

SECTION V

BRIDGEHEAD ON THE NIED
ALLEMANDE RIVER

During the night 19-20 November 1944 all three Regiments of the Division were ordered to send patrols out to determine enemy dispositions and if no enemy