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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 3D BATTALION, 10TH IN-
FANTRY REGIMENT, (5TH INFANTRY DIVISION) IN
THE SAAR VALLEY, VICINITY OF LUDWEILER, GER-
MANY, 3 - 5 DECEMBER 1944.

(RHINELAND CAMPAIGN)

(Personal Experience of a Company Commander)

Type of operation described: INFANTRY BATTALION
ATTACKING IN WOODS.

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the long course of history, military men have been aware of the great psychological advantage and of the results that flow in sequence to the side that gains and vigorously exploits the element of surprise.

Yet throughout history, men and armies have fallen victim to this basic principle of war.

In the short history of our own Army, many examples can be cited. The surprise of the British at Trenton by the ragged Colonials, The Union Army at Shiloh, The U. S. First Army in the Ardennes.

These were Armies. The shocked amazement of large bodies of troops, suddenly finding themselves confronted by the blazing guns of a resolutely advancing enemy. However, surprise in its effect on small units is to the individuals and units concerned no less devastating. Here it is also more understandable, for men cold and fatigued with combat and exposure, during the long hours of watching in daylight and in darkness, are prone to grow less wary and become the victims of surprise.

This narrative concerns the men of small units, from platoon to battalion, both German and American, who used surprise and in their turn became the victims of it. These

small units are perhaps in themselves relatively unimportant but the cumulative results growing out of their surprise, has a far more reaching effect. For the surprise of an outpost or a sector of the front as narrow as a knife, followed by a sharp thrust vigorously exploited, can mean the unhinging of a line and become decisive.

Here battles can be won and the reasons for its inclusion among Clausewitz's nine principles of war becomes apparent.

THE GENERAL SITUATION

During the summer of 1944, the U. S. Third Army, pushing through the broken German lines in Normandy, drove five hundred miles across France to the vicinity of Metz. There late in the month of August, due to lack of supplies it was halted. (1) (Map A)

The enemy, reeling back before the slashing drive of the Third Army, seized upon this lull to regroup and occupied Metz in force, taking full advantage of this fortress city, whose natural defensive position on the Moselle and Seille Rivers, had been improved and supplemented by the military brains of both France and Germany for many centuries. (2)

The momentum of the drive that had carried the Third Army from Normandy was lost. The situation at Metz changed from the offensive to the defensive. However, this time was

(1) A-1, p. 1; (2) A-1, p. 6.

not lost. The Third Army was resupplied and on the 9th of November, the offensive was resumed. (3)

At this time the 5th Division, in conjunction with other divisions of the Third Army, had been engaged for more than two months in the battle for Metz. The division had as its mission the envelopment of the city from the south and east. The 90th Division north of Metz executed a similar maneuver and enveloped the city from the north, completing the encirclement. The 95th Division, west of Metz, was initially to contain and then attack Metz from the west. To the south of the 5th Division the 80th Division of the XII Corps was attacking simultaneously. (4) (Map B)

When Metz was finally entered on 20 November 1944, some of the formidable forts still remained defiant. Ft. Driant, Ft. Jeanne D'Arc and other great strongpoints of the fortress chain had to be reduced or contained. The 5th Division was assigned this task. (5)

With the fall of Metz the German Line collapsed. In order to exploit this situation, while the 5th Division remained in Metz, the 95th and 80th Divisions, from Metz and south of Metz, where they had been previously engaged, drove eastward across the Province of Lorraine into the Saar Valley, in the direction of the Saar River and the "Siegfried Line". (Map C)

Originally the axis of advance of these two divisions had been parallel. Running to the northeast in the direction

(3) A-1, p. 13; (4) A-1, p. 12-13; (5) A-1, p. 43.

of the Saar River, with the 95th Division attacking on the left or north side. Near the town of Hallering, the 80th Division veered due east following the Corps boundary, while the 95th Division continued northeast. Due to this change of direction the two divisions became widely separated and a gap developed in the line. (6) (Map C)

The terrain between the Moselle and Saar Rivers is rolling, dotted here and there by small well defined towns and cities, surrounded by cultivated fields. This region particularly along the Saar River is one of Europe's highly industrialized areas, second only to the Ruhr and long a bone of contention between France and Germany. The mines and power plants were of such interest to the French, who were highly desirous of capturing them without damage, that in some instances French officers arrived on the scene to inspect them shortly after they were captured. (7)

Part of the area west of the Saar River and north of the city of St. Avold, is heavily wooded. It was in this region, bypassed on the south by the 80th Division and to the north by the 95th Division, that a salient was formed in the German line on the exposed south flank of the 95th Division. Counterattacks from this salient were a thorn in the side of the 95th Division and against this salient the 10th Regiment of the 5th Division, forming the nucleus of a Task Force, known as "Task Force Bell", was committed in an effort to wipe it out. (8)

(6) A-1, p. 45; (7) A-3; (8) A-2, p. 79.

