

The Fifth Infantry Division IN THE ETO



PASS IN REVIEW



U.S.A. ICELAND ENGLAND N. IRELAND FRANCE LUXEMBOURG GERMANY AUSTRIA CZECHOSLOVAKIA



FROM IRELAND

MANCHE

CALVADOS

EURE

SEINE

ILE ET VILAINE

RENNES

MAYENNE

LE MANS

LOIR

ORLEANS

LOIR

ET

CHER

INDRE

TOUR

LOIRE

NANTES

Saumur

Chinon

Loches

Valençay



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***The* FIFTH INFANTRY
DIVISION
in
the ETO**

+

ICELAND . ENGLAND

IRELAND . FRANCE

GERMANY . LUXEMBOURG

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

AUSTRIA

1945

Prepared by

**THE FIFTH DIVISION HISTORICAL SECTION
HEADQUARTERS FIFTH INFANTRY DIVISION**

SONS OF THE RED DIAMOND

Who took the torch from honored hands,
Bore it aloft through History's sands,
'Til Freedom blazed in Foreign Lands?

Red Diamond!

Who stood to arms among the first,
Kept Iceland from the Foeman's worst
While Hitler, in his "West Wall" cursed?

Red Diamond!

Who marched from beaches newly-won,
And guarded Caumont from the Hun,
Helped in the break-through just begun?

Red Diamond!

Who met the Germans turned at bay
At Chateaufort and grim Angers,
Drove out the foe from old Chartres?

Red Diamond!

Etampes, Malesherbes, and La Chapelle,
The Boche recall those cities well,
And know to whom these strongpoints fell,

Red Diamond!

Through Fontainebleau and Montereau,
Who crossed the Seine to trap the foe,
Dealt ancient Rhiems the fatal blow?

Red Diamond!

With Varennes battle scarcely done,
Who blasted Clermont from the Hun
And freed the ghosts that haunt Verdun?

Red Diamond!

Down through the ages men will tell
Of how the Fifth crossed grim Moselle
Through tracers' glare and screaming shell,

Red Diamond!

Who drove the Boche from out the Forts
And left proud Metz without supports.
Who captured Metz? The Boche reports—

Red Diamond!



Who crossed the Saar 'mid winter's blast,
And when the Panzers struck at last,
Who scorned to let the Foemen past?

Red Diamond!

Who paced their fathers' steps again
To Luxembourg, and held it when,
The Boche was storming the Ardennes?

Red Diamond!

Who stormed across the river Ouer,
Bridged next the Sure and then the Sauer,
And smashed the Siegfried's vaunted power?

Red Diamond!

Across the Prum and then the Kyll,
Who gave the German steel for steel
And watched the "mighty" Wehrmacht reel?

Red Diamond!

Fell Dudeldorf and Bitburg, then
The Fifth was driving on again,
The Diamond's Sons were proven men—

Red Diamond!

The "Sacred" River Rhine was crossed,
And back again the foe was tossed,
Town after town the Germans lost.

Red Diamond!

Across the battered Frankfurt span,
Through heavy fire the Diamond ran,
And met the Jerry, man to man—

Red Diamond!

Who drove across the Czech Frontier,
Reached Austria, and paused to hear
All Europe freed from Nazi Fear—?

Red Diamond!

—K. H.

PASS IN REVIEW

"KAMERAD, HELL!" shouted Private First Class John Yezzi from behind his machine gun on top of Hill 386 across the bloody Moselle river as fanatic Germans charged his position firing machine pistols and rifle grenades and yelling "Kamerad." Yezzi pressed off another burst and shouted to his buddies of Company D of the 10th, "pass me another belt of ammunition."

That, in a phrase and an act, was an example of the type of battle skill, courage, and faithfulness to duty and to comrades that characterized the Fifth Division and gained for it the unquestioned reputation as a crack combat division. With troops skillfully employed by all command and staff echelons and their employment courageously and skillfully carried out by the troops and troop-leaders themselves, the members of the Red Diamond gained for the Fifth a reputation unique among the divisions that fought in the European Theater of Operations.

The history of "Pass in Review" of the Fifth is a difficult matter to put in between two covers in words and pictures. One had to live with the Division to understand the wealth of living and feeling that grew around its accumulation of experiences—in tedious garrison and stevedore-work, in rigorous training, in bitter combat, and in brief monotonous occupation.

To record the terrific "esprit de corps" and intense pride in the Diamond patch and even more particularly, the intense pride each one had in his own Regiment, Battalion and Company, is an impossible task.

The very growth of it was a minor miracle, founded as it was upon the stagnant garrison life in Iceland. "The Rock" to most meant long hours of dock-work at Reykjavik and Keflavik, of building Nissen and Quonset huts in sunlight, moonlight and artificial floodlight, in wind, rain and snow. It meant hours of loneliness and little recreation. Troops were so scattered around the barren perimeter that it was difficult to achieve a sense of unity in a Regiment or Battalion.

The move to England after two years on "The Rock" brought a more vital, brighter way of life, and the rigorous training in North Ireland brought the units closer and knitted them together in smoothly coordinated units of mutual understanding.

It was not until combat, however, that the intense feeling of pride developed throughout the Division—the feeling that made the Division operate with self-assured cockiness and made it recognized as a superior outfit.

It developed within the members of the Division. There never was any high-pressure campaign inside or outside the Division to tell the Red Diamond wearers how good they were. Nobody had to tell the soldiers and officers of the Fifth they were good. They already knew. Their knowledge had been received through discipline, training and experience, and long months together had achieved near-perfection in teamwork.

It fought every type of warfare from fast fluid actions to long slow sieges. It crossed more rivers than any other division and fought in all kinds of weather on all types of terrain.

Each Rifle Battalion was convinced it fought most of the war and each Regiment believed it had the best record

but every one united in telling outsiders that the Red Diamond Division patch symbolized the best. Naturally, the Fifth had due respect for all other fighting units, particularly tough veteran outfits it knew intimately, like the First, Second, Fourth, Eightieth and Ninetieth Infantry Divisions and the Second and Fourth Armored Divisions.

The Fifth had very heavy casualties and the realization of the sacrifices made by its members intensified the division pride.

The personnel of the Division which crossed into Frankfurt during the last days of the war was not the same personnel that fought in Normandy, for the most part. But it had the same spirit, handed down to it by every soldier and every officer who ever wore the Red Diamond. It was an intangible quality, the confident feeling of being part of a great division, but it was an intangible quality that each reinforcement quickly absorbed as he joined the Division.

The Fifth won its battle prestige in its very first blooding in Normandy and when it joined the Third Army and quickly liberated the important town of Angers and amazed military scientists with the speed an infantry division could move and fight it became known as one of, if not indisputably, the best Division in General Patton's Third.

Wherever the Fifth was, there was the weight of a Third Army drive or its spearhead. It is fact, and not idle boast, that the Fifth established the first Third Army bridgeheads across the Seine, Moselle, Sauer, Kyll, Mosel, and Rhine rivers. It drove the opening wedge in the Third Army offensive at Metz, into the Siegfried Line, into the Rhineland across the Kyll and into Central Germany across the Rhine. It was no accident that the Fifth drew the heavyweight assignments; it was because the Fifth always produced the desired result, impregnable Fort Driant being the sole exception and even that falling eventually to the Division.

An attempt has been made in the following pages to delineate the combat history of the Division by telling what each Battalion of infantry did, in chronological sequence. The emphasis has been placed on the truly magnificent and sacrificial fighting performed by the infantryman—the G. I. with a rifle, bazooka, machine gun or mortar. No one would ever deny the infantryman the credit due him, least of all his close comrades in arms—the sweating artilleryman, the medic, the artful engineer, the tanker, the tank destroyer, or the recon trooper. But readers should not forget that behind each Battalion's action was a vast amount of work; work by the command and staff sections of Division and Regiments; work by the quartermaster, ordnance and their corresponding units in the Regiments; work by members of all arms and attachments—the artillery, whose forward ground observers and air observers were the forgotten heroes of the war, the versatile engineers and all elements of the Division.

It is the attempt of this book to reflect the record and the reasons for the pride in the Red Diamond that each one who was ever a part of the Fifth felt. It is hoped that as each one reads this he will be pleased to say to himself that "that's the way it was" and that of the Fifth's history he can now say "all of it I knew; some of it I saw; part of it I was."



MAJOR GENERAL CORTLAND PARKER
Commanding General
 August, 1941 to June 23, 1943

Joining the Fifth Division in November, 1939, at Fort Knox, Kentucky, as commander of the Nineteenth Field Artillery Regiment, General Parker rose to command of the Fifth during the Tennessee and Louisiana maneuvers in August of 1941. He took Division Headquarters to Iceland in April, 1942, and commanded the Fifth during the long occupation and garrison of that strategically important North Atlantic outpost. He graduated from West Point in 1906.

During World War I, General Parker commanded the Sixth Field Artillery Regiment, which supported the First Infantry Division. In addition to the usual army officers tours of duty at various posts in the States, General Parker was Military Attache in London, England 1931 to 1935, and served in Hawaii and the Philippines.

Upon leaving the Fifth Division in 1943, General Parker assumed command of the Southern California Sector of the Western Defense Command of the Zone of the Interior.



MAJOR GENERAL ALBERT E. BROWN
Commanding General
 April 21, 1945 to the Present

Commander of the Fifth in its final days of combat in Czechoslovakia was General Brown. The general joined the Division after previous combat experience with the Seventh Infantry Division on Attu, and several weeks of experience in the European Theater as combat observer with other veteran Divisions.

Graduated from West Point in 1912, General Brown selected the infantry branch and saw the Mexican Border campaign with General Pershing and the World War I with the Fourth Infantry Division in France. After the usual post-war service school's and tours of duty at various posts, the general was assigned to the War Department General Staff. As the army started its expansion period General Brown joined the Seventh Motorized Division which was later converted into a straight infantry outfit. After the Attu campaign, General Brown commanded the Infantry Replacement Training Center at Camp Wheeler, Georgia.

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BRIGADIER GENERAL HAROLD C. VANDERVEER
Commanding General Fifth Division Artillery
 September, 1942 to the Present

From corporal in the U. S. Marine Corps to Brigadier General, U. S. Army, is the history in brief of the Commanding General of the Fifth Division Artillery.

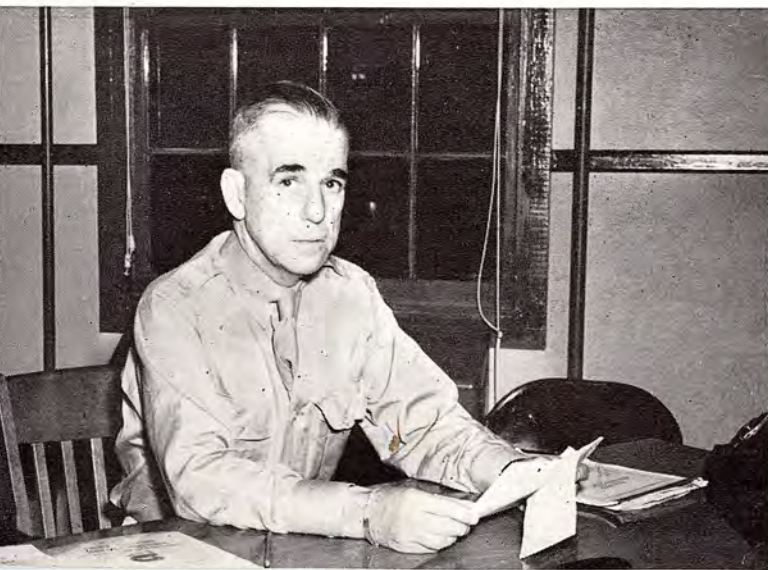
Joining the army as a second lieutenant of Field Artillery in 1911, General Vanderveer served the World War I period with the First and Ninth Field Artillery at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

An expert in Field Artillery tactics and technique, the general had various troops at Fort Sill, Fort Leavenworth and Fort Riley. Just previous to his assignment to the Fifth, the general was artillery officer of the IX Corps at Fort Lewis, Washington. He joined the Division in Iceland in September, 1942, and his military discipline and thorough schooling gave the Fifth one of the best groups of artillery battalions to ever fire a TOT in Europe.

BRIGADIER GENERAL ALN D. WARNOCK
Assistant Division Commander
 December, 1942 to the Present

From private to general in the U. S. Army, is the story of the Fifth Division's Assistant Commanding General.

A native Texan, the general served in the army as private and came up through the non-commissioned ranks to grade of first sergeant until discharged on January 14, 1917, to accept a commission as second lieutenant. Serving on the Mexican border until July 1918, General Warnock later saw combat in World War I in France. After a brief post-war tour as a sheriff in Arizona, General Warnock returned to the Regular Army as a first lieutenant. He saw foreign service in Hawaii and various tours with different infantry regiments. He was a member of the Iceland Base Command from late 1941 being named Assistant Division Commander in December, 1942 and serving in that capacity all through the war.





MAJOR GENERAL S. LeROY IRWIN

Commanding General

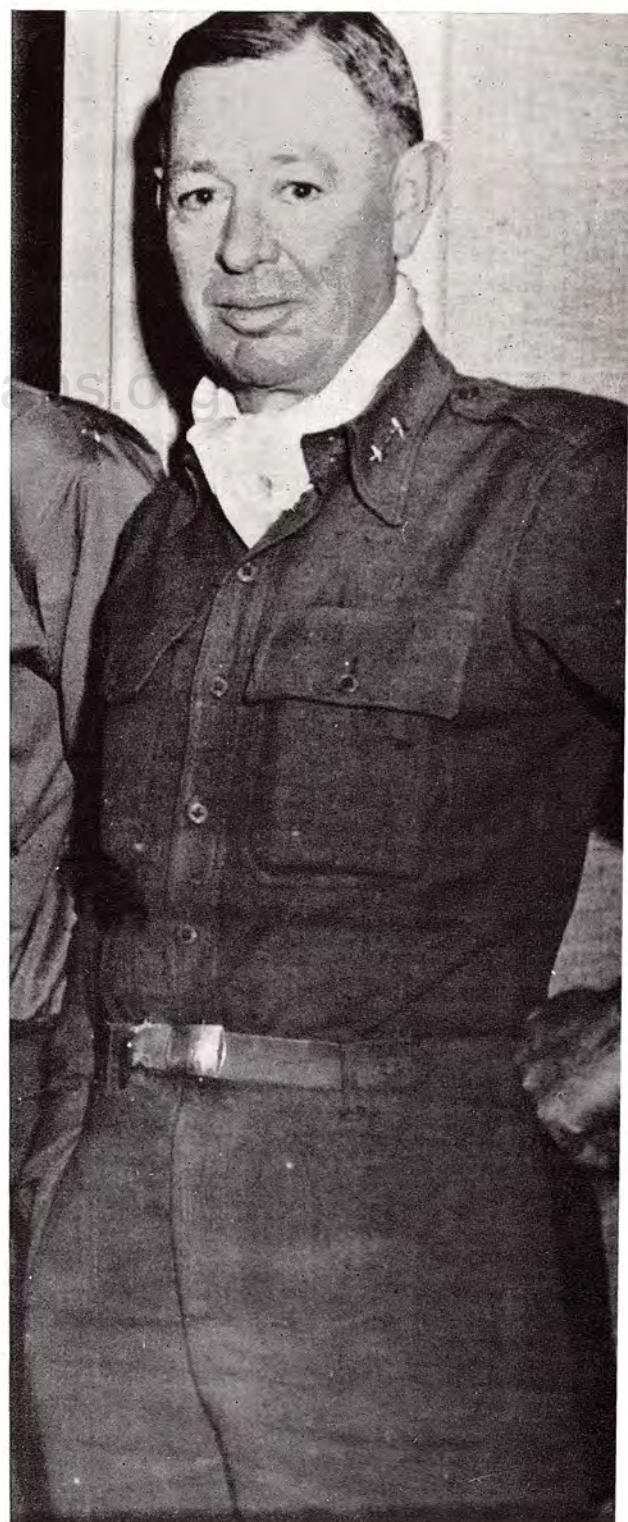
July 3, 1943 to April 21, 1945

"It is not only a great division, it is a magnificent one," said General Irwin when he uttered his feelings about the Fifth Division on the day of his departure from the Fifth to command the XII Corps.

That was the way Major General S. LeRoy "Red" Irwin felt about the fighting Red Diamonds he commanded from the last week the Division spent in Iceland, in July, 1943, through the rigorous training days in England and Ireland and through the bitter fighting in Europe up to April 21, 1945, after the reduction of the Ruhr pocket. And General Irwin was well qualified to define combat greatness, having come to the Division from his previous capacity as artillery commander of the veteran Ninth Infantry Division.

Born on March 23, 1893, General Irwin, like his father and grandfather, early planned a military career and graduated from West Point in 1915. His consequent career led through the Mexican border campaign, the Philippines, tours of duty at land-grant colleges as military science instructor, and instructor at the Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. At the Field Artillery School he was instrumental in experimenting with and developing present sound-ranging technique and fire-direction center system of artillery control.

He landed with the Ninth Infantry Division in North Africa on Christmas Day, 1942. At the completion of the North African campaign, he was reassigned to command of the Fifth Infantry Division and flew to Iceland to assume command on July 3, 1943.





COL. WORRELL A. ROFFE
Commanding 2nd Infantry
Until April 20, 1945

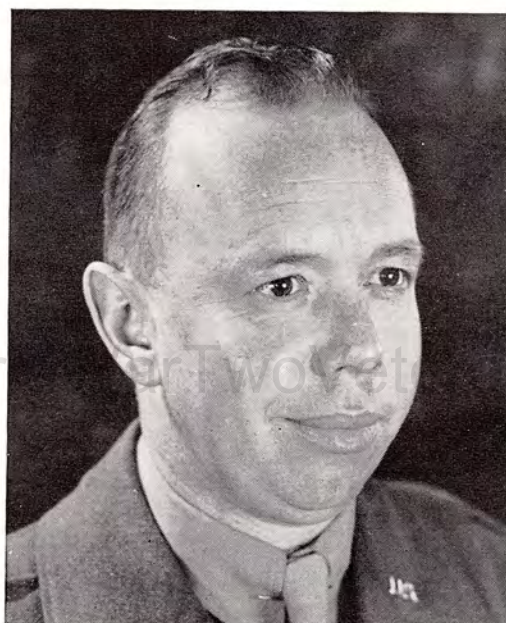
CHIEF OF STAFF AND REGIMENTAL COMMANDERS



COL. WELDER R. GRAHAM
Commanding 2nd Infantry
From April 20, 1945, to present



COL. ROBERT P. BELL
Commanding 10th Infantry



COL. SAMUEL W. HORNER II
Executive, Division Artillery



COL. PAUL O. FRANSON
Chief of Staff



COL. CHARLES W. YUILL
Commanding 11th Infantry
Until November 20, 1944



COL. PAUL J. BLACK
Commanding 11th Infantry
From November 20, 1944, to present

Historical Sketches of...

FIFTH DIVISION UNITS

THE HISTORY of the FIFTH Infantry Division is one of action, glory, and tradition. The action of the division as a whole covers the bloody paths of World Wars I and II. The tradition of some of the organic units dates back to the Indian Wars waged by Gen. Anthony Wayne, through the Battle for New Orleans, the Civil War, Mexican War, Philippine Insurrection and the Spanish-American War. The glory that the division has achieved is the story of all glory—a difficult task completed and paid for at a price.

The FIFTH Infantry Division was activated at Camp Logan, Texas, on December 1st, 1917, under the command of Maj. Gen. Charles H. Muir as a "heavy," or "square type division." Assigned to the division were some of the oldest and most traditionally famous regiments of the United States Army, units that had already won laurels in combat.

Organically, the division was composed of the NINTH Infantry Brigade composed of the SIXTEENTH and TWENTY-SIXTH Infantry Regiments and FOURTEENTH Machine Gun Battalion; the TENTH Infantry Brigade, composed of the SIXTH and ELEVENTH Infantry Regiments, and the FIFTEENTH Machine Gun Battalion; the FIFTIETH Field Artillery Brigade, composed of the NINETEENTH, TWENTIETH, and TWENTY-FIRST Field Artillery Regiments and the FIFTH Trench Mortar Battalion.

The division as a whole never assembled at Camp Logan. Hardly had organization plans been completed, when sailing orders were received, and on February 24th, 1918, advance detachments from units of the division proceeded overseas as billeting and training area parties. The remainder of the division was sent overseas piecemeal and distributed in various billeting areas throughout the British Isles and France. By May 1, 1918, all units of the division had been assembled in France, and division headquarters was set up in Le Havre.

Upon arrival in France, the members of the division came face to face with the effects of war. It was written on the faces of all the French people, for scarcely a family had not lost some near relative. The Germans had launched their last great offensive intended to win or lose the war and an atmosphere of anxiety hung over the entire country.

All units immediately started intensive training for front line duty. Battle seasoned instructors from the French and British Armies were utilized to the maximum. The troops, fresh and eager, learned rapidly and the division began to take shape as a combat unit. Gas training was intense, and schools for all branches of the service were in constant operation. During the latter part of May, an inspection of the division was made by Gen. John J. Pershing, commander in chief of the American Expeditionary Forces, and the FIFTH was declared ready for introduction to the front.

On May 31, Field Order No. 1 was issued preparatory to moving to the front. The division answered, "We Will."

The FIFTH was placed at the disposal of the French SEVENTH Army which at that time was holding a quiet sector of the line in the upper Alsace and Vosges Mountains. The lines in that sector had not changed in over three years and it was thought to be a good indoctrination area for the French methods of trench warfare. After assignment to the French SEVENTH Army, units of the division were parceled out to the various divisions of the French XXXIII Corps for further training in the technique of trench warfare.

On July 15, the FIFTH Division was given the St. Die sector. It had been a static sector for a long time with activity limited to patrol action. Static warfare, or trench life, however, did not appeal to the men wearing the Red Diamond. They increased their patrol activities and soon won control of "No Man's Land" from the Germans who had held it for more than three years. On August 17th the division made its first concerted attack up the valley towards St. Die. The attack was successful and resulted in the capture of two strategically important points, Hill 451 and the village of Frapple. But most important of all, it resulted in the first change in the German lines since 1915.

Following this baptism of fire, the division was relieved on August 20 and sent to the Arches for rest, re-equipping, and retraining for future missions.

By now the American Expeditionary Force was nearing full strength and plans were made for the first full scale offensive by an American Army. The FIFTH, now being considered battle experienced and one of the crack divisions, was assigned to the American sector and on August 28, began assembling along the Moselle River. On September 4th the division began a gruelling 50 kilometer march through mud and rain to the front. At the front it was assigned a zone two kilometers wide, a tough objective of enemy strongly entrenched in hills in the Meuse Valley. The attack was to be north, eight kilometers, to the tough Hindenburg line.

On the morning of September 12th, a full scale offensive was launched. The FIFTH rolled forward, capturing huge quantities of materiel and large numbers of prisoners. Five officers and sixteen enlisted men were awarded Distinguished Service Crosses before the Division was relieved on September 16th. On the evening of the first day of battle, Major General Liggett, commanding the First Army Corps, telegraphed the division commander:

"Congratulate sincerely the 5th Division on its splendid achievement today and desire to express my pride and gratification in having such a splendid unit under my command."

September 17 found the division in a rear area rest camp receiving replacements. Major General Hanson Ely had now succeeded General McMahon in command.

The Meuse-Argonne offensive started October 26th, and the FIFTH was assigned positions along the Meuse River, where the enemy, expecting an attempt to cross the river, had concentrated a large force of troops and arms. It was a bloody fight for the FIFTH to cross the Meuse River, but once the crossing had been forced, the division expanded its own, and neighboring divisions' bridgeheads, and advanced 18 kilometers taking nearly 200 square kilometers of territory before the November 11 Armistice brought an end to hostilities.

Following cessation of hostilities, the FIFTH was one of ten chosen for the Army of Occupation, and was assigned a base in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. On July 4, 1919, the division started its trek back to the United States.

The FIFTH had won its laurels but the glory was not bought cheaply. It had suffered, including killed, wounded, captured, and missing in action, a total of 9,299 battle casualties. Members of the Red Diamond division had sacrificed heavily that wars should end. But 25 years later the FIFTH was again to make history in the same cause and to pay a far heavier price for its glory.



Oblique aerial photograph of Iceland looking from Camp White Heather along road past Camps Omskeyri, Colne Valley, Baldurshagi, Pershing, Curtis to Reykjavik and the sea.

Upon arrival home the division was assembled at Camps Merrit and Mills where those who had entered the service for the period of the emergency were discharged. On October 4, 1921, the Red Diamond division was deactivated, the units sent to various posts and camps for permanent stations and to await the time when the Red Diamond would again answer "We Will."

The call came on October 16, 1939. War clouds had blackened the skies of Europe and threatened to roll westward. The Army of the United States was beginning to expand. The units destined to be a part of the new FIFTH began assembling at Fort McClellan, Alabama, under the command of Brigadier General Campbell B. Hodges. Thus, after eighteen years of inactivity the FIFTH was ready to make history again.

The FIFTH, reorganized, of triangular type, at that time consisted of three infantry regiments, the SECOND, TENTH, and ELEVENTH Infantry; two Field Artillery regiments, the NINETEENTH, and TWENTY-FIRST, and divisional troops composed of the SEVENTH Engineers, FIFTH Quartermaster Battalion, FIFTH Medical Battalion, FIFTH Signal company, and Division Headquarters and Military Police Company. In 1940, the organization of triangular divisions was again changed. Division Artillery was organized, and instead of two regiments of field artillery, four battalions were formed. Two new field artillery battalions were formed from battalions from the NINETEENTH and TWENTY-FIRST, the FORTY-SIXTH coming from the NINETEENTH, and the FIFTIETH coming from the TWENTY-FIRST. Headquarters and Headquarters Battery of the Third Battalion of the Twenty-first Regiment became Headquarters Battery of Division Artillery.

It is interesting to note here that this was not the first time that the three infantry regiments had been together under one command. During the Civil War the SECOND, TENTH, and ELEVENTH Infantry Regiments composed the SECOND Brigade in the battle of Chancellorsville.

Immediately after reactivation at Fort McClellan, Alabama, the division spent several months at intensive training which culminated in a series of division maneuvers. Following maneuvers, the FIFTH went through further intensive training until the spring of 1940 when the various units separated and returned to their former home stations for a few months of garrison duty. In August, 1940, the division again assembled at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, for field problems, and the firing of weapons. In September the units again returned to their home stations to prepare for final assembly of the division at its new permanent station—Fort Custer, Michigan.

In the meantime Major General Joseph M. Cummins assumed command of the division on September 4, 1940, and headquarters was moved to Fort Custer. The first division troops arrived in the middle of September.

During the winter of 1940, a composite group of officers and men were sent to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, to train and study methods of combat in snow and extreme cold. This training, later given the division as whole, was to prove valuable in Iceland.

With the arrival of the first selectees in the spring of 1941, a new system of training was inaugurated. The new men were formed in separate companies or platoons and trained by selected officers and non-commissioned personnel. The officer strength leaped to 50 per cent. overstrength, the new officers coming from the Officers Reserve Corps.

On May 20, 1941, the division started a 600-mile march to central Tennessee where it participated in SECOND Army maneuvers until June 28th. The 5,000 selectees now in the division functioned as smoothly as veteran regulars by the end of maneuvers. When the division arrived back at Fort Custer during the first week of July it was considered ready for combat, but specialized training was carried out to polish off rough spots observed during the maneuvers.

In the meantime the war clouds over Europe had become darker, and almost everyone believed war was inevitable.

England was on her knees. Changes began to take place in the FIFTH. All available regular army officers and men were shifted to the TENTH Infantry and FORTY-SIXTH Field Artillery Battalion, forming a complete combat team. On July 24th Major General Charles H. Bonesteel assumed command, succeeding General Cummins. Almost immediately Brigadier General Cortland Parker, former Divisional Artillery Commander, succeeding General Bonesteel as commander.

In late August the division shuttled itself to Louisiana to take part in war games. But it left behind the TENTH Combat Team. The TENTH was on its way to Iceland. During the Louisiana maneuvers the FIFTH Anti-Tank Battalion was formed, the personnel being drawn from the TWENTY-FIRST Field Artillery Battalion and the three infantry anti-tank companies. This battalion was later redesignated as the 605 Tank Destroyer Battalion.

Returning to Fort Custer the division began preparations for shipment of the remainder of the units to Iceland. Going over piecemeal, as in World War I, the movement required several months, the first elements arriving on September 16, 1941, and the last element on May 10, 1942.

THE ICELAND ORDEAL

Iceland was an arduous task. The lack of service troops, the limited and hazardous road nets, severe climate and the necessity of continued training demanded long hours and hard work. Combat troops were called upon to work as deck hands, and assist in building the huge Meeke airfield on Keflavik peninsula. Observation posts were constantly manned and beaches along vital coastal areas patrolled. Training areas were limited and daylight hours varying; the division was dispersed over a large area and it was almost impossible to carry on unit training on a large scale.

Despite all these handicaps, the division conducted many schools, keeping abreast of the latest methods and tactics. Winter warfare training was conducted on a small scale and this training later proved valuable in France. Close association with the U. S. Marines, naval units, all arms and services of the U. S. Army, the Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, and the FORTY-NINTH British Infantry Division in daily operations in the defense of Iceland broadened the knowledge of commanders and staffs and laid the foundation for the solution of many subsequent problems. But above all else, Iceland, with its hardships and its disadvantages, knit the division in a brotherhood of men with a common understanding and objective.

The Iceland occupation ended in early August, 1943, when the FIFTH moved to England for advanced training. By this time all knew that a continental invasion was

imminent. The FIFTH was ready to train as part of the invasion force.

ENGLAND—THE WAR-WEARY LAND

In England training was paramount. With the Germans less than 100 miles away in occupied France, the men began to take an active interest in training, especially in the identification of air craft and armored vehicles. The division was given a section of the English coast for defense under the V Corps, and defense plans were completed after extensive study and reconnaissance.

A cannon company of 105 mm. howitzers was added to each of the infantry regiments in October. Obsolete 37 mm. anti-tank guns were replaced by heavier 57 mm. weapons. New, combat serviceable equipment was received by all units. Restrictions were relaxed despite the intensive training, and forty-eight hour passes and furloughs were granted so the men could see parts of England. And many men enjoyed another type of diversion—assisting the British "Land Army" girls harvest crops.

Training stressed development of the individual soldier, qualification in arms, and physical conditioning. Excellent range facilities were available at Tidworth Garrison, where the division was stationed. Artillery units fired on the local range at West Down and later in the moors of Devonshire. A few unit exercises were conducted in conjunction with the British Home Guard as they maneuvered to drive a simulated enemy from the Salisbury Plains.

IRELAND—INVASION TRAINING GROUND

Training in the Tidworth Garrison area completed, the division moved to Northern Ireland in October for pre-invasion training, and were billeted in many small camps adjacent to the Mourne Mountains. Training here emphasized making every man an expert in one or more weapons. Special allowances of ammunition were allotted the division to overcome the result of the long tenure in Iceland, and day after day the troops poured lead into the mountain sides perfecting their firing technique.

Progressively the problems were enlarged as battalions, regiments, and finally the entire division participated in exercises which led them over the peaks of Slieve Donard and the lesser Mourne Mountains. The training was planned to cover every phase of the attack and defense, and to prepare the men for every situation which might arise in combat.

Here, also, training in attack on a fortified position, which later proved invaluable at Metz, the Siegfried Line, and many other points, was stressed as a separate phase for each infantry battalion. Battle drill, a system of training used by the British in training small units, was adopted and used so extensively that almost any combat soldier in the division could recite from memory his duties in any situation which might occur in combat. The system proved unparalleled for rapid training of the individual for a specific job in an organization.

River crossings, for which the division was to become so famous later, were practiced on the small Irish lakes, the rivers being too small to furnish serious obstacles, with the engineers moving out by units to build and rebuild the various types of bridges required in combat.



View of Camp Richardson on Mount Eyjafjallajökull in winter Warfare School.

Battle inoculation was prescribed for all combat personnel requiring the men to go through courses of overhead small arms fire, mine fields and bursting demolition charges both day and night. Throughout the fall and winter the artillery fired almost daily on the Hilltown and Annalong ranges and occasionally moved to the Sperrin Mountains for a variety of terrain on which to fire. Each battalion fired many times its yearly ammunition allowance but in so doing each battalion became a crack unit. More than a thousand anti-aircraft machine gunners were trained in a special course at Saint John's Point during March and these gunners later manned all the .50 caliber machine guns during combat.

Interspersed with the major subjects of training were many lesser subjects, all vital to a well trained unit, which included scouting, patrolling, map and aerial photograph reading, first aid and sanitation, camouflage and concealment, and instructing junior officers of infantry, engineer and cavalry units in the adjustment of artillery fire. The use of mines, booby traps, grenades and rockets occupied a good share of training as did the principles of tank-infantry cooperation.

Considerable research was conducted on German weapons, equipment and battle methods, including the sending of officer observers to the Italian front and to combat units returned to England following the African campaign.

The combat efficiency of the division was now rated as superior and the units were prepared for any type of operation except airborne or amphibious. The continental invasion was bound to be amphibious so an abbreviated course was set up for all units in assault and follow-up landing operations. The well-conditioned troops of all units went through this training while the staffs toiled over detailed orders and loading charts.

By now plans had been received for the employment of the division on the continent. D-Day was fast approaching and the FIFTH was destined to take part in the greatest amphibious operation in history. A planning room was established and the staffs worked long hours on its part of the plan for "Operation Neptune." The division was allotted 12 Liberty ships to be used for motor transport and five passenger ships for personnel. Orders were drawn up and loading charts completed. Finally the ships were

loaded and the convoy scheduled to sail from Belfast in the early morning of July 6th. The men were trained to the peak of efficiency, a far cry from the outfit that had stagnated in Iceland. The FIFTH was again on the way, destined to play an important part in the defeat of the nation that was responsible for its activation in 1917, and destined to travel over part of the same road its forebears had traveled.

This is the history of the FIFTH Division to the date it sailed for the shores of France for combat in World War II. The rest is told in the combat narrative which follows.



Instruction



Olfusa river flood puts Camp Wood, Iceland, under water.



Shaggy Icelandic ponies went to work for the Army.

The ever present jeep bucks the Olfusa flood in Selfoss, Iceland.

The 2ND INFANTRY REGIMENT

ORGANIZED 154 years ago under a bill signed by President George Washington, the SECOND Infantry Regiment, prior to World War II had participated in 84 battles in defense of the nation and was preparing to sail for the battlefields of France when the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918.

No organization with so brilliant a record ever made a more humble start. In its first campaign against Chief Little Turtle, of the Miamis, the regiment was attacked by the cagey Indian while bivouaced on a branch of the Wabash, fifty miles from the headwaters of the Maumee at daylight on November 4, 1791. Stung and badly beaten with humiliation by this defeat in its first encounter, the SECOND Infantry later with a force under General Anthony Wayne, on the morning of July 28, 1794, near Fort Deposit, cleansed its record by helping win a decisive victory that broke the back of the Indian Wars.

The next few years the SECOND followed a nomadic life, mopping up following Indian skirmishes and occupying various posts in the Middle West. During the War of 1812, against Great Britain, the regiment fought along the borders in the battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane, and finally prevented the British from capturing Fort Bowyer, near Mobile, Alabama. In this engagement 130 infantrymen withstood the siege of 1,300 British troops and four vessels of war. A part of the SECOND Infantry fought with General Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans, but the exact number has not been determined. Following the Battle of New Orleans, however, the British not knowing that the war had already been terminated, again marched on Fort Bowyer, and reduced the small force of the SECOND Infantry stationed there to surrender.

Following the War of 1812, the regiment again occupied many posts throughout the country, taking a small part in the Black Hawk war. In 1839, trouble with the Seminoles necessitated the assembly of the regiment in Florida, and excepting one decisive battle, its work consisting of building ninety forts and 480 miles of roads in the Florida swamps. Following its work in Florida, the regiment spent a year in garrison along the Great Lakes.

