barrage forced the German machine gunner to take cover for a brief instant. Disregarding his own chances of being wounded in this shellfire, Lieutenant Simpson was able to drag his fellow officer, Lieutenant Guinessy, to the slight protection of a tree and some hedge,

where he rendered all assistance possible. Although continued German fire prevented his evacuation from that area until the following day, Lieutenant Guinessy was still alive when finally evacuated.

1st Lieutenant Sidney K. Strong (later promoted to captain), the Executive Officer of Company A, assumed command of a provisional platoon on July 13 and carried out an attack upon a position where all previous attacks had failed. Exposing himself to enemy machine gun fire, he pointed out enemy emplacements which were successfully disposed of. Eight of the enemy were killed, twelve taken prisoner, and large amounts of enemy materiel was captured. This was a case of outstanding leadership under fire.

Late in the afternoon of July 13 two platoons of Company L, one of which had as a member Technical Sergeant Mitchell R. Hughbanks, were pinned down by machine gun fire. After the Company radio man had been killed, Sergeant Hughbanks removed the radio from the hand of the dead soldier, called the Battalion Command Post, and requested artillery fire on the German position. For almost an hour he directed the fire, until the enemy emplacements were neutralized.

Throughout the seige of St. Lo, Sergeant Allen C. Allburty distinguished himself by heroic achievements under fire in his capacity as communications sergeant. During the period July 11-17, he constantly kept the radio in operation despite enemy fire. He was of great assistance to the Battalion Commander in keeping him informed, and he helped reorganize his own Company after the Company Commander and Executive Officer had become casualties.

Outstanding leadership shown by enlisted men resulted in numerous recommendations for battlefield appointment as second lieutenant. In addition to Technical Sergeants Hupp and Gonzales, recommendations included the following:

Technical Sergeant Louis A. Griffith, A Company. Technical Sergeant Wilbur G. Hobbs, C Company. Technical Sergeant Victor W. Shulty, C Company. Technical Sergeant Elwin I. Shopteese, E Company. Technical Sergeant Lloyd W. Belt, Jr., L Company. Technical Sergeant Paul L. Power, Med. Detach. Staff Sergeant William G. Ligon, Med. Detach. Staff Sergeant Walter J. Black, Med. Detach.

Six Privates First Class showed such qualities of leadership under fire that they were promoted to Staff Sergeant, a jump of three grades. These men, all members of rifle companies, were:

Staff Sergeant Harold T. Shaw (16 July), I Company.

Staff Sergeant Gerald Jones (16 July), I Company. Staff Sergeant Glenwood B. Dahlgren (17 July), B Company.

Staff Sergeant Cecil D. Bruer (17 July), K Company.

Staff Sergeant Harold P. Green (21 July), K Company.

Staff Sergeant LeRoy D. Fagan (21 July), L Company.

Staff Sergeant Bob R. Adams was promoted two grades to the position of 1st Sergeant of Company C.

At the end of two weeks in combat, the fine training and quality of men of the 137th Infantry was obvious as they proved themselves to be an aggressive, efficient fighting machine. Contributing to the success of the Regiment in its initial operation was the smooth handling of supplies of all classes. Compared to this was the woeful lack of supplies suffered by the Germans.

Another tremendous advantage enjoyed by our forces was that of replacements received. After the first few days of the battle, replacements were received regularly, both officers and enlisted men. Reports from German prisoners indicated that their replacements were practically non-existent.

On July 24th the Regiment remained in a defensive status. The day was comparatively quiet, with scattered mortar and artillery fire, mostly on road junctions. The 1st Battalion remained in Division reserve. The 134th Infantry was now on the left of the Regiment. The 30th Division remained on the right.

One man was killed and one wounded on the 24th. No enemy prisoners were taken.

Colonel Emery was evacuated to the hospital at 2030, July 24. Colonel Robert Sears joined the Regiment at 1830 and assumed command.

Almost a week had passed and the great armored push that was expected to follow the fall of St. Lo had not come. American and German lines were tensed, waiting for something to happen to break the deadlock in hostilities. At 1100 on July 25, the air suddenly seemed filled with planes-American planes! The bombers plodding overhead with their energetic fighter escort seemed like great winged birds with tiny mosquitoes dashing about in their midst. American planes! 3,000 of them! What a spectacle—the smoke trail of the plunging pilot flares—the rain of the deadly eggs of the bombers the earth-shaking crunch and rumble as the bombs exploded—the mushrooming of German flak—bombers burst into flames and fell to pieces, and tiny fighters plummeted to the earth from the deadly flak. Still the procession of planes continued for thirty minutes and then silence. A heavy smoke pall hung over the German positions. Suddenly, fighter planes dashed through the smoke and strafed the dazed and retreating enemy. It was a wonderful spectacle—a fitting prologue to the breaking out of Patton's armor.

Three prisoners were taken during the day. Bombing caused two men to be killed and three men injured in the Regiment.



Troops examine equipment left behind by the retreating Germans

The 30th Division continued their attack on the right the following day, but the positions of the 137th remained unchanged.

An alert 3d Battalion observer watched 45 Germans, with full equipment, enter a house northeast of St. Lo, then notified the artillery, which demolished the building.

At 2300 enemy bombers made an appearance over the 3d Battalion area and dropped several bombs. No men were killed on this day, but five men were wounded. On the 26th no prisoners were taken.

On July 27 the 1st Battalion was attached to the 134th Infantry, and that Regiment attacked at 1000. The 320th Infantry also attacked at that time. The 137th, less 1st Battalion, was in Division reserve. During the day the 117th Infantry (30th Division) pushed across the 35th Division front, and the 137th moved to a new area between La Luzerne and St. Lo.

No casualties of any kind were reported on this day, for the first time since the Regiment entered combat. However, a physical check of personnel and reports from various sources revealed that, during the first week of combat, the Regiment suffered numerous casualties which had not previously been reported. These included 34 killed, 71 wounded, and four missing.

The Divisions on the right and left of the 35th continued their advance.

On the 28th, the 35th Division became part of the V Corps, and resumed the attack at 1000. The 1st Battalion of the 137th remained attached to the 134th Infantry, which advanced throughout the day with little opposition.

Notification was received of the appointment of Technical Sergeants Claude A. Hupp of Company M and Frank A. Gonzales of Company I as second lieutenants. These men had distinguished themselves in the first few days' action. They were assigned to their original companies.

The only casualties reported for the day were two men wounded.

The 1st Battalion reverted to Regimental control on 29 July. The Regiment moved from north of La Bedellerie, down Highway 2, southeast of St. Lo, to the vicinity of La Barbee, and remained in Division reserve. The Division objective at this time was the high ground east and north of Torigni sur Vire.

No enemy artillery fire was reported, but enemy planes were again over the area. One man was wounded on the 29th, as the casualties remained almost non-existent for the third successive day. No prisoners were taken on the 27th, 28th, or 29th.

On the 30th the Regiment was organized into Task Force S, under the command of Brigadier General Sebree. The force also included the 219th Field Artillery Battalion, 737th Tank Battalion less one company, Company B of 60th Engineers, Company

B of 110th Medics, one company from 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion, one platoon from 35th Reconnaissance Troop, and a detachment from the 35th Signal Company.

Task Force S was given the mission of seizing two objectives, the first being the high ground southeast of Brectouville, and finally, the Division objective, which was the high ground north of the Vire River, southeast of Tessy sur Vire. The Regiment then moved to the area near le Renoudiere and prepared to attack the following morning. Casualties for the day were one officer and five enlisted men wounded. No prisoners were taken.

After receiving an enemy bombing during the night, the Regiment attacked in columns of battalions at 0618, with the 3d Battalion leading and the 1st following at 300 yards. The 2d Battalion was in reserve. The Regimental I & R Platoon had been given its first full mission on this operation and first encountered enemy machine gun fire south of Conde sir Vire.

The 3d Battalion was held up by machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire north of les Fontaines, about 1,500 yards south of Conde sir Vire, at 0930, but had pushed on to the bridge 500 yards south of les Fontaines by noon.

The 1st Battalion was slowed up during the early part of the day. They were meeting heavy artillery and mortar fire along their entire front.

The 3d Battalion ran into heavy enemy machine gun fire and light mortars north of Brectouville at 1900, and was forced to withdraw. The 1st Battalion was then maneuvered to the left of the 3d, and both battalions reorganized. By 2300 the 3d Battalion had pushed through to the initial objective, with Company L reported in the vicinity of La Roque.

Tank support was of considerable help in our advance, and artillery support, though not as heavy as the first week, remained good.

Casualties for 31 July were two killed, and 19 wounded; six prisoners were taken. The Regiment maintained contact with the retreating enemy, and prepared to resume the attack at 0530 the following morning, August 1.

The 134th Infantry on the left of the 35th Division and the 30th Division on the right, continued the attack as the Division drove south and east from St. Lo toward Tessy sur Vire.

On August 1 Task Force S attacked at 0530, with the 3d Battalion on the right, the 1st on the left, and the 2d in reserve. Early reports were that the Germans had been digging in all along the front, with no evidence of withdrawal. Nevertheless, the 1st Battalion pushed cross country toward Brectouville, and their supporting tanks moved along the road to that town, which had been reported as the location of a German headquarters the previous day. At 0850 the main body of the Battalion was in Brectouville. Farther south, they found new half-track and

other large vehicle tracks, and also freshly dug slit trenches and foxholes, which indicated the Germans had just left the vicinity. A large prepared communications cable leading through the area was left behind in their hasty departure.

By noon the 1st Battalion was at the stream north and west of Pitaunay, where they were held up by enemy machine gun and mortar fire. At that time the 3d Battalion had crossed the same stream and were at a point slightly south of le Mt. Herbert.

With a strong enemy line encountered extending from south of le Mt. Herbert to Pitaunay and west, the task force reorganized and launched a coordinated attack at 1800. After an advance of approximately 1,000 yards, the 1st Battalion ran into heavy machine gun and mortar fire again, and in addition, direct 88 fire, at 2050. The Battalion received heavy casualties, and B and C Companies were cut off for a time. The Battalion fell back, and the 2d Battalion was ordered to move around to the right of the 1st, to march on Tessy, and cut the Tessy-Torigni road. It had already been reported that Allied armored forces had entered Tessy during the evening.

The attack continued on August 2 during the night, and a coordinated night attack was made shortly after midnight with the 2d Battalion jumping off at 0045 and the 3d at 0130. By 0800 the 3d Battalion was in Domjean. The 2d Battalion, now operating on the right of the 3d, crossed Highway 3 leading northwest from Tessy, pushed down the east bank of the Vire River, and had reached the double bend in the river south of le Mesnil by 1000. At 1050 the Battalion Commander reported two of its rifle companies and the heavy weapons company across the river.

At 1530 the 1st Battalion was reported south of les Verges, and the 3d Battalion at Beau Costil. All battalions were receiving heavy shelling from German artillery and mortar positions west of the Vire River. However, steady progress was made, and the high ground north of the river was cleared of the enemy resistance by 1800. Four enemy tanks observed at the bend of the river north of Pontfarcy were destroyed by American aircraft. At 1845 the main body of the 3d Battalion was across the river.

With the 2d and 3d Battalions across the river, the Division Commander then ordered one battalion to remain north of the river. The 1st Battalion remained, to protect the west flank of the Division.

The attack again continued through the night of August 3, and at 0210 the following morning, Company E was on the objective. The 3d Battalion was on the objective at 0735.

The weather, which had been clear during the first three days of the present operation, became cloudy and overcast, and rain fell during the afternoon, ranging from a light sprinkle north of the Vire to thunder showers to the south of the river.

The 2d and 3d Battalions resumed the attack south of the river, and moved forward with very



Crew of a knocked-out tank destroyer take cover behind their vehicle while trying to locate the gun that fired on them. In the foreground are some horses killed by the same gun.

little opposition until the 2d was held up at 0940 by a dug-in Tank Destroyer position south of la Fortier. The Battalion knocked out this resistance at 1115 and moved on. The advance was again held up at 1225 by machine gun and mortar fire south of Hel Gohier, and by tanks east of that point. The enemy tanks were driven out by our own tank battalion at 1320, and shortly after 1400 the 2d Battalion pushed through to la Tabourie.

The 3d Battalion in the meantime was receiving heavy mortar and scattered time fire, and increased enemy resistance held up the Regiment's advance late in the afternoon. At that time, contact was made with the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 116th Infantry (29th Division), closing our exposed flank to the right. No action other than patrolling was reported after darkness on this day.

Casualties in the Regiment for the first three days of August were six killed, 48 wounded, and one missing on the first; ten killed, 77 wounded, and three missing on the second; and three killed, 20 wounded, and five missing on the third. 2d Lt. Frank I. Gonzales, of Company I, was killed on the second. While leading his platoon in a flanking action on an enemy strong point he was cut down by the fire of an enemy ambush. Lieutenant Gonzales

had distinguished himself during the first week of combat as a platoon sergeant and had been given the Regiment's first battlefield commission in recognition of his performance at that time.

Few prisoners were being taken as the Germans fought their delaying action. On August 1 there were eight captured, and only three on each the 2d and 3d. The prisoners taken were predominately Nazis, in comparison with the Poles, Czechs, and Austrians captured north of St. Lo. Some of them maintained their belief that Germany would win the war, and their faith in Hitler remained unshaken. Claims that "total war" was to be waged on the Allies soon, and that pilotless planes were to be used on the front lines, were expressed by the prisoners, some of them members of the Hitler Youth.

The attack jumped off at 0630 on August 4, with the 2d Battalion on the right and the 1st Battalion, which had been brought up from across the Vire River, attacking on the left. The 3d Battalion, after being passed by the 1st, reported to Regimental reserve. The weather was again clear, but the roads remained slightly muddy.

Light scattered resistance was encountered at 0830, and enemy minefields were reported south of Beaumesnil and extending west, which caused some

trouble. The 2d Battalion pushed across the stream south of Beaumesnil, and were reported on the new objective at 1000. The 1st Battalion, after overcoming mortar and machine gun fire, reached the objective at 1447. Thereupon, Task Force S ceased to operate as such, and all units comprising it reverted to their former status. During the remainder of the day the 137th Infantry secured and patrolled the area. All elements of the Division continued to reach their objective during the day, and a review of the operations showed that in four days the Division had advanced almost the entire distance from St. Lo to Vire.

At this time the 134th Infantry continued to operate on the left of the 137th, with the 29th Division on the right. Reports showed nine killed, 96 wounded, and 25 missing in action, but many of these were, no doubt, casualties which had occurred during previous days and had not yet been reported. No prisoners were taken on the 4th. More information was now being obtained from French civilians than formerly, and their attitude was generally more cooperative. On August 5, the Regiment moved into an assembly area north of Beaumesnil and prepared to move by motor to a distant area upon order of the Division Commander. Enemy aircraft was reported during the night, and mines left behind by the Germans resulted in light casualties. One enemy prisoner was taken on the 5th.

On August 6 the Regiment remained in the same area and awaited further orders. Casualties for 5-6 August were one killed on the 5th, two wounded on the 5th, six missing on the 5th, and two missing on the 6th. A resume of casualties incurred to date, before leaving the St. Lo-Vire area, would show: In the battle of St. Lo, from 10 July to 19 July, 106 were reported killed, 592 wounded, and 32 missing in action. Additional casualties during the continued operation of the area taken, up to 30 July, and delayed reports of earlier casualties, together with information gained from various sources, boosted these figures to 145 killed, and 704 wounded, while those missing were reduced to six. One officer re-

mained missing in action. Eleven officers had been killed, and 29 wounded, of whom four had already been returned to duty.

After beginning the attack south of St. Lo, operating as Task Force S with the XIX Corps in the drive through Tessy toward Vire, the Regiment lost 30 killed, 260 wounded, and 34 missing from 31 July to 4 August. Scattered casualties during the continued occupation of this area brought the total to 31 killed, 262 wounded, and 42 missing in action before leaving this sector. Among those killed were three officers, while six officers had been wounded and two were missing. 21 prisoners had been taken. Since arriving in France the 137th Infantry had suffered 1,183 casualties, consisting of 177 killed, 946 wounded, and 40 missing in action. Many of the wounded had returned to duty, and these and new replacements totaled 826.

The 137th Infantrymen were now battle-seasoned. In one brief month of combat they had learned more than in the years of training. They had learned to use concealment and cover, the terrible price of bunching, to keep moving forward if under mortar and artillery fire, that there is no respite from the enemy until the objective is gained.

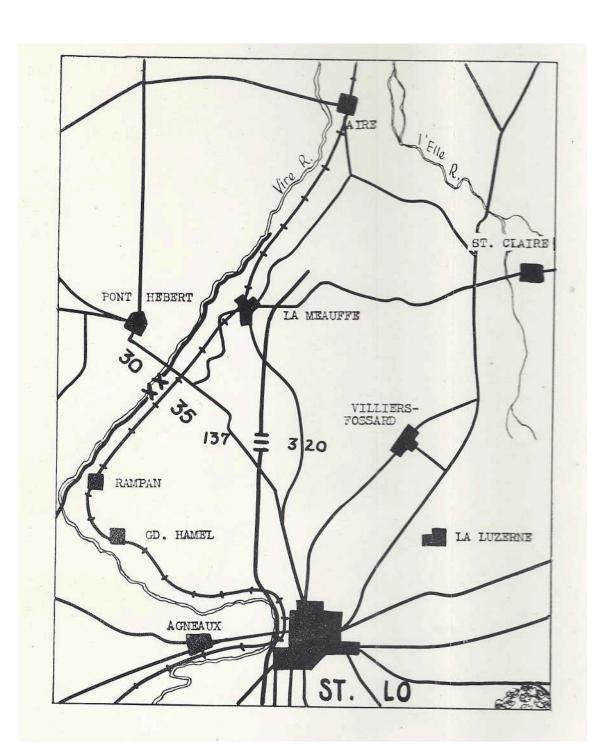
The war had moved on. Civilians were no longer sullen. Cider and eggs were plentiful. Kitchens were moved up into the company areas and an army mess never tasted so good before. Haircuts were in order; beards became a fad. Kraut pistols and bayonets dangled from the belts in lieu of the superfluous equipment shed after the first hour of combat. Platoon and squad actions were argued and refought.

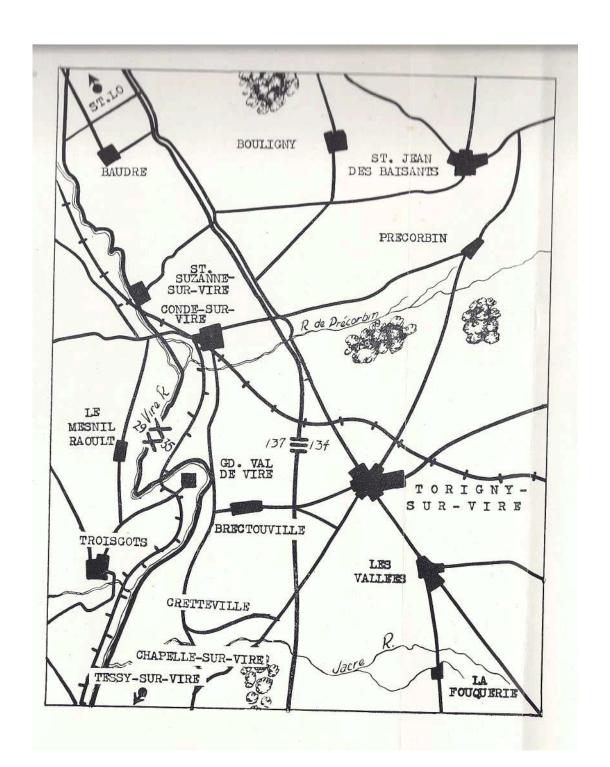
With Patton's army slashing the retreating Germans to bits, the men of the 137th were seething with anxiety to get with him. On the afternoon of August 6, the Regiment was suddenly alerted to move. At 1750 they were en route to the vicinity of St. Hilare, in the Brittany Peninsula where the Regiment with the 35th Division passed from First Army to Third Army control. Normandy was behind.

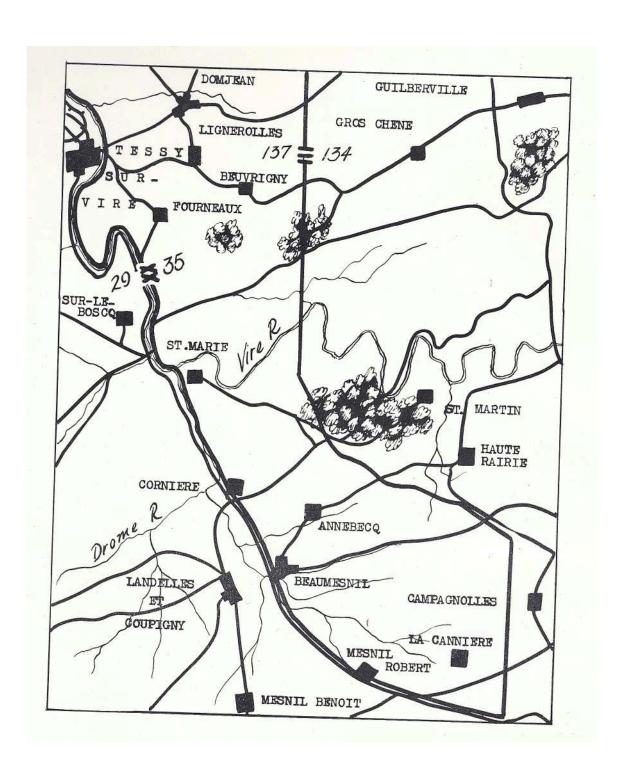














Statue of Jeanne de'Arc of Orleans before she lost her sword in the second battle of Orleans



Orleans, France—A French patriot The FFI was first contacted in Central Europe

NORTHERN * FRANCE

CHAPTER THREE

The Moselle River between Crevechamps and Velle, from the west bank near where the 137th made its initial crossing



General Mud, very much an enemy in the last phase of the Battle of Northern France



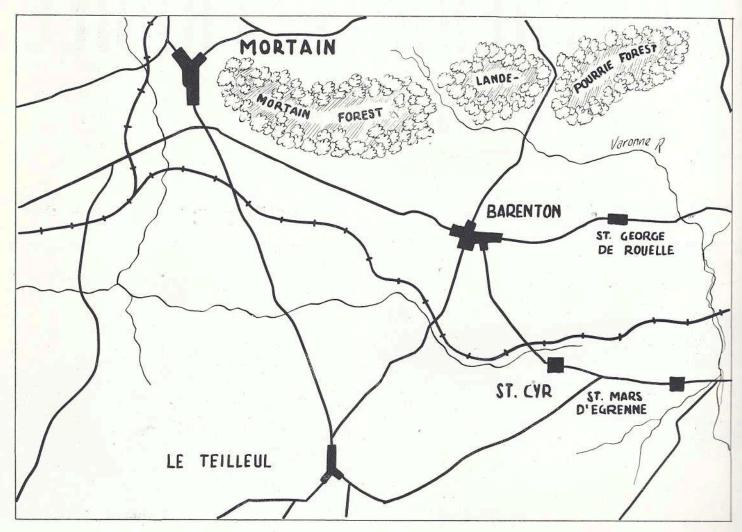
CHAPTER THREE NORTHERN FRANCE

At 1750 the 137th Infantry left the St. Lo-Vire area. Their destination was the vicinity of Louvigne, lying southwest of Avranches, where the latest German thrust was threatening to cut off the entire Brest Peninsula. Proceeding to Pontfarcy, the motor convoy turned southwest, swung around Villendieu, then continued southwest to Ponts, within sight of Avranches on the Mont Saint Michel Bay. Turning east at Ponts to Brecey, then south, the convoy reached the devastated city of St. Hilare at midnight.

In St. Hilare there was great congestion and confusion. This was the 35th Division's first long move in combat. Countermanding orders drained the Division of guides and now, with inadequate guides, the entire Division convoy was on roads and had bottlenecked in St. Hilare. Just as the 137th was creeping through the ghostly village, driving blackout in the pitch-black night, there came the well known throbbing roar of German bombers above the sound of the idling motors of the convoy. The hideous warning flares were dropped and the screech

of falling bombs filled the air. The crunch of the detonating bombs sounded like footfalls of a mythical giant crushing everything beneath his feet. Anyone who went through this bombing will remember the mad scramble for cover—the extreme fright of the troops—the woeful bleating coming out of the weird night, "Where's OUR airplanes?" Despite the vulnerability of the long convoy in the brightly lighted highway, the vehicles were damaged only slightly and the convoy moved on to the assembly area northwest of Louvigne immediately after the raid. However, four men were killed and three wounded by the bombing, with one missing.

Shortly after 1500 the 137th Infantry moved west to the area near St. Symphorien and at 1830 received the Division order to begin movement by motor to secure the high ground in the Mortain-St. Cyre area. With the enemy threatening from the northwest and already reported in the 134th Infantry area, the plan called for an attack at 2000—only one and one-half hours' notice. The 35th Division was now under XX Corps of the Third Army. The



coming operation called for the 30th Division on the left, with the 2d Armored Division operating within the sector.

Various sources of information indicated that a large force of Germans was pocketed in the Mortain Forest.

With Company B of the 737th Tank Battalion and Company B of the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached, the 137th jumped off on schedule, and met no resistance. They continued to advance until 2230, then dug in for the night, in conformance with Division orders. At this time the line was in the vicinity of Villechien.

The attack was resumed on the morning of August 8 according to schedule, and at 0720 Companies E and F were on the objective, followed by the 1st Battalion, which was about 1,000 yards back. The 3d Battalion was released to the 134th Infantry on order of the Commanding General, 2d Armored Division, after confirmation by the 35th Division's Commander. The 1st and 2d Battalions, after reaching their objective, assumed outpost, roadblock, and patrol activity previously done by the 3d Battalion.

At 1200 the 137th Infantry received orders to assume responsibility of the area occupied by the 3d Battalion of the 120th Infantry. The troops moved into Barenton and the area between there and Le Teillul, securing the road for the trains of the 2d Armored Division. The 1st Battalion established an outpost at St. George de Rouelle, and the 2d Battalion at St. Mars de Egrenne, with a motorized patrol covering the road net from Le Teillul to St. Cyr, and to the regimental boundary between Barenton and Mortain.

The 35th Division was attached to the VII Corps on August 8 at midnight. On August 9 the 137th Infantry's only activity was the conducting of patrols to the front and flanks and continuing to secure the town of Barenton. The 3d Battalion remained attached to the 134th Infantry, and that Regiment continued the attack, while the 30th Division was meeting strong resistance on our Division's left. The 3d Battalion of the 134th Infantry was attached to the 137th on this date.

The 137th Infantry continued to occupy and secure its position on August 10. Elements of the 4th Division moved in on the 35th Division's right and began to take over part of the 137th area. The 134th continued to meet strong resistance, principally machine gun, mortar, and small arms fire.

The 1st Battalion received artillery shelling at 1300, and the 3d Battalion of the 134th Infantry reported mortar fire and tank fire in the vicinity of St. Jean du Corail, at about the same time. No other enemy action was reported during the day.

Casualties for the past three days in the 137th Infantry were very light. No men were reported killed; one man was wounded on the 8th and three on the 10th; five men were missing on the 8th, eight

on the 9th, and four on the 10th. No prisoners were taken from the 7th to the 10th.

August 11 the 2d Battalion reverted to Division reserve, while the 1st Battalion advanced northeast from Barenton to Bourentier, then westward toward the Mortain Forest. The 134th 3d Battalion advanced also, on the left of 1st Battalion, 137th. The 3d Battalion, 137th, continued the attack with the 134th Infantry, in the vicinity of Bion. Very little opposition was reported on the 11th, and no casualties were suffered by the 137th Infantry. No prisoners were taken.

The attack continued, and early on the morning of the 12th the ridge of high ground north of le Gil Bouillion was gained. The enemy was pushed from the north slope of the high ground and during the day a general withdrawal was reported, with long columns of enemy vehicles leaving Ger and St. Barthemy. American F-45's, punching with a lightning strike, pounced upon the fleeing Germans and bombed and strafed continuously during the afternoon. Despite the withdrawal, enemy artillery and mortar fire inflicted heavy casualties on the 1st Battalion late in the day. The terrifying "Screaming Meemies" were also brought into use by the Germans against our troops for the first time.

After reaching the vicinity of Rancoudray, the attack was ordered halted, at 2100, and the Regiment was to be relieved by elements of the 2d Armored Division at 2200. However, both the 1st Battalion and the 3d Battalion of the 134th Infantry were still engaged in a heavy fire fight at 2200, and the relief was not affected until the following morning, August 13. At that time the 134th 3d Battalion reverted to the control of its parent unit.

Casualties for 12 August were the heaviest of the week, with two men killed, 43 wounded, and 12 missing in action. Seventeen prisoners were taken, including SS troops and one first lieutenant. Most of the prisoners were from the 21st Panzer Regiment of the 10th Panzer Division, and were about 19 years of age.

The Regiment, after being relieved by the 2d Armored Division, moved to an assembly area south of Barenton. Our 3d Battalion reverted to regimental control, and its casualty report brought the total for the day to 17 killed, 90 wounded, and nine missing. Nine additional prisoners were captured.

The Regiment prepared to move from the Mortain sector by motor, with a tentative destination of Le Mans and an ultimate destination of Orleans. Total casualties in the Mortain sector, from August 7 to 13, were 23 killed, 140 wounded, and 40 missing in action.

Shortly before midnight the Regiment departed, headed south through Le Teillul, and continued to Ernee. No enemy aircraft appeared during the night, and the convoy moved southeast without interruption. From Argente the convoy proceeded

east on Highway N 157 to Varges, then south to Soulges, east to the outskirts of Brulon, then north to St. Denis. At St. Denis the column again turned east and moved into Le Mans on Highway N 157. At Le Mans, the largest French city yet entered by the 137th Infantry, the Regiment was greeted by wildly enthusiastic civilians who lined the streets and cheered the Americans as they passed by. Little damage had been done to Le Mans in its capture four days previously, and apparently the city was "open for business." During the afternoon of August 14 the Regiment closed in a bivouac area one and one-half miles east of Le Mans, where they remained for the night.

The next day the 137th Infantry proceeded on its mission—to seize Orleans, sixty-five miles south of Paris, on the north bank of the Loire River. Again organized as Task Force S under the command of Brigadier General Sebree, the Regiment was operating with Combat Command A of the 4th Armored Division as part of the XII Corps. Little was known of German strength east of Le Mans, and the Regiment was to be responsible for its own protection at all points east of St. Calis. The I & R Platoon preceded the convoy, which moved out shortly before noon.

The route to Orleans took the Regiment to the town of Change, then northwest to Highway N 157. Traveling east on this main road to Orleans, the convoy proceeded cautiously, stopping at many points as the country ahead was screened for hostile resistance. Through Ardenay and Boulore there was no evidence of Germans remaining. However, farther east, near Buslouys and Preteval, the enemy had just left that morning, after blowing up ammunition and destroying supplies. Scattered Germans were rounded up, and 12 prisoners were taken at one point by the platoon. Also 12 unexploded flying bombs were located.

On the road from Le Mans was much evidence of the losses of equipment suffered by the enemy, as burned and overturned German tanks, guns, trucks, trailers, and various materiel were strewn along the countryside. In several places, complete enemy motor pools had been destroyed. Proceeding eastward, the column passed through Binas, Ouzouer, and Charlsonville. At Charlsonville, cooperative French civilians directed our troops to a large German buried communications cable crossing under the city. A crew from the Regimental Wire Section destroyed the cable.

After encountering a heavy rainstorm, the Regiment reached Coulmiers shortly after dark, and remained in that vicinity during the night. During the night, great fires were observed to the northeast, where American airmen had been playing havoc among enemy installations and transportation, and where the Germans continued to destroy their own ammunition and supplies which could not be taken with them in their rapid withdrawal.

Casualties reported on August 14 and 15 were six wounded and three missing on the 14th, and two missing on the 15th. Patrols sent out during the night and early morning worked their way to within a few kilometers of the objective. The enemy continued to occupy Orleans, and was also in strength at Chateaudun, to the northwest.

On the morning of the 16th the Regiment began its move on Orleans, with the 2d and 3d Battalions advancing on the city from the north, and the 1st Battalion pushing south to the river, west of Orleans. Some resistance was encountered in the woods between Coulmiers and Ormes, and the 3d Battalion suffered two casualties at this point.

At Ormes a large German warehouse was taken, with a complete stock of new kitchen and dining room supplies and equipment, including high grade china and silverware, vast quantities of pots, pans, and other utensils, brushes, brooms, and considerable heavy equipment such as electric meat slicers, mixers, etc. A large quantity of motor fuel was also taken at Ormes. The 1st Battalion captured a large enemy machine shop, with airplane motors and other ordnance, in their sector.

Pushing into Orleans, the 2d Battalion reached the railroad crossing on the Ormes highway at the outskirts of the city at 1300. Two hours later, the 3d Battalion was in the northwest part of the city. and at 1645 the city hall was captured. Despite machine gun fire and heavy artillery fire from German positions across the Loire River, and a constant sniper menace within the city, Orleans was captured with very few casualties in the Regiment. Only two officers and one enlisted man were wounded. There were 42 prisoners captured. During the night, occupation of the city was completed, and by morning all hostile resistance had withdrawn across the river. The Germans had left dynamite, bombs, and other explosives in the post office, telephone building, and other locations, but their only successful work of demolition was in blowing up the bridge over which the city water main passed. Thus the city was without water for two days, until an auxiliary plant could be put into operation. Mined streets were encountered near the river, and the city received artillery fire most of the day. Casualties on the 17th were 17 wounded, seven killed, and two missing.

With headquarters set up in the former German headquarters in the heart of Orleans, Task Force S set about to care for a city of 73,000 with no water or electricity. The Regimental Civil Affairs officer efficiently brought about the cooperation of city and military officials and French civilians to restore the city to normalcy. The Free French forces organized themselves rapidly in the city after the Germans had withdrawn, and were of great assistance.

Throughout the next few days, there were enthusiastic rallies, parades, and other demonstrations by the liberated French, as they crowded the streets, parks, and squares. German collaborationists were

sought out and roughly treated. Orleans women who had been too friendly with the Nazis were gathered up, their hair clipped short, and paraded through the streets.

August 18 the Germans continued to shell the city from their artillery positions across the Loire. Their fire was extremely accurate, with hits on the Task Force Headquarters, the Regimental motor park, and the kitchen train. A church tower in St. Jean le Blanc was undoubtedly being used as an observation point, and a tank destroyer from the 654th Battalion removed the tower cleanly with three shots. There were 14 prisoners taken on the 17th, and 42 on the 18th. On the latter date, four men were killed and 25 wounded.

Reports of large numbers of Germans marching from the south failed to materialize, and the 137th Infantry conducted only patrolling activities within the city, as it moved its headquarters to the outskirts. Only one man was wounded on the 19th and two men were reported missing. Nine prisoners were captured.

On August 20 the Regiment moved to the vicinity of Artenay and prepared to move east upon order. The 3d Battalion was left in Orleans. No casualties of any kind were reported on the 20th and 13 Germans were taken prisoners. In making its thrust of nearly 200 miles to seize Orleans, the 137th Infantry lost a total of 11 killed, 52 wounded, and nine missing in action. During the week of 14th to 20th of August 110 prisoners were taken by the 137th Infantry.

Private Dagenhart, a bazooka man of Company B of the 137th Infantry Regiment became the first man in the battle for France to be twice decorated when he received the Silver Star and Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star.

The 137th Infantry left the 35th Division for its next operation on the 21st and became attached to the 4th Armored Division. With elements of the 4th, the Regiment was divided into three parts. The 1st Battalion combined with CCA of the Armored Division. The 2d Battalion with another armored Combat Command formed CCB. One battery of the 448th Anti-Aircraft Battalion was attached for the operation. The 3d Battalion was attached to CCR. The plan for the coming operation called for a daring and spectacular move. Sixty miles southeast of Paris was the city of Sens. Located on the navigable Yonne River just below the junction with the Seine, this rail and highway center was reported to be a central supply point of the Germans for their strong points to the northwest as far as Paris, and southwest to Montargis. The mission of CCA and CCB was to capture Sens and cut this supply route. CCR was to remain in Orleans.

Moving in a column of tanks, tank destroyers, self-propelled artillery and trucks, the forces would travel approximately ninety miles, with no flank protection, a large part of the way. It was believed

that the Germans were in considerable strength on the Loing River at Montargis, and further north at Fontainebleau. It was decided to move between these reported strong points and cross the Loing River at Souppes, then push east into Sens. The success of such an operation would depend largely on the surprise element, the enemy being unaware of the proximity of the American forces due to his own shattered transportation and communication lines.

At 0900, CCA left Artenay, followed by CCB at 1300. Swinging back through Patay and Ormes to Orleans, the column then turned northeast. Main highways were avoided as much as possible as far as Nibelle. The force moved through Boigny, Trainou, Sully la Chapelle, and Ingrannes, then east through the Chene Pointu Forest to Nibelle. Taking to the main highways, the column moved into Boisocommun, east to St. Loup les Vignes, then to Juranville and Corbeilles. This was the first sight of Allied troops in these towns, and in most of them the Germans had left the day previously. From Corbeilles, CCA proceeded northeast toward Sens, through Chateau Landon and Souppe, then east through Egreville, Jouy, Montacher, St. Valerien, and Villeroy.

