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OPERATIONS OF THE 3D BATTALION, 507TH PARACHUTE IN-
FANTRY (17TH AIRBORNE DIVISION) "THE BATTLE OF DEAD
MAN'S RIDGE" VICINITY OF LAVAL-CHISOGNE, BELGIUM,
7-8 JANUARY 1945.
(ARDENNES CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of a Battalion Liaison Officer)

Type of operation described: PARACHUTE INFANTRY
BATTALION ATTACKING AND OCCUPYING A HILL POSITION.

Major Murray L. Harvey, Infantry
ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS CLASS NO I

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OPERATIONS OF THE 3D BATTALION, 507TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY (17TH AIRBORNE DIVISION) "THE BATTLE OF DEAD MAN'S RIDGE" VICINITY OF LAVAL-CHISOGNE, BELGIUM, 7-8 JAN 45.
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INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of the 3d Battalion, 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 17th Airborne Division, in the "Battle of Dead Man's Ridge", 7-8 January 1945, during the Ardennes Campaign. It includes a brief synopsis of the regiment's history after its arrival in the ETO, the movement from England to France for this action, a study of the terrain where the action took place, and the battalion plans prior to the action itself.

The 507th Parachute Infantry arrived in the ETO on 17 December 1943, as a part of the 2d Airborne Brigade. They were stationed at Portrush, North Ireland, at this time, where their training was limited to movement along roads and beaches, as no training area had been secured in this sector of Ireland. (1)

On 27 February 1944, the 2d Airborne Brigade was broken up and the 507th Parachute Infantry moved to Nottingham, England, where it was attached to the 82d Airborne Division. At this location the 507th entered into an intensive division training program that ended when the 82d Airborne Division, with all attached units, jumped in France, 6 June 1944. (2)

(1) A-5; (2) Personal knowledge.

After returning from the Normandy Campaign, the 507th was assigned to the 17th Airborne Division, which arrived in the ETO, 28 August 1944. This division was located in the southern part of England, so the 507th was moved to Camp Barton Stacy, Wiltshire, England. (3)

At this location the regiment received enough replacements and equipment to bring it back up to its authorized strength. Once again the regiment began an intensive training period, stressing small unit actions and night operations. This training ended 19 December 1944, when the regiment was alerted for an airborne movement to the continent, where the now famous "Battle of the Bulge" was well under way. (4)

The high command had made the decision for this move in order that all their reserve elements would be immediately available if and when they were needed. (5)

Bad flying weather prevented the regiment from making this move until 25-26 December 1944. By that time the entire regiment had been air-landed in the vicinity of Reims, France, where they loaded on trucks and moved to Mourmelon, France. After remaining in this location for one night the regiment was loaded back on the trucks and moved to the Meuse River line, on the Belgium - France border where they were placed in SHEAF reserve. (6)

The mission of the regiment at this time was to guard all bridges in their sector that crossed the Meuse River,

(3) (4) Personal knowledge; (5) A-8, p. 733; (6) Personal knowledge.

prepare these bridges for demolition, and be alert for any Germans that may have penetrated our front lines, dressed as American troops. (7)

The regiment remained at this position until 1 January 1945, when the 17th Airborne Division was attached to the VIII Corps, which was part of the Third Army. (8) The VIII Corps was now composed of the 11th Armored Division, the 87th Infantry Division, the 101st Airborne Division and the 17th Airborne Division and was located in the Bastogne, Belgium area. (9)

On this same date the 17th Airborne Division was ordered to attack through the 11th Armored Division at 1200 hours, 3 January 1945, with the L'Ourthe River as their objective. (10)

This brief history of the regiment has been given so that the reader will know the background and training of the battalion, prior to this engagement.