During the Mexican War, the SECOND Infantry, as a part of General Scott's Army, traveled the rugged road from the Rio Grande to Vera Cruz and on to Mexico City participating along the way in the battles of Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Churubusco, Contreras, Chapultepec, and finally the capture of Mexico City. Returning to the United States in August, 1848, it was sent to the West Coast to subdue threatened Indian uprisings. To reach California the regiment sailed from New York harbor in September, 1843, going by way of Rio de Janeiro, Cape Horn, and Valparaiso.

The Civil War found the SECOND on duty in a number of Forts in Kansas and Missouri, and on May 10, 1861, four days after declaration of war, Company B is credited with capturing Camp Jackson, Missouri, and its garrison consisting of a brigade of Confederate militia. The four years of the Civil War were a series of twenty-three engagements including the famous battles of Bull Run, Gettysburg, The Wilderness, Rappahannock Station, and the most bloody and costly of all, the Battle of Gaines Mill. Following General Lee's surrender the SECOND spent eight years in the South, occupying five Southern States.

From 1877 to 1898, the SECOND participated in helping reduce the Indian menace in the Great Northwest.

The Spanish-American War gave the regiment its second

Infantry learns skiing on
Mount Eyjafjallajokull.





Navy lighter transports Fifth Division men from Reykjavik to large troop transports in Hvalfjörður naval anchorage prior to sailing to United Kingdom.

taste of war on foreign soil, and while in Cuba it participated in the battles of Santiago and San Juan Hill. By 1899 the regiment was again in the United States, but the sojourn in the States was to be of short duration. With the Philippines flaming with insurrection against American rule and occupation, the SECOND Infantry was ordered abroad again and by April 1, 1902, the complete regiment was in the Philippines where it once more won battle honors.

The Philippines campaign was one of twenty-seven small engagements with seldom more than a force of company strength being used, but the task was strenuous and beset by the tropical diseases and the cunning of the "insurrectos" who specialized on stealthy raids on the peaceful natives and shooting up the American garrisons at night. Of the companies taking part in the different engagements, Company E led the list with six, and Companies M and H followed with four and two respectively. After four years of the rigors of tropical combat, the SECOND again embarked for home, but its stay was to be short, for again in 1906 the regiment sailed for its second tour of duty in the Philippines, this time as a part of the permanent garrison force. The regiment remained on Philippine duty until 1908 when it was again returned to the United States. For three years the regiment performed the routine garrison duties, but 1911 again saw foreign orders delivered, this time to the Hawaiian Islands for outpost defense and garrison duty.

Soon after the outbreak of World War I in 1914, when relations between the United States and Germany became more strained, the SECOND was given the task of guarding German ships that had put into Honolulu Harbor to escape the prowling superior British navy. After the entry of the United States in the war against Germany, the SECOND returned to the United States in 1918 and began training for overseas duty. The regiment was at Camp Dodge, Iowa, when the Armistice was signed, and the second oldest regiment in the United States Army, which up to that time had participated in every war the United States had, had found itself without battle honors in the greatest war the world had ever known to that time.

Then followed normal garrison life in the United States until October 16, 1939, when the regiment was called to

join other historically famous units in the activation of the FIFTH Division at Fort McClellan, Alabama. By this time the Army was undergoing an expansion program with war against some of the Axis powers seemingly inevitable. There followed the normal period of training with many months spent in field maneuvers and finally the assembly of the entire division at Fort Custer, Michigan. There the SECOND participated in combined training, more field maneuvers, and once again, in April, 1942, the regiment landed on foreign soil, this time the barren wastes of Iceland.

The mission in Iceland was the defense of a forty-mile section of the Western Defense Area extending sixty miles inland. Here the troops "endured the fickle antics of the climate by having one minute to push against sleet and snow driven in sharp, biting anger before a diabolical mile-a-minute gale, and the next minute being soaked to the skin with a frigid rain, or teased by an anemic sun peaking over the edge of the world." Added to this was the necessity for working as dock hands, patrolling beaches, manning observation posts, and building camps. But despite the handicaps, the SECOND continued training for the inevitable invasion of continental Europe.

On August 18, 1943, the regiment was on another piece of foreign soil, this time at Tidworth Garrison, England, where intensive training for its part in the continental invasion was started. Utilizing the ranges near Tidworth, and later the Mountains of Mourne in Northern Ireland, the regiment worked towards perfection in the qualification of arms, physical conditioning, battle indoctrination, and finally combined training with the division as a whole. Throughout the winter the training continued and by May 1, 1944, the regiment was ready for combat. It was firmly moulded into a compact fighting unit and was awaiting the call. The call came at midnight on June 29 when the regiment was alerted. All personnel were "sealed in" their barracks and no officer or enlisted man was allowed to leave. Normandy was waiting and on July 9, the convoy carrying the SECOND to more battle honors dropped anchor off the coast due east of St. Nere Eglise. At 2205 hours the first troops of the SECOND, destined to add more laurels to the now crowded colors, set foot on French soil.

The 10TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

SEPTEMBER 25, 1855, Colonel E. B. Alexander, a newly-made full colonel, commanding the six-month-old TENTH Infantry Regiment, read his order of the day to the cocky, confident group of men assembled on the parade grounds of Carlisle Barracks. He began:

"Officers and men of the TENTH: You are formed this morning in line of battle in order that I may present to you the National and Regimental colors. In your hands and your courage and fidelity are now entrusted the honor of your country and the reputation of your Corps. In time of peace so conduct yourselves that neither shall be sullied. In time of war, in the presence of the enemy, remember that these colors which I present to you now are far more precious than life itself.

"Follow wherever they may lead. Gather round them in moments of peril and rather than see yourself deprived of them, die like faithful soldiers beneath their cherished folds."

The TENTH had been formed six months before, on March 3, 1855. The Civil War loomed as a dim threat, but bands of raiding Sioux Indians were sweeping down upon the settlers throughout the Middle-West, looting, burning and murdering. The TENTH was needed and with the address of Colonel Alexander ringing in their ears, the men set forth for Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and were soon organized in small detachments for frontier duty. By 1862, the TENTH had fought the Sioux, Comanches, Yanktons, Apaches, and Navajos, marching from the Platte to the Great Horn, and from the Red River to the Badlands.

Following the suppression of the Indians, the TENTH was sent to Utah to convince Brigham Young, then self-appointed governor, that the Lord Almighty had said: "Brigham, you need no longer be governor." The mission was successful and the newly appointed governor, Alfred Cumming, duly took his place.

When the War Between the States broke out in 1861, the TENTH was on duty in New Mexico, and fought its first battle of the war at Val Verde, nearly two thousand miles from the main theatre of operations. When the South made substantial gains into Northern territory at the beginning of the war, the TENTH was brought east and put into the thick of the fighting. The battles of Manassas, Peninsula Campaign, Antietam, Virginia, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Wilderness, Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg—followed in rapid succession with skirmishes and brushes with the enemy mixed between. At Gettysburg more than sixty per cent of the officers and men were killed and wounded when the regiment occupied a position against a superior force with its front and both flanks exposed.

At the close of the Civil War the regiment was again sent to frontier duty in the expanding west, being scattered between the Dakota and Minnesota territories and along the Rio Grande in Texas, protecting settlers and suppressing banditry along the Mexican Border. When the Oklahoma Territory was opened in April, 1889, the TENTH was sent there to preserve order among the settlers.

Came the Spanish-American War in 1898. The TENTH

Sun sets behind Slieve Donard where the Mountains of Mourne sweep down to the sea by Newcastle, County Down, North Ireland.





1. A summer day at Camp Baldurshagi home of Division Headquarters in Iceland.
2. Skipton Camp in Reykjavik, housing the Third Battalion of the Tenth.
3. Familiar embarkation scene, this time on the Reykjavik docks.

was among the first to see service in Cuba, and on July 1, 1898, led the charge up San Juan Hill and planted the Stars and Stripes on its heights. Following the service in Cuba, the regiment was sent to the Philippines to help suppress the Insurrection. There followed months of small engagements fighting the deadly Moros through the untamed jungles.

Returning to the United States in 1903, the regiment was stationed at Presidio of San Francisco, California; Fort Lawton, Washington; in Alaska; Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana; Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and finally moved to the Panama Canal Zone where it was stationed at the entrance of the United States in World War I. While there it was assigned the important mission of guarding the Panama Canal until early in 1918 when it was returned to the United States and its members divided into cadres and sent out to various stations to become the nuclei of new regiments being formed. These regiments built upon the shoulders of TENTH infantrymen saw service on all fronts. The regiment, refilled with new personnel, guarded munitions, key industries, and was engaged in strike duty until the end of the war.

During the years following World War I, the regiment performed garrison duty, trained civilian army components, participated in flood duty and summer field training until 1939, when it was called to Fort McClellan, Alabama, to become a part of the FIFTH Infantry Division being organized there.

Following the division concentration at Fort McClellan, the regiment participated in maneuvers in Georgia and Louisiana, and finally, on December 3, 1940, moved to Fort Custer, Michigan, the permanent home station of the FIFTH Division. While at Fort Custer, the regiment participated in the June, 1941, Tennessee maneuvers, where the men demonstrated effectively their ability to fight, march, and withstand hardships.

It was this type of training that caused the TENTH, less the second battalion, to be chosen as the initial force from the FIFTH Division for the occupation of Iceland, the regiment leaving the United States on September 5, 1941. The second battalion joined the regiment early in 1942.

The TENTH remained in Iceland until August, 1943, guarding long stretches of beaches against an expected German attack, building camps, unloading supplies from ships, and training when possible during the extremes of the unpredictable Iceland weather.

From Iceland the regiment moved to Tidworth Garrison, England, for intense training and reequipping. The first opportunity for leaves and furloughs, for some in more than four years of service, became available and the men were frequent visitors to Scotland, Wales, and parts of England.

In October, 1943, the regiment moved to Northern Ireland, and was stationed in the south-eastern portion of Ulster, being billeted in Newcastle, Kilkeel, and Ballyedmund. There followed a pre-invasion training program with stress being placed on open warfare, assault against fortified positions, and amphibious operations. An effort was made to make every combat soldier an expert in one or more weapons, and field problems involving the whole division were frequent items.

Finally, on July 1, 1944, the regiment made preparations for movement from Northern Ireland to France, and on July 6, set sail arriving off the coast of Les Dunes de Varreville, July 9, and unloaded on July 10, D plus Thirty-Four.

This is what the regiment had been training for. The men knew that combat lay just a few miles ahead, and were reminded of the old, unofficial slogan of the TENTH Regiment: "When it is getting tough for everyone else, it is getting just right for us."

The 11TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

THE PRESENT ELEVENTH Infantry regiment of the regular Army can trace its entity back to a presidential decree signed by President Lincoln at the beginning of the Civil War in 1861. However, as far back as 1798, again in 1812, and in 1847, certain regiments of the army bore the designation of ELEVENTH Infantry. These organizations, however, were militia or temporary organizations, and bear no historical connection with the present ELEVENTH Infantry which emerged from the old TWENTY-FOURTH and TWENTY-NINTH Infantry Regiments at the close of the Civil War, and has been authorized to claim battle honors won by the two former regiments.

The present ELEVENTH can also lay claim to another honor. It was one of the regiments called on to be a part of the FIFTH Division during World War I and as such won fame as a fighting unit in the Meuse-Argonne offensive in 1918. With the reorganization of the FIFTH Infantry Division in 1939, the ELEVENTH was again called to be part of the FIFTH, and as such, again won laurels in the same land where it had so gallantly fought twenty-five years before.

Of its Civil War record it is known to have been first a part of the Army of the Ohio and later a part of the Army of the Cumberland, taking part in such battles as Shiloh, the Kentucky Campaign, Chickamauga, Murfreesboro, the March through Georgia, and the Battle of Atlanta.

Following the Civil War the ELEVENTH became known as the "Wandering ELEVENTH," and statistics compiled by the Recruiting Service reveal the following facts: between 1898 and 1920, the FIRST Battalion made 59 changes of station and traveled 44,897 miles completing seven years of foreign service. The SECOND Battalion changed station 64 times for a total of 45,545 miles of travel and seven years of foreign service. The THIRD Battalion during the same period changed station 55 times and put 36,330 miles behind them, spending six years on foreign soil. The regimental colors have been flung to the breezes under the sun of nine different nations—Cuba, Philippine Islands, Mexico, France, Belgium, Iceland, the British Isles, Germany and Luxembourg.

Following the Civil War the regiment was occupied with Indian Campaigns and work along the frontiers, with short interims of garrison life until the war with Spain, in 1898, when the ELEVENTH was assigned to Puerto Rico as its theatre of operations. The Puerto Rican Campaign was light, only one major battle, at Las Marias, being necessary to bring the Spanish garrison under control.

During the Philippine Insurrection the ELEVENTH was called to the islands and participated in a long drawn out series of engagements consisting of skirmishes against the insurrectionists, punitive expeditions against bands of outlaws, and arduous stretches of road building and construction work. In early 1904 the regiment was returned to the United States.

From 1904 to 1913, the regiment was stationed in western posts, its most important action being duty at San Francisco, in 1906, following the earthquake which almost destroyed the city.

In 1911, when General Pancho Villa with his private outlaw army was beginning to make depredations into the United States, the ELEVENTH was moved to Texas City, Texas, to be in the proximity of threatened border trouble. After two years' garrison duty at Texas City, the regiment was moved to Arizona and New Mexico where it performed guard duty along the Border.

With the partial settling of the Mexican trouble, the United States was by now embroiled in World War I against Germany. The ELEVENTH was almost depleted several times when it was necessary to furnish cadres for

1. Fifth Division troops of Keflavik sector, after building the hut camps around the airfield and helping Sea-bees construct the huge airfield itself, open Meeks Airfield in Iceland in dedication ceremony.
2. A view of one of the better decorated and cared for living quarters in Iceland.
3. General George S. Patton, Third Army Commander, gives Red Diamond infantrymen a combination Pep talk and tactical lecture in North Ireland.





1. Typical terrain found throughout Iceland except for lava beds.
2. Dundrum Castle ruins in County Down, North Ireland.
3. Second Infantrymen help British Land Army Girls gather valuable crops.

newly formed regiments in the Army's expansion program. Finally, back to full strength, the regiment sailed for France on April 24, 1918, and on May 1, had completed the long hike to Camp Pontanazon, near Chaumont, France, where it joined the newly formed FIFTH Division. The ELEVENTH then took part in the Vosges Mountains, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives. It was in the second

phase of the great Meuse-Argonne offensive that the regiment forced a brilliant crossing of the Meuse River near Dun under intense artillery and machine gun fire, gained a bridgehead across the river and started the Germans on retreat. For this action, the ELEVENTH has chosen November 5 as Organization Day and adopted the stirring French "Sombre et Meuse" as its regimental march. Following the signing of the Armistice the ELEVENTH was assigned occupation duty in Germany and Luxembourg and finally returned to the United States in 1919.

After three years spent in eastern camps, the ELEVENTH was moved to Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, for permanent station. There followed seventeen years of garrison life, the most tranquil period in the history of a regiment that had spent a more or less turbulent life. During this time the regiment was busy conducting Citizens Military Training Camps, taking part in summer maneuvers at Camp Knox, Kentucky, and the normal routine of garrison life. Brief interludes included flood duty at Louisville, Kentucky, in 1937, and special assignments at the Great Lakes Exposition, the Texas Centennial, and the National Rifle Matches.

Threats of the rampaging Axis powers in Europe brought about the Army expansion program of 1939, and the ELEVENTH was called to Fort McClellan, Alabama, to again join the FIFTH Division which was being organized there. After a short period of intensive training, the regiment returned to Fort Benjamin Harrison to prepare for movement to Fort Custer, Michigan, the permanent home of the new FIFTH Division. After several months of intensive training at Fort Custer, followed by field maneuvers in Tennessee and Louisiana, the regiment was again a part of a well trained combat division. In early 1942 the Wandering ELEVENTH was again on its way, this time to Iceland.

Outposting and defense of the Keflavik area in Iceland kept the troops busy for fifteen months. The drudgery of dock work, sodding Nissen huts and bucking the constant gales on long marches, was mixed with submarine scares, plane crashes, and strafing attacks by German reconnaissance planes. Training definitely deteriorated during this phase, but stepped up again with the movement of the regiment to England in August, 1943.

In England the regiment was stationed at Tidworth Garrison. Here for three months training in individual arms, familiarization firing, and transition firing with all types of weapons was stressed. The regiment was reequipped with new combat serviceable equipment, and all phases of training was pointed towards the continental European invasion. Here, also, restrictions were relaxed, and passes and furloughs were freely issued, something unknown during the Iceland vigil.

Late in October the regiment moved to Camp Ballykinler and Camp Donard Lodge in the bleak, wet hills of Northern Ireland, where for eight months the unit followed the rigorous training for combat. The training included field problems, battle indoctrination courses, qualification in weapons, refresher courses in all types of weapons, gas schools, and amphibious landing operations. Finally the ELEVENTH was pronounced ready for combat. On the eve of the departure for the Normandy beachhead, the regiment was inspected by Generals Eisenhower and Patton. General Patton remarked: "This is the fittest, roughest, readiest outfit that I've ever inspected."

Near midnight, on July 4, 1944, the ELEVENTH boarded the transport, "Excelsior," for the voyage to France, and on the afternoon of July 9, dropped anchor off the coast of Normandy.

The ELEVENTH Infantry was again back in France, this time to travel a longer road, fight more bloody battles, and to suffer more casualties, than the same regiment that had been there more than twenty-five years before.

The 5TH DIVISION ARTILLERY

THE FIFTH Division Artillery was activated in the fall of 1939 with the reorganization of the NINETEENTH and TWENTY-FIRST Field Artillery Regiments, the NINETEENTH being reactivated on October 1, 1939, with two battalions of 75 mm. guns, and the Twenty-first on October 6, 1939, with two battalions of 155 mm. howitzers. The NINETEENTH joined the division on January 25, 1939, and the TWENTY-FIRST on February 10, 1939, at Fort McClellan, Alabama.

The division artillery was organized in its present form on October 14, 1940. Headquarters Battery, FIFTH Division Artillery, was organized from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery of FIRST Battalion, TWENTY-FIRST Field Artillery Regiment. The TWENTY-FIRST Regiment was reorganized into a 155 mm. Howitzer battalion. The FIRST Battalion, NINETEENTH Regiment was redesignated the NINETEENTH Field Artillery Battalion, the SECOND Battalion became the FORTY-SIXTH Battalion, and the THIRD Battalion redesignated as the FIFTIETH Battalion, all three battalions being equipped with 75 mm. guns.

The division artillery participated in maneuvers at Fort Benning, Georgia, Louisiana, and at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, in 1940. Late 1940 saw the artillery with the division at Fort Custer, Michigan, where many service practices were held and General Headquarters tests taken. Early Spring of 1941 saw the artillery battalions taking part in the Tennessee maneuvers, and later, less the FORTY-SIXTH Battalion, taking part in maneuvers in Louisiana. Before the Louisiana maneuvers, the FORTY-SIXTH had been assigned to the TENTH Infantry as part of the TENTH Combat Team and was making preparations for movement overseas.

By May, 1942, all units of Division Artillery had moved to Iceland where many missions were performed in addition to training and being always on the alert to give support to the infantry in case of an attack. During the Iceland occupation the FORTY-SIXTH Battalion was equipped with 105 mm. howitzers instead of 155 mm. materiel.

In August, 1943, the Artillery moved to Tidworth Garrison, England, along with the rest of the division. The



Brig. Gen. Harold A. Vanderveer outside Div. Arty. CP somewhere in Germany.



Camp Baldurshagi, Iceland, during the winter.

ranges of West Down and Exmoor afforded excellent opportunity for training.

In late October, 1943, after being fully equipped with the newest in combat equipment, the division moved to North Ireland, with Division Artillery Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, and the light battalions, now equipped with 105 mm. howitzers, stationed at Mourne Park, and the TWENTY-FIRST, or medium battalion, stationed at Camp Panther. Here pre-invasion training was started on a stepped up schedule with many long hours of drill, service practices, field exercises with the infantry on Annalong, Hilltown, and Sperrin Mountain Ranges, maneuvers, physical training, night problems and battle indoctrination.

By the end of June, 1944, the FIFTH Division Artillery was pronounced ready for combat, and on July 9, arrived at Utah Beach, Cherbourg Peninsula, France, and started unloading at 1600 hours. Unloading of troops and materiel was without mishap and the unit assembled in the vicinity of Montebourg, preparatory to entering the front lines.

The 19TH FIELD ARTILLERY *Battalion*

THE NINETEENTH Field Artillery Battalion derives its designation from the old NINETEENTH Field Artillery regiment organized as part of the FIFTH Division during World War I from a cadre from the SEVENTH Field Artillery regiment. Activated at Camp Wilson, Texas, June 1, 1917, the regiment was moved to Camp McArthur, near Waco, Texas, on February 17, 1918. The stay at Camp McArthur was short as overseas orders were soon issued and on May 27, the regiment sailed for France, landing at Le Havre on June 19. The FIFTH Division was being assembled in France and the NINETEENTH joined the unit before going into action.

The regiment took part in the battle of Vosges, St. Mihiel, and the Meuse-Argonne, the latter engagement being one of the hardest to face the entire FIFTH, and the engagement that finally broke the back of the German resistance.

Following the signing of the Armistice, the NINETEENTH, still a part of the Red Diamond Division, served in the Army of Occupation with Headquarters in Luxembourg. The regiment was returned to the United States in July, 1919, and was deactivated at Camp Mills, Texas.

The FIRST Battalion of the NINETEENTH was again organized at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, on December

4, 1934, the cadre coming from the THIRD Field Artillery. The remainder of the regiment was reactivated at Fort Knox, Kentucky, on October 5, 1939, and the regiment, now complete, was sent to join the FIFTH Division then being activated at Fort McClellan, Alabama. Following maneuvers with the Division, the regiment returned to Fort Knox where reorganization took place and the First battalion became the NINETEENTH Field Artillery Battalion, but retained the crest worn by the regiment.

From Fort Knox the battalion joined the FIFTH Division again at Fort Custer, Michigan, and embarked on the strenuous training program that was to take them through maneuvers in Tennessee, Louisiana, and Wisconsin, finally equipping them for occupation of Iceland with the other units of the Fifth.

Fifteen months were spent in Iceland in training, construction work, and helping in the defense of the island. The mission there completed, the battalion moved to England in August, 1943, and began training for the continental invasion. While in England the old 75mm guns were cast aside for new 105mm howitzers, and new combat equipment throughout was drawn. As a part of the invasion force, the battalion completed its pre-invasion training in North Ireland under conditions as near that of combat as possible, and was pronounced ready by June, 1944. On July 9, the battalion landed on the Normandy coast and joined the Division. On July 13, the NINETEENTH went into the line in support of the infantry, exactly 25 years from the day the old NINETEENTH regiment sailed for home from World War I.



Golf course, with Newcastle, North Ireland and Mourne Mountains in background.



Water-proofed vehicles of Fifth Division being tested in the Irish Sea.

The 21ST FIELD ARTILLERY *Battalion*

FIRST organized as a regiment at Camp Funston, Texas, in 1917, with the original cadre coming from the old THIRD Field Artillery, the TWENTY-FIRST has served as an organic unit of the FIFTH Division in both World Wars. However, the TWENTY-FIRST had existed on paper many years prior to its organization and only awaited the time when it was needed to be called to the colors.

Following organization of the regiment on June 1, 1917, it was moved to Camp McArthur, Texas, on February 15, 1918, and with the NINETEENTH and TWENTIETH Regiments, became part of the FIFTH Field Artillery Brigade and was assigned to the FIFTH Division. Its period of training, compared to present day standards, was short, because on June 19, 1918, the regiment landed in France. During World War I the TWENTY-FIRST did not remain with the FIFTH Division in all campaigns, but was at various times assigned to the NINETEENTH and SEVENTY-EIGHTH Divisions, seeing action in the Arches Area, St. Mihiel, Limey, and Purville sectors.

After serving in the Army of Occupation following the war the regiment returned to the United States in 1919, and on September 23, 1921, was made inactive at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

The regiment was reactivated at Fort Knox, Kentucky, on October 6, 1939, and was assigned as a part of the newly activated FIFTH Infantry Division. After taking part in spring maneuvers in Louisiana in 1940, and summer maneuvers in Wisconsin the same year, the regiment moved

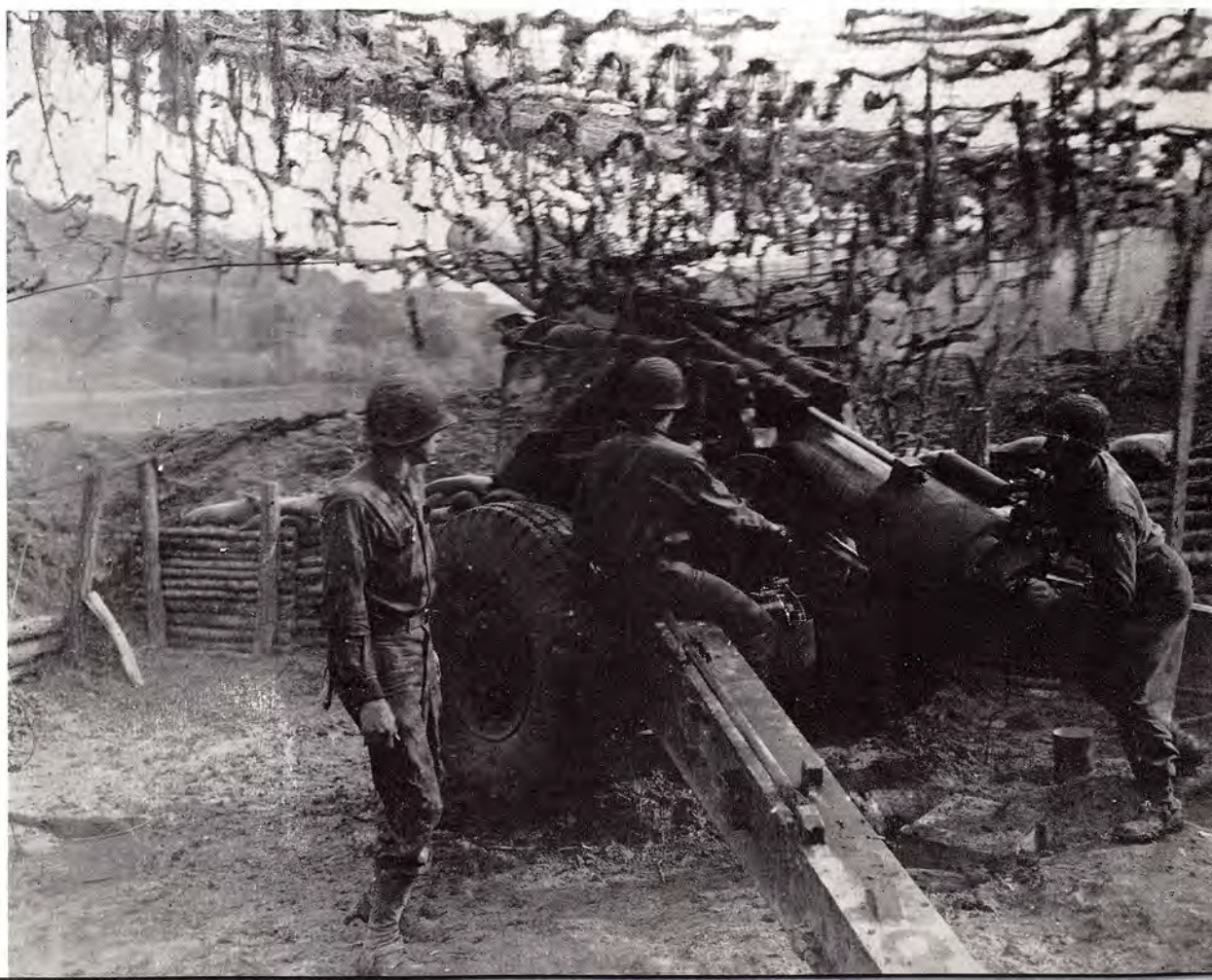
to Fort Custer, Michigan, in December, 1940. On September 10, 1940, with the reorganization of field artillery units in triangular divisions, the TWENTY-FIRST Regiment was reorganized into the TWENTY-FIRST Battalion.

During the summer of 1941 the battalion, as part of the FIFTH Division, took part in SECOND Army maneuvers in Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana, finally returning to Fort Custer to prepare for shipment overseas.

May 11, 1942, found the TWENTY-FIRST in Iceland following a harrowing trip across the Atlantic through submarine infested waters, and the long 15-month vigil of guard duty, construction work, and dock toil took place.

The continental invasion being rapidly planned, the TWENTY-FIRST was moved to Tidworth Garrison, England, in August, 1943. Here began the preliminary training for the invasion, with service practices and field problems being stressed. In November, 1943, the battalion, along with the rest of the Division, was moved to Northern Ireland where pre-invasion training began in earnest. On the Annalong, Hilltown, and Sperrin Mountain ranges, the battalion polished off rough spots in firing, took part in combined training with the infantry, and finally, in June, 1944, the battalion was considered ready for combat.

The call to move to France, where the invasion was already underway, came on July 1, 1944. On July 12, personnel and materiel were unloaded on the wreckage-strewn Utah Beach in Normandy. Combat was just ahead, but the TWENTY-FIRST knew it was ready.



155mm. howitzer of Twenty-First Artillery in action at Arnville, France.

The 46TH FIELD ARTILLERY *Battalion*

DESIGNATION of the Forty-Sixth Field Artillery Battalion was officially made on October 14, 1940, upon reorganization of regiments of the Fifth Infantry Division Artillery. At this time the Second Battalion of the Nineteenth Regiment was changed to the Forty-Sixth Battalion. The battalion, however, had been organized on October 5, 1940, at Fort Knox, Kentucky. As a member of the Nineteenth Regiment it had taken part in maneuvers in Louisiana and Wisconsin, and following re-organization, moved to join the division at Fort Custer, Michigan, on January 4, 1941.

As a part of the Fifth Division Artillery intensive training was carried on during the early spring of 1941, culminating in the Second Army Tennessee maneuvers during the summer of that year.

Following the Tennessee maneuvers, while the Fifth Division was preparing to embark for more extensive maneuvers in Louisiana, orders came cancelling movement of the Forty-Sixth to Louisiana, and assigning it as a part of the Tenth Combat team with the Tenth Infantry regiment. Overseas shipment was evident, and selective service enlisted men were transferred to other units and the ranks filled with regular army personnel. The shipment was designated "Indigo," and on August 26, the battalion started an overland march to the New York Port of Embarkation. On September 16, 1941, the battalion arrived at "Indigo," which proved to be Iceland, where the batteries of the Battalion were stationed at several points on the island.

The battalion was the first to land on foreign soil during World War II and the men had few amusements, much hard work, and were constantly on the alert for an expected German attack on the long stretches of beaches that afforded ideal landing places.

In the spring of 1942 the remainder of the Fifth Division had assembled in Iceland, but the Forty-Sixth continued its role of support of the Tenth Combat Team, occasionally taking part in divisional exercises.

In August, 1943, the battalion moved to England, being stationed at Tidworth Barracks with the rest of the division. The invasion of France was in the making, and extensive training was started to have the division ready when called. Following several months' training in England, the battalion followed the division to Northern Ireland and by November 4, 1943, was encamped at Mourne Park, in County Down. The training here was even more intense, with service practices, combined problems with the infantry, qualification in arms, and physical conditioning taking priority. All training was conducted under as near combat conditions as was possible.

By late June, 1944, the battalion was pronounced ready for combat, and the first days of July were spent in waterproofing the vehicles preparatory to the trip to France where the invasion was already under way. Sailing from Belfast Harbor on July 6, 1944, the battalion landed on Omaha Beach, near La Madaleina, France, debarked by battery, and joined the Division in its assembly area, near

Montebourg. Almost immediately plans were made for the battalion to relieve a unit of the First Division in the front lines about 12 miles ahead.



105mm. howitzer of the Forty-Sixth sends greetings to Germans from Lorry, France.

The 50TH FIELD ARTILLERY *Battalion*

ALTHOUGH IT has been organized in its present form since October 15, 1940, the FIFTIETH Field Artillery Battalion traces its history to October 15, 1939, when it was organized as the THIRD Battalion, NINETEENTH Field Artillery Regiment, at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and destined to become a part of the FIFTH Infantry Division as its forerunner, the NINETEENTH Regiment had been in World War I.

As part of the NINETEENTH Regiment the battalion took part in sub-zero weather firing practice during the winter of 1939-40, then joined the FIFTH Division, newly organized at Fort McClellan, Alabama, on January 29, 1940. Following several months of training the battalion took part in maneuvers in Georgia and the THIRD Army maneuvers in Louisiana that year. Following the 1940 maneuvers, the THIRD Battalion was detached from the regiment and was stationed at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, and Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, where it participated in the training of R. O. T. C., C. M. T. C., and O. R. C. units.

On October 15, 1940, the THIRD Battalion was made inactive, and the FIFTIETH Field Artillery Battalion was formed by transfer of personnel and materiel from the THIRD Battalion. On November 28, 1940, the battalion was moved to Fort Custer, Michigan, which was to be its permanent home with the FIFTH Infantry Division until being sent overseas.

With the FIFTH Division Artillery the battalion took part in the 1941 Tennessee maneuvers, and later in the year in SECOND Army maneuvers in Arkansas and Louisiana. Following the return to Fort Custer, the battalion was engaged

in post maneuver training when the Japanese made the sneak raid on Pearl Harbor.

The FIFTH Division was immediately earmarked for service in Iceland and the FIFTIETH landed on "the Rock" on March 3, 1943.

During the stay in Iceland the battalion was stationed in two camps 16 miles apart, and the time was spent in training, guard duty, manning observation posts, construction work, and helping out as dock hands.

With the concentration of a large American force in England, the FIFTH Division was destined to take its place in the lot, and on August 18, 1943, the battalion arrived at Tidworth Garrison, England, to begin its stepped-up training schedule. Here new equipment throughout was issued and the units brought to full strength.

Moving to Northern Ireland on November 9, 1943, the battalion plunged into the strenuous phase of pre-invasion training under conditions as near those of combat as was possible, stressing service practice, qualification in arms, combined field maneuvers, and physical conditioning. Alert orders for movement to France, where the invasion had already been launched, were received on June 22, 1944. The battalion sailed from Belfast on July 7, and landed at Utah Red Beach at Looe on July 10, where a 12-mile foot march took them to the division assembly area in the vicinity of Montebourg, France the same day. The guns could be heard in the fighting a few miles ahead, and preparations were immediately started to relieve a unit of the FIRST Infantry Division.

Fiftieth Field Artillery training days in England.



The 5TH MEDICAL BATTALION

THE motto, "Humanity in War," has followed the FIFTH Medical Battalion through two wars and its history is one of readiness to serve and courage under the most trying conditions. Organized at Camp Greene, North Carolina, March 5, 1918, as the FOURTH Sanitary Train, the unit saw service in France during World War I with the FOURTH Division and its colors carry streamers for the Aisne-Marne, Vesle, Toulon, St. Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne offensives.

Following cessation of hostilities the FOURTH Sanitary Train was assigned to the Army of Occupation until it was returned to the United States, arriving on August 4, 1919. For the next 2 years it was stationed at Camp Dix, New Jersey, Camp Dodge, Iowa, and Camp Lewis, Washington. On February 17, 1921, the unit was redesignated the FOURTH Medical Regiment and made inactive on September 21, 1921.

Certain components of the regiment were reactivated on February 1, 1939, and on October 20, the same year, was redesignated the FOURTH Medical Battalion, assigned to the FIFTH Infantry Division, but attached to the FIRST Division for duty.

On July 1, 1940, the unit was redesignated the FIFTH Medical battalion and the same year took part in maneuvers in Georgia, Louisiana and Wisconsin. On January 9, 1941, the battalion, now fully organized, joined the FIFTH Division at Fort Custer, Michigan, its home station.