Moving into Sens, our forces caught the Germans by complete surprise. Not a single casualty was suffered by the 137th Infantry, and almost the entire German garrison was taken prisoner. Many German officers were captured in dress uniform, and they admitted that they had not realized the Americans were within 100 miles of the city.

By 2200 Sens was completely liberated and in the hands of the American forces. In occupying the city, the 137th Infantry had now advanced farther east into France than any other Allied troops yet reported. In the meantime, CCB had reached Corbeilles at 2030, and remained east of that town for the night.

In the morning CCB moved on to Chateau Landon, then ran into enemy resistance at Souppes. This point had been passed by CCA the previous day, and at that time no Germans had exposed themselves to make a stand. By noon all resistance was wiped out, but Company F lost five men by enemy machine gun fire, two of which were killed and three wounded. CCB then moved on east, leaving Company F at Souppes. However, with Sens already securely held, the 2d Battalion was sent to Courtenay, 18 miles southwest of Sens.

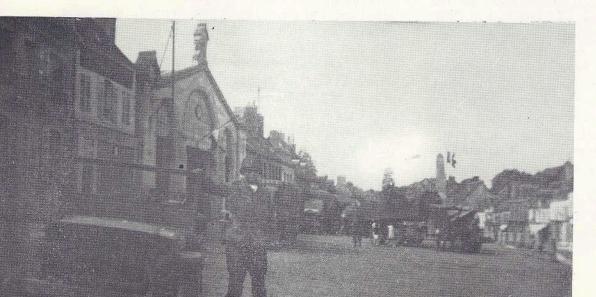
At Sens, the Americans were again enthusiastically welcomed by the liberated French, and as in Orleans, parades, demonstrations, and public gatherings were numerous. Reports of the city as being a supply point proved true, as warehouses and storage caves were found. Some of the warehouses had already been completely leveled by Allied airmen. Large stores of canned goods, flour, chocolate, coffee and other foodstuffs were taken. In addition, many



SHAVING IN ZERO WEATHER



EATING CHOW IN FRANCE



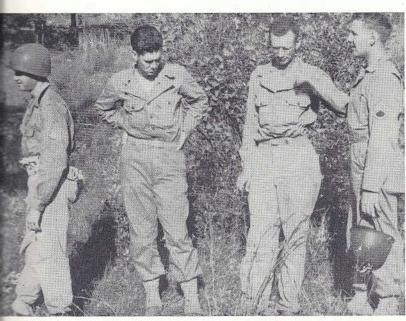
A CONVOY IN MONTARGIS, FR.



Orleans — La Place Du Matroi



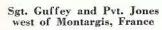
Orleans — La Rue Jeanne d'Arc and the Orleans Cathedral



Taking a break



Captured German 88 near Orleans



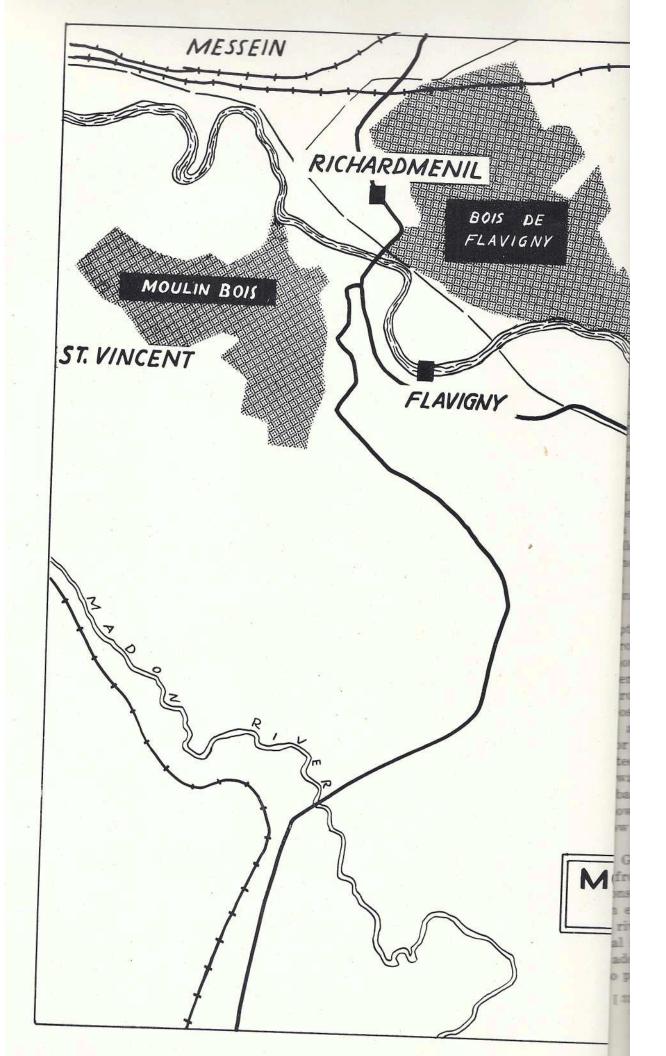


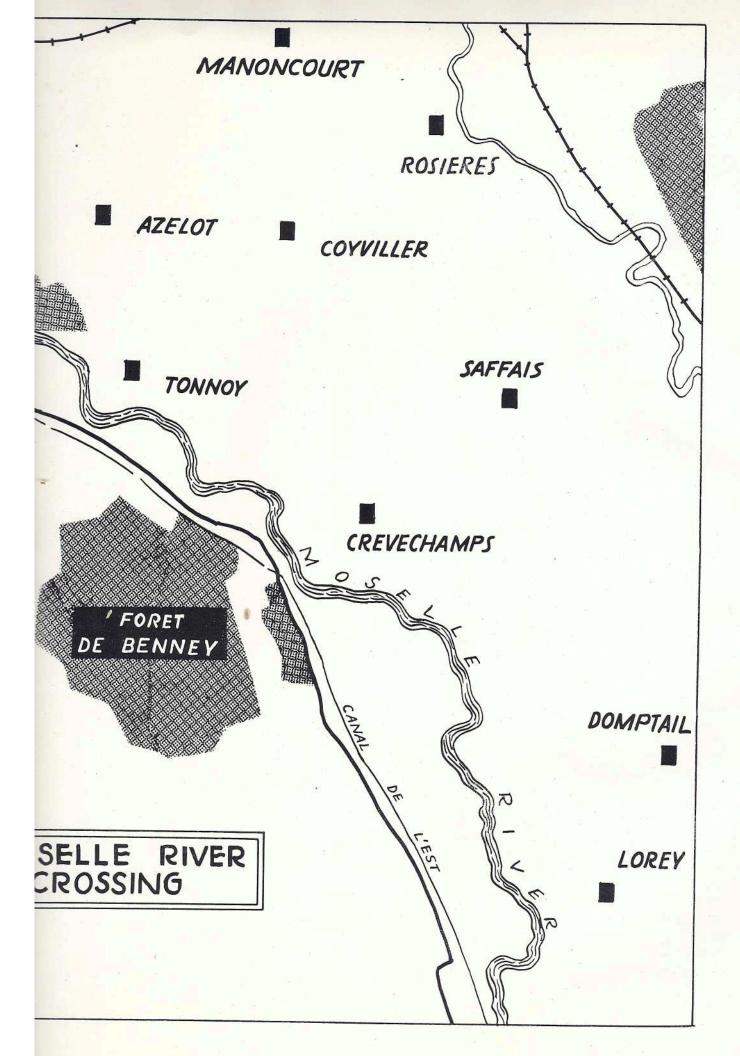
Orleans — Maison De Jeanne d'Arc



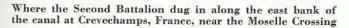
Col. Murrey in front of German barracks in Metz, France













German machine gun position overlooking the Moselle River

nay, Sens, Troyes, and Finey to the vicinity of Briene le Chateau, where they took over the mission of protecting the south flank of the Division from Bar sur Seine to Bleise. Here the Regiment remained until September 9. During this time the 134th Infantry was protecting the south flank of the Division from Sens to Bar sur Seine and the 320th Infantry from Blaise to Joinville. The 6th Armored Division of the VIII Corps took over the sector from Sens west to Montargis. The 802d Field Artillery Battalion and Company C of the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached to the 137th Infantry during this period. The 80th Division, east of the 35th, continued to advance toward Nancy, and on the 5th established a bridgehead in the Moselle River loop at Toul.

During its period of comparative inactivity at Briene le Chateau from 3-9 September the Regiment gained a well-earned rest. Replacements received during the period brought the 137th almost to full strength, and as the Regiment prepared to leave Briene le Chateau to resume the battle, it was in very good shape. The only casualties during the period was one man wounded and one missing. During this time 11 prisoners were taken.

With Allied forces driving north from southern France, east from Normandy and Brittany, and already reported in Belgium and Holland, the next move of the 137th was to Crepey, southwest of Nancy, to assemble for an advance across the Moselle River below Nancy and to open the way for a drive on the Siegfried line. On September 9, the 137th Infantry made the motor move to Crepey, through Louze, St. Dizier, Ancerville, Ligny, Void, Vaucouleurs, and Colombey. That evening at 2115 the order was issued for the next operation.

On September 10 the XII Corps was to advance into a position to attack on the next day, with the high ground west of the Moselle River southeast of Nancy as the objective. The 134th Infantry was to attack to the north, and in the 137th Infantry the 3d Battalion was to attack on the right and the 2d

Battalion on the left. The 1st Battalion was to remain in reserve, prepared to move on order.

The Regiment moved out at 0800 on the 10th, and the 2d Battalion encountered the first enemy fire—intermittent artillery at 0915 east of Houdel-They continued to move forward, and by 1300 crossed the north-south highway between Ceintrey and the Benney Forest. A half-hour later the 2d Battalion was in the Benney Forest itself, and two miles south the 3d Battalion had reached Lemainville. At that time the 1st Battalion was at Ville sur Moselle and by 1500 had moved into the woods south of Ormes et Ville. By 1700, 137th was on its objective for the 10th and occupied the high ground west of the Moselle River, in position to attempt to establish a bridgehead on the following morning. The only casualties reported on the 10th were two men wounded. With the German forces withdrawn to positions across the Moselle, only one prisoner was taken.

The Regiment jumped off at 0500 on September 11, with the 2d Battalion attempting to cross the river near Crevechamps and the 3d Battalion near Neuviller sur Moselle. The 1st Battalion remained in reserve in the Ormes Forest. First across the Moselle at that point was 1st Lieutenant Joseph S. Giacobello, holder of the Silver Star and already recommended for the Oak Leaf Cluster for heroic action in previous engagements. With fifteen men of Company F he crossed the river, and was soon out of communication with the rest of the battalion. The remainder of Company F was pinned down most of the day on an island in the river below Crevechamps.

The crossing proved difficult, as the Germans had blown all bridges across the Moselle from Flavigny south, and they held strong positions on the east side of the river, with machine gun emplacements on the steep bluffs overlooking the river, and artillery positions to the rear. The canal running parallel to the river's west bank was an added barrier. The 2d Battalion was never able to put addi-



Lorey Crevechamps

Domptail Neuviller

tional forces across the river in the Crevechamps vicinity during the day. Lieutenant Giacobello and his men were the only American troops across the river at that point for a day and a half, and were believed to have been lost, in the face of almost hopeless odds. The Battalion eventually abandoned a crossing at that point and withdrew to attempt a crossing farther south. Elements of the 3d Battalion crossed the river in its sector during the day, but were pinned down until late in the afternoon. At 1730 the 1st Battalion was committed, and a coordinated attack launched by all three battalions, with the 2d on the left, the 1st on the right, and the 3d between them. With heavy artillery support, the 1st and 3d Battalions each got two companies across the river by 1845 in the vicinity of Lorey and St. Mard. The strong enemy resistance at Crevechamps forced abandonment of the construction of a treadway bridge across the river at that point.

The attack continued during the night, and by the morning of September 12, the 1st Battalion had cleared all enemy resistance in the area around Lorey. The 2d Battalion, to the north, got across the river early in the afternoon, then worked back up the east side of the river and was rejoined by Lieutenant Giacobello with his party intact. In the 3d Battalion sector, dug-in concrete pillboxes were located. Four of these were knocked out by means of artillery, bazookas, and grenades. The 2d Battalion also reported concrete pillboxes near Crevechamps. At 0915, the 3d Battalion captured a former enemy command post and a large quantity of Ger-

man equipment left behind in the area. The equipment was of excellent quality, indicating superior troops in the area.

With the way cleared by the 1st Battalion, it was possible to put a ferry into operation across the river at Neuviller, and shortly afterward a treadway bridge was completed at that point by the Engineers. By late afternoon most of the Regiment was across the river.

The 1st Battalion moved as far as Lorey, where the Germans launched a counterattack with armor and infantry in a desperate effort to save ammunition stores in that vicinity. With the support of Company B of the 737th Tank Battalion, Company C broke up the counterattack, then moved in to destroy an ammunition dump at Domptall. Racing to the left, they cleaned out the hills east of the river, then swung in between the 2d and 3d Battalions. By 2100 the 2d Battalion took Crevechamps, after a large part of the town had been set afire, and the Regiment was in a position to turn the attack to the north.

On September 13 the 137th Infantry attacked toward Gayviller, on the east bank of the Moselle, with the 320th Infantry on the Regiment's right. Jumping off at 0700, no resistance was encountered until shortly after 0900, when the 2d Battalion, on the left, contacted the enemy at Tonnoy. A few minutes later the 3d Battalion, on the right, reported opposition east of Tonnoy. The 3d Battalion pushed past Tonnoy on the right at 1400, but the 2d Battalion was held up until 1800, receiving heavy artillery

fire from German positions in the woods south of Conviller.

Breaking past Tonnoy, the 2d Battalion advanced rapidly, and shortly after 2100 both 2d and 3d Battalions were on the objective, occupying the high ground between Saffais and Coyviller, with assault guns and tanks of the 737th Tank Battalion in position to protect the left flank against attack from the direction of Flavigny, from which city the Germans had been withdrawing to the east, across the river and into the Flavigny Forest. The 1st Battalion was held up by an illuminated roadblock near Rosieres. Here again the tanks were called upon, shortly after midnight, and at 0159 the 1st Battalion was one kilometer from the objective. At 0200 the high ground half a mile southwest of Rosieres was gained, in position to attack that town at dawn.

At 0630 on September 14 the 1st Battalion, with men riding the tanks, captured Rosieres, thereby establishing the Regiment on a line from Moselle to the Meurthe River. The morning of the 14th the 2d and 3d Battalions were ordered to hold their positions, and the 1st Battalion was ordered to put a reconnaissance force across the Meurthe River strong enough to hold a position on the east bank. The 2d and 3d Battalions cleared out the wooded areas in their sectors during the morning, and at 1400 further orders were issued for these battalions to advance on a broad front, the 2d to the high ground in the vicinity of Azelot, and the 3d to the high ground north of Manoncourt. The 1st Battalion now received orders to advance on the left of the Meurthe River to St. Nicolas, seizing any bridgehead possible.

Jumping off at 1600, all battalions advanced to their objectives with little resistance. The Germans had already withdrawn most of their forces from the area between the Meurthe and Moselle Rivers. At 1730 the 3d Battalion had taken Manoncourt, where the Germans left a large store of 120mm mortar ammunition and well dug-in positions. By 1830 the 2d Battalion had moved to within a mile of Azelot, and at 1900 entered the town. By 2100 the 1st Battalion had taken St. Nicolas. At both St. Nicolas and Azelot it was learned that the enemy had withdrawn earlier in the day. French civilians reported that the Germans were withdrawing all along the Moselle River, from Richardmenil, Messein, and other points. Information gained from prisoners taken and from civilians indicated that the Germans had withdrawn one Division from that area. At St. Nicolas, between 500 and 600 of the enemy force had been withdrawn.

At the close of the four days' fighting the 137th Infantry had suffered 221 casualties in crossing the Moselle River and pushing the enemy beyond the Meurthe as far north as St. Nicolas. On the 11th one man was killed and 23 wounded. On the 12th, four were killed and 61 wounded. A total of 13 killed, 51 wounded, and eight missing were reported

on the 13th. On the 13th the Regiment also lost 1st Sgt. Warren P. Schrader of Wichita, Kansas, popular topkick of Headquarters Company, the first First Sergeant of the 137th Infantry to give his life in the present war. On the 14th 12 were killed, 11 wounded, and ten missing in action. 1st Lt. Vernon W. Pickett, after having been captured by the Germans on July 15 and later escaping from a prison train to rejoin the 137th on August 30, met his death on the 14th. The Regiment also lost its second First Sergeant in two days, Claude L. Applegate, efficient Company I Sergeant.

There were 68 prisoners taken on the 12th, 47 on the 13th, and 36 on the 14th. Prisoners were identified as from the 104th Regiment of the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division from Saarbrucken, from the 1120th Regiment of the 553d Division, and from the 2d Parachute Regiment. Many of the prisoners reported themselves to be Paratroopers, and some were formerly in the Air Corps, having been pressed into infantry service from the Luftwaffe.

At this time the 320th Infantry continued to operate on the right of the 137th, and had crossed the Meurthe River. Task Force T—composed of the 2d Battalion of the 134th Infantry, 35th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop, and 127th Field Artillery Battalion—was protecting the west bank of the Moselle River from Fort De Pont St. Vincent south. The remaining two battalions of the 134th Infantry were attached to Task Force S, which was operating in the Forest de Eaye and closing in on the city of Nancy from the west. North of Nancy, the 80th Division was holding Mousson and the high ground in the vicinity.

On September 15, Task Force S moved into the city of Nancy, and on the same day elements of the 137th Infantry began to cross the Meurthe River. During the morning of the 15th, the Regiment had driven out all hostile resistance in their sector south

Field of fire of German machine gun position overlooking the Meurthe River





Knocked-out German tanks east of the Moselle River

of the river, cleaning out the Germans from the Flavigny Forest.

On the morning of the 15th, with the 1st Battalion already on the river at St. Nicolas, the 2d Battalion moved through Lupcourt to the high ground just east of the Canal de l'est Emb't de Nancy at 0930. They then moved north to the Meurthe River. The 3d Battalion moved from Manoncourt to the vicinity of Laneuville, putting all battalions in position to cross the river. The Germans had generally withdrawn from the south of the Meurthe to positions across the river, from which our 1st Battalion received machine gun, mortar and artillery fire during the day. Casualties reported on the 15th were five killed, 47 wounded, and 19 missing, some of which had occurred prior to this date but had not been reported. There were 25 prisoners taken.

On September 16 the 137th Infantry crossed the Meurthe River in force, beginning at 0500. The 2d Battalion had Companies F and G across the river near Chartreuse by 0700, and the 3d Battalion moved up the river behind them at the same time. The 1st Battalion pushed across the river in assault boats to move into Varangeville, the Germans withdrawing to the north. By 1300, one company and most of another were across the river.

Farther south, at Rosieres, the Engineers had modified the bridge in place at that point to carry tanks, and here the armor of the 737th Tank Battalion and the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion poured across the river, then swung north to cross the Sanon River at Sommerviller. They then doubled back to the west to rejoin and support the 137th Infantry.

As the 2d Battalion crossed the river into Chartreuse, an alert aerial observer spotted enemy activity in the forest northeast of that town. This was

first reported to be only a small group of Germans. Later reports from ground observers indicated that four tanks were also in the woods. Continued observation from the air and other sources of information soon revealed the Germans to be in great strength in the area, with between ten and twenty tanks, waiting for the Americans to bypass them. Had these Germans not been discovered, they were in a position to counterattack and cut off our forces as they advanced to the north, a situation which might easily have developed into disaster for our troops. Even before the true strength of the enemy was learned, artillery was called on observed targets in the area, and as it became known that the woods were alive with Germans, all available artillery was poured into the area. Hundreds of the enemy were killed during the afternoon, as the big guns of nine artillery battalions had a virtual field day. Attempting to break through the 2d Battalion at Chartreuse with infantry and ten tanks, the enemy was completely annihilated by the combined artillery and supporting tanks and tank destroyers of the 737th and 654th Battalions moving in from their river crossings at Rosieres and Sommerviller.

During the afternoon of the 16th the Regiment completed its crossing of the Meurthe River. The casualties resulting during the day were two killed and eight wounded, while 62 Germans were taken prisoner.

On the morning of September 17, the 137th began an advance from the Meurthe to the northeast, pointing toward Velaine, with the 134th on the left and the 320th on the right. The 80th Division was operating north of this objective, and the 4th Armored Division had driven east as far as Bezange la Grande, south of Chambrey. However, they had bypassed large forces of Germans, who remained in

considerable strength in the Champenoux Forest and other heavily wooded areas in that vicinity.

The 1st Battalion, on the right, moved north from Varangeville and by noon had entered Lennoncourt, while the 2d Battalion advanced over a mile farther north, on the left. The Regiment held at these points, awaiting further orders. Cleaning out the area, our troops took the biggest haul of prisoners since the liberation of Sens. The medium tanks of the 737th Battalion, which had supported the 137th Infantry up to this point, were now detached from the Regiment and reverted to Division control. However, their platoon of assault guns remained with the Regiment, and were attached to the 1st Battalion. Company B of the 654th TD Battalion was attached to the 2d Battalion.

Resuming the advance on the 18th, our forces contacted few Germans, but before 0700 it was evident that the enemy had mined the area heavily as he withdrew, particularly in the vicinity of Buisson-court and Cereueil. Some loss of vehicles resulted. The 1st Battalion reached the objective at 0900, coming within mortar range of the Germans north of Cereueil, and received both mortar and artillery fire during the morning. The 2d Battalion pulled up to the west of Cereueil, and the 3d moved in on the right, as the Regiment received orders to hold and prepare for a motor movement.

At 1430 reports were received of fourteen German tanks and two companies of infantry advancing northwest toward Luneville. Another report indicated an additional six tanks and two companies were advancing north at Magnieres. Later reports increased the total to thirty tanks. To meet this threat, two companies of the 2d Battalion were alerted for movement, and preparations made to blow the bridge near Dombasle and mine possible routes of enemy approach. However, during the evening the reports were found to be without foundation. Casualties on September 17 and 18 were not heavy. On the 17th one man was killed, six wounded, and one missing. On the 18th four were killed, nine wounded, and seven missing. On the 17th there were 96 prisoners taken, and on the 18th there were 16 taken.

On September 19 the 137th Infantry closed into an assembly area north of Buissoncourt, still awaiting orders for a motor movement, with a possibility of the Regiment following the 4th Armored Division as a Combat Team for the forthcoming operation. The 3d Battalion was tentatively attached to CCA of the 4th Armored.

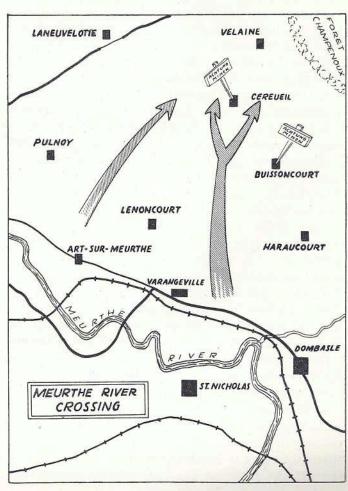
Continued reports showed that enemy activity was undoubtedly increasing to the north and to the east. French civilians reported an enemy troop train unloaded at Luneville and a large enemy concentration in the Parroy Forest. Others reported dug-in Tiger Tanks in the area between Amante and Champenoux, with infantry dug in along the railroad and

the main highway northeast of Laneuvellotte. Roadblocks were also reported in that vicinity and a Polish prisoner stated that the woods north of the railroad were full of Germans.

On the morning of the 19th the 134th Infantry was counterattacked and driven from the high ground east of Agincourt. To meet this latest threat the contemplated move of the 137th Infantry was temporarily called off, and the Regiment made ready to again attack to the north. The 2d and 3d Battalions jumped off at 1600, and met no immediate resistance. However, the enemy mine menace soon appeared again, and Captain Theodore P. Robie, Assistant Surgeon of the 2d Battalion, was killed when his vehicle hit a mine east of Cereueil. Captain Robie was the first of the fine medical officers of the Regiment to be killed in France.

At 1830 the 2d and 3d Battalions had moved up to the blacktop road leading from Velaine to Champenoux, and reported the woods to the north were full of the enemy. The Battalion Commanders recommended holding at that line, and that patrols be sent out during the night, with our forces again jumping off on the following morning. This plan was approved by the Regimental Commander, and the Regiment held up at that line. On the 19th there were 23 casualties. Of these two were killed, 15 wounded, and seven missing. Eleven prisoners were taken.

Meurthe River Crossing



At 0545 on September 20 the forward elements of the 2d and 3d Battalions moved out to what was to develop into one of the bloodiest struggles in which the Regiment had yet engaged. Shortly after 0600, both battalions reached the woods south of Highway 74, main route leading northeast from Nancy to Saarbrucken. At this point the highway ran through an open valley, bordered on the north by a heavily wooded slope. From this concealment the enemy had almost unobstructed observation across the highway to the opposite slope, a thousand yards to the south. As the 2d and 3d Battalions came into range of the enemy they were hit by heavy machine gun and mortar fire from the German positions, and both battalions were pinned down immediately. One platoon of Company F worked its way into the enemy woods at 0715, but were forced to withdraw by hostile fire. At 0735 a German tank came out of the woods and opened up with direct fire at Company E. Ten minutes later Company I fought its way into the woods with heavy casualties and knocked out a machine gun nest.

All through the day continued efforts were made to cross into the woods, with no success. At each attempt to cross the terrain the enemy would pin our forces down with machine gun fire, then bring mortar fire upon the pinned-down elements.

During the morning of the 20th the 320th Infantry was ordered to move with CCA of the 6th Armored Division, and 1st Battalion 137th, which was being held in reserve, moved a strong force to partially cover the 320th area.

By midnight neither the 2d or 3d Battalions had been able to advance, and during the early morning hours of the 21st our artillery began to lay a continuous barrage on the German-held woods. Air support became available at daybreak, and again the attack was resumed. The lack of tanks was felt keenly, and at noon the offensive was held up to await the arrival of armored support. In two days' fighting, only one platoon, from Company I, had been able to advance into the woods without being thrown back. This platoon was since out of communication and believed lost.

The 137th Infantry held their positions during the morning of the 22d, with CCB of the 6th Armored Division moving up on our right flank. A coordinated attack was planned to begin at noon, the main effort to follow an earlier attack by tanks. The 134th was to operate on our left, and the Division mission was to destroy enemy forces in the Champenoux Forest and the Faulx Woods. Ammunition restrictions were lifted for the artillery, and the Corps Commander ordered the woods to be taken under any conditions.

Following a heavy artillery preparation and air strike, the attack began as planned. Company C, riding the tanks and attacking around the right flank, was first to reach the woods, at 1300. Jumping off the tanks at the edge of the woods, they

moved in on foot, and within five minutes had captured six prisoners. At 1310 the 2d Battalion moved out and by 1320 was entering the woods. By 1335 the 3d Battalion was also in the woods.

The German defenses consisted mainly of dug-in positions on the fringe of the woods, and once these were cracked our forces moved steadily ahead. By 1345 the 2d Battalion had crossed the railroad, and by 1430 Companies K and L had moved through the woods several hundred yards to reach the railroad on the right of the 2d Battalion.

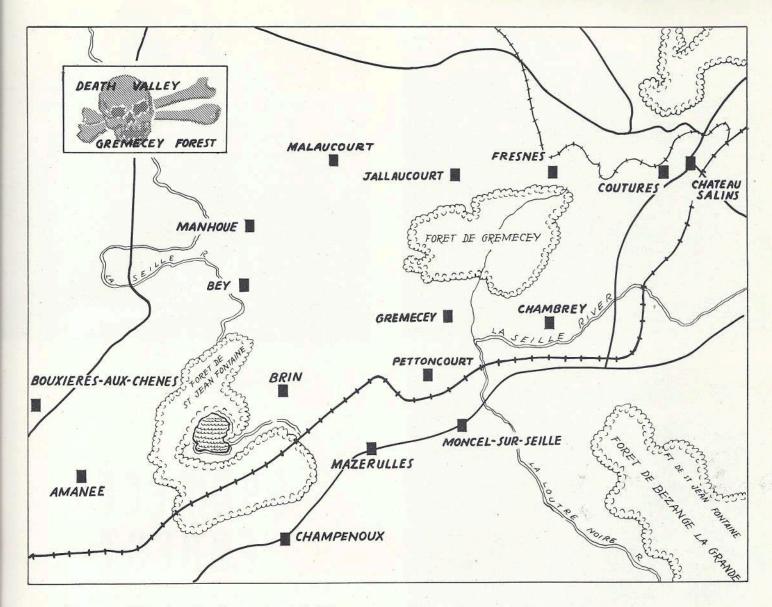
At 1535 the tanks of CCB were nearing their objective at Amanee, and the Germans began pulling out what forces they had left in the area. The highway from Moulins to Bouxiers aux Chenes became a mass of both horse-drawn and motor-drawn artillery. Retreating troops and German equipment checkered other roads leading to the north with columns as long as four miles. Here the Air Corps went to work, bombing and strafing almost at will.

In reserve up to this time had been the 1st Battalion, less Company C which had made the initial assault of the day, and Company D which had gone into position north of Cereueil to forestall any German move in that direction. This Battalion was committed late in the afternoon in an all-out cleanup of the woods, and by 1800 the Regiment had achieved its mission.

It was believed that some of the enemy had withdrawn to the north of Amonee, and at 2000 the 2d Battalion was ordered to occupy the high ground in that vicinity. A patrol from Company E was sent out, followed by Company G, and by 2130 the hill was gained and 15 prisoners were taken.

With the Germans finally driven from the Champenoux Forest, it became possible to see why they had put up such a stubborn defense. The south edge of the woods was an unbroken string of dug-in emplacements, with almost perfect fields of fire. With a network of roads and trails leading in and out of the woods, accessibility of supplies was simplified, and it was possible for the enemy to move tanks out to the edge of the woods to fire, then withdraw to another position. Our forces were also running into outlying fortifications of the former Maginot Line. Blockhouses, pillboxes, and shelters of reinforced concrete construction with overhead protection were found. Old trench systems of 1917 and 1918 were also found, as the present conflict moved into the battlefield of World War I. The Germans had a strong force for the defense of the area, and their strength in the sector was reported by prisoners to be as high as 4,000 men.

On September 23 the Regiment continued to secure the area and clean out scattered Germans. The enemy, as he withdrew, had effectively blocked many routes by laying mines and by felling heavy trees across the roads, and these obstacles were removed during the day.



Our casualties for the three days' fighting on September 20, 21, and 22 had been 11 killed, 111 wounded, and three missing. Of these, two were killed, six wounded, and one missing on the 20th, eight killed, 78 wounded, and two missing on the 21st, and one killed and 28 wounded on the 22d. On the 23d, one man was killed and one missing.

Although our casualties were not small, they were far less than those of the enemy. The Germans suffered terrific losses, chiefly from our artillery and mortar fire. The 2d Battalion fired more than a thousand rounds of mortar ammunition on one day alone, with every round fired at an observed target. A German Captain of the Medical Corps surrendered, after all his medical supplies and equipment had been expended and further supply was unavailable. Speaking perfect English, he told his capturing officer that the casualties among their men were the worst he had ever seen. He further remarked, "You Americans now have us by the throat."

Altogether, there were 15 prisoners taken on September 20, four on the 21st, 61 on the 22d, and 91 on the 23d.

On September 24 the Regiment remained in the same area, establishing a line from Highway 74 near

Mazerulles, extending northwest through Brin and the St. Jean Fontaine Forest toward Bey. The clear weather which had been prevailing came to an end, as intermittent showers began during the afternoon and developed into a steady rain. There were no men killed or wounded on the 24th, but four men were reported missing. During the day 26 prisoners were brought in.

On the morning of September 25 the 137th prepared to move to the northeast to relieve elements of the 4th Armored Division. The enemy was reinforcing his troops in the vicinity of the Chateau Salins Forest with armor and infantry. His strength in that sector was as yet unknown, but the 113th Panzer Brigade had been identified as in the vicinity. and two infantry regiments, the 1125th and 1126th of the 559th Division, had moved in from the north during the night of September 23. The FFI reported a concentration of enemy troops, supplies, and ammunition at Morhange. The 3d SS Totenkopf Division and the 106th Panzer Division were identified assembling in the vicinity of Wuisse, and still another division was reported marching southeast from the vicinity of Metz, with a mission of encircling the Gremecey and the Chateau Salins Forests.







Medics of the 137th Infantry carry a casualty back through heavily mined fields in France

The linemen had a tough time, too

GREMECEY FOREST

With straw to cushion the earth floor, members of the 219th FA Battalion give their makeshift shelter all the comforts of a GI "Home" somewhere in France

An engineer of the 60th Engineer Battalion stands by with a mine detector after clearing the way for members of a graves registration party who were out to recover the body of an American casualty. The soldier was killed when he stepped on a Nazi "8" mine near Nancy, France.



With a large-scale attack by the Germans a definite possibility, the XII Corps prepared to defend along a line from the Seille River near Manhoue east then south through the Gremecey Forest, facing the German-held towns of Coutures and Chambrey. The line then extended east and south through the Bezange la Grande Forest, and the 4th Armored Division was to move to defend this sector upon being relieved in the Gremecey area. The 80th Division was to defend the sector on the left of the 35th, with the 6th Armored Division remaining east of Nancy in Corps reserve. In the sector assigned the 35th Division, consisting generally of the Gremecey Forest, the 134th Infantry was to defend to the left of the 137th, and the 320th in Division reserve.

During the afternoon of September 25 the 137th Infantry moved by way of Mazerulles, Moncel sur Ville and Pettincourt and went into their defensive position, with the 3d Battalion established to the north and east of Gremecey, and the 1st to their right, southeast of Gremecey and east of Pettincourt. The 2d Battalion went into reserve near Gremecey.

All was quiet along the entire Corps front until noon September 26, except for a small counterattack on the 4th Armored Division at Marsal. Early in the afternoon of the 26th the 3d Battalion began to receive artillery shelling in their area, and increased activity was observed in Chambrey. At 1800 a small German force attacked through the Chambrey Woods, from the direction of Coutures, but were driven back during the night. The 4th Armored Division located 33 tanks and 400 men in the vicinity of Juvelize and Lezey, but no further activity was reported during the day. There were some casualties in the 3d Battalion on the 26th, as two men were killed, six wounded, and six missing.

During the early morning of September 27 artillery began falling in the Regimental area, and enemy planes were overhead. Company B and Company C both reported a fire fight to their front, northeast of Pettincourt, at 0600, and a little later Company K reported small arms and mortar fire to their front, with continued artillery shelling in the 3d Battalion area. At 0640 an enemy tank attacked Company I, while five more tanks moved to the left, followed by infantry.

Shortly after 0700 the Germans, moving west on the Chambrey-Pettincourt highway, overran a 1st Battalion roadblock, captured four anti-tank guns, and by 0730 had established themselves in position to bring direct fire on Pettincourt. Two companies from the 2d Battalion were committed to assist the 1st Battalion in defending that area. Moving tanks up from their stronghold at Chambrey, the enemy advanced to the edge of Pettincourt and the 1st Battalion's situation there was becoming serious. At 1030 the Division Commander committed the 320th Infantry, and their 1st Battalion, together with Com-



In Gremecey Forest

pany C of the 737th Tank Battalion, was attached to the 137th and sent to bolster our defenses in the threatened area.

By 1130 the enemy was forced back sufficiently for our Anti-Tank Company to recover three of their guns, and by 1130 the 1st Battalion had restored their lines to their original position, clearing Pettincourt and the roads leading into it from the danger of direct enemy fire. The Germans suffered heavy casualties in attempting their mission of capturing Pettincourt, and most of their officers had become casualties. In repulsing the attack, the 1st Battalion captured 24 prisoners.

Back in the 3d Battalion area, enemy tank activity increased during the morning, and shortly before noon aerial observers located a concentration of infantry on halftracks and fifteen tanks a mile east of Gremecey. An additional ten tanks were spotted a short distance to the southeast of the first group, and two platoons of our tank destroyers moved east out of Gremecey to go into action. Within twenty minutes they had knocked out two of the enemy tanks.

To the north of Gremecey, tanks were reported in the woods during the afternoon, and were targets for our Cannon Company. One tank moved to within 200 yards of the 3d Battalion Command Post before being blasted out by a tank destroyer. At 1800 a German force was observed approaching Fresnes, and an hour later Company K was driven from their outpost in that town.

Activity slackened during the evening, and no additional action was reported. The Regiment had held its lines intact, but in so doing had suffered 52

casualties, six killed, 45 wounded, and one missing. The Germans had lost far more heavily in killed and wounded, and 71 of their men were taken prisoners.

Enemy patrols were active during the early morning hours of September 28, and shortly after midnight had made contact with a 1st Battalion patrol at Merlinsole. A 3d Battalion outpost was attacked by another patrol, and as daylight approached the enemy activity increased. Company C detected considerable motor movement in and around Chambrey, with tanks leaving the town and heading west and northwest. Company C also reported small arms fire to their left, and Company B reported machine gun fire about 700 yards to their right front. By 0600 the Regiment was receiving artillery fire all along its front, and at 0640 the 134th Infantry was attacked by five enemy tanks in their 3d Battalion area.