GENERAL SITUATION

By 1 January 1945, the Germans had lost the initiative in the Ardennes, and it was evident that they feared an attack from the Third Army, as the Bastogne salient had made a penetration of eight miles into their southern flank. Consequently we find the enemy building up his forces to the north, east and west of Bastogne. (11)

The Allies had, by this time, regrouped their forces

(7) A-5; (8) (9) (10) A-9, p. 204; (11) A-1, p. 2.

and, with the Third Army on the south and the First Army on the north of the German penetration, were ready to launch a coordinated large scale attack to pinch off the salient and trap the enemy forces. It was planned that the Third and First Armies would meet in the vicinity of St. Vith. (12)

(Map "A")

The First Army's attack was to take place on 3 January, and it was expected that this attack would relieve the pressure on the Third Army so it could regroup for an attack by 9 January. (13)

The 17th Airborne Division was not able to complete the move to their forward assembly areas in time for their scheduled attack on 3 January due to the icy condition of the roads they had to move over by truck. The attack was then postponed until 4 January 1945. (14)

At this time the 17th Airborne Division was composed of the 193d and 194th Glider Infantry Regiments, the 507th and 513th Parachute Infantry Regiments, with the 550th Parachute Infantry Battalion attached. (15)

For this attack the division planned to employ the 193d Glider Infantry on the left of their sector and the 513th Parachute Infantry on the right. The 194th Glider Infantry, with the 550th Parachute Infantry Battalion attached and the 507th Parachute Infantry was to be held in reserve. (16) (Map "B")

On 4 January the 507th Parachute Infantry moved into

(12) (13) A-1, p. 2; (14) A-7, p. 8; (15) (16) Personal knowledge.

their assigned sector in the vicinity of Pinsamont, Belgium.

(17)

TERRAIN STUDY

This sector of Belgium was made up of a continuous range of fairly uniform hills and scattered woods. These hills assumed particular importance to the attacker in that they afforded excellent observation in any direction during clear weather. All main roads in this area ran through the valleys, thus anyone who held the hills also held control of traffic along the roads. Due to the streams that ran through most of the valleys, the woods, and steep banked ravines, the attacker had to use roads in order to keep his troops supplied. In view of all of this any attack in this area would have to be considered an attack on a cross compartment.

(18)

THE BATTALION SITUATION

The 3d Battalion of the 507th was assigned the village of Pinsamont as their sector, when the regiment was designated as one of the reserve units of the division. They moved into this village on 4 January and prepared their positions. At this time they were tied in on the right with the 19th Glider Infantry, and were making contact on the left by patrols to the 346th Infantry, a part of the 87th Infantry Division. (19) (Map "C")

(17) (18) Personal knowledge; (19) A-5.

1938 - not clear because this unit is supposed to be attacking and the 507th is in reserve.

For the next three days the battalion remained in this village, improving their position, checking their equipment and waiting. (20)

Enemy action during this period was limited to scattered, long range, harrassing artillery fire. (21)

By this time winter had completely closed in on this section of Belgium. Snow covered the ground from 8 to 14 inches in depth, making all travel by vehicle extremely difficult. Only the main roads were open and usable, while it was impossible for any cross country movement as far as military vehicles were concerned. (22)

About 1600 hours on 7 January, the Regimental Commander of the 507th made a personal visit to the battalion command post with instructions generally as follows: The 3d Battalion would plan an attack on Hill 500 in a night action for that night. The mission was to cut the road running from Millet to Laval and take the commanding ground on Hill 500 to prevent its use by the enemy. Division Engineer troops would relieve the battalion of their present position and constitute a reserve for them if it was needed. All Division Artillery, plus two battalions of Corps Artillery, would be available to fire a preparation prior to H-hour; two battalions of Corps Artillery would then remain in direct support. One platoon of 57 mm (towed) anti-tank guns from the Division Anti-Tank Company would be attached and would meet the battalion in Acul if the attack was made. (23)

(Map "C")

(20) A-5; (21) (22) Personal knowledge; (23) A-3.

