

HEADQUARTERS 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 56

6 November 1945

**BATTLE HONORS.** Under the provisions of Section IV, Circular 333, War Department, 22 December 1943, as amended, the Third Battalion, 137th Infantry, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in France from 18 to 21 November 1944. On the morning of 18 November 1944, the Third Battalion, 137th Infantry launched an attack toward high ground north-east of Harprich, as part of the 35th Infantry Division offensive designed to break the winter offensive line established by the Germans on the axis of Nancy, Sarreguemines and Mannheim. The first objective was seized at 0915 hours after the Battalion forded an icy stream and drove through barbed wire entanglements at the muddy approaches to the town of Bening. Pausing momentarily, the troops pressed on under increasingly accurate enemy shellfire, across open terrain, and entered the town of Bistroff. Bitter house to house fighting ensued, until 1230 hours when possession of the town was secured. Marshy terrain in that vicinity defied all efforts to move either track or wheeled vehicles. In anticipation of an enemy attempt to retake Bistroff, anti-tank mines were hand-carried under cover of darkness and placed astride the two roads leading into the town. At 0600 19 November, Company "K" launched an attack on Hill 315, the outstanding terrain feature in this area, studded with gun emplacements which denied the use of nearby roads to our forces. Simultaneously the Germans counterattacked the town of Bistroff in Company strength, supported by two Mark V Panther tanks. Both tanks were disabled by the well-placed anti-tank mines, and the Third Battalion riflemen, with artillery support, placed withering fire among the enemy ranks, stalled the enemy attack, gradually turned it, and forced the Germans back with heavy casualties. In the meantime Company "K" achieved a tactical surprise and, supported by a heavy machine gun platoon, stormed the dug-in positions on Hill 315. The capture of this hill pierced the enemy defense line, and enabled armor and other units on the right to advance and seize Gros-Tenquin. At 0700 20 November, the Third Battalion moved toward the enemy stronghold of Freyhouse, across soggy terrain and under artillery and mortar fire, seized several intervening fortified positions, and that afternoon launched an attack which carried into the outskirts of Freyhouse. The enemy reacted strongly with well organized counterattacks. By nightfall, one platoon of Company "K" was established in a group of houses in the town. Other units of the Third Battalion, supported by two tank destroyers, attacked at 0700 the following morning, advanced relentlessly across an open field swept by machine gun fire, joined the platoon already in the town, and, without respite, proceeded to drive the bitterly resisting Germans from Freyhouse, thereby eliminating the last major obstacle before Saarguemines. The extraordinary heroism, exemplary endurance and teamwork displayed by the members of this unit, fighting under adverse circumstances against a determined and resourceful enemy, is in accordance with the highest traditions of the military service.

BY-COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL BAADÉ:

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