Tanks and infantry were reported north of the 137th area, moving from the vicinity of Fresnes and Galloncourt, and by 0900 it was apparent that the enemy armor was in great strength and included heavy tanks. Our tank destroyers knocked out one tank in the 3d Battalion area at 1045, after first losing one of their own TD's. The 3d Battalion continued to report tanks in their area, and at noon a strong German patrol got behind the Battalion CP and attacked and captured the Battalion Motor Pool. With the 3d Battalion command post and right flank endangered, the Battalion Commander committed his Headquarters group and all available men. Company F and one platoon of tanks were sent to relieve their precarious situation. Enemy tanks continued to move into the 3d Battalion area, and between 1000 and 1300 Company B of the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion had knocked out five tanks, three of them Tigers, and one self-propelled gun.

At 1440 enemy patrols again infiltrated into the area, and the 3d Battalion wire team was attacked by Germans armed with bazookas. Late in the afternoon, with reports of enemy tanks mounting, the Air Corps was called upon to strike at Chambrey and west of Coutures, known to be concentration points of enemy armored forces. Fighter-bombers bombed and strafed these points heavily and also attacked Jallaucourt, to the northwest. Air support continued during the night and the Regiment's lines remained intact as they prepared for further attacks by the enemy. Casualties increased some on the 28th, especially among the missing. There were 11 killed, 48 wounded, and 20 unaccounted for. Nine prisoners were taken.

The Germans attacked at 0530 on September 29, moving in from the direction of Fresnes toward the 3d Battalion lines. Company L, in position at the northeast tip of the Gremecey Forest, was hit first, and by 0830 was surrounded. Companies F, C, and E were ordered to pull in their lines. Most of Company L fought their way out of the trap, but their commanding officer was wounded and his executive

officer was captured. However, the captured officer talked his twelve captors into surrendering themselves to the Americans, and brought them through the lines as prisoners.

German infantry attacked at other points in the 3d Battalion area, and continued their tactics of infiltrating and surrounding our troops. This menace reached serious proportions during the day when Company K lost an entire platoon, and over a hundred men in the 3d Battalion as a whole were believed captured. Air protection continued during the day, and there was little tank activity reported. Late in the day action slowed down considerably, and reports from the FFI and other sources hinted that the Germans were pulling back to organize for an all-out attack.

With 105 men missing during the day, in addition to 11 killed and 35 wounded, it was apparent that the Germans must be cleaned from the Gremecey Forest, where their many capabilities and possibilities of attack were a constant threat to the defense of our entire sector. A plan was made for a coordinated attack with the 320th Infantry, to begin the following morning. An enemy attack was expected at 0500 from Fresnes, and to counter this the 3d Battalion of the 320th was ordered to attack the Germans at that point at 0430. 2d and 3d Battalions of the 137th were to attack at 0500, with the 1st Battalion of the 320th. 1st Battalion, 137th, was ordered to hold its present position, with the 2d Battalion of the 320th in reserve.

During the early morning of September 30 the Regiment received artillery shelling, and at 0600 the 134th Infantry was attacked after a heavy artillery preparation.

The attack began, but progress was slow. The 2d Battalion received heavy mortar fire, and at 1000 their left flank was being infiltrated and they began to drop back to their original positions. Continuing their infiltration and encircling tactics, the Germans moved in behind Company E and opened up, cutting off one entire platoon.

With the left flank open and a 700-yard gap between companies, the 2d Battalion's defenses were in grave danger. The Germans, throwing a barrage of mortar and machine gun fire in front of them, poured through the gap on the left flank of Company E, and moved toward Gremecey. At this point the 133d Engineer Battalion was rushed from Pettincourt and committed to halt the advance. With their assistance, the 2d Battalion held off the Germans until its lines could be organized. It was almost midnight before the lines were again established.

The attack on the 2d Battalion positions proved to be the main German effort of the day. The 3d Battalion was relieved shortly before midnight by the 3d Battalion of the 320th, and moved to Biocourt for a badly needed rest and reorganization period.

On the 30th there were 12 men killed, 51 wounded, and 81 missing. There were 37 prisoners taken,

identified as being from the 1127th and 1128th Infantry Regiments and from the First Army Group.

September was a banner month for individual awards and decorations within the Regiment. As battle progressed deeper into enemy territory the following awards were announced for the month of September. Distinguished Service Cross: The first DSC in the Division was awarded to Captain William C. Miller, Commanding Officer of Company B; this award was presented on the 12th of September for outstanding heroism in the St. Lo area. On the 26th of September like awards were presented to Technical Sergeant Fuller and Staff Sergeant Franz, both of Company E.

The close of the month showed the 137th Infantry making a superior stand in its first assignment in a defensive position. The Regiment was drawing the commendation and praise of both Lieutenant General George S. Patton and Major General Eddy, Corps Commander, as they personally observed the performance of the organization in throwing back everything the Germans could hurl at them in their last desperate effort to stop the Allied forces.

On the morning of October 1 the 137th Infantry was opposed by strong German forces from a point midway between Pettincourt and Chambrey on the Seille River northward to the edge of the Gremecey Forest. Northeast through the Gremecey Forest the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 320th Infantry were in position, tying in with the 134th Infantry southeast of Fresnes. The 134th line extended west to Manhoue. Beyond them, across the Seille, was the 80th Division. On the right the 4th Armored Division was operating south of the Nancy-Saarbrucken Highway. The 133d Combat Engineers remained in defensive position in the 137th sector, after being moved to the ridge east and south of Gremecey the previous day in repulsing the furious German attack in the direction of that town.

Elements of the 6th Armored Division had moved up from Corps reserve near Nancy, and went into an assembly area to the rear of the 137th, in preparation for a coordinated attack on the morning of October 1. Task Force Harris of the 6th Armored had the mission of attacking east from the vicinity of Pettincourt to the line Chambrey-Bois de Chambrey.

The 137th Infantry attacked at 0930 on the 1st, with a mission of re-establishing its lines and, in addition, to take the town of Chambrey, which was still an enemy strong point in spite of air strikes and artillery pounding. Moving over open terrain in the vicinity of Merlinsole, a short distance northwest of Chambrey, Task Force Harris received many casualties from enemy artillery, but the remainder of the Task Force pushed through to the line Chambrey-Bois de Chambrey. The 2d Battalion, 137th Infantry, advanced to the east and by midafternoon was at the southwest edge of Bois de Chambrey. At this point they were joined by Company A from

the 1st Battalion. A concerted attack was launched from the south to clear the Bois de Chambrey of the enemy and to re-establish the defensive position on the east edge of the woods. Company B advanced to the east and at 1700 was fighting in the streets of Chambrey. They captured the town at 2000, after taking 25 prisoners.

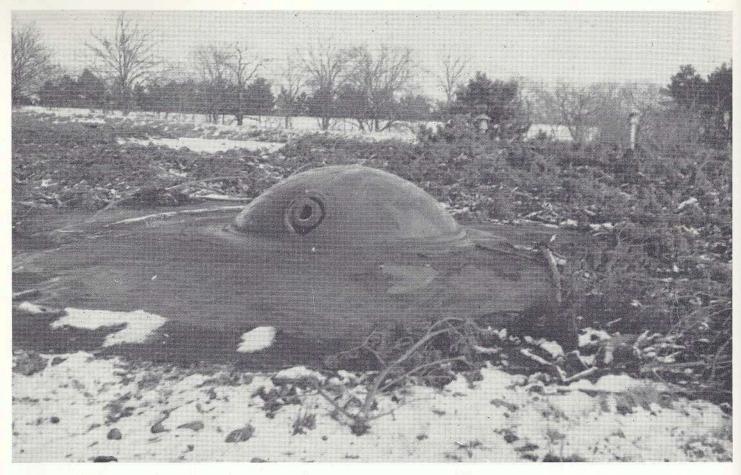
Most of the enemy withdrew about a thousand yards to the east and northeast of Chambrey. Believing an attempt would be made to recapture the town, General Sebree ordered that Chambrey be held at all costs. All of the 1st Battalion anti-tank guns were moved to the Chambrey area, and roadblocks were established on all routes leading into the town.

Meanwhile, tanks from the 737th Tank Battalion were employed to support the 2d Battalion and Company A in their attack on the woods. The mission of the tanks was to pin down the enemy in the woods as infantry advanced north. By 2000 the 2d Battalion, with Company A, had attained their objective along the eastern edge of Bois de Chambrey, and had established a combat outpost between the Bois de Chambrey and the town of Chambrey to maintain contact with Company B during the night.

Casualties in the Regiment for October 1 were six killed, 28 wounded, and five missing. There were 37 enemy prisoners taken, most of them from the 1st Company of the 1127th Infantry, 559th Division. This Company had been left to defend Chambrey to the last man, and had anticipated our attempt to capture the town on that morning, even as to details of the attack.

On October 2 with the Germans withdrawing into the woods toward Chateau Salins, it was believed their next strong point in that direction would be "Hill 300," the high ground south of Coutures. To gather all possible information on enemy strength there, General Sebree called for a volunteer patrol of one officer and two enlisted men to penetrate this enemy territory, and Captain Roger N. Baker and two of his men from Company D accepted the hazardous mission. Leaving at midnight, the party was gone for nearly five hours before returning. In carrying out their mission they had located one enemy artillery battery, and reported many new foxholes dug deep in a creek bed at the foot of the west slope of the German-held hill. A large amount of enemy telephone wire had been found. Our patrol shot one enemy wireman. In addition, the patrol reported what were believed to be ammunition vehicles moving to the area from Chateau Salins.

The 1st and 2d Battalions were alerted for any possible enemy movement but, during most of the day October 2, there was no enemy action to our front. At 1600 on the 2d the Air Force attacked German positions in the woods east and north of Chambrey, with eight bombers strafing the area. There was believed to be an entire regiment still held in that vicinity.



Fort Gambetta—outer defense circle of Metz

The 137th Infantry strengthened its defenses during the day, using barbed wire between Chambrey and positions to the north, and laying extensive minefields on all possible routes of approach. The 60th Engineer Battalion made good use of German minefields north of Chambrey by rearranging the mines already in place there.

On October 2 one man was killed and four were wounded. Two enemy were taken prisoner, one of whom told of having seen the German V-3 one-man flying bomb which was to be used as a new weapon against the Allies.

After a week's defense of the area and after standing off the heaviest German attacks yet encountered by this organization, our main lines of resistance had actually been pushed forward and strengthened. Lieutenant General Patton visited the Regimental Command Post and personally congratulated Colonel Sears on the fine stand of the organization, and decorated the Regimental Commander with the Bronze Star award during his visit.

While the XII Corps was engaged in holding this sector, Allied forces to the north and to the south were approaching positions that had never fallen during World War I. On the left, other elements of the Third Army were attacking Fort Driant, commanding the medieval city of Metz, key to the enemy's Alsatian defenses. On the right, the 79th Infantry Division, part of the XV Corps, was attacking

the Parroy Forest, where the enemy strength was estimated at 5,000 men and 100 tanks.

The heaviest fighting on the West Wall at this time was taking place near Aachen, where the First Army was advancing farther and farther onto German soil, and at Arnheim in Holland, where fifteen Divisions were fighting on a thirty-five mile front. The Ninth Army in the meantime had moved east from the vicinity of Brest for the final push on Germany.

In all sectors there was developing the possibility of unfriendliness of the civilian population. We had now crossed over into Alsace-Lorraine. This the Nazis had always regarded as rightfully theirs, and many German families had moved into the territory. Although some were evacuated with the withdrawal of the Nazi army, the population remaining was necessarily considered doubtful as to sympathy to the Allied cause, and could not be depended upon for the enthusaistic cooperation obtained from French civilians thus far. However, some assistance was gained from Polish workers who had been brought into the territory by the Nazis as forced labor.

On October 3 and 4 the 137th Infantry improved its defensive positions and conducted patrols, with very little enemy action reported. The 3d Battalion moved to Pettincourt from regimental reserve at Bioncourt, after its companies had been restored to full strength by replacements received.

At 1830 on the 4th, the relief of the 137th by elements of the 320th Infantry began, with their 2d Battalion relieving our 2d Battalion, who then assembled in Gremecey. The 1st Battalion was temporarily attached to the 320th and later relieved to move into an assembly area at Attilloncourt shortly before midnight on the 5th.

The enemy continued to shell the area intermittently during October 3, 4 and 5, particularly in Pettincourt and Gremecey, where 105 and 150mm artillery was reported. On the 5th, adjacent units reported shelling of heavy calibre, presumably from German railway guns. Rain which had been threatening for several days began to fall during the morning of the 5th, and continued through the day.

Casualties for October 3d and 5th were as follows: three men wounded on the 3d, one man wounded and two missing on the 4th, and four men killed and one wounded on the 5th. Only two prisoners were taken on the 3d, and none on the 4th or 5th.

The Germans resorted to the use of a public address system to speak across the lines to our troops during the morning of October 5, and later shot propaganda leaflets into our area. The futility of their efforts was shown by the fact that on October 5 and 6 not one man of the 137th Infantry was reported missing.

On October 6 and 7 the Regiment remained in Division reserve. Scattered enemy artillery fire continued, and German planes were reported over the area in small numbers as the weather began to clear. There were no casualties on the 6th, and on the 7th one man was killed, one wounded, and one missing. At 1400 on October 7 the 3d Battalion was attached to the 134th Infantry, and at 2100 moved to their area near Manhoue.

On October 8, with the remainder of the 137th Infantry still in Division reserve, the 3d Battalion moved up with the 1st Battalion of the 134th to a line facing the Germans who were at Chenicourt, Fossieux, and Malaucourt. With a new main line of resistance already established by our forces in the right portion of the Division zone, it was planned to similarly extend the main line of resistance of the left portion by pushing north along the front in that area. The entire 737th Tank Battalion was attached for the operation.

The 3d Battalion moved out at 0615 on the morning of October 8, with Company L riding tanks of Company C, 737th Tank Battalion, driving toward Fossieux from the south, and Company K riding tanks of Company A of the 737th advancing on their left. Company I, on the right, had the mission of capturing the ridge southeast of the town. By 0930 Company L was at the edge of Fossieux, and Company E was east of Arraye-et-Han above the Seille River. A half hour later Company K had cut the Fossieux-Ajoncourt road, and Company I was inside the town of Fossieux. One platoon of Company K

dismounted in the vicinity of the left limiting point of the Division, and the balance of the Company advanced on Fossieux from the southwest. By 1230 Company K had taken over a hundred prisoners, while Company L was mopping up in Fossieux with the assistance of the tanks. Company I in the meantime had gained its objective by 1030, and continued to clean out the area between the Rau d'Osson and Seille River. In taking its objective the 3d Battalion suffered forty-two casualties. This included six killed, 35 wounded and 14 missing. In comparison, the Germans suffered far more heavily. The enemy lost 127 men in prisoners captured alone, more than had been taken by the entire Regiment in any single day since August 21.

Although driven from Fossieux, the Germans remained at Chenicourt, Aulnois, Lemoncourt, and Jallaucourt. On the morning of October 9 they launched a counterattack with tanks and infantry, and re-entered Fossieux from the north. By midafternoon three of the German tanks had been knocked out, but five remained in the town and seven others had moved to the northeast across the Rau d'Osson.

The situation was not relieved until the following morning, when Company K and Company L, together with Company A of the 134th, again drove the Germans from the main part of the town. At 1130 the enemy was holding out only in the northeast corner of Fossieux, and one tank remained in position to the northeast of the town. Company C of the 737th Tank Battalion was brought in to assist in cleaning out the last resistance. By 1745 Fossieux was again cleared of Germans, and bridges on roads leading north and northwest of the town were reported to have been blown up by our Engineers.

During the German counterattack and the recapture of Fossieux our 3d Battalion lost 67 men. On October 9, four were killed, ten wounded, and eight missing. On October 10 there were eight killed, 23 wounded, and 14 missing. Only one prisoner was taken by the Battalion on the 9th, but in retaking the town on the 10th, 45 were captured.

The remainder of the 137th Infantry continued in Division reserve at Attilloncourt and Gremecey during this time. Intermittent shelling was received in their area with little damage. Early on the morning of October 10 the Attilloncourt area received four rounds of heavy artillery, in the vicinity of the Regimental and the 1st Battalion Command Posts. Shell fragments recovered were over two inches wide by one and one-half inches thick and up to fourteen inches long, and indicated that the shells were from 280mm railway guns.

On October 11 our forces held Fossieux, but were under heavy artillery and mortar fire during the day. That night the 3d Battalion was relieved by the 1st Battalion of the 134th and moved to Aboncourt as regimental reserve. There were four men wounded on the 11th, and six Germans were taken prisoner.

The Regiment remained in Division reserve until October 15. During this period the 35th Division continued its defense of the sector. To the south the 26th Division, now operating in the XII Corps, took over part of the 4th Armored Division sector. The 80th Division remained on the left of the 35th, and was in the process of regrouping its forces. Despite overcast skies and intermittent showers during the period, our aircraft remained active, bombing and strafing the woods west of Lemoncourt on the 12th, 13th, and 14th. To the north and east, the rail junction of Benestroff was hit, and a railroad gun believed blown up west of Han-sur-Nied. From October 12 to 15 the 2d Battalion continued to report intermittent shelling at Gremecey, but damage was negligible. The only casualties in the Regiment during this period occurred on October 13, when one man was killed and one wounded.

On October 15 the 137th Infantry relieved the 134th in the left regimental sector of the Division area, beginning at 1300. The 1st Battalion moved its Command Post to the vicinity of Han, and the 2d Battalion CP was moved to near Rhin de Bois. The 3d Battalion, still at Aboncourt, remained at that location in regimental reserve.

From October 16 until the end of the month the 137th Infantry remained in a defensive status, with the regimental sector divided into two portions. The left portion extended from the Seille River east to Fossieux, then southeast along the ridge between Mauaucourt and Manhoue to the west tip of the Jallaucourt Woods. The 1st Battalion occupied this portion of the sector was occupied by the 2d Battalion, and was bounded by the northern edge of the Jallaucourt Woods and the Gremecey Forest to a point south of Fresnes, where the lines of the 320th Infantry began.

With the assistance of the 60th Engineer Battalion, elaborate defense installations were established along our lines, with minefields, booby traps, concertina fencing, and trip flares used extensively. These extended east from the junction of the Seille River and Ruisseau d'Osson. The Ruisseau d'Osson was itself a tank obstacle and added to the strength of the defense. From this ditch east to the Aulnois-Ajoncourt road was laid a 500-yard concertina fence, with anti-personnel mines and trip flares along its length, and a hasty anti-tank minefield behind it.

From the Aulnois road east, 1,600 yards of concertina fence were laid to Fossieux, with anti-tank and anti-personnel mines and trip flares to its front. Farther to the front, four bridges had been blown, blocking all roads leading into Fossieux and Ajoncourt from the north. Around Fossieux 587 anti-tank mines were laid.

From Fossieux southeast, the Engineers laid 4,750 yards of single concertina, to the edge of the

woods. The remainder of our line, extending along the edge of the woods, was heavily booby-trapped, with anti-tank minefields laid on all routes into the woods. Three triple and three double concertina installations were laid behind these installations, to complete an almost unbroken line through the forest.

To the front of this line, Engineers blew up the bridges across the Rau d'Osson on the road southwest of Malaucourt, on the Jallaucourt-Manhoue road, and due south of Jallaucourt.

The Regiment's defensive positions were manned by Company C from the Seille River to the Fossieux area, Company B in the Fossieux area, and Company A on their right to the Jallaucourt Woods. The 2d Battalion's lines were equally divided between Company G on the left and Company E on the right.

The situation called for diligent patrolling activity to our front, and a definite patrolling policy was set down. This policy specified that two patrols would be sent out each night by each front-line battalion, with the Battalion Commander selecting his own patrolling missions when not given a definite assignment from higher headquarters.

Early on the morning of October 17 Company E fired on a German patrol which set off a trip-wire flare to their front. Mortar fire on the area was believed to have inflicted casualties on the Germans. The Regiment began to receive artillery fire during the morning of the 17th, with Fossieux and its vicinity shelled from long range. Company B reported shelling in Fossieux several times during the day, and the 2d Battalion received 120mm mortar fire southeast of Jallaucourt at 1450. At 1840 they again reported shelling, with eighteen to twenty rounds believed to have been fired into their area from tanks. Later in the evening the 1st Battalion reported twenty rounds of mortar fire from the direction of Jallaucourt. During the evening the Germans began sending up flares, and this continued all during the night. Seventeen flares were observed during the night, mostly in the vicinity of Malaucourt, Jallaucourt, and Aulnois. The Regiment had only one casualty during the day, one man being wounded by enemy artillery fire.

On October 17 the 137th Infantry completed its 100th day of combat. In that 100 days the Regiment had pushed almost completely across France, from Omaha Beach through the battle of St. Lo and the Mortain Forest, the capture of Orleans and the liberation of Sens, the crossings of the Moselle and the Meurthe Rivers, and the battle of the Champenoux Forest, to its present defensive stand in the bend of the Seille River.

During that 100 days the Regiment had suffered 2,353 casualties. Of these, 441 had been killed, 1,680 wounded, and 232 missing in action. Many of these wounded had already been returned to duty with their organization, and with ample replacements received, the strength of the Regiment stood at 155 officers and 3,128 enlisted men, exceeding that of

July 10 when the 137th Infantry first went into position above St. Lo. Of the original 156 officers who had departed from Bodmin and Newquay with the Regiment, 96 were still with the organization. Of these, eight had returned to duty after being wounded in action in earlier engagements.

At this time the eyes of the world were turned to Aachen, where the beleaguered German garrison had been given a final ultimatum to surrender before 1050 on October 18. This refused, the First Army, already surrounding the city, began their final assault upon that German stronghold. At 1330 on October 20, Aachen fell, the first major German city taken by the American forces.

During the period of October 18, 19, and 20, the 137th Infantry was encountering very little enemy action. The 1st Battalion received artillery fire on the 18th, but no casualties resulted.

On October 18 and 19 the 137th Infantry, 320th Infantry, one battalion of the 134th Infantry, and several artillery, tank, and TD units made preparations for possible isolation from the Division CP and MSR's during the week to follow. Sixteen miles east of our area, near Dieuze, was the Etang de Lindre, a large artificial lake formed by the damming of the Seille River at Lindre Basse. By blowing out the earth dam there, the Seille Valley could be flooded through German-held Sallonnes, on through Chambrey and circling our own area including Alincourt, Aboncourt, Manhoue, and Ajoncourt, and beyond into German territory again to the north.

The Germans controlled the lake and the dam, in a position to release the impounded water at any time. The flooding of the valley, coordinated with an enemy attack of sufficient force, might have resulted in the trapping of considerable American troops in the bend of the river. However, at the present time the enemy was known to be incapable of attacking in such force in this sector, and an immediate inundation of the area would be to their disadvantage, bogging them down at their strong points at Dieuze, Marsal, and Vic-sur-Seille, in addition to removing the possibility of a future flood at a time of their own selection.

It was planned that our own Air Force bomb the dam, and although engineering estimates indicated that our bridges at Brin and Manhoue could still be used at the highest stage of the flood, precautions were taken by the Regiment in case the flood waters did reach a stage that would cut off our forces from the west side of the river. A four-day supply of rations was brought in, and the Regiment drew 2,600 gallons of gasoline for the emergency. Sufficient ammunition to bring the quota up to two basic loads each of cannon and 81mm HE ammunition, and one and one-half basic loads on all other ammunition was obtained. Additional Engineer supplies were dumped on the east side of the river. The Regimental Surgeon drew extra medical supplies, and one collect-

ing company was established on each side of the river. Amphibious 2½-ton "Ducks" and boats were made available for use in crossing the swollen river.

Shortly after noon on October 20, a formation of fighter-bombers flew east above the Seille River to the huge reservoir, and at 1300 carried out their bombing mission, scoring two direct hits on the dam, and two near misses on the sluice gates. At 1600 two squadrons returned to the site to carry out further demolition of the dam. A 50-foot gap was blasted in the western end of the dam, releasing the impounded water in sufficient force to flood the town of Dieuze by 1950. Beyond Dieuze the flood began to spread out over the surrounding lowlands and moved west toward Marsal. It was estimated that no noticeable raise would reach our area until the following day.

The enemy's artillery activity began early on the morning of the 20th, and the 2d Battalion received ten rounds of 88 fire at 0645. Two direct hits were scored on the Battalion CP, and communications were disrupted, but no casualties resulted. The 1st Battalion reported four rounds in the vicinity of their CP at 0700. At 1335 twelve duds in succession landed in front of the 2d Battalion's positions. The Regiment had no casualties on October 18 or 19, but on October 20 one man was killed and two wounded by artillery fire, and three men were missing in action.

The flood moved down the Seille Valley as far as Vic-sur-Seille on the 21st, slowing down considerably as the waters backed up into the many tributaries of the river. It reached Pettincourt on the following day, and moved slowly on past Attilloncourt and Brin.

The skies began to clear on the 22d, after rain had fallen intermittently for most of the past week. The dirt roads in the sector had already been churned into a mass of deep mud, and water in foxholes and slit trenches added to the discomfort of the troops. While the 35th Division front remained comparatively quiet on the 22d, elements of the 26th Division, on our right, attacked toward Bezange and Moncourt in an effort to straighten their lines. During the day the 2d Battalion spotted a battery of 88mm self-propelled guns north of Fresnes, and called for an air strike on the position.

At 1700 the 3d Battalion began relief of the 1st Battalion in the left portion of the regimental sector. Company K moved into former Company G positions, adjacent to the Seille River. Company L took over the Fossieux area, relieving Company B, and on their right Company I moved into the positions of Company A. Relief was completed at 2200, and the 1st Battalion reverted to regimental reserve.

The Seille River flood reached its highest stage in our sector late on the 22d. The bridges at Brin and Manhoue were not affected by the high water, and normal traffic across the river continued. During the morning of October 23 the river began to fall at Pettincourt, as the flood crest began to move north into German territory on its way to empty into the Moselle River at Metz.

The night of October 22 the Regiment increased its patrols to six, and the activities of two patrols extended to include the laying of mines on roads behind the enemy lines. One patrol received mortar fire north of Fossieux, and two others contacted an enemy patrol of about fifteen men northwest of Malaucourt. The Regiment had one man missing in action on the 23d, their first loss since October 20.

On October 24 the 134th Infantry relieved the 320th in the right sector of the Division defense area, and the 137th remained in the left sector. Our night patrols again worked far behind the enemy lines and laid mines on their main roads. Battalion patrols made use of illuminating flares for observation purposes during the night. One 3d Battalion patrol drew enemy mortar fire northwest of Fossieux, but received no casualties.

The Division rear echelon and service units in Nancy reported shelling on the morning of the 24th between 0300 and 0430. Seventeen rounds of large calibre artillery, believed to be from railroad guns, landed in the city and across the river in St. Max. No damage to military installations was reported. The only shelling reported in the 137th area on October 24 was ten rounds of 120mm mortar fire from northwest of Jallaucourt falling in the Company F area.

Few prisoners were being taken by any of the units along the Corps front, and that mission became a high priority among our nightly patrols. The determination of our patrols in this respect was apparent during the night of October 24, when one 3d Battalion party attempted to enter enemyheld Malaucourt, intent upon seizing and bringing back a German soldier. This patrol had reached this point when the first guns opened up on them. The patrol was forced to withdraw after two of its members had been wounded. Both of the wounded men were evacuated safely to our lines. The 2d Battalion again sent patrols toward the Jallaucourt-Fresnes road, and reported that route to be strongly outposted by the enemy. Repeated attempts were made by one patrol to approach the road at several points, and each attempt drew enemy arms fire.

On October 25, 120mm mortar fire was again reported in the Company F area, from the vicinity of Jallaucourt. At 2305 the 2d Battalion CP area received five rounds of 105mm artillery, the only other shelling reported in the Regiment during the day. A five-day psychological warfare drive was begun on the 25th, and during the afternoon ten rounds of safe-conduct leaflets were fired over the German lines. The drive also called for the use of the public address system to announce the news, dressed up psychologically, to the German soldiers.

Our patrols again ranged far behind the enemy lines, but were still unsuccessful in their attempts to

capture prisoners. Enemy patrols were also active, and shortly before midnight on the 26th infiltrated into our area southeast of Manhoue, wounding one man of Anti-Tank Company.

During the early morning of October 27 there was increased activity of horse-drawn wagons and carts in the Juree Woods, in Jallaucourt and Malaucourt, and on the road between. Repeated reports of horse carts along the German lines during the past few nights indicated that this was the principal means of transportation being used by the Germans in this sector.

At 0515 enemy smoke shells were fired into the draw to the front of Company I and Company L, but there was no further action by the Germans in the area.

On the 27th the 1st Battalion relieved the 2d at 1300, with Company A moving into the right portion of the Battalion's lines in the Gremecey Forest, and Company B taking over on the left.

Our artillery again fired leaflet concentrations across the German lines during the day. Seven concentrations were fired into the area from Fresnes to Aulnois. At 1705 the enemy again began to lay smoke to the front of Company I and Company L, and in fifteen minutes the entire draw between Fossieux and Malaucourt was covered with smoke. Again there was no further action by the Germans in that area. At 2135 on the 27th Company K wounded and captured a German paratrooper behind their lines. The prisoner claimed to have been hiding the past weeks in our rear areas, and was trying to get back to his own lines at the time he was captured.

At 0940 on the 28th two Russians walked into the 1st Battalion area and reported themselves as prisoners who had escaped from the Germans. Three of them had slipped through German territory all the way from Metz, where the Nazis had taken them to work, but one of their party had been killed in coming through the lines of Fresnes.

On October 29 the Germans again shelled the 3d Battalion at 0300 the following morning, with ten rounds landing south of Manhoue. Again at 0330 the Battalion reported shelling, with five rounds of 105mm received near Ajoncourt.

Our patrols were again behind the enemy lines, chiefly on the hunt for prisoners. Lieutenant Constantine Mims, leading a patrol from Company K. returned at 0600 after having encountered two Germans at an outpost south of Aulnois. The Germans were evidently caught off guard, and did not have their weapons immediately at hand. Both withdrew far back into a covered dugout, and refused to surrender. Hoping to capture the men alive if at all possible, Lieutenant Mims entered the dugout and attempted to drag the unwilling Germans out. Within the close confines of the narrow dugout this proved to be very difficult, and it was decided to resort to some other means to take the men. Both

were screaming and shouting, and one became hostile to such an extent that it was necessary to shoot him. The patrol then tore the top off the dugout, and Lieutenant Mims again went after the remaining German. Using Judo methods, he forced his burly captive out into the open, and the patrol started back with their prisoner. However, the German's excessive shouting and other noise had evidently been heard by his own men, and in a short distance the patrol was fired on by enemy machine guns. With their prisoner still with them, the patrol worked their way a few yards farther, and then released smoke grenades. The enemy again opened up with machine gun fire. The prisoner took this chance to turn and dash back through the smoke, in the face of his own men's fire, to make his get-away. Our patrol slipped over the ridge to their front and returned intact. Two men of the Regiment were reported wounded on the 29th, both from artillery fire.

At 0130 on October 30 Company K again captured an enemy prisoner, from the vicinity of Aulnois. The German told of a new anti-tank gun called the "Pupchen" in Aulnois. This was described as a compact and easily-handled weapon with a barrel about a meter long, effective against tanks at two hundred meters, and firing a shell similar to a mortar. It could also be used as an anti-personnel weapon with an effective range of seven meters.

The day was of special significance for forty men and four officers of the Regiment who gained a well-earned trip from the combat area to Paris, as that city was placed "on limits" to soldiers and 48-hour passes authorized in limited numbers to combat troops. The first of those passes in the 137th Infantry were restricted to Privates and Privates 1st Class among the enlisted men, and platoon leaders among officers. At 0600 on the 30th, two men from each company of the Regiment, with four officers departed for the French capital.

During the day two volunteers from Company C, Staff Sergeant William L. Smith and Sergeant Robert L. Deem, determined to bring in a German prisoner, obtained permission from the Regimental Commander to attempt to slip into Jallaucourt under cover of darkness, then await an opportunity to pick off one of the Germans in the town. The two men circled halfway around Jallaucourt and approached from the northwest, but at the edge of the town were discovered and fired upon by the enemy, and were forced to pull out and return to our lines.

On the right of the 35th Division, the 26th Division had succeeded in driving the enemy from the Moncourt Woods and were continuing their defense of the area south of Highway 74. The 80th Division remained on our left. The water level of the Seille continued to fall, and the river was back within its banks as far north as Ajoncourt.

As the month of October ended, the Regiment lost its capable and well-liked Regimental Com-

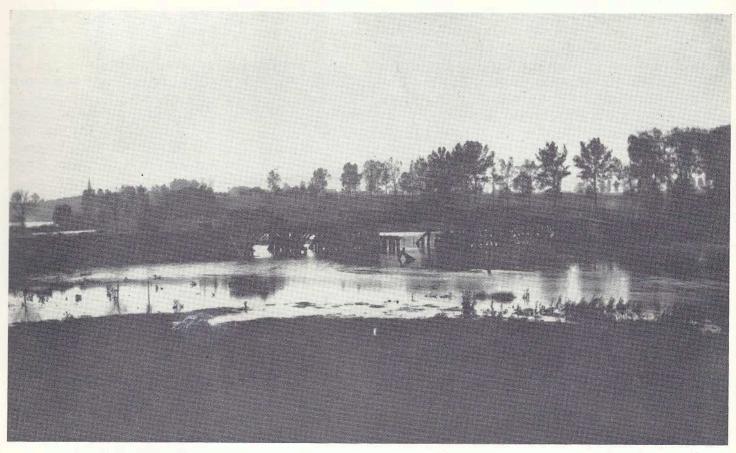
mander of the past three months. Colonel Robert L. Sears, who had assumed command of the 137th Infantry north of St. Lo on July 25, received orders which took him away from the Regiment that he had led all the way through its brilliant sweep across France. At midnight on October 31, command of the 137th Infantry was officially assumed by Colonel William S. Murray, formerly of the 5th Infantry Division, already thoroughly familiar with the present campaign and a capable leader for the future operations of the Regiment.

November first found the 137th Infantry in its sixth week in a defensive status, as XII Corps continued its mission of defending that portion of the Third Army front from Cheminot, ten miles south of Metz, to the Marne-Rhine Canal near Xunes, 20 miles east of Nancy. The 137th, in position from Ajoncourt to a point near Chambrey, was bounded on the left by the 134th Infantry and on the right by the 26th Division. Colonel William S. Murray assumed command of the 137th Infantry at 0001 on November 1, just one hundred days after his predecessor, Colonel Robert Sears, had taken over the Regiment in its first days of combat.

Within the sector, the 2d Battalion came out of reserve on November 1 and relieved the 3d Battalion on the line from Ajoncourt through Fossieux and southeast to the tip of the Jallaucourt Woods, following the ridge south of enemy-held Malaucourt and Jallaucourt. Relief was completed at 2130, with Companies E, F, and G on the line from right to left. To the east, the 1st Battalion remained in position, occupying the Jallaucourt Woods and the Gremecey Forest to a point south of Fresnes, where they tied in with the 134th Infantry. At 2150, 88 fire began falling in the draw east of Fossieux, and at 2205 eight rounds fell on the south edge of the town. The 2d Battalion, which had just moved into the area. lost five men, of which two were killed and three wounded.

The Germans were feeling the force of our own artillery also during the day. Upon request of our 1st Battalion, the 127th Field Artillery Battalion fired into Jallaucourt with 155mm fuze delay shells. Buildings were wrecked, fires were started, and an ammunition dump was believed hit. In direct support of the Regiment, the guns of Company C, 737th Tank Battalion, fired seven missions during the day. Late in the evening one of our men, returning from repairing an anti-personnel minefield, was wounded when he ran into a booby trap, bringing the total casualties for November 1 to two killed and five wounded. These were the first men killed in the Regiment since October 20.

During the afternoon, the 319th Infantry (80th Division), across the Seille River on our left, attacked with a mission of clearing the enemy from west of the river in the Abaucourt-Letricourt area. Their attack began at 1300, supported by tanks and tank destroyers. By 1600 their 2d Battalion had



Rau d'Osson Manhoue, where the Second Battalion crossed to Malaucourt

cleaned the Germans out of Letricourt, and the 3d Battalion was mopping up at Abaucourt. In that three hours' fighting the 319th took 140 prisoners. With the Germans cleared from the loop of the Seille River, the Regiment left small groups in observation of all known river crossings and its main force returned to its former defensive position.

On the morning of November 2 patrols returned with reports of much activity near Fresnes, and across the creek from Fossieux. A 3d Battalion patrol cut enemy communication lines east of Fossieux, and radioed Battalion Headquarters to direct mortar fire upon what was believed to be a mine-laying crew.

On November 3, patrols returned from missions of inspecting bridge sites to our front, near Aulnois, Fossieux, Malaucourt, and Jallaucourt. Five bridges were examined for possibility of use by tanks and trucks. Of these, one was reported as possibly strong enough to hold a 21/2-ton truck, and it was believed that the bridge northeast of Fossieux, constructed of reinforced concrete with ten-inch I-beams, could be repaired sufficiently to hold tanks. All other bridges had been damaged beyond use. Showers fell intermittently during the day, and all was quiet to our front until after dark, when enemy patrols became active. One Company A outpost fired on a German patrol shortly after 1900. At 2025 Company E reported a patrol to its front, but rifle fire forced the Germans to withdraw. Our wires were out in the Company A area at about 2200,

and linemen sent out to repair the break contacted an enemy patrol of five or six men behind our lines. The wire crew fired on the Germans, and the patrol fired back, then made a getaway. Again on the 3d, there were no casualties in the 137th Infantry.