The Battalion Commander told the Regimental Commander that he was opposed to an attack at this time, as it did not give him and his Company Commanders time to make a proper reconnaissance, plan of attack and issue the attack order. The Battalion Commander also felt that due to the extreme weather conditions an attack was not advisable on a battalion level, because of the difficulty involved in maintaining adequate supplies and communications for a battalion, in as much as Hill 500 was approximately two miles to the front. (24) (Map "C")

The Regimental Commander, however, told him to make what plans he could and he would notify the battalion whether or not the attack would take place after he returned to the Regimental Command Post. (25)

Darkness had fallen by the time the Regimental Commander left the battalion area so there was no chance to make a daylight reconnaissance, however the Battalion Commander did order the S-2 out with an eight man patrol to find out all that they could about Hill 500. (26)

A warning order was sent to all companies and the Company Commanders of all battalion units plus the Company Commander of the Engineer Company reported to the Battalion Command Post. (27)

At this time the village of Acul was chosen as the I. P., and the road running north from Chisogne was designated as the L. D. It was also determined that the battalion

(24) (25) A-4; (26) A-6; (27) Personal knowledge.

could not cross the I.P. prior to 2400 hours, due to the time it would take the Engineer troops to relieve all units. (28) (Map "C")

About 2000 hours the Regimental Commander called the Battalion Commander by wire and told him to attack Hill 500 as soon as possible, and to send radio message, "Cake is cut", when the mission was completed. (29)

The relieving process by the Division Engineer troops began, and plans were made with the artillery liaison officer for all supporting artillery to fire a 15 minute preparation, beginning at H-15. (30)

H-hour was reluctantly set at 0230 hours, 8 January. It was realized that this gave very little time for consolidation ^{of the positions} and digging in prior to daylight, but the relieving process and the move to the L.D. made the late hour mandatory. (31)

At this time the S-2 returned from his reconnaissance and reported that he had contacted elements of the 346th Infantry in position northwest of Chisogne. He also stated that Hill 500 was occupied by approximately one company of enemy infantry with at least four machine guns. Tanks had been heard moving in the vicinity of Laval. The main roads running north and south from Chisogne, and west from Laval were passable to vehicles, whereas cross country mobility was impossible. (32) (Map "C")

Based on this information the decision was made to at-

(28) A-5; (29) (30) A-3; (31) A-3; (32) A-6.

tack from the southwest of Hill 500. (33)

THE BATTALION PLAN OF ATTACK

The Battalion Commander formulated his plan of action generally as follows: The battalion will move out from the I.P. in a column of companies, "H" Company leading, followed by "G" Company, the Anti-Tank Platoon from Division, Headquarters and Headquarters Company and "I" Company. "H" Company with one section of machine guns attached will secure the L.D., furnish fire support for the attack, and occupy the left flank of the battalion sector after the objective is taken. "G" Company will seize and secure the center portion of Hill 500. "I" Company with one section of machine guns attached will seize and secure the woods on the right flank of the battalion sector. 81 mm Mortar Platoon will support the attack from positions in the vicinity of Chisogne. Anti-Tank Platoon will protect the right flank of the battalion against enemy armor. Battalion Surgeon will set up a forward aid station in Chisogne, be prepared to move remaining equipment on order. Battalion supply dump will remain in Pinsamont, move sufficient equipment into Chisogne to support the attack, and be prepared to move all remaining equipment on order. Overcoats, packs, and rolls will be left at Battalion supply dump, issue extra ammunition to all men. Battalion message center and switchboard remain in Pinsamont and one wire team to⁶⁰ with each company to lay as-

(33) A-3.

sault wire. Radio silence prior to H-hour, use messengers if needed, after attack starts use radios for chief means of control. The Battalion S-3 will move with "H" Company to coordinate supporting fire. The Battalion Commander will be with "G" Company. (34) (Map "C")