SPECIAL SITUATION

The 3d Battalion, 10th Regiment of the 5th Division, then at Metz, was ordered out to the east to the Saar Valley where it was attached to and given the mission of protecting the south flank of the 95th Division. (9)

The battalion, reinforced with Cavalry and Tanks, took up a defensive position at the town of Carling. On the 30th of November the remainder of the 10th Regiment was attached to the 95th Division and received orders to reduce the salient that existed between the 95th and 80th Divisions. (10) The 10th minus the 3d Battalion moved to assembly areas near the town of Ham. (11) (Map D)

On the first of December, the 1st and 2d Battalions started clearing the Foret de la Houve, north of Ham. These woods had been used by the Germans in their attacks on the exposed flank of the 95th Division. They were held by the enemy in a line running generally along the railroad which passed through the mining town of Creutzwald. (12) At this time the 3d Battalion of the 10th, having been relieved by the 5th Ranger Battalion at Carling, moved into regimental reserve in the town of Ham.

By 3 December the 1st and 2d Battalions had cleared the Foret de la Houve and gained a foothold in the town of Creutzwald, on a line running generally along the Bisten River and connecting with the 5th Ranger Battalion in the vicinity of Carling. (13)

(9) A-2, p. 79; (10) A-1, p. 46; (11) A-3; (12) A-2, p. 81; (13) A-2, p. 81.

At this time the 3d Battalion displaced from Ham to Creutzwald. (14) There it received orders to relieve elements of the 5th Rangers who had pushed forward from Carling into the Carlsbrunn Woods, southeast of Creutzwald.

The mission of the 3d Battalion on relieving the Rangers was to attack through the Carlsbrunn Woods in the direction of the town of Ludweiler, with the battalion's final objective the high ground, Hill 283, overlooking the town of Wehrden on the Saar River. (Map D) This was a distance of 10,000 yards from the reported Ranger position, mostly through dense woods. (15) If this mission could be accomplished, the salient would be reduced and the regiment placed in a position to threaten the Siegfried Line on the east bank of the Saar River.

NARRATIVE *

On December 3d at 1030 hours the 3d Battalion moved out of Creutzwald with I Company in the lead. Following a circuitous route that was marked by the grotesquely stiffened bodies of the enemy, that the Rangers had left in their wake, they found B Company, 5th Rangers in the woods 500 yards south of the Creutzwald-Lauterbach Road. The Ranger position was just east of the international boundary that marked the French-German Border. (Map D) The relief was affected and I Company occupied the Ranger position. A few yards to the front lay German dead, mute

(14) A-2, p. 82; (15) A-3; *Entire narrative based on personal experience of the author.

testimony to a fanatical charge that the enemy had made on the Rangers that morning. Shortly thereafter Company K moved in on the left of I Company. With the arrival of the Battalion Commander, it was decided that as it was getting late in the afternoon and with the situation in regard to the enemy obscure, the battalion would occupy its present position and attack the following morning at 0600 hours, with Companies I and K in the assault and L Company in reserve. Each assault company was to have a platoon of heavy machine guns attached as they could not be used in general support in this terrain. The tanks and tank destroyers working with the battalion would have to wait in the rear as they could not be used in this phase. They would be held in reserve until such time as the advancing infantry secured a road through the forest that they could use as an axis of advance.

The nature of the terrain made it necessary to give special consideration to the method and formation of the attack. The battalion was located in a dense second growth evergreen forest. The branches of the trees interlocked close to the ground, in spots almost impassable. Any deployment in width would result in immediate loss of control. However, in the I Company zone a trail led directly to the German lines, which were along the Greutzwald-Lauterbach Road, about 500 yards to the north. To the left of this trail and parallel to it in the K Company zone a firebreak, which also served as the international boundary, was cut

through the tangled evergreen. (Map D)

The decision to attack down the trail and firebreak was forced on the battalion by the nature of the terrain. Consideration was given to an artillery preparation on the German position but this was abandoned in favor of surprise. This decision was partly influenced by the knowledge that the Germans had used an artillery preparation the preceding morning, in their abortive attack on the Ranger position and had only succeeded in alerting the well dug in Rangers.

