

INTERVIEWEE: Lt Col <sup>Wm.</sup> ~~John~~ Boydston, CO, 2d Bn 317th Inf, at CP 2d Bn,  
HEIDERSCHIRD, LUXEMBOURG, 16 Jan 45.

INTERVIEWER: Lt S. J. Tobin

The move from SARREUNION to LUXEMBOURG was made without loss of a man or a vehicle. Night visibility was good during the march as the weather was clear. Precautions as to proper interval were taken, but the pressure of the traffic near towns forced the column together until at many places vehicles were bumper to bumper. The only strafing by enemy planes encountered was the incident of the 5 German fighters which strafed the AAA Plat attached to the 31st FA Bn. Lt Col Boydston said, "Had the Jerries hit almost any other part of the column, they would have torn it to pieces."

On the morning of the 21st Dec 44, the Bn left its position near CONDRENG (U927227) at 0415 and moved by motor and marching to STEINSEL (U830210). There they set up defensive positions and outposts remaining in the vicinity of STEINSEL until the following morning, 22 Dec, when they received orders from regiment at 1000 to move to PETTINGEN (V830310). On the morning of 23 Dec 44, they moved out 0830 to a forward assembly area north and west of BERG (U815365). From there they jumped off in attack at 1630 going north and east from BERG meeting no resistance until they reached the vicinity of NEIDERTEULEN (U785410). There, east of the town, they ran into an enemy patrol consisting of 18 to 20 men armed with automatic weapons and other small arms. They opened fire killing five and capturing 3. The others escaped into the woods north of NEIDERTEULEN. They advanced to the vicinity of WELSCHSID (U800445) where they met heavy mortar and small arms fire. There they captured one man and killed several others at about 2300. Intense artillery and nebelwerfer fire were also encountered. They received a number of concentrations of artillery of about 40 rds in a concentration. It was a bright

moonlight night and our troops were vividly silhouetted against the snow as they attacked. The terrain was very rugged with a series of valleys and ravines running generally northwest by southeast to cross. It was necessary to cross the skyline to attack and the enemy was defending each reverse slope with MG fire. At 2400, A Co 702d Tk Bn and B Co 610th TD Bn (SP) joined the 2d Bn. G Co 2d Bn supported by a platoon of tanks attacked the high ground overlooking WILLSCHIED~~X~~ engaging in a fire fight with the Jerries until 0400 on 23 Dec 44. The tanks were of no use for they couldn't get into position to fire on the enemy who were defending the reverse slopes. G Co finally pulled back at 0500. E and F Cos with a MG Plat from H had been sent out at 2300 to envelop WILLSCHIED~~X~~ from the right; however, enemy defense and terrain proved too much for them. These troops took refuge in a defiladed pocket on the lip of the ridge southwest of WILLSCHIED at (U304440) remaining there all day 24 Dec. There were an estimated 500 enemy troops on three sides of them. Heavy fighting continued all day 24 Dec in the 2d Bn sector in the area between WILLSCHIED and BURDEN (U324437). The Germans had tanks and other direct fire weapons on the high ground northeast of BURDEN<sup>U</sup> (829441) and dominated the sector with these weapons all day long -- even shelling the Bn CPs in NEIDERFUELEN.

After E and F Cos with the Plat from H returned, the 2d Bn pulled back into position around NEIDERFUELEN occupying the key terrain north and east of the town.

From 25 Dec until the night of the 27th, they held the defensive positions around NEIDERFUELEN. On the night of 27 Dec they were relieved by the 3d Bn, and they moved up to positions on the high ground west of <sup>KELMEN</sup> KEEPMEN (U780460) where they held the position for the ensuing 13 days.