

MOSELLE CROSSING Div Artillery, 80th Div.

Interview with Lt Col J.E. Shaw, Exec Officer:

On the 5th of Sept the infantry attempted a crossing. No artillery was requested. However smoke was placed on two hills, (80-38) and (82-31). The first hill was to the N of MOUSSON HILL, the second to the S. The attack was a failure. It had been an attempt to gain surprise. The artillery did fire missions of direct support along the canal and river on the East bank.

On the 6th a second attempt was made, this time preceded by fire on MOUSSON HILL, and area along East bank of river near town of PONT A MOUSSON. The attempt was partially successful. Some troops made the crossing. That night other crossings were made at various points. The engineers ferried I and L Cos across. However all were captured. These attempts also ended in failure.

On the 12th at 0430 there was a 15 minute preparation by the artillery. Eight battalions fired.

Organic Div Artillery: 313th Bn (105 How)  
314th Bn (105 How)  
905th Bn (105 How)  
315th Bn (155 How)  
Reinforced by: 512th Bn (105 How)  
974th Bn (155 How)  
775th Bn (4.5")  
176th Bn (4.5")

The battalions fired 2 rounds per gun per minute on line. These did not fire time fire as originally planned. It was found to be impracticable. The range was beyond the 25 second fuse range. The target was the NS road S of LOISY, opposite DIEULOUARD, where the road parallels the river. Line extended from (7962-3123) to (7950-2772). Fuse delay ammunition was fired. Type of fire was impact.

At the same time 30 rounds of white phosphorous were placed on the town of BEZAUMONT to guide and orient the infantry by setting fire to the town. As the infantry advanced to the road the barrage was raised.

When the fifteen minute barrage was lifted 19 concentrations were fired at various points in advance of the line. Each battalion for each concentration fired three volleys. These concentrations were fired by 314th, 315th, 775th, 176th Bns. The 313th and 512th fired close-in support fires called from the infantry.

On crossing the river the infantrymen met little opposition. The artillery had pushed them out of the path of the advancing infantry.

Regarding observation, on the day before the crossing (11th) the artillery had adjusted. Each bn had adjusted on the spot where would shoot, and from then on kept the weather corrections. During the attack fired delay fuse, from then on quick fuse.

On the afternoon of the 12th at 1500 the 313th Bn crossed. The other battalions did not cross until after the 15th.

The 313th Bn got three tanks near its position on the S slope of Hill 380. (815-299). En penetrated through part of its position, but were forced back. The 314th and 315th Bns shot direct support missions from the West side of the river.

On the 14th Gen Searby was killed on MOUSSON HILL. Lt Col Shaw took over until the 21st.

On the 15th when the infantry with one platoon of tanks were cut off on MOUSSON HILL two artillery cub planes delivered food and medical supplies by parachute to men on hill.

During night used forward observers, during day cub planes, for observation.

Revised (3)

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cont.

Ammunition expended 050600-060600

313th 963 rounds ✓ *12/24/44*  
314th 273 rounds  
905th 422 rounds  
315th 2048 rounds

120600-130600

313th 777 rounds  
314th 1317 rounds  
905th 433 rounds  
315th 3282 rounds