On December 4th at 0600 hours, following a black night mixed with intermittent cold rain, which made sleeping in the open fox holes impossible, the 3d Platoon of I Company moved quietly down the trail, surprised and killed the enemy outpost and gained a narrow foothold in the German line. Behind this the company was pushed rapidly and the penetration deepened along a road running to the north, to the rear and at right angles to the German position. (Map D) The trees along both sides of this road had been ringed with an axe about four feet from the ground and each ring contained a necklace of explosives. These were all wired together and ready to blow simultaneously in a great tangled mass, that could effectually block the road for many days. Because of the suddenness of the thrust into their lines, the enemy did not have time to put their plan into effect and the wires were cut by the advancing riflemen, rendering the explosives harmless.

Company K pushed up the firebreak to the left of I

Company and ran into difficulty. A heavy firefight was in progress in that sector. In the early morning darkness the men of K Company and the Germans mixed and in the ensuing melee both sides took casualties and prisoners. In the confusion and fog, before the astonished eyes of K Company Commander, a file of German prisoners came down the trail, arms raised, fingers locked behind their heads in customary fashion, guarded by Americans. They were immediately followed, practically in lock step by a file of American prisoners, arms raised, fingers locked behind their heads, guarded by Germans. The action that followed was short and decisive. The K Company Commander recovering his speech shouted, "Shoot the bastards", which the men around him promptly did. The American prisoners then returned to American control.

The hard crust was cracked and the progress behind the German lines was rapid. I Company pushed steadily up the road, harrassed only by sniper fire and light artillery fire. K Company channeled in behind I Company and after an advance of 2000 yards, the attack which had been generally to the north along the road, changed sharply to due east, following a road parallel to and about 2000 yards behind the German line. (Map D) At this point consideration had to be given to the flanks as they were both wide open. It was imperative that some formation be used that would provide sufficient punch up front to keep the attack rolling and yet give plenty of protection to the flanks. The punch to

the front was provided by moving the light machine guns and several automatic rifles forward with the point of the advance, so that they could mass their fires against the scattered opposition that was being received. The rifle platoons were employed one behind the other in a long irregular line, parallel to the long axis of the road and moved just off the shoulders of the road in the tree line, so that they could not be enfiladed by fire coming down the road from the front. To meet an attack from the flank it was only necessary for the men to face to the right and they would be already deployed in a skirmish line to meet it. K Company drew abreast and adopted a similar formation on the left of the road thus making it possible to face any threat while the advance was in progress. The overall formation resembled a huge goose egg split in two by the road. The advance to the east was continued in the direction of Ludweiler. (Map D) It was then that the formation just adopted began to pay dividends. The Germans who were still on the line to the south, hearing the firing behind them pulled back through the woods, so that they would not be cut off and in small groups were continuously running into the flank of Company I and being killed or captured. The progress toward Ludweiler was rapid. The Company Commanders radioed their positions back to battalion as they neared the far edge of the woods. As the companies approached the wood's edge, the trees thinned, and the men caught a glimpse of the open rolling country to the east, the fields southwest of

the town of Ludweiler. (Map D)

Here a costly mistake was made. Instead of moving cautiously up to the edge of the woods, the desire to get in a position where the fields of fire and observation were excellent, overcame good judgement. The men spurred on by the sight of a few Germans retreating across the open fields in the direction of Ludweiler, moved recklessly up to the tree line in plain view of enemy observers and the attached heavy machine guns opened fire on the retreating Germans. In this way the American position along the tree line was pinpointed for the German artillery and mortar observers and they were not long in reacting.

On orders received by radio from battalion the advance was halted for that day as the battalion had pushed out beyond the supporting units. The tanks and tank destroyers were coming up slowly to the rear having difficulty bypassing fallen trees in the road. Organization of the defensive position to hold what had been gained was started.

The men had barely begun digging in, when direct fire from a German "88" began to cut the trees into shreds around them, the report of the gun and the sound of the explosion coming so close together that it was apparent the gun position was close in. The fire of the "88" was soon supplemented by the explosions of German heavy mortar shells dropping without warning along the edge of the woods. The men lay in their shallow holes in flesh crawling expectancy while the casualties among officers and men mounted.

