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SECTION I

CONSOLIDATION OF POSITIONS WEST
OF THE SEILLE RIVER

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Date Initials

The front line of the 80th Division on 1 November 1944 extended along the SEILLE RIVER, from LESMENILS to AJONCOURT. The enemy held a small portion of ground on the western side of the SEILLE RIVER in the vicinity of ABAUCOURT and LETRICOURT. The SEILLE RIVER was the next natural barrier for the Division to overcome.

The 317th Infantry occupied the northern sector of the Division Zone. The 3d Bn was on the line along the SEILLE RIVER from the vicinity of LESMENILS to MORVILLE-SUR-SEILLE. The 1st Bn occupied the right sector of the Regimental Zone along the SEILLE RIVER from MORVILLE-SUR-SEILLE to CLEMERY. The 2d Bn was in Regimental Reserve.

The 318th Infantry occupied the center sector of the Division Zone. The 2d Bn, on the line between Clemery and the railroad east of MANONCOURT, occupied the left sector of the Regimental Zone. The 3d Bn was on the line in the vicinity of FME DE LA BORDE, south of NOMENY, occupying the right sector. The 1st Bn constituted the Regimental Reserve in the vicinity of LIXIERES.

The 319th Infantry held the southern sector of the Division Zone. It was in this sector that the enemy still occupied some ground west of the SEILLE RIVER. The 2d Bn occupied defensive positions in the vicinity of BOIS D'AULNOIS, southwest of LETRICOURT. This area was the right flank of the Regiment as well as the Division. The 3d Bn occupied the left sector, holding the high ground north of BOIS DU HTE DES TRAPPES. The 1st Bn was in Regimental Reserve.

In compliance with Field Message Number 1, issued 30 October 1944, the 319th Infantry, with "C" and "D" Companies 702d Tank Bn and "A" Company 808th Tank Destroyer Bn in direct support, launched a coordinated attack to clear the area ABAUCOURT-LETRICOURT.

Jumping off at 1300, 1 November 1944, the 319th Infantry achieved tactical surprise and all hostile forces within the area were killed or captured. The 2d and 3d Bns were employed in this attack. The 2d Bn, in position southwest of LETRICOURT, attacked towards the town and the high ground

north and east. By 1408 two platoons of "F" Company and one platoon of tanks were fighting in LETRICOUR. The two platoons of "F" Company then occupied the high ground east of the town. "G" Company moved at 1422 to occupy the high ground northwest of the town. One platoon of "G" Company and one platoon of light tanks then attacked the town from the north. By 1445, all enemy opposition in this area was cleared and the position was consolidated. By 1445, both Battalions had organized the ground gained. "G" Company dug in on the high ground north of LETRICOURT and elements of "F" Company occupied LETRICOURT and the high ground southeast of the town (HILL 216). "E" Company was in Battalion Reserve.

Meanwhile, the 3d Bn, attacking northwards from the vicinity of BOIS DU HTE DES TRAPPES, was engaged in a fire fight on the southern edge of ABAUCOURT at 1408. Enemy resistance was quickly overcome. One platoon of light tanks and two platoons of "L" Company were fighting in the town at 1414, mopping-up enemy resistance.

Eight engineer reconnaissance parties reconnoitered the south bank of the SEILLE RIVER for possible crossing sites.

"L" Company occupied ABAUCOURT, together with one platoon of light tanks, "I" Company dug in on the high ground southeast of the town (HILL 211) and "K" Company remained in Battalion Reserve. At 1730 the 3d Bn began to withdraw from the vicinity of ABAUCOURT to its former positions occupied before the attack. By 1945 the Battalion had closed into its former positions in the vicinity of BOIS DU HTE DES TRAPPES. The 2d Bn began to withdraw from the vicinity of LETRICOURT at 1800. It closed into its former positions in the vicinity of BOIS D'AULNOIS at 2015. Observation Posts were established on the ground gained by the attack, one southwest of ABAUCOURT and one north of LETRICOURT.