THE BATTALION ATTACK

Light snow was falling when the battalion moved out from the I.P. to the L.D., and a very cutting cold wind had begun to blow, reducing visibility to about 50 feet. (35)

The movement to the L.D. went as planned, except that, ~~however~~, the Anti-Tank Platoon from Division was unable to join the battalion in Acul because of drifting snow on the roads. (36)

At H-15 the artillery preparation came down on schedule and "G" Company crossed the L.D. at 0230 hours, in column of platoons, with the 3d Platoon leading. No opposition was encountered until this platoon approached the top of Hill 500, where they were suddenly fired upon from their immediate front. It was estimated that not over four riflemen were delivering this fire so the platoon continued to advance. After moving approximately fifty yards they once more received fire from their front. This fire was supported by one machine gun, so the platoon hit the ground and immediately returned the fire. The Company Commander of "G" Company, seeing all this ordered his 1st Platoon to deploy on the

(34) A-3; (35) Personal knowledge; (36) A-5.

*Artillery Co. H
to screen L.D.
Support by
fire omitted*

right to assist the 3d Platoon. Before they could get into position all firing stopped as suddenly as it had begun. As soon as the Battalion Commander, who was with this unit, saw this type of action on the enemy's part, he assumed they had encountered and driven in an outpost, so he ordered the Company Commander of "G" Company to move his 2d Platoon on line to the left of his present position and dig in. (37) (Map "D")

The Battalion Commander then ordered "I" Company to move into and clear the woods to the right of "G" Company, then take up a position facing generally north, east and south. (38)

"I" Company moved out to the right of "G" Company and started for the woods. As the 1st Platoon approached to within approximately 75 yards of the south edge of the woods, an enemy machine gun started firing on them. This gun was located in the southwest corner of the woods. The Company Commander of "I" Company immediately placed his 60 mm mortars in battery, and they with the 1st Platoon furnished a base of fire, while the 2d and 3d Platoons moved around to the right and entered the woods from the east. After a short fight the woods were cleared and "I" Company moved into their assigned positions. (39) (Map "D")

"H" Company was then moved up from the L. D. where they went into position as outlined in the battalion plan, without any opposition. (40) (Map "D")

(37) (38) A-5; (39) A-2; (40) Personal knowledge.

6. 10 was to
bring measure the
center position of Hill
500 - this is not an
signature - m. J. D.

About 0600 hours, all units were on the objective and regiment was notified. (41)

The weather by this time was exceedingly bad, the wind had reached blizzard proportions, and snow was drifting, making it from about 14 to 36 inches deep in the open. (42)

The Battalion Command Post group, ^{led} ~~lead~~ by the Battalion Commander, moved in to the southwest corner of the woods, and began digging in and setting up their installations, where the enemy machine gun, which had fired on "I" Company, had been located. Daylight was just beginning to show, when suddenly an enemy artillery concentration, lasting approximately 15 minutes, fell on the unsuspecting CP group, before they had finished digging in. This preparation killed or wounded five officers and twenty seven enlisted men, and destroyed all communication equipment that was with them. Among those killed was the Battalion Commander, the liaison officer and the two forward observers from the supporting artillery, and all of the battalion communication personnel. (43)

The Battalion S-3, who had a SCR 300 radio with him came over from "H" Company area and immediately took command. He called the Battalion Executive officer, who was in Pinsamont at the rear CP, and told him what had happened, requesting him to get ambulances from regiment to evacuate the wounded. He then called a Lieutenant from "G" Company to assist him evacuate the wounded to Chisogne and reestablish

(41) A-3; (42) Personal knowledge; (43) A-6.

the Battalion CP southwest of the woods, in "G" Company's area. While this was being accomplished he set up an OP on the east side of the woods and directed artillery and mortar fire on the town of Laval and the woods northwest of Laval where he thought the enemy artillery might be located. These requests for artillery fire had to be relayed back from the battalion rear CP, so they were not too effective. (44) (Map "D")