Suddenly the shelling ceased and a German counter-attack drove viciously and without warning into the left flank, rolling it up. The surprised, tired soldiers were pressed relentlessly back, followed by the enemy delivering heavy automatic fire as they came. The German Infantry refused to be stopped until a tank destroyer coming down the road from the rear fired high explosives into their ranks at close range. They then fell back leaving a welter of dead and wounded in their wake, mostly American.

When the counterattack ceased the reorganization of the position was started and the wounded evacuated with difficulty. The reorganization being well under way, plans for continuing the attack the next day were discussed. The Regimental Commander came forward on a short reconnaissance and suggested a plan to the Battalion Commander. On the following morning, at 0700 hours, the tanks were to burst out of the woods along the road in the direction of Ludweiler drawing the enemy fire. The infantry would then attack from the woods, across the open ground on the left of the tanks. (Map D) Both Battalion Commander and Company Commanders viewed this plan with foreboding, as the proposed plan did not properly evaluate the local situation as it then existed in front of the 3d Battalion. The terrain from the edge of the woods to the objective, Hill 283, was open and rolling for more than 3000 yards. Enemy observation over this terrain was excellent and their artillery well zeroed in, as they had proved during the previous shelling. Tank crews

generally are not enthusiastic about adopting the role of guinea pigs and displaying themselves for the purpose of drawing fire, particularly with an "88" concealed somewhere to the front and in close proximity. Also the fire that they would draw initially, could be shifted with ease to the attacking infantry by a thoroughly alerted enemy. If there had been no other alternative, an attack similar in plan might have to be attempted but there was an excellent alternative.

A natural concealed avenue of approach stretched through the woods on the left of the battalion position all the way to the objective. Using this the battalion might be able to work close to the German position.

During the night of the 4th of December, the plans were discussed with the final decision going to the frontal attack across the open ground as that was the plan suggested by the Regimental Commander.

The following morning Company A, 10th Infantry, moved up and took over the positions occupied by the 3d Battalion at the edge of the woods, freeing the 3d Battalion for the attack.

As the companies were deploying for the attack it became increasingly obvious through complete lack of enemy activity in the woods to the left, as well as a short reconnaissance, that it would be possible to move both companies much nearer the enemy position, if not entirely in on its flank, by using this route of approach. The Commanders

of I and L Companies discussed this possibility briefly and decided to make an attempt to get the Battalion Commander to approve a change in plan, even at this late hour. The attack through the woods was a maneuver that he fully sanctioned but had given up in deference to the Regimental Commander's suggestion. (16) The Battalion Commander when contacted, immediately approved the change with the words, "I have the utmost confidence in the judgement of my Company Commanders -- go ahead". In doing this he displayed great moral courage, for the responsibility rested on him if the attack failed.

Due to the change in plan a short adjustment and re-organization had to be made. The companies were composed of veteran troops and this did not take long. Shortly they were moving through the forest in single file, resembling in their camouflaged helmets, more a war party of hostile Indians than a body of modern soldiers.

The men seemed to sense the necessity for complete silence. The nature of the woods at this phase also aided the plan, the trees tall, with little underbrush, cast the surrounding floor of the forest in deep quiet shadow. The heavy carpet of pine needles absorbed the sound of footsteps, making the passage of two companies of infantry barely louder than a whisper.

Presently the head of the column was stopped at a mine field extending through the trees across the route of ad-

(16) A-6.

vance. The point in front of L Company, now leading the advance, probed this and a path was found, apparently the route used by the Germans on their way to the counterattack the previous evening. In single file, each man stepping with elaborate care in the footsteps of the man preceeding, the mine field was passed and the advance continued.

Shortly thereafter another path was discovered leading in the direction of the enemy position. It wound along the side of a hill through dense evergreens. A nearly perfect defilade approach. The progress thus far had been uninterrupted and signs of the enemy completely lacking. A study of the map disclosed that the companies had penetrated deeply enough to be well on the flank of the objective. The men were halted and a patrol was sent up the side of the hill to a point where they could observe. On their return they reported that the objective was but a short distance away.

The men were moved up the hill ^{where} and deployed in attack formation with I Company on the right and held well back from the edge of the woods in deep shadow. At this time it became evident that the Germans were completely unaware of the presence of the Americans in the woods, deep on their right flank and only 200 yards away. Also the very thorough nature of their defensive preparations became aparent. German soldiers were unconcernedly walking in the vicinity of their positions on the near edge of Hill 283. The defenses consisted of deep (World War I) style trenches, which zigzagged from the hill completely around the town. There were connecting trenches and fire positions, all cerefully planned.