Following basic training with the FIFTH Division, the battalion took part in the Tennessee and Louisiana summer maneuvers of 1941, and upon return to the home station, Collecting Company A, one platoon of Company D and a detachment from the Headquarters detachment were alerted for movement to Iceland. The remainder of the Battalion moved to Iceland in early 1942 where the FIFTH Division assembled for occupation duty.

During the tenure in Iceland, the Battalion received much practical training in providing medical care for the hundreds of casualties from torpedoed ships in the Battle of the Atlantic, the victims of plane crashes on the bleak

hillsides, and the numerous emergencies that arose. In March, 1943, the battalion ambulances and trucks evacuated the ELEVENTH Station Hospital and personnel from the flooded Kaldadarnes area, and the following month assisted in evacuating personnel and patients when the ONE HUNDRED SIXTY-EIGHTH Station Hospital was destroyed by fire.

Moving to Tidworth Garrison, England, on August 9, 1943, the Battalion drew new equipment, replacements, and started on a vigorous training schedule for its part in the battle for Europe. Officers and men had their first leaves and furloughs since leaving the United States. In the latter part of October, 1943, the battalion moved to Northern Ireland for pre-invasion training and was stationed at Camp Ballywillill. Here training was placed on a stepped-up scale stressing problems with combat teams, continuous classroom instruction, rigorous physical training and special exercises in amphibious operations.

The month of June, 1944, found the battalion a beehive of activity what with waterproofing of vehicles, shake-down inspections, and an intensified physical training program under way. All the men knew that there was much work ahead as the whole Division was preparing to take its place on the Normandy beach-head. Alert orders finally came and the Battalion sailed through the Irish Sea, across the English Channel and landed on Utah Beach, on the Normandy coast of France, on July 10, 1944. Four days later the battalion was relieving the FIRST Medical Battalion of the FIRST Division in the Camont Sector.

The "Medics" carry no arms; they have no time for glory—their only job is to save lives and administer to suffering humanity, yet, it has been pointed out by competent authorities that compared to the number in service, there are more decorations on the chests of the medical corps men than in any other branch of service. A glance at the record of the FIFTH Battalion shows one Congressional Medal of Honor, 138 Bronze Star medals, 27 Silver Stars, 2 Soldier's Medals, and 3 French Croix de Guerres.

From this record it can readily be seen that the FIFTH Battalion made a glorious march across Europe.



Realistic training in Ireland finds the medics wearing gas masks while stretcher-bearing.

The 7TH ENGINEER BATTALION

ORGANIZED AS the SEVENTH Engineer Battalion on October 16, 1939, upon redesignation of the SEVENTH Engineer Regiment, the SEVENTH Battalion has a background extending much farther back. The SEVENTH Regiment was organized in 1918 by expansion of Companies E and F of the FIRST Engineers, which had in turn been organized in 1916 from the First Battalion of Engineers formed in 1901 from Companies A (1846), B (1861), and E (1861). With this imposing background the battalion colors carry 10 battle honors from the Civil War, 1 from the Spanish-American War, and 4 from World War I, not to mention those from World War II.

During World War I the FIRST Battalion of the SEVENTH Regiment was stationed, for the first 3 months after arrival in France on April 6, 1918, in the Department of Haute-Marne, and the SECOND Battalion in the Department of Loir-et-Cher, and engaged in construction of hospitals, warehouses, engineer depots, and some railroad work. The regiment joined the FIFTH Division during the period June 25-30 in the Gerardmer sector (Vosges), where it constructed front line shelters, dugouts, barracks and roads. The regiment served also with the SEVENTY-EIGHTH Division and the IV American Army Corps. It participated in the general attack by the American FIRST Army which started November 1 and lasted until the November 11 Armistice. The regiment was then assigned to the Army of Occupation and was returned to the United States on July 28, 1919. It was then deactivated, with the exception of Company A, on October 1, 1933.

On October 16, 1939, the SEVENTH Engineer Regiment was again made active and concurrently designated the SEVENTH Engineer Battalion, using as a nucleus one half of the SECOND Engineer Regiment. Upon completion of the organization, the battalion joined the FIFTH Infantry Division at Fort McClellan, Alabama, for the construction of a permanent camp site. During the winter that followed the battalion was engaged in the various construction jobs that go with camp building, and in April, 1940, left for Fort Benning, Georgia, for a month's maneuver. In July the battalion (less Company B) participated in summer maneuvers at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, remaining there following maneuvers to work with the Rents and Claims Board until September when the battalion moved to Fort Knox, Kentucky. On January 6, 1941, the battalion moved to Fort Custer, Michigan, where it joined the FIFTH Division in training. The first few weeks were spent in improvement and construction of the new camp, and in training replacements that had been received. Later, the battalion participated in maneuvers in Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana, where the men displayed a high state of training and enthusiasm.

Following maneuvers the battalion engaged in post maneuver training, polishing off rough spots and getting ready for overseas service. The foreign duty came in May, 1942, when the battalion landed in Iceland. There, in support of the division in defense of the island, the work consisted largely of road construction and maintenance, and preparing defense positions, construction of road blocks, construction and maintenance of camps, and training for combat.

The battalion left Iceland August 6, 1943, and arrived at Tidworth Garrison, England, on August 9. While stationed at Tidworth the battalion cleared 2 minefields on the Southern Coast, worked on assault courses for battle indoctrination, and trained for construction of wet and dry Bailey bridges.

The battalion left England on October 22, 1943, and arrived at its new station in County Down, North Ireland, on October 25. At this station the battalion continued its

maintenance and improvement duties as well as taking part in the division intensive battle drill program. A battle inoculation was constructed and maintained while all units of the division went through the course. A combat firing course was improvised at the Hen Mountain range. Training was stepped-up in construction of all types of bridges, demolitions, and laying and removing mine fields.

The pre-invasion training completed, the battalion, along with the rest of the FIFTH Division units, was alerted late in June. Sailing from Belfast the SEVENTH arrived off Utah Beach on the Cherbourg Peninsula on July 9, 1944, and transferred troops and equipment to the division concentration area north of Montebourg, and prepared to relieve the FIRST Engineer Battalion of the FIRST Infantry Division in the Caumont Sector.



Two chief engineer functions during combat were bulldozing roads and ruins and sweeping for mines.



The 5TH QUARTERMASTER COMPANY

THE FIFTH Quartermaster Company can trace its origin to November, 1917, when the FIFTH Division Motor Supply Train was organized at Camp Joseph E. Johnson, Jacksonville, Florida. Since that time the unit has been redesignated "Motor Supply Train, FIFTH Division, FIFTH Division Supply Train, FIFTH Division Quartermaster Battalion, and FIFTH Quartermaster Company. It is possible that some of the truck companies composing the original organization had seen service on the Mexican Border, but authentic data to that effect is not available.

The company inherits the battle streamers of Lorraine, St. Mihiel, and the Meuse-Argonne, won by the original organization in World War I.

After designation as the FIFTH Quartermaster Battalion, the unit joined the FIFTH Division on November 4, 1939, at Camp McClellan, Alabama. Following a short stay at Camp McClellan, units of the battalion returned to their home stations for maneuvers and training until October 1, 1940, when the battalion as a whole assembled at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. On December 6, 1940, the battalion left Fort Benjamin Harrison for Fort Custer, Michigan, to join the FIFTH Division being assembled there.

While at Fort Custer, in January, 1941, Company A participated in winter maneuvers at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, and later was in charge of a convoy of motor vehicles being delivered to Camp Davis, North Carolina. For this feat, driving a convoy more than 2,000 miles over treacherous roads without accident, the company was highly commended. During the summer of the same year the battalion took part with the division in maneuvers in Arkansas and Louisiana.

Returning to Fort Custer in October, Company A was given a 48-hour alert on December 1, and under secret orders, departed by motor convoy for the New York Port of Embarkation. Sailing on December 12, the company landed

in Reykjavik, Iceland, December 23. From then, until the arrival of the remainder of the battalion on May 11, 1942, the company worked three shifts, 24 hours a day.

The period in Iceland was a round-the-clock vigil of hauling supplies, motor maintenance, and improvement of camps. For the job of keeping supplies coming through Kambar Pass to the base in Kaldadarnes, the unit was commended by General Parker, then commanding the FIFTH.

On February 4, 1943, the Battalion was redesignated the FIFTH Quartermaster Company, following reorganization, the maintenance section being transferred to the Ordnance.

On August 5, 1943, the Company left Iceland and sailed for England, being stationed at Tidworth Garrison. England was a paradise compared to the bleakness of Iceland, and the company was kept busy drawing and issuing new equipment and training for combat, which by now was inevitable.

The movement, with the rest of the division to Northern Ireland for pre-invasion training, was started October 24, 1943. In Ireland, the company was commended for its excellent motor maintenance and records. Training in all phases of combat duties were vigorously pursued, but despite the hard work the officers and men found time for passes and furloughs during which they saw many of the sights of Ireland.

Following alert orders in late June, 1944, the company was able to waterproof all its vehicles and pack the equipment for shipment to France and at the same time carry on its transportation and supply functions through the loan of vehicles from other units.

The company landed on Utah Beach on the French Normandy coast on July 10, moved to the assembly area near Montebourg, where the company was met by the assistant division quartermaster with information as to where supplies could be drawn.

The somber fact that they were in the fight was made all the more real when the 606th Graves Registration Platoon was attached to the company. They knew then that war was at hand.



Fifth Q.M. distributes beef from its ration dump in Thiaucourt, France.

The 5TH SIGNAL COMPANY

ONE OF the units born prior to World War II during the expansion of the Army program, the FIFTH Signal Company was activated at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, in October, 1939. On November 2, it was moved to Fort McClellan, Alabama, where it joined the FIFTH Infantry Division that was in the process of organization.

In April, 1940, the company moved to Fort Benning, Georgia, where it participated in the IV Corps Maneuvers, and then in May moved to Camp Beauregard, Louisiana, where it participated in the THIRD Army maneuvers. Following the maneuvers, it was ordered to Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, arriving there on June 1. After a two weeks' stay, the company proceeded to Fort Custer, Michigan, for the purpose of training R. O. T. C. students.

On July 16, the company left Fort Custer for Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, to participate in SECOND Army maneuvers. Returning to its home station, Fort Benjamin Harrison, in September, two months were spent in training and then the company joined the FIFTH Division at Fort Custer, Michigan, its permanent station.

Following several months of intensive training the company participated with the division in the 1941 maneuvers in Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana, returning to Fort Custer in late 1941. By this time the division was preparing for overseas shipment. The company landed in Iceland on April 29, 1942.

In Iceland communications were installed and maintained

in the most adverse weather conditions, even in the most remote parts of the island and to the island of Vestmannaeyjar where a platoon of TENTH Infantry was stationed. During this time the company also held division radio, wire, and message center schools.

The company moved with the division to England and was stationed at Tidworth Garrison from August 9, 1943, to October 23, 1943, where 85 per cent. of its signal equipment was drawn, its former equipment having been left in Iceland.

Moving from Tidworth Garrison the company arrived at Tollymore Park, Bryansford, County Down, Ireland, on October 23, 1943. During the pre-invasion training in Ireland the unit completed and maintained communications between all units during the combined field problems, conducted specialists training and held schools in communications, encoding and decoding of messages, air-ground communications, and radio procedure.

With the Division selected and ready for an important role in the continental Europe invasion, the company knew that communications would be the life line of the division and trained for that end. Late in June, 1944, alert orders came. Sailing from Belfast, the company landed on the Normandy beachhead on July 10, and joined the division in the assembly area near Montebourg, and prepared to take over signal communications when the division relieved the FIRST Infantry in the lines.

Fifth Signal Company wire construction crew fixes an overhead installation near Pagny, France.



The 5TH RECONNAISSANCE TROOP



Reconnaissance before moving forward.



THE FIFTH Reconnaissance Troop was organized August 10, 1940, at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, from a cadre of 20 enlisted men from the Second Cavalry, Fort Riley, Kansas. On November 7, the troop moved to Fort Custer, Michigan, to join the FIFTH Division.

Taking part in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana maneuvers in 1941, the troop distinguished itself during the Louisiana war games when it drove deep in the THIRD Army (the enemy) lines and for several hours disrupted communications, harassed truck convoys, and gathered valuable information, delaying the THIRD Army simulated attack.

Returning to Fort Custer in the fall of 1941, the troop continued its training as "the eyes of the division," until moving to Iceland in 1942, arriving there on May 11.

In Iceland the troop conducted ground reconnaissance in conjunction with the infantry in the division's assigned area, was on constant patrol duty along the beaches, and furnished anti-aircraft protection for all motor convoys and large formations.

The troop moved to England with the division in 1943, arriving at Tidworth Garrison August 10. The new M-48 Scout Car had just come off the assembly lines and the unit was the first in the United Kingdom to be issued this equipment. Here, the troop was given a chance to start intense training in its duty with the division.

Moving from Tidworth to Northern Ireland, the troop arrived at its station, Camp Seaforde, on October 25, where pre-invasion training was intensified. Working with the combat teams in their field exercises, the countryside in Ireland gave the troops valuable experiences for its work in the continental invasion.

Pre-invasion training completed in June, 1944, the troop sailed with the FIFTH Division for the Normandy beachhead and landed on the French Coast on July 10. The FIFTH was due for action in a few days and the unit was ready to take its place at the point of the column that was later to lead the Division across France and Germany.

5th Recon Troop holds a review inspection at Camp Riley, Iceland, in May, 1943.



Twenty months later, Recon Troops clear the town of Michelau, Luxembourg.

The 705TH ORDNANCE COMPANY

THE SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTH Ordnance Company (LM) was activated on February 7, 1943, in the West Sector, Western Defense Area, Iceland. Personnel forming the company were drawn from the Maintenance Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, FIFTH Quartermaster Battalion, and the Ordnance Section, Headquarters FIFTH Division. The company was stationed at Camp Lagafell, 10 miles east of Reykjavik, the Iceland capital.

Iceland, from the start, was an ordnance nightmare. Vehicles, at that time, were shipped overseas knocked down and the company was given the task of assembling the parts into completed vehicles. Due to the severe weather and the rough lava roads, all vehicles required constant maintenance, which had to be carried on under severe weather conditions. The constant use of vehicles in hauling of supplies necessitated, at times, maintenance being performed while the vehicles were being loaded or unloaded. Spare parts were scarce and many replacements had to be improvised or made.

With movement of the division to England, the company arrived at Tidworth Garrison on August 9, 1943. Here another problem confronted the company. All except essential equipment had been left in Iceland and now complete

motor and armor equipment was issued and it fell to the lot of the Ordnance company to draw, process, and issue it all. Despite the press of normal duties, the company still found time for field training and to conduct schools for selected officers and personnel.

Moving to Northern Ireland in October, the company was stationed at Castlewellan Station Camp, arriving there on October 27. Pre-invasion training was hard on vehicles and artillery pieces and the company was kept busy on maintenance and making repairs. And here again, the unit found time for training and took an active part in the British Waterproofing School and other training activities. During the preparation for the movement to France in June, 1944, the company was kept especially busy supervising the many water-proofing jobs that arose.

The company moved with the division to the Normandy Beachhead in early July, and landed in France on July 10, 1944, joining the division in the assembly area near Montebourg. The company experienced, almost immediately, the problems of combat repair, due to enemy artillery and air action. It was from this section that the men of the company were to contribute greatly in the breakthrough which was to come at St. Lo. But that is another story—one to be mentioned in another section.

WorldWarTwoVeterans.org

1. An infantry regiment's M-3 howitzer gets its first firing in England.



2. Red Diamond Express, Fifth Division supply railroad, run for the division by the Seven Hundred and Fifth Ordnance and Fifth Q.M. companies in Luxembourg, heads for the railhead at Consdorf with gasoline.

3. Ordnance experts make repairs in their own mobile repair shop-truck.



HEADQUARTERS SPECIAL TROOPS

HHEADQUARTERS Special Troops was activated on October 1, 1943, at Tidworth Garrison, Wiltshire, England, personnel coming from the following units: Commanding officer, TENTH Infantry; Adjutant, Headquarters FIFTH Infantry Division; Headquarters Company, FIFTH Infantry Division and Company G, TENTH Infantry.

The duties of the unit consist principally in handling the administration of the Quartermaster Company, Ordnance Company, Signal Company, Headquarters Medical Detachment, Division Band and the Military Police Platoon.

Shortly after activation the company moved with the Division to Tollymore Park, Northern Ireland, arriving there on October 25, 1943.

With all the special troops participating in uninterrupted field training, the headquarters was kept busy with the large amount of administrative and personnel work, but managed to get its share of training in infiltration courses, battle indoctrination, and qualification of arms.

In late June, 1944, the division was preparing to embark for France where the invasion was already in progress. This demanded feverish activity on the part of the headquarters in order to get all personnel records up to date, equipment for the rear echelon packed and waterproofed, and making advance plans for setting up a rear echelon on the continent.

The unit landed on the French coast in the early hours of July 10, 1944, and marched to the division assembly area near Montebourg, where the first administrative center was set up. As set up there, the organization remained intact through its many moves before the war ended.

MILITARY POLICE PLATOON

THE Military Police Platoon, as such, came into being in Iceland on July 19, 1942. Its history prior to that is the history of Headquarters Company, FIFTH Division.

As a part of the Headquarters Company the military police, prior to movement to Iceland, received valuable training in traffic control during Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana maneuvers, and in patrol duty in the towns around camps and maneuver areas.

Upon arrival in Iceland on May 11, 1942, the platoon was placed on duty as a special guard for the Base Command and performed that duty during the stay on the island. While on this duty the members stood several guards of honor for distinguished visitors.

Arriving at Tidworth Garrison, England, August 5, 1943, the platoon reverted to division control and started training in marksmanship and prisoner of war handling. Coupled with this came daily patrol duty in the nearby towns.

Moving to Northern Ireland on November 3, 1943, the platoon was stationed at Newcastle. Here stress was placed on qualification in arms, physical conditioning, and field training. Traffic control for artillery units moving to and from the ranges, was furnished, as well as police duty in the Irish villages.

It was in England and Ireland that the men of the division came to know the true value of the Military Police platoon. Following the long Iceland vigil, the men were naturally wont to kick over the traces and shoot the works. The Division Military Police were always ready to put under a wing a soldier and keep him on line rather than swing a club or write a ticket. For this the soldiers came to look on them as friends rather than foes.

Sailing with the division from Belfast on July 6, 1944, the platoon went ashore in France on Utah Beach July 10, 1944. Ahead of them lay a 2049.5 mile march across Europe, one that was to be filled with many dusty, muddy, hot, wet, and freezing hours of traffic duty, road marking, and handling of thousands of prisoners of war, and investigations that come in the normal life of a military police.



1. German P W's shiver in Fifth Division open-air enclosure in Fels, Luxembourg.

2. The Honorable Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, inspects Division Headquarters Company in Iceland, accompanied by Major General S. LeRoy Irwin, division commander, and Major General William S. Key, island commander.

DIVISION HEADQUARTERS CO.

ORGANIZED originally as Headquarters and Military Police Company, FIFTH Infantry Division, October 2, 1939, at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, the organization was redesignated Headquarters Company, FIFTH Division, on July 19, 1942, with the dropping of the Military Police platoon. The original cadre was taken from Headquarters Company TWELFTH Brigade; Headquarters Company, TENTH Brigade; Headquarters Battery, SIXTH Field Artillery Brigade; FIRST Battalion, SECOND Infantry; SECOND Battalion, THIRD Field Artillery; FIRST Squadron, FOURTEENTH Cavalry, and the SIXTY-FIRST Coast Artillery (AA).

Participating in maneuvers at Fort McClellan, Alabama, 1939, Fort Benning, Georgia; Louisiana, and Shamrock, Wisconsin, 1940, the unit reported to Fort Custer on December 13, 1940, to remain permanently with the FIFTH Infantry Division.

The following year, 1941, saw the company take part in maneuvers in Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana, returning to Fort Custer on October 7. Following its return to Fort Custer the unit performed its routine duties and a rigid training schedule until shipped to Iceland in the spring of 1942, arriving there on May 10.

The stay in Iceland was one of routine duties in connection with defense of the island, of training under trying weather conditions, and of sweating out the long, lonesome wait until the unit moved to some other place.

The move, welcomed by all, came in August, 1943, when the division moved to Tidworth Garrison, England, arriving there on August 9. Here training for combat was started in earnest.

In October the company moved again, arriving at Tollymore Park, Northern Ireland, on November 3. Pre-invasion training was carried on uninterrupted, with all the men firing the qualification course in their particular weapon, physical conditioning, and taking part in field problems and CPX's.

Training in Ireland continued until late June, 1944, when the division was made ready to take its place on the Normandy beachhead. Arriving off the coast of Normandy on July, 9, the company debarked on July 10 and marched to the assembly area near Montebourg, France. Here at last was combat. The company was divided into two parts, the forward and rear echelons, and the thing they had been training for the past year was at hand.



Fifth Division Band in Rostrevor, North Ireland.

5th DIVISION BAND

WITH THE elimination of the regimental bands from the tables of organization in a division, the FIFTH Division Band was organized on October 1, 1943, at Tidworth Garrison, England. Personnel for the band came from selected members of former bands from the SECOND, TENTH and ELEVENTH Infantry Regiments.

Moving with the division to North Ireland in October, the band was stationed at Newcastle, County Down, from October 25, 1943, until the division left for France in 1944.

During the tenure in Ireland the band held frequent rehearsals, and participated in the training schedule that would fit the members for their part in combat. Besides training, the band appeared on all formal division occasions and played a number of public benefit concerts. The public concerts were well received and did much to promote the good will between the Irish civilians and members of the Division.

Sailing with the Division for the battle in France in July, 1944, the band landed on the Normandy Coast on July 10, and remained for the most part with the rear echelon throughout the long campaign.



Gen. Parker and Unit Commanders. Left to right: Col. Charles W. Yuill, Eleventh Infantry; Col. Robert P. Bell, Tenth Infantry; Col. Laurence Mickel, Second Infantry; Gen. Parker; Lt. Col. Howard H. Bass, Fifth Medical Battalion; Lt. Col. Hugo V. Stark, Seventh Engineer Battalion; Lt. Col. Joseph Mitchell, Fiftieth Field Artillery Battalion; Lt. Col. William R. Calhoun, Nineteenth Field Artillery. Back row: Lt. Col. James R. Johnson, Forty-Sixth Field Artillery; Lt. Col. Robert L. Brunzell, Twenty-First Field Artillery; Major John C. Ohaver, Division Headquarters Company; Capt. Forrest N. Prater, Seven Hundred and Fifth Ordnance Company; Capt. Theodore Twelmeyer, Fifth Reconnaissance Troop; Capt. Robert Bagley, Fifth Quartermaster Company; Capt. Urban S. Rohr, Fifth Signal Company.

The 449TH AAA.-AW. BATTALION

MOBILE

THE ONLY attached unit that rendered continuous support to the FIFTH Division during combat was the FOUR HUNDRED FORTY-NINTH Anti-Aircraft Artillery-Air Warning (Mobile) Battalion. Activated July 1, 1942, at Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, the unit did not begin active training until October 12. Basic firing was conducted at Scortons Neck, Popponesset Beach, and Camp Wellfleet on Cape Cod. In February, 1943, the unit was moved to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, where training was conducted in infiltration courses, rifle ranges, field problems, and tracking low flying aircraft. In conjunction with the Engineer Amphibian Command the battalion participated in an amphibious practice at Martha's Vineyard.

On July 21 the battalion moved to Fort Dix, New Jersey, and was attached to the FOURTH Infantry Division. During the next three months, training in field problems occupied most of the time.

Overseas alert orders came on November 25 and the unit sailed on December 5, arriving at Liverpool, England, on

December 16. The battalion was then moved to Camp Crookston, Scotland, and assigned to the FIFTY-FOURTH AAA Brigade, NINETEENTH AAA Group, with the mission of providing security for the fighter and bomber fields in England. The batteries were parceled out to many fields covering a wide section of England.

On March 24, 1944, the battalion was moved to Camp Upton Lovell, England, assigned to the FIRST Army, and attached to the TWELFTH AAA Group, where training for the invasion of France was started. On June 9, the battalion was alerted for the crossing and left for the marshalling area near Southampton.

On June 15, D plus 9, the battalion landed on Omaha Beach Sector of the Normandy beachhead. The German lines were scarcely more than two miles from the beach and continuous battles were under way with all elements subjected to mortar, artillery, sniper and machine gun fire, with German aircraft making nightly bombing and strafing raids. The battalion was assigned the mission of protecting bridges, and elements of the TWENTY-NINTH Division and XIX Corps.

On June 30, the unit was relieved from the XIX Corps and moved to the vicinity of St. Saviour Le Vicompte and assigned to protect the artillery of the VIII Corps. On July 12, the unit was withdrawn from the line near La Haye du Puit and moved to the vicinity of Montebourg and attached to the FIFTH Infantry Division, for keeps during ten months of combat.



40 mm. Bofors anti-aircraft gun of the Four Hundred and Forty-Ninth AAA AW Battalion guards the Rhine crossing of the Fifth Division against the Luftwaffe.



Other ack-ack weapon of the Four Hundred and Forty-Ninth AAA AW is the 50 caliber quadruple mount.

The 737TH TANK BATTALION

THE SEVEN THIRTY-SEVENTH Tank Battalion, another of the units that joined the FIFTH Division in the Christmas Battle of the Bulge, lays claim not only to being a hard-hitting combat unit, but to the honor of being the youngest tank battalion in combat. Youth being a requisite to daring, the battalion lived up to its name and was cited for its achievements several times.

The SEVEN THIRTY-SEVENTH was activated at Fort Lewis, Washington, February 1, 1943, the original cadre coming from the SEVEN FORTY-THIRD Tank Battalion, and most of the personnel from Alabama, Georgia and North Carolina. Following basic training the units participated in maneuvers in Oregon and Washington, and on February 12, 1944, sailed for England. In England the unit was stationed near Nuneaton in Midlands where intensive training under the VIII and XV Corps was pursued. The rapid-fire pace the battalion had lived brought it to Omaha Beach on the Normandy Coast of France on the morning of July 13, where it was attached to the THIRTY-FIFTH Infantry Division.

The battalion followed the THIRTY-FIFTH until December 22, advancing with the division in the THIRD Army drive across France. Tanks of the battalion were the first in the THIRD Army to cross the Moselle and Muerthe Rivers. By December the tanks had battled across the Saar and Blies Rivers on to German soil northeast of Sarreguemines, being the first tanks in the XII Corps to enter Germany proper. On December 22, the battalion was pulled from this sector and after an all night march joined the FIFTH Infantry Division, at Oetrange, Luxembourg, on December 23. Christmas Eve found them helping the Red Diamond men throw the Germans back to the east bank of the Sauer River.

The career of the SEVEN THIRTY-SEVENTH continued with the FIFTH Division until the end of the war. A tabulation of its hectic life shows the battalion was in combat eighteen months and three days after activation; saw service under three Armies, nine Corps, and ten Armored Groups in 174 days of continuous combat.

Seven Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Tank Battalion rolls through Kehrig, Germany.



Tanks of the Seven Hundred and Thirty-Seventh prepare to attack Bitburg, Germany.



Lt. Col. Fred M. Kroschel stands outside his command post.



The 803RD TANK DESTROYER Battalion



JOINING THE FIFTH Infantry Division on Christmas Day, 1944, when the division was committed to the Battle of the Bulge, the EIGHT HUNDRED THIRD Tank Destroyer Battalion supported the division, giving valuable, and much needed aid to the Red Diamond warriors, until hostilities ceased.

Activated September 30, 1940, as the ONE HUNDRED THIRD Anti-tank Battalion, the composing elements were Headquarters Troop B, Washington National Guard, and the FORTY-FIRST Tank Company, Centralia, Washington. Troop B was the oldest National Guard unit in the State of Washington and was the guard of honor for the state's governor. Inducted into federal service February 10, 1941, the unit spent several months in training and field maneuvers and was redesignated the EIGHT HUNDRED THIRD Tank Destroyer Battalion on December 12.

Training operations then took the battalion from Fort Lewis, Washington, to Camp Hood, Texas; Camp Dix, New Jersey; and finally to Pine Camp, New York. During this time all efforts were made to reach combat efficiency in training with the newest weapons of war. Sailing for England on the "Queen Mary" June 24, 1943, the battalion was stationed at Chilsendon, Wilts, and Barnstaple, Devon, England, where intensive training in assault landings was carried out.

One June 13, 1944, the battalion hit the Normandy Beach. Few tank destroyer battalions were then available and attachments and assignments were numerous, the unit being in turn with the SECOND Infantry Division, THIRD Armored Division, THIRTIETH Infantry Division, TWENTY-NINTH Infantry Division, and the EIGHTY-SECOND Airborne. Following the St. Lo breakthrough, the battalion followed these units through France, Belgium, and Holland and finally into the Hertgen Forest with the FOURTH Infantry Division.

So long a campaign demanded a much-needed rest so the EIGHT HUNDRED THIRD was moved to the FOURTH Infantry Division's quiet Luxembourg Sector where the battle-weary FOURTH held a thin defensive line. But the sector was not to remain quiet for long, for it was here that the German General Von Rundstedt made his initial probes that finally resulted in the Ardennes breakthrough to create the Belgium Bulge.

It was at the Bulge that the battalion presented itself as a Christmas present to the FIFTH Division, and followed them to the end of the war.

1. Eight Hundred and Third Tank Destroyer moves across Mosel river at Munden, Germany.

2. Tank destroyer rides a ferry across the Rhine river at Oppenheim.

3. Red Diamond doughboys climb on one of their most-used means of transportation—an Eight Hundred and Third T. D.

The 818TH TANK DESTROYER *Battalion*

ACTIVATED December 15, 1941, a few days after a declaration of war, at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, the EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH Tank Destroyer Battalion followed the usual routine of units organized during that period by participating in numerous field maneuvers and finally entering combat.

Personnel for the organization came from anti-tank batteries of the ONE HUNDRED FORTY-SECOND, SEVENTY-SEVENTH, and THREE HUNDRED FORTY-NINTH Field Artillery regiments, then stationed at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, as school troops.

Early in 1942 the battalion accompanied the EIGHTEENTH Field Artillery Brigade to Camp Bowie, Texas, where the unit continued its field training and participated in maneuvers in Louisiana during the summer.

Few records are available from late 1942 until the battalion was attached to the FIFTH Infantry Division in Ireland on April 29, 1944, for future general support when the Division took its part in the invasion of France.

Leaving its home station, Stowell Park, Wiltshire, England, on July 11, 1944, the unit marched to the port of embarkation, Weymouth, England, debarking at Utah Beach, France, July 14. Three days later the battalion was committed to combat with the FIFTH Infantry Division, and fought with the division from that time until December 20, when it was detached from the FIFTH in the THIRD Army's regrouping for the Battle of the Bulge. Following that date, it fought for the most part with the Twenty-Sixth Infantry Division.

1. The Eight Hundred and Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion was billeted in Murlough House during its training days in Ireland.

2. When an Eight Hundred and Eighteenth T. D. shell hit a German Tiger tank, the camera recorded the result.

3. Eight Hundred and Eighteenth T. D. blasts German positions across the Seine river at Fontainebleau.



The 735TH TANK BATTALION

Historical data concerning organization, early training, and date of sailing for overseas could not be obtained for a historical sketch of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion. This much, however, is known: The battalion was attached to the Fifth Infantry Division in England, went through pre-invasion training in England, and joined the Fifth Division on the Normandy Beachhead in France soon after the Division landed on July 10, 1944.

The battalion played a prominent part in the St. Lo breakthrough by the use of the improvised hedgerow cutters attached to the front of the tanks which materially aided in cutting huge gaps in the hedgerows so that the infantry could push through.

Before the battalion was detached from the division it was proved that it was always ready and eager to be right out in front supporting the doughboys when the going was the toughest, and the division doughboys learned early in the game that they could depend on the tanks of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth to knock out a strongpoint that was too much for them to overcome.

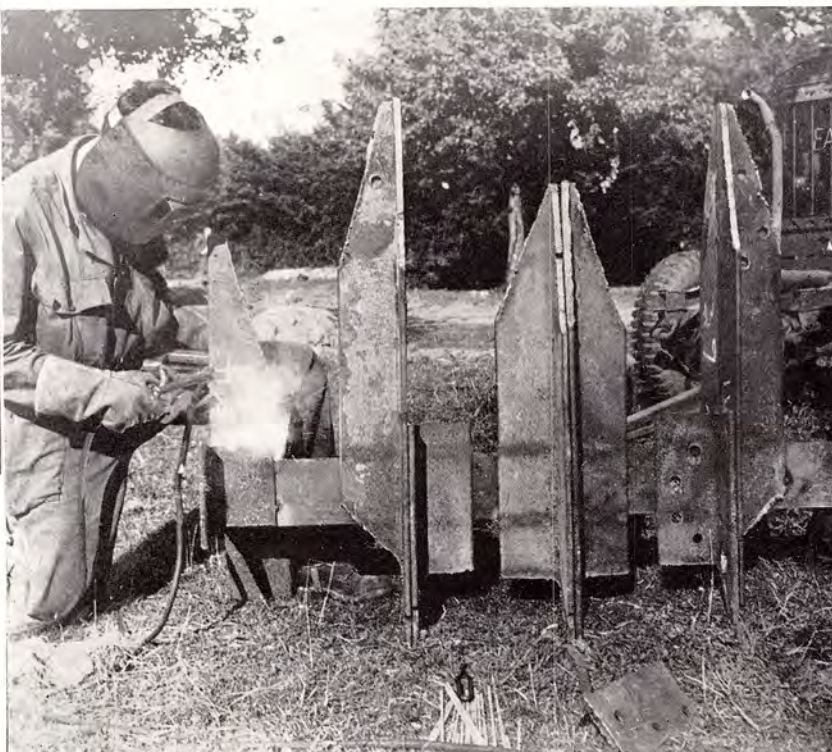
View showing hedgerow cutters being constructed for use on the front of tanks.



Welder is shown cutting piece of steel prior to making hedgerow cutter to place on 735th battalion tank.



Assembled by welding angleiron into the queer contraptions as shown, the hedgerow cutters were invaluable when the attack started.



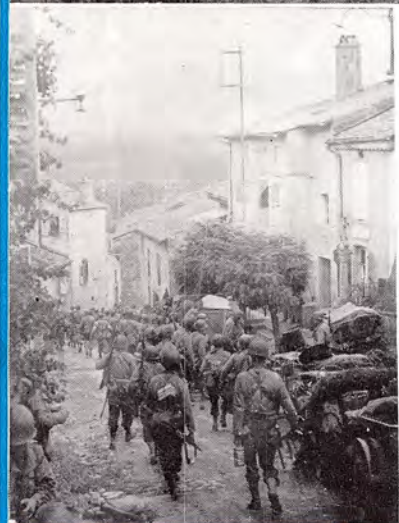
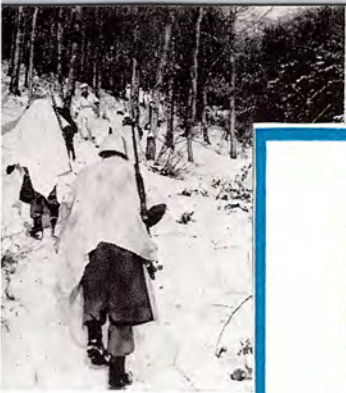


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WE WILL

THE RED DIAMOND, official insignia of the Fifth Infantry Division, has become through the history of two wars much more than a patch to be worn upon the left sleeve. It has become a deep-rooted tradition that stands for intense loyalty, versatility of performance and the fulfillment of the motto "*We Will*," when given a task to perform.

Selected as the Division insignia during World War I at the suggestion of Major Charles A. Meals of the Quartermaster Corps, who, on being told that the Division should have a distinctive emblem, suggested the "Ace of Diamonds, less the ace." It was approved by General McMahon and officially adopted in General Order No. 2, January 18, 1918. The General Order stated: "The division insignia will be a Red Diamond with a vertical diagonal of six inches and a horizontal diagonal of four inches in center of which will be a two-inch figure '5' in white." After reaching France the figure '5' was removed from the Diamond. In succeeding years the Red Diamond was reduced to its present size.