Patrols sent out on the night of the 5th were very successful. German troops in Jallaucourt were deprived of their nightly hot meal when a strong patrol from Company C made their way to the Malaucourt-Jallaucourt road and there ambushed a horse-drawn kitchen wagon coming from Fresnes. One prisoner was taken, and he reported that his company was receiving one hot meal each night, eating concentrated food during the day. The prisoner revealed that his company consisted of only 80, commanded by a twenty-year-old lieutenant. He reported that the morale of the troops, including noncommissioned officers, was very poor.

Rains swelled the Seille River to flood stage, and for the second time in two weeks the valley was inundated as far as Ajoncourt. The 60th Engineers, working constantly on the roads in the sector, kept all routes open in spite of the mud and high water. Company C of the 737th Tank Battalion was relieved by Company B of the same organization in direct support of the 137th Infantry on the 6th. During their last day in support of the Regiment, Company C fired 250 rounds of artillery in performing fifteen firing missions.

Elsewhere on the Western Front, the clearing of the Scheldt Estuary, which would make available to



Malaucourt, France, taken November 8th by the Second Battalion

the Allies the great port of Antwerp, was almost completed. In Holland, nearly all of the German Fifteenth Army had been driven back across the Maas, and the Allies held all but one of the bridges across that river.

After its short period of comparative inactivity, the Third Army prepared to resume the offensive in the Metz-Nancy area, to encircle the German fortress city of Metz, and to continue the drive on the Siegfried Line. At 1330 on November 7, Division Field Order No. 26 was passed down to the 137th Infantry, and the Regiment, after more than six weeks in a defensive status, again prepared to attack.

In the new operation, XII Corps was to attack to the northeast to seize rail and road facilities in the vicinity of Falkenburg, and prepared to continue the advance to the northeast and seize a bridgehead east of the Rhine River. Within the Corps, the 26th, 35th, and 80th Infantry Divisions were to attack from their present positions, with the 26th operating on the right of the 35th, and the 80th, with the 4th Armored operating in the zone of the 35th, passing through the west and north portion of our Division zone after our troops had secured a bridgehead across the Rau d'Osson.

The plan called for continuous, close fighter-bomber support, and five additional artillery battalions were made available to the 35th Division for the operation. Within the 35th Division, the 137th Infantry was to operate on the left, and the 320th on the right. The 134th remained in Division reserve at the beginning of the operation.

The initial mission of the 137th Infantry was to attack to the north and northeast, secure a bridge-head across the Rau d'Osson, and seize the first objective, five miles to the northeast of our present position, cutting the main highway between Chateau-Salins and Metz in the vicinity of Laneuveville. In direct support of the 137th Infantry was the 737th Tank Battalion less one company, Company B of the 60th Engineers, and Company A of the 654th Tank Destroyers.

The Regiment attacked at 0600 on the morning of November 8, after a heavy artillery preparation. The 2d Battalion, on the left, encountered the first resistance, one enemy machine gun, at 0611. On the right, the 1st Battalion attacked Jallaucourt, and by 0720 had one platoon of Company C in the town. Two platoons were pinned down west of the town by heavy enemy fire, and Company A was sent into the fight for the shell-wrecked village. The Battalion was also receiving fire from German positions in the Juree Woods, which hampered operations to the east of Jallaucourt.

In the 2d Battalion sector, two platoons of Company E reached the edge of Malaucourt by 0750, but to their left Company G was having difficulty in crossing the swollen Rau d'Osson, where flood waters of the Seille River had backed up into that stream. By 1000 all of Company G were across and on the ridge northwest of Malaucourt. At the same time, Company E was in the town, had cleaned out four buildings, and was working its way on through, house by house.



Jallacourt taken November 8, 1945, by First Battalion

The Engineers completed a bridge south of Jallaucourt by 1040, after being held up part of the morning by enemy machine gun fire on the site. At 1130 our armored support began to cross, losing one tank just after it had cleared the bridge. Shortly after noon eight tanks were moving in on Jallaucourt, with Company B attacking from the southeast. By 1240 the 1st Battalion had two full companies in the town, and heavy fighting was in progress. Steady rain set in shortly after noon, and our air support was called off during the afternoon.

By midafternoon the enemy had been cleared from all but the north edge of Jallaucourt, and at 1500 the 3d Battalion was ordered to move companies to both Malaucourt and Jallaucourt to relieve troops there. At 1700 the 1st Battalion was in possession of Jallaucourt, but the Germans were still battling between the town and the Juree Woods, and still occupied the latter.

A second bridge was completed by the Engineers at 1610, south of Malaucourt, and at 1630 Company F crossed on tanks and moved into the town, where Company E was still engaged. Direct artillery fire was received, and the lead tank was knocked out. The remaining tanks fanned out, and Company F dismounted and proceeded on foot. At 1750 both

Company F and Company E were on the north edge of the town, and at this time orders were received from the Division Commander to hold up the attack at 1800, consolidate positions and outpost security, and to prepare to attack the following morning at 0600.

Fighting continued in the Juree Woods, however, until midnight. Company A, supported by Company A of the 737th Tank Battalion, finally cleared the enemy from the woods, then prepared to resume the attack from that point the following morning. The 3d Battalion, less Company I and Company K, was directed to move to Jallaucourt at 0500 on the 9th. Company I was sent to occupy Malaucourt, and Company K to occupy Jallaucourt at 1600 on the 8th when the 3d Battalion was ordered to move troops to those towns. On this first day of the new offensive, the 137th Infantry took 134 prisoners, most of them from the 1125th Regiment. Our casualties on the same day were six killed and 76 wounded.

The Regiment resumed the attack at 0600 on the 9th, with the 1st Battalion striking toward Oriocourt, two miles northeast of Jallaucourt. The 2d Battalion, leaving Company I to clean out the last resistance in Malaucourt, moved north, and at 0755



Member of Reconnaissance Company, 654th TD Battalion, attached to the 137th Infantry, shown with his captured German Paratroop motor bike which he picked up in the drive northeast of Nancy, France

Company G called for lifting of our artillery fire on the Aulnois Woods and attacked German positions there. Company E and Company F followed closely. Moderate resistance was encountered 150 yards inside the woods, but the Battalion advanced steadily during the morning, and at 1400 had cleared the woods. The Battalion then reorganized and moved toward Lemoncourt.

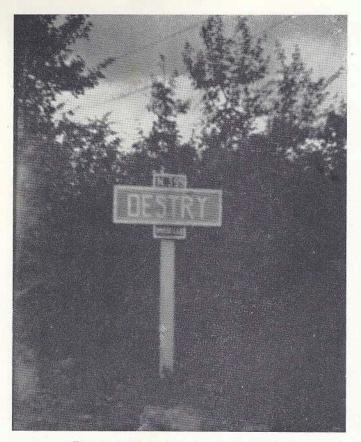
The 1st Battalion, in the meantime, was making steady progress to the northeast, and by 1400 captured Oriocourt, taking 150 prisoners and a battery of enemy field artillery. Turning to the east toward Laneuveville, the Battalion drove on toward the initial regimental objective. At 1415 the 2d Battalion captured Lemoncourt, taking fifty prisoners, and by 1700 Company F and Company G were moving into Delme, two kilometers to the north. The German withdrawal was becoming more and more hurried, and as our forces overran one enemy position after another, the prisoner total mounted rapidly. The Germans were surrendering in large groups, and during the afternoon it became evident that this would be the largest number of prisoners yet taken in a single day by the 137th Infantry.

The 2d Battalion attack on Delme resulted in the capture of that town at 1915. The Germans with-

drew to the east, and began shelling the town heavily with mortar and artillery fire. To the south, the 1st Battalion had crossed the Metz-Chateau Salins railroad and highway, and by dark had seized Laneuveville, then occupied the high ground to the east of the town. This placed the Regiment on its initial objective, after two days of fighting. In regimental reserve, the 3d Battalion, assembled at Oriocourt, prepared to follow the 1st Battalion in their next move.

The 4th Armored Division moved up during the day, crossing the bridge at Malaucourt, and passing through Lemoncourt. Elements of the Division then thrust beyond our lines into Viviers, but during the night the Germans retook that town, capturing two ambulances and four wounded Americans. Prisoners taken by the Regiment during the day reached the record-breaking total of 445. Morale was very low among a large number of those taken. Many of them, wet and shivering from the cold rain which fell intermittently during the day, were generous in divulging information on their own forces. Our casualties were five killed, 24 wounded, and four missing in action.

The Regiment attacked at 0700 on the 10th, with the 1st Battalion jumping off from the high ground



Destry, taken by the Second Battalion

east of Laneuveville toward Fonteny, two kilometers to the northeast. The 2d Battalion set out to recapture Viviers, and to occupy the woods south of that town. From the Delme-Donjeaux area the Battalion moved east to the woods, leaving Company G to clean out that spot. The remainder of the Battalion, operating with the armor, attacked Viviers from the south shortly before 1100. Here they met stiff resistance from the Germans who had moved back into the town during the night. In addition to small arms fire from the town, the Battalion began receiving long range artillery fire from the east. At 1245 they had not yet been able to enter the town, and our tanks were having difficulty in maneuvering off the roads due to the mud.

The 1st Battalion moved to the ridge overlooking Fonteny without opposition, then ran into heavy small arms fire from the tip of the Chateau-Salins Forest. The Germans also had tanks in the vicinity, with two reported moving from Fonteny into the woods at 0955, and four others just south of town. Tank destroyers of the 4th Armored moved up to meet this threat. At 1335 two enemy tanks were reported northwest of Fonteny, moving to the rear between the 1st and 2d Battalions, and soon after this number had increased to six. One anti-tank gun and reinforced platoon was rushed to Delme by the 3d Battalion. No further reports of enemy armor were received until 1730, when the 1st Battalion received fire from five tanks north of Fonteny.

The 2d Battalion, after fighting most of the afternoon, had Company F and one platoon from

Company E in Viviers by 1600. An hour later, two full companies were in the town, and fighting was still going on. At 1800 Viviers was aflame and the 2d Battalion occupied most of the town. Fifty Germans had been taken prisoner and many more wounded or killed. The four wounded Americans captured by the Germans when they had retaken the town the day before were rescued, and one of the two ambulances recovered.

The 1st Battalion was unable to take Fonteny during the day, and the Regiment was again ordered to hold up the attack at 1800. Extensive patrolling during the night was ordered, with an SOP distance of one and one-half miles if necessary.

Adjacent units were progressing on schedule. On the right, the 320th Infantry was advancing through the Chateau-Salins Forest and the 134th was attacking Gerbecourt. The 26th Division captured the city of Chateau-Salins during the afternoon. On the left, the 319th Infantry moved into Tincry.

There were 125 prisoners taken on the 10th, most of them being from the 43d Fortress Battalion and the 110th Panzer Regiment of the 11th Panzer Division. This unit had left the Metz vicinity on two hours' notice and had been committed in the Chateau-Salins Forest east of Laneuveville. Casualties in the 137th during the day were 11 men killed, 34 wounded, and five missing.

The attack was resumed at 0800 on November 11, and the 2d Battalion quickly cleared Viviers of the Germans left there and at 0830 moved northeast toward the Serres Woods. An early patrol from the 1st Battalion revealed that the Germans had not withdrawn from Fonteny during the night, but remained in considerable strength and were dug in on the high ground behind the town and in the woods to the southwest. The 1st Battalion again attacked the stronghold, but were held off until 1330, when Company A got into the town. By 1500 much of Fonteny had been cleared, and a column of CCB of the 4th Armored moved through the town, heading toward Oron.

The 2d Battalion in the meantime began to clear the way toward Oron through the Serres Woods. With tanks in support they moved from Viviers to the edge of the woods, and by noon two companies, E and G, were in the woods.

At 1530 Company F, with Company B of the 737th Tank Battalion supporting, moved as a task force to seize Faxe at the southeast corner of the woods. Running into an anti-tank ditch west of the village, the armor was unable to move up to attack, and heavy machine gun fire forced the task force to withdraw. Our artillery was then called on to shell German positions at that point. It was evident that a stronger force would be necessary to take the town, and plans were made for a renewed attack on the following morning, with Company K assisting Company F.

In the Serres Woods, Company E and Company G advanced steadily until 1600, when they were held up by two pillboxes and two tanks protecting the road junction halfway through the woods. Tank destroyers were brought up, and at 1815 this resistance was knocked out and the two companies pushed on to the road junction. By dark the 1st Battalion had taken three-fourths of Fonteny, but were receiving continuous mortar and artillery fire, and the casualties in the Battalion were heavy. Plans were made for the 3d Battalion to relieve the 1st in Fonteny before daylight the following morning, and for the 1st Battalion to assemble in Laneuveville in regimental reserve. The Regiment again held up the attack for the night, and made ready to continue the following morning. On the 11th the Regiment lost seven killed, 67 wounded, and seven missing. A total of 43 German prisoners were taken during the day.

The 3d Battalion, less Company E, relieved the 1st Battalion in the Fonteny area at 0400 on the morning of November 12, and the 1st assembled at Laneuveville in regimental reserve.

The fresh troops of Companies I and L attacked at 0600 to clear Fonteny of the enemy, and by 0800 they were mopping up in the town. Three Mark V tanks, apparently in good shape, were captured.

Company K, in the meantime, was attacking Faxe, with Company F. They entered the town at 0730, and by 0810 Faxe was clear of Germans. However, they left the town heavily mined and

booby-trapped. At 0845 Company F moved on out of Faxe to the Serres Woods, to rejoin the 2d Battalion. Meanwhile, Company G had patrolled the woods almost to its north edge, and reported no enemy. The Battalion moved on through the woods, then dashed to the east and seized Oron. Our troops advanced on the town with such speed that the Germans were unable to carry out planned demolition of the bridge across the Niad Francais Rau west of Oron, and that highly important crossing was captured undamaged. In Oron, 150 prisoners were captured, members of a work battalion, mostly older men of decrepit appearance.

The 3d Battalion, moving cross-country toward Chateau Brehain, advanced rapidly, meeting light resistance consisting only of a covering force. By 1100 the leading elements of the Battalion were half-way to the Chateau-Salins Forest, and an hour later had begun to skirt the north edge of the woods. Advancing on Chateau Brehain swiftly, they captured the town at 1400, taking 16 prisoners. The 3d Battalion then pushed forward and seized Brehain just prior to dark.

The 1st Battalion left Laneuveville and followed the 3d into Chateau Brehain. At this town a new situation had confronted the occupying forces. Up until this time in the present engagement, civilians had left the battle areas as the Germans withdrew. However, at Chateau Brehain civilians had remained in the town, and it was necessary to place these people, 80 in number, under the supervision of the Civil

Baronville, taken by Third Battalion



Affairs Officer for evacuation to the rear. Our casualties on November 12 were 12 killed, 54 wounded and six missing. Including the members of the work battalion captured at Oron, a total of 179 prisoners were captured during the day.

On November 13 enemy resistance stiffened, as the 137th Infantry hit a strong defense line from the woods north of Villers-sur-Neid to Achain. Jumping off at 0800, the 3d Battalion attacked northeastward, while to the north the 2d Battalion advanced on Villers-sur-Neid. Both received heavy artillery and mortar fire immediately after jumping off. After two hours' fighting, Company G pushed on into Villers, and at 1130 two companies were in the town. Street fighting was in progress until shortly after noon, when our forces cleared the town of Germans. The 2d Battalion then reorganized and continued the attack toward Marthille, a mile to the east, which they entered at 1530 and captured at 1700 after a fight. After taking Marthille, the Battalion quickly moved on Destry, two miles northeast.

The 3d Battalion, just outside of Brehain, ran into small arms fire from the hill to the east. However, engaging the enemy with frontal fire, the Battalion slipped sufficient troops around the hill to get behind the German positions, capturing 25 of their number and forcing the remainder to pull out. Moving northeast, the forward elements of the Battalion reached the crossroads midway between Marthille and Achain where the Battalion ran into strong German positions to the left of the highway. These positions were immediately attacked and taken, but the Battalion was then brought under fire from the high ground to the northeast. Again attacking, our forces dislodged the Germans from that point, putting the Battalion within two kilometers of Baronville. Here they held up until the following morning.

The 2d Battalion, in their attempt to capture Destry, reached the ridge south of the town at 1700, where they were stopped by heavy mortar and artillery fire. With CCB of the 4th Armored Division moving into the area, an attack on Destry the following morning with that unit was decided upon.

The 1st Battalion, still in reserve, moved from Chateau Brehain to Marthille at 1600. This day was the coldest yet, and during the night snow fell over the entire sector.

Ninety-seven prisoners were taken during the day, bringing the total for the first six days of the campaign to 1,023. Our own casualties dropped on this day, with 30 men reported wounded and none killed or missing.

The 2d and 3d Battalions resumed the attack at 0900 on the 14th. The 3d, moving on Baronville from the southwest, encountered no opposition until 1020, when they were met by heavy machine gun fire on the ridge in front of the town. Mortar fire and direct artillery fire were received by the Battalion as they maneuvered to attack the stronghold.

The Germans were defending the town stubbornly, with tanks and infantry, and held out from dug-in positions until late afternoon, despite repeated assaults by our troops. The Battalion finally broke through at 1600, with house-to-house fighting again developing as the last resistance was cleared from the town. At 1710 the 3d Battalion reported Baronville clear.

Meanwhile, the 2d Battalion had attacked Destry, with CCB of the 4th Armored. However, the armor was held up one kilometer south of the town until almost noon by enemy artillery. Shortly after noon the tanks entered the town, and Companies E and G fought their way in at the same time. Here again house-to-house fighting resulted, and the town was not fully occupied by our troops until late afternoon. Securing the town, the 2d Battalion held up for the night but sent patrols to the front as far as the railroad two kilometers northeast, which was the Division objective.

Again, civilians were found to have remained in the besieged towns. The 3d Battalion alone found two hundred civilians in their occupation of Baronville.

Casualties in the Regiment were two killed and 29 wounded on the 14th. There were 34 prisoners taken. Prisoners captured during the past two days gave the information that they were recently brought from the Polish front and placed in Marthille, Baronville, and other points in this sector; that they had been given no orientation on the situation, only ordered to hold these towns at all cost.

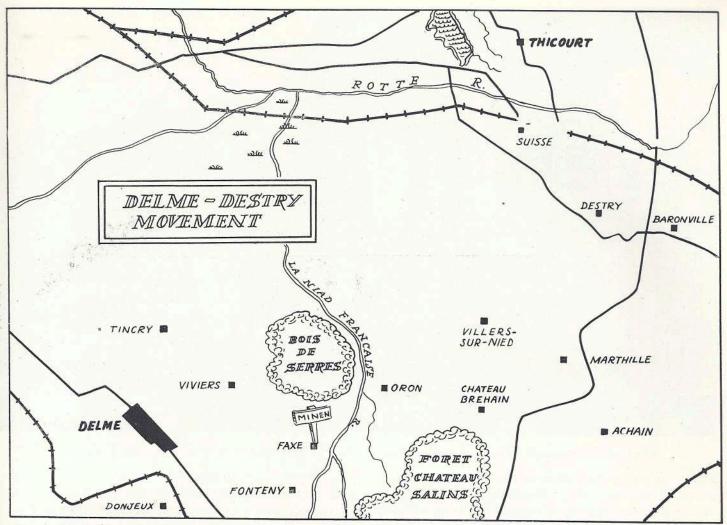
On November 15 the 137th Infantry, nearing the Division objective, continued the attack for the eighth consecutive day. Both 2d and 3d Battalions moved to seize the Metz-Benestroff railway in their zone.

Jumping off at 0900, the 2d Battalion was the first to reach the railroad, and moved onto the objective at 1035. The 3d Battalion, in their zone, had to clean out the Grand Bois, which they entered at 1000 and cleared by noon.

After moving onto the objective from the woods, the 3d Battalion was given an additional mission of advancing, seizing and holding Hill 264, north of Etang DeMutche, and overlooking the railroad. The Battalion jumped off for its new objective at 1400, and at 1635 occupied the hill in the face of heavy artillery fire. The Battalion Commander, instituting a rotation system for the night, left one platoon from each company to secure the hill, the remainder of the Battalion withdrawing to the shelter of the railroad station at the foot of the hill to dry clothing and clean equipment.

The 2d Battalion, after cleaning out the woods to their left, tied in with elements of the 80th Division on their left flank, dug in, and secured the area.

The north and south columns of the 4th Armored CCB, continuing to operate in our zone, converged at



Baronville during the day, then moved east toward Morhange.

The 1st Battalion continued in regimental reserve, but were alerted to be prepared to relieve the 2d Battalion upon receipt of the next attack order.

Twenty-eight prisoners were taken on the 15th, the smallest number yet captured in one day since the start of the present offensive. Our own casualties were one killed, 13 wounded, and 13 missing in action.

On November 15, after eight days of continuous fighting, the 137th Infantry gained a brief rest, remaining in its present position and awaiting further orders.

During the day the Division Commander visited the Regimental CP and presented the Silver Star award to Colonel Murray in recognition of outstanding performance in the present operation. Since November 8, the first day of the attack, the Regiment had advanced 25 kilometers, capturing 17 towns and taking well over 1,000 prisoners.

The enemy had left the area heavily mined, and although these were being cleared as quickly as possible, some casualties resulted from this menace on the 16th. The Regiment also continued to receive scattered artillery shelling. Twelve Germans were taken prisoner.

The Regiment continued to remain in its present position on November 17. There was no letup in

the cold weather, and the skies were overcast. A light snow fell late in the day.

Two men were reported missing on this day, but none were reported killed or wounded. Only two enemy prisoners were taken.

The order to continue the attack was received, and at 1330 Regimental Field Order No. 22 was issued, calling for the 1st and 3d Battalions to attack at 0800 the following morning. The advance was to continue to the northeast, following generally to the north of the Morhange-Sarreguemines highway. The 137th Infantry was to be on the left in the Division zone, and the 320th on the right, with CCB of the 6th Armored Division operating initially in the 320th sector. The ultimate objective was the Saar River at a point south of Sarreguemines.

The 2d Battalion, after having been on the line all the way from Malaucourt to Ia Houve, was placed in regimental reserve for the coming operation.

The 1st Battalion made a night march from Marthille, starting at 0400 on the morning of the 18th, moved through Baronville and jumped off with the 3d Battalion at 0800. Swinging around the lake, Etang de Mutche, the 1st proceeded toward Harprich from the south. Very little resistance was encountered, and the Battalion entered the town at 0900. They were immediately subjected to artillery and mortar shelling, and the Germans began laying down a terrific barrage along the road leading to



The town of Fremestroff, France, for the capture of which the Third Battalion received the Unit Citation

Berig-Vintrange to harass any advance along that route. However, the Battalion moved on out of Harprich and advanced on Berig-Vintrange, to meet the most stubborn resistance the Germans offered during the day. The enemy had considerable armor in the town, and they held strong positions on the high ground to the east.

Artillery directed on Berig-Vintrange knocked out three of the German tanks, and shortly after noon tank destroyers were moved up with the 1st Battalion. With their support the enemy was driven from the town after several attacks. Those German tanks which were not knocked out withdrew to the high ground to the cast, however, and the Battalion was subjected to direct fire from their guns, making a continued advance impossible at the time.

The attack was held up at 1800, but Engineers worked on into the night removing mines and obstacles left by the retreating Germans. At Berig-Vintrange a massive roadblock at the south edge of town prevented the use of the main road into town until 1930, and then it was only sufficiently cleared to allow passage of quarter-ton vehicles.

Similar obstacles, though generally of less elaborate construction, were now being encountered blocking the way into every town, as the enemy resorted to every possible means to delay the Americans. The Germans were throwing everything available into these obstacles, ranging from sturdy log and stone structures to hayrakes and other farm implements.

The 3d Battalion had advanced rapidly during the day, seizing the town of Bening and by midafternoon had two companies in the village of Bistroff. The Battalion had moved swiftly across muddy terrain and surprised the enemy by this daring maneuver of operating far in advance of supporting weapons, which were road-bound because of the mud. The enemy surprise was so complete that a counterattacking force was not brought into use until carrying parties of the 3d Battalion had brought up ammunition and supplies. Anti-tank mines, hand-carried more than three miles, were placed to cover tank approaches into the Battalion's position.

The Germans had blown the bridge on the Bistroff-Berig Vintrange road, and shortly before midnight the Engineers moved up to repair the bridge, to establish a supply route to the 3d Battalion. Vehicles, however, did not reach the town of Bistroff until approximately 1400 the following day.

Three men of the 137th Infantry were killed on October 18, and seven were wounded. Fifteen prisoners were taken.

On the morning of the 19th the 3d Battalion received a counterattack at 0730, with enemy infantry and two tanks trying to get into Bistroff. The attack was repulsed after one German tank had been knocked out by mines. These mines, hand-carried and laid by the Mine Platoon of the Regimental Anti-tank Company only a few hours before, figured prominently in breaking up the attack.

CCB of the 6th Armored Division moved into the regimental zone early in the morning, and upon resumption of the attack at 0800 their tanks passed through the 1st Battalion toward Bertring. They were met by heavy artillery and anti-tank fire, but advanced almost to Bertring, where they were held up by an anti-tank ditch along the forward slope of the ridge west of the town. Company A and Company B moved up at 1100, crossed the ditch and attacked the town. The Germans resisted stubbornly, and held them off until almost 1500, and then had to be cleared from the town from building to building. In the meantime, the tanks were still held up west of the ditch, their assistance in the assault hindered by the protection of the ridge between them and the town. Tank dozers were brought up to fill in the ditch sufficiently to allow the armor to cross, but one tank destroyer had been knocked out and burned by artillery in the meantime.

With CCB then supporting the advance beyond Bertring, the 1st Battalion moved swiftly on Gros-Tenquin. They entered the town at 1530, quickly cleaned out all resistance and seized the high ground to the northeast.

The 3d Battalion, after beating off the early counterattack by the Germans at Bistroff, followed through at 0840 with an attack on Hill 315 to the northeast, taking a machine gun nest and 30 prisoners, several mortars, and a 20mm gun. The Battalion then remained in the positions already held for the rest of the day.

The 3d Battalion moved up to Gros-Tenquin during the night to relieve the 1st Battalion.

The Regiment again took a big haul of prisoners on the 19th, with a total of 208 captured during the day. Our casualties were one man killed, 27 wounded, and four missing.

At 0725 the following morning the 3d Battalion moved out from Bistroff toward Freybouse, situated four kilometers east beyond the north tip of the Freybouse Woods. The Battalion moved east through the Meisenbruck Farm, which they passed at 0745,

German "Panther" knocked out by a Third Battalion mine



then swung wide to the left and reached the tip of the woods at 1100. At 1300, Company K led the attack on Freybouse. Resistance was stiff, and the Company received tank fire from the town which held them off for almost an hour. At 1350 Company K got their first men into the town, and fighting continued all afternoon. By dark Company K had two platoons in Freybouse, after the Company Commander had been wounded. The Germans were still holding out stubbornly, and the attack was halted for the night, with the two platoons remaining in the town.

In the meantime, the 2d Battalion had jumped off at 0900, in conjunction with CCB of the 6th Armored, and moved to attack the Freybouse Woods to their front. Heavy artillery fire was received as the Battalion jumped off and advanced steadily, and at 1015 punched into the woods north of the Gros-Tenquin Hellimer highway. By noon they had cleared the woods in their zone. Emerging from the east edge of the woods, however, the Battalion was subjected to terrific fire from the high ground to the north and east. With perfect observation, the Germans brought deadly mortar, small arms, and direct artillery fire on our troops with every attempt to advance over the open terrain to the front. By dark the Battalion had made no appreciable gain, and the attack was stopped for the night.

Six officers were wounded in the day's attack, the largest loss in a single day among officers since the Moselle River crossing. These included two company commanders. Captain Clyde R. Mills, who had led Company G through every engagement since the first day of combat, was one of those.

Casualties among enlisted men were four killed, 51 wounded, and six missing. Forty-two Germans were captured on the 20th.

The 2d Battalion resumed its attack toward Hellimer on the 21st. Again attempting to advance east along the Hellimer highway, they moved five hundred yards past the Francaltroff road junction, when enemy small arms fire opened up. From 0730

Kraut assault gun knocked out at Hillmer Offenbach, France





The mud and floods of Eastern France

until almost 0900 they again were subjected to heavy fire from Hellimer. Shortly after noon they were in a position to attack the town, but the first assault was thrown back by heavy machine gun and tank fire. The Battalion attacked again at 1300, but the Germans had five tanks in the northwest corner of the town holding up the approach, and it was almost 1500 before any sizable force could get into the town. Company F led the way in the final assault, and bitter street fighting again developed as the Germans were cleared from the town house by house. Two enemy tanks were knocked out in the fight, and another was abandoned in perfect condition as the Germans withdrew to Diffembach to the northeast.

The 3d Battalion, with two platoons already in Freybouse, resumed its attack on that town at dawn and after fighting most of the morning, cleared out the enemy and sent a force to the north in an attempt to capture Fremestroff. With elements of the 6th Armored, they moved north out of Freybouse, but after going a short distance were held up by a blown bridge. The infantry moved on across the creek at 1630, while the armor awaited the arrival of Engineers to repair the bridge. An hour later our troops were in Fremestroff, and the tanks had moved up and surrounded the town. However, dark-

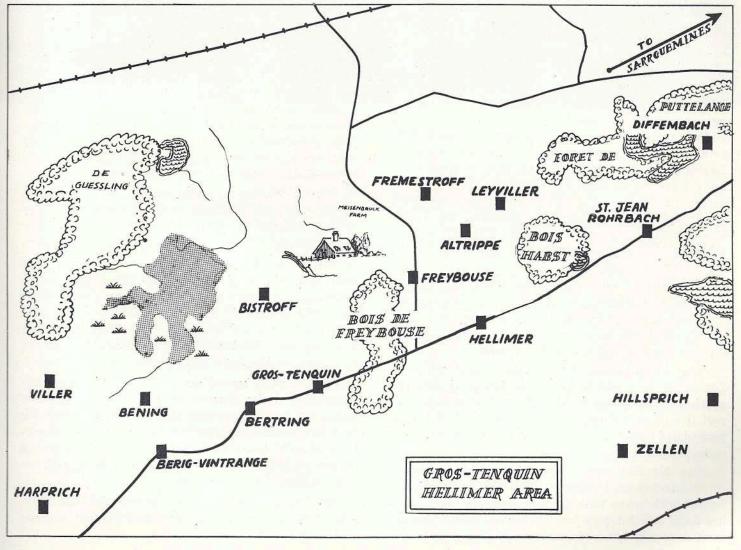
ness found the enemy still in the town, and our forces waited until the following morning to attempt to clear the last resistance.

Three men were killed on the 21st, and 55 were wounded. Thirty-eight Germans were captured.

Plans of November 22 were for the 6th Armored Division to send two task forces out from Hellimer, one north to Leyviller in conjunction with an attack on that town by the 1st Battalion, then east to St. Jean-Rohrbach, and the other northeast to Diffembach, and on to St. Jean-Rohrbach. A third task force, already in the vicinity of Fremestroff, was to assist in cleaning out that town, then move east into the zone of the 1st Battalion.

On the morning of the 22d, forces of the 3d Battalion cleared Fremestroff early, and the 3d Battalion moved on to Diffembach, where the Germans had withdrawn from Hellimer. Company E was first in the town, and pushed the enemy out shortly after noon. The rest of the Battalion moved up, and at 1400 jumped off for Hilsprich, four kilometers east.

Meanwhile the 1st Battalion moved up from reserve and attacked Leyviller, four kilometers to the north of Hellimer. Co-ordinating with the tanks, Company A moved in on the town from the right, and Company C from the left. By 1100 Leyviller



was partially surrounded by tanks and infantry, and at 1400 they took the town after hard fighting, with the Germans withdrawing to the north. The Battalion quickly turned the attack toward St. Jean, four kilometers to the east and formerly heavily-garrisoned by the Germans. Enemy tanks on the outskirts of St. Jean brought heavy fire on the doughboys, and SS troops were defending within the town. Fighting continued until after darkness, with the Battalion pushing the enemy from the town shortly before 1800. Immediately the Germans began shelling the area, and this continued throughout the night.

The 2d Battalion moved half the distance to Hilsprich, then was counterattacked at 1540 by Germans from the Habst Woods north of the Hellimer-St. Jean highway. The enemy was stopped with severe losses from our combined machine gun and mortar fire, and the surviving Germans fled back into the woods.

The 3d Battalion reverted to regimental reserve and moved into Leyviller during the afternoon. After dark, the Germans moved a patrol back into Fremestroff, and plans were made for Company I to send a motorized patrol to clear them out the following morning.

Six men were killed, 17 wounded, and five missing in action in the Regiment on November 22. There were 58 prisoners captured, including members of the 36th SS Division.

On the morning of November 23 all battalions were attacking. The 2d, jumping off at 0800 from the high ground midway between Diffembach and Hilsprich, moved through the Machweld Woods and swung right, to the southwest of Hilsprich. The 1st Battalion moved out from St. Jean to approach Hilsprich from the northwest. The 3d Battalion, at Leyviller, moved their motorized platoon from Company I around through Freybouse to clear Fremestroff. Other elements of the Battalion moved on Altrippe, while another force attacked the Habst Woods to clean out those Germans which had escaped after their counterattack on the 2d Battalion the day before had failed.

Fremestroff was cleared by 0900, and before noon the 3d Battalion had gained all objectives, with Company K occupying Altrippe, Company I occupying Fremestroff, and Company L returning to Leyviller after clearing the Habst Woods.

The 2d Battalion entered the woods north of Zennen at 0930, and by noon was emerging from the southeast tip of the woods. Here they received direct fire from the high ground to the east, and were pinned down and unable to advance during the afternoon.

The 1st Battalion encountered stiff resistance in its advance on Hilsprich. The town was well defended with heavy tanks and infantry, and surrounding high ground was bristling with dug-in enemy positions. Six hundred yards west of the town the

1st Battalion ran into terrific fire from the German positions, and at 1330, with heavy tanks discovered operating in the town, the Battalion Commander requested that all artillery possible be thrown into the objective. The Germans threw back the first attempt to enter the town, and only after hard fighting and heavy casualties were our forces able to get into the stronghold. Company A suffered serious losses, including Captain Sidney K. Strong, their Commanding Officer, killed by 20mm fire while leading his men in the attack.

The main enemy force withdrew to the east, but shortly before dusk came back into Hilsprich with tanks and inflicted further losses on troops of the Battalion there. Breaking into the town at both ends of the Main Street, the enemy tanks worked toward the center of town, firing point-blank on buildings and troops. Company C lost heavily, with the Company Commander, three company officers and 29 others missing. The remaining troops withdrew to St. Jean.

The Hilsprich engagement was a costly one to the 1st Battalion, as they lost four men killed, 26 wounded, and 39 missing during the attack and the enemy counterattack that followed. Total casualties in the Regiment were ten killed, 76 wounded, and 40 missing.

Sixteen Germans were captured on the 23d.

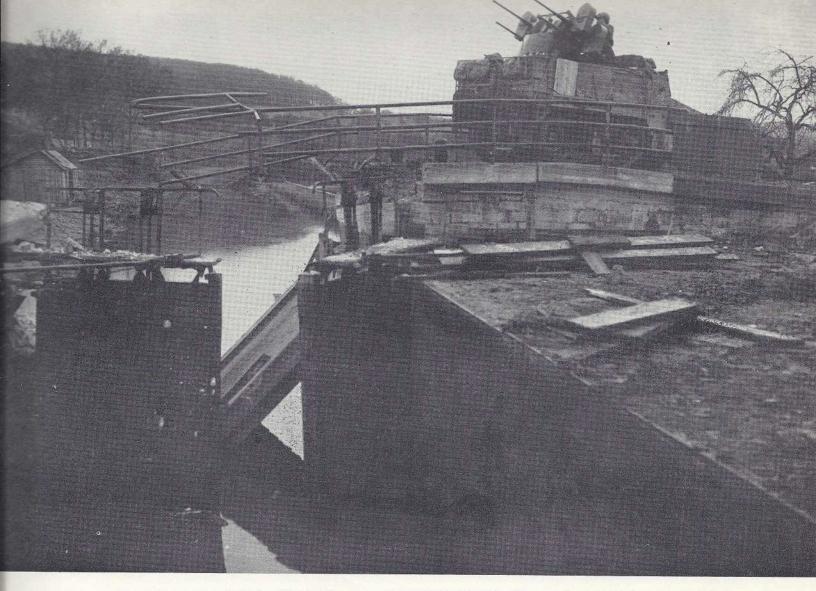
On November 24, with the 1st Battalion withdrawn to St. Jean and in the process of reorganization, the 737th Tank Battalion and the 1st Battalion of the 134th Infantry attacked Hilsprich at noon and recaptured that town. The 2d Battalion held its position southwest of Hilsprich, covering any possible enemy withdrawal to the south. The Battalion then outposted the high ground to the southwest with one platoon of Company F, and the remainder of the Battalion moved back to Diffembach.