It was the most elaborately dug defensive position the troops had encountered since the Metz Forts. A frontal assault on this position would have been very costly.

As the final preparations for the attack were being made, a horse drawn German supply wagon was driven down the road 50 yards to the front. The driver calmly holding the reins unaware that he was covered by scores of American rifles. As he passed between the Americans in the woods and the Germans on the hill, the slightest show of suspicion on his part would have meant his instant death.

When the supply wagon had passed, the attack signal was given and a long skirmish line stepped out of the woods. The Americans were 25 yards beyond the fringe of the trees before the startled enemy reacted. They were caught completely off guard and the fight that followed was short and futile. They opened with scattered rifle and machine gun fire, but the American infantry bore in fast using assault fire (Marching fire). Complete surprise combined with a rapid overwhelmingly violent attack carried the American infantry forward and into the trenches before some of the enemy were fully aware of what had happened. The attack rolled quickly over the trenches and up on the hill. A German officer, an artillery forward observer, captured shortly thereafter, stated that he was completely unaware of the presence of the Americans. The 1st Platoon of I Company on the extreme right of the attack formation, despite orders to stay out of the town and drive for the hill that dominated it, went attack crazy and drove toward the town, down the

long axis of the trenches, rendering them useless ditches. The aggressive forward drive of these men undoubtedly had a decisive effect on the demoralized enemy. Unfortunately the forward impetus of their drive carried them into the upper end of the town and into the barrages that were thrown into it by the American artillery to protect the reorganization on the hill. A dozen men of the 1st Platoon were wounded by this fire.

The sudden smash on the flank and rear, coupled with the fear of being cut off from their line of retreat to the Saar River, unhinged the German line. From the trenches in front of the town they rose in a cloud, fell back into the town and right through it. Company K following the attack and A Company moving on the town frontally had little difficulty. A Company running into only minor opposition in the town itself, even though it was estimated that some 300 Germans, elements of 3 companies, were defending Ludweiler.

(17)

I and L Companies pushed out to the north end of Hill 283 and looked down on Wehrden and the Saar River. The next day B Company of the 1st Battalion followed shortly thereafter by I Company, pushed into Wehrden and up to the west bank of the Saar, to a position where they could see the pill boxes of the Siegfried Line on its eastern bank.

The operation was over, but the fruits were still being harvested. Through the days and nights that followed, Ger-

(17) A-6.

man soldiers bypassed in the rapid advance, were surrendering in small groups, or during the hours of darkness seeking to infiltrate back across the Saar, were running into and being killed by American sentries.

As a result of the operation, the 10th Regiment had reduced the salient and the American line along the Saar River was straightened. The regiment was opposed by elements of the 36th and 347th German Divisions. The attack had been made with understrength battalions, on a front that was at one time more than 500 yards wider than that of the 95th Division on the north flank. (18)

The companies of the 3d Battalion were at half strength, due to trench foot and casualties sustained during the fighting at Metz, and plagued with diarrhea caused by the run down conditions of the troops. (19) With the completion of the operation these conditions were alleviated as the regiment assumed the defensive. The 3d Battalion was pulled back into Ludweiler, while the 6th Cavalry patrolled the river line. Here the battalion was built up to strength by replacements and rested. (20)

To the north the ominous rumbling of Von Runsteadt's offensive against the 1st Army in the Ardennes was making itself heard. The men of the 10th Regiment marked time, waiting to play their part in the spectacular Third Army move to the north to attack the south flank of the Bulge.

(18) A-2, p. 86; (19) A-3; (20) A-3.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

The chief factors contributing to the success of this operation ^{were} the achievement of surprise and the aggressive spirit of the troops. Initially all was dependent on the squad and platoon leader in the thrust down the trail on the first day. If they had been timid a foothold would not have been gained in the German line and the attack channeled as it was along the trail could easily have been contained. The enemy then massing his fires down the long axis of the trail could cause heavy casualties.

The aggressive drive of the 1st Platoon, as they veered to the right during the attack on Ludweiler, had a decisive effect as they rolled up the German flank. Here as in most battles, the fighting spirit of a magnificent few decides the issue and captures the objectives.