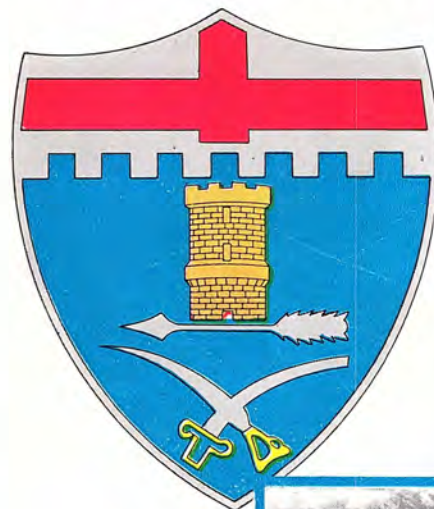
2d Infantry



10th Infantry

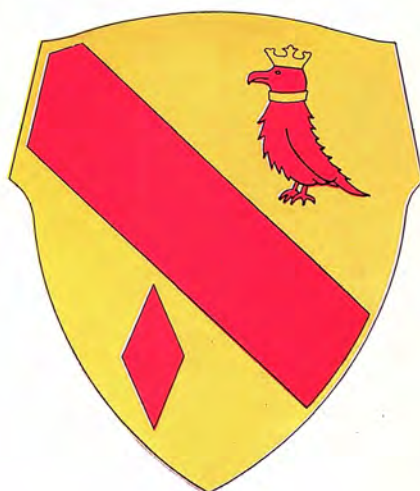


11th Infantry





*19th
Field Artillery Bn*



*21st
Field Artillery Bn*



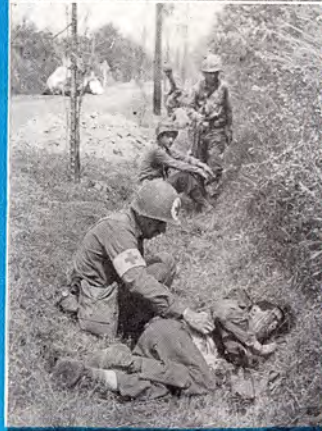
*46th
Field Artillery Bn*



*50th
Field Artillery Bn*



7th Engineer Bn



5th Medical Bn



5th Signal Co



5th Quartermaster Co





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HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH U. S. ARMY
Office of the Commanding General
A P O 408

17 November, 1945

To the Officers and Men of the Fifth Infantry Division:
Nothing I can say can add to the glory which you have achieved.

Throughout the whole advance across France you spearheaded the attack of your Corps. You crossed so many rivers that I am persuaded many of you have web feet and I know that all of you have dauntless spirit. To my mind history does not record incidents of greater valor than your assault crossings of the Sauer and the Rhine.

Concerning the former operation, I showed the scene of your glorious exploit to a civilian for whom I have the highest esteem. After looking at it for some time he said, "I did not believe there was enough courage in the world to achieve such a victory." Knowing the Fifth Infantry Division, I was sure you would achieve it and you did.

Now that peace has been re-established I am sure all of you will continue through the remainder of your lives to stand for those great qualities of America which in war you so magnificently demonstrated.

With affectionate regards and sincere congratulations,
I am, as ever,

Your devoted commander,
G S Patton Jr
G. S. PATTON, JR.
General

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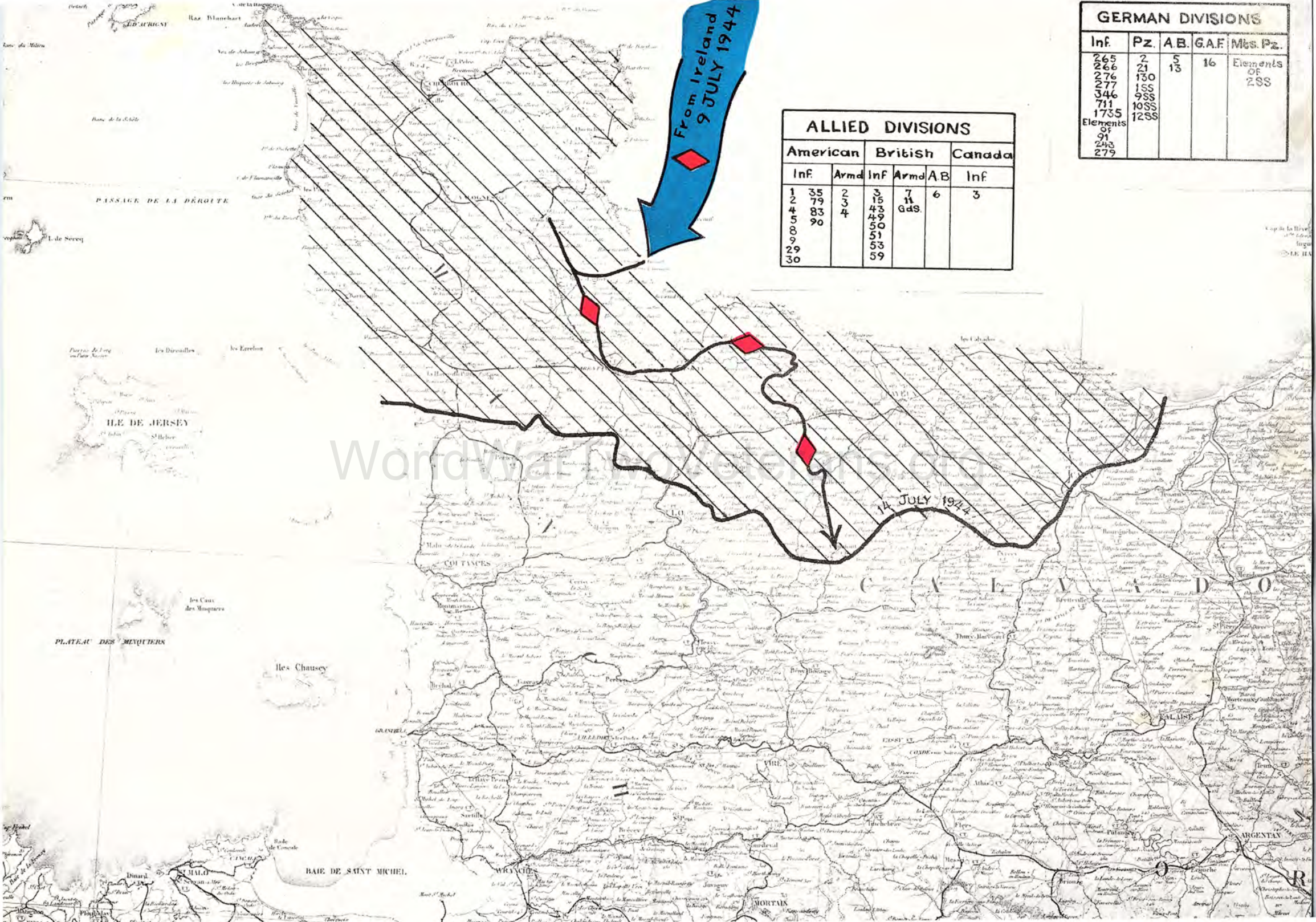
COMBAT

THIS WAS IT! It was a day that all members of the Fifth Division would remember. It was July 9, 1944, and the place was the coast of France at St. Mère Eglise, on the Normandy beachhead that had been won 33 days before.

A fine mist hung over the coast as the men clambered over the sides of the ships, down the swinging nets, and into the tossing landing craft that would take them to Utah Sugar Red Beach. From there they would march to the Division concentration area near Montebourg. And in a few days they would be in the thick of the fight.

For the veterans of the division it was the fourth time in three years they had debarked from gangplanks onto foreign soil. But the others had been a dress rehearsal for the real thing which was now. Pre-invasion training in North Ireland was paying off. This was France. France was hot, full of shell-shattered towns, dead cows, and signs everywhere that said "mines cleared to the hedges," or "mines cleared to the edge of the road." A heavy, fetid smell was in the air, artillery rumbled in the distance, and planes roared overhead. It was evident to everyone that the most important thing in life right now was a clean rifle and a good fox hole.

As the troops trudged up the road to the concentration area, little did they realize that they were on the beginning of a long march that would take them across France, Luxembourg, Germany, and into Czechoslovakia and Austria, spearheading drives, and sparking offensives. All they knew was that this was it. From now on the game would be played for keeps and the stakes were high.



GERMAN DIVISIONS

Inf.	Pz.	A.B.	G.A.F.	Mts. Pz.
265	2	5	16	Elements
266	21	13		OF
276	130			2SS
277	155			
346	9SS			
711	10SS			
1735	12SS			
Elements				
OF				
243				
279				

ALLIED DIVISIONS

American			British		Canada	
Inf	Armd	Inf	Armd	AB	Inf	
1	35	2	3	7	6	3
2	79	3	15	43		
4	83	4	49	Gds.		
5	90		50			
8			51			
9			53			
29			59			
30						

5TH INFANTRY DIVISION

IN COMBAT

A WEEK PRIOR to the movement of the Division, an advance detachment was sent to NORMANDY to receive orders, become acquainted with the situation and prepare to receive the Division on the continent. This advance detachment was headed by the Assistant Division Commander, Brigadier General Aln D. Warnock, and it landed on UTAH Beach at approximately 0900 hours on 4 July 1944.

The Fifth Infantry Division dropped anchor off LES DUNES DE VARREVILLE on the east coast of the CHERBOURG Peninsula during the afternoon and evening of 9 July, D Day plus 33. On all sides rose a forest of masts as transports, LCIs, LCVs and tank lighters scurried to and from the shore. At this time the nearest Boche were only 12 miles away, and the beaches were still subject to air attack at almost any time of the day.

Almost immediately the first troops hoisted their duffle bags and equipment into LCTs, clambered down the sides of the wallowing transports and stood away for UTAH Beach. It was the 10th of July, however, that the majority of the troops reached the beach in landing craft provided by the U. S. Navy.

Immediately upon arrival on the beach, all troops marched to transit areas where they stacked their duffle bags. The tangled wreckage, barbed wire fences, and ever-present "Actung Minen" signs served as a grim reminder that the beachhead was but newly won. After a short break, the troops marched through the rolling dunes and winding hedgerows to the Division concentration area, 1½ miles West of MONTEBOURG, FRANCE, a distance of 16 miles from the transit area. It may be added that this march was made with wet feet owing to the inevitable gap between the landing craft and the beach.

Some vehicles were unloaded on 10 July but only a few reached the beach before 2300 hours. The majority of the vehicles were unloaded the following day. The vehicles were de-waterproofed progressively as they moved from the beach through Transit Area B near ST. GERMAIN DE VARREVILLE and on to the assembly area. They picked up, enroute, the heavier equipment and duffle bags from the beaches and transit areas. By 1700 hours on the 12th of July, the Fifth Division with all troops and equipment had closed into the concentration area.

It is not to be supposed that the movement of troops and equipment was carried out unhindered by enemy activity. Several times during the nights of 10th and 11th of July German aircraft made brief reconnaissance and harassing raids over the beaches and the concentration area. After the first visit by enemy aircraft, very few people had to be told to dig in.

Immediately on landing, the Fifth Infantry Division was assigned to the First U. S. Army, and placed in reserve as an assignment to a Corps had not been made by 11 July. The normal components of the three Combat Teams throughout most operations were to be as follows:

SECOND COMBAT TEAM—Second Infantry Regiment; Fiftieth Field Artillery Battalion; Company A Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion; Company A Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion; Company A Seventh Engineer Battalion; Battery C Four Hundred Forty-Ninth

Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion; and Collecting Company A Fifth Medical Battalion.

TENTH COMBAT TEAM—Tenth Infantry Regiment; Forty-Sixth Field Artillery Battalion; Company B Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion; Company B Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion; Company B Seventh Engineer Battalion; Battery D Four Hundred Forty-Ninth Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion; and Collecting Company B Fifth Medical Battalion.

ELEVENTH COMBAT TEAM—Eleventh Infantry Regiment; Nineteenth Field Artillery Battalion; Company C Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion; Company C Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion; Company C Seventh Engineer Battalion; Battery A Four Hundred Forty-Ninth Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion; and Collecting Company C Fifth Medical Battalion.

On 12 July orders were received assigning the Division to V Corps and ordering the division to relieve the First Infantry Division in the CAUMONT Sector. The move to the V Corps Sector was made on organic transportation plus six truck companies (approx. 290 trucks). Relief of units of the First Infantry Division was made unit for unit, with no changes in dispositions. Insofar as possible, the relief was to be made position for position, and weapon for weapon. As the leading elements moved warily down sunken roads and through hedgerow after hedgerow, they were met by guides from the units they were relieving and led by covered routes to the defensive positions they were to occupy. As soon as the foxholes were vacated by the dusty veterans of the First Division, a "Red Diamond" man stepped into place.

On the whole the relief went off quietly, although some units heard their first incoming artillery coupled with the swish of the Jerry "88s" while still on the road. By 1500 hours on the 14th of July the Fifth Infantry Division had assumed responsibility for the sector. The relief of the Sixteenth Infantry was completed by the Second Infantry at 140100; the Twenty-Sixth Infantry by the Eleventh Infantry at 140835; the Eighteenth Infantry by the Tenth Infantry at 150700; and the CG Division Artillery assumed command of artillery installations at 141800. The Fifth Infantry Division was in the line!

All three regiments were committed to the line, but two battalions of the Second Infantry Regiment were held in reserve near the right flank where the Second Infantry Division was holding positions not quite abreast of ours. The left flank also bent back, but here the Second Armored Division had committed only its Forty-first Armored Infantry Regiment and had plenty of armor in reserve. These positions were held without change other than local reliefs until July 24th when the Fifteenth Scottish Infantry Division relieved the Tenth and Eleventh Infantry Regiments in the line. Shoulder to shoulder in the line with the Fifth Division were the supporting attachments who became so much a part of the Division that they made the term, "Cooperation," seem inadequate in describing the close support and assistance given to the line companies and Division Artillery. The Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion (which arrived on the 15th of July), the Eight Hundred



Combat loaded vehicles on motor transport to the Normandy Beachhead.

Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion (arrived 16 July), and the Four Hundred Forty-Ninth Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion were made semi-permanent attachments on 13 July. Company D Eighty-First Chemical Battalion (4.2" mortar) and the Fourth Platoon Six Hundred Sixth Graves Registration Company were temporarily attached to the Division on the 13th of July. The Thirty-Eighth Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron was attached to the Division on the 14th of July.

On the 17th July at 2300, British Eighth Armored Brigade took over positions on our left flank from the Second U. S. Armored Division. The Fifth Infantry Division in the CAUMONT Sector held the left flank of the First U. S. Army and the Southernmost salient of the Allied Beachhead on 15 July. The Combat Teams were assigned sectors from right to left, Second CT, Tenth CT, and Eleventh CT.

The Fifth Division found itself very much in luck as a result of the relief of the First Division. Small groups of NCOs and Officers of the battle-tested First remained with the Fifth for a few days to assist and coordinate the employment of the various units of the Division and from these men the newcomers learned a great deal about combat and the activities of the enemy in that sector. In addition to this, for the first, and almost the last time, the Fifth Division found itself occupying well dug positions and prepared defenses that required little or no effort to adapt them to its own use.

The terrain in the CAUMONT Sector was rolling, and characterized by high hedges and trees bordering the many small fields. Most of the roads were secondary, narrow, dusty passageways winding their way through the sector. Only the main roads were paved and fit for two-way traffic, but there were few of these that weren't under enemy artillery fire, particularly the important road junctions and crossings. The many sunken roads in the area proved a blessing inasmuch as they furnished covered routes of approach, concealed the dust of passing vehicles, and afforded good protection from the ever-present artillery fire.

Clear, warm days and cool nights with frequent rains broke the monotony of summer weather. French weather left much to be desired, but the Fifth Division with experience in ICELAND, ENGLAND and IRELAND soon acclimated itself.

The days passed with frequent artillery duels, sniper fire and patrol activity. The enemy had occupied his dug-in and prepared positions for almost a month and his defense of the sector was well organized. From occasional PWs and captured enemy documents, the following German units were identified: Eighth Paratroop Regiment, Third Para-

troop Division; Fifth Paratroop Regiment, Third Paratroop Division; Fifteenth Paratroop Regiment, Fifth Paratroop Division; and the Reconnaissance Company, Third Paratroop Division, proving that these first opponents of the Fifth Division were by no means secondary troops. The enemy's morale appeared to be very high. The first prisoners taken by the Fifth Division seemed to be well equipped, and mostly young men with at least six months' training. The numerous outpost and patrol clashes provided the all-important battle indoctrination which later attributed in no small way to the Division's success.

It was here that the Division first encountered the various German automatic weapons, among which was the Schmeisser Machine Pistol, which later became known as the "Burp Gun" owing to the easily distinguishable sound resulting from its high rate of fire. It was here, too, that the men of the "Red Diamond" became acquainted with the famous "88," the "Screaming Mimi," and other German weapons destined to become very well known indeed ere the Wehrmacht lay down its arms.

Front line units conducted extensive patrol activity both day and night, securing information of enemy positions which proved valuable in the later attack on VIDOUILLE by the Second Combat Team. Division Artillery delivered both observed and unobserved fires, with prearranged harassing fires at night.

At about 1200 hours on the 15th of July, 15 enemy vehicles including six tanks (believed to be MK III's and IV's) were observed moving into position just off of our right flank. They were brought under artillery and anti-tank fire but did not withdraw. It was at this time that the Division for the first time observed the use of smoke for concealment by the enemy.

Several raids were carried out by both sides during the following days and nights keeping the outposts on the alert and finally netting the Division about 15 prisoners. Enemy aircraft were over the sector almost every night and occasionally in the daytime and at least six enemy planes were shot down.

It became increasingly apparent that the enemy was strengthening his positions, and his working parties were busy laying mines and trip flares and constructing obstacles under the protection of tanks and infantry patrols.

On the 18th of July, the Thirty-Eighth Reconnaissance Squadron, less troop B, was relieved from attachment to the Division.

Enemy artillery fire continued to harass the troops in the sector and in some areas it seemed that Jerry had arranged a schedule for his artillery inasmuch as he appeared to fire his heaviest concentrations almost invariably at breakfast time, noon, and suppertime. However, almost anytime during the day, one might hear the scream of an approach-



Troops wearing life preservers line the rail sailing across the Channel into combat.

ing shell, and everyone became surprisingly adept at making a foxhole in one leap and almost nothing flat.

The Division Artillery club planes were up almost every day spotting enemy positions, directing fires and collecting all possible information. Enemy anti-aircraft fire finally succeeded in shooting down an artillery club plane two miles west of CAUMONT at about 1450 hours on the 19th of July.

In the morning the 21st of July an enemy force estimated at about one platoon accompanied by a tank attacked the Division outpost line at a point two miles Southwest of CAUMONT. They showed great aggressiveness, shouting and screaming as they attacked until the tank was knocked out. After this the attack broke up and the enemy withdrew. This was the first example of a tank-infantry attack on the Fifth Division although there were a good number of enemy tanks in the area.

Two new enemy units were identified in the sector opposing the Fifth Division, they were the Ninth Paratroop Regiment and the Second Panzer Grenadier Regiment.

On the 23rd of July plans were completed for the relief of the Fifth Division by the Fifteenth Scottish Infantry Division. The General Officer Commanding the Fifteenth Scottish Infantry Division assumed command of the CAUMONT Sector at 0600 hours on the 24th and the Fifth Division, less Second Infantry, Division Artillery, and artillery attachments moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of CERISY LA FORET 10 miles to the Northwest. The British Forty-Fourth Brigade relieved the Tenth Infantry Regiment and the Two Hundred Twenty-Seventh Brigade relieved the Eleventh Infantry Regiment.

The Offensive

Operation "Cobra" was planned by First U. S. Army as a breakthrough effort, commencing with a carpet bombing attack on the German lines followed by a general offensive along the entire Army front. The breakthrough was designed to be made in the area immediately West of St. Lo, key city and road center of the area, and to continue to the Southwest toward GRANVILLE, at the West base of the COTENTIN Peninsula. It was in this area West of St. Lo that the heavy, medium and light bombardment aircraft saturated the defenses preparatory to the armored breakthrough.

Since the Army left boundary was being changed, only a single regiment, the Second Infantry, was to be employed initially. Upon capture of VIDOUVILLE and HAUT VIDOUVILLE it was to be relieved by the Ninth Infantry Regiment of the Second Infantry Division. The Fifth Division was then to be employed on the right of the Second Division, attacking Southwest to meet elements of the XIX Corps in the vicinity of ST. SUZANNE SUR VIRE, five miles south of St. Lo.

The target date for the operation was initially set as 22 July, but weather and other factors forced its postponement until 1100 hours on the 25th, when the bombers hit in force. The Second Infantry Regiment was ordered to attack at 0645 hours on 26 July.

At 0500 hours on the 26th of July the Third Battalion of the Eleventh Infantry moved by marching and by organic motors to occupy Hill 192, five miles Northeast of St. Lo. The Thirty-Eighth Infantry Regiment of the Second Infantry Division was having a bitter fight in front of Hill 192 and the entire Eleventh Infantry Regiment was alerted for possible movement to their rear as a measure against possible German counterattacks. The Eleventh Infantry Regiment moved the afternoon of the 26th of July to the crowded Second Infantry Division area at COUVAINS, six miles Northeast of St. Lo.

The Battle of Vidouville

At 0635 on the 26th of July, the Second Combat Team supported by a fire support group from the Tenth Combat Team consisting of Cannon Company, Company M,

Third Platoon of Company D and .50 Caliber MGs and crews from other units of the Tenth Infantry Regiment and by Division Artillery, attacked Southwest to capture VIDOUVILLE and secure HAUT VIDOUVILLE, the high ground at Highway 3, in conjunction with the Second Infantry Division on the right. The Second Infantry Regiment attacked with First and Third Battalions abreast, Second Battalion in reserve. Troop B, Thirty-Eighth Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron; Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion, less Companies B and C; and Company A Seventh Engineer Battalion were attached 26th July.

At 0655 an artillery concentration was fired on VIDOUVILLE and at 0657 screening smoke was dropped into LE MILITAIRE Woods. A prearranged detailed plan of artillery concentrations was used to good advantage in addition to observed fire.

This was the first attack by a unit of the Fifth Division and it was to be a bitter fight. The enemy stubbornly refused to withdraw and poured machine gun, mortar and artillery fire on our attacking troops ceaselessly throughout most of the attack.

The First Battalion was ordered to go around the right flank of the Second Battalion and the Third Battalion was to go around the left flank, occupying their respective zones of attack in front of the Second Battalion and to attack abreast.

The First Battalion encountered heavy sniper fire as soon as they crossed the line of departure but they pushed on for their objective at once. Company A met stiff resistance from an estimated German company in LE MILITAIRE Woods. They called for and received assistance from tanks and artillery and this enabled them to drive clear through the enemy positions leaving mopping up to be done by the rear elements. During their passage through the woods, enemy machine guns and other automatic weapons opened up on them from close range and took a heavy toll of the attackers.

Company B drew fire from enemy snipers and machine guns as they attacked through the woods on the right flank. However, they continued to move ahead despite losses until they were stopped on the southern edge of the woods by an enemy strong point and an 88mm. gun concealed in a house at the southern edge of the woods. By this time Company A had lost heavily from enemy fire in and about VIDOUVILLE. Company A was committed in the C Company zone and the two companies were ordered to attack and reduce VIDOUVILLE.

At 1130 hours the two companies resumed their attack and by 1600 hours they were about 200 yards South and Southwest of the town. Two platoons of F Company were sent into VIDOUVILLE to mop up, and suffered heavily from enemy artillery fire. Company G was sent to mop up the woods in rear of Company B and reduce the strongpoint and 88mm. gun that had been holding up the advance. This "88" got at least two of our tanks before it was knocked out.

When the Third Battalion jumped off at 0645 they met little resistance initially until they were almost into VIDOUVILLE, when Company K ran into an enemy strongpoint that forced them to withdraw slightly in order to take cover from heavy automatic weapon fire from this strongpoint. Company I succeeded in crossing the main road but was caught in the open by artillery and machine gun fire from their flanks. They returned the fire, but were forced to withdraw about 800 yards to a sunken road for cover from the intense artillery fire which by now was taking continual toll from the Third Battalion. The Third Battalion had moved ahead so fast in the attack that the Artillery Forward Observers were unable to maintain contact with their batteries and as a result the battalion was pushed back when they were counter-attacked owing to the lack of coordinated supporting fires.

Meanwhile air support was being delivered by P-47 fighterbombers on prearranged targets across the entire Corps front. The system of air-ground communication had not been completely worked out yet as the supported division had no communication direct to the aircraft. This failure resulted, at 1500 hours on the 26th, in the dropping of one 500 lb. bomb between the aid station and the command post of the First Battalion. Although severely shaken up, no one was injured in the aid station.

At about 1500 hours the Second Battalion, Second Infantry was committed in the gap between the First and Third Battalions. It was decided to reorganize on the line of the sunken road and main road, just Southeast of VIDOUVILLE. VIDOUVILLE and remainder of the objective was reported completely ours by 1600 hours.

During the fighting in the woods by both battalions a large number of snipers were encountered, many of whom were tied in trees and caused some casualties before they were cleaned out.

By 1800 hours all units began to organize their gains and to dig in. Company E and D Company of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion formed the Second Combat Team reserve. Artillery defensive fires and anti-tank defense in depth were painstakingly prepared in order to insure a maximum of safety for the rifle companies should the Boche attempt to strike back. Stragglers were collected, casualties evacuated and outguards were posted for all around security. Food and water were brought up by jeep and carrying party, and ammunition brought forward to the companies.

It was discovered from documents on German bodies and from prisoners that the unit opposing the 2d Combat Team in their attack was the Ninth Paratroop Regiment of the Third Paratroop Division and at the start of the attack had been in the area to the strength of about two battalions. Later information proved this unit to be regarded by the Germans as the best of their units in NORMANDY. A check-up in the area showed that the Boche lost heavily in their first tangle with the "Red Diamond."

As darkness closed in on the troops holding the hard-won objective, enemy planes illuminated the area with bright yellow flares and proceeded to bomb and strafe the front lines. This proved more of a nuisance than anything else and the supply and evacuation continued unabated throughout the attack and most of the night.

In the meantime the Third Battalion, Eleventh Infantry, passed to the control of the Second U. S. Division occupying Hill 192, at 1615. At 1750 the Corps Commander ordered the remainder of the Eleventh Infantry Regiment to move

to the area of Hill 192 and to be in the area before dark. They reported all in the area at 2400.

Previous to this, the reserve (First) Battalion, reinforcing the line, was told to prepare to attack in the morning, and the tired gun crews of the Twenty-First Field Artillery who had supported the attack, snatched in relays sleep before they once more took up support of the Second Combat Team the following day.

Let us pause for a moment at this point and take stock of the situation. The troops of the Fifth Division had engaged the enemy for the first time. They had attacked and driven back a well organized, well dug-in and stubborn enemy force. Both sides lost heavily, and during the night of July 26th both sides were hastily reorganizing for the

fighting to come. The attackers, in this case the Second Combat Team, were forced to carry out supply and evacuation over a limited road net, most of which was mined and none of which was well known to the troops occupying the newly won area. The Boche, on the other hand, had only to fall back a short distance to reserve positions, fresh troops and supply dumps, all of which were as fully organized and as well prepared as the original main line of resistance.

The morning of the 27th of July opened at 0500 with an intense shelling of our lines by German 88mm. artillery and, as darkness lifted, we returned the fire with our own artillery and mortars. At 1101 hours, Company E was moved from the reserve area to a forward assembly area in rear of Company B.

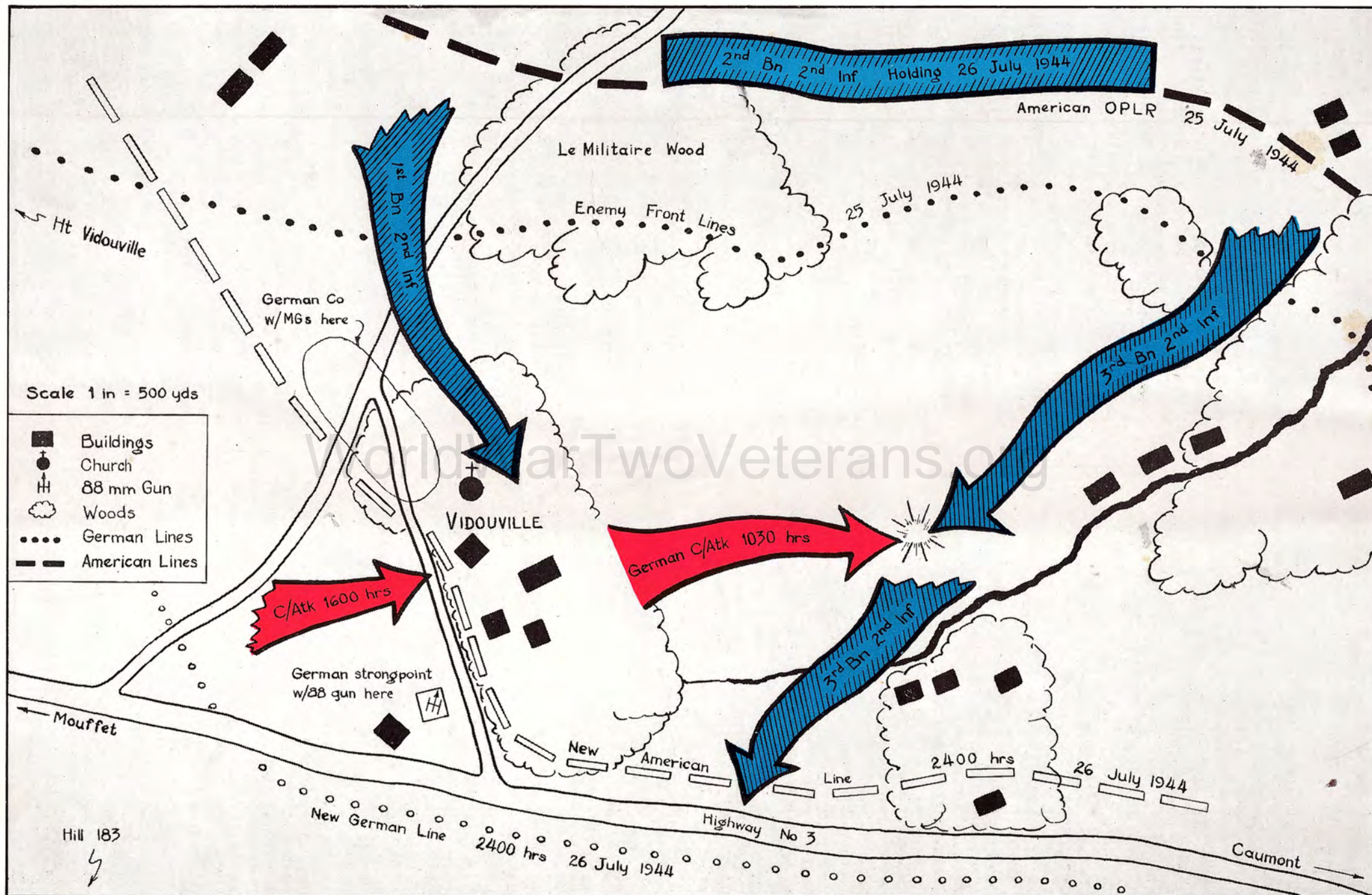
On the morning of the 27th, in a conference with the Corps Commander, the Division Commander was directed to accom-

plish the following: (a) Place the Eleventh Infantry Regiment in Corps Reserve in present position; (b) Move the Tenth Infantry into line on the right of the Second Regiment, taking over from the Ninth Infantry Regiment as soon as the Ninth is able to turn over. The Eleventh Infantry was designated as V Corps Reserve at 1200 hours and orders were issued for the movement of the Tenth Infantry late that afternoon.

Preparations were made with Companies E and B of the Second for a coordinated attack to jump off at about 1400 hours. Company C Second Infantry, and Company D Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion were withdrawn from the front and reverted to reserve. The coordinated attack by E and B Companies crossed the line of departure at 1402 hours and moved in on the Boche behind a previously planned artillery preparation. The attack pushed forward with Company B on the left and Company E on the right and both companies advanced to Highway 3 with little opposition but were pinned down by mortar and ma-



Church tower used as aiming point by Germans in Caumont, France.



chine gun fire from enemy positions in the orchard South of the road.

For a moment the situation looked bad for the attacking companies, but quick work by the forward observers and the gun crews of the Fiftieth and Twenty-First Field Artillery brought a rain of American shells on the Jerry and the attack rolled forward. By 1500 hours Company E reported itself on the objective, and the battalion staff began to breathe a little easier. Shortly after this at 1530 hours, Company B reached its objective. In the meantime, the remainder of the Second Infantry shook themselves out of their fox-holes and moved forward with battalions echeloned from right to left in the following order: First Battalion, Second Battalion, and Third Battalion. The dismayed Boche poured a hail of artillery, small arms and mortar into the ranks of the attackers, but the advance continued relentlessly until at 1545 hours the remainder of the First Battalion reached the highway. The Second Battalion arrived shortly thereafter. At this time Company E was organizing on its objective, 150 yards South of Highway 3. The Third Battalion moved forward at 1700 hours and met light resistance. All units were organizing on the objective at 1830 hours. The First Battalion, with Company E attached occupied HAUT VIDOUVILLE, a terrain feature in the form of a large hill mass about a thousand yards West of the town of VIDOUVILLE itself.

At 1745 hours, information was received of a German counterattack forming Southwest of VIDOUVILLE between Companies B and C. The artillery dropped a heavy concentration on this area, but were unable to break up the enemy attack, and almost at once the storm broke on the First Battalion. The enemy force was estimated at about a company, and they attacked with stubborn determination. As they reached the lines of the First Battalion they opened up with heavy automatic weapons fire, and finally succeeded in breaking through the line, pocketing one platoon of Company B and driving through to VIDOUVILLE.

Company G, then in position as Combat Team reserve, moved out with one platoon of light tanks from Company D of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion with orders to throw the enemy out of our lines. The guns of the Fiftieth and Twenty-First Field Artillery supported these reserves. The enemy counterattack was met in the vicinity of VIDOUVILLE and, after a sharp fight, thrown back across Highway 3. Some indication of the stubborn resistance of the German troops in this area can be seen from the fact that the enemy attacked three times after this with great determination in about a platoon (reinforced) strength. However, our lines held and reorganization was carried out in spite of bombing by both friendly and enemy planes.

At 2005 hours, the enemy massed in strength in front of Company E and forced them back with heavy fire of all types. It became increasingly apparent that the enemy was determined to regain their positions in and around the town and heights of VIDOUVILLE and the fighting became extremely bitter as the night wore on. Company E was forced back about 500 yards fighting desperately and making the Boche pay dearly for every foot of the way. As the line swayed inward Company C was forced to relinquish its hard-won ground and fall back to the positions occupied on the night of the 26th, prior to the first attack. The fire fight continued well past dark and at last the enemy was driven back and we reoccupied our former positions.

The enemy attacked twice again after midnight and it was only through much hard fighting that our lines were kept intact. During the night of July 27th the Tenth Infantry Regiment was racing to the scene of the fighting and had relieved the Ninth Infantry Regiment of the Second Infantry Division by 0709 hours the following morning. The First Battalion, Tenth Infantry, moved into Division

reserve near MONTRABOT Woods, 2000 yards behind the front lines in the Second Combat Team sector.

Information was received of a concentration of enemy vehicles believed to be approximately 200 in number in the vicinity of LE BENY BOGAGE, 10 miles to the front. This target was bombed by the RAF but they were unable to report any results.