The 3d Battalion continued to occupy the area to the north of Hellimer, with companies in Leyviller, Altrippe and Fremestroff. Late in the day the Germans began shelling those towns incessantly.

There were three killed, three wounded, and two missing in the Regiment on the 24th. Twenty-two Germans were captured. Some of these were from the 38th Regiment of the 17th SS Division, and reported that this Regiment, and possibly the entire Division, was withdrawing to Saarbrucken, and that they were in the force left to cover the withdrawal.

On the morning of the 25th the Germans continued their relentless shelling of the 3d Battalion area. During the morning they subjected Leyviller to a terrific bombardment, with the shelling reaching its height shortly before 1100 when the Germans poured in 168 rounds of 120, 105, and 88mm mortar and artillery fire in fourteen minutes.

On this date the 2d Battalion moved to the Hilsprich area to occupy the town and prevent reoccupation by the Germans.



Anti-aircraft machine guns of the 448th AAA Battalion stand ready to protect this canal near Saar-einsming, Alsace Lorraine

On the 26th and 27th the 137th Infantry remained in place and continued patrolling and strengthening defenses in its area. The skies cleared on the 26th, for the first time in over a week.

Scattered shelling was received in the area, but few casualties resulted. On the 25th two men were wounded. On the 26th no casualties were reported. On the 27th, one man was killed when a lone round of 88 fire landed near the 1st Battalion Headquarters in St. Jean. On the same day two men were wounded by mortar fire at an anti-tank gun position.

On November 28 the 137th Infantry, less the 3d Battalion, moved to an area approximately seven miles to the west, with the 1st Battalion locating at Herprich, the 2d at Bistroff, special units at Viller, and Regimental Headquarters at Bening. The 3d Battalion remained at Leyviller.

On the 29th and 30th the Regiment remained in these areas, to gain a well-earned rest. There were no casualties during the last three days of the month. Two Germans were taken prisoner on the 29th.

In the month of November had developed some of the hardest fighting yet engaged in by the 137th Infantry. Although comparatively inactive the first week, the Regiment was in the attack more days during November than any previous month. Since November 8 our troops had advanced over thirty miles to the north, and had taken nearly 1,500 prisoners.

The 137th's casualties in the drive had not been light. It had lost 76 killed, 573 wounded, and 98 missing. However, of those missing, only 66 were unaccounted for at the end of the month.

In this drive, the 137th Infantry had played an important part in the great Third Army offensive which already had resulted in the capture of Metz and the crossing of the Saar River.

Forward elements of the Regiment now stood eleven miles from the German border at Sarreguemines, 22 miles southwest of the industrial city of Saarbrucken, and awaited the orders which would carry them into the Reich itself.

As November drew to a close the 137th Infantry Regiment had set an impressive record in total num-



The bridge over the Saar River which the Second and Third Battalions crossed to take Sarreguemines

ber of medals awarded to its members. This total, amassed in less than four months, was 537 awards, broken down into classifications as follows: Six Distinguished Service Crosses, 122 Silver Stars, and 409 Bronze Stars.

The 35th Infantry Division maintained its position in XII Corps reserve on December 1. On November 24, the 137th had been relieved from contact with the enemy, after driving for sixteen days through the retarding mud and rain to seize and hold Hellimer and St. Jean-Rohrbach. This day marked the Regiment's 146th day on French soil, 111 days of which were spent in actual combat, with 137th elements opposing the enemy on the front lines. A training problem was scheduled for this period of relative inactivity which consisted of pill-box assault activity, handling of demolitions, and staging of attacks on fortified positions. The Regiment's vehicles were washed, weapons cleaned and inspected by the 735th Ordnance Company.

The 137th Infantry remained in reserve on the 2d and made preparations to move the following day to a new assembly area. The 137th moved seven miles approximately northeast, to its new assembly area on the morning of December 3 and remained in Division reserve. Regimental Headquarters, Special Units, and the 2d Battalion closed into Erstroff by 1000. The 1st Battalion moved to Linstroff

by 1055 and the 3d Battalion was billeted in the town of Grening by 1140. Service Company continued its stay in Villers. The Regiment was ordered into Corps reserve, and suitable reconnaissance was conducted, in view of the fact that the 137th might be employed in any sector of the Corps.

The 137th Infantry made a motor move approximately 15 miles east through the early morning rain of December 6 and closed into its forward assembly area by 0900. The 3d Battalion had remained in Grening. Regimental Headquarters opened in Hirbach at 0730, 2d Battalion in Bettring by 0840, and the 1st Battalion in Helving by 0900. No enemy artillery fire was received by any units of the Regiment during the day.

The 137th Infantry Regiment moved by foot to another forward assembly area approximately nine miles east, in the direction of Sarreguemines, on December 8. Regimental Headquarters, Anti-tank Company, and the 1st Battalion located themselves in Hambach by 1345. The new Regimental Command Post was opened at 1245. The 3d Battalion closed into Neufgrange by 1500, while the 2d Battalion moved into the Foret de Sarreguemines, just south of Siltzheim. Service Company was situated in Gueblange. The 1st Battalion was alerted to move by foot from Hambach to Sarreguemines, to occupy the town and patrol the south bank of the Saar River. The Battalion prepared to move at dawn on December 9.



The pottery plant in Sarreguemines for the capture of which Company F received the Unit Citation

Reconnaissance was conducted with a view to moving east of the river on Division order. All was quiet in the towns occupied.

At dawn on December 9, the 1st Battalion of the 137th moved up from Hambach to Sarreguemines to occupy the town. The riflemen occupying the city proper were constantly bothered by snipers, who killed one man and wounded six others of the 1st Battalion. Service Company moved up to the town of Hambach and was closed in by 1130.

The 137th Infantry was to attack the following morning, marching from its assembly area and across the Saar beginning at 0500, by using the railroad bridge south of the town. The 2d and 3d Battalions abreast were to attack at 0730. The 2d on the left was to take that portion of Sarreguemines that lay north of the river and attempt to seize intact the bridge that crossed the Blies River within its sector. The 3d Battalion was to attack within its zone and seize the high ground south of the Blies River. The 1st Battalion, from positions on the south bank of the Saar, was to support the advance of the 2d by fire and cover the bridge across the Blies, in an attempt to keep the enemy from blowing it. Antitank Company was to support the attack from positions on the Saar River and the I & R platoon was to establish an OP on the forward edge of the woods, southwest of Sarreguemines.

Inside the pottery plant at Sarreguemines





The doughs move up

On December 10, the attack moved smoothly with the 3d Battalion crossing the railroad bridge on the southeastern outskirts of Sarreguemines without receiving any enemy fire. The battalions completed the crossing at 0545 and the 3d Battalion Command Post opened on the north bank of the river at 0700, just north of Remelfing. The 2d Battalion completed crossing right behind the 3d, and both battalions closed into their assembly areas north of the river. With poor visibility from an overcast sky, but no rain, the two battalions jumped off at 0730, the 2d on the left and the 3d on the right.

The 2d Battalion met bitter resistance from the enemy which was strongly organized in the Pottery Plant southeast of Sarreguemines. After a four-hour battle, Company F captured the factory and moved again into Sarreguemines proper. Company E was cleaning out the buildings north of Sarreguemines while Company F worked in the factory. Company E had tough opposition in these houses and finished routing the enemy from their area at the same time

Company F cleared the factory. During this battle the 1st Battalion fired long range machine gun fire on the retreating enemy from positions across the river.

The 3d Battalion operating on the right flank was receiving heavy fire and bitter resistance in its sector. At 1002, the 3d Battalion called for air support on the town of Neunkirch when enemy tanks were seen in the village. Company L moved off into Neunkirch and at 1500 had cleared the town. The 1st Battalion across the Saar was still in support of the 2nd Battalion and encountering sniper fire when darkness fell on the city. The 2d hadn't quite cleaned out the city and the 3d Bn was occupying Neunkirch.

The 137th Infantry continued the attack on December 11 as the 2d Battalion cleaned out the remainder of Sarreguemines, liberating 995 ex-PWs left behind by the Nazis, while the 3d Battalion pushed on from Neunkirch, took over the Sarreguemines airfield, and went on to capture the town of Frauenberg, on the Blies River.



A new M-36 tank destroyer is ready for action in Germany. The burning building in the background was hit by a German shell earlier in the day.

At 0800, the 2d and 3d Battalions shoved off again; the 1st received orders to secure Sarreguemines on the eastern bank of the river after the 2d had moved on. The 1st Battalion was to follow the 2d at a distance of 800 yards. One platoon of the Anti-tank Company was in support of each battalion, and one platoon remained on the high ground with the 1st Battalion. One platoon of the TD's also supported each battalion. The 2d Battalion experienced considerable difficulty in ridding Sarreguemines of the remaining enemy. All the buildings were honeycombed with passages and mouseholed for machine gunners and snipers.

The 3d Battalion left Neunkirch at 0800 and at 0900 called for artillery fire to be placed on the high ground overlooking the Blies River from the north, where the enemy had commanding observation. They secured the high ground by 1000 and secured the position from where they continued the attack toward Frauenberg. One platoon from Company K,

supported by Company M machine guns, entered the town, and one hour later the entire Company was engaged in fighting in the German border village. By 1700 the whole town was clear of enemy and Frauenberg was taken. The 1st Battalion had crossed the Saar River and closed into eastern Sarreguemines.

At 0100, December 12, the 137th Infantry had the first man in the Division to enter Germany. This day the Regiment was to develop the situation and patrol its flank, the left flank of the Division. No crossings were to be attempted except with Division approval. The 134th Infantry was to cross the Blies at 0500. The forward elements of the Regiment were heavily shelled throughout the day and quite a few casualties were suffered. Frauenberg was rapidly turning into the hottest town ever occupied by 137th troops.

While elements of the 137th Infantry's 3d Battalion crossed the Blies River into Germany before dawn on the morning of December 13 and encountered severe artillery fire throughout the day, the 1st

Battalion contained the large number of troops on the north bank of the Saar and Blies Rivers north of Sarreguemines, and the 2d Battalion maintained contact between the 1st and 3d.

Beginning at 0430, riflemen of K and L Companies crossed the river in assault boats near the town of Frauenberg and were the first Regimental troops to make the assault crossing of the Blies. Six of the eight boats attempting the crossing were successful. Two overturned in the water. These troops crossed in the face of heavy grazing fire from enemy machine guns emplaced on the high ground north of the river. Terrific artillery and mortar barrages met the boats as they reached the opposite shore and most of the boats were so riddled with bullets that they were unable to make the return crossing. No further crossings were attempted in daylight, since at each attempt to cross an intense barrage was laid down on the crossing site, which was in direct observation of the enemy from the high ground across the river. In general throughout the Regimental area, the artillery fire was unusually heavy.

The 1st Battalion continued to defend the left flank of the Division and at 1300 reported considerable activity observed in the German sector. Heavy artillery fire was directed on this activity and it subsided. Company B Observation Post received some direct fire from the woods opposite their position. Artillery fire was placed on the woods, and the fire ceased.

The 3d Battalion began crossing the Blies within its sector again at 2300, and by 2350, all of Companies K and L were over on the German side of the river.

The 3d Battalion of the 137th Infantry was entirely across the Blies River into Germany shortly after midnight and on December 14, pushed ahead to the high ground north and northeast of the river. The 1st Battalion continued its defense of the Division's left flank, protecting Sarreguemines and the Regimental sector all along the Blies River while the 2d Battalion remained this side of the river and prepared to follow the 3d Battalion. Company E also was in position protecting the left flank.

The 3d Battalion jumped off at 0630 under heavy small arms fire. The rifle units, I, K, and L, in that order, were established in positions along the high ground north and northeast of the Blies River. In the woods, to the Battalion's front, the enemy was delivering intense tank and mortar fire on the forward elements of the Battalion.

The enemy continued to shell the entire Regimental area throughout the day, the 3d Battalion receiving a particularly heavy barrage. Vehicles running along the road from Neunkirch to Frauenberg did so at their own risk. The enemy had perfect observation on the road and the town.

The enemy opposing the 3d Battalion continued to hang on bitterly to the Breiterwald Woods on

December 15, despite the fact that P-47's in close air support were bombing and strafing their positions.

After reorganizing its forces, the 3d Battalion launched another attack on the Breiterwald Woods. Companies I and K advanced against fierce Nazi fire and took the small patch of woods just southeast of the Breiterwald Woods while Company I was driving onto the larger woods. L Company remained in the smaller patch of woods, while K Company, in conjunction with I Company, attacked the larger woods. Supported by armor, the two companies reached the center of the woods, meeting fanatical German resistance all the way from Nazi armor to infantry. Shortly before dark, the two 3d Battalion units were counterattacked and driven back a short distance, but not out of the woods. During the night they were very heavily shelled by enemy artillery and mortar fire.

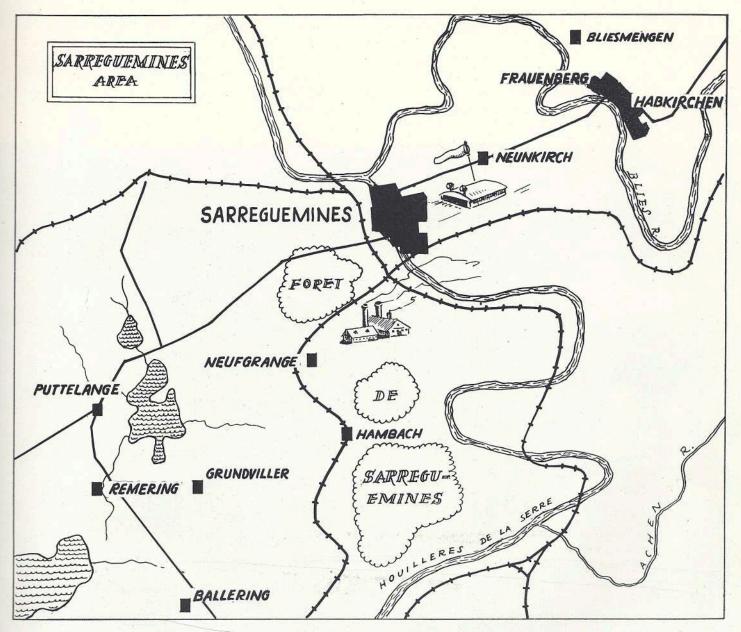
The 1st Battalion remained in position with the same mission of protecting the north flank of the Division until it was relieved by the 42d and 2d squadrons of the 2d Cavalry Group.

Company E remained south of the Blies River and assisted the 1st Battalion. Company G, attached to the 3d Battalion, operated on its left flank for protection while Company F remained in reserve in Frauenberg. The 2d Battalion was to be committed the following morning with the mission of capturing Bliesmengen and Bliesbalchen.

This day's casualties were the heaviest of any day since the Regiment started its Saar River operation.

Pushed back to the edge of the Breiterwald Woods by the enemy on December 15, the 3d Battalion again attacked the well-defended enemy positions in the forest and regained a portion of the lost ground. The enemy artillery fire remained extremely heavy throughout the day, and Frauenberg received its usual pounding of intense artillery and mortar fire. At the same time our air support bombed and strafed Bliesmengen and the woods to the east of it. The 1st Battalion was protecting the Division's left flank in Sarreguemines and along the Blies River pocket. The 2d Battalion had Company G across the Blies protecting the rear flank of the 3d Battalion, while E Company was aiding the 1st Battalion. Company F was being held in reserve at Frauenberg.

The 3d Battalion launched its attack at 0750, with Company I working toward the Breiterwald Woods and Companies K and L aiming at the small patch of woods southeast of it. Company K, entering a corner of the woods at 0830, captured some prisoners, and by 1030 K and L Companies occupied a small portion of the enemy-held woods. Company I had encountered two enemy tanks on the edge of their woods at 0820 and had not been able to advance into Breiterwald. At 1230, Company I, supported by friendly tanks, penetrated the woods, meeting fierce resistance. Companies K and L found their patch of woods



quite a problem and by 1615 had not yet cleared it completely. Company L remained to hold the woods for security and Company K went on to assist I Company in the woods. Before dark the 3d Battalion elements were counterattacked by German tanks and infantry and driven back to the edge of the woods.

The 1st Battalion was relieved at 1725 by the 2d Cavalry Group. The 2d Battalion elements on the defensive were relieved at 2130 by the 2d Cavalry. The 3d Battalion had occupied the edge of the Breiterwald Woods for the night and was receiving sporadic enemy artillery fire and occasional flares.

The 2d Battalion was to attack on December 17 with the mission of driving for Bliesmengen and Bliesbalchen, and the 3d Battalion was to continue on into the woods.

On December 17, 137th Infantry elements were fighting under the heaviest artillery fire they had ever experienced in France or Germany.

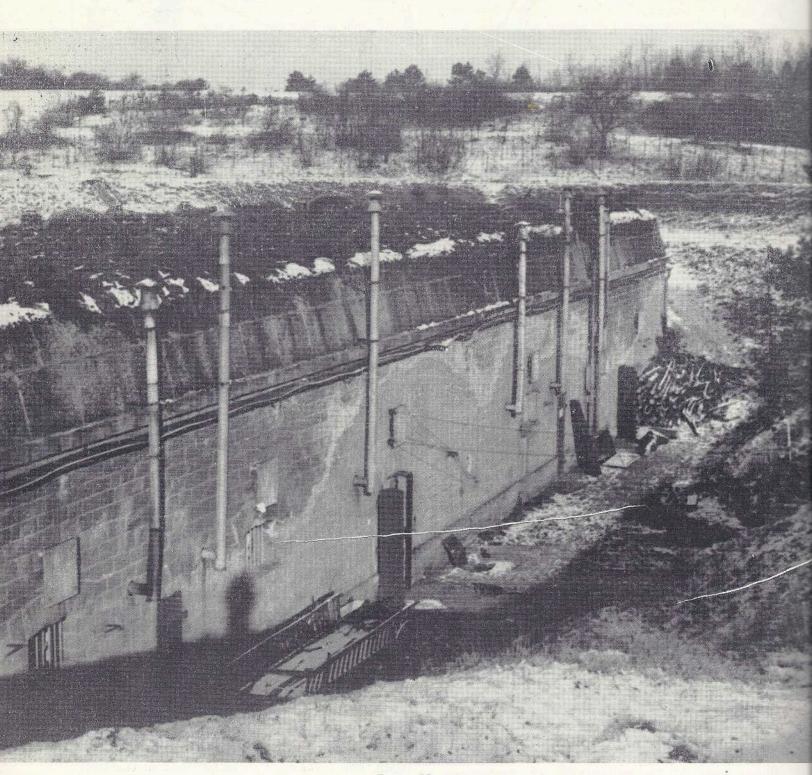
The 3d Battalion forces in the Breiterwald Woods were unable to move against the savage enemy resistance and were taking a severe shelling all day.

Though our direct support artillery pounded enemy positions in the woods, and the air support bombed and strafed the German positions unmercifully, the enemy still held tenaciously to the forest.

Elements of the 2d Battalion fighting in Bliesmengen were faced by direct enemy tank fire, and other elements were pinned down all day. The enemy continued to shell the Regimental area regularly during the period. Frauenberg was hit very heavily again and again during the day.

All units of the 137th Infantry were alerted at 1125 for bomber-support and at noon fighter bombers were hitting the enemy in Bucholz Woods ahead of the Regiment's positions. The 737th Tank Battalion, less Company C, was attached to the Regiment at 1231.

The 3d Battalion was relieved by the 1st Battalion at 2200. Company A took over the patch of woods below the Breiterwald, while Companies B and C relieved the 3d Battalion elements in the woods proper. The 137th was ordered to resume the attack at 0800, December 18.



Fort at Metz



One of the forts at Metz



Metz, Christmas Day



A demolished bridge at Metz

On December 18, the enemy was heavily pounded by P-47's in the Regimental sector throughout the day. Breiterwald Woods was again the scene of fierce battles between German and American infantry and tanks. The enemy was unable to stop the assault of our forces and was driven back to the rear edge of the woods.

The 2d Battalion of the 134th Infantry, attached to the 137th Infantry, attacked the enemy at the edge of Reinneimerald Woods, on the 137th's right flank, just southeast of Bebelsheim.

The Regiment was ordered to stop its attack at 1830 and to consolidate its positions on the most favorable ground. At the conclusion of the day's operations the 2d Battalion of the 134th was at the edge of Reinneimerald Woods. The 137th's 1st Battalion was holding all of the Breiterwald Woods and a small patch of woods near Bannholz. The 2d Battalion had elements in Bliesmengen and east of the town, while the 3d Battalion was held in reserve at Neunkirch.

On December 19, Frauenberg continued to receive terrific artillery and mortar fire. The enemy fired again and again at the Frauenberg-Habkirchen bridge, but never scored a hit.

The 1st Battalion continued to hold its position on the edge of the Breiterwald Woods and repelled numerous German counterattacks. Roadblocks were established on all entrances to the woods and minefields laid on all logical mechanized approaches. Several enemy tanks fired on the 1st Battalion from a distance of 1,000 yards and were driven off by Yank artillery.

The 2d Battalion also improved its positions and placed roadblocks and mine fields on its flanks. Fire was delivered on the enemy, who was extremely active to the Battalion front. The Battalion Command Post was shelled heavily, but no casualties resulted.

The 3d Battalion remained in Neunkirch and continued reorganization of its elements. It also conducted training for its 67 new replacements who had not had much previous infantry training.

On December 20, the 1st Battalion was attacked repeatedly during the day, and Company B had two companies of SS troops infiltrate into its positions. This attack took place in the neck of the woods. The attack was held off by one squad of B Company until one friendly tank was brought up, and the combined fire of the infantry and tank drove the enemy from the position. Several enemy tanks made sorties toward the 1st Battalion positions, but direct fire from our TD's and artillery fire drove them off.

The 2d Battalion remained in position on the high ground near the woods and improved their positions during the day. Companies F, E, and G, in that order, were on the line. The Battalion received heavy enemy artillery fire on the ridge during the period. During one two and a half hour period, 1,000 rounds of artillery and mortar fire fell on the ridge and portion of the woods held by the Battalion.

The 3d Battalion remained in Neunkirch and continued its reorganization and training for replacements. The Battalion was also placed on the alert status as per the counterattack plans of the Regiment.

On December 21, the 137th Infantry received orders that it would be relieved by the 324th Infantry of the 44th Division prior to 2400 that day. The Regiment was to assemble temporarily in the vicinity of Frauenberg, Habkirchen, and Neunkirch until ordered to move to an assembly area.

In the morning the 1st Battalion continued its defense of the Regimental sector. With a heavy artillery barrage, the enemy launched a heavy counterattack on the 1st Battalion positions. This attack was repulsed with heavy enemy losses. During the day the enemy artillery and mortar fire was extremely heavy on enemy positions.

The 2d Battalion improved its positions and also delivered harassing fire on all known and observed enemy targets.

At 1300 the 3d Battalion closed its CP in Neunkirch and moved to its new assembly area in Richeling, where it closed in by 1500. The Regimental CP moved from Neunkirch to Remering, closing shortly after midnight. The Special Units cleared into Ballering at 1500. The 1st Battalion's relief by the 324th Infantry was completed by 2245, and the Battalion assembled and prepared to move to the new Regimental Assembly Area. The 2d Battalion was relieved by elements of the 324th Infantry by 2200, and the units assembled to move to the new area.

On December 22, the 2d Battalion arrived at Remering from Neunkirch and was billeted by 0315 in the new assembly area. The 1st Battalion cleared into the town of Grundweiler by 0415. During the day an ordnance check was made and all ordnance items and several 50 calibers were tested for anti-aircraft defense.

The Regiment received more replacements which helped raise the strength of the units. Eight officers and 220 enlisted men were received.

The 35th Infantry Division was ordered to move by combat team to Metz sometime during the day. Later the IP time was set at 2330. The Regiment had 78 trucks assigned for the move. The 137th Infantry Combat Team, less the 219th FA Battalion, cleared the IP at Puttelange by 2330 and moved northwest toward Metz and its new assembly area, and, going through St. Avold, Boulet, and Metz, arrived at its destination, Moulins, by 0400. Moulins is just west of Metz. The Regiment rested, and cleaned and repaired equipment. They also attended movies and washed clothes, uniforms, and spent Christmas in this location. The 137th remained assembled in the German barracks in Moulins. At 1140 on December 24, the 35th Infantry Division was assigned to the XX Corps from the XII Corps.



KO'd Tiger Royal in Belgium

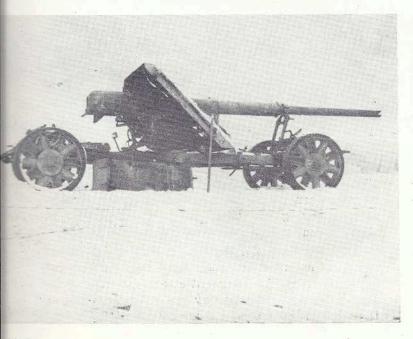


Tintange, Belgium

THE ARD & ENNES

CHAPTER FOUR

An "88" knocked out near Honville, Belgium



Soldiers of the 137th make a prisoner remove U. S. Army pants and shoes in Geromont, Belgium



CHAPTER FOUR THE ARDENNES

The day was spent in rest, with small classes held for some of the replacements. One hundred fiftyfive more replacements were also received, which brought the 137th to nearly full strength.

The 35th Division passed from XX Corps control to III Corps control. The Regiment was notified of the movement, by motor, which it was to make the following morning to a new area.

On December 26, the 137th Infantry Combat Team, with the 127th FA Battalion attached, moved by motor from Metz, at 0645, and closed into assembly areas in the vicinity of Nothomb, Belgium, by 1450. Upon its arrival, the Regiment moved forward and relieved elements of the 6th Cavalry Squadron, in its zone.

The Regimental motor column entered Belgium via Messancy, turned west and bypassed the town of Arlon, passed through Pontellange and on to Nothomb. Regimental Headquarters was established in Nothomb, while the battalions moved on into Luxembourg and the 1st Battalion closed into Roodtles Ell, southeast of Holtz. The 3d Battalion billeted itself in Perle, and the 2d Battalion in Holtz.

Upon arrival, the Combat Team dissolved, and the 127th FA and the 219th FA reverted to Division Artillery Control. During the night, forward elements of the Regiment moved forward and relieved elements of the 6th Cavalry, which were screening in the 137th's zone to the north. The 134th Infantry was on the left of the 137th and the 26th Division on the right flank of the 35th Division. The 137th Infantry was to attack on the morning of December 27, passing through the 6th Cavalry and with the 4th Armored Division, relieving the pressure on the 101st Airborne Division, which was surrounded in Bastogne.

The 137th Infantry jumped off at 0800, on December 27, with the 2d Battalion on the right and the 3d on the left, with the 1st Battalion held in reserve at Tintange. The 2d crossed the Surre River at 1015 and by 1110 the first elements of Company G entered the town of Surre. Company E was held up by enemy machine gun fire and was unable to enter the town. The 1st Battalion left Tintange at 1525, and moved in approach march formation toward Surre. By 1640, the entire Battalion was on the road to Surre and the point was receiving machine gun fire from its left flank. Company A was at the point and in contact with Company G in the town.

The 3d Battalion was driving ahead on the left flank, under small arms fire and mortar barrages. In the afternoon, the 3d Battalion was hit by a terrific artillery barrage. The Regiment was ordered to halt its advance at 1730 and organize defensive positions not later than 2000. The 137th was to resume the attack at 0600 on December 28.

The 1st Battalion had two companies in Surre by 1815 and was securing the town. Company E pushed out into the woods at 2100 and ran into strong enemy dug-in positions. The 1st Battalion CP moved into Surre at 2215. The 3d Battalion reported enemy dug-in positions to its front. The enemy force to the front was identified as the 5th German Paratroop Division.

Company D, 5th Chemical Battalion, was attached to the Regiment this day and Company B, 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion, was also assigned in direct support.

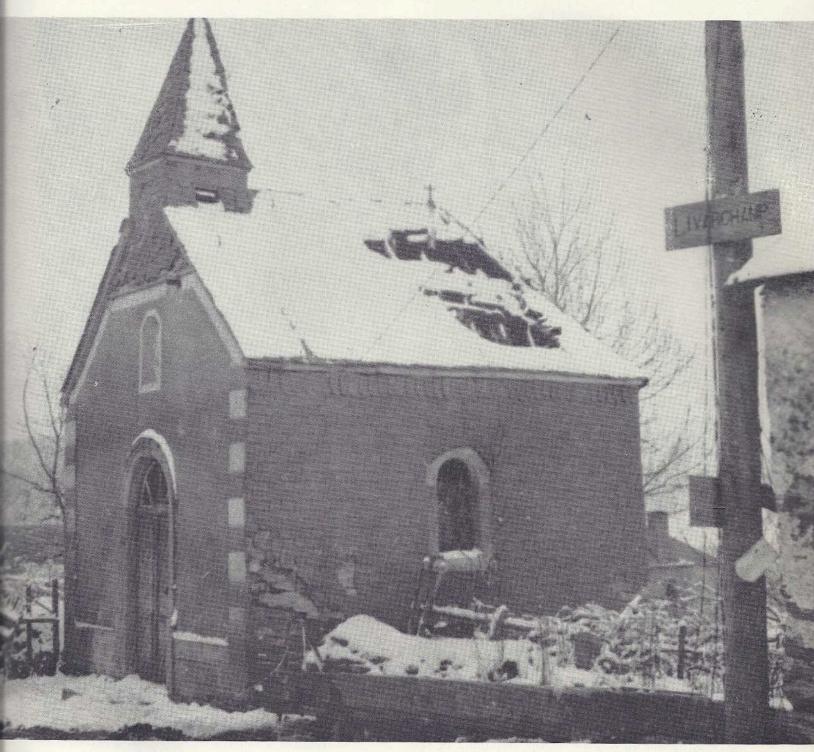
On December 28, the 137th Infantry attacked north of Surre, against all types of heavy enemy fire and drove eastward to assault Villers-la-Bonne-Eau.

The 1st Battalion was located in Surre and the 2d Battalion with Companies E, F, and G, in that order, on the edge of Surre Woods. The 3d Battalion was pushing northeast toward Livarchamps. At 0620, the companies began to move into the woods, and the 3d Battalion hit Livarchamps at 0715 and sent Companies I and K 500 yards past the town. Company L had a strong patrol on the road. At 0845 the 3d Battalion was receiving heavy small arms, rocket. and artillery fire from Villers-La-Bonne-Eau. Two hours later the fire had increased, and the enemy was delivering machine gun fire and direct fire from selfpropelled 88's on the 3d Battalion positions. The 2d Battalion, driving into the woods, was in the face of direct tank fire and considerable mortar. Enemy tracked vehicles were located 600 yards to the direct front of Companies E and F. Company F was moving up a draw on the right flank, in the direction of a reported enemy CP and forty enemy riflemen.

The 3d Battalion launched its attack at 1230 with the mission of getting into Villers-la-Bonne-Eau. The 1st Battalion moved out of Surre at 1405, with the mission of encircling the 2d Battalion's left flank. One platoon of Anti-tank guns was left in Surre to block all tank approaches to the town. At 1745 the 3d Battalion, after a bitter battle, was in the town of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau.

The Regiment was ordered to suspend the attack at 1800, consolidate for the night, and attack at 0800 the following morning. The Corps Commanding General warned all units to beware of enemy counterattacks during the night or early morning. The Surre Woods still contained many German troops.

On December 29, the 137th Infantry attacked again in the Surre Woods against bitter machine gun and tank fire. The Regiment attacked to the northeast in its zone, bounded by the 134th Infantry on the left and the 320th Infantry on the right.



Liverchamps, Belgium

The 2d Battalion attacked through the woods, following an air strike, and met heavy tank and selfpropelled gun fire. The Battalion advanced against this fire to the last tip of the Surre Woods. The 1st Battalion jumped off at 0810 and ran into heavy fire also. Companies C and A, from left to right, led the attacking troops and advanced toward the town of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau. The 2d Battalion had Companies E and G forward, with Company E in Surre. The 3d Battalion reported that it had two TD's knocked out from direct fire from enemy tanks. By 1550, Company I had contacted the 134th Infantry on the left flank of the Regiment. The CO of the 3d Battalion also estimated that he had knocked out at least nine heavy machine gun emplacements during the day.

The 137th was ordered to cease its attack at 1800 and continued the attack on December 30 at 0800. All roads leading into the area were to be mined and blocked. Roadblocks were to be in depth, several on each road. The Regiment halted its attack and buttoned up for the night. Enemy artillery fire was very heavy in the Regimental area during the night, with the Regimental CP area receiving several barrages of rockets.

On December 30, the 137th patrolled vigorously to the front during the night, while the front lines and rear areas received heavy artillery and rocket fire. The snow that had fallen the previous day had frozen over, and the ground and roads were extremely slippery. Harlange and Villers-la-Bonne-Eau remained the main points of enemy resistance. The 3d Battalion was operating southwest of Villers and the 1st Battalion assembled at Livarchamps, with Company A manning roadblocks to the east, in the gap between the 3d and 2d Battalions. The 2d Battalion had two companies on the edge of the Surre Woods, meeting heavy enemy fire from the vicinity of Harlange and Betlange.

At 0645 Company E advanced toward Harlange, passing through Company G. The Company advanced with moderate resistance until it reached a position within 400 yards of Harlange, when it received severe machine gun and mortar fire, which pinned it down. The enemy also opened up on them with flanking fire from the right and left flank. The threat to the right flank was stopped. Company E withdrew from the open field under a protective barrage, moved up a draw on the left flank of the enemy to outflank the enemy position, and ran into tough opposition near Betlange.

At 0645 the 3d Battalion held four buildings in Villers-la-Bonne-Eau, and by 0900 the enemy activity and resistance in the town increased considerably. Enemy assault guns and SS troops moved into the town in the morning to reinforce the enemy garrison, and the armored guns moved in and around the town shooting into the houses occupied by elements of the 3d Battalion. Two of these guns were knocked out by bazooka fire, and the rest withdrew out of

bazooka range and shelled the houses with direct fire. Heavy fighting continued all during the day in the town, until Companies K and L were considered cut off from the rest of the Battalion.

On December 31, at 0520, Company I was counterattacked by the enemy, who had positions in the woods to their front, and at 0615, the 3d Battalion CP lost communications with the Company. Contact was regained that same morning.

The 1st Battalion jumped off at 1330 for the town of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau. Companies B and C entered the town at 1420 and occupied some of the buildings. Two enemy tanks rolled up to their positions and started shelling them with direct fire. Men from the companies fired bazookas at them, but the tanks kept just out of range, and although several hit the tanks, they did not knock them out. The elements of the two companies were forced to withdraw to the cover of the woods.

At 1700 the Regiment was ordered to dig in for the night and continue operations the following morning. At 1730 Company C received a heavy concentration of artillery, was counterattacked, and forced back slightly. This ground was immediately regained and the line re-established at 1800.

The 2d Battalion, less Company G, pulled back to the town of Surre and moved to north of Livarchamps. Company E took over the roadblocks occupied by Company A, while Company G remained in position in the Surre Woods to protect the right flank of the Regiment.

Two hundred thirty-five men were reported as missing from Companies K and L. The majority of these men were believed to have been captured in the town of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau, where they had been cut off for two days by enemy tanks and infantry.

On January 1, on the Regiment's front, the 137th Infantry was facing the toughest opposition it had yet met in its combat experience. Elements of K and L Companies were still cut-off in Villers-la-Bonne-Eau. The 1st Battalion was in position south of Villers, while the 2d Battalion had Companies E and F west and southwest of the Belgian town, and Company G, on the Regiment's right flank, in Luxembourg. German prisoners had stated that the SS Adolph Hitler Division and the 339th Nazi Infantry Regiment were on the 137th's front.

The Regiment ordered Company D, 3d Chemical Battalion, to fire on the woods north of Villers at 0855, in order to flush an enemy assembly point. The 1st Battalion, 320th Infantry, was attached to the 137th and was to be committed on Division order.

The 137th jumped off at 1330 on an attack toward Villers, after patrols had been sent ahead into the town. The attacking elements had difficulty with enemy infiltration parties working around the flanks. A large number of enemy faced Companies E and F and a bitter fight ensued. At 1700, Company E relieved Company I, which had been in the woods west



Medics of the 137th remove the wounded from Lustremange, Belgium, shortly after the town was shelled by artillery

of Villers. Company F had nearly completed cleaning out the woods, and in the Surre Woods, Company G had beaten off several counterattacks. The Regiment was ordered to halt its advance at 1810, dig-in, mine the roads, and patrol to the front, in preparation to stepping off again at 0800, January 2. In Villers, Companies K and L were slowly being cut to pieces by tank fire and flame throwers.

Company C, 602d TD Battalion, reverted to III Corps Control and worked between the flanks of the 137th and the 134th Regiments.

The 137th Infantry continued to attack the defenses about the town of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau on January 2, as the 1st Battalion cleaned out the woods west of the town and then assisted Company F in clearing the enemy from the woods south of the enemy-held road junction west of Villers. Company E, pressing from the south, cleared enemy points. The 3d Battalion assembled in the vicinity of Livarchamps, and Company I took over the roadblocks on the Regiment's front. Company G remained in the Surre Woods. The enemy opposition continued to be strong, as units of the 137th were under enemy artil-

lery, tank, mortar, and machine gun fire throughout the day. The weather was bitter cold.

