

317-S3

SECRET

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HEADQUARTERS 317TH INFANTRY
APO #80, U S Army

17pp

2 February 1945

Subject: After Action Report (S-3).

To : Adjutant General, Washington D.C., through Commanding
General, 80th Infantry Division, APO #80, U S Army.

The following report (After Action) from S-3, 317th Infantry Regiment is submitted in compliance with Section III, 2a, Memo #64, Headquarters 80th Infantry Division, dated 24 August 1944.

JAN 45

1 Jan 45 - Regiment remained in defensive positions. Regtl CP located in NIEDERFEULEN. 3rd Bn in Regtl Reserve. Co K manning five road blocks on main roads coming into NIEDERFEULEN. 1st and 3rd Bn CP's located in NIEDERFEULEN. 2nd & 1st Bns en line, 2nd on left and 1st on the right. Contact made by 2nd Bn with 319th Inf, 1st Bn maintaining contact with 318th Inf. All three Bns maintained contact by foot patrols. Had communications with three Bns, higher headquarters, 318th Inf and 319th Inf.

2 Jan 45 - Regt remained in defensive positions. Orders received to push one company of 1st Bn North and outpost the WARK River in Vic WELSCHLID. This move to be coordinated with 1st Bn 318th Inf who are to move North on the right flank. Co B to make the move under cover of darkness. Received Artillery and mortar fire throughout day. Maintained contact by patrols and wire with all units including 318th Inf and 319th Inf.

3 Jan 45 - Co B completed ordered movement at 0315. 318th Inf 1st Bn was not able to take their objective, having met MG and small arms fire. B Co received artillery and mortar fire throughout day. Communications with all units. One platoon of 3rd Bn sent to reinforce right flank of 2nd Bn.

4 Jan 45 - Regtl CP located in NIEDERFEULEN. 1st & 3rd Bn CP's also located NIEDERFEULEN. Co B received a very large concentration of mortar and artillery fire at 1630; following this the enemy was observed digging in approximately 1000 yards to the front of B Co. From this location the enemy advanced starting at 1700. Because of very effective artillery fire, enemy withdrew. Active patrolling was carried on throughout the night.

5 Jan 45 - Regtl CP remained in NIEDERFEULEN. Ordered 1st Bn to relieve 3rd Bn from road blocks and move into reserve. 3rd Bn moved at 1500 to Vic NIBEL to relieve 2nd Bn 319th Inf. 3rd Bn closed in new position at 2200. 2nd Bn remained in position prepared to attack Northeast on order this headquarters. Received intermittent artillery and mortar fire throughout day.

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- 1 - NCWN by [signature] date 1-26-69

After Action Report (S-3) 317th Inf, Jan 45, cont'd.

6 Jan 45 - 80th Inf Div (Reinf) crossed SURE River Vic HEIDERSCHNEIDERGRUND 060400 seized high ground Vic NOCHER and MASSELLER. 317th Inf (less 1st Bn, Div Res) with Co A 702d Tk Bn, Co B 610th TD Bn, two platoons Co A 305th Engr (C) Bn attached advanced on order, seized high ground Northeast and S of KEHMEN. Assisted advance 318th Inf by fire on high ground Vic BOURSCHNEID. 3rd Bn (Reinf) Vic RINGEL assist by fire attack 319th Inf. Cross SURE River Vic HEIDERSCHNEIDERGRUND and continued attack North on order. 1st Bn moved on Div order from Vic NIEDERFEULEN to Vic HEIDERSCHNEID. Crossed IP NIEDERFEULEN 1015. 2nd & 3rd Bns remained in positions throughout day awaiting Div order to attack.

7 Jan 45 - Moved Reserve Platoon Co B 610th TD Bn from NIEDERFEULEN to HEIDERSCHNEID. 1st Bn remained in Div Res. 2nd Bn remained in defensive position SW of KEHMEN making plans to seize KEHMEN and high ground NE & E of town. 3rd Bn remained in defensive position, prepared to support 319th Inf by fire. Regtl CP moved from NIEDERFEULEN to HEIDERSCHNEID under cover of darkness.