Dawn found the Fifth Division still reorganizing its gains generally along Highway 3. Company F advanced slightly to a more advantageous position closer to Highway 3, while the scattered elements of the First Battalion, and Companies E and G, began to reorganize and consolidate their positions. The organization of the area was made more difficult in the daytime owing to intense shelling of forward and rear areas. Our dead and wounded were picked up, wire laid, rations, water and ammunition brought up in the face of artillery and mortar fire, and the crews of our field artillery answered the enemy gunfire with counter-battery fire that was as galling to the Boche as it was accurate. The medical corpsmen in both the line companies and the aid stations showed great ability and courage in picking up, transporting and caring for our wounded under fire.

On the 28th of July, the fire support group from the Tenth Combat Team was released from the Second Combat Team, and reverted to control of the Tenth. They had supported the Second Combat Team attacks by fire, and the gunners had considerable Boche to their credit in both dead and wounded. The Second Infantry reorganized and consolidated its positions during the day while the Tenth pushed forward slightly to secure more advantageous terrain from which to continue operations.

At 1800 hours the Corps Commander released the Eleventh Infantry to Division control and directed that the Division push forward on the right to gain a foothold on the ridge starting about 1200 yards South of MOUFFET, important road junction 2000 yards West of VIDOUVILLE. Having reached the ridge the Division was to continue to the South and capture the next objective which later became famous as Hill 183. On the left the Division was to hold present positions and patrol aggressively. To continue the advance on the left would have resulted in an extremely exposed flank as the British units on our left had not yet jumped off. Accordingly the Second Infantry was left in place and the Tenth was directed to attack on the 29th. The Eleventh was told to move to a Division reserve position in rear of the Tenth.

The morning of the 29th of July dawned clear and sunny. At 0930 the Tenth Infantry jumped off to the Southwest. The first resistance encountered consisted of scattered machine guns and snipers, with a small amount of mortar fire. The isolated machine gun nests and snipers were cleaned up quickly and the advance resumed. The Second Battalion was on the right and the Third Battalion on the left, while the First Battalion was in reserve. By 1200 hours the assaulting battalions had driven the scattered resistance 1000 yards to the South and were still advancing. The objective assigned by Division was a hill mass known as Hill 183 with intermediate objectives at a stream 200 yards to the front and LA FORGE AU PAS 2000 yards farther South. The first objective fell at about 1115 hours. By 1520 hours the Second and Third Battalions had driven the enemy back and were occupying the second objective and were preparing to attack Hill 183.

At this point, heavy enemy fire was encountered South of LA FORGE AU PAS which caused considerable casualties and held up the advance during the necessary change of direction. In spite of this galling fire, the two assaulting battalions pressed on to the lower slopes of Hill 183. Here enemy resistance stiffened and mortar, machine gun, and rifle fire swept the attackers with devastating accuracy.

By the time the two battalions had reached the East-West road on the Northern slopes of Hill 183 it became increasingly apparent that the Boche occupied the hill in force and were determined to defend it against all attacks. By this time the Second and Third Battalions were not only facing a well dug-in enemy force to their front, but were encountering sniper fire to their rear. Enemy artillery fire increased, and mortar and machine gun fire raked the slopes continuously.

Orders were given to dig in, and prepare to attack in the morning. Anti-tank guns were brought up, command posts and outposts established. It must be understood that the country in which the fighting was taking place was cut up into a crazy patchwork of small fields, narrow lanes and thick hedge rows, all of which are easily adaptable to defense. Mine fields, "booby-traps," and trip-flares, as well as barbed wire, hidden machine guns, and snipers, contrived to make such terrain a series of small forts which had to be overcome one by one, through combined tank-infantry-artillery teamwork, and even with a maximum of coordination between these arms, a stubborn defense of such an area cost the attacker dearly.

Owing to the many fields and cul-de-sacs, it was of the utmost importance that all front line units guard their flanks well and if at all possible, make physical contact with adjacent units. Hence, on the night of July 29, each assaulting battalion was cautiously reaching for the adjacent units for mutual contact and protection. Unfortunately this was not always accomplished and enemy patrols and snipers succeeded in slipping through to cause confusion and casualties in the rear.

It was also discovered at this time that the enemy was using every conceivable type of trick and stratagem to kill, wound or frighten our troops. Snipers attempted to fire in such a manner as to have the crack of their weapon drowned out by the roar of artillery or mortar. Several examples of such tricks as booby trapping the dead, using Red Cross arm bands to provide protection for non-medical personnel, pretending to surrender in order to bring our troops into the open, and shouting orders in English to confuse the attacking troops were noted, and as a result the Boche found that the "Red Diamond" men adopted a "shoot first and argue later" attitude.

In their rapid advance, to the forward slopes of Hill 183, our leading elements overran two company command posts, and one battalion command post. At one of these locations the former occupants left hurriedly before their noon meal had been completed. The table was set and a duck was still roasting in the oven when our troops arrived and took over.

At the enemy battalion command post a map was captured showing the automatic weapons positions and fire plan of Hill 183, designating the hill as part of the final enemy main line of resistance. This proved later to be authentic, and in their first engagement, the Tenth Combat Team was smashing at the ring of steel the Boche had hoped to forge around the hard-won Allied beachhead.

At the close of the day, the Second Infantry Regiment held the left of the Division sector, the Tenth Infantry held the right with the Eleventh Infantry in reserve.

All night the enemy fired flares, sniped, shot mortars, and fired direct fire with self-propelled guns. The routine, but nonetheless dangerous, supply, evacuation and reorganization was carried out throughout the night. Several times during the night enemy vehicles were heard moving about on the Southern slopes of Hill 183. In the meantime, the Eleventh Combat Team received orders to move to an area in the vicinity of HAUT VIDOUVILLE and occupy the forward slopes in rear of the Tenth Infantry Regiment which was scheduled to attack in the morning.

The Battle for Hill 183

On the morning of the 30th of July, Major General S. Leroy Irwin, the Commanding General of the Fifth Infantry Division received orders to move the Division forward with all possible speed and push everything to the VIRE River. The Second Combat Team was to shove ahead with patrols and reconnaissance troops, and advance as far and as fast as possible.

The Eleventh Combat Team held the southern slopes of HAUT VIDOUVILLE as measure against possible German counterattacks from the flanks. The Fifth Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop moved into position to maintain contact between the Tenth and Second Infantry Regiments. Battery D of the One Hundred Sixteenth Anti-Aircraft Gun Battalion; and the One Hundred Eighty-Seventh Field Artillery Battalion (155 millimeter howitzers) were both attached to the Division Artillery, giving it an enormous amount of fire power in heavy caliber artillery. Troop B of the Thirty-Eighth Reconnaissance Squadron was detached and reverted to control of the CO One Hundred Second Cavalry Group. The Forty-Sixth Field Artillery Battalion was placed in direct support of the Tenth and Eleventh CTs.



At 0900 hours on the 30th of July, doughboys of the Tenth Infantry Regiment left their foxholes of the night before and moved up to the line of departure. The order of battle of the Tenth Infantry was as follows: Third Battalion on left of the line; K Company left, L Company right, I Company in reserve; Second Battalion on right of the line; E Company left, G Company right, F Company in reserve. The First Battalion was held in reserve.

The line of departure was to have been the sunken road running East to West across the Southern slopes of Hill 183, but as the Second and Third Battalions moved forward to the line of departure they were met by a withering fire from German mortars, rifles, and machine guns. By 1030 hours the companies of both battalions found themselves not only unable to cross the line of departure, but fighting desperately to hold it against a smashing counterattack delivered against the right flank of L Company and the left flank of E Company.

The attackers were from units of the German Ninth and Fifteenth Paratroop Regiments, and their fanatical fury seemed unlimited as they threw themselves at the American line. Our troops returned the German fire with vigor and the artillery forward observers called frantically for more artillery support. For several hours the fighting swirled savagely through the battered hedgerows and small fields bordering on the sunken road, the line of departure. Visual contact was well nigh impossible for, owing to the dense foliage, the battalions and the companies often found them-

selves with enemy on three sides and snipers on the fourth. Medium tanks were available from Company B of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion but owing to the chaotic conditions of the attacking lines and the lack of communication they were unable to be used until some time later in the day.

The counterattack, meanwhile, broke against the desperately fighting L and E Companies and smashed into the flanks of K and G Companies. The situation became desperate, rumors flew, "so and so was pulling out." There was firing in the rear. A steady stream of wounded poured down the sunken road. The company aid men found themselves fired upon as they tended the wounded. The sweating ammunition and pioneer platoons rushed water and ammunition to the almost isolated companies and more than once found it necessary to throw down their loads and fight off attacks by shouting groups of the enemy. The German mortar fire falling on the sunken road was hellishly accurate and casualties streamed into the aid stations.

At about 1115 hours, tanks of Company B Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion were committed in the Second Battalion area and added their fire to that of the line companies. Towards noon the enemy attacks slackened and when the smoking guns of the Forty-Sixth Field Artillery paused in their fierce bombardment, the German attack was broken and the battered remnants of the Boche scattered away through the fields. This, however, was by no means the end of the German resistance. Their counter-attack had cost them dearly, but they still defended their strongpoints tenaciously. Concealed machine guns, mortars, anti-tank guns, and the ever-present "burp" gun caused heavy casualties before our attack could actually get under way.

At last the tanks were committed in the Third Battalion area and the slow movement forward began. Several of our tanks were knocked out in the vicinity of LES PEZERILS by mines and tanks caught fire, but the tankers set up their light machine guns and stubbornly defended their gains with the infantry. Companies K and L ran into a nest of enemy anti-personal mines (Schu-mine) and suffered several casualties. Slowly the Second and Third Battalions fought their way up the slope, raking the fields with rifle fire, blasting the houses and strong-points with mortar and bazookas, and cleaning out the dugouts with hand grenades. The enemy clung to its positions to the last, but the attack pressed on as the tanks with their rhinoceros attachments crashed through the hedges, and the riflemen fired their automatic rifles and light machine guns from the hip.

In spite of the heavy mortar and artillery fire falling in the rear areas, supply and evacuation proceeded slowly. The engineers of Company B Seventh Engineer Battalion sent out mine-sweeping squads to clear the roads for the passage of tanks, anti-tank guns, and aid jeeps.

The reserve (First) Battalion of the Tenth moved to the right flank of the Second Battalion to extend the line. As they moved towards the line, they encountered fire from a pocket of resistance behind the right flank of the Tenth. For a time they contained this pocket and finally at 2000 hours moved into line on the right of the Second Battalion. Other units of the Tenth Infantry were sent to mop up the pocket in conjunction with light tanks from Company D of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion.

In the meantime the battle along the Tenth Infantry line continued unabated. At 2000 hours the attack had definitely halted, with both sides pouring a hot fire into the lines. The gun crews of the Forty-Sixth Field slammed shell after shell into the breach as forward observers called in targets by radio. The Germans were so close that it was necessary to drop accurate fire within two or three fields of the line companies (100 to 200 yards) and the scream of incoming and outgoing shells reached a crescendo.



The massed fires of the battalion and Division Artillery, plus the 155 millimeter howitzers of the One Hundred Eighty-Seventh Field Artillery broke up numerous attempts by the enemy to drive the Tenth off the hill. Since early in the afternoon Company D of the Eighty-First Chemical Battalion (4.2" mortars) had been in action registering direct hits on many German emplacements in spite of the heavy counterbattery fire thrown at them by the Boche. With the aid of First Battalion on the right flank of the battle line, the medium tanks, and the excellent artillery support, the Tenth blasted its way to the top of the hill.

The Jerry fought bitterly every step of the way, falling back only when completely outflanked or surrounded, leaving his dead in hedgerow and foxhole, lane and field. Very few prisoners were taken, whether as a result of the reluctance of the Boche to surrender or reluctance on the part of the Americans to take prisoners, no one seems prepared to say. It was discovered that the German machine gun crews adopted a plan wherein they left small ammunition dumps in prearranged defensive positions and hedge corners and fell back from one to another as they became outflanked, or as their ammunition ran low.

As the companies of the Third Battalion, led by Major A. P. Shipley, reached the top of the hill the reason for the unbelievable accuracy of the enemy mortar fire was explained. While in the process of cleaning out a handful of snipers near the crest of the hill, a complete enemy mortar observation post was discovered in the top of a tree that overlooked the sunken road designated as the line of departure. From this position it was possible to direct the maximum amount of fire with the maximum amount of accuracy on any given spot in the Tenth Infantry's lines.

By 2100 hours Companies K, L, E, and G with I and F Companies in close support reached the LA FORCHET-LA MORGNIERE road south of Hill 183. The enemy fire slackened and died away, and by 2230 hours all elements of the Tenth Infantry were consolidating their gains generally along the East-West road South of Hill 183. The battle for Hill 183 was history, but there was still much to do. Wounded lay in every hedge row; both American and German dead covered the hillsides; food, water and ammunition had to be carried up; wires had to be laid, mines lifted, contact with flank elements made. The decimated companies of the Tenth Infantry dug in for the night while the artillery liaison officers plotted defensive fires, and unit commanders planned the placement of weapons against possible German night counterattacks.

During the original attack and the ensuing battle for Hill 183, the Tenth Infantry Regiment sustained a loss of 1 officer and 77 enlisted men killed, 23 officers and 323 enlisted men wounded, and 35 enlisted men missing, attesting to the stubborn defense of the hill by the Boche, and the fury of the American attack when it became apparent that the Germans would have to be driven off the hill, step by step. Enemy losses were estimated at between 700 and 750. The freshly dug graves of the 450 of the enemy were found by our troops the next day. The enemy units encountered in this engagement were identified as the following: Fifteenth Paratroop Regiment, Fifth Paratroop Division; Fifth Paratroop Regiment, and Reconnaissance Co., Third Paratroop Division.

As the tired troops of the Tenth Infantry dug in on the Southern slope of Hill 183, the Eleventh Infantry was alerted in preparation for a movement through the Tenth Infantry and a night attack to the South.

Simultaneous with the Tenth Infantry attack on Hill 183 was an attack by the Second Combat Team on the left of the Tenth Infantry across the HAUT VIDOUVILLE-CAUMONT road starting at 0745 hours on the 30th of July. The regiment jumped off with the Second Battalion on the right,

Third Battalion on the left and First Battalion in reserve.

No resistance was encountered for about the first 2000 yards when heavy enemy mortar and machine gun fire broke out to the front and both flanks in the vicinity of LAMBERVILLE. Company G Second Infantry drove through fairly strong resistance and advanced abreast of the Tenth Infantry at about 1745 hours. Company E was unable to maintain contact with leading elements due to heavy enemy resistance in the vicinity of LE VIVEROT. As the remainder of the regiment reached a line abreast of the Tenth Infantry they were halted and pinned down by a torrent of fire from mortars and automatic weapons.

At 2355 Company G smashed forward across the TORIGNY-SUR-VIRE-CAUMONT road. The Third Battalion Second Infantry advanced within the designated zone, but was forced to fall back due to heavy mortar and small arms fire. By 2400 hours the Second Infantry was organizing defenses for the night in the area just North of the TORIGNY-SUR-VIRE-CAUMONT highway, which was outposted by the enemy. This placed our leading elements just South of BEVILLE.

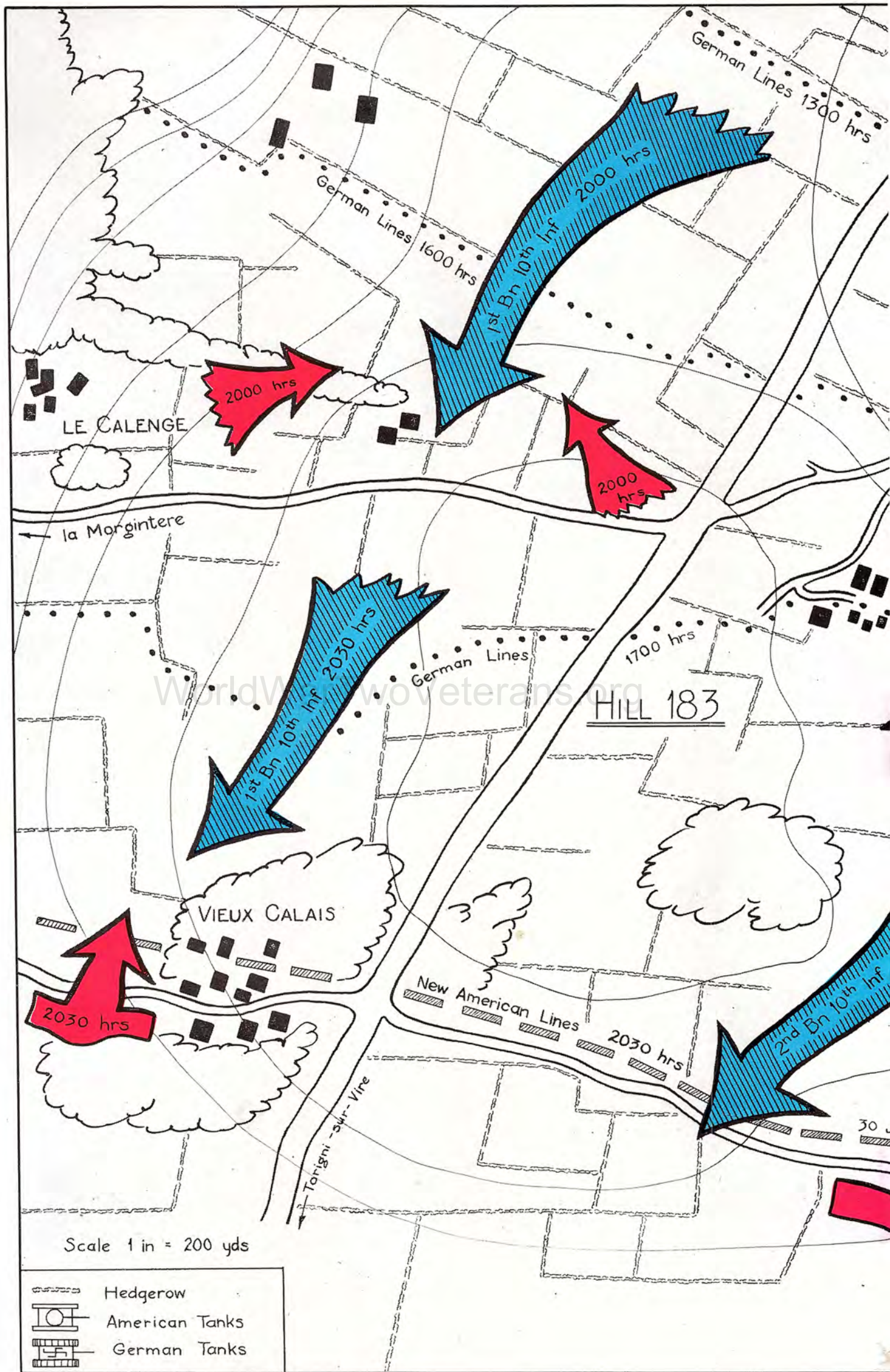
At this time the Fifth Reconnaissance Troop relieved Troop B of the Thirty-Eighth Reconnaissance Squadron and Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion was relieved from attachment and assigned to direct support of the Second Combat Team.

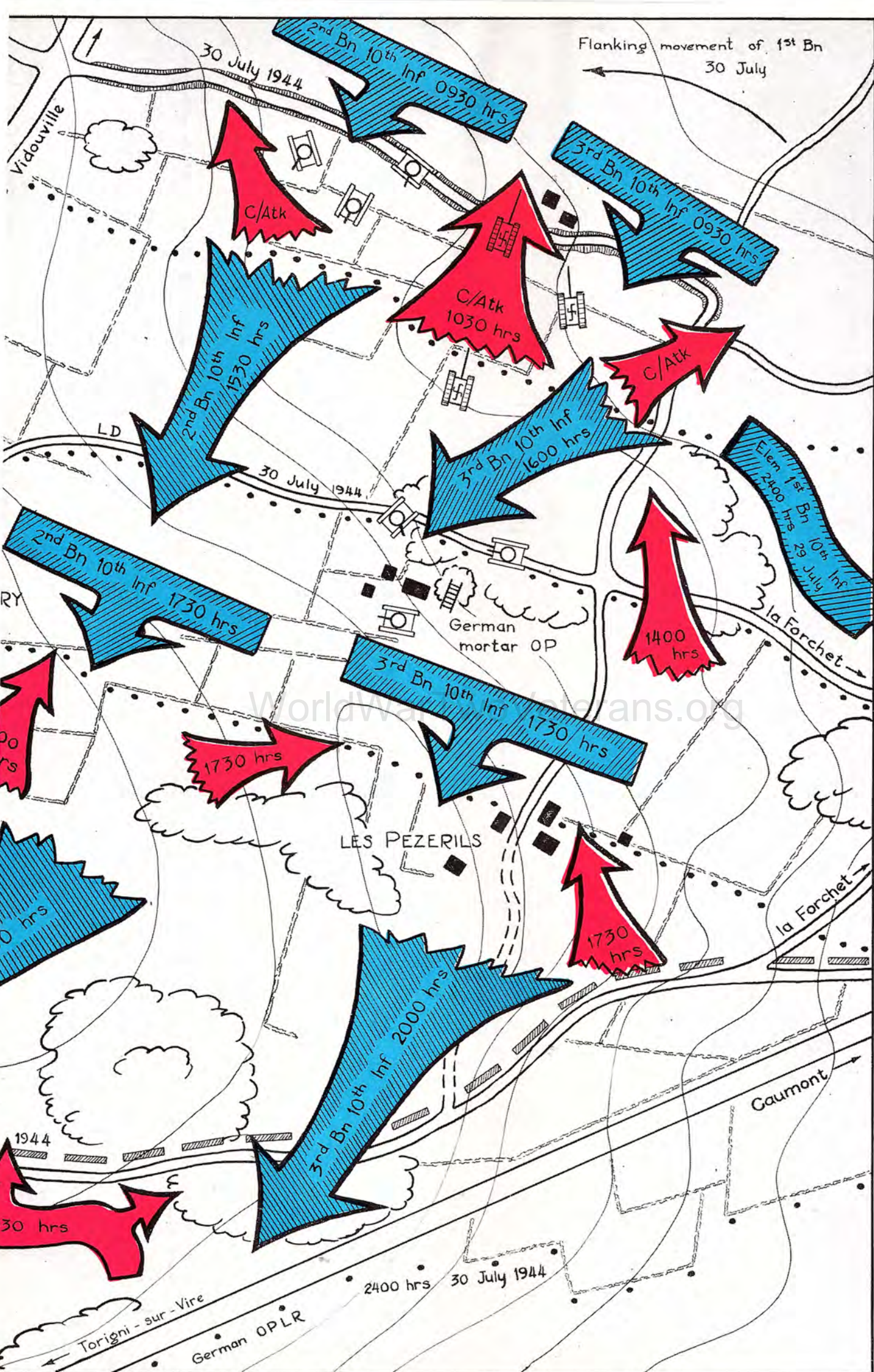
During the night of the 30-31st of July the Second Infantry patrolled vigorously in the vicinity of the enemy's outposts along the highway to the front.

The planned night attack of the Eleventh Infantry jumped off through the lines of the Tenth Infantry at about 0400 31 July, but met no enemy resistance except for minefields. Because of the absence of resistance the attack turned into a pursuit with the regiment moving ahead in two columns. The first consisted of the Second Battalion, Cannon Company, a tank Company and a Tank Destroyer Company, less one platoon. The other column was led by the First Battalion followed by Regimental Headquarters, Nineteenth Field Artillery Battalion, one platoon of the tank destroyers, the Third Battalion and the Service Company trains. The mine platoon together with a platoon of engineers was kept busy clearing the roads of anti-tank mines and obstructions.

The pursuit continued for about 15 miles with both columns meeting no resistance, until they arrived in the vicinity of LE PIR, when enemy artillery and automatic weapons fire slowed up the advance. Company B of the Eleventh went into action to push aside what appeared to be a thinly held OPLR but were trapped while crossing an open field by enemy automatic and small arms fire at close range. The German strongpoint waited until the company had advanced to within a very short distance of their position before opening fire. By this maneuver they succeeded in pinning the company down in the open and inflicting severe casualties.

In attempting to come to the aid of B Company, Company A ran into an adjacent enemy strongpoint and their movement developed into a sharp fight with both sides pouring automatic fire at one another in an attempt to force a withdrawal. Finally Company G and a platoon of medium tanks from C Company Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion drove into the enemy's right flank and the Boche were forced to withdraw leaving their artillery behind. This consisted of a battery of 105 millimeter howitzers which were booby trapped before being abandoned. In addition to the artillery pieces captured, the Eleventh Infantry took 25 prisoners. The entire engagement was fought as a delaying action by uncontrolled and decentralized groups of German snipers and strongpoints. At this time, orders were received halting further





movement to the South and the next day the Eleventh Infantry Regiment was pinched out by a junction of the Second Infantry Regiment and the Second Infantry Division near the VIRE River.

Simultaneous with the movement of the Eleventh Infantry on the 31st of July, was the advance of the Second Combat Team, with the First Battalion passing through the Third Battalion on the left and advancing abreast of the Second Battalion. The advance was delayed due to the large number of mines and booby traps concealed in the hedgerows. Inasmuch as contact had been lost with the enemy, and no one knew just when resistance might be encountered, the advance was made in line of skirmishers which slowed up the advance considerably. A directive from the Commanding General of V Corps ordered the troops to move ahead in advance guard formation on the roads and the movement was speeded up.

The First Battalion Second Infantry pinched out the Second and Third Battalions when the zone of advance narrowed to 1100 yards and the regiment moved in the following order: First, Second, and Third Battalions.

When the head of the First Battalion Second Infantry reached the railroad East of LE PIR at about 2030 hours small arms fire broke out, and the advance was halted while the tanks of Company A Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion were brought up. The enemy withdrew without further resistance and the battalion moved ahead rapidly. It continued during the hours of darkness passing through FORET L'EVEQUE, and reached LA FERRIERE at 0200 hours on the 1st of August. Since the British armored forces were using all passable roads in this sector no further movement was made in the direction of the VIRE River and the First Battalion bivouaced for the night and moved up to occupy positions in the early morning hours.

The Second and Third Battalions, Second Infantry moved in rear of the First Battalion to successive assembly areas and prepared to support the advance of the First Battalion. The Second and Third Battalions occupied bivouacs in the

vicinity of LAVENTE (Second Battalion) and LORRAILE (Third Battalion).

The Fifth Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop was relieved from attachment to the Second Infantry and ordered to patrol vigorously to the Division front on the 31st at 1200 hours. It reached the bridge across the VIRE River in the middle of the Division zone without encountering organized resistance and were ordered to stop at that point.

The Seventh Engineer Battalion assisted by the Twentieth and Thirteen Hundred Fortieth Engineer Combat Battalions worked day and night clearing roads in rear of the advance across the VIRE River South of LA FERRIERE. Company D Eighty-First Chemical Battalion; One Hundred Eighty-Seven Artillery (155 millimeter Howitzer) and Battery D One Hundred Sixteenth Anti-Aircraft Gun Battalion were detached from the Division on 1st of August. Snipers harassing our troops in FORET L'EVEQUE were liquidated by British armored patrols.

The Second Combat Team was ordered to resume their advance on the 1st of August and they moved out from LA FERRIERE toward the SOULEVRE River. The six-barreled German Nebelwerfer was heard in the British sector, and the Twenty-First German Panzer Division was reported moving about in front of the Division, but no tanks were reported North of the SOULEVRE River. It was impossible to move any other unit of the Division but the Second owing to the presence of the British Eighth and Eleventh Armored Divisions in the Division's area.

The Second Combat Team met only light resistance in their advance to seize the bridge and the high ground beyond, within its zone. The bridge was held by about one German platoon with machine guns and mortars. As the First Battalion took the enemy force under fire, it withdrew, abandoning weapons and equipment, and suffering about five casualties in the engagement.

As the Second and Third Battalions arrived they closed in rear of the First Battalion and held their positions. The First Battalion sent reconnaissance elements across

Fifth Division doughboys take cover behind hedgerows near St. Quen des Bescoes, France.



the river, but made no contact with the enemy. These patrols were withdrawn due to occupation of the area by the British, in their advance to capture the city of VIRE.

The Tenth Infantry held their positions along the LA FORCHET-LA MORGNIERE road South of Hill 183 on order of V Corps preparatory to moving North to a Division concentration area in the vicinity of AUX MALLES. The Fifth Reconnaissance Troop was given the mission of patrolling along the North bank of the SOULEVERE River with the objective of reaching the confluence of the SOULEVERE and VIRE River. As the leading elements reached this point they were brought under heavy fire by the enemy. Withdrawing from this fire the troop continued its patrol along the North bank of the SOULEVERE River until withdrawn to the Division concentration area.

By this time the British Eighth Armored Division had swung directly across the zone of the Fifth Division making any further action to the front virtually impossible and as the armored units passed through our lines the division was pinched out and withdrawn from the line.

By 1750 hours on the 2d of August all elements of the Division had closed into the concentration area Northwest of AUX MALLES. It was during this period of comparative inactivity that the troops of the Division had their first opportunity to bathe and don clean clothes since leaving CERISY-LA-FORET, and the first since leaving CAUMONT for the Second Combat Team. The battlefields were searched for the dead, equipment reclaimed, and citations made. Hedgerow tactics were studied, weapons tested, and a general reorganization carried out throughout the Division.

The Fifth Infantry Division hitherto untested in battle in this war, had attacked and broken successfully the German line facing the beachhead forces. The units facing the Fifth were the elite of the German Army and they were overrun and disorganized to such an extent that no new front line could be established for more than a month, not until Allied troops had invaded GERMANY proper.

The Division was only one of many in this action which became known as the "NORMANDY Breakthrough," but it performed its task so well that it received an official commendation from the Commanding General, V Corps.



French townspeople gather around an American truck loaded with five German prisoners captured in mopping up activities in their town.



Ration dump used by 5th Quartermaster Company in the dash across France.



Engineers ready a railroad bridge in the Angers area to handle tank traffic.



Tank with modified hedgerow cutter attached plows through a hedgerow in the Normandy sector of France.





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Dugouts near Caumont, France,
used by Division Staff.

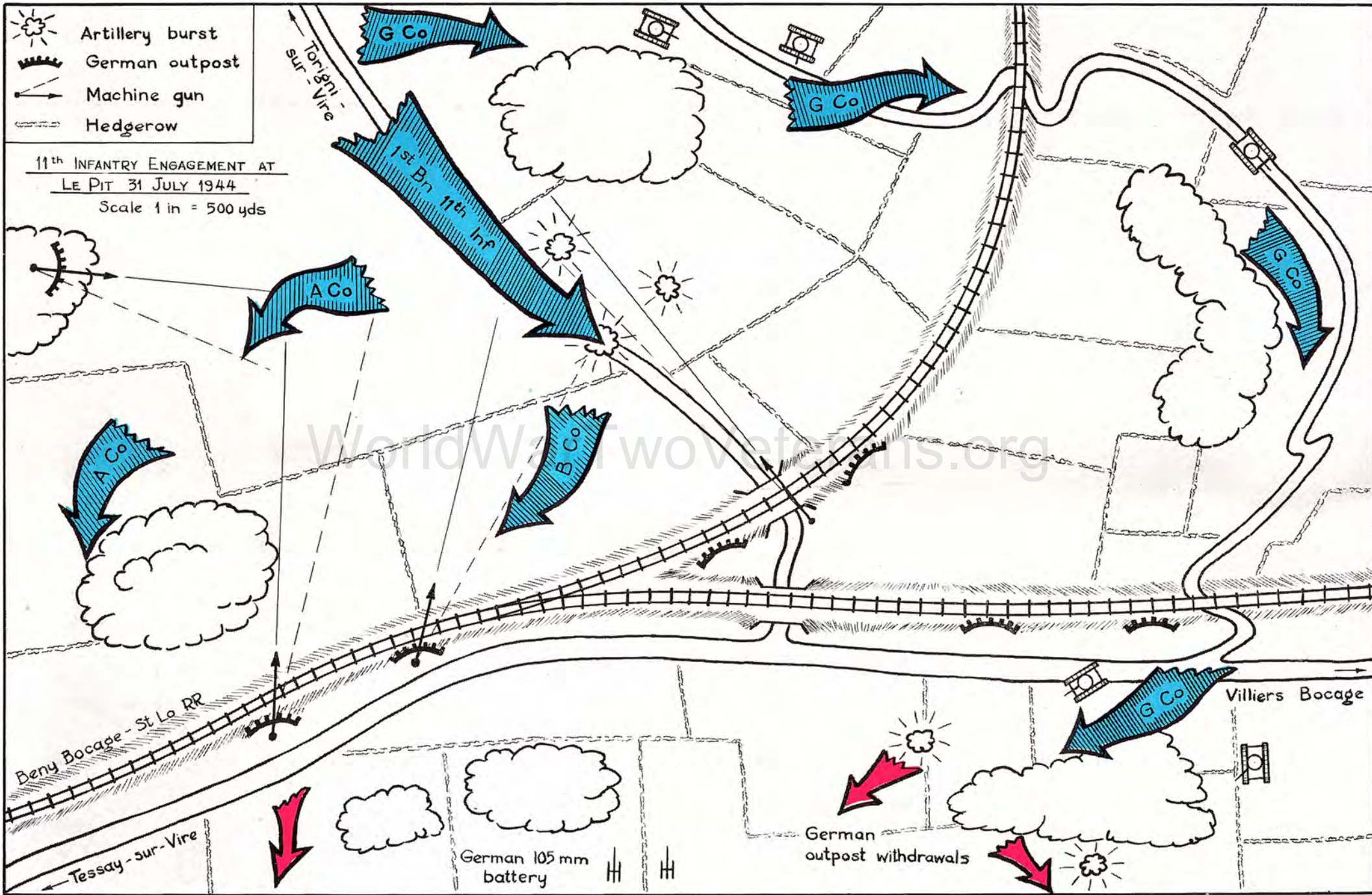


Major Walsh of 7th Engineer Bn.,
shown in interior of dugout.



-  Artillery burst
-  German outpost
-  Machine gun
-  Hedgerow

11th INFANTRY ENGAGEMENT AT
LE PIT 31 JULY 1944
Scale 1 in = 500 yds





Aerial Photograph of Normandy showing hedgerows and sunken roads typical of that part of France.

Bridge destroyed by retreating Nazi near Angers is obstacle to infantrymen picking their way into the town.



THIRD ARMY

At 1645 on the 3d of August orders were received to move the Division to the vicinity of CERISY LA SALLE, in the zone of the newly formed Third Army. With this movement the Division passed to First U. S. Army reserve, and thence to control of XX Corps of the Third U. S. Army. The move itself, of approximately 55 miles was continued on to ROUFFIGNY and was completed with the aid of six Quartermaster Truck Companies. The last trucks had not rolled into the new area until after dawn on August 5th.

At 2142 hours on the 4th of August warning orders were issued for motor movement to another assembly area in the vicinity of ST. GEORGES DE REINTEMBULT. On the 5th of August the Division moved in two shuttles by organic transportation plus two truck companies to the vicinity of ST. GEORGES DE REINTEMBULT, a distance of 25 miles and closed into the new area at 0420 on the 6th.

During this period, the Fifth Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop patrolled as far South as VITRE without encountering resistance, although no Allied troops had previously been in most of the area.

As the leading units closed into the concentration area around ST. GEORGES DE REINTEMBULT orders were issued for the Division to move to a new assembly area in the vicinity of LA BRESNE, South of VITRE.

The movement was to be made in two shuttles, using only the organic transportation. This was to be the first of the many, "hit the road" movements in which every available inch of space on the transportation was utilized in order to prevent continual shuttling by the "Red Diamond" vehicles. In addition to this movement the Division was given the mission of seizing the bridge across the SEICHE River in the vicinity of LA GUERCHE DE BRITAGNE, a few miles South of the concentration area. Both the movement and the mission were accomplished without difficulty and the Division closed into the new area at 0600 hours on the 7th of August with the exception of a few rear echelon and service units.

The newly seized bridge was heavily outposted by our troops and guns of the Division Artillery laid on the bridge as a measure against counter-seizure. Meanwhile, patrols operated in front of the Division finding no resistance.