Fighter-bombers bombed and strafed Villers and then struck close to the 137th front line positions. Bitter fighting was carried on along the front.

By January 2, the 320th Infantry, which was working on the Regiment's right flank, had pulled up opposite the 137th, and Company G of the 137th was facing the enemy in but two directions, rather than three. On the 137th's left was the 134th Infantry, assisted by elements of the 4th Armored. The 35th Division was bounded on the left by the 6th Armored and on the right by the 26th Infantry Division.

The Division ordered operations to halt at 1755, the forward elements of the 137th dug-in and sent patrols to the front during the night. Regimental Headquarters was located at Honville, along with the 2d Battalion CP, while the 1st and 3d Battalion CP's were in Livarchamps.

On January 3, the 137th Infantry attacked again, but was unsuccessful in taking the road junction west of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau. Enemy tanks thwart-



An aid man pulls a litter for wounded soldiers which was constructed by natives in the village of Luxembourg, and is used by medies of the 137th Infantry in this area

ed the maneuvering of the 1st and 2d Battalions. Heavy fire of all types was received by the Regiment throughout the day. The 2nd Battalion had Companies E and F attacking west of Villers, and Company G on the defensive in the Surre Woods. Companies B, C, and A, in that order, were on the line below Villers. The 3d Battalion was guarding the roadblocks on the Regiment's front.

At 0915, the 1st Battalion reported that the enemy was infiltrating up the road from Villers toward the road junction, and artillery checked this move. 2d Battalion patrols reached the junction at noon, but were unable to take it. The 1st Battalion was under tank fire throughout the day, while both the 2d and 3d faced heavy artillery. The advance was stopped at 1700, and all units posted security and used patrols to keep contact with the enemy. Mines were also laid by the Regiment.

The second group of men from the 137th left this day for furloughs to the United States. The quota was one officer and 13 enlisted men from the Regiment.

On January 4, the 137th hurled an attack at the road junction west of Villers, captured and defended the position against heavy enemy counterattacks. The intense enemy artillery fire forced heavy casualties on the Regiment.

The attack was launched at 0800, and Company A was on the road junction by 1045. The 1st Battalion closed into an assembly area in the rear of the 2d Battalion zone, at 1610. The 3d Battalion was assembled in Livarchamps, with Company I on the roadblocks. Company G was holding its 700-yard frontage in the Surre Woods, with its CP in Surre.

By nightfall, the 320th Infantry had secured four houses in Harlange and was being counterattacked by tanks and infantry.

The 137th Infantry struggled on January 5 against the stubborn resistance, as the 1st Battalion, now under the command of Major Albert Frink, moved from its position south of the Villers road junction to a position behind the 2d Battalion, and prepared to follow the 2d in an attack. The 2d Battalion supported the 1st by fire and awaited its ar-



A German prisoner helps American GI's carry another wounded German prisoner of war to a jeep ambulance near Harlange, Luxembourg. Both of the German prisoners were in their teens.

rival in their rear before moving out. The 2d Battalion cleared out infiltration parties and also mopped up the draw to its front. The 3d Battalion, relieved of roadblocks on the front, secured positions vacated in the woods by the 1st Battalion after its move. Company G remained in the Surre Woods.

Company D, 3d Chemical Battalion, continued to support the 137th with its missions. The 6th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron took over the screening missions along the bulge into the 137th's sector, between Tintange and Honville. The 1st Battalion, 320th Infantry, reverted to control of the 320th Infantry.

Heavy fire was received by the Regiment throughout the day. Three terrific barrages landed at 0720, just to the right of Company F positions. During the night, vigorous patrolling was conducted. Companies A and E turned back two enemy patrols. The Regimental listening post picked up several enemy armored vehicles moving in Villers during the night.

The weather grew colder on January 6, and the 137th Infantry continued its pressure for the second day on Villers, after capturing the all-important road junction. The 320th combined with the 137th, while the 134th continued the attack in its zone. Heavy fire was received all along the Regiment's front.

The 6th Cavalry Group relieved Company G in the Surre Woods at 2350, and the unit assembled in the town of Surre. The 320th Infantry, less the 1st Battalion, was attached to the 6th Armored, which was on the left flank of the 35th Division. The 26th Division was on the right. The 28th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron continued to hold positions between the 137th and the 134th. The 6th Cavalry Group moved into positions between the 3d Battalion, 137th, and the positions vacated by Company G, 137th.

The organic and attached field artillery battalions continued to support the Division attack, firing TOT's on all towns and roads in the Division sector.



Building in Villiers La Bonne Eau. All but one building were in a similar condition.

A heavy schedule of harassing fire continued throughout the day.

January 7 marked the 11th day that the 137th Infantry had been struggling on against the welldefended town of Villers. The Regiment continued to put the pressure on the village as it was being ripped apart by thundering artillery. The 137th's front was cut down to approximately half its previous width as the 6th Cavalry Group took over the right portion of the Regiment's sector. The 137th was flanked on the left by the 134th Infantry and on the right by the 6th Cavalry Group. Within the 137th's zone, the 1st Battalion, with Companies A and C on the line, held down the left flank, and the 2d Battalion, with E and F, was on the right. Company G remained in the Surre Woods, and the 3d Battalion was assembled south of the 2d Battalion. The 1st Battalion had moved its Command Post from Livarchamps to Halt.

On January 8 active patrolling was conducted against the enemy and harassing fire was delivered throughout the day, as the 137th Infantry maintained its pressure on the enemy in the vicinity of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau.

The 1st Battalion relieved elements of the 28th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron with Companies B and C. Company G was relieved at noon by Company A, and then assembled in the rear of Company B. The 2d Battalion continued to occupy its original positions on the right flank of the Regiment with E and F, as Company G moved from Surre to its battalion to effect the relief of Company F. The 3d Battalion continued to occupy positions southwest of Villers until it was relieved by elements of the 6th Cavalry Group, at 0915. The Battalion then assembled in the vicinity of Livarchamps. Company C, 735th Tank Battalion, and Company D, 3d Chemical Battalion, were attached to the 137th.

The entire III Corps was to launch an attack into the Belgian Bulge on the morning of January 9. At 1500, the 3d Battalion moved from Livarchamps and assembled between the 1st and 2d Battalions. The 134th was in position on the left of the 137th and on the right was Task Force Fickett, the 6th Cavalry Group. The 6th Armored Division was to attack on the left flank of the 35th Division.

With the 1st Battalion working on the left flank and the 2d Battalion on the right, the 137th Infantry launched an attack on January 9, to take Villers and the ground to its north, but the enemy checked the thrust. The Regiment's zone was so laid out that the 137th would be pinched out by the 134th Infantry and Task Force Fickett. The Regiment jumped off at 1000, supported by Company C, 735th Tank Battalion, along with Company B and one platoon of Company C, 654th TD Battalion, and was to attack in its zone until it was pinched out by its adjacent units.

The 1st Battalion stepped off, with B and C leading the attack, and Company C striking to the right



Colonel Murray and radio man in Belgium, January, 1945

of Company B. Supported by a company of tanks, the 2d Battalion hit toward Villers and also protected the right flank of the Regiment's zone. E and G Companies were on the line while Company F was in battalion reserve. The 3d Battalion occupied a position to the left of Company A and maintained contact with the 134th Infantry.

The 137th Infantry suffered heavy casualties as the enemy stopped the attack.

The 1st Battalion was hit at 0230 by a heavy enemy patrol, which drove into the OP line. The stab was repulsed and casualties were inflicted upon the enemy. The OP line was re-established and reinforced at 0330.

The 2d Battalion was heavily shelled, at 2335, by artillery and mortar fire.

Supported by tanks and tank destroyers, the 137th Infantry pushed ahead against the enemy again on January 10, making a slight gain and capturing the much sought and fought for town of Villers-la-Bonne-Eau, a target of the Regiment for the past thirteen days. The Regiment attacked at 0915 with its attached units, the 735th's Tank Company C, along with Company B and one platoon of Company C, 654th TD Battalion, and Company D, 3d Chemical Battalion.



The wake of battle

The 1st Battalion, with one platoon of Company C, 654th TD Battalion, a platoon of the Regimental Anti-tank Company, and Cannon Company in direct support, advanced up the center of the 137th's sector and gained slightly. The Battalion located a C-47 which had apparently crashed from four to five days before.

With a company of tanks and one of tank destroyers attached to the 2d Battalion, Company G entered Villers and by 1400 held two buildings on the edge of the battered town. Later in the afternoon the entire village was cleared.

On the Regiment's left flank, the 3d Battalion was prepared to move on order and patrolled actively to its front and flanks, maintaining contact with the 134th. The 6th Cavalry Group maintained contact with the 137th on the right flank.

At 1400, the road leading from Lutremange was choked with enemy vehicles, and an air strike and artillery pounded the column.

The 137th was to attack again at 0800, January 11, supported by the 735th tanks and 654th Tank Destroyers, along with Company D, 3d Chemical Battalion. The Regiment suffered heavy casualties this day, the majority being from the 2d Battalion.

The 137th Infantry had one of its coldest days on January 11, as it took the town of Lutremange and was pinched out in its sector by 1700.

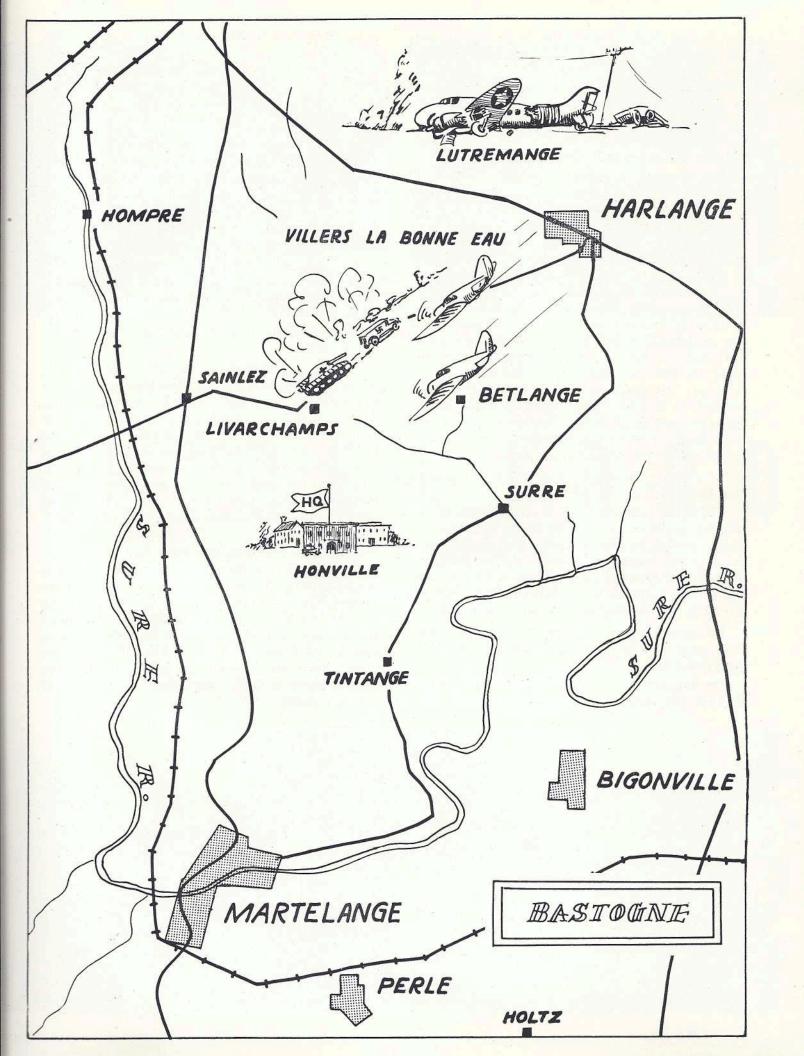
The 1st Battalion, with a section of tanks and a platoon of TD's, attacked in its zone at 0800, and by 1015 Companies B and C were on the Battalion's initial objective. The Battalion continued through the woods and out into the open, securing its final objective by 1625. The Battalion took over the ground above Lutremange.

The 2d Battalion had patrols stop off from Villers and advance toward Lutremange to determine whether the town was accupied by the enemy. By 1300, Companies E, F, and G had patrols going through the town and found it to be clear. The Battalion was supported by fire from Company C, 735th Tank Battalion, and Company B, 654th TD Battalion. Lutremange was found to be almost as badly demolished as Villers.

The 3d Battalion prepared to move on order and maintained contact on the left with the 134th Infantry Regiment.

By 1700, the 137th Infantry was pinched out by the advance of the 134th and Task Force Fickett. The 137th then went into 35th Division reserve. The 2d Battalion remained in Lutremange, the 3d moved into Livarchamps, while the 1st assembled in Hompre and its vicinity. Regimental Headquarters remained in Honville.

The 137th Infantry remained in 35th Division reserve on January 12, with the 1st Battalion assem-



bled in and about Hompre, the 2d in Lutremange, the 3d in Livarchamps, and Regimental Headquarters in Honville.

The 137th Infantry remained in Division reserve on January 13, with all units occupying their original towns.

The Regiment received the tentative defense plan which it was to follow if ordered by Division.

The Regiment remained in Division reserve on January 14 and also conducted reconnaissance parties over the area which the Regiment was to defend if ordered. Unit commanders conducted a reconnaissance of the defensive sectors during the morning and submitted individual plans to the Regiment by 1500. The 1st and 2d Battalions were to have two rifle companies on the line and one in reserve under Regimental control. Routes were reconnoitered to the positions, with the use of the main highway prohibited, except for the use of Cannon and Anti-tank Companies. The 3d Battalion reconnoitered the Battalion reserve area and the routes to the area. An alternate route and area was to be selected, in case the 320th Infantry would be released to the 35th Division. Caution was exercised, since the MLR of the tentative defense plan was in the vicinity of the present front lines.

On January 15, the 137th Infantry remained in 35th Division reserve.

The 137th Infantry conducted rehabilitation and training again, on January 16, as the Regiment remained in 35th Division reserve. Regimental Head-quarters was located in Honville, the 1st Battalion in and about Hompre, 2d Battalion in Lutremange, and the 3d Battalion was billeted in Livarchamps. The 35th Division was in III Corps control.

Companies B and C reported that they had been fired on at 0415 by what was believed to be a self-propelled gun.

On January 17, the Regiment received orders that CT 137 would move by motor on January 18

to the Fort Moselle Barracks in Metz, France. The combat team was to cease upon its arrival in Metz. Three Quartermaster Truck Companies, the 658th, 6968th, and the 4051st, were attached to the 137th at 1900, providing 89 trucks for transportation on the move down into France.

A Field Order was issued from Regiment, at 2300, to all units of the 137th.

CT 137, exercising certain counter-intelligence measures, moved out of Belgium on the morning of January 18, and went by motor to Metz, France, where the combat team ceased and the 137th Infantry Regiment was billeted in Fort Moselle.

On this move from Belgium into France strict secrecy was observed, which included the covering of Division patches, bumper markings, and any other markings which would disclose the unit. Route markers on this move did not show any unit designation or number.

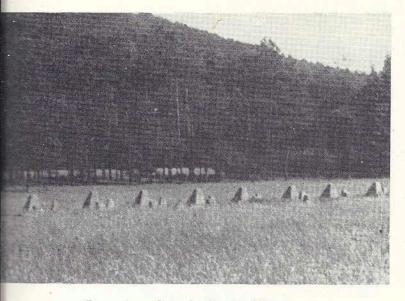
The IP was in Martelange at 0930. The 3d Battalion serial cleared the IP at 0945, Special Units and one platoon of Company B, 60th Engineer Battalion, cleared by 1017, the 219th FA Battalion cleared by 1027, the 2d Battalion by 1037, and the 1st Battalion by 1054. The Combat Team departed from Martelange, Belgium, by motor and moved south through Arlon and then went on into Longwy. The column turned southeast and moved through Uckange, turned south and traveled on into Metz, and closed into Fort Moselle.

The 137th closed its Command Post in Honville, Belgium, at 0914 and opened it immediately at the head of Serial No. 2 in the Combat Team motor column. The 3d Battalion closed into Fort Moselle at 1525 and was followed by Regimental Headquarters and Special Units at 1625, 2d Battalion at 1650, and the 1st Battalion at 1705. The 219th FA Battalion closed into Metz on the opposite bank of the Moselle River at 1730. Fort Moselle is located in northern Metz.









Dragon's teeth in the Siegfried Line



Another view of the Siegfried Line

RHINE & LAND

CHAPTER FIVE

Aphoven



Schinveld



CHAPTER FIVE

RHINELAND

At 1620 on January 19, CT 137 was placed in XX Corps reserve, and was ordered to be prepared to move by motor on a three-hour notice.

The Regiment conducted rehabilitation and training during the day and also received a small number of reinforcements.

From January 20 to 22, the 137th remained in XX Corps reserve and was on a three-hour notice to leave Metz by motor movement. Eighty-five trucks were attached to the Regiment for transportation.

The Regiment conducted a training schedule during this period, along with rehabilitation. The schedule included an hour's march, close order drill and classes.

CT 137 jumped from the III Corps of the 3d Army to the XV Corps of the 7th Army on January 23, as the Regiment moved by motor from Fort Moselle, Metz, to an area in the vicinity of Chateau-Salins. The status of the Regiment was Corps reserve. The 134th Infantry remained attached to the 6th Armored Division at Bastogne, while the 320th Infantry moved along with the Division to its new assembly area in the 7th Army sector.

Led by the 2d Battalion Serial, the Regimental motor column hit its IP, which was the Moyen, or the second bridge over the Moselle River, at 1045. The 1st Battalion cleared the IP at 1115, the 3d Battalion at 1135, Special Units at 1205, and the 219th FA Battalion at 1230. The Combat Team moved in a southeastern direction, through the extremely cold and windy weather, from Metz to Chateau-Salins.

The 137th Infantry moved into its assembly area by 1530. Regimental Headquarters was located in Chateau-Voue, 1st Battalion in Couthill, 2d Battalion in Grousisville, and the 3d Battalion was billeted in Mulcy. The Regiment was to await further orders from XV Corps Headquarters.

The 137th Infantry moved by motor from its assembly area in the vicinity of Chateau-Salins on January 24, to an area in the vicinity of Montbraun, and relieved the 398th Infantry, of the 100th Division, in its defensive positions during the night.

The Regiment moved from its former area at 0730 in an eastern direction, with the 219th FA Battalion leading the column. The 3d Battalion cleared the IP at 0805, the 2d Battalion at 0925, the 1st Battalion at 0845, and Special Units at 0915. The column left Alberstroff and traveled through Sarre-Union and Dimeringer to reach its new area.

The 2d Battalion moved up into Lemberg, the 3d Battalion went into St. Louis, the 1st moved into Meisenthal, and Regimental Headquarters was located in Soucht. The 219th FA Battalion went into Montbraun. The 320th Infantry took up positions

on the right flank of the 137th. On the left was the 100th Infantry Division.

The Regiment was to relieve the 398th Infantry and defend and improve on the defensive positions. The Regiment received a number of reinforcements this day.

On January 25, the 137th Infantry was holding the positions it had taken over from the 398th Infantry during the early morning. The 35th Division was under XV Corps control, bounded on the left by the 100th Infantry Division and on the right by the 45th Infantry Division, of the VI Corps of the 7th Army. The 137th was on the left flank of the Division and was flanked on the right by the 320th Infantry. The 134th Infantry remained detached from the Division.

Within the 137th's sector, the three battalions were on the line in their defensive positions. The 2d Battalion was on the left, its CP in Lemberg, and its troops holding ground on the outskirts of the town and to the south. In the central sector, the 3d Battalion had its CP in St. Louis. The 1st Battalion, on the right, was stretched out along eastern Sarreinberg and had its CP in Meisenthal. The Regimental Headquarters was in Soucht.

During the night the Regiment relieved the 398th Infantry by 0230. The 1st Battalion had completed relief as of 0020, the 3d Battalion by 0035, and the 2d Battalion as of 0230. The battalions held the ground and improved their positions.

The 2d Battalion received five rounds of 120mm mortar fire at 0845 and several casualties were suffered. At 1335, three rounds of artillery coming from the rear killed three men. Company I reported that at 2050, the enemy was probing its positions with much small arms fire, but the situation quieted down by 2150.

The 137th Infantry continued to hold its defensive positions vacated by the 398th Infantry and sporadic fire was received by the battalions throughout the day, although there was no heavy action.

All battalions were ordered to send out reconnaissance patrols this day and during the night of January 26-27, to determine elements of essential information such as the location of automatic weapons, fortifications, wire entanglements, minefields, booby trapped areas, fields of fire through woods, roadblocks, CPs, or indications of the enemy improving their defense or any flare of activity. The regular motorized patrol was also to be conducted.

Snow continued to fall throughout the day, as the 137th Infantry maintained its defensive positions on January 27, holding and improving them. Company B, 654th TD Battalion, was in direct support of the Regiment.

The 320th Infantry, on the 137th's right flank, also continued to hold and improve its positions. The adjacent divisions, the 100th and the 45th, also maintained their positions. The 134th Infantry remained attached to the 6th Armored.

Patrols reported enemy action throughout the front of the Regiment's sector. The battalions were rotating their companies, with two outfits on the line, and the third rifle company in reserve.

On January 28, the 137th Infantry continued to hold and improve its positions in its sector of defense. Patrolling activity was conducted.

The 137th was relieved of its sector by the 398th Infantry on January 29, and the Regiment moved by motor to a rear assembly area. The 1st Battalion was relieved by 0105, the 3d Battalion by 0115, and the 2d Battalion by 2115.

Headquarters and Special Units moved to Adamsviller, 1st Battalion to Gungwiller, 2d Battalion to Berg, and the 3d Battalion moved to Rexingen. The Regiment was billeted in the towns for the night prior to moving out in the morning, by train and motor, for Holland.

On January 30, the 137th Infantry began its movement to Holland. Leaving its assembly areas in the morning, the 137th organic transportation moved out on its two-day move through Lorentze, Sarre-Union, Fenetrange, Vic-Sur-Seille, Nancy, Toul, Void, Commercy, St. Mihiel, and stopped for the night just short of Verdun.

The remainder of the Regiment moved by truck from the assembly areas to Reding and boarded "40 & 8" cars for a three-day move to Holland.

The 137th Infantry continued on its move up into Holland on January 31. Troops, moving by rail, traveled through Lunesville, Nancy, Toul, Verdun, Sedan, Mezieres, Namur, and Liege, and stopped at Vise on February 1, during the three-day move.

The organic transportation left Verdun in the morning and moved on through Stenay, Sedan, Bouilion, Paliseul, Massin, Tellin, Rochefort, Marche, Liege, Vise, turned northeast, and moved through Warlange to Moorbeek, Holland. From that destination point, Regimental Headquarters moved to Banholt, 1st Battalion to Houtem, 2d Battalion to Scheg, and the 3d Battalion to Herkenrade. This assembly area was north of Liege, east of Maastricht, and near the Meuse River.

The Regiment was now assigned to the Ninth Army, along with the 35th Division.

Casualties for the month of January were 34 men killed in action, 222 men wounded in action, and six men missing in action. Twenty-three prisoners passed through the 137th Infantry PW cage during the month.

Troops of the 137th Infantry, following their three-day train ride from Southern France, arrived in Vise, Belgium, on the morning of February 1, and moved by motor to the Regiment's assembly area in the vicinity of Banholt, Holland. Troops who made the entire trip by motor had arrived in Holland the previous day. The 35th Division was now in the XVI Corps of the Ninth U. S. Army.

The Regiment's new assembly area was located north of Liege and east of the Netherlands city of Maastricht. Regimental Headquarters and Special Units moved into Banholt, 1st Battalion to Houtem, 2d Battalion to Scheg, and the 3d Battalion assembled in Herkenrade. The 137th closed into its area by 1615.

The 137th Regiment remained in its assembly area February 2 and 3, as the 35th Division remained in XVI Corps reserve. The 134th Infantry, which had remained in Bastogne when the 137th and 320th Regiments moved south and joined the Seventh Army, rejoined the 35th Division in Holland. This marked the first time that the three regiments of the Division had been together since the 35th erased the southern tip of the Belgian Bulge.

The 35th Division was ordered to relieve elements of the British 52d Infantry Division of the 3d Army, in defensive positions inside Germany on February 5. The 137th Infantry, with the 17th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron attached, was to move by motor from its assembly area in Holland to the sector held by the 156th Infantry Brigade. The Regiment was to occupy and defend the same defensive positions held by the British Infantry to enter Germany for the second time. The 17th Cavalry was to defend ground to the left of the 137th, while the 320th Infantry was to be on the Regiment's right flank.

The Regiment, with the 17th Cavalry attached, moved by motor from its assembly area in Holland to the British positions. The 3d Battalion, with one platoon of the AT Company, cleared the IP at 1045, the 2d Battalion serial, with a platoon of the AT Company, cleared by 1105, the 1st Battalion, with a platoon of the AT Company, cleared at 1125, Special Units with Company B, 110th Med. Det., and Company B, 60th Engr. Battalion, cleared by 1150, the 219th FA Battalion by 1220, the 17th Cavalry by 1300, and Company B, 654th TD Battalion, cleared the IP by 1400.

The 1st Battalion moved into the right sector of the Regiment's zone and relieved the 7th Cameronions. Troops took up defensive positions on the northern outskirts of Heinsberg and southeast of the battered German town, while the CP was located in Aphoven. In the central sector, the 2d Battalion relieved the 6th Cameronions, as its troops moved into positions in Kirchhoven and Lieck. The Battalion CP was in Braunsrath and the reserve company in Locken. The 4/5 Royal Scot's Fussiliers were relieved in their positions by the 3d Battalion, on the Regiment's left. The CP was in Obspringen and the troops took over positions in Hagserduesch and Vinn. The 17th Cavalry relieved the Regiment in a position to the left of the 3d Battalion. Company B, 654th TD Battalion, co-ordinated anti-tank defense

with the 137th AT Company. Regimental Headquarters was established in Bocket.

In the 35th Division zone, the 137th Infantry, with the 17th Cavalry, was holding the left flank, while the 320th was on the right. The 134th Infantry was in Division reserve. To the left of the 35th Division was the 7th British Armored Division, and on the right was the U. S. 102d Infantry Division.

A Company A patrol, conducting a reconnaissance to the front, was pinned down by enemy fire coming from a nearby building. Reinforcements were sent out to contact the patrol, but failed to locate the Company A men. It was believed that the patrol of one officer and four EM were captured by the enemy.

The roads in the Regimental sector were in poor condition, due to mud and rain, and a number of roads were impassable for vehicles. Regimental Message Center employed the M-29 (Weasel) to run from Regiment to the battalions.

On February 8 the 137th Infantry was to be relieved of its sector by CCB, 8th Armored Division, but the relief was postponed and the Regiment continued to hold and defend its positions. Patrolling was conducted by the front line units. The 1st Battalion received sporadic enemy fire throughout the day; otherwise the enemy artillery was light.

The 137th Infantry continued to hold its defensive positions west of the Roer River on February 11 as enemy fire increased slightly during the day.

The enemy destruction of the floodgates at the mighty Schwammenauel Dam this day sent tons of water flooding down upon the Roer Valley and caused the Roer River to rise to a stage as much as seven feet above its normal average along the 9th Army front. The Roer, normally a sluggish and comparatively narrow stream winding through scenic and industrial German countryside west of the Cologne Plain, had been galvanized into a racing torrent in some sections, and in the 137th area, it had overflowed its banks and flooded large areas.

A 3d Battalion patrol followed an enemy patrol to the outskirts of Karken, at 2335, ran into an enemy observation post, became engaged in a fire fight, and then withdrew. Company G at 2115, heard enemy activity in Kirchhoven, lit up the area with flares, and then forced the enemy to withdraw by placing mortar fire on them. Enemy artillery fell at 1212 in the 3d Battalion zone and at 1800 in the 1st Battalion sector. Two 12-round barrages of heavy artillery hit the 2d Battalion and 1st Battalion at 1810 and 1840, respectively.

The 137th Infantry and the enemy watched each other across the enemy-created flood of the Roer River on February 12 as the Regiment maintained its defensive positions.

Major General Baade, 35th Division Commander, directed that all troops be alerted to the fact that the enemy might conduct raids into the Regiment's lines up to and including company strength.

The 17th Cavalry and the three battalions of the 137th Infantry remained in their defensive positions on February 13. Early in the morning the Company L observation post was encircled by approximately 20 enemy troops, but when artillery was placed on the area, the enemy dispersed from the OP.

The sun was shining, and the weather turned warmer on February 15 as the 137th Infantry continued to hold and defend its positions. Enemy artillery fire was light, as in the past few days.

The 137th Infantry continued to hold its defensive position west of the Roer River from February 16 to 18. Sporadic enemy artillery fire continued throughout the three days, as well as flare activity during darkness. All units conducted patrols as usual. Regimental Headquarters was in Bocket, 1st Battalion in Aphoven, 2d Battalion in Braunsrath, and the 3d Battalion in Obspringen. The 17th Cavalry Squadron remained attached to the 137th Infantry.

Enemy patrols were active on February 17. The Company F observation post and a patrol from Company G fired on an enemy patrol and it withdrew. Company K killed two of its own men at 0515 when they were challenged and failed to halt. At 0745 the Company B observation post was fired on by an enemy machine gun and bazooka, but when reinforcements arrived, the enemy withdrew. The Company A observation post was attacked at 1035 by an undetermined number of enemy with machine guns and small arms, but the situation quieted down by 1115, and two of the enemy were known to be killed during the fight. The 17th Cavalry had leaflets fired at them, which welcomed the 84th Division "Rail Splitters" back into action.

At 1030 on February 18, an enemy patrol followed a Company E patrol which was returning to its lines. The enemy fled when 137th men fired on them. Company G fired on three of the enemy who were attempting to get in touch with civilians in Kirchhoven late in the evening. One enemy attempting to crawl into the Company F Observation Post at 2245 was fired upon and fled.

From February 19 to 21, the 137th Infantry continued the defense of its sector west of the Roer River, and also conducted assault boat training in a rear area.

At 1150 on February 19, when three men of Company G were moving out to their front to put in trip flares, they were wounded by enemy machine gun fire. At 1330 the 1st Battalion Observation Post observed a 12-man enemy patrol in Unterbruch, and artillery fire was placed on the town. During the night there was much flare activity reported by all units along the front.

A British Lancaster bomber crashed 1,000 yards north of Heinsberg and 200 yards to the front of 2d Battalion positions at 0150 on February 21. A 2d Battalion patrol found the plane to be free of personnel, but removed the navigational equipment and maps which it discovered in the wreck.

A 2d Battalion patrol went into Haag at 0035, found no activity in the town, but was involved in a fire fight with an enemy patrol while returning to friendly lines. One enemy was wounded at 0145 when Company G fired on an enemy patrol in the act of infiltrating through the lines. At 0842 all companies were alerted when 25 to 30 enemy were observed crossing the Roer River in boats. Three additional boatloads of from six to eight men each crossed to the western shore of the river at 0920. The Observation Post kept the enemy under constant observation as mortars were brought forward to engage any one attempting to cross the river. The enemy failed to make a thrust at any of the positions of the 137th.

The 137th Infantry Regiment was relieved of its sector at 2307, February 22, by the 314th Infantry of the 79th Division, and then moved back out of Germany into an assembly area in Holland and passed into 35th Division reserve. The Regiment closed into its assembly area at 0315, February 23. The 320th and 134th Regiments remained on the defensive in their sectors and prepared to jump-off with the 9th Army at 0330 on February 24.

Locations of the 137th units in the Regiment's assembly area were: Regimental Headquarters, Special Units, and the 1st Battalion in Schinveld; 2d Battalion in Pannenschopp; and the 3d Battalion in Neiderbusch.

At 1900, February 24, the order was issued to sew on all 35th Division patches and paint bumper markings on all vehicles at once, since the veil of secrecy was lifted from the Division.

As scattered enemy artillery fell all along the Division front, the 320th and 134th Infantry Regiments jumped off at 0330 February 24, following a preparatory barrage, and cleared their zones to the Roer River. The 137th Infantry remained in Division reserve in its assembly area in Holland and conducted reconnaissance for possible commitment into any sector of the Division.

The 35th Division, on the right flank of the XVI Corps, was bounded on the left by the 314th Infantry, 79th Division, and on the right by the 84th Division, XIII Corps.

The 137th Infantry remained in 35th Division reserve until the evening of February 25, and then moved by motor to cross the Roer River and attack in the sector assigned to it, adjacent to the 84th Infantry Division.

The Regiment, with its attached units, moved out of its assembly area in Holland on the evening of the 25th, with the order of march being the 3d Battalion, 2d Battalion, and the 1st Battalion.

The Regiment was to cross the Roer River at Korrenzig, then move by foot to Doveren, then on to the Line of Departure, and attack at 0600, February 26. The 134th Infantry was to work on the left of the 137th, while the 320th Infantry was to support the

attack of the 134th by fire. The 134th had to make a crossing of the Roer in its jump-off at 0600.

The 137th Infantry crossed the Roer River by motor under cover of darkness, moved into Doveren, attacked at 0630 on foot to reach the Line of Departure, and then swung a thrust toward Houverath, Bruck, and Eastern Huckelhoven, against the stiff enemy resistance encountered during the day.

Reconnaissance elements moved forward to Doveren, and the foot elements of the Regiment crossed the IP at Ball at 0330 and moved to the line of departure, followed by the motor transportation. The entire Regiment closed into the area by 0500, and Regimental Headquarters was established in Doveren, which at the time was subjected to a heavy enemy artillery barrage.

The 2d Battalion, led by Company F, attacked in a column of companies. The advance was met by heavy mortar, artillery, and SP fire. Company F moved through the woods east of Huckelhoven under mortar fire, while Company E followed with a platoon of tanks, proceeding along the road to the right of the woods. The Battalion pulled up at the stream bed near the edge of the woods, dug-in, and blazed away at the enemy confronting it, as Company H supported the fire by long range machine gun fire. When the 137th moved on toward Seidlung, 12 enemy soldiers came out of Huckelhoven and surrendered to Company F.

The Regiment received considerable mortar, small arms, automatic weapons, and artillery fire during the day, as the enemy was making observations from a slag pile in Huckelhoven. The 3d Battalion, attacking on the right, captured the town of Houverath and moved on toward Bruck. Five hours after leading elements passed through Houverath, 15 enemy soldiers were flushed from cellars in the town. Among the prisoners taken this day were a captain, CO of the 1st Battalion, 330th Infantry Regiment, 183d VG Division, and a lieutenant, 219th FA Regiment.

Continuing the attack a second day, the 137th Infantry shoved ahead on February 27 and pitched the enemy out of Gerderath, the woods southwest of Gerderath, Fronderath, Gerderhahn, and Almyhl. The Regiment received exceptional work from Company B, 784th Tank Battalion, which was attached to the 137th for the operation.

After jumping off at 0600, Companies K and L secured Gerderath at 1125 and at 1420, Company I captured Gerderhahn. One platoon of Company L took the town of Fronderath.

The 2d Battalion launched its attack from K1 Gladbach at 0600 with 784th Tanks and tank destroyers from the 654th Battalion. Spearheaded by Company F, the Battalion fanned out, went through the woods southwest of Gerderath, moved across the stream, and cleaned out a patch of woods 500 yards wide, below Myhl. The 27th marked the second day that Major Harry Parker had commanded the 2d

Battalion in combat and his men advanced over 2,000 yards. Company H machine guns were firing from upstairs windows of houses in Gladbach across to the town of Myhl. The work of Company B, 784th Tank Battalion, had been exceptional all day, and the negro tankers supported the Regiment in an excellent manner all day.

The 1st Battalion, in Regimental reserve since the beginning of the operation, jumped off for Myhl at 1515, moving on the Regiment's left flank. At 1700 the Battalion had captured Almyhl and then continued on toward Myhl.

February 28, the 137th infantrymen trudged ahead working through the Birgeler Woods and seizing the towns of Wildenrath, Rodge, Arsbeck, and Station-Vlodrop. The enemy offered slight resistance of small arms, automatic weapons, and SP gun fire on leading elements of the 137th during the days operations.

The 1st Battalion had cleared the town of Myhl during the night, consolidated its positions, and continued the attack on February 28, moving northwest to the road junction east of Rod en, then followed the 3d Battalion to the edge of the town. A 407th Group, XVI Corps, observation plane was shot down over the 1st Battalion area and the pilot was slightly wounded, and treated by 137th medical aid men.

After assembling in Myhl, the 2d Battalion moved to Wildenrath in Regimental reserve.

The 3d Battalion pressed on in the morning from Gerderath, and swept ahead through Wilderath and Rodgen to Station-Vlodrop, where it held, awaiting further orders.

The Regiment had advanced 6,000 meters during the day, clearing road blocks and flushing cellars in the towns passed through. The Regimental Command Post moved to Rodgen in the afternoon and made plans to execute the Division mission of following Task Force Byrne when it had passed through Rodgen.

Battle casualties for the month of February were five killed in action, 30 wounded in action, and five missing in action.