8 Jan 45 - Regtl CP located HEIDERSCHNEID. 1st Bn Div Res at HEIDERSCHNEID with Co C at HEIDERSCHNEIDERGRUND with one platoon guarding bridge on SURE River. 2nd Bn in defensive position SW of KEHMEN. 3rd Bn in defensive position Vic TADLER. Bns continued to occupy and improve defensive positions. 3rd Bn supported 319th Inf with mortar fire on MASSELLER. 313th FA Bn fired forty missions in support of Regt. Co A 305th Engr (C) Bn (one platoon attached 317th Inf, remainder company in support) improved roads in Regtl sector. Combat efficiency: excellent.

9 Jan 45 - Regtl CP remained in HEIDERSCHNEID. 3rd Bn remained in Vic TADLER continued to improve and occupy defensive position. 2nd Bn relieved by 1st Bn under cover of darkness. 1st Bn moved from Div Res Vic HEIDERSCHNEID by foot and motor to defensive position occupied by 2nd Bn SW of KEHMEN. 2nd Bn moved to Vic HEIDERSCHNEID in Div Res.

10 Jan 45 - Regtl CP remained in HEIDERSCHNEID. 1st Bn made adjustments in their defensive position under cover of darkness SW of KEHMEN. 3rd Bn continued to occupy and improve their position. 313th FA Bn with Btry & 633d AAA Bn, Co A 317th Inf and 1st Platoon Co A 91st Cml Mort Bn attached fired ninety one missions in support of Regt. Radio and wire communications with all units.

11 Jan 45 - 1st Bn completed adjustments of positions under cover of darkness night 10-11 Jan. 317th Inf (Reinf) continued to occupy and improve defensive positions. Regtl CP remained in HEIDERSCHNEID.

12 Jan 45 - No changes in position. Sector quiet.

13 Jan 45 - 1st Bn sent one platoon to take high ground N. SCHNEIDEL. Met heavy resistance when they reconnoitered high ground. Platoon outposted SCHNEIDEL. 2nd & 3rd Bns remained unchanged.

After Action Report (S-3), Hq 317th Inf, Jan 45, cont'd.

14 Jan 45 - Regtl CP remained in HEIDERSCHEID. 2nd Bn remained in Div Res with Co F outposting area Vic bridge at HEIDERSCHEIDERGRUND. 1st Bn moved remaining two platoons forward to Vic SCHEIDEL where they dug in W & NW of town. 3rd Bn remained in defensive position. Wire and radio communications with all units.

15 Jan - 317th Inf continued to occupy and improve defensive position. Communications maintained with all units.

16 Jan - 2nd Bn started to relieve 3rd Bn Vic TADLER at 2400. Two companies of 2nd Bn had completed the change. 3rd Bn moved to HEIDERSCHEID in Div Res. Co K replaced Co F outposting bridge Vic HEIDERSCHEIDERGRUND. 1st Bn remained in defensive position Vic SCHEIDEL.

17 Jan - 1st Bn continued to maintain and improve defensive position. 2nd Bn continued to maintain and improve defensive position. Under cover of darkness Co G moved from Vic TADLER to HEIDERSCHEID in Div Res. 3rd Bn (less one reinf plat) moved from Vic HEIDERSCHEID N to GOESDORF relieving 2nd Bn 319th Inf. Closed in that area 2030 and outposted the town. One reinf plat Co K continued to guard and outpost the bridge Vic HEIDERSCHEIDERGRUND. Regtl CP remained in HEIDERSCHEID.

18 Jan - 1st & 2nd Bns supported attack 319th Inf by fire. 3rd Bn continued to outpost GOESDORF. Regtl CP remained Vic HEIDERSCHEID.

19 Jan - G Co relieved F Co, F Co moved back to HEIDERSCHEID. Bns continued to improve and occupy defensive positions. One reinf plat Co K continued to outpost and guard bridge Vic HEIDERSCHEIDERGRUND. Heavy snowfall caused telephone communications to be out about two hours in the morning.

20 Jan - Regt continued to occupy and improve defensive positions. Regtl CP remained in HEIDERSCHEID.

21 Jan - 1st Bn seized KEHMEN. 2nd Bn attacked at 0600, met very heavy enemy resistance and at 1800 were fighting in DIRBACH. Orders were given for 2nd Bn to withdraw under cover of darkness. 3rd Bn moved at 1800 to BUDERSCHEID.