It was during the period of movement from CERISY LA SALLE to VITRE that the Allied Armies were forming the mighty pincers later to snap shut on the famous FALAISE GAP and the fleeing German columns afforded excellent targets for our Air Force. Some idea of the tremendous power of our Air Force was given the Fifth Division troops as they rolled down the road past AVRANCHES and MONT ST.

MICHEL. Battered transportation and twisted equipment lay on both sides of the road as the dusty columns of the Division streamed Southward. Charred bodies of horses and men choked the ditches, and a litter of helmets, rifles, papers, and clothing covered the fields adjacent to the road. Batteries of German light field pieces lay uselessly along the roads with their prime movers and caissons proving no more than a traffic obstacle to the rolling tanks.

The break-through had become a sweeping advance, and the American and British Air Forces swept over the Boche columns day and night, mercilessly pounding them with light and heavy bombs, and strafing ceaselessly. It was easily apparent to the men of the Division that without the powerful air support given the ground forces, many of the minor engagements would have been major ones indeed, and the advance of the Allied Arms would have been much slower.

The reception of the troops by the French populace of the provinces of NORMANDY and BRITTANY made even the most tiresome of journeys worthwhile. Clusters of peasants stood at every crossroad waving to the troops as they swept past. At every halt the French people pressed flowers, fruit, and wine on the liberating columns.

Meanwhile, ahead of the division, elements of the FFI (French Forces of the Interior) ambushed German convoys, hunted down snipers, and pointed out to the forward elements possible ambushes and strongpoints. The crowded streets of the cities were gaily bedecked with flags, both French and American, and the full throated roar of welcome swept along

the streets like a wave as the tanks, trucks, and jeeps race Southward.

Owing to the necessity of keeping the rifle companies within easy reach of the leading elements, plus the shortage of troop carrying trucks, it became necessary to load the men on anything that rolled, including tanks, tank-destroyers, and captured German vehicles. The prime-movers and supply trucks of the Division Artillery swarmed with riflemen, as did the anti-aircraft batteries, and kitchen trucks.

ADVANCE TO ANGERS

On the 7th of August, 1944, the Fifth Division was assigned the mission of seizing ANGERS and the bridges across the MAINE and LOIRE Rivers.

On receipt of this order, Major General Irwin, the Division Commander, decided to send a force to CHATEAUNEUF-SUR-SARTHE, 15 miles North of ANGERS and then East of ANGERS, in an attempt to outflank ANGERS and secure the bridge over the LOIRE River directly South of the city at LE PONTS DE CE. This force was to be known as Task Force THACKERAY.

Simultaneous with the organization of Task Force THACKERAY, the Eleventh Combat Team moved towards the city



A typical German Soldier encountered during early fighting in France.



Vital railway bridge across Maine river used by 3rd Battalion, 11th Infantry and 10th Infantry in attack on Angers.

of ANGERS, leaving VITRE at 1400 hours on the 7th of August and completing a motor march of about 63 miles on organic transportation plus tanks, tank-destroyers, artillery and engineer trucks.

It was estimated from G-2 reports that there were about 300 enemy troops in the city, but it was expected that these would be reinforced by whatever remnants of the fleeing German Army could reach the city in time to assist in its defense. Chief among the several objectives and important installations in ANGERS was a Naval Command Station at ST. BARTHELEMY D'ANJOU, which controlled the entire German Atlantic Fleet by means of a large underground radio installation. Other objectives were command installations and a Gestapo Headquarters. The city was almost circled by a large anti-tank ditch supplemented by numerous tellermine.

The city itself is located at the junction of the MAINE and LOIRE Rivers, with the MAINE River cutting the city in two. At one time, the city had a population of 80,000. ANGERS was the first large, and strategically important city to be captured by the Third Army in its history-making sweep across France. Owing to its location, ANGERS was an exit from the BREST PENINSULA and the inland port of NANTES on the west coast of FRANCE for such troops of the German Seventh Army as sought to retreat.

Therefore, inasmuch as the city was an important communication and transportation hub, and a focal point for the German exodus, the enemy could be expected to put up a determined defense, a defense which later proved to be fanatical and bitter, finally resulting in an attempt by the German Army to blow all bridges in that area to slow Allied pursuit.

As the Eleventh Combat Team approached ANGERS it was preceded by the Regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance platoon to prevent surprise and ambush. Just prior to the arrival of the Eleventh at the outskirts of the city, it was learned that the garrison of the city was at least three enemy battalions reinforced, plus several batteries of 88 millimeter anti-aircraft-anti-tank guns.

In the meantime, Task Force THACKERAY left the Division Command Post at 1315 hours on the 7th of August and proceeded South and East along the bank of the LA MAYENNE River. The force was composed of the following units: Fifth Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop; Company G Second

Infantry; 81 millimeter Mortar Platoon of H Company Second Infantry; First Platoon Company A Seventh Engineer Battalion; one platoon of the Clearing Company Fifth Medical Battalion; Company D Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion (less one platoon); elements of the Division Photo Team, the Military Interpretation Team, and the Counter Intelligence Detachment. The force was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel D. W. Thackeray, Division G-2.

Plans had been made through Air Support to secure fighter planes for strafing missions, and the Artillery Liaison planes maintained observation for the force throughout the entire action.

Task Force YUILL, consisted of the Eleventh Infantry Regiment, commanded by Colonel C. W. Yuill, Nineteenth Field Artillery Battalion; Company C Seventh Engineer Battalion; Company C Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion; collecting Company C, and one platoon of the Clearing Company Fifth Medical Battalion; and one platoon Company D Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion. This force was to proceed directly South 30 miles to CHATEAUBRIANT, and then Southeast to ANGERS, an additional 43 miles, and capture the town.

The remainder of the Division was to remain in the concentration area preparatory to moving by motor, South and East.

Task Force THACKERAY proceeded in column as far as CHATEAU GONTIER, about 25 miles to the Southeast without coming in contact with the enemy. At this point a message was received from the Artillery Observation plane that AZE, one and one-half miles to the front, was free of enemy, but that approximately 200 could be observed in the vicinity of COUDRAY, three miles farther on.

In addition to the enemy force near COUDRAY, about 500 SS troopers were reported on the right flank about 15 miles away.

With a battle imminent, an aid station was set up in CHATEAU GONTIER. At 1730 the column started toward COUDRAY with three light tanks in the lead. Two platoons of infantry were assigned to flank protection on the road. The supply element was left in the vicinity of CHATEAU GONTIER. Initial contact with the enemy was made at about 1845 hours about one and a half miles from COUDRAY. Apparently the enemy force in this area was a rather strong outpost, and a brief skirmish followed. Several prisoners were taken and some casualties were inflicted.

After reorganization the column continued toward COUDRAY. At about 800 yards distance from the town there was a sharp hill, followed by a dip and then another rise ending in a curve leading into the town. The leading tanks moved ahead into the depression as the remainder of the column reached the top of the first hill. At this point enemy anti-tank guns opened up on the leading tanks knocking out first the leading tank and then the second. The third tank attempted to evade the fire by moving behind a hedgerow, but just as it reached the hedgerow it was hit and badly damaged.

With three tanks out of action in the first few moments of the fire fight, the task force was left with but three tanks.

The infantry were rushed to the spot and as they moved around the tanks they were raked by intense small arms and machine gun fire. Moving from hedgerow to hedgerow the riflemen fired at whatever target presented itself, and as the volume of fire slackened it became evident that the enemy was starting to withdraw. Mortars and tank fire were brought to bear, and the Germans began to suffer heavily whenever they exposed themselves.

Finally it was decided to bivouac in AZE during the hours of darkness and continue the attack on COUDRAY in the

morning. However, during the night the enemy withdrew his forces from COUDRAY and our troops entered the town without opposition. In the search of the town an enemy command post was located in which there were the bodies of two German Officers and several valuable documents. After a search of the town and its immediate vicinity, the force moved at 0945 on the 8th of August. There was no sign of the enemy in the town of DAON, two miles South, and the troops proceeded toward CHERRE, five miles farther Southeast.

Scattered resistance in this area delayed the force until about noon. Small groups of the enemy equipped with rifles and machine pistols fired from hedgerows and wooded areas, falling back when outflanked or attacked. During this action there were 12 P-47's in support of the force. At the main road junction Southeast of CHERRE the resistance stiffened and gradually developed into a considerable fire fight. One of the three remaining tanks of the force was hit while supporting a group of infantry in cleaning out a pocket of resistance in the hedgerows.

After a sharp fight the enemy withdrew leaving behind four 20 millimeter guns, four anti-tank weapons, two truckloads of German ammunition and assorted small arms. About 20 of the enemy were killed and 15 prisoners of war were taken. A small French detachment and two squads of engineers were left to guard the road junction and the task force moved on to the South.

The enemy put small resistance up as the force moved into CHATEAU-NEAUF-SUR-SARTHE but succeeded in blowing the bridge before the troops could save it. In their haste to cut themselves off from the Americans by blowing the bridge, the Germans left much equipment and several bicycles behind, most of which were appropriated by the riflemen of the task force. By 1900 hours on the 8th of August the town was completely organized for defense by the task force, outposts established, guards posted, and the remainder of the troops bivouaced for the night. In the advance to the town and the several small skirmishes that ensued 15 more PW's were taken. Later on, this number was supplemented by stragglers and lost individuals who, cut off from the main German body across the river, came into the town and gave themselves up.

On the morning of the 9th of August, the force moved six miles Southwest towards LE LION to secure the bridges there. LE LION was free of the enemy when the force moved in, although it was learned that there had been 500 SS men there prior to the advance of the task force. The town of CHAMPIGNE was also taken during the advance without opposition.

From here the advance continued and the force sent out patrols to determine the condition of the other bridges across the river. Unfortunately the enemy had succeeded in destroying all of these bridges and the patrols returned without crossing. While these patrols were out, word was received from the Division Commander ordering the force to return to the Division immediately. On the return of the patrols, the force assembled and the return trip to the Division began. Task Force THACKERAY rejoined the Division in the vicinity of BECON, near ANGERS at 2200 hours on the 9th of August.

During the advance of Task Force THACKERAY a sudden call for maps was received at the Division Command Post, then in the vicinity of VITRE. The assistant G-2 Major T. C. McGuire was flown with the maps in an Artillery Cub plane

to the task force. Contact with the force was made just outside of COUDRAY and the maps dropped alongside of the command vehicle. While endeavoring to ascertain whether the maps had been dropped to the right person, the plane swooped very close to the ground several times. On their last and lowest swoop they were fired upon, presumably by an enemy sniper. When it became apparent that it would be impossible to return to the CP before dark, a forced landing was made in the vicinity of ARGENTRE. The crew returned safely to the Division the following day.

During the three-day advance of Task Force THACKERAY, the Eleventh Combat Team advanced on ANGERS with the mission of capturing the city and killing or capturing the garrison. On the 7th of August the Eleventh approached the city with the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon moving ahead as the point. At about 1900 hours the platoon ran into a strong force of the enemy at LA ROCHE, about four miles west of ANGERS. The platoon engaged the enemy with small arms and machine gun fire and transmitted the information to Company G, which was then acting as the advance guard. Company G detrucked and marched on foot to engage the enemy and insure the uninterrupted forward movement of the main body.

As G Company arrived at the scene of the fighting they became engaged in a hot fire fight that ran through most of the night. The rest of the Second Battalion detrucked and was committed astride the road running directly East into ANGERS. The Regimental Command Post was established in a small grove along the road not far behind the lines. The Third Battalion was ordered to dismount and take up positions to protect the regiment's immediate rear and right flank. The First Battalion detrucked, marched seven miles to the North, and struck a road leading Southeast into ANGERS. They were given the mission of forming the left column attacking the city, together with Company C Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion (less one platoon); one platoon of the tank-destroyers; and one platoon of the Seventh Engineers.

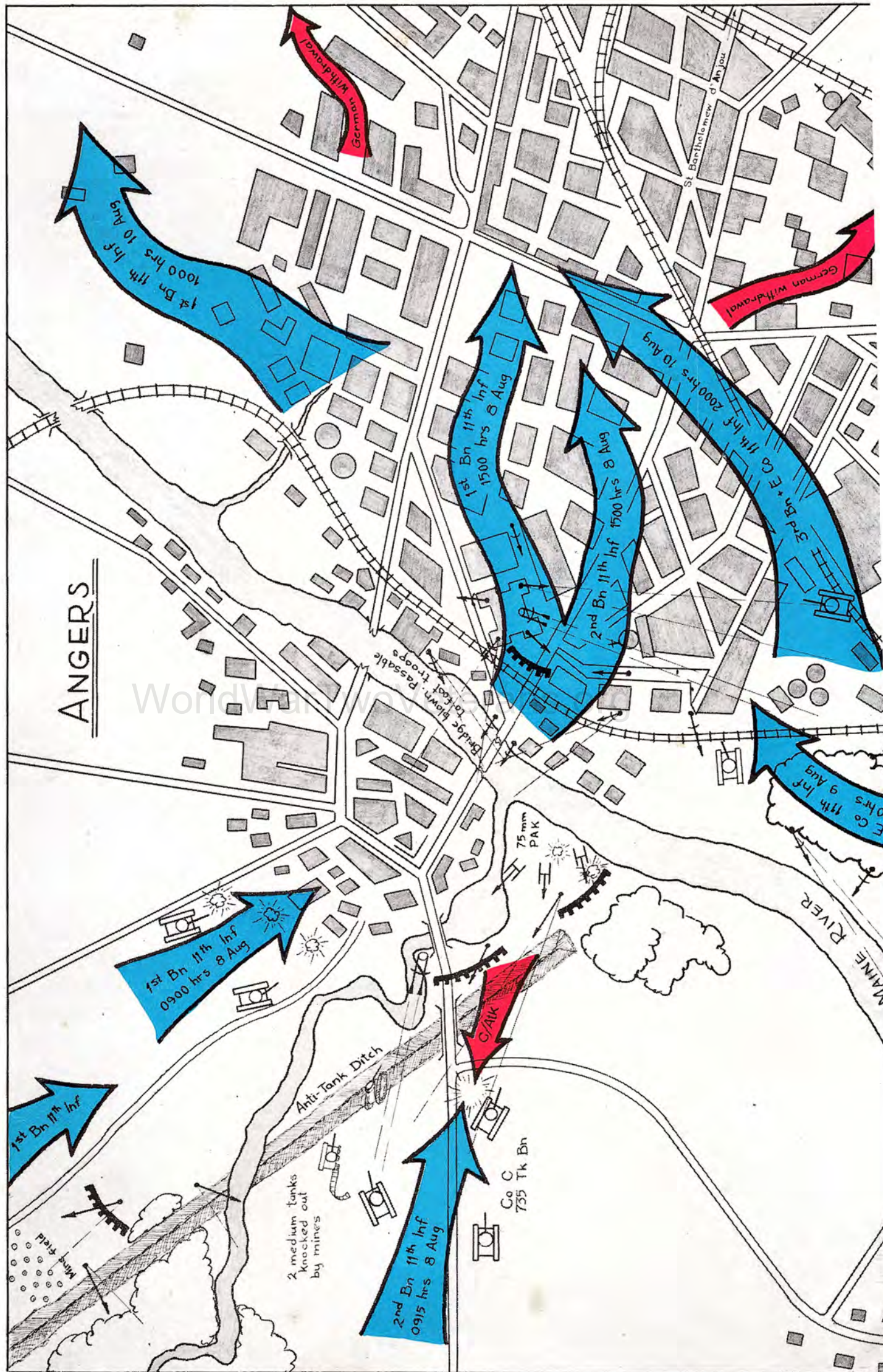
Also on the 7th of August the First Battalion of the Tenth Infantry supported by artillery outposted the bridges at LA GUERCHE DE BRITAGNE to prevent their destruction on the Division's route of advance.

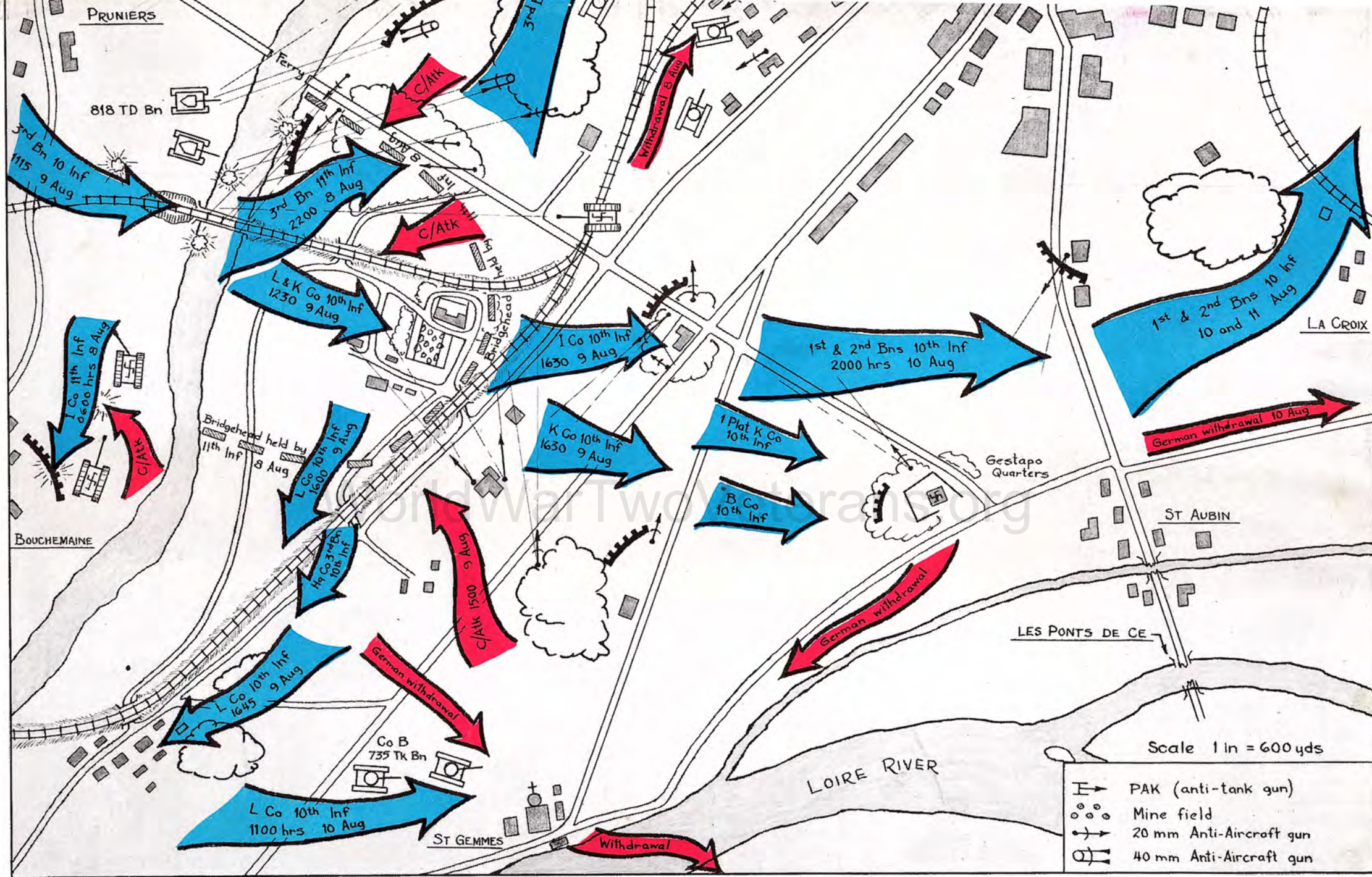
On the 8th of August the Tenth Combat Team less the First Battalion proceeded to a concentration area in the vicinity of BECON. The Forty-Sixth Field Artillery Battalion, less Battery C which was assigned to direct support of the First Battalion, took up positions Southwest of ANGERS. The movement of the Tenth Combat Team to BECON began at 1700 hours. A forward Command Post was set up East of St. JEANNE DE LOIRE, four miles from ANGERS, at 0400 hours on the 9th of August.

The artillery began occupation of positions at 0100 hours



Right—5th Division Infantry takes cover behind a bridge to fire on Germans across River Main.







Company C of 11th Infantry goes over 12-foot wall while storming Angers.

and was assigned a general support mission in the attack on the city of ANGERS. The Third and Second Battalions of the Tenth moved to a forward assembly area in the vicinity of the forward Command Post in the order named. The Tenth Combat Team had been given the mission of advancing around the city of ANGERS from the West to protect the Division's flank, and to prevent any reinforcements coming to the assistance of the defending garrison from across the LOIRE River to the South, and subsequently to prevent escape of any elements of the garrison to the West.

Meanwhile, the First Battalion Second Infantry was alerted at 2300 hours on 8 August for movement to vicinity Northeast of NANTES 54 miles Southwest of ANGERS with the mission of blocking routes to the North and East and containing any force encountered. Attached to this battalion were one platoon Cannon Company; one platoon Company D Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion; and a section of Company A Fifth Medical Battalion. This Battalion with attachments left the vicinity of VITRE at 0435 hours on 9 August and reached its objective at 1000 hours the same day.

No enemy resistance was encountered enroute, but enemy patrols were contacted near the city. A sharp fight developed as the battalion swung into action and in the ensuing fight 20 prisoners and two motorcycles were captured, two armored cars and three personnel carriers were destroyed. The battalion sustained light casualties. It can be readily seen that the aforementioned engagements were but preparatory to the main battle for the city of ANGERS. In general, the plan was to take the city by a combination of assault and isolation, thereby preventing either the escape or reinforcement of the garrison.

THE BATTLE OF ANGERS

EARLY IN the morning of 8th of August the Third Battalion, Eleventh Infantry was ordered to send one company South to cross the MAINE River and secure the bridge over the LOIRE River South of ANGERS. At 0200 hours Company I, Eleventh Infantry was sent to accomplish this mission.

The enemy was reported to be holding a general line about one and a half kilometers from the city. There were city, around the city. The location of the anti-tank ditch and mine fields seemed to be along this general line and about one and a half kilometers from the city. There were also reports of about 500 enemy Marines in the area engaged in blocking roads, and blowing bridges.

As Company I moved up to secure the bridge across the LOIRE River they were met by heavy enemy fire from the vicinity of BOUCHEMAINE, on the MAINE River. After exchanging hot fire with the enemy, I Company, led by Capt. F. H. Smith pushed ahead and finally gained the high ground at BOUCHEMAINE.

Meanwhile the Second Battalion Eleventh Infantry ran into stiff enemy resistance that grew in desperation until the battalion was finally held on the high ground about two miles West of the city. The First Battalion Eleventh Infantry also encountered enemy fire from a patch of woods, and quickly contained the enemy until tanks could be brought up, when tank-infantry teams cleared out the woods inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. This brought the two battalions to the anti-tank ditch and mine belt around the city which proved a formidable barrier to both.

With the Second Battalion Eleventh Infantry maintaining pressure on the Boche from the West, and the First Battalion attacking from the Northwest, the Third Battalion was ordered to cross the MAINE and attack from the South.

Meanwhile Company I was stubbornly resisting increasing pressure in the BOUCHEMAINE area. Although they were in sight of the bridge they were held up at 0605 hours by machine gun fire from the cleared portion of the high ground around BOUCHEMAINE. French civilians stated that the Boche had blown the bridge at 0300 hours that morning and that it was not passable. By this time I Company was held down by machine gun fire and mortars from the railroad and both flanks.

At around 0645 hours I Company was attacked by three enemy tanks and an armored car. The fire fight increased in intensity as the Germans supporting the attack by fire from the flanks sought to keep the company pinned down while the armor broke their line. The riflemen returned the fire as best they could as the enemy tanks closed in. At this point a bazookaman knocked out the armored car and the tanks fell back. The attack was beaten off but the enemy fire continued to be heavy, causing several casualties.

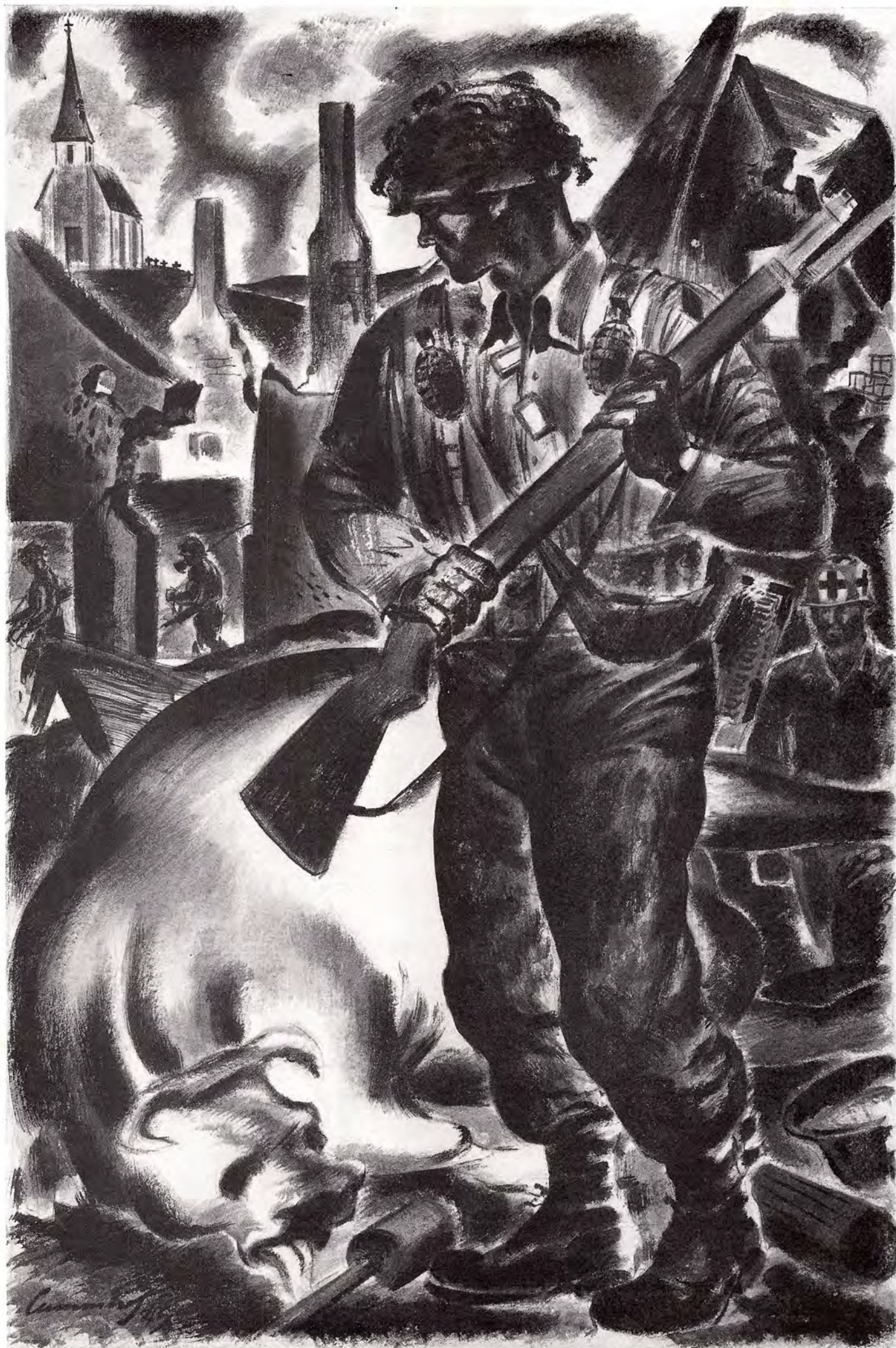
At 0830 the Commanding Officer of the Third Battalion Eleventh Infantry, Major W. H. Birdsong, Jr., requested permission to move the battalion South to relieve the pressure on Company I. Permission was granted and Company C Seventh Engineers was deployed to protect the regiment's rear. At 1220 hours Companies K and L moved on PRUNIER and captured the town at 1730 hours. From the town, a railroad bridge could be seen and it was recommended that this bridge be used to cross on, in as much as the double gauge railroad at BOUCHEMAINE and the highway bridge South of that had been destroyed. While waiting for permission to use the railroad bridge a combat patrol from L Company near the West end of the bridge completely surprised and captured a German sentry whose duty it had been to blow up the bridge at the approach of the American troops.

Meanwhile use of the bridge had been OK'd and it was decided to move across it at once.

The bridge was a standard type single-track railroad bridge with boardwalks running along both sides. Although it had been captured intact, it was still more of an obstacle than a help to the troops in as much as it was loaded with demolitions.

In the center of the bridge stood a boxcar loaded with explosives, while tellermines lay on the bridge along with blocks of explosives, and the road approaching the bridge was heavily mined.

A five-man volunteer detail from Company L led by Technical Sergeant Frederick Keppler removed the tellermines from the bridge while under fire. A light tank was sent to pull the boxcar off the bridge after the foot troops had



passed, and engineers were brought up to clear the bridge and make it passable for vehicles.

All this while, PRUNIER and the high ground around it was held by Company K and was under extremely heavy 88, 40 and 20 millimeter gun fire.

The terrain on the East bank was open from the end of the bridge for about 100 yards to a stone wall, then the terrain sloped upward for about 900 yards from the railroad bridge. The railroad itself proceeded straight East for about 1000 yards from the bridge. On the high ground to the right of the railroad stood a large Chateau in a patch of woods about 800 yards from the river. On the left of the railroad was an open field, and just beyond this was a large patch of woods.

Despite the extremely heavy enemy fire, and with the knowledge that the enemy must be located around the high ground, Company L began crossing the field at about 2200 hours. The Third Platoon of L Company Eleventh Infantry, led by Lt. Lewis Dilwith, sprinted across the bridge, past the boxcar and onto the far shore. The other platoons of L Company followed suit. The Third Platoon advanced 300 yards and deployed, the other platoons moved through it and advanced another 400 yards before they met enemy fire. The Second, First, and Weapons Platoon returned the fire while the Third Platoon moved up, and the whole company drove ahead, raking the woods and hedges with machine guns and automatic rifles, answering the enemy's fire with vigor.

As the company moved ahead, a vicious counterattack developed against its front and as the pressure increased L Company withdrew 200 yards to the cover of a hedge-row. Here the light machine guns were set up, and a heavy fire poured into the enemy as they attempted to drive Company L into the river. In spite of the fanatical efforts of the enemy and the hot fire directed at their positions, L Company stood fast and finally broke the German attack.

About midnight the two sides were so close together that an Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer from M Company who went up the South side of the railroad embankment to set up a mortar observation post met a group of Germans coming up the North side of the embankment. The Americans opened fire killing a German Officer and two German privates. The rest of the Germans retreated.

At 0200 hours, Company K crossed the bridge which was still under heavy 88 and 20 millimeter fire and moved to the aid of L Company. It crossed the bridge by squad rushes and deployed to the left of Company L. Its arrival was none too soon for at about 0300 hours German infantry attacked suicidally against both companies from the center and left flank. Documents captured later proved that these attacks were made in company strength. In their attempt to drive the Americans back and blow the bridge, the Germans drove again and again at the line in fanatical fury.

These attacks were confusing to both sides owing to the complete darkness, and it was extremely difficult to know whether or not the persons on the right or left were friends or enemies.

The Germans came rushing down the slope with demolition charges tied to their waists and over their shoulders, yelling "Kamerad" as they fired their rifles and machine pistols. The American riflemen fired at the flashes of flame from the German weapons and in almost every instance when a German was hit he would blow up as the explosives he was carrying went off, screaming his life away as he actually disintegrated. In the Company K area Lt. Robert Emery shot a German in the nick of time just 15 yards from the company command post near the East end of the bridge.

In order to cover Company L's right flank one platoon of Company K was sent to take position to the right of Company L.

In the meantime, Company E was attached to the Third Battalion and crossed the bridge on the run during one of the suicidal counterattacks by the Boche. It sprinted across the open field and took up positions to the right of Company L. At this time the flank guard platoon of K Company was released from its position and returned to the rest of the company. During these maneuvers the night was filled with flashes, screaming shells and the streaks of tracer fire. The fire fight along the Third Battalion front grew in intensity and the Boche redoubled their efforts to wipe out the bridgehead.

All this time the bridge which was the only link with the hard-pressed troops on the far shore was under heavy fire, but a platoon from Company C of the Seventh Engineers removed the tellermine and the deadly boxcar, thus forestalling destruction of the bridge by a lucky hit on the boxcar by enemy fire. In order to maintain the bridge approaches and insure a steady flow of supplies to the troops on the far shore the One Hundred Fifty Engineer Combat Battalion was attached to the Division on the 9th of August.

In the event that a bridge should have to be constructed, the Nine Hundred Ninety-Fourth Engineer Treadway Bridge Company, and the Five Hundred Thirty-Seventh Engineer Light Pontoon Company were attached the same date. The Division Artillery was supplemented by the attachment of the Two Hundred Fourth Field Artillery Battalion (155 millimeter howitzer).

At about 0600 hours Company L which had been engaged in a fire fight throughout almost the entire night, ran out of ammunition and sent a hurried call for a resupply. During this time the Germans were raking the bridge with 20 and 40 millimeter shells and the battalion command post was blasted continuously with 88 millimeter fire.

An attack had been planned at 0830 but it was impossible to get ammunition to L Company owing to the torrent of shells that swept the bridge making crossing virtually impossible. At this crucial moment K Company reported that they, too, were out of ammunition. This left but one company with sufficient ammunition to beat off the Germans should they decide to repeat their onslaughts of the night before, and their supply was steadily dwindling.

This called for a change of plans, and at last it was decided to attack at 1015 with a 10-minute artillery concentration by the already sweating gunners of the Nineteenth Field Artillery and the Regimental Cannon Company.



Infantry advancing on road to Angers, France.

German ammunition trucks burn in distance.



Tanks with infantry walking along side, move through Angers, France.

Two German self-propelled guns were located at the railroad junction to the East, firing directly at the bridge. An observation tower and machine gun nest was spotted to the left of Company K beyond a patch of woods. The artillery and tank destroyers fired on the self-propelled guns and one tank destroyer and one anti-tank gun from the Battalion Anti-tank Platoon fired on the tower and machine gun nest, along with the artillery. Both targets were knocked out, and at 1015 hours the battalion attacked in spite of the dangerously low ammunition supply.

Once the attack was under way, the rain of shells on the bridge was greatly reduced as the German guns shifted to our advancing troops and the Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon raced across with the sorely needed ammunition for the companies. Although the hitherto protective effect of marching fire was greatly reduced due to the ammunition shortage, the companies flung themselves at the enemy line and succeeded in carrying their advance to the main railroad securing the bridgehead, and making it possible for the battalion transportation to cross the bridge without being subjected to direct small arms fire, although snipers, mortars, and anti-aircraft-anti-tank guns still riddled the bridge from time to time.

At about 1215 hours the anti-tank platoon of the Third Battalion crossed the bridge, and took up positions to protect the rifle companies against attack by enemy tanks. Close on their heels came aid jeeps, and company transportation bearing food, water, and ammunition to the line companies. Throughout the entire crossing the drivers were subjected to sniper and 20 millimeter fire, but managed to get all vehicles across the bridge safely by coolly ignoring the fire as they bumped and clattered over the steel rails and wooden ties of the railroad bridge.

Meanwhile the Tenth Infantry had taken up positions to support the attack of the Eleventh, and the Forty-Sixth Field Artillery (less Battery C) went into position to add their fire to the general attack. At 0930 hours on the 9th of August the Tenth Infantry was ordered to cross the river on the railroad bridge. By this time the enemy fire that had been diverted by the attack of the Eleventh Infantry

had again been concentrated on the bridge, and 88 millimeter anti-aircraft-anti-tank guns added their air bursts to the storm of 20 millimeter, 40 millimeter, and machine-gun fire sweeping the bridge and its approaches. At first the crossing progressed slowly, the companies crossing a squad or two at a time, first I and then K Company, but as more and more men got through, the stream of troops poured across the bridge, pausing only when the fire assumed furious proportions, and then rushing on as it slackened. The aid men moved across rapidly and began to tend the wounded on the far side.