Tanks of the 702d Tank Battalion were released from Battalion control at 1730 and reassembled in LOIS DE BRASQUIN. The 2d Bn had been reinforced with one platoon of medium tanks and two platoons of light tanks. The 3d Bn had been reinforced with one platoon of light tanks and two platoons of medium tanks.

The 2d Bn 317th Infantry relieved the 1st Bn 317th from its position along the SEILLE RIVER between MORVILLE-SUR-SEILLE and CLEMERY. Relief was completed at 2000, 1 November 1944 and the 1st Bn closed into the vicinity of PONT-A-MOUSSON at 2230 as Regimental Reserve.

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The 318th Infantry made no change in its troop dispositions on 1 November 1944.

Infantry Regiments of the Division continued to occupy defensive positions west of the SEILLE RIVER on the 2d and 3d of November. Active patrolling was conducted to develop hostile positions.

Field Order Number 14, issued 0900, 4 November 1944, revealed the plans for the Division's role as a part of the Third Army's attack to envelop the METZ area from the north and south and carry the attack to the northeast towards the MAINZ-FRANKFURT-DARMSTADT area.

XII Corps was to attack, on Third Army's order, with the 35th, 26th, and the 80th Infantry Divisions abreast.

The 6th Armored Division was to attack through the 80th Division bridgehead across the SEILLE RIVER on Corps order and advance northeast to seize the FAULQUEMONT area.

The 4th Armored Division was to attack northward through the 35th Infantry Division bridgehead and advance into the 80th Division Zone to assist in seizing DELME RIDGE.

The XX Corps, on the XII Corps left flank, was to contain METZ from the west, cross the MOSELLE RIVER in the vicinity of THIONVILLE, seize BOULAY and then advance northeast. The 5th Infantry Division was to attack to the east on the left (north) flank of the XII Corps (80th Division).

The 80th Infantry Division (reinforced) was to attack D-Day, H-Hour, to force a crossing of the SEILLE RIVER in the Division Zone with three regiments abreast initially and advance to the northeast towards FAULQUEMONT, where relief of the 6th Armored Division was to be accomplished.

The 317th Infantry, with one company of the 702d Tank Battalion and one company of the 808th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached, was to force a crossing over the SEILLE RIVER in the vicinity of MORVILLE-SUR-SEILLE and PORT-SUR-SEILLE to seize EPLY, RAUCOURT and ST JURE, then advance eastward on Division order.

The 318th Infantry, with one medium company of the 702d Tank Bn and one company of the 808th Tank Destroyer Bn attached, was to force a crossing over the SEILLE RIVER in the vicinity of CLEMERY and NOMENY, seize the towns of

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ROUVES, NOMENY, MAILLY-SUR-SEILLE and PHLIN, then carry the attack to the northeast on Division order.

The 319th Infantry, which was to constitute Division Reserve, was to seize the bridges over the SEILLE RIVER in the vicinity of ABAUCOURT, THEZEY-ST MARTIN, and AULNOIS-SUR-SEILLE. One Battalion was to occupy the high ground between ABAUCOURT and LETRICOURT and cover by fire the area east of the SEILLE RIVER to prevent hostile troop movement to the north from the vicinity of AULNOIS-SUR-SEILLE. Assistance to the 318th Infantry by fire on MAILLY-SUR-SEILLE was also to be rendered.

The 319th Infantry was to be prepared to comply with one of the following on Division order:

1. Cross the SEILLE RIVER to position in Division Reserve northwest of MAILLY-SUR-SEILLE.
2. Cross the SEILLE RIVER vicinity AJONCOURT, seize the high ground northeast of CRAINCOURT and push strong combat patrols to THEZEY-ST MARTIN and the southern part of COTE DE DELME.
3. Be prepared to attack and seize COTE DE DELME (DELME RIDGE) on order of the Commanding General.
4. Move by motor, following the 6th Armored Division.

Units attached to the Division were: 702d Tank Bn, 808th Tank Destroyer Bn and the 633d AAA AW Bn.

Twelve field artillery battalions were to initially support the Division attack.