The almost unbelievable lack of security on the German flank, possibly could be explained in part by the presence of the mine field and their dependance on it, in itself, to passively defend the flank, instead of actively defending it by fire. The German knowledge gained during the counter-attack on the position at the edge of the woods, that the Americans had tanks accompanying them, probably led them to massing the bulk of their defenses in front of the open ground, realizing that it would not be possible for tanks to negotiate the thick woods on the flank.

Perhaps the chief criticism of the American operation was the part played by the Regimental Commander in telling

his Battalion Commander just how the battalion was to take the hill dominating Ludweiler, instead of simply assigning it as an objective. This led to a dangerous last minute change in plans to avoid a suicidal frontal assault, and placed on subordinate commanders the responsibility of weighing the lives of their men against the desires of a superior commander.

The lessons so bitterly learned in war are so often forgotten between wars, that perhaps it is appropriate to quote from the observations of the great German General, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, from his book, "Infantry Attacks", written about his experiences as a Lieutenant in World War I. Quote, "The heavy French artillery fire produced devastating results among the troops stationed in and on the edge of the woods. These units were not dug in properly. Many shells which on a bare ridge would have been harmless "overs" caused damage among the troops by striking and exploding among the tree tops. The forward edge of the woods was a death trap and the adjustment of fire there very easy". Unquote. (21)

The position of the German troops in the quotation above bears a remarkable similarity to that occupied by the 3d Battalion of the 10th Infantry, along the edge of the woods in front of Ludweiler, almost thirty years later. The danger to troops inadequately dug in along the forward edge of a woods, if the enemy becomes aware of their presence while they are in the process of organizing a posi-

(21) A-4, p. 34.

tion, was well known to the company commanders, but the anxiety to take advantage of excellent observation and fields of fire outweighed the danger. However, at times it is necessary to occupy and defend the forward edge of a woods as it is sometimes the best defensive position available. When this is so the utmost caution should be exercised to prevent the enemy from gaining knowledge of these intentions. Particularly during the critical period while the troops are digging in and are without depth to their fox holes, or adequate overhead cover to protect them against tree bursts. An error in judgement such as this, can as it did in this case, make an attack that up to this point was low in casualties, an expensive experience. This experience was properly applied on the following day when the commanders kept their troops well back in the shadow of the trees, while deploying for the flank assault on Ludweiler.

Once again from the observations of Field Marshal Rommel, Quote -- "In advance as well as in forest fighting, it is advisable to have a maximum number of machine guns well up forward. It will be necessary to fire the machine guns while on the move in case of chance encounters or while engaged in the assault". Unquote. (22) This principle was applied by the 3d Battalion during the push through the forests by moving the light machine guns well forward as well as automatic rifles. Thus the punch up

(22) A-4, p. 21.

front was provided and the attacking Americans, able to quickly overcome the scattered opposition encountered, allowing the attack to go forward unimpeded.

LESSONS

1. When a defensive line runs close to, and just outside of the edge of a woods, such as the German line at Ludweiler, it is subject to surprise and must be adequately outposted in the woods.

2. Mine fields not covered by fire are futile.

3. Do not do what the enemy expects. Do not attack down the axis of advance until after you have started an attack from the flank. Then hit him down the axis of advance when he reacts to the attack from the flank.

4. Allow plenty of time for your flank attack to get into position unobserved. Put most of your strength in this attack.

5. Regimental Commanders should assign a mission to a Battalion Commander, but should not plan the details of the maneuver within the battalion.

6. In an advance through woods, troops should be halted well back of the tree line as they near the far edge. If the edge is to be occupied they should be infiltrated forward in small groups.

7. In an advance down a trail or woods road, automatic weapons should be kept well forward to bring any enemy suddenly encountered under heavy fire and insure the continuance of the advance.

8. To reduce casualties advance rapidly and smother the enemy with fire.

9. Deployment in width is impossible in thick woods or heavy underbrush as it means loss of control.

10. A Unit attacking down a road or trail in woods can guard against being enfiladed from the front and at the same time protect its flanks by moving off the road in the tree line, adopting a long irregular file on both sides of the road. The troops can then be faced quickly in the direction of the attack and be in a skirmish line to meet it.

11. A quick surprise thrust to gain a foothold in an enemy line, followed by rapid exploitation, can often achieve better results than an attack preceded by a lengthy artillery preparation, which in some instances serves only to alert the enemy.