By 1210, all troops of the Third Battalion Tenth Infantry were reported across, less vehicles, and the Second Battalion followed, completing the crossing at 1345. No sooner had the Third Battalion gained the far shore than it moved through the Eleventh Infantry and attacked the high ground to the East. Company L took up positions as reserve company as the battalion crossed. The Third Battalion Eleventh Infantry was charged with supporting the attack by fire from its positions at the railroad. The 81 millimeter mortar platoon and the Forty-Sixth Field Artillery Battalion were placed in direct support of the attack, arranging for speedy deliverance of TOT* fire by maintaining radio and phone contact with forward observers in the attacking companies.

It was further planned that, once the Third Battalion of the Tenth Infantry secured the high ground, the Second Battalion of the Tenth would pass through it continuing the attack to the Northeast in conjunction with the Third Battalion Eleventh Infantry and elements of the First Battalion Tenth Infantry.

It developed, as the attack jumped off, that the railroad was not as securely held as had been reported, for, as the attacking platoon of I Company Tenth Infantry emerged from the woods they were pinned down by small arms fire from an estimated enemy company on their left flank. Company K continued its advance across the railroad meeting only slight resistance from occasional snipers and burp guns. Upon crossing the railroad, Company K halted and brought its small arms to bear in support of Company I which was beginning to extricate itself from the murderous fire of the Jerry gunners on the left.

As I Company sought cover, Company K located the general vicinity that the flanking fire was coming from and immediately brought that area under artillery and 60 and 81 millimeter mortar fire.

The enemy fire slackened, allowing I Company to move abreast of K Company and cross the railroad. Both companies then prepared to assault the objective under cover of a preparatory mortar and artillery barrage requested and controlled by the Battalion Commander.

The Tenth Infantry transportation crossed the bridge immediately behind the Second Battalion led by one or two litter jeeps, some machine gun jeeps of M Company loaded with ammunition, and the Third Battalion Anti-Tank Platoon. The bridge was still subjected to enemy fire and some casualties in driver personnel were suffered.

During the crossing of the Tenth Infantry transportation, the bridge was threatened by an enemy force which gained the woods just to the left of the bridge and commenced pouring machine gun and 20 millimeter fire into the elements of the Second Battalion Tenth Infantry as they were completing their crossing. Company E swung to the left as it crossed the bridge, deployed, and swept at the woods with marching fire, supported by artillery. The enemy fire slackened, and the troops moved across the open field up to the woods, firing from the hip as they moved. As

*TOT (Time Over Target) Air bursts 20 to 30 feet above the target.

they arrived at the woods, they were ordered to return to the railroad and continue the advance with the rest of the battalion and they moved back to the embankment, a platoon at a time, each covering by fire the other's retrograde movement.

The command posts of Second and Third Battalions Tenth Infantry were set up in the large chateau to the right of the bridge as were the aid stations. From the upper windows of this building enemy activity was observed and artillery fire directed during the day. Mortars were set up in the front courtyard enabling close support of the hard-pressed companies in their fight to take and hold the high and wooded area South of ANGERS. As the troops of the Second Battalion Tenth Infantry arrived on the far side of the river, the attack of the Third Battalion Tenth Infantry was well under way and the Second Battalion took up positions preparatory to jumping off through the Third Battalion as soon as it reported that its mission was accomplished.

In the meantime, at about 1650 hours, the Third Battalion was attacking the objective with I on the left and K on the right, while the smoking guns of the Forty-Sixth Field pounded the Kraut machine-gunners, and mortar fire fell with increasing intensity on the enemy lines.

The terrain through which Company I was advancing was virtually devoid of cover and the enemy seemed to have every advantage, cover, fields of fire, and observation. The objective was a huge Chateau surrounded by an eight-foot stone wall, thick enough to turn most of the marching fire employed at that time to keep the Boche in their holes, but it also prevented them from putting up a large amount of defensive fire. The terrain through which K Company advanced had only slightly more cover, and both companies suffered several casualties.

As the companies reached the stone wall surrounding the large Chateau, they stormed the gates, throwing hand grenades, blasting at doorways with automatic rifles, and cutting the barbed wire surrounding the main entrance. By 1715 hours, both companies were in possession of the high ground forming the key terrain feature in the enemy's Southern defenses of ANGERS. A hurried reorganization ensued which resulted in the assault companies of the Third Battalion facing Northeast with Company L preparing to attack the wooded area to the Southeast at 1830 hours following a 15-minute artillery preparation.

The 9th of July was extremely hot and the wounded suffered considerably. It became almost impossible to evac-

uate casualties owing to the heavy sniper fire and continual shelling of the bridge. The personnel of the Third Battalion Aid Station were pinned down by sniper and machine gun fire as they moved up towards the Chateau. As the day wore on a trickle of casualties came back across the bridge although there were a great number on the far shore needing immediate attention. Several German wounded lay in the area with German aid men tending them. The German dead from the suicidal attacks of the night before lay all about the bridgehead and shattered equipment and guns covered the ground in the fields and woods.

Despite rigorous local security measures, German snipers and small units continued to penetrate the American lines causing numerous casualties and attempting to disrupt supply and evacuation efforts. Continual shelling by 88 millimeter guns, supplemented by 20 and 40 millimeter anti-aircraft guns, used by the Boche as ground weapons because of their high rate of fire, made any vehicular movement dangerous and often pinned down advancing platoons before they could get to their lines of departure in the attacks.

At 1700 hours on the 9th, the Third Battalion Second Infantry was ordered to move to the support of the Second Battalion Eleventh Infantry in the ANGERS area. The Third Battalion Second Infantry and the Fiftieth Field Artillery assumed position of support at 2030 hours on the 9th of August.

Some indication of the volume of fire being continuously directed at the bridge can be gained by the fact that although transportation elements of more than three battalions and at least two complete aid stations moved across the railroad bridge in the course of the day, and a bulldozer from the Seventh Engineers was engaged in gouging a road out of the embankment, the enemy was still firing at vehicles at dusk on the 9th. Two battalion platoons and two regimental platoons of the Tenth Infantry anti-tank guns moved slowly in column across the bridge, without sustaining any losses, but as the third regimental anti-tank platoon crossed, the enemy opened fire on the third gun just as it reached the far end of the bridge, seriously wounding the driver and assistant driver, and setting both gun and truck afire.

The bright light from the flaming vehicle provided an excellent target for the Boche gunners, and the exploding ammunition made it virtually impossible to bypass the vehicle. The truck and gun effectively blocked the bridge

Gate is widened by 735th tank in frontal assault on Angers, France.



Capt. Philip Staples of 2nd Infantry eating egg omelette presented by grateful French Civilian who had just been liberated from Germans.



to further transportation and the bursts of enemy fire made passage by foot troops extremely hazardous. The bridge remained blocked for several hours until the fire died down and it became possible to haul the vehicle over the embankment, once more allowing the uninterrupted flow of supplies and personnel.

During the day, the gun crews of the Forty-Sixth Field Artillery served their guns under enemy fire from a German 150 millimeter gun firing 149 millimeter Italian shells. Approximately 15 rounds landed during one period of the shelling, 12 of which were duds.

Also during the day, many of the casualties resulting from the attacks of the Eleventh Infantry's Third Battalion were evacuated through the Tenth Infantry aid stations, owing to the rapid advance of the Eleventh Infantry in the direction of ANGERS.

The night of August 9th was spent in consolidating the bridgehead, evacuating the wounded, and resupplying the companies with food, water and ammunition. Several small-scale counterattacks were beaten off, although none were as determined and fanatical as the ones on the preceding night.

During the night the Second Battalion, Tenth Infantry sent F Company forward to cut the ANGERS-CHEMILLE highway Southeast of ANGERS and the company reported "Mission completed" at 0300 hours on August 10th. This blocked another escape route for the doomed German garrison.

There was a large number of civilians in the area and they were forced to shift for themselves for food and cover owing to the inability of the Americans to cope with both the Boche and the civilians. Several FFI members joined the various companies and fought with them, using the M-1 rifle to good advantage. German planes were over the bridgehead but there was no damage done to the bridge.

At 0900 hours on August 10th the Third Battalion Eleventh Infantry was ordered to jump off to the Northeast, attack ANGERS itself and seize the bridge over the MAINE river. The line of departure was a road leading East from the river, and the battalion moved across this with Company I on the left, Company E in the center, and Company K on the right with a 500-yard frontage each. Two light tanks were with Company I and one with Company E. It was impossible at this time to get tank destroyers or medium tanks across the railroad bridge although the Seventh Engineers were attempting to devise some means of getting them across.

From the moment the line of departure was crossed the battalion encountered stiff enemy fire which grew in intensity as the companies pushed forward. The enemy was supplementing its small arms fire with 20 and 40 millimeter fire, and the casualties began to mount.

Companies I and K cleaned out nine 20 millimeter gun emplacements in their stubborn advance capturing only two prisoners. It was at this time that the battalion found a map on the body of a German Officer with overlays showing that each of the first German counterattacks had been made in company strength, and that a German infantry battalion supported by anti-aircraft anti-tank guns faced Companies L and K. Other captured maps and documents proved that the Germans had organized a strong point on the East bank of the river at the very place picked by the Eleventh Infantry reconnaissance elements as a crossing point before the intact bridge was discovered. Consequently in using the bridge to cross, the Americans outflanked the German strongpoint and attacked it from the South.

After seizing the first objective, Company L passed through Company E and Companies I, L, and K resumed the attack towards ANGERS. As the town was approached, the fighting took on the nature of street fighting as the enemy fought back from every house and rock wall. Light tanks from D Company of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth



Private Ivan Lewis, perched on front of truck, is handed a tomato by French woman during the dash to ANGERS.

Tank Battalion were used to flush groups of German riflemen and machine-gunners from their well-dug-in positions. The anti-tank platoons were brought into action and 57 millimeter gunfire and bazookas were employed to blast holes in buildings and open passages through walls. The anti-tank guns placed direct fire on the many German pillboxes, from which the Boche gunners were pouring a stream of machine-gun fire into the attackers.

It was hot, slow, deadly work to clean out nest after nest of infantrymen and machine-gunners who fought fanatically to the last, or fled only when all their ammunition had been fired at the Americans, or when outflanked. Casualties were heavy as a result of the ground employment of anti-aircraft automatic weapons, and were mounting steadily as the thinned-out companies drove savagely into the town. Some respite was gained from the sweeping anti-aircraft fire when the battalion overran a German position and silenced four more 20 millimeter guns.

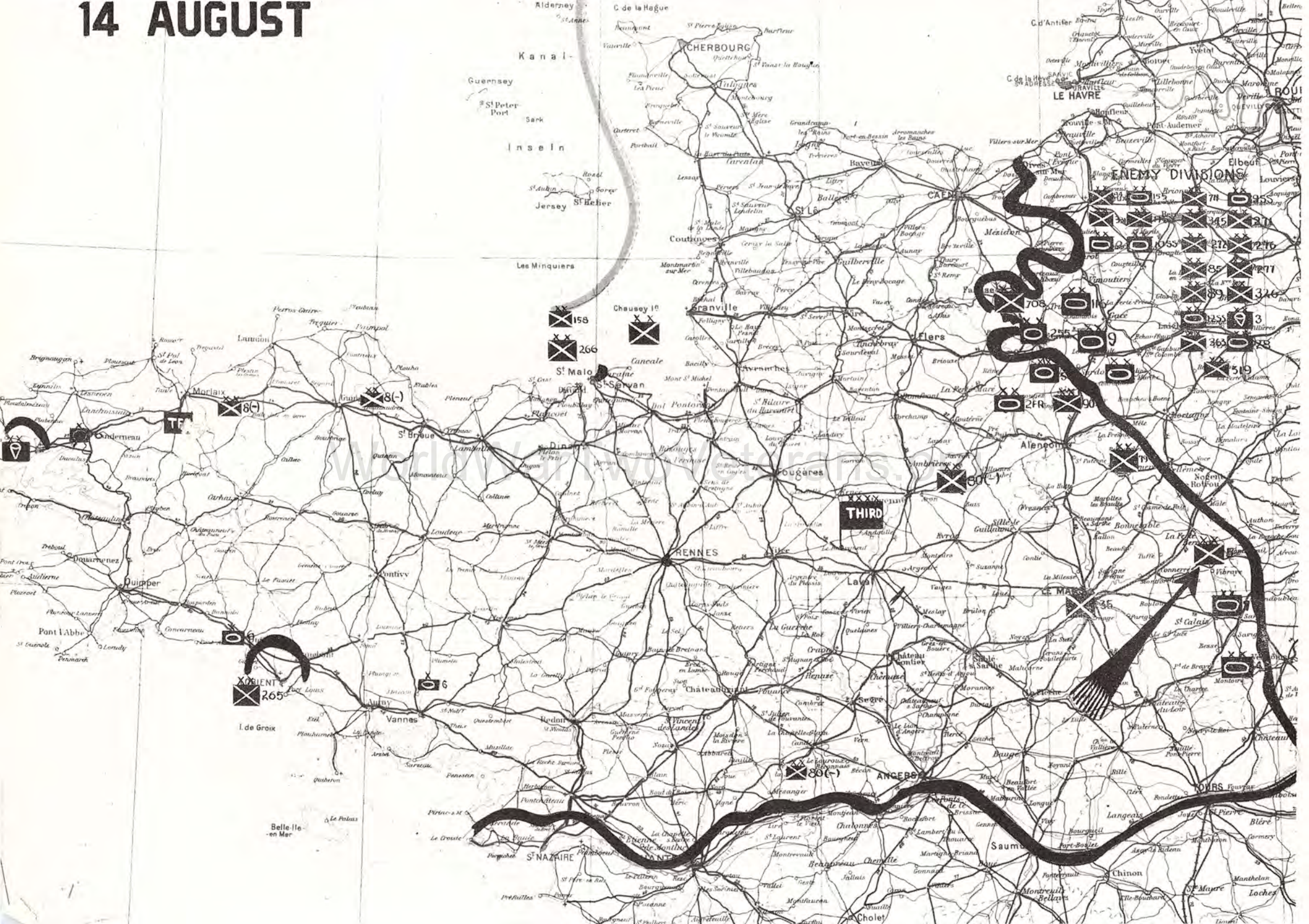
The attack which started at 1300 hours, had covered more than 2000 yards when Company I finally made contact with the Second Battalion in the city of ANGERS at 2030 hours.

Earlier in the day, the First Battalion had linked up with the Second Battalion and by the time the Third Battalion had joined with these two, the Germans were in headlong retreat along the road leading East paralleling the LOIRE river. The Twenty-First Field Artillery Battalion pursued them by fire and interdicted the road by night. Pursuit by foot was impossible for the Germans were in full rout and fleeing too fast for organized foot elements to maintain contact. The vehicle bridge across the MAINE river in ANGERS had been damaged and required at least seven hours' work by the Seventh Engineer Battalion to make it usable, hence pursuit by vehicle was also impossible.

By capturing ANGERS the major gateway of escape for the Germans from the BREST PENINSULA was closed, and a communications and supply hub was secured for the American Armies. In capturing the railroad bridge intact, the Third Battalion Eleventh Infantry insured a quick rail supply route and saved what would have been much necessary work by the railroad engineer units in the construction of a new bridge.

Meanwhile, the First Battalion of the Tenth Infantry which, up to this time had remained on the mission of guarding the bridges at LA GUERCHE DE BRITAGNE, arrived in the ANGERS area and started crossing the river at 0600 hours on the 10th of August.

14 AUGUST



Mopping up of areas already taken in the ANGERS area became necessary due to the small groups of Germans engaged in destruction and sniping.

At about 1100 hours on the 10th of August, Company L Tenth Infantry plus the First Section, First Platoon Company M was directed to advance to the Southwest in the area of EMPIRE, and ST. GEMMES SUR LOIRE, to reduce the enemy resistance in the wooded area there. Great difficulty was encountered in crossing the railroad in front of the town due to enemy small arms and machine gun fire, and at about 1320 hours the company was 200 yards North of the woods with its left platoon pinned down. Tank Destroyers of Company B Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion were called up. At the same time, an artillery "Serenade"* on EMPIRE was called for, and under cover of this shock Company L and the attached tank destroyers began to move forward. Simultaneous with this, a hurriedly-collected fire party from Headquarters Company of the Third Battalion Tenth Infantry pushed through the railroad underpass on the right flank of the enemy and gained a small ridge running parallel the railroad embankment.

With the appearance of our troops on both flanks, and tank destroyers maneuvering to the front of him, the Boche slowly withdrew in the direction of ST. GEMMES SUR LOIRE. Company L established an outpost line Northeast of ST. GEMMES and the fire party returned to battalion command post. Outpost and anti-tank roadblocks were set up in the vicinity of EMPIRE and preparations made for an attack on ST. GEMMES in the morning.

At about 2000 hours on the Tenth of August the Second Battalion of the Tenth Infantry assisted by elements of the First Battalion of the Tenth began an advance towards objectives East of ST. LEONARDS, and LA CROIX.

This attack got under way with the Second Battalion Tenth Infantry with elements of the First Battalion on the

right, and the Third Battalion Eleventh Infantry on the left.

With their left and right flanks already shattered by the attacks Southeast of ANGERS, and the penetration of two battalions of the Eleventh Infantry in the city itself, the enemy resistance melted rapidly before the advance of the assaulting battalions. By 0600 hours the following morning, August 11, the objectives of ST. LEONARD and LA CROIX had been taken and organized. During this advance, a Gestapo Headquarters was captured in a large Chateau formerly used as a Catholic Girls School. A warehouse crammed with supplies also fell into our hands at this time.

With the fall of this area, the battle for ANGERS came to a close. The Naval Command Post at ST. BARTHELEMY D' ANJOU fell into our hands along with several other important installations and much enemy equipment.

The First Battalion of the Second Infantry containing the enemy at NANTES was relieved of its assignment at 2130 on the 11th of August by elements of the Fourth Armored Division. The battalion was ordered to return to the Division by way of the North bank of the LOIRE river mopping up on its way. Mopping up in the ANGERS area continued during the 11th of August by all units, and reorganization of the units engaged in the battle was carried out.

THE HISTORIC DASH

ON THE 12th of August the Eleventh Combat Team was ordered to revert to XX Corps reserve and moved 52 miles North to CHATEAU GONTIER. On arriving there it remained in Corps reserve just four hours when it received orders to report to a new concentration area near ST. CALAIS. The move of 94 miles due East was made, and the combat team closed there at 1815 on the 13th of August.

The defensive area previously occupied by the Eleventh Infantry in the Northeast sector of the ANGERS area was taken over at 1300 on the 12th of August by the One Hundred Fiftieth Engineer Combat Battalion, which was in turn relieved by the Tenth Infantry at 1800. The Second Combat Team was relieved of the Eastern defense of the city of ANGERS and organized a perimeter defense of the city. Isolated groups of the German garrison continued to be mopped up and liquidated during the 12th and 13th of August.

On the 13th of August the following units were relieved from attachment to the Fifth Division: One Hundred Fiftieth Engineer Combat Battalion; Five Hundred Thirty-Seventh Engineer Light Ponton Company; Battery B Seventh Field Artillery Observation Battalion; Nine Hundred Ninety-Fourth Engineer Treadway Bridge Company; Two Hundred Fourth Field Artillery Battalion. The Second Combat Team remained in position in defense of ANGERS, and the remainder of the Division joined the Eleventh Combat Team in the concentration area in the vicinity of ST. CALAIS, 92 miles Northeast.

On the 14th of August, information was received of about 80 tanks and 200 other vehicles moving North through CHARTRES, 50 miles Northeast on the evening of the 12th. Twelve hundred German Air Force personnel were also reported in the town at that time. All roads in the vicinity of CHARTRES were reported to be defended by anti-tank guns, dug in, or hidden in haystacks. Ten tanks and approximately 1000 Germans were known to be in the vicinity of CHATEAUDUN 27 miles South of CHARTRES, at 1400 hours on the 14th of August.

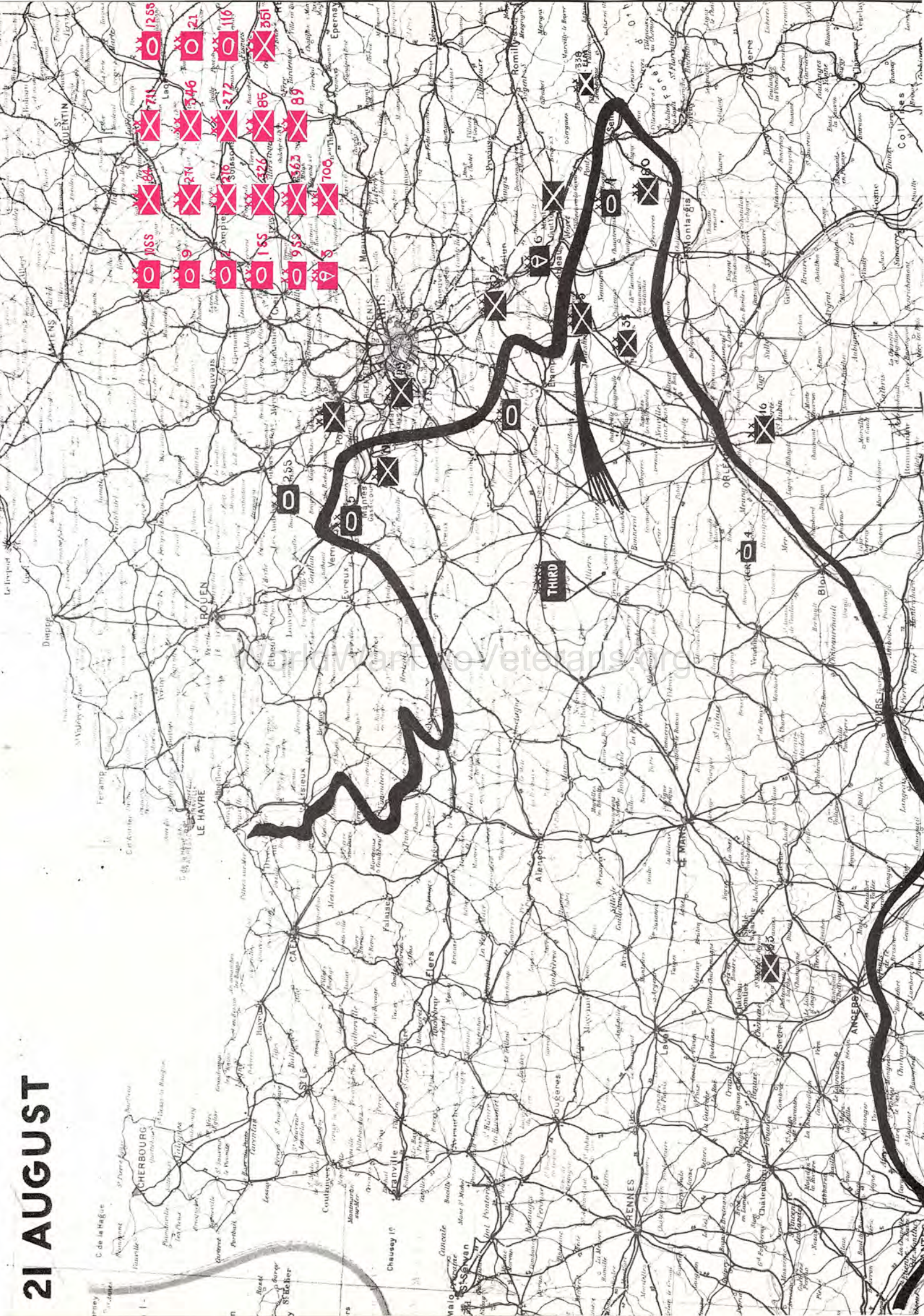
At 2400 all units of the Fifth Division, less the Second

*All artillery pieces within range fire one round timed so that all strike the target simultaneously.

Infantrymen close in on Germans at Chartres.



21 AUGUST



Combat Team (then occupying positions in the defense of ANGERS), had moved into the new Division concentration area in the vicinity of AUTHON DU PERCHE, 25 miles North of ST. CALAIS.

It was during the hurried moves from ANGERS, MAINTENON, ST. CALAIS, and AUTHON, that the Fifth Infantry Division perfected the "Hit the Road" system. Owing to the constant practice given all units by the swift advance from CAUMONT and the NORMANDY beachhead, the Red Diamond units became adept at packing up command posts and messes and hitting the road almost at an hour's notice.

Since many of the routes taken by the Fifth Division ran through "Indian Country" or country not officially cleared of the enemy, no one knew exactly where the Boche might strike suddenly, and without warning. To prevent surprise and ambush, and at the same time to allow the swift and uninterrupted movement of the columns, a detailed plan was worked out, whereby the infantry and tanks were given a place in the column that would insure a maximum of speed in getting into action.

Radio contact was carried out by means of the SCR 300 thus allowing the Battalion Commander to contact any portion of his column quickly. Drivers were instructed to pull as far to the right of the road as possible in order to leave the left of the road for the tanks, tank destroyers, anti-tank guns, and riflemen, should the point of the column meet with unexpected resistance.

The practice of carrying riflemen on any vehicle that would roll became necessary as the supply lines stretched out across NORMANDY and BRITTANY. Infantry rode on tanks, tank-destroyers, captured vehicles, artillery trucks, and supply vehicles. As the dusty columns rolled through town after town, the streets were lined with shouting people, flags of both FRANCE and the UNITED STATES waved from buildings. The blitzkrieg had boomeranged on the Boche, and become an avalanche.

Although all available transportation was being used to its maximum capacity, it still became necessary to shuttle some loads of both food and ammunition, and this lot fell to the already overworked truck-driver. A Divisional move of from 40 to 50 miles in one day became a weary trip of from 120 to 150 miles to the shuttling truck-driver who often had to wheel his vehicle back along a none-too-secure supply route.

In as much as the forward movement of the troops usually took most of the day, the return trips had to be undertaken at night without the benefit of lights, over roads that ran from hard-topped highways to little more than wagon trails. The troops ate while on the move, slept while clinging to the side of a tank-destroyer or tank, arriving at the destination only in time to snatch an hour's rest, pack up and hit the road once more.

It was at this time that the cry of "Rally Up" or "Rally Down" came into use by several of the Battalion Commanders to denote the location of resistance on either flank to the riflemen dismounting from the trucks. At the cry of "Rally Up" over the radio, the rifle Company Commander would prepare to meet resistance from the left flank, and at the command "Rally Down" he would prepare to contact the enemy on the right flank. At either call, the riflemen would dismount and move towards the head of the column until they were in position to meet the threat, attack the resistance, and either contain it, or destroy it. As soon as the way was clear again, the trucks would roll up, the infantry remount, and the column would be off.

The days were usually warm and sunny, with little or no rainfall. As a result the roads turned into billowing clouds of dust, and those unlucky enough to be forced to ride or drive without goggles suffered considerably.

First echelon maintenance became of prime importance due to the difficulty in obtaining spare parts and in sending



F Company, 11th Infantry advances on Chartres.

vehicles back to heavy maintenance shops. In short, during this period, the Division fed, supplied, protected and transported itself almost entirely by means of organic and attached units—and all this of course, while driving deeper and deeper into a country where there were no front lines, and ambush at one time or another almost a mathematical certainty.

Naturally, in such circumstances, it became necessary to take precautions to insure the protection of the Division during the halts and during the hours of darkness. To accomplish this, the Division staff took a page from the American history, and borrowed the old pioneers policy of a nightly corral. On arrival in a suitable bivouac area, the billeting details would so dispose the several commands in such a manner as to place the Division in the form of a large circle, not unlike a huge wheel, several miles in diameter.

Around the outside of the circle, corresponding to the rim of the wheel, would be deployed the infantry regiments, plus their supporting tank, anti-tank, and tank destroyer units. These regiments would occupy positions and maintain contact with flank units in such a way as to draw a ring of protective infantry around the entire Division. Within this ring would be dispersed the Division transportation, the supply and medical elements, the regimental and Divisional command posts, and the air strip for the observation planes of the Division Artillery. Almost at the center of the circle, or the hub of the wheel would be placed the artillery batteries sited in such a manner as to be able to fire in a 360-degree circle. At appropriate places within the circle would be placed the Division anti-aircraft batteries thus insuring protection against attack from the sky. Thus, the entire Division was able to swing into a corral formation at night for protection, and in a very short time, swing back on the road in column the following morning, and at the same time drive deeper and deeper into "Indian Country," that might or might not be infested with the enemy.

As our columns rolled Northeast toward CHARTRES, small groups of the enemy were encountered. These were usually left behind by the German commanders to fight delaying actions or to cover anti-tank guns sited in such a manner as to catch our tanks by direct fire at road junctions and bridges. As a rule, the country was flat, open terrain, devoid of hedgerows, but dotted here and there with small wooded patches and gentle slopes. Here the Division expected to make the acquaintance of the vaunted Panzer Divisions reported to be led by Field Marshal Irwin Rommel, known to the world as the "Desert Fox," but the only tanks encountered were in groups of from three to five.



French civilians volunteer to guard cross roads while 5th Division passes through town.

usually putting in an appearance in small scale counter-attacks with supporting infantry and machine-gun teams.

Advance elements of the Tenth Combat Team encountered resistance from a Chateau in the vicinity of SPOIR, just Southwest of CHARTRES. After a sharp engagement the place was captured and found to be a German Quartermaster Warehouse containing stores of food. At 1600 hours the combat team assembled in the vicinity of NICORBIN with the mission of outposting a line to the South and Southeast of CHARTRES to prevent reinforcements coming to the aid of the German garrison defending the city. The U. S. Seventh Armored Division was given the mission of clearing the city of the enemy.

At the same time the Eleventh Combat Team moved towards CHARTRES and took up positions at BAILLEAU-LE-PIN, four miles Southwest of CHARTRES, remaining there until the 16th of August.

At 0430B on the 15th of August the Second Combat Team moved out of ANGERS headed toward AUTHON. The movement was delayed by troops of XII Corps on the road and elements of the Second Combat Team were still arriving in AUTHON at 2400 hours.

Also on the 16th of August the Fifth Reconnaissance Troop was screening the movements of the South and East columns moving to the vicinity of MIGNIERES. This column was composed of artillery and elements of the Tenth Combat Team. The Reconnaissance Company of the Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion screened the movement of the North and East columns toward the vicinity of SANDERVILLE. Light resistance was encountered in the vicinity of ILLIERES, 15 miles Southwest of CHARTRES but was quickly overcome.

Still later on the 16th of August the Second Combat Team arrived in the vicinity of BLANDAINVILLE at about 1545. During these movements several of the columns composing the Second Combat Team were strafed by ME-109s but little damage was done.

On the 17th of August, reports were received of a large German concentration in the general vicinity of CHARTRES, and several hundred troops with anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns in ETAMPES 30 miles farther East. Reports seemed to indicate that the Germans were in a state of indecision and some units seemed to be staying to fight while others gave indications of fleeing or surrendering. Also on this date the Eleventh Combat Team moved 15 miles East to PRUNAY LE GILLON.

The Division was ordered to move to advance its position to the vicinity of PEZY, 10 miles Southwest of CHARTRES. The movement was made against little or no resistance and the Division closed into the new area at 2215.

THE BATTLE OF CHARTRES

On the 18th of August, a civilian who claimed to have left PARIS at 0500 hours on the 18th, stated that there was no German defensive line between the American troops to the Southwest and the city of PARIS itself. He further stated that he had encountered no German troops until he reached RAMBOUILLET, 22 miles Northeast of CHARTRES and midway between CHARTRES and PARIS. At this point he saw some vehicles and troops. Further reports placed the Germans at ST. GERMAINE and OULERVILLE in considerable strength, and reports were received of enemy tanks in a wood two and a half miles North of ALBIS, 17 miles East of CHARTRES.

At 1200 hours the Division received orders to relieve the Seventh Armored Division in the vicinity of CHARTRES. The movement started at 1300 and by 2200 the Second and Tenth Combat Teams were occupying an outpost line East of the city of CHARTRES.

CHARTRES, known as the "Gateway to Paris," was famous chiefly for its Cathedral and schools. It had a normal population of 40,000 although the city was somewhat larger than the population would lead one to believe.

The attack on the city by the Seventh Armored was initially successful. With the tanks and self-propelled guns of the Armored Division blasting at the town, the combat commands managed to breach the German defensive lines and drive through with their tanks into the heart of the city. Here they were welcomed as liberators by the Mayor and the populace. After a brief interval of fighting, the German garrison drove the tanks back with savage counter-attacks. The Germans then proceeded to beat up the Mayor of the town, which consequently made the populace very timid in their cooperation when the Eleventh Infantry entered the town several days later.

Eleventh CT Liberates Chartres

On the 18th of August the Commanding General, XX Corps ordered the Seventh Armored to pull its tanks away from the city into an improvised tank park. He then gave the Fifth Division the mission of taking the town. This task fell to the Eleventh Combat Team. At this time, the Combat Team was composed of the following elements: Eleventh Infantry Regiment; Company C Fifth Medical Battalion; Company C of the Seventh Engineer Battalion; Company C Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion; and Company C Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion.

Aggressive probing by the Third Battalion of the Eleventh located a pocket of resistance in the woods just South of CHARTRES, in the vicinity of LUISANT and BARJOUVILLE. The enemy brought heavy fire to bear on the attacking battalion supplementing their normal automatic fire with 40, 20, and 88 millimeter gunfire from the anti-aircraft weapons protecting the city. As the limits of the pocket began to take shape, the Second Battalion moved about 2000 yards and in spite of the heavy fire coming from the enemy positions succeeded in cutting the pocket off from retreat to the North, and completely enveloping it.

Two platoons (4 howitzers) of the Regimental Cannon Company, under Capt. Harry M. Smith, were placed in support of the Second Battalion and one platoon was placed in support of the First Battalion. The guns quickly swung into position and added their fire to the 81 millimeter mortar fire of H and M Companies. After a brief barrage, the enemy fire ceased and a force of about 90 Germans surrendered.

With this pocket cleaned out, the two battalions continued to push ahead along parallel roads about 1000 yards apart. The advance continued Northward towards the city from the vicinity of LE COUDRAY. The First Battalion moved towards the heart of the city from the East as the Second

and Third Battalions, with F and K Companies leading, located a second and much larger pocket composed of about 1000 Germans. The purpose of sending the First Battalion into the city from the East was twofold, first, to enter the city itself if possible, and secondly, to block the Northward escape of any enemy who might attempt to escape. This mission was accomplished with little difficulty, and the First Battalion took up positions to prevent the escape of any of the garrison.

The Cannon Company observation post group, consisting of Capt. H. M. Smith, Sgt. Clarence White, and Radio Operator Paul Tredanari, were traveling with the forward elements of F Company, commanded by 1st Lt. Nathan F. Drake, when the second pocket of resistance was located. At this time F Company was located on the edge of a large patch of woods facing a clearing, at the opposite side of which there was another scattered woods with a few buildings, about fifty yards distance. Throughout the night the observation post group labored to convert a barn into a suitable observation post. As the morning mists cleared, the Cannon Company observation post crew peered through a large hole in the roof. They immediately located one 40 millimeter gun, one 20 millimeter gun, and one 88 millimeter gun on a 100-yard front just in front of a church with a large red cross flag draped prominently across the front of it.

At the same time (about dawn), things began to happen back at the regimental command post. A haystack and a building near it, around which the command post tents were pitched began to erupt Germans. Bullets began to zing through the command post installations, cutting short the routine command post activities. The situation began to assume the proportions of a fire fight before the regimental security platoon got the situation and about 50 Germans well in hand. Most of them had been willing to surrender in the first place, but a dozen or so had wanted to fight. One American was slightly wounded, and several Germans were wounded before they all surrendered and were rounded up.