The 1117th Engineer Group was to render general support to the 80th Division and the 6th Armored Division.

Anti-aircraft protection for construction of bridges across the SEILLE RIVER and crossing of the 6th Armored Division, was to be furnished by the 27th AAA Group, consisting of the 452d AAA AW Bn and the 457th AAA AW Bn.

The 610th Tank Destroyer Bn (SP) was to move in the zones of the 80th and 35th Divisions and be prepared to repel enemy tank attacks.

At 2340, 4 November 1944, the 1st Bn 318th Infantry, in Regimental Reserve vicinity of LIXIERES, relieved the 3d Bn from its position in the line vicinity FME DE LA BORDE, south of NOMENY. The 3d Bn closed into Regimental Reserve, vicinity LIXIERES, at 2358.

On 5 November 1944, the 3d Bn 319th Infantry, holding defensive positions on the high ground north of BOIS DU HTE DES TRAPPES, was relieved by the 1st Bn (Regimental Reserve) at 1540. The 3d Bn reverted to Regimental Reserve and closed into the vicinity of JEANDELINCOURT at 1705.

The situation remained static on 6 November 1944. All Regiments continued to occupy and improve defensive positions and patrol actively to the front and flanks.

The 702d Tank Bn and the 808th Tank Destroyer Bn continued to supplement Division Artillery by firing harassing and interdiction missions.

During the day 7 November 1944, preparations were being completed for the attack on the following day. There were no troop movements during the daylight hours, but during the hours of darkness 7-8 November, the 319th made some adjustments.

The 1st Bn, in position vicinity BOIS DU HTE DES TRAPPES, moved under cover of darkness to the vicinity of ARRAYE-ET-HAN.

The 2d Bn, in position vicinity BOIS D'AULNOIS, occupied LETRICOURT with "E" Company (reinforced) and ABAUCOURT with "G" Company (reinforced). "F" Company, the Battalion Reserve, established strong points on the high ground between LETRICOURT and ABAUCOURT. All troops were in position by 0530, 8 November 1944.

The Division was ready to push off on "D-Day", 8 November 1944. "H-Hour" was set for 0600.

The 317th Infantry was in position on the Division left (northern) flank, with the 3d Bn along the SEILLE RIVER from the LESMENIERS-CHEMINOT highway to MORVILLE-SUR-SEILLE; the 2d Bn along the river from MORVILLE-SUR-SEILLE to CLEMERY; and the 1st Bn in Reserve.

The 318th Infantry occupied the center sector of the Division Zone. The 2d Bn held the ground from CLEMERY to the railroad east of MANONCOURT; the 1st Bn occupied the vicinity of FME DE LA BORDE, south of NOMENY; while the 3d Bn was in reserve vicinity of LIXIERES.

The 319th Infantry was in position on the Division right (southern) flank, with the 2d Bn occupying ABAUCOURT and

LETRICOURT, including the high ground in between; the 1st Bn in the vicinity of ARRAYE-ET-HAN; and the 3d Bn in Reserve, vicinity of JEANDLINCOURT.

The Division Artillery preceded the Division attack with a 45-minute preparation. Twelve other Field Artillery Battalions also participated in fire missions on 8 November 1944. They were:

- 404th Field Artillery Group
 - 512th Field Artillery Battalion
 - 974th Field Artillery Battalion
 - 775th Field Artillery Battalion
 - 731st Field Artillery Battalion
- 183d Field Artillery Group
 - 276th Field Artillery Battalion (SP)
 - 696th Field Artillery Battalion (SP)
 - 752d Field Artillery Battalion (SP)
- 6th Armored Division Artillery
 - 128th Field Artillery Battalion
 - 212th Field Artillery Battalion
 - 231st Field Artillery Battalion
- XII Corps Artillery
 - 741st Field Artillery Battalion
 - 267th Field Artillery Battalion

Other units furnishing fire support were, the 808th Tank Destroyer Bn and the Cannon Companies of the 317th, 318th, and 319th Infantry Regiments.