22 Jan - 2nd Bn in defensive position (close-in) Vic TADLER. 1st Bn moved to HEIDERSCHEID, 3rd Bn moved to BUDERSCHEID. Received order to move Regt (Reinf) to assembly area at WILTZ. Move completed prior to 2400. Forward Regtl CP established in WILTZ.

23 Jan - 3rd Bn attacked 0730, followed by 1st & 2nd Bns. 3rd Bn seized ground E of ESCHWEILER, occupied defensive position on high ground. 1st Bn moved to left flank 3rd Bn, set up defensive position. 2nd Bn Regtl Res moved from WILTZ to ERPELDANGE. Regtl CP moved from WILTZ to ERPELDANGE. 3rd Bn attacked N from WILTZ 0730, seized ground E of ESCHWEILER. Co B 610th TD (SP) bn claimed one Tiger royal tank probably destroyed.

After Action Report (S-3), Hq 317th Inf, Jan 45, Cont'd.

24 Jan - 317th Inf prepared to continue attack to NE to seize HOSINGEN. 1st Bn moved to ENSCHERANGE, patrolled river for crossing. 2nd Bn assembled at PELDANGE reserve. 3rd Bn maintained positions, patrolled river for crossings and patrolled right flank of regt. Regt CP remained at PELDANGE. Wire communications with all units. Requested air mission against PINTSCHA.

25 Jan - 317th Inf (reinf) attacked 0400 to the NE, crossed the CLERT River, seized and occupied WILERWILTZ and PINTSCHA. One 75mm AT gun capture, one US Tank retriever recaptured. Approximately one-hundred forty Pw taken. 1st Bn 318th Inf Afdhd regt in regt res.

26 Jan - 317th Inf (reinf) continued Atk 0500, seized high ground Vic HOSINGEN. 1st Bn attacked 0500 to NE, seized high ground Vic WEIDRAUSEN against heavy resistance and at 0800 was preparing to attack N to take DONSCHMID. 2nd Bn attacked E against heavy artillery and mortar fire, order received to hold attack. 3rd Bn attacked NE with objective of BOCKHOLZ; when order was received to hold Bn had taken high ground SE BOCKHOLZ. Radio communications throughout the day. Approximately one-hundred thirty five Pw taken. 317th Inf (reinf) attached to TF SUMMERS. Regt CP moved to WILERWILTZ from PELDANGE.

27 Jan - 317th Inf (reinf) attached to TF Summers. 1st Bn continued Atk to E, seized DONSCHMID and high ground to the E. 2nd Bn sent G Co to seize HON SCHMITZ, remainder Bn supported the attack from high ground. G Co met heavy MG fire at the edge of town, took up positions on high ground overlooking town. 3rd Bn seized BOCKHOLZ. 1st & 3rd Bns relieved by 193rd Inf of the 17th AB Div. Regt prepared to move to new Div Sector.

28 Jan - Regt moved to new Div zone. Regt CP at MEDERNACH. Troops billeted in houses. 1st Bn MEDERNACH, 2nd Bn GRUCHTEN, 3rd Bn HEFFENACH.

29 Jan - Regt remained Div res. Training Schedule planned. Troops spent day cleaning and caring for personnel, equipment and weapons.

30 Jan - Regt conducted training consisting of care and cleaning of equipment, squad training, intelligence and communications training. Plans made for Div Res defensive line.

31 Jan - Regt CP and all troops remained in positions. Training conducted throughout the regt.

ADDENDUM

1. It was found feasible to use the artillery observation plans to supplement ground reconnaissance. Ground reconnaissance gave a picture of the terrain to the immediate front and the terrain along the route of advance could be seen from the plans. This facilitated future planning, especially in the Ardennes Region because the maps of the area gave a completely erroneous idea of the terrain.

2. In the Ardennes Region the lack of roads made medical evacuation exceedingly difficult. It was found expeditious to use sleds for evacuation to ambulance collecting posts because litter carry was almost out of the question due to the rugged terrain. In one instance, troops from Service Company were used to assist in the evacuation by setting up a litter evacuation system akin to the water bucket chain system.

3. In this operation several attacks were made without a preceding artillery preparation. This aided surprise materially. In one instance, a German Company was captured intact without a single American casualty.

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S-3