In the meantime, the battle with the German pocket began as the Germans poured out of the church to man their guns. The squat 105 millimeter howitzers of Cannon Company blasted first the enemy observation post in the church tower, and then covered the guns and the area around them with approximately 200 rounds of high explosive quick fuze shell. The Germans, unable to man their guns, fled into the woods and took cover in foxholes, but the shells burst in the trees and had the same effect as time fire scattering shrapnel downwards into the holes. A hit on an enemy ammunition dump was also registered. When the Cannon Company fire was finally lifted the infantrymen walked into the area with only four shots being fired by German riflemen.

A German Colonel negotiated a surrender through a first sergeant captured from one of the Combat Commands of the Seventh Armored Division on the 17th of August. The entire German garrison of more than 800 men surrendered to the Americans and were taken over by E and F Companies. The Eleventh Infantry suffered four men killed and one officer and 20 enlisted men wounded in the two days' fighting. The battle for CHARTRES ended at 1100 hours. The surrender of the German force resulted in the liberation of 40 men of Company A, Fortieth Armored Infantry Battalion Seventh Armored Division.

The Cathedral of CHARTRES, one of the most famous in the world, was untouched. Much food, clothing, and materiel was captured in German warehouses and the First Battalion was sent to guard these supplies on the morning of the 19th of August.

A considerable number of German vehicles were taken in the battle and these eased the transportation problem somewhat. In addition to the various vehicles taken, the Third

Battalion of the Eleventh Infantry captured a huge German limousine which was presented to Lt. General George S. Patton, Army Commander. The Third Battalion also captured intact two 88 millimeter guns and two small tanks.

During the operations in the vicinity of CHARTRES, an airport with supply warehouses, one mobile fighter control station, three large ammunition dumps and a large bomb assembly plant were captured. Approximately 50 ME-109s were destroyed at the airport.

Reports on enemy activity on the 19th of August indicated the following: Germans in considerable force on the high ground in the vicinity of MONTREUIL, our troops receiving mortar fire from the direction of the AVRE River, and our observation posts was reported under fire; bridges South of MORTEL mined and under German control; three anti-tank guns reported South of BOISHERPIN; Germans with anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns at RIEUVILLERS, MISPUITS, and COUTUMELLE, all to the East of CHARTRES; Prisoners of war report that three SS Divisions plus personnel under 30 years of age will man a line between PARIS and the WEST WALL; no demolitions have been completed on bridges on the SEINE River North of PARIS, but plans have been made to blow them; small groups of enemy in the vicinity of RAMBOUILLET are withdrawing Northeast toward PARIS.

During the 19th of August the Tenth and Second Combat Teams consolidated their positions in their sectors of the outpost line and mopped up small pockets of resistance in their sectors. The Eleventh Combat Team continued the occupation of CHARTRES completing its movement into the city by 1200. First Battalion of Eleventh relieved by the Third Battalion moved to the vicinity of TREMBLAY in Corps reserve and closed into that area at 2020.

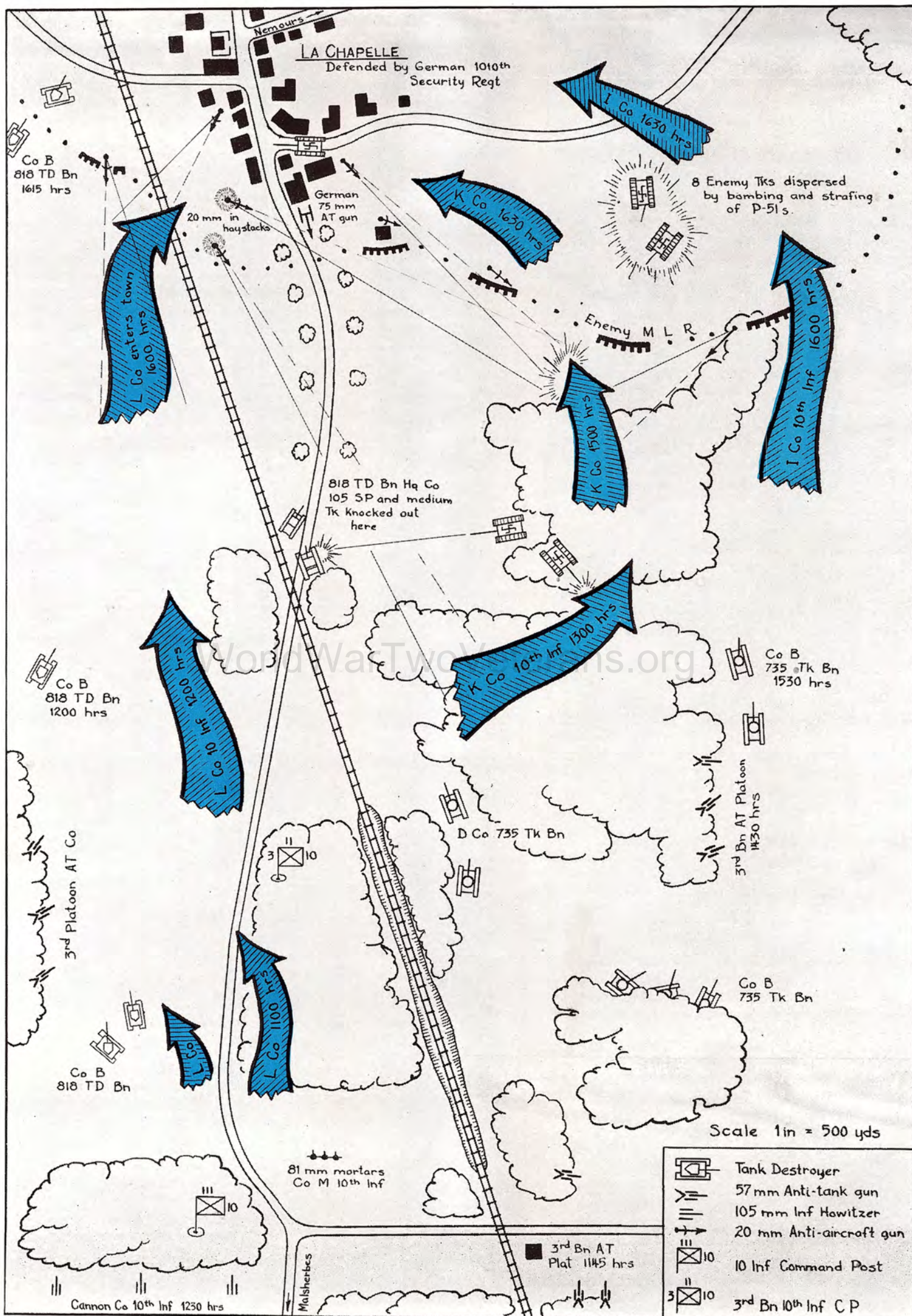
The Fifth Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop reconnoitered in the vicinity of ORLEANS, 42 miles Southeast, and RAMBOUILLET, 24 miles Northeast, and at the latter place encountered Mr. Ernest Hemmingway, Press Correspondent, who was traveling with another armored patrol. The Reconnaissance Company Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion swept Bois BAILLEAU clear of enemy resistance and reported a large enemy ammunition dump there.

Enemy was reported to be digging in in strong positions near PITHIVIERS-MALESHERBES, 42 miles East. Strong enemy forces were reported in the area around FOUNTAINEBLEAU, 60 miles East on the SEINE River. The enemy was reported to be moving elements to reinforce his troops in the vicinity of MILLY and MALESHERBES. LES GRANGES was also reported to be in the hands of the enemy.

At 1100 hours on August 20th the Division received orders

Artillery liaison plane is rolled from place of concealment. These little planes were the eyes of the artillery and the saviors of the infantry.





to prepare to attack to the East. The First Battalion of the Eleventh Infantry returned from Corps reserve and closed into the Eleventh Infantry Area at 2030. Movement orders were issued at 1700 hours and the Fifth Reconnaissance Troop reconnoitered routes of advance for the coming movement of the Division to the East.

ACROSS THE SEINE

THE FIFTH Division started moving East again with objectives at ETAMPES, 34 miles, FONTAINEBLEAU, 60 miles and MONTEREAU, 72 miles. ETAMPES was on the main railroad running to the South from PARIS. Cutting this road would assist in the cutting off of supplies and reinforcements to the German troops in Southern FRANCE, who were soon to be faced with another Allied landing near MARSEILLES. FONTAINEBLEAU and MONTEREAU were located strategically Southeast of PARIS on the SEINE River. If the Americans could effect a crossing of the SEINE River, it would be possible to outflank PARIS and surround it, or push directly on to the East, thus severing Northern and Southern FRANCE. This plan was also part of a much bigger plan to prevent the Boche from making a stand on the SEINE River.

During the 21st of August the enemy continued to withdraw to the East and Northeast. It was more in hope of delaying the American advance than in putting up any determined resistance that the German rear guards outposted the many road junctions and crossings. The forces left to guard these places ran in strength anywhere from a platoon reinforced, to an entire regiment, plus whatever fleeing elements could be halted and added to the larger centers of resistance. ETAMPES was garrisoned by German infantry units supplemented by machine guns, anti-aircraft, and anti-aircraft-anti-tank (88 millimeter) guns. The road net in and around this area was defended by road blocks and mine fields.

MALESHERBES, on one of the selected routes of advance, was garrisoned by approximately two enemy battalions of three rifle companies each (100 men per company). The entrances to the town from the West were heavily mined and covered by fire. An anti-aircraft company was attached to each battalion. At about 1700 hours tanks and 88 millimeter anti-aircraft-anti-tank guns were reported to be in the town. The entrances to MAISSE, on the road to FONTAINEBLEAU, were covered by 75 millimeter guns, and the railroad bridge leading into the town was reported to have been mined.

Reconnaissance elements encountered several enemy tanks, believed to have been Mark IVs in the vicinity of MALESHERBES, but they were not engaged.

Division moves through liberated Chartres.



Second Infantry at Etampes

On the 20th of August the Second Combat Team was ordered to move East from MAINTENON on two routes. The First and Third Battalions were to move on the North route and the Second Battalion was to move on the South route. The regiment moved out on the 21st and for the first few hours all went well and the advance was rapid. At about 1000 hours, however, the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon met strong resistance in the form of a road block defended by anti-tank guns and mortars. By 1030 hours the North column was stopped seven miles West of ETAMPES by a combination of heavy artillery, 88 millimeter, 20 millimeter and mortar fire.

At 1100 hours armor and infantry were dispatched to the flanks and to the town of BOUTERVILLIERS. Heavy artillery fire from the vicinity of VENANT was received while entering the town and the advance was slowed. The column passed through the town and reassembled on the East side, proceeding forward again at about 1310 hours.

At 1400 hours the North column was again stopped by heavy fire and artillery, about 3,000 yards short of ETAMPES. The infantry went into action supported by light tanks from Company D of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion. The enemy seemed to have a great number of automatic weapons in his defensive set-up, supplemented by anti-tank guns.

The riflemen returned the fire and drove at the enemy positions in an attempt either to break the enemy line, or brush the resistance aside and allow the column to proceed. The enemy fire, while it was not too accurate, was nevertheless plentiful and several casualties were sustained. Two of the light tanks were knocked out by anti-tank fire.

At 1500 hours the First Battalion was committed and deployed on both sides of the main routes into ETAMPES. An advance was started at 1600 hours by two companies of the First Battalion. In spite of the punishing enemy fire poured into them the companies advanced steadily, returning the enemy fire with fire from machine guns, mortars, and automatic rifles. By a combination of marching fire and support from the battalion's heavy weapons, gains were made on both flanks.

At 1200 hours the Second Battalion was halted on the outskirts of ETAMPES. During the afternoon the enemy delaying action had turned into a desperate defense of the city itself. By stubbornly smashing at the enemy positions the Second Battalion gained from three to four hundred yards. At 1900 hours the reserve company was committed but was pinned down by heavy automatic fire from the town. At 2150 one company was withdrawn and sent to maneuver to the South of ETAMPES and move into town from the West to seal off possible escape in that direction. Company E was directed to flank ETAMPES to the Southeast and secure the enemy's Eastern escape route. This company reached its prescribed positions at daylight on the 22d of August.

At 2330 hours on the 21st of August Company A was ordered to close escape routes to the North and reached positions at 0300 hours. No enemy was encountered during these movements.

During the night of the 21-22 August our patrols stole into the city and found some unoccupied enemy positions.

At 0800 hours on the morning of the 22d the regiment attacked the town with the Second Battalion, less one company, and the Third Battalion abreast. While this force attacked the town from the Southwest, the First Battalion less one company attacked the town from the South. No enemy was encountered and the town was entered without delay. By 1030 hours on the 22d of August all battalions were in the town, and mopping up assigned areas.

Tenth Infantry at Malesherbes

Meanwhile, on the 21st of August, the Tenth Combat Team advanced to the East in a sweeping move toward Montereau. The column was lead by the Regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance platoon under Lt. Douglas W. Curtis. As the first jeep neared the small village of BELLE SAUVE, a mile from MALESHERBES, they were warned by a Frenchman that the Boche were deployed in the woods on both sides of the road before the village and that the Americans were under observation from a water tower which could easily be seen in the distance. This information was relayed to the command post group and the platoon was ordered to proceed. Just before reaching the village, the enemy opened fire with rifles, machine guns, "burp" guns, 20 millimeter guns and mortars.

The men leaped out of their jeeps and flung themselves to the cover of the ditches along the road. For 45 minutes the men lay under a withering hail of enemy fire, unable to advance, withdraw, or even return enemy's fire. It became apparent that the enemy intended to capture the platoon intact for they sent troops to the right and left in an attempt to encircle the reconnaissance platoon. One of the drivers, Pvt. Joseph Gherard, crawled to his jeep and started the motor with his hands, all the while under the searching fire of the Boche. When he had the motor running, he leaped into the jeep and sped through the torrent of small arms fire to inform the main body of the situation.

Shortly thereafter an enemy command car advanced to the lead jeep and ordered the men to surrender. The men refused and the enemy fired on the group, wounding one fatally, and taking the other two prisoner. Before the command car could advance to the second jeep the relief force from the advance guard came in the form of tanks to the right and left of the road closely followed by infantrymen from Company I Tenth Infantry. The enemy fled into the town pursued by a storm of small arms and tank fire.

As the I Company platoons advanced on BELLE SAUVE, deployed on both sides of the road, they were met by a hail of mortar and 20 millimeter fire. The Germans were dug in just in front of the town on both sides of the road. They also had at least three 88 millimeter guns placed to cover the roads leading into town.

At the orders of the Battalion Commander the 81 millimeter mortars were set up to the left of the road near a small clump of woods. With the aid of excellent mortar support from M Company, and the added fire from one platoon of light tanks from D Company of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion on the left flank, and from the platoon of medium tanks from B Company of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion on the right, the riflemen drove in at the town, silenced the 20 millimeter and 88s, and either killed or captured the defenders. As soon as the town was taken, the 81 millimeter mortars displaced forward to support I Company, then crossing the left platoons over to join those on the right of the road. With this maneuver successfully completed, I Company, led by

Capt. James C. Borrer, attacked with marching fire across the low ground to the Northeast with the mission of cleaning out the woods on the far side of the valley.

At the same time K Company had been ordered up, and swung its platoons to the Southeast to attack on the left side of the main road and take the high ground to the left front of the battalion.

It was at this point that a column of vehicles was observed racing along the crest of a ridge about 3,000 yards to the right of the village of BELLE SAUVE. At first these were believed to belong to the Thirty-Fifth U. S. Division but on closer inspection it was discovered that they were camouflaged with branches. Tanks from both platoons of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth swung their guns on the convoy, and the Third Battalion Anti-Tank Platoon went into action on the right of the road and added their fire to the tankers. Hits were scored on several of the German vehicles and the water tower suspected of being an enemy observation post was hit several times by guns from the mediums.

In the meantime both I and K Companies had driven the Jerries from their emplacements on the high ground, crossed the railroad tracks, capturing two 88 millimeter guns, and entered the town of MALESHERBES. The Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon of the Third Battalion proceeded to remove tellermine from the road in the vicinity of BELLE SAUVE, and the vehicles of the Battalion raced for MALESHERBES. Shortly after this, one of the captured 88 millimeter anti-aircraft-anti-tank guns blew up, and it was determined that the other one was booby trapped also.

The bridge across the ESSONNE River in MALESHERBES had been prepared for demolition by the Germans previous to our arrival. It was discovered that the fuze had been lit once but had fizzle out. A German demolition squad returning to finish the job that morning were told by a Frenchman that it wasn't necessary to blow the bridge at that time as there were no Americans in the area. The



Sgt. William R. O'Toole asks road directions of French milk maid.



Dead Nazi soldiers lay in the gutters as 5th Division tanks and infantry pressed toward the Seine.

hesitation of the Germans was all that our troops needed and the demolition squad were shot by the advancing riflemen before they could relight the fuze. The charge was located and turned out to be a boatload of tellermines placed under the stone arch.

While the bridge was being secured from destruction by the Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon, the rifle platoons were deployed to the right and left of the road along the West bank of the river. Shortly after this L Company effected a crossing of the bridge and outposted a line astride the main road to the front.

This advance was made under cover of fire from the heavy machine guns of M Company. The gun crews climbed to the roofs and upper stories of the houses on the West bank of the river, set up their guns and poured a torrent of fire at the buildings and German positions on the far shore. This fire was very effective, and resulted in a complete collapse of the German East bank defenses.

The crossing of the Essonne was made with light casualties, while the Germans suffered a large number of killed, wounded, and captured. The remainder retreated to the Northeast in the direction of FONTAINEBLEAU.

During the crossing of L Company the streets of MALESHERBES were thronged with the liberated populace who cheered each new arrival of our troops with fervor, seemingly unaware of the fact that they were practically standing in the center of a fire fight.

Simultaneous with the attack of L Company was the crossing of the Second Battalion of the Tenth Infantry on a bridge slightly to the right of the one used by Company L. On arrival at the far side of the river they deployed and outposted a line to the Southeast. The remainder of the night was spent in consolidating the position and preparing to continue the advance on the following morning.

The Eleventh Combat Team, now complete with the re-joined Nineteenth Field Artillery Battalion moved 55 miles to the vicinity of ROINVILLIERS, six miles Southeast of ETAMPES, on 21 August. The column moved out with the First Battalion leading. The Eleventh Combat Team followed the route taken by the Second and Tenth Combat Teams and was in Division reserve. Twelve of the 17 medium tanks attached to the Eleventh were forced to fall out due to engine failures and worn out treads that could not be repaired.

The Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon of the Eleventh Infantry, plus a combat reconnaissance platoon of the First Battalion was ordered to proceed to the bridge in GIRONVILLE, and secure it until daylight if it was not held by the Germans or already blown. The platoons were forced to leave the road while they were reconnoitering towards GIRONVILLE on the EURE River. Several shots were exchanged with a force estimated to be about 30 Germans. Eighteen of the enemy were captured, and the rest fled, evidently thinking themselves greatly outnumbered. From here the platoons proceeded to the bridge and secured it, posting a heavy guard at the bridge, and sending word to the main body that their mission was accomplished.

At daylight on the 22d of August, Company B Eleventh Infantry crossed the bridge under fairly heavy enemy small arms and tank fire. As they reached the far side the enemy counterattacked with four tanks from the North. The heavy machine guns from the machine gun platoon of D Company were hurriedly put into action and began to spray the German infantry following the tanks. A 57 millimeter anti-tank gun from the anti-tank platoon of the First Battalion blasted the German tanks and the enemy attack faltered. Finally, after a sharp engagement the attackers were driven off and the bridgehead secured. This fight cost the First Battalion one officer and 10 men killed, 16 men wounded, and four captured. (These later escaped and rejoined the battalion.)



The road to Fontainebleau. A Nazi who died for Hitler lies in foreground.

With C Company furnishing flank protection from the Germans fleeing from the attacking Second Combat Team at ETAMPES, the Second Battalion passed through the First Battalion on the 22d of August and occupied the town of MILLY that night.

Also on the 22d of August the Second Combat Team cleared up ETAMPES and moved to the vicinity of MONTAGNE. Company A, Seventh Engineer Battalion proceeded to clear the roads in the ETAMPES area, removing mines and booby traps, and a detonator from a 500-pound bomb prepared for demolition purposes by the Germans.

By 2330 on the 22d of August the Second Combat Team had closed to a new area near MAISSE, 10 miles East of ETAMPES. Here the combat team was placed in Division and Corps reserve and prepared for movement at a moment's notice.

In the meantime, the Tenth Combat Team began their attack from the vicinity of MALESHERBES East towards LA CHAPELLE, eight miles East.

Early on the morning of the 22d of August the Tenth Combat Team struck out from their bridgehead on the East bank of the ESSONNE River toward LA CHAPELLE. The advance was to be in column on the road with the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon leading and the Third Battalion again as advance battalion.

As the one platoon of the Fifth Reconnaissance Troop reconnoitered the route, they were informed by a civilian of an enemy armored car concealed near the road along the route. This information was passed on to the Regimental Commander, and the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon moved out to cover the advance. As the Regimental Executive Officer, Lt. Col. W. O. Breckinridge, took a position along the route to check the convoy, the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon arrived on the scene and drove the enemy armored car off with fire from the .50 caliber machine gun mounted in one of the jeeps. After proceeding for about five miles the enemy was contacted in force.

This time they concentrated their fire from 20 millimeter anti-aircraft guns on the second jeep in which Lt. Curtis and Pvt. Lamb and Strauss were riding. As the men hit the ditch they found themselves on the receiving end of .30 caliber machine gun fire from the machine gun jeeps of M Company who were rushing to the scene of the firing. Shortly after this situation was corrected the enemy opened fire with an 88 millimeter gun. Pvt. Melvin Lamb crawled to the jeep and attempted to operate the radio. A second shot at point blank range wounded all three of the crew

including the platoon leader who was attempting to bring the platoon into position to answer the enemy's fire.

Another member of the platoon, Pvt. Edgar Stalder, in full view of the enemy and under extremely heavy fire, leaped into his jeep and swung the .50 caliber machine gun to bear on the enemy ambush. He returned the enemy fire with telling effect, destroying two enemy mortars, one machine gun and about a squad of enemy infantry. He continued to take the positions until he ran out of ammunition, whereupon he started the vehicle, turned it around and raced to the rear for more ammunition. On the way he picked up the wounded men and brought them to the main body for medical aid. His arrival at the main body gave the commanders the situation and allowed the deployment of the troops to meet the situation.

By this time the enemy fire had become extremely heavy and it was readily apparent that the town was occupied



Civilians remove road block in French town to aid progress of 5th Division troops.

in strength by the Boche. Troop commanders moved to the head of the column, a brief estimate of the situation was given by the Battalion Commander and plans made for deployment.

L Company was dismounted and deployed on both sides of the road. One platoon from Company B of the Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank Destroyer Battalion together with the Third Platoon of Regimental Anti-Tank Company swung to the left of the road to protect the left flank of the deployed company. One platoon of light tanks from Company D of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion plus the Third Battalion Anti-Tank Platoon deployed to protect the right flank. One Cannon Company Platoon occupied positions on the right rear of the left platoons of Company L behind a slight rise to the left of the road. The 81 millimeter mortars occupied positions behind the same rise to the right of the road.

Company L advanced against extremely heavy 20 millimeter fire and cleaned out the woods on both sides of the road for the space of about half a mile. At this point the main line was struck and the advance halted.

LA CHAPELLE FIGHT

Towards noon on the 22d of August K Company was committed on the right flank and the right platoons of L Company crossed the road to rejoin the left platoons. The anti-tank platoons displaced forward to cover the flanks and the attack on the town of LA CHAPELLE began.

The Germans were dug in in front of the town itself, in buildings in the town, and on a ridge to the South. The normal German infantry weapons were supplemented by many 20 and 40 millimeter anti-aircraft guns, 75 millimeter anti-tank guns, heavy mortars, and tanks emplaced in hull defilade.

One section of heavy machine guns dispatched to support L Company attempted to cross the road and open fire and were pinned down by enemy machine gun fire from the left flank. They were forced to hit the ground and crawl to the protection of ditches along the road and make a wide detour in order to bring their guns to the assistance of Company L who at that time was hotly engaged with the enemy's right flank defenses.

Early in the afternoon K Company, led by Capt. John C. Dalton, pushed ahead in an attack diagonally to the Southeast in an effort to drive the enemy from the woods on the right. The attack progressed well for the first few hundred yards, and the railroad was crossed without meeting serious resistance.

However, as they crossed a small stretch of open ground to attack the woods, they attracted the attention of the German 20 millimeter gun crews to the front and left flank. These guns were dug in behind buildings and haystacks and for a while were nearly impossible to pick up. As they concentrated their fire on K Company, the enemy in the woods either fled to the foxholes on the slight rise to the front, or remained in their holes and carried on sniper activities.

On entering the second wooded area to their front the leading platoons encountered two tanks located just inside the far edge of the woods. The company defended their gains stubbornly with rifle, machine gun and bazooka fire, but the tanks continued to maneuver across the front of K Company, firing at the platoons with 75 millimeter shell and machine guns causing a large number of casualties and a great deal of confusion.

A hurried call was sent to the anti-tank platoon then moving up on the right flank, but before the 57 millimeter guns could be brought to bear the enemy tanks withdrew. It is believed that the enemy tankers informed the 20 millimeter gunners of the exact location of the attacking company, for in the next hour the enemy fire increased in accuracy and intensity, killing one platoon leader and several men and seriously wounding the Company Commander.

In the meantime Company L supported by the tank-destroyers and anti-tank platoon on their flank began a slow, steady drive towards the city of LA CHAPELLE itself. The enemy gunners swung the 20 millimeter guns to bear on the attackers and caused several casualties in the first few minutes of the assault. At the orders of the Company Commander, Capt. Harold D. Bowers, the attacking platoons opened up with marching fire, and the infantrymen moved doggedly ahead, firing from the hip, raking the woods and haystacks with a deadly fire.

In the meantime the situation on the left flank had become worse and the riflemen of K Company found themselves suffering increasing casualties as the Boche gunners swept the woods with explosive 20 millimeter rounds.

Finally a medium tank platoon from Company B of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion was ordered to execute a wide flanking movement around the right in an attempt to turn the enemy's left flank. At the same time Company I was committed with orders to make a wide

sweep around the right flank in conjunction with the tanks and drive for the city of LA CHAPELLE itself.

During this phase of the battle, word was received at the Battalion Command Post of about eight enemy tanks estimated to be Mark IVs, Vs and the notorious "Tiger" tanks moving toward the already hard-pressed platoons of K Company. Word was passed to the supporting artillery but the enemy tanks were driving in fast. Suddenly without any warning or announcement a group of P-51 fighter-bombers dropped like a bolt from the blue and proceeded to strafe the enemy armor unmercifully. Back and forth they swept over the enemy tanks until the lumbering vehicles were forced to flee. One tank was knocked out completely and at least two damaged and left in flames before the avenging fighters swung away and disappeared back into the sky. Subsequent inquiries failed to disclose either the unit or home base of group, but a silent vote of thanks went up to them that day as they faded from sight.

With two rifle companies and a platoon of tanks attacking their left the enemy defense began to falter and fall back.

In the meantime headquarters vehicles of Company B of the Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion moved forward on the road to LA CHAPELLE, with one medium tank and an assault gun in the lead. As this force reached the junction of the railroad and the main road both lead vehicles were hit by direct, point blank fire from an enemy 75 millimeter anti-tank gun situated just to the right of the main road at the entrance to the town. The Company Commander was killed, and several men were badly wounded. The vehicles were set afire and had to be abandoned.

Meanwhile L Company had reached the first German 20 millimeter anti-aircraft gun positions and were continuing their advance to the city. Several of the enemy crews fired until the riflemen reached their positions and then attempted to surrender at the last moment. The advance continued.

Light tanks from D Company Seven Hundred Thirty-Fifth Tank Battalion were sent to assist K Company in clearing out the woods to its front, and the powerful thrust at the enemy's left resulted in the sudden collapse of the defenses in that sector. In the meantime the tank-destroyers of Company B Eight Hundred Eighteenth Tank-Destroyer Battalion reached the city and penetrated its outer defenses just prior to the arrival of L Company. At the same time Companies K and I drove into the town from the right and the enemy fled from the city in utter rout. The mopping up continued and an outpost line organized facing Northeast.

This engagement cost the Tenth Combat Team in officers: 3 killed, and 6 wounded; in Enlisted Men: 6 killed and 40 wounded.

It was learned later that the town had been defended by the German One Thousand Tenth Security Regiment. The enemy suffered at least 75 killed and 278 captured.

The populace of the town turned out to welcome the troops and an impromptu celebration was staged in the streets. The mayor of the city presented Battalion Commander, Major Alden P. Shipley, with a Croix de Guerre won by him in 1939. Some German equipment was taken including many 20 millimeter guns, a 75 millimeter anti-tank gun, and two enemy tanks. Our loss in materiel consisted of one 105 millimeter self-propelled gun and a medium tank.

Simultaneous with the attacks of the Tenth Combat Team during the period of the 23-24th August the Second Combat Team moved to a new area in the vicinity of URY. Patrols were sent to investigate areas believed to contain enemy but returned to report that there were no enemy present in the areas. At 1700 hours on the 23d August the Combat Team was again ordered to move Eastward and this move-

ment continued until the combat team closed into an area in the vicinity of MONTMACHAUX on the banks of the YONNE River.

The First and Second Battalions, Headquarters, Anti-Tank, Cannon, Medics, and Tank Companies closed into the new area at 0030 on the 24th. Local security was posted and patrols to the flanks established. The Third Battalion, Service Company, and supply elements closed into the new area at 1100 hours on 24 August. Reconnaissance was carried out during the day and a bridge over the YONNE River located for a crossing of the combat team. The bridge was partly destroyed but could be repaired in a short time by the engineer company.

CROSSING AT FONTAINEBLEAU

Also on 23d August the Eleventh Combat Team with the Fifth Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop and Regimental In-



Two German half tracks and a tank are left burning on the road to Fontainebleau.

telligence and Reconnaissance Platoon leading, moved to attack FONTAINEBLEAU. When the dense forest of FONTAINEBLEAU was reached, motor reconnaissance proved to be no faster than foot reconnaissance and the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon became absorbed by the advance guard as it moved through the forest without contacting the enemy. As the advance progressed, the point of Company G surprised a German guard at a viaduct before he could detonate two airplane bombs wired for demolition.

When the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon reached the city it was dispatched to scout out the approaches to the bridge across the SEINE River and to see if the bridge was still intact. The Germans blew the bridge just as the platoon approached. Company G arrived at the Northeast edge of FONTAINEBLEAU on the West bank of the SEINE at 1600 hours and found the enemy to be firmly entrenched on the far shore.

At that time there were no bridgeheads South of PARIS over the SEINE River and although the Seventh Armored was working on one farther North at MELUN, it fell to the Red Diamond Division to establish a crossing for the American forces sweeping across Southern FRANCE. Realizing that the longer the delay in crossing became, the higher the price that would have to be paid for the bridgehead, the Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Kelley B.

Lemon, of the Second Battalion Eleventh Infantry, personally swam the SEINE River under small arms fire to procure five small civilian boats he had spied on the far shore. He secured the boats and paddled back to the near shore still under a hail of small arms fire directed at him by the now alerted Boche. At the same time Capt. Jack S. Gerrie, Commanding Company G, and Platoon Sgt. Dupe A. Willingham obtained a ten-foot civilian canoe, and paddled across to the far shore which rose abruptly to form a bluff. Gerrie killed one German and was pinned down by answering fire. He ordered Sgt. Willingham to return to the near shore and to bring the troops across.

Sgt. Willingham returned to the near bank, gathered the troops and began the descent of the far bank to cross the river. At this point the enemy small arms fire became exceptionally heavy causing several casualties. The troops deployed and answered the enemy fire with even heavier fire. Under the cover of this fusillade Captain Gerrie managed to wriggle over the bluff and to swim back to the troops on the near bank. There he called for a medium tank, maneuvered it into position and with his knowledge of the location of the enemy 20 and 40 millimeter guns on the far shore, directed the tank fire with such accuracy that his company was able to use the canoe and civilian boats to cross the river and start fighting for the bridgehead.



Rifleman crouch behind barricade on Seine River to cover men and equipment crossing river on pontoon ferries.

As G Company reached the far shore it began firing rapidly at the enemy positions in an effort to keep the Boche in their holes and in a position to be unable to fire at the crossing troops. Not all of the enemy were contained in such a manner, however, and the fire fight became quite intense. Men of Company F swarmed down the banks, leaped into the boats and paddled across to where their comrades were blazing at the enemy with every available weapon. As they arrived at the far shore the bridgehead began to expand and take shape, and the arrival of E Company with Battalion Headquarters attachments made the establishment of a bridgehead seem certain. At this time the troops were fighting in an area 700 yards deep and about 500 yards wide. The Germans, apparently undismayed at the arrival of the Americans on the far shore, continued to fight with unabated fury.

The rifle companies coolly dug in under heavy fire and on completion of their foxholes returned the enemy's fire shot for shot. By now the area was being raked by every possible weapon that the Boche had available and the hard-

fighting troops were subjected to tank and artillery fire as well as small arms and ground employed anti-aircraft weapons. About the middle of the afternoon the enemy attacked F Company with tanks and infantry. The Company Commander, 1st Lt. Nathan F. Drake, called for artillery fire to prevent their breaking through his lines. The sweating gun crews of the Nineteenth, Fiftieth, and Two Hundred Eighty-Fourth Field Artillery Battalions poured hurricane-like time fire on the enemy formations as they drove stubbornly at the thinly manned lines.

The enemy apparently had excellent morale and good leadership for they used a good deal less fanaticism and suicide tactics than they had at ANGERS and at the same time they counterattacked desperately in an attempt to wipe out the bridgehead. Just prior to darkness the Germans counterattacked twice with tank-infantry teams, but excellent artillery support broke their assault both times. In the meantime the location of the German reserves was determined and Cannon Company went into position and broke these assemblies with accurate fires.

The weather turned against the regiment as it began to rain very heavily and the night was one of the blackest, darkest on record.

Heavy artillery fire raked the crossing site, causing many casualties and preventing engineering.

After dark the enemy used practically every trick in the book to penetrate or infiltrate our lines, but the alert, and veteran riflemen held fast. During the counterattacks at dusk bazooka teams stubbornly refused to give ground to the enemy armor and calmly waited until the enemy tanks were within range of their rockets. By their coolness under fire, Bazookamen Pfc. McDonald and Pfc. Crafts of G Company, they were able to knock out two light tanks and stall a lumbering "Tiger" tank.

Documents captured from the One Hundred Twenty-Seventh German Regiment, Forty-Eighth Division, in the vicinity of FONTAINEBLEAU proved that the enemy were desperately trying to rush reinforcements to hold or delay our crossing of the SEINE River, and that the dispersal and destruction of a large portion of their reserves by Cannon Company and artillery fire was in a large part responsible for the failure of the Boche to hold.

And fail they did, for more troops rushed across to help the hard-pressed battalion on the far shore. Company A Eleventh Infantry was caught in an intense artillery barrage during the night of August 23d as it was leaving its assembly area to go to the assistance of the Second Battalion. However, movement toward the bridgehead was not halted and by daylight Company A had crossed the river and taken up positions on the left flank. Company K crossed by boat at 0900 hours on the 24th of August and was assigned the mission of seizing the high ground on the right flank of the bridgehead.

Company C of the Seventh Engineers plus one platoon of the Five Hundred Thirty-Seventh Engineer Light Pontoon Company which was attached to the Division on the 24th of August began to construct a treadway bridge. In spite of harassing fire and periodic mortar and artillery barrages, this bridge was finished at 1630 on the 24th. No sooner had the bridge been completed than a stream of tanks, tank-destroyers, and the Cannon Company howitzers began to pour across. Following them came the remaining companies of the First and Third Battalions, Eleventh Infantry. As these elements reached the far shore they were assigned positions appropriate to their missions and a comprehensive consolidation of the bridgehead undertaken.

During the entire operation the enemy was supported by light and heavy artillery and we suffered many casualties in both forward and rear elements. Added to the danger from constant shellfire, was the steady downpour of rain that filled foxholes, drenched the men, and made