March 1 found the 137th Infantry Combat Team continuing its swift attack toward the Rhine River with TF Byrne and the 134th CT. The 137th CT was in the vicinity of Rodgen, Germany, on March 1 waiting for TF Byrne to pass through its positions and then follow the 320th force further east by marching and shuttling. By 1750 TF Byrne had passed through the road junction east of Rodgen and the 137th's CT began to move out at the rear of the TF Byrne column. The 137th's mission was to advance and close into an assembly area near Leuth, Germany, southeast of Venlo, Holland.

Upon arrival, Regimental Headquarters and Special Units moved into Leuth at 0030, March 2, while the 2d and 3d Battalions closed into a position southeast of Leuth. At 0220 the 1st Battalion met enemy opposition outside of Kierhenback, its proposed as-

sembly area. The Battalion was confronted by an entrenched roadblock and a woods to the right of the road, with an estimated number of 65 enemy. By 0430 the 1st Battalion troops and their tank destroyers had flushed the woods, cleared the enemy situation, and advanced into the town.

A gun crew of Cannon Company captured 40 enemy soldiers without a fight during the early morning when the enemy came marching down a road into May. Later in the morning when the Service Company quartering party entered Leutherheide and spotted an estimated number of 65 enemy troops, it reported the news to the 137th CP. A task force was organized of armored cars, tank destroyers, and seven jeep loads of men from Companies L and G, roared into the town, and so surprised the enemy that 35 surrendered and the remainder fled. The 137th CT remained assembled in the area while TF Byrne was three kilometers east of Straelen at 1505, March 2.

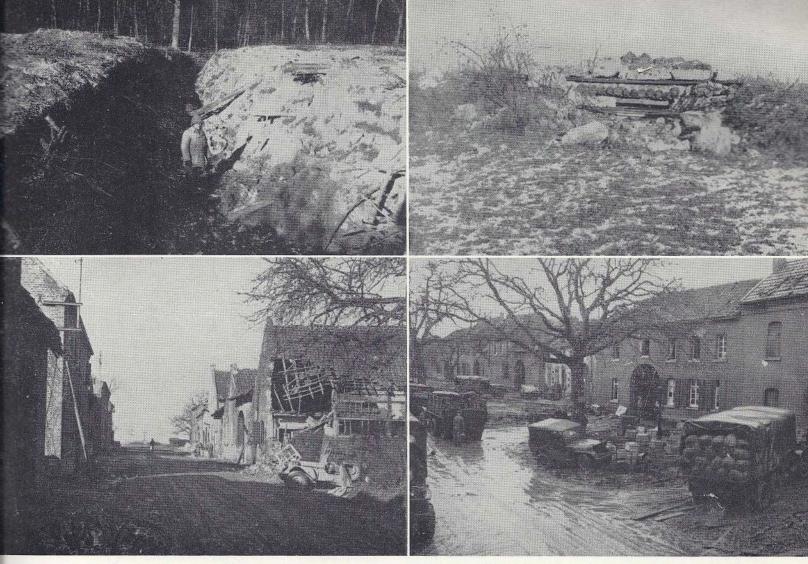
The 137th Infantry CT departed from its assembly area in the vicinity of Venlo, Holland, at 1500, March 3, and moved by foot and motor to an assembly area west of Nieukirk, Germany, where it closed by 1900. The 2d and 1st Battalions left their areas and marched 14 miles through the night prior to jumping-off in an attack at 0700, March 4. The 3d Battalion moved to Nieukirk during the night and remained there in Regimental reserve until 1100.

The 2d Battalion, with Company G pointing the push, launched its drive and swiftly secured the town of Rheurdt, southwest of Lintfort. The Battalion seized two bridges intact over the Fleuth Landwehr at 1000. The 1st Battalion, advancing meanwhile, also took crossings over the Fleuth Landwehr until it met strongly held and fortified enemy positions in the woods to its front, protecting Lintfort. The 3d Battalion, in reserve, manned roadblocks and outposts near Nieukirk.

On the left flank of the U. S. Ninth Army, TF Byrne was holding down the left flank of the 35th Division. The 137th CT was in the central sector of the Division, and the 8th Armored Division, attached to the 35th, was on the right flank of that Regiment. The 35th had the 1st Canadian Army on its left and the 5th Armored to its right.

After Lintfort had been taken on March 5, Task Force Murray, which included CCB, 8th Armored, was composed and in a daring night attack captured the city of Rheinberg.

The 8th Armored desired to seize Lintfort by attacking through the 137th's 2d Battalion, a plan which was mutually agreed upon by the respective commanders. The attack began at 0700 with the 8th Armored rolling into the city while the 2d Battalion made a demonstration, then assisted the armor by fire, and followed it into the city. The 1st and 3d Battalions attacked in the left zone, using columns of companies. Company A advanced to a point north-



In the vicinity of Gros Tenquin, France

The first Regimental CP located in a German town was in Bocket, Germany

Typical hasty machine gun and observations positions used by Germans near Gros Tenquin, France

Regimental Supply, Bocket, Germany



SHOT-DOWN NAZI PLANES

west of Lintfort before it was pinned down by heavy enemy fire.

Task Force Murray became effective as of 1600, March 5, and was composed of Troop E, 88th Reconnaissance; Company B, 654th TD Battalion; Company A, 784th Tank Battalion; Company B, 809th TD Battalion; 36th Tank Battalion (minus one company); 49th Armored Infantry Battalion; Company B, 53d Engineer Battalion; and Company B, 80th Engineer Battalion, along with the 137th Infantry Regiment. Its mission was to twist north and take Ossenberg, then move on across the Rhine River with Wesel as its final objective.

The 8th Armored stabbed toward Rheinberg in the afternoon and received a jolting punishment from the enemy in the city. The 2d and 3d Battalions of the 137th had become motorized when Lintfort was taken and had followed the armor to the outskirts of the city.

A night attack was planned to capture Rheinberg, a plan which only a veteran, experienced unit could fulfill. In a daring and shrewd move, the 3d Battalion entered Rheinberg at 1930, and the 2d Battalion at 2012. After dismounting from trucks, the battalions made contact and worked their way down the main street, the 2d Battalion on one side and the 3d on the other. After flushing out dark cellars and buildings, Rheinberg was nearly cleaned up by 0300. There were still fire fights until 0600 when the city was mopped up and securely outposted. The tankers of the 784th added a touch to the victory by prefacing their entry into the city with a sensational dash, through five miles of enemy lines, to the Rhine River itself.

The prized trophy of TF Murray in taking Rheinberg was the multi-millionaire midget and his luxurious mansion in the town square, where Regimental Headquarters and the 3d Battalion located their CP's.

For the remainder of the day, the 2d and 3d Battalions were checked outside of Rheinberg by a blown bridge. Without the support of tanks, the men couldn't move against the heavy enemy fire directed at them across the flat expanses of terrain, and the armor couldn't cross the stream until a bridge was built. The drive continued at 1800 as soon as the bridge was put in, with Ossenberg as the next objective. Artillery had pounded Ossenberg day and night so that it might be taken and a stop put to the enemy's retreat across the river above the city. The 1st Battalion had a bitter struggle in clearing the Haus Heideberg Woods west of Ossenberg.

On March 7th, Task Force Murray was fighting in the outskirts of Ossenberg while absorbing all types of intense enemy fire. The road from Rheinberg to Ossenberg gave the 137th its bitterest opposition encountered during the entire operation and was dubbed "88 Alley." The enemy was determined to hold Ossenberg in order to keep his pocket west of the Rhine River and Wesel.

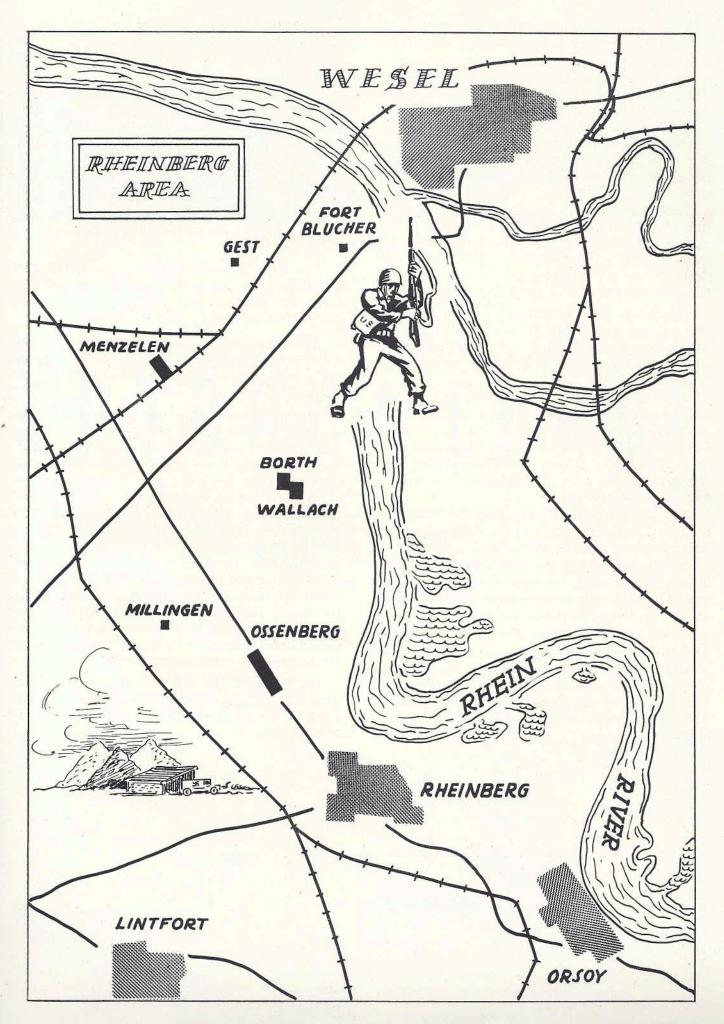
The heavy enemy fire slowed down the entire attack of the 3d Battalion. The 1st Battalion met severe resistance throughout the day as Company A advanced to the woods directly east of Ducksrath and Company C neared the slag pile and brickyard across the railroad tracks southwest of Ossenberg. The 2d Battalion remained in Ossenberg and prepared to attack along the Rhine the following day.

Task Force Murray was hammering away at the southern edge of the enemy out of Ossenberg and its Solvay Works. Working on the left, Group 1 was engaged in bitter fighting with Company C battling in the brickyard. Group 3 went around Ossenberg and edged its way north under violent enemy fire.

TF Murray now consisted of Troop E, 88th Reconnaissance, and three groups. Group 1, commanded by Major Frink, consisted of the 1st Battalion, 137th Infantry; first platoon, Company B, 654th TD Battalion; first platoon, Company A, 784th Tank Battalion; first platoon, Company B, 60th Engineer Combat Battalion, Group 2 was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Butler and consisted of his 3d Battalion, 137th Infantry; Company B, 809th Tank Battalion: 36th Tank Battalion (minus one company); and Company B, 53d Engineer Battalion. Group 3, led by Lieutenant Colonel Roseborough, consisted of the 49th Armored Infantry Battalion; 2d Battalion, 137th Infantry; Company B (minus one platoon) 654th TD Battalion; Company B, 36th Tank Battalion; Company B (minus one platoon), 80th Engineer Battalion; and Company A (minus one platoon), 784th Tank Battalion.

Group 1 had the mission of hitting the highway between Ossenberg and Millingen. Group 2 was to advance through Ossenberg on up the highway to a point, southwest of Menzelen, then cut northeast and take the town of Menzelen and advance on to Gest. Group 3 was to move along the highway just west of the Rhine River up to smaller Borth and then advance on to Augenedshorf. Group 3 was to continue northeast up the highway to Buderich, on up to Fort Blucher, then across the Rhine to Wesel, the final objective of TF Murray.

Group 2 had the mission of taking Ossenberg and organized a force which included Company I, 137th Infantry; a platoon of 8th Armored tanks, and a platoon of 809th tank destroyers, which fought for and seized the city. When daylight came, the group had reached the town when the enemy pushed a counterattack into the group. The men pulled back to relieve the shock and then jumped once more, reaching the Solvay Works. The fire was fierce, and the enemy had guns in every building and shack. The enemy artillery and mortar fire was heavy as the men of Group 2 moved slowly ahead in the bitter struggle. Two enemy tanks and one self-propelled gun were knocked out during the fray. Another force of Group 2 was working on the western outskirts of Ossenberg, driving north in the face of heavy enemy fire.



With Group 1, Company C jumped off prior to dawn on March 8 and battled 18 hours when it fell upon and captured the huge slag pile and brickyard southwest of Ossenberg. Before daylight, heavy artillery and mortar fire were laid down on the enemy positions, and at 0500 hours, a platoon of Company C attacked the slag pile and secured it by 1400. Another platoon went around the pile and hit the yard with its numerous piles of bricks. By 2000 the position was cleared, with the exception of enemy snipers in the vicinity.

Task Force Murray continued the attack in its zone at 0700, March 9. As Group 2 mopped up the remaining resistance in Ossenberg, Group 1 punched ahead to the eastern outskirts of Millingen, and Group 3 was pinned down by vicious enemy fire from the eastern side of the Rhine River.

On March 10, TF Murray had its boundary changed, and after the 137th had smashed ahead and seized Borth and Wallach, it was pinched out of the advance by the 134th CT, attacking toward Wesel through TF Byrne.

Against light resistance, the 3d Battalion moved north, and Company K seized Wallach at 1040. The 1st Battalion continued mopping-up southwest of Ossenberg. The Regiment was directed to assemble in its positions and initiate patrolling. At 2220 CCB, 8th Armored Division, was released from attachment to TF Murray.

The 134th CT, after contacting the British on their left, had sent patrols to the bridges over the Rhine River by duck on March 10.

On March 11 and 12 the 137th Infantry remained in its positions along the bank of the Rhine River. The 3d Battalion was occupying positions in Wallach and Borth, the 2d Battalion troops were in Ossenberg, and the 1st Battalion was in position southwest of Ossenberg.

Regimental Headquarters and the 3d Battalion CP remained in Rheinberg. The 2d Battalion had CP's in both Ossenberg and Rheinberg, while the 1st Battalion CP was located east of Bauern, west of Rheinberg.

At 2135, the 137th Infantry was relieved in its zone by the 290th Infantry Regiment of the 75th Division, and prepared to move March 13 to a rear assembly area.

When the 35th Division was relieved of its responsibilities along the Rhine River Front, the 137th Infantry moved by motor to a rear assembly area in Germany, southeast of Venlo, Holland.

Regimental Headquarters and Special Units closed into an area in the vicinity of Breyell by 1000, March 13. The 1st Battalion moved into an area at Klinkhammer by 0930, the 2d Battalion into Leutherside by 1100 and the 3d Battalion in the vicinity of Leuth by 1130.

The 35th Infantry Division remained in XVI Corps reserve of the Ninth Army from March 16 to March 22. The 75th Infantry Division was holding the Corps front along the Rhine River.

The Regiment conducted a daily training schedule which did not interfere with passes to Brussels and Paris, recreation, moving pictures, and Red Cross clubmobiles.

The offensive to win the war in Europe was launched at 2200 hours, March 23, as the Ninth Army, British and Canadian troops, shrouded by a 66-mile-long smoke screen, crossed the Rhine River in assault craft of every type. These attacks were north and south of Wesel, on the east bank of the Rhine, only 12 miles north of the congested factory district of the Ruhr Valley, and had previously been the final objective of the 137th Infantry during its drive from the Roer to the Rhine. The Ninth Army bridgehead was established 12 miles south of Wesel, and the troops were surprised to discover that the enemy positions were held so lightly. From dawn to dusk, Allied Air Forces brought to a climax the program of devastation they had carried on day after day across northwestern Germany.

On March 25 the 35th Division was alerted to move forward as soon as operational space was provided by the 30th and 79th Divisions, battling east of the Rhine.









V-2



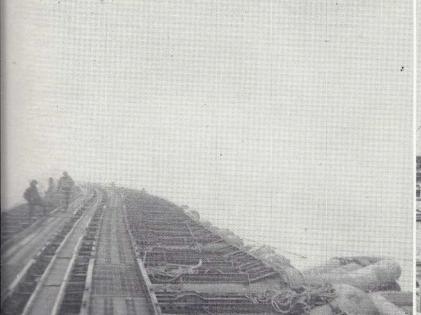
Kraut plane shot down by our AA near Tangermunde, Germany

CENTRAL & EUROPE

CHAPTER SIX

Bridge the Regiment used to cross the Rhine

Rhineberg





CHAPTER SIX

CENTRAL EUROPE

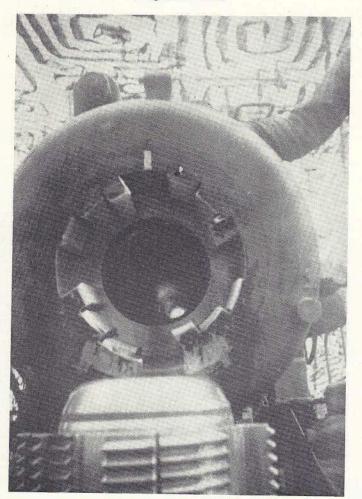
The 137th Infantry moved by motor March 26 to a forward assembly area east of the Rhine River and prepared to attack the next morning between the 30th and 79th Divisions.

The Regimental motor column reached its IP in Leuth at 0700, departed from its area, moved through Nieukirk, Sevelen, Horstgen, and Rheinberg, then crossed the Rhine River south of Mehrum on a pontoon bridge under an umbrella of air protection, and proceeded through Gotterswickerhamm to Dinslakener-Bruch. Regimental Headquarters and Special Units closed into Dinslakener-Bruch by 0930 while the three battalions moved into an area east of the town.

Leaving the northern Rhine bridgehead south of Wesel, the 137th Infantry Regiment knifed into the northern section of the Ruhr industrial area March 27 against stubborn enemy resistance. As the Autobahn superhighway was approached there was no indication of an enemy withdrawal from the 137th's front.

The 30th Division was attacking to the left of the 35th Division, and the 79th to the right. The 35th





attacked with the 134th on the left and the 137th on the right.

The 3d Battalion, 137th, attacked at 0600 in the left zone, while the 2d Battalion attacked in the right sector. The 1st Battalion followed the 3d Battalion. Cannon Company was in general support.

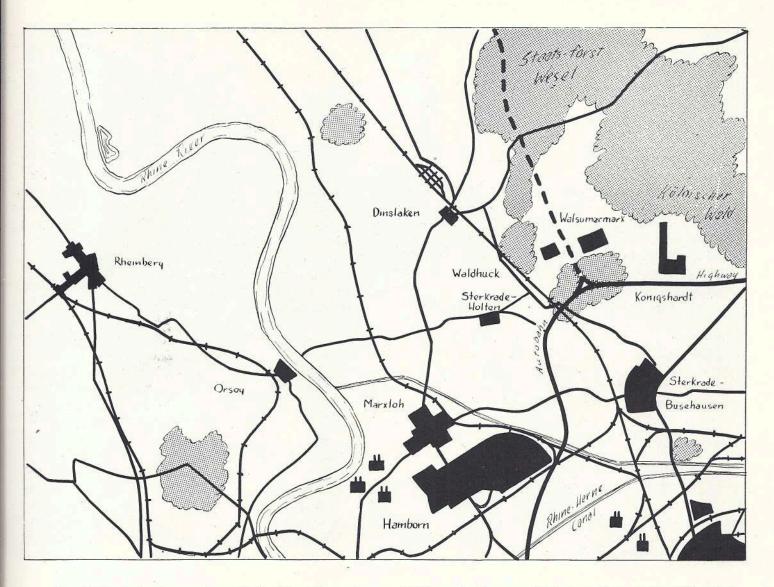
The 3d Battalion pushed through the Staatz Forst Wesel throughout the day, while the 2d Battalion took Waldhuck, Walsumermark, and Sterkrade-Nord by 2030. The superhighway was stiffly defended, as 2d Battalion troops, now under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George O'Connell, advanced to a point 1000 yards west of the Autobahn. The Battalion ran into opposition at 0920 as the enemy directed SP and machine gun fire at the men. Company E was confronted by an enemy tank at the same time. The enemy was initially observed by the 3d Battalion when an enemy company advanced in approach march formation. They deployed and a fire fight began which was marked with enemy tank fire into Walsumermark and Sterkrade-Nord. It was believed that the enemy was using dummy tanks to draw fire.

Twenty-three men of Companies G and H were killed or captured when they unknowingly advanced into enemy territory to establish an OP in a building, were isolated, and had no means of possible escape.

The 137th Infantry was encountering severe enemy resistance March 28 as the Regiment contacted the Autobahn superhighway east of Konigshardt. The 3d Battalion had struggled through the gloomy Kollischer Woods and finally succeeded in getting two companies along the edge of the highway. The 1st Battalion had fought its way between the Staatz Forst Wesel and the Sterkrade Woods, capturing Konigshardt.

The 35th Division, with the 134th on the left, 137th in the center, and 320th on right, was now flanked on the left by the 30th Division and on the right by the 79th. The 30th Division was holding down the left flank of the XVI Corps and the Ninth Army, adjacent to the British Second Army.

Prisoners taken by the 137th said they were to defend the superhighway at all costs and were using dug-in positions along the highway. An enemy railroad gun, north of Kol Rheinbaben, was firing in the 3d Battalion's front. Approximately 500 tons of various German ammunition was discovered in the Staatz Forst. The 1st Battalion jumped at 0600, and by 0745, Companies B and C were meeting heavy resistance. The advance was halted again at 1015 when Company C was held up by SP and machine gun fire. Five self-propelled guns were firing on the 1st Battalion from the opposite side of the highway.



The 137th Infantry continued attacking throughout the night of March 28-29 and by morning had three companies across the Autobahn Highway. When the attack ceased at 1900, the 137th had reached the suburbs of Kol Rheinbaben, Eigen, and Bottrop.

After an artillery preparation, Companies I, K, and L were up to the highway receiving heavy mortar and machine gun fire. The 1st Battalion was under intense small arms and SP fire at midnight, but by 0240, had both assault companies, A and B, at the edge of the Autobahn. The heavy enemy fire checked their crossing, however, and they planned to jump across at 0330. By 0410, Company I had one platoon on the other side of the highway.

The 137th ceased the attack at 1900 and was directed to continue at 0700, March 30. The Regimental CP moved from Brink to Konigshardt at 1400. Company A, 89th Chemical Battalion, was attached to the 137th Infantry.

The fact that the 137th had captured 290 German soldiers in its sector during three day's fighting proved that the enemy was determined to hold the ground along the northern Ruhr Valley.

The 1st and 2d Battalions broke away from Kol Rheinbanen and Bottrop on March 30 and made an 8,000 yard advance which took them to the "Topeka" Objective, a line running southwest from Buer Beckhausen to Horst. The 137th was attacking east just 6,000 yards north of the city of Essen, with its Krupp Steel Works. The Regiment's boundaries were the Autobahn superhighway on the left and the Rhine Herne Canal on the right.

The 2d Battalion, led by Company G, passed through Schlangenhardt, Eastern Eigen, Ellinghorst, Piesbeck, Rheinbaben Schachten, Boy, Schuhmacher, Z. Graf Noltke, Lone, Siebeck, and Buer Beckhausen.

Operating in the right sector, the 1st Battalion, with Company C on tanks, shot through Bottrop and Krahenburg. At 1840, the 1st Battalion had enemy resistance between its CP and OP, but when the advance was halted shortly after, the enemy was soon mopped-up.

Company K crossed the Autobahn at 0720, and then the entire 3d Battalion was assembled in and about Kol Rheinbaden. The Regimental CP moved from Konigshardt to Bottrop at 1400 and from Bottrop to Gladbeck at 1900.

The 137th rolled swiftly east March 31, gaining from 6,000 to 7,000 yards and capturing 100 Nazi soldiers. The 1st and 2d Battalions received scat-



Recklinghausen

tered artillery fire in the early morning, prior to jumping-off for the day.

The 2d Battalion began to move out of Buer Beckhausen at 0710, and Company C rolled out on tanks at 0725. The Battalion advanced past the Buer Erie airfield and Buer Erie itself and knifed approximately 1000 yards into the Kol Ewald Woods.

The 1st Battalion launched its push as Companies B and C flushed the large factory in northeastern Horst and Company A mounted tanks. By 1110, the Battalion was receiving direct fire from across the canal on its right, and at 1245 the Battalion was advancing in the face of heavy mortar fire. The 1st Battalion took the town of Bechmann and pushed through the southern portion of the Kol Ewald Woods after going through Buer Erie. The advance was halted at 2000.

The Regimental CP moved from Gladbeck to Beckhausen at 1000.

Battle casualties for the month of March were 31 killed in action, 161 wounded, and 28 missing.

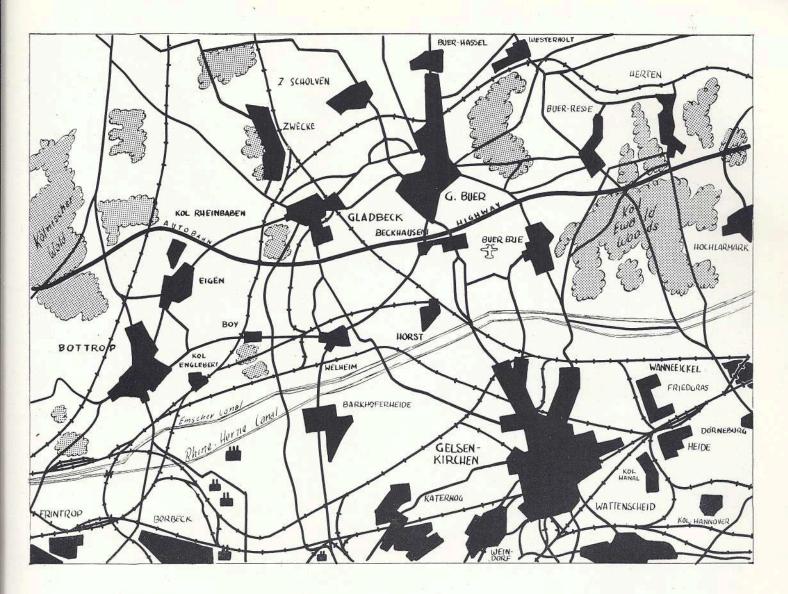
The 137th Infantry continued its eastward advance between the Autobahn superhighway and the Rhein Herne Canal in the Ruhr Industrial Area on

April 1, and, toward the end of the day, swung south into a defensive position along the northern bank of the canal.

The Regiment had British flame-throwing tanks attached April 1 from the 1st and 2d Platoons, B Squad, 1st Fife and Forfan Yeomanry.

The 2d Battalion moved into the left sector of the Regiment's defensive zone along the canal. The 3d Battalion swung into the right sector, and its zone was bounded on the north by the Autobahn and on the south by the canal. Its sector ran from Hochlarmark west to the road running through Kol Ewald from Herten to Wanne-Eickel. The 1st Battalion occupied the central sector and received scattered enemy artillery fire at 2320. The Autobahn and the canal were the north and south boundaries with Hochlarmark the western boundary, and the road running south from General Blumenthal through Emscherlof, the right. The 2d Battalion defended the ground from Rollinghausen south to the canal. Sonntagshof was the extreme left boundary. The 320th Infantry was on the right and the 134th on the left.

April 2 to 5, the 35th Division continued its aggressive defense along the Rhein Herne Canal, send-



ing contact patrols along the canal and reconnaissance patrols south of the canal.

137th Infantry patrols which crossed the canal located enemy positions on the outskirts of Herne and along the southern bank of the canal. A majority of the enemy captured by the 137th claimed that the enemy force south of the canal wanted to surrender to the Americans, since they realized the Ruhr was surrounded.

On April 4, the 35th Division continued its defense along the canal with the 137th on the left, 134th in the center, and the 320th on the right. The 137th had the 2d Battalion on the left and the 1st Battalion on the right, within its zone, while the 3d Battalion was in reserve.

From April 6 to 8, the 137th Infantry, with Company A, 89th Chemical Battalion, attached, continued to occupy and defend positions along the north bank of the Rhein Herne Canal.

The 75th Division Reconnaissance Troop was on the left of the 137th on April 6, and the 2d Battalion, 134th Infantry, was on the right. The 320th was relieved by elements of the 79th Division and the 1st Battalion, 134th, and at 2400 was attached for the operation to the 75th Division.

At 1500, April 7, the left boundary of the 137th Infantry was moved east approximately 1000 meters. The 79th Division had jumped across the canal at 0300 while the 137th Infantry assisted by a fire demonstration. The 1st and 2d Battalions of the 137th remained on the line and the 3d Battalion in reserve in General Blumenthal. The boundary between the 1st and 2d Battalions was the road running from Recklinghausen to the canal.

The 137th prepared to attack in the early morning of April 9, crossing the canal and advancing south.

The 137th Infantry crossed the Rhein Herne Canal under heavy enemy fire on the morning of April 9, secured a bridgehead north of Herne, broke the crust of the enemy defense south of the canal and advanced against scattered resistance to the railroad tracks running through Herne and Wanne-Eickel.

The 2d Battalion had 20 men on the island in the canal at 0215, but they were forced by heavy enemy fire to withdraw at 0435. With the 1st Battalion attacking in the right zone, Company B had one platoon across and a bridgehead secured by 0450. By 0600 the entire Company was across under heavy



Geisenkirchen, Germany

enemy fire. Company A crossed at 0800 without opposition, and was followed by Company C. The 1st Battalion then advanced to the Wanne-Eickel rail sidings. The 2d Battalion crossed the canal in the 1st Battalion zone and advanced to Herne's important rail marshalling yard. The 3d Battalion began moving at 1400, crossed the canal, and moved to a position on the right of the 1st Battalion. The attack ceased for the day at 1930.

The three battalions attacked at 0700, and with practically no opposition, the 3d Battalion was on its objective at 0930, the 2d by 1136, and the 1st on its objective by 1625. The final objective for the day was the railroad track running through Gerthe to Hiltrop Dorf.

Herne, with a population of 66,000, was struck from the north by the 1st Battalion. Little resistance was encountered as the Battalion moved through the city and its outskirts of Altenhofen, Vode, Bergen, Hiltrop Wanne, Hiltrop Dorf, and the Constantine Estate. The 2d Battalion on the left swept through Behringhausen, Borsinghausen, Mittelfeld, and Sodingherholz to reach the objective. On the right, the 3d Battalion advanced through Rootbruch, Dorenburg, Horst, and Aschenbuch.

The 137th Infantry attacked to the south April 11, overrunning over six miles of Industrial Germany, while taking such towns as Gruner Bauren,

Harpen, Baerfeld, Laer and Querenburg. The 2d Battalion attacked in the left sector and the 1st Battalion in the right.

The 2d Battalion jumped-off at 0615, and the 1st Battalion moved out at 0630, meeting initial resistance of machine gun fire. The 2d Battalion was on its objective 800 yards north of the Ruhr River by 1110. The 1st Battalion reached its objective at 1340. The Regimental CP, which had been in Herne, moved to Laerfeld at 1330. The 3d Battalion in Regimental reserve moved to Kirchharpen at 0810 and later in the day to Laerfeld.

The 137th continued to hold its position along the north bank of the Ruhr River, awaiting relief by the 79th Division.

Upon being relieved, the Regiment was to assemble and form a combat team.

The 137th Infantry was relieved in its position along the Ruhr River on April 13 by the 289th Infantry, 79th Division, and then assembled in the vicinity of Laerfeld. At 0800 the 137th Infantry Combat Team began its motor movement from the Ruhr to join forces with that part of the Ninth Army driving eastward toward the Elbe River.

The motorized column had its IP in Herne at 0850, and in this order the 3d Battalion, 2d Battalion, 1st Battalion, Special Units, and 219th FA Battalion started east on its 220-mile move to the Elbe

River. The Combat Team arrived in an assembly area in the vicinity of Everingen at 2100.

On April 14, the 137th Infantry CT moved by motor from its rear assembly area in Everingen approximately 25 miles northeast to the Elbe River, six miles south of Stendal.

The CT departed at 1530 and closed into an area in the vicinity of Luderitz by 2150. The 1st Battalion moved into Segell at 2100, the 2d Battalion into Bellingen, and the 3d Battalion into Buchholz. The 219th F. A. Battalion moved into Gr. Schwarzlosen.

Armored spearheads to the east had bypassed numerous enemy pockets in the large woods within the 137th's new area, and the Regiment discovered it had entered a weird and fluid situation.

On April 15th 137th Infantry flushed the enemy from the woods throughout its sector and patrolled by both foot and motor to the Elbe River. At the conclusion of the day 476 PW's had passed through the 137th PW cage, but it was believed enemy forces were still scattered about the sector.

On April 16 the 137th Infantry consolidated the positions along the west bank of the Elbe River after having initially sent patrols to the river bank.

The 3d Battalion occupied the left sector from the railroad tracks running through Stendal south to, and including, Tangermunde. The 1st Battalion, less Companies A and B, who were in rear areas doing guard duty, was in the center with its CP in Bolsdorf. The 2d Battalion on the right had a sector extending south to the inland town of Grieberg.

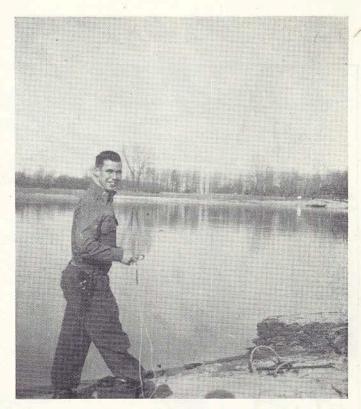
The 137th was in the 35th Division's left sector and the 134th in the right. The 102d Division was on the 137th's left flank.

There was much activity observed on the enemyheld east bank of the river during the day, and patrols were sent across the Elbe during the night of April 16-17 to determine strength, disposition, and identification of enemy, and conditions along the east bank opposite the 137th's front.

The 137th Infantry remained in its defensive position along the west bank of the Elbe River on April 17. During hours of daylight, patrols were sent to the river, and during darkness reconnaissance was conducted along the east bank.

The 1st Battalion and 2d Battalion remained in position throughout the day. The 3d Battalion was relieved of its sector at 1800 by the 1st Battalion, 406th Infantry, 102d Division, as the 102d sector was moved south to include Tangermunde. As per Division order, the 3d Battalion, 137th, relieved a battalion of the 134th Infantry, and at 2245 occupied the newly created right sector of the Regiment's zone.

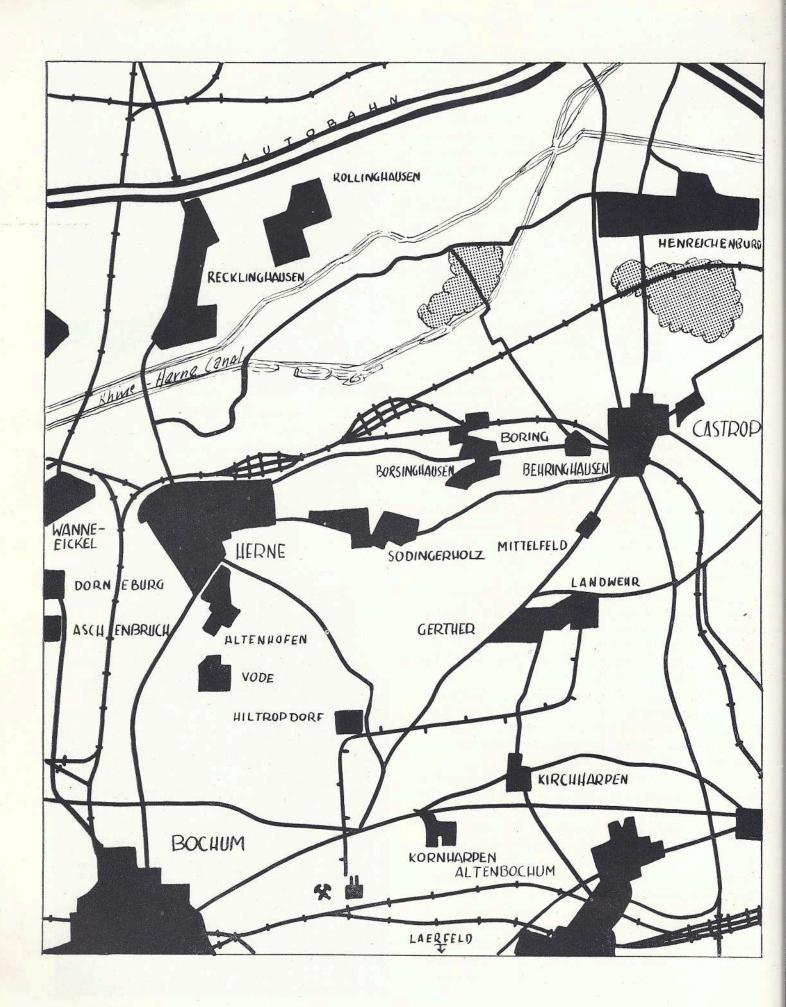
The Company E OP was pushed back approximately at 0130 by an enemy force of 50 troops, but mortar fire checked the enemy thrust. The 2d and 3d Battalions were under shelling during the early morning.