By this time all companies were tied in, and an outpost line consisting of two men was in position in front of each platoon. (45)

About 0700 hours, the Anti-Tank Platoon arrived in Chisogne and was ordered into position on the right flank of the battalion, facing the town of Laval. The four guns and their prime movers, which were weapon carriers, moved up to prepare to dig in approximately 150 yards south of the woods. Just as the prime movers unhooked and the crew members dismounted, an enemy Mark IV tank moved out to the edge of Laval and fired approximately 15 rounds into this position, knocking out two guns and their prime movers. (46) (Map "D")

When this tank appeared the Battalion S-3 attempted to get artillery fire but was unable to establish radio contact with the rear Battalion CP or the supporting artillery. He did, however, bring 81 mm fire down on this tank and was successful in causing the tank to withdraw back into the town of Laval. (47)

(44) A-5; (45) Personal knowledge; (46) A-5; (47) A-5.

The Battalion Executive officer after receiving the S-3's message had notified regiment and the Regiment Communication officer reported to the rear CP where he and the Battalion Executive Officer moved out to the battalion, laying wire as they came. As soon as the Battalion Executive Officer got on position the S-3 returned to the rear CP to plan, organize and relay requests for artillery fire, for by this time the artillery was a little confused over some of the calls for fire, as all the artillery personnel on the position had been killed or wounded. (48)

The S-3 also organized a wire team consisting of the S-2 and one intelligence man, to try to keep a wire in from the battalion to the rear CP. Enemy mortar and artillery fire had continued to fall every 10 or 15 minutes on the position, and the temperature seemed to keep dropping accompanied by high winds which drifted the snow. Due to all of this it was extremely difficult to keep wire communications in working order. (49)

About 0900 hours an ambulance from the regimental aid station arrived and moved into position to load the wounded, about 200 yards in rear of the burning primemovers of the Anti-Tank Platoon. They had loaded three or four stretchers when once again enemy artillery started falling. Several rounds fell in the vicinity of the ambulance, knocking it out and killing the Regimental Chaplain, who was helping load the wounded men. (50) (Map "D")

(48) A-4; (49) A-3; (50) A-5.

Shortly after this the Division Commander called the battalion, he informed the Executive officer that for the remainder of the operation the battalion would revert to Division control, he also stated that he had a platoon of tanks at the Division CP to send up as soon as someone came back to guide them. (51)

An officer was sent to the Division CP to guide the tanks to the position, however, none of the tanks were able to negotiate the distance to the battalion due to snow drifts and ice on the roads. (52)

The men by this time were very sluggish and slow to respond to anything, due to the intense cold and the light clothing they had on for this type of weather. Squad leaders were told to go from foxhole to foxhole and make their men stand up, swing their arms and stamp their feet to keep them from freezing. (53)

Enemy artillery and mortar fire continued to fall throughout the area, and with radio communication so sporadic, the only counterfire that could be brought to bear on suspected enemy locations most of the time, was that of the 81 mm Mortar Platoon. (54)

About 1400 hours a forward observer from the Division came forward, however, as he was moving up the field to the Battalion CP, he was hit by mortar fire, so once again the battalion found itself without any representative from the supporting artillery. (55)

(51) A-3; (52) (53) Personal Experience; (54) A-5;
(55) Personal knowledge.

In the meantime the Battalion S-4 had managed to get one 2½ ton truck through to Chisogne with ammunition and K rations, so carrying parties were sent down to move these supplies on position. Three more men were lost on this mission to enemy mortar and artillery fire. (56)

About 1500 hours, the first counterattack came. An enemy force estimated at one company, dressed in white camouflage suits, came out of the woods that faced "I" Company in the battalion sector. This attack was supported by three Mark IV tanks, located at the edge of Laval. Fortunately at this time the Company Commander of "I" Company was in radio contact with the S-3 in Pinsamont so the S-3 was able to bring supporting artillery fire down and break up the attack by driving the enemy back into the woods.