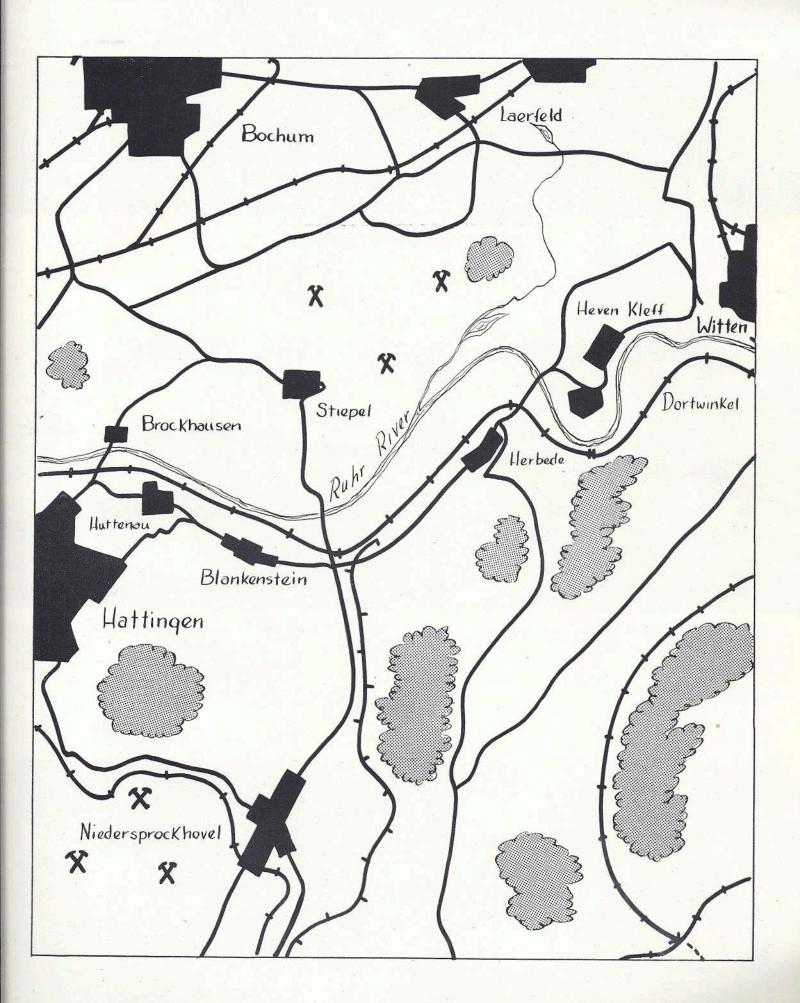


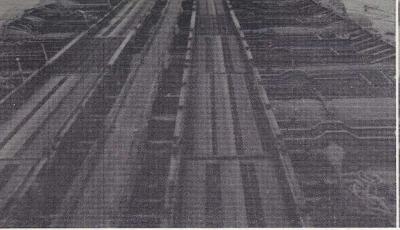
On the west bank of the Elbe River

Bomb damage over Buer, Germany











Rhine River crossing above Rheinberg, Germany

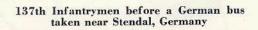


Convoy leaving Herne, Germany, Ruhr Pocket, on way to Hildesheim



Ernie Pyle Bridge, Dusseldorf, Germany

Herne, Germany









We go ahead on into Germany

Russian and Polish laborers working in Germany under Nazi rule







Road signs near Buch, Germany

From April 18 to 20, the 137th Infantry Regiment continued the defense of its sector along the west bank of the Elbe River.

Companies A and B remained in the rear area, over 50 miles west of the Elbe, doing guard duty. On April 18, Company B discovered a sugar plant in Konigslutter, with no less than 20,000,000 pounds of white sugar in storage. This plant had supplied all the people between the Rhine and Elbe Rivers. North of Lehre, Company B captured 47 enemy, five vehicles, and liberated two American PW's. A mine shaft was also discovered with stores of weapons, ammunition, radio equipment, aerial cameras, and chemical testing apparatus. Three men were sent to Lelm to collect the weapons taken up by the Burgermeister, and returned with the weapons, along with 262 Hungarians who had surrendered to them.

On April 19, 643 German PW's were taken by the 137th. Two crashed enemy aircraft were discovered by the 2d Battalion.

Motor of a ME-109 shot down by our AA's

Carload of V-1's and Lieutenant Parkhurst at Tangerhutte, Germany

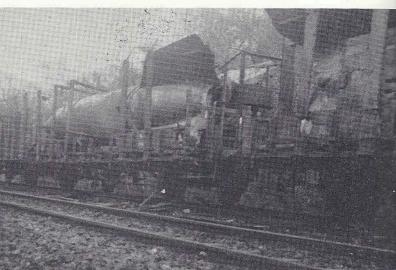
Interest on April 20 was focused on CT Clauswitz, an enemy force of 20 SP guns, 30 half tracks, and numerous American vehicles, along with 800 troops, who had cut south between the British and the Ninth Army. After it had penetrated 15 miles of ground behind the Ninth Army troops along the Elbe, it was stopped by the 5th Armored Division.

Firing a machine gun from the west bank of the Elbe, Company M knocked out two enemy trucks on the east bank. Two enemy planes strafed the 3d Battalion CP town of Cabbel at 1920.

The 137th Infantry remained in position along the west bank of the Elbe River, April 21, patrolling actively along the river bank. In compliance with the 35th Division Order to hold regimental sectors with two battalions, the 1st Battalion went into 137th reserve, while the 2d Battalion took the left sector of the Regiment and the 3d Battalion the right.

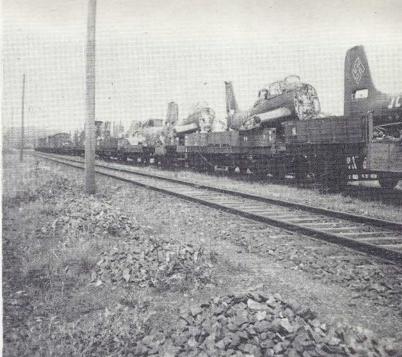
The 3d Battalion had relieved all of the 2d Battalion in the new 3d Battalion zone by 2225, April





V-2's





Kraut prisoners on the Elbe River

talion received 100 rounds of enemy artillery within

Stukas near Hanover, Germany

20. The 2nd Battalion relieved the 1st Battalion at 1200, April 21. The 1st Battalion, less Companies A and B, moved to Briest. The 2d Battalion established its CP in Buch. Company F remained in Jerchel and Schelldorf. Company E occupied positions in Buch, and Company G was scattered throughout Buch, Bolsdorf, and Grobleben. The 3d Battalion CP remained with the Company in Cobbel while Company K was in Grieben, Company L in Bittkau, and Company I in Ringfurth.

At 1705 four enemy aircraft were observed by Company F, taking-off from an undisclosed airstrip on the east side of the river, directly across from Company F's positions.

Company A was relieved at 1700, April 22, and rejoined the 1st Battalion in its area at 1900. Company B was not relieved of its duties in the rear area until the 22nd, and then closed into the 1st Battalion area at 1210.

The 137th continued the defense along the west bank of the Elbe River within its zone. The 3d Batthirty minutes during the morning.

Russian units spearheading toward the Elbe River were believed to be nearing the positions of the 35th Division on April 24. The Ninth Army Air Reconnaissance reported a large number of unidentified vehicles in several groups moving in a northwesternly direction toward the Elbe.

The no fire line for the 137th Infantry was the Elbe River, and all units within the Regiment were reminded of this. At 2305, Company E observed two green flares at the time, believed to be a signal from the Russians. Two officers of the 2d Battalion crossed the Elbe during the night in an attempt to contact the Russians. After firing flares on the east bank and moving 800 yards inland without success. they returned to the west bank of the river.

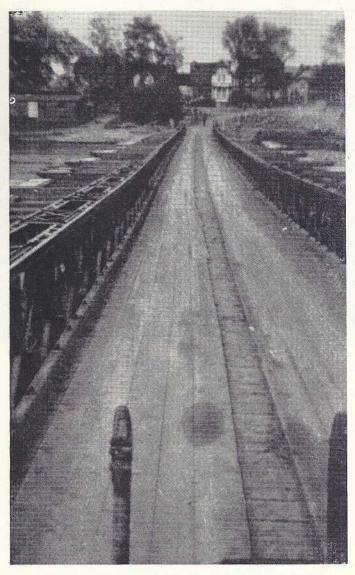
The 2d Battalion heard motor movement in Jerichow at 0520 and called for artillery to fire on the town.

Gardelegen

Gardelegen







Pontoon bridge over the Weser River at Hameln

Doughboys watch the white phosphorus shells burst on German positions



Throughout April 25, the 2d Battalion observed heavy motor movement north out of Jerichow. There was much activity throughout the day all along the eastern shore of the Elbe opposite 137th Infantry positions.

At 0100, April 26, the 2d Battalion Commander, two members of his staff, and a Company G officer and mess sergeant, set out on a mission which, if it was at all possible, was to contact the Russians. When they reached the western bank of the river they began firing green flares in an effort to attract the Russians. One of the flares lit up a barge floating off the eastern bank, on which enemy soldiers were loading ammunition. Two members of the patrol fired on the enemy, and the fire was returned by the enemy, forcing the 2d Battalion patrol to make a strategic withdrawal. Company K also had a patrol out which crossed the river during the night. The men couldn't contact the Russians, but killed two enemy officers and knocked out an armored car before returning.

The German civilians on the east side of the river were very aware of the fact that the Russians were approaching them. Sixty civilians came across the Elbe in the 3d Battalion sector. Company F brought across to the 2d Battalion two enemy Medical Officers who wished to surrender their field hospital of 356 patients and 25 nurses if it could be evacuated across the river to the west side. Lieutenant Colonel George O'Connell, on approval by Colonel William Murray, made a deal with the two officers: only if they rounded up all the American PW's in their area and brought them down to the river bank, would they be allowed to bring the hospital across the river.

They brought 15 American and 33 other Allied PW's to the river to meet a 2d Battalion patrol. Fourteen enemy soldiers also surrendered at that time, and were used to man oars on the boats which ferried the hospital personnel across the river. The hospital was moved to Tangermunde.

The 137th Infantry was relieved of its positions along the river bank at 1855 by elements of the 102d Division. The Regiment then made preparations for a motor movement to the Hannover area, where it was to occupy and administer military government in its own particular area.

The Regiment completed a 120-mile motor movement from the Elbe River to an area south of Hannover on April 27. Here it was to occupy and govern the area within its zone.

The IP was Tangerhutte, and time 0800 as the Regiment moved out with the 1st Battalion, 3d Battalion, 2d Battalion, and Special Units, in that order. The motorized column passed through Gardelegen, Gifhorn, Dahrenhorst, and Hannover, then turned south and continued on into its sector of occupation.

By 5 May 1945, the 137th's zone was enlarged. Its eastern boundary was a line extending north to south from Meyenfeld, west of Hannover, to Springe, to Altenhoven, southeast to Voldaysen, and continu-



Cologne



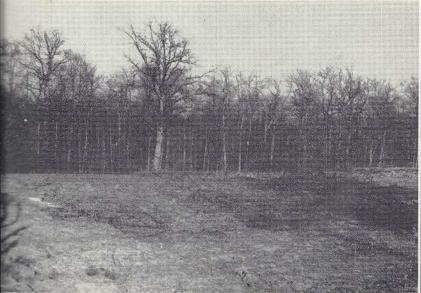
German prisoners are searched for weapons



Lt. Sudduth, Sgt. Bickley, and Driver



This was the entrance to a Kraut Garrison



Booby-trapped barbed wire entrance into the Siegfried Line



Anti-tank ditches dug by slave labor near Gros Tenquin, France

ing southeast to skirt the Duringer Forest, and include Luerdissen. The southern boundary ran from Leredissen west to Lugde. The western boundary was a line extending north through Hiddensem and Bisingfeld to Bremke, where it curved in a north-westerly direction to Varenholz. The boundary then curved east to Lunden, north to Obernkirchen, dipped into the Brandshol Forest, and extended north to Dudingham. The northern boundary ran along a line from Dudingham to Meyenfeld.

The 2d Battalion continued to occupy and govern the southern zone with its CP in Hameln. The 1st Battalion occupied the west central sector with its CP in Rinteln. Regimental Headquarters remained in Munder and HQ Company occupied the surrounding area. AT Company controlled the area about Wennigsen and to the west. CN Company had its CP in Barsinghausen, and SV Company in Eimbeckhem, controlling the vicinity. The 3d Battalion occupied the northwestern sector of the zone with its CP in Obernkirchen. Company K was in Bordst, Company I in Rodenberg, Company L in Nenndorf, and Company M in Lindherst.

The 137th Infantry had guards posted at the J. D. Kiedel and Hahn AG Works, a radar station, an electric power plant, two headquarters of both the NSDA and NDF, 15 hospitals, three flour mills, three grain storages, a glass factory, fuse factory, three ammunition dumps, and two displaced persons' camps.

The 137th CP was located in Bad Munder, Antitank Company in Holtensen, Cannon Company in Fischbeck, and Service Company in Eimbekhem. The 2d Battalion moved into Hameln, the town involved in the tale of the "Pied Piper." The 1st Battalion established its CP in Rinteln with Companies A and D. Company B moved into Todenmann and Company C took over Steinbergen. The 3d Battalion assembled in Obernkirchen. Hameln and Rinteln are both located on the bank of the Weser River.

The entire 35th Division was in the Hannover area governing and occupying the sector.

From April 28 to 30, the 137th Infantry continued to occupy and govern its sector.

The battle casualties for the month of April were six killed in action, 40 wounded in action, and one missing in action.

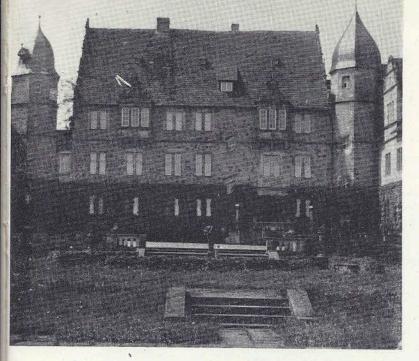
Missions of the 137th Infantry Regiment during the month of May consisted of occupying and governing a zone southwest of Hannover, Germany, from 1-17 May and then occupying a zone in the Ruhr area from 18-31 May.

From 1-4 May, the 137th took 282 Nazi PW's. The Regiment was guarding 15 hospitals scattered throughout its zone. A close check was maintained on the wounded enemy soldiers in these hospitals, and as soon as they were fully recuperated from their wounds or illness, they were taken as PW's. Any civilians presenting a security threat were also treated as PW's.

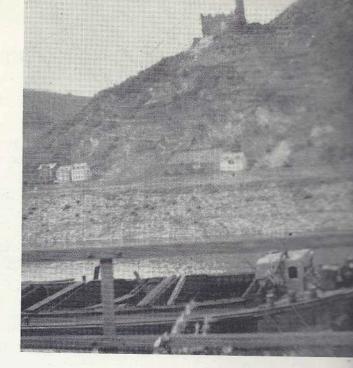








Baron Munchausen's castle in Hamelin, Germany, built in 1548

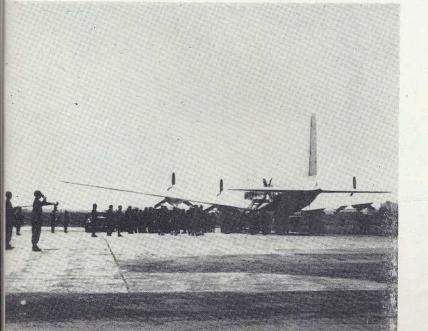


A castle on the Rhine

OCCUPATION * INACTIVATION

CHAPTER SEVEN

The President's plane at Brussels, Belgium



Bomb damage to Hannover



CHAPTER SEVEN

OCCUPATION and INACTIVATION

The 137th Infantry continued to occupy and govern its assigned zone south of Hannover, Germany, from 8-16 May, 1945.

The 3d Battalion moved its CP from Obernkirchen to Bokelch on 14 May. The companies remained in their original towns. The 1st Battalion with its CP in Rinteln, had Company A in the vicinity of Rinteln, Company D south and southeast of Rinteln, Company B west of Hameln, and Company C northwest of Hameln as far as the Autobahn superhighway, which ran through the Regimental zone.

The sector extending south from Hameln was taken over by the 60th Engineer Battalion.

The 137th Infantry turned over responsibilities for its zone to the 335th Infantry, 84th Infantry Division, prior to 2400, 17 May. On the morning of 18 May, the Regiment moved by motor 110 miles from its IP in Hameln westward to the Ruhr area in the vicinity of Rechlinghausen, and relieved the 377th Infantry of the 29th Division.

The route taken by the 137th was from Hameln southwest through Bromberg, Hon, Padeborn, and Gesche, then west to Bochum and north through Herne and Reclinghausen to its new zone of occupation. The entire Regiment closed into the area by 1555, 18 May.

The 137th Infantry occupied approximately 400 square miles of the Ruhr from 19-31 May 1945. The southern boundary of the zone was but a few miles north of Essen and extended south of the Autobahn highway from Bottrop east to Heprichenburg. The zone extended as far north as Roesfled and east to Wassendorf to a point west of Dulmen. It included over 135 cities and towns, the most densely populated being Gelsenkirchen, Bottrop, Recklinghausen, Dorsten, and Haltern.

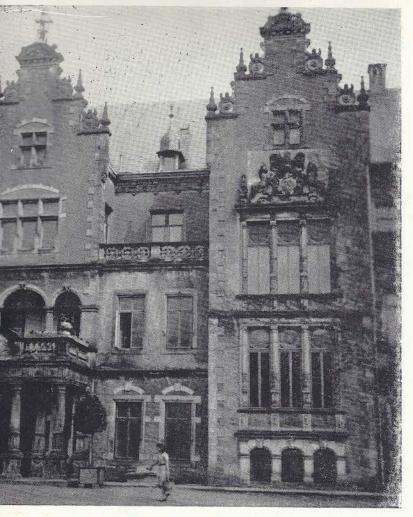
Regimental Headquarters was located south of Herten and the Autobahn, AT Company in Herten, CN Company in Dreul Nord, and SV Company in Stickenbusch. The 1st Battalion CP was in Bottrop

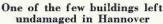
V-E Day Parade, Hamelin, Germany





V-E Parade in Hamelin







V-E Day Parade, Hamelin, Germany

along with Company A and Company C. Company B was in Gladbeck and Company D in Kirchhellen. The 2d Battalion CP was located in Buer, Company E in Marl, Company F in Gelsenkirchen, Company G in Buer Erle, and Company H in Berten. The 3d Battalion CP was in Waltrop with Company I, while Company K was in Oer-Erken-Schwick, Company L in General Blumenthal, and Company M in Recklinghausen. The 547th AAA Aw. Battalion was attached to the 137th Infantry in this zone. It occupied the northernmost sector of the zone and had its CP in Hullern.

The 137th posted guards on 55 Displaced Persons' camps containing some 44,000 Russians, Poles, Dutch, Italians, French, and Belgians, along with guarding 23 camps holding 7,290 ex-Allied PW's. The civilian population, according to the Military Government, amounted to one million people. Also under guard were six German military hospitals, a synthetic rubber plant, and all bridges in the zone.

In this zone, a transportation difficulty was encountered by the Regiment. This difficulty was overcome by assigning CN Company and AT Company installations to guard, so that their transportation could be utilized.

The civilian population was allowed on the streets from 0500 to 2100 daily. Vehicles could be driven by the Germans only if the Military Government had issued a permit for such. During the allotted hours, the civilians could circulate anywhere in the 35th Division zone without being disturbed. All schools and post offices remained closed.

Probably the biggest problem throughout the Ruhr was the lack of food. The congested industrial districts offer little of the garden space which is so prevalent in most other sections of Germany. The German civilians received scant rations while the Displaced Persons were being fed through the U.S. Army.

The problem of renewing public utilities in this zone was already solved when the 137th began occupation. Electricity and running water were provided throughout the zone.

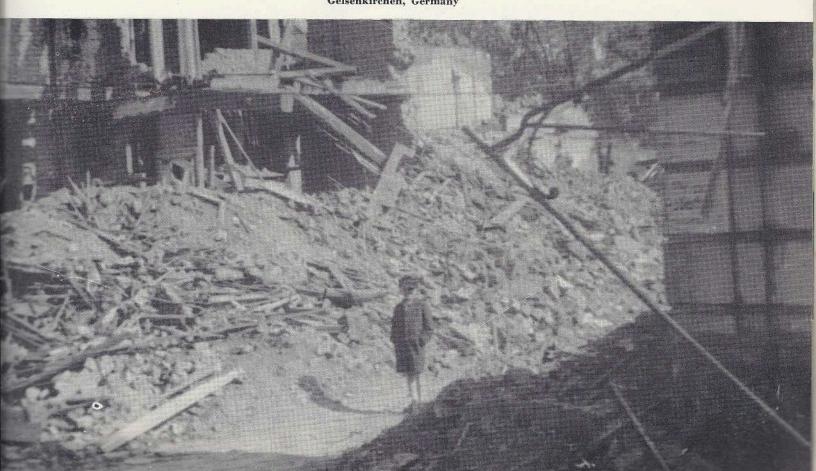
The mission of the 137th Infantry Regiment during the month of June, 1945, was to occupy and govern a zone, west of the Rhine River and south of Coblenz, which included the four landkreis of St. Goar, Zell, Cochem, and Simmern.

The 137th Infantry departed from the Ruhr industrial area on the morning of June 1, 1945, and



Memorial Day Services at Buer, Germany

Gelsenkirchen, Germany





The Moselle Valley

moved by rail and motor south to its newly assigned zone on the opposite side of the Rhine River.

The 35th Infantry Division during this period was a part of the United States 15th Army and the XXIII Corps. The 2d Battalion of the 137th Infantry held the status of XXIII Corps reserve, but at the same time had nine security missions.

This section of Germany which the 137th Infantry occupied was of scenic and historic importance. The Regiment's extreme eastern boundary was 35 miles of the Rhine River from Rhens south to Bingham. The 3d Battalion of the 137th Infantry had 41 miles of Moselle River winding through its sector. The entire valley country along both the Rhine and Moselle Rivers are dotted with many resort towns which had flourished during the prewar days.

Regimental Headquarters, along with Company B, was located in the resort town of Boppard, on the Rhine. Other units located on the Rhine were Com-Company A in St. Goar, Cannon and Anti-tank Companies in Oberwesel, and the 1st Battalion Headquarters in Bacharach. These units were all within the landkreis of St. Goar.

The Simmern landkreis was occupied by Company D, which was located in the town of Rheinbollen, 2d Battalion Headquarters with Company G and Company H in Simmern, Company E and Com-

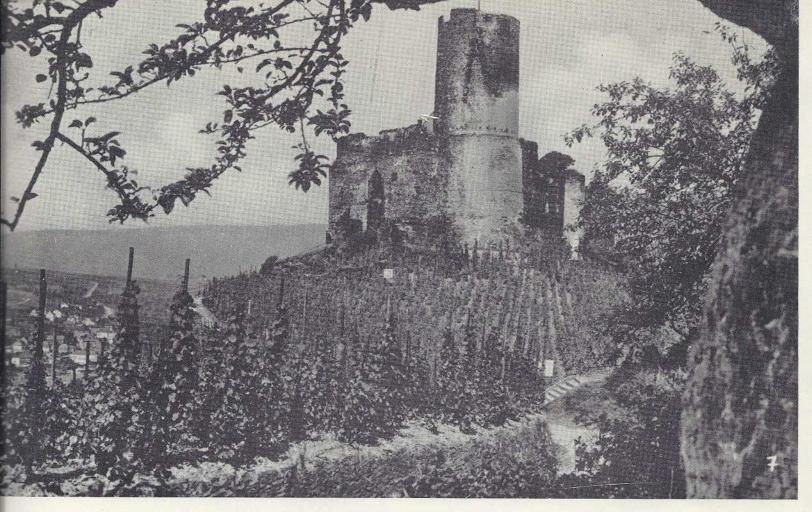
pany F in Kirchberg, and Service Company in Castellaun.

The 3d Battalion occupied both the Cochem and Zell landkreisen. The Battalion Headquarters was located in Bad Betrich with the 35th Division Rear Echelon and Personnel Sections. Company I was in Kaisersech, Company M in Pommern, Company L in Zell, and Company K in Traben.

The Regiment's greatest difficulty was the wide zone it had to occupy and govern. The area covered approximately 1000 square miles. Extensive patrol missions over this area and military police type of duties necessitated the formation of a provisional

Boppard, Germany, and the Rhine





A castle on the Moselle River

Military Police Company. This provisional Company was formed from the Regimental Anti-Tank Company and the Battalion anti-tank platoons. The AT Company Commander was designated as Regimental Provost Marshal.

A training schedule was also carried on during June. Units of the Regiment who had a large number of men on security missions were still continuing their training by means of an accelerated program by which each man would obtain some form of training at the least.

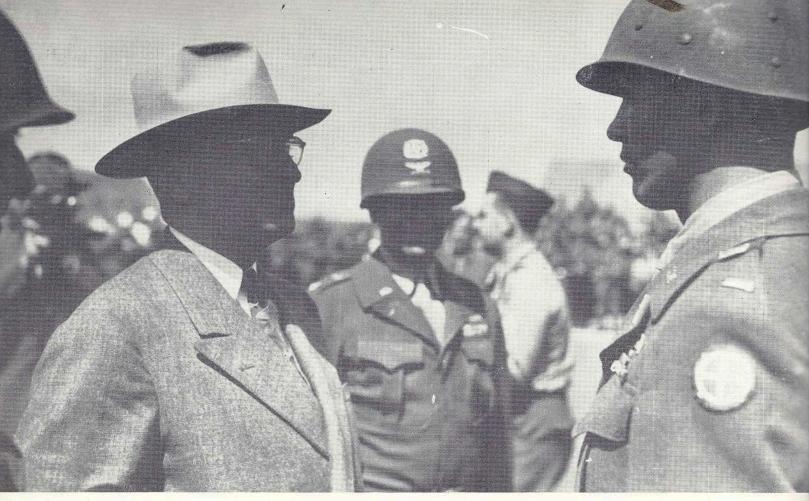
Another difficulty encountered by the Regiment was maintaining communications over this widely scattered area. Some 450 miles of wire were being used to maintain communications from Regiment to the battalions and on to the companies. Commercial wire solved the problem wire teams faced—the problem of the lack of wire.

The athletic program shot ahead in June. A Regimental baseball team was formed of players from throughout the Regiment. This team would compete on a Regimental level. Four members of this team were chosen to play with the 35th Division nine on a Division level. Each company in the 137th Infantry organized both a softball and a volley ball team. Each battalion and the Special Units formed a league for these two sports. Each battalion and

the Special Units had competed in track and field meets to qualify individuals to compete in the 137th Infantry track meet held in July. The 35th Division-sponsored swimming meet was also held in July. Turning to the links, the Regiment had sent a five-man golf team to compete in the 35th Division golf tournament in Luxembourg. Tennis tournaments were to be held in July also.

The Information and Education program in the Regiment was very active during the month of June. Each battalion and the Special Units had a two-man mobile orientation team which delivered orientations to the companies within the allotted hour each week. Another hour each week was allotted for group discussion. Each platoon in the Regiment had a discussion leader for that purpose. Instructor training schools were held at regimental and battalion level during the month, and 120 potential instructors were trained.

Another function of the Information and Education Section was conducting Regimental-sponsored tours to points of both scenic and historic interest along the Rhine River. Among the points visited was the Stolzenfels Castle, in Kappelen on the Rhine. This historic structure was initially built in 1235, destroyed completed in 1689, and restored by 1842. These tours were conducted four days per week, one day allotted for each battalion and the Special Units.



The President, Colonel Murray, and Lieutenant Shoptise

There were no casualties for the month of June.

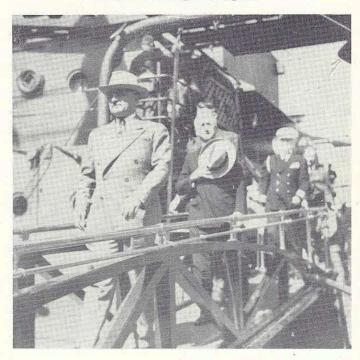
The missions of the 137th Infantry Regiment during the month of July, 1945, were: first, to continue occupation of its sector of Germany south of Coblenz and west of the Rhine River until July 4; second, to relieve the 28th Infantry Division Artillery in the Kaiserlautern area, west of the Rhine, on July 7; and third, to move from Germany into Belgium to provide security and an honor guard on July 15, at airfield B-58 northwest of Brussels, for the President of the United States. During the period July 10-31, the entire 137th Infantry was stationed at Camp B-60, Grimbergen, in the northern outskirts of Brussels. The Regiment began processing for redeployment on July 16 and continued through July 31, 1945.

The 137th Infantry relieved the 28th Division Artillery in the Kaiserlautern area on July 7, 1945. The Regimental and 1st Battalion CP's were located in Neustadt. Company A was located in Neidenthal, Company B in Ludwigshafen, Company C in Haardt, and Company D in Dannstudt. The 2d Battalion CP, along with Company E, was in Frankenthal, Company F in Nisenbert, Company C in Kirchheis Bolandem, and Company H in Dumstein. The 3d Battalion CP, with Company N, was located in Landstuhl, Company I in Hamstein, Company K in Rockenhausen, and Company L in Winnweiller. The AT Company

was occupying Weitersweiller, CE Company in Lauterecken, and SV Company in Grunstadt.

The 137th Infantry moved by motor on July 10 from its zone in Germany to Camp B-60 at Grimbergen, Belgium. The Regiment now had the mission

President leaving the Augusta







The provisional Battalion at the ceremony in Brussels

of providing an honor guard for the President of the United States when he arrived at Airfield B-58 on his journey to Potsdam for the Big Three Conference.

The President and his party debarked from the *U. S. S. Augusta* at Antwerp, Belgium, on July 15. The 137th Infantry, with attached troops, secured the President's route from 300 yards north of Boom to Airfield B-58 before he left by air for Potsdam.

The attached troops for this mission were the 707th MP Company, a British MP Detachment, a Chanor Base Section MP Detachment, and a Provisional Armored Car Company.

The 2d Battalion, 137th Infantry, secured the route from 800 yards north of Boom to 200 yards north of Mutsaard, Belgium. The 3d Battalion, 137th Infantry, secured the route from 200 yards north of Mutsaard to the gate at 5-56. The 1st Battalion, 137th Infantry, less Company B, secured the route from the gate at B-56 to the airfield, B-58. Security at B-58 included a cordon about the Presidential Party aircraft on the taxi strip, as approved by Mr. McGrath, U. S. Treasury Department Agent.

The guard of honor, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel George O'Connel, consisting of two provisional companies of 150 specially selected men, received the President at B-58 at approximately 1300, July 15. The President was met by Colonel William E. Murray, Commander of the 137th Infantry Regiment, and then inspected the honor guard.

Beginning at 1800, July 14, CN Company of the 137th Infantry inspected and secured all bridges, culverts, overpasses, underpasses, and canal crossings until the Presidential Party was safely at B-58. Company B, 137th Infantry, constituted a moile reserve with one platoon reinforced at three locations along the route. Chanor Base Section furnished ambulances, wreckers and radio-equipped trucks along the route to B-58. The Regimental CP during this mission was the control tower at B-58.

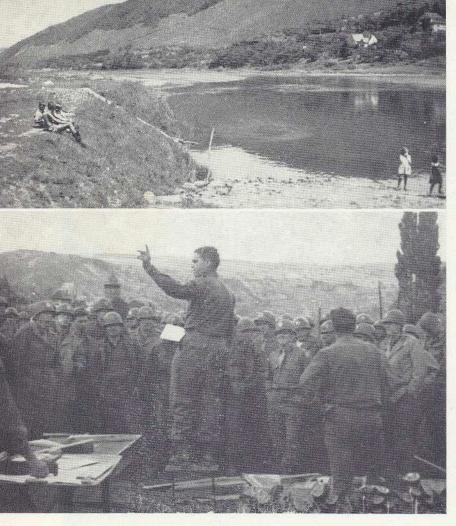
The Regiment began processing for redeployment to the United States on July 16 at Camp B-60, where the Regiment remained through the remainder of July.

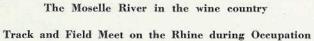
The 137th Infantry participated in the Presentation of Awards, Parade, and Retreat Ceremony held July 30 at the Palais de Justice in Brussels under the direction of Chanor Base Section.

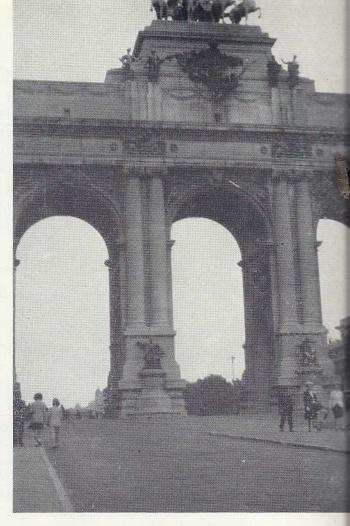
A provisional battalion of the 137th Infantry commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Albert W. Frink constituted the Parade Battalion at this ceremony.



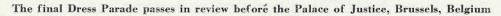
The Chanor Base Section Band







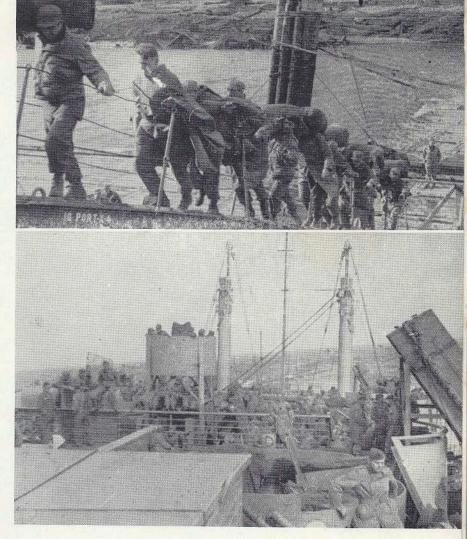
The Arch of Brussels







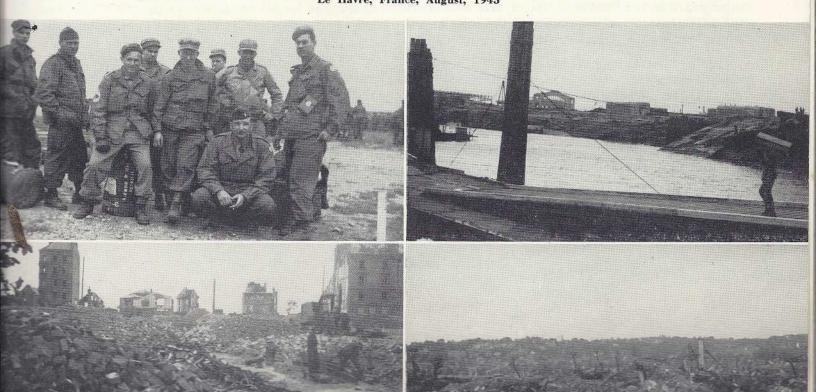
Loading on the Christobal, Le Havre, France



Homeward Bound

At Camp Lucky Strike

Loading the boat for the return home, Le Havre, France Le Havre, France, August, 1945





The flag ceremony at the Hall of Justice, Brussels, Belgium

At the conclusion of the retreat ceremony, the Battalion passed in review before distinguished guests present in the reviewing stand. In addition to the color guard in the Parade Battalion, five men from the 137th Infantry also constituted the color guard which lowered the American flag during retreat.

Major General Paul W. Baade, 35th Infantry Division Commander, visited Colonel William S. Murray at Camp B-60 on July 31, 1945. At 1245 General Beade had a meeting of the Battalion and Special Unit Commanders in Colonel Murray's office. There were no casualties during the month of July.

On August 8, the Regiment received a call from the Commander of the Port at Le Harve, France. After a picturesque motor move via Amiens, Arras, Abbeville, Dieppe, and St. Vallerie, the Regiment arrived at Camp Lucky Strike, 40 miles from Le Harve. The last days were spent in preparation for the movement home.

On August 22, the final call from the Commander of the port came, and the men of the 137th loaded on the *SS Cristobal* and sailed the following morning for America.

The *Cristobal* docked in Boston Harbor on August 31. Trains were waiting to speed the men to Camp Miles Standish.

Within a few hours special trains carrying 137th veterans had started on that final lap home for 45 days of rest and recuperation.

After 45 days the Regiment started to reassemble at Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky, finally closing about October 31.

Inactivation was quick and well ordered and finally completed on December 1.







137th Infantry

AWARDS-

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE	E CROSS 15
CROIX DE GUERRE 11	BRONZE STAR 836
SILVER STAR 226	SOLDIER'S MEDAL 3
TOTAL	1091



Distinguished Service Cross

FREDERICK L. BACH, Jr., 1st Lt.
RAYMOND W. BRAFFITT, 1st Lt.
SAMUEL C. DAVIS, Sgt.
PAUL A. FALL, T/Sgt.
CARL J. FRANTZ, Sgt.
JOSEPH P. FULLER, T/Sgt.
JOSEPH S. GIACOBELLO, 1st Lt.
SHERWOOD C. LINES, S/Sgt.
HARRY L. LUTHER, S/Sgt.
HAROLD D. SNYDER, T/Sgt.
ODIE T. STALLCUP, 1st Lt.
CLAYTON W. PEARSON, T/Sgt.
VERNON W. PICKETT, 1st Lt.
CARL E. PISTER, Capt.
WILLIAM C. MILLER, Capt.

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