(57) (Map "D")

The platoon leader of the 81 mm Mortar Platoon was in the OP when this attack started, he immediately called for all his guns to bring fire on the three tanks in Laval. The tanks withdrew back into the town, however, the platoon leader continued to fire W.P. where he thought the tanks might be. After firing about 15 rounds, a large column of black smoke started to rise from Laval and exploding ammunition could be heard blowing up, so it is reasonable to assume that this platoon leader was successful in knocking out a tank with 81 mm mortar fire. (58)

Shortly after this action enemy rockets in addition to

(56) Personal knowledge; (57) A-5; (58) Personal knowledge.

mortar and artillery started falling, with most of the rockets going into the woods where Co. "I" was located. These rockets however seemed to be welcome by the men, for due to the high velocity of the wind artillery shells could not be heard coming in, needless to say this did not apply to the screaming meemies. (59)

Throughout the remainder of the afternoon the enemy continued to fire mortar, artillery and rockets. On several occasions small groups of the enemy could be seen moving between the woods they occupied and Laval. (60)

By this time the weather was so cold it was difficult for the moving parts on the weapons to operate, so squad leaders were kept busy keeping the men awake and checking all their guns. Every one felt sure that another counter-attack would soon be coming. (61)

Another forward artillery observer came up and reported to the CP. He was sent into Company "I"'s area, where he could get good observation and told to fire on Laval, the woods that the enemy had retreated into, any target of opportunity, and all suspected enemy locations. This observer stayed on the Battalion position about one hour, then he was called back by Division. However, before he was recalled he had fired on all targets that had been designated to him and when he left, the town of Laval, plus several haystacks in the area was burning brightly. (62)

The anti-tank platoon did not fire one round during

(59) Personal knowledge; (60) A-5; (61) Personal knowledge; (62) A-5.

the entire day, although they had been told several times by the Battalion Executive Officer to fire on all enemy armor and vehicles. This was the first combat this platoon had been in, and it is believed that this plus their losing 2 guns and prime movers when they moved on position, was the contributing factor for this behavior. (63)

About 2000 hours the next and last counterattack came. This attack was supported by two Mark IV tanks between the woods and Laval. It was preceded by a terrific artillery, mortar and rocket concentration lasting approximately 15 minutes. (64)

Once again the German's dressed in white camouflage suits^s, came onto the position from the woods north of Laval. Darkness had fallen by this time and the weather was still very bad. The Germans approached to within about twenty yards of Company "I"'s position before they were seen, but once they were discovered, all weapons in Company "I" seemed to open fire simultaneously, and they were successful in beating off this attack. It was estimated that 40 Germans were killed in front of this Company position. (65) (Map "D")

The entire Battalion area was once more subject to intense rocket, mortar and artillery fire, as soon as the enemy had withdrawn. (66)

About 2400 hours the Regimental Liaison Officer arrived on position with orders from the Division Commander to break

(63) A-5; (64) Personal knowledge; (65) A-2; (66) Personal knowledge.

contact and withdraw back to the woods, south of Pinsamont.
(67) (Map "C")

Orders were sent out to the Battalion units to fire most of their ammunition beginning at 0200, 9 January 48, and at 0230 fall back to Chisogne, reorganize and move back to the old Regimental area. (68)

One platoon from Company "I" and one platoon from Company "H" were left on position to cover the withdrawal. All supporting artillery was to fire a 15 minute preparation on known enemy locations beginning at 0230 when the withdrawal started. (69)

By daylight the entire Battalion had withdrawn back in the Regimental area south of Pinsamont. (70) (Map "C")

Approximately forty percent of the battalion was lost during this entire operation most of it due to enemy supporting weapons. (71)

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

It is the writers opinion, after making a study of this operation, that the following points should be criticized:

1. If this objective was worth taking, it certainly should have been worth holding, however the 3rd Battalion was ordered to withdraw, twenty four hours after H-hour, after losing forty percent of their assigned strength on what now appears to be a needless operation.

2. Parachute Infantry, during the past war, was

(67) A-4; (68) (69) Personal knowledge; (70) A-5;
(71) A-4.

noticeably weak in communication equipment, yet this Battalion was ordered out on a more or less isolated attack, approximately two miles to the front, with no additional communication equipment to insure its being able to keep in contact with its supporting artillery.

3. The Battalion Commander can be criticized for moving his CP group into an area that the enemy had occupied, as it can be assumed that the enemy had this position plotted for an artillery concentration in the event a penetration was made.

4. There was no excuse for the actions of the attached anti-tank platoon during this operation. While they lost one half of their equipment as soon as they got on position, they could have used what was left on several occasions. Troops must be trained to such a state that they will use all means at their disposal to fight with.

5. The platoon leader of the 81 mm mortar platoon, exemplified the state of training it is desirable to reach, when he employed his mortars against tanks, and succeeded in knocking one out.

6. In ordering this Battalion to make this attack, w/out overcoats, no thought was given to the comfort of the men. It is realized that war is not considered a comfortable business, still all commanders should give some thought to the weather conditions, and the effect it will have on their troops.

7. Infantry leaders down to and including the platoon should know how to adjust artillery fire, in the event the

artillery observers and liaison officers are killed or wounded.

8. Weather and road conditions should always be considered when ordering any unit to make an attack. This was well brought out when the entire Division failed to be in position for their scheduled attack on 3 January, and again when the tanks that were to support the 3rd Battalion were unable to move to the position.

9. The employment of the Battalion after it got on the position, certainly gave no depth to the defense, however, the Battalion Commander should not be criticized too severely for this, since it must be remembered he was unable to make a daylight reconnaissance and observation was very poor the night the Battalion moved up, due to the snow and wind.

10. The Battalion S-3 can be commended for his prompt action in getting the Battalion organized after the Commander had been killed, and for the way he directed artillery fire. His actions and behavior had a very steadying effect on the entire Battalion at a critical time.

11. The German's can be criticized for failing to launch their counterattack as soon as the 3rd Battalion got on their position. If they had followed up their original artillery concentration, the one that played havoc with the CP group, with a coordinated infantry attack, there is no doubt in the writers mind that they would have succeeded in driving the 3rd Battalion off of Hill 500.

12. The German's also failed to apply the principle

of mass when their tanks failed to accompany their infantry in their two unsuccessful counterattacks. Had the tanks joined in the attack with the infantry their chances of success would have been great, inasmuch as the streams between the 3rd Battalion and Laval were not a tank obstacle.

LESSONS

1. No commander should order a unit out on a mission, without carefully weighing the importance of the mission, and the effect it will have on the unit.

2. Any unit ordered on an isolated attack must be furnished adequate signal equipment to enable it to keep in contact with supporting troops under any and all conditions.

3. Never physically occupy the exact position an enemy has been driven from, if it can be avoided.

4. ^{attached} (Supporting) troops must be trained to carry out orders from the unit they are attached to.

5. Tanks can be destroyed by 81 mm mortars firing W.P. shells.

6. Every effort should be made to provide warm clothing for troops in winter warfare.

7. [^] All infantry officers should be trained to adjust artillery fire, prior to their entry into combat.

8. Weather and road conditions must always be considered

^{more specific words needed} in war.

9. Sufficient time should be given commanders to make a reconnaissance, so they will best know how to employ their troops, and occupy a position.

10. In the event a unit loses its leader, someone should immediately take over, in order to prevent disaster.

11. As soon as any penetration is stopped it should be counterattacked at once, before their position can be organized.

12. Tanks should always accompany infantry, in a situation such as this, so they can be used to their best advantage on the objective.

*more
specific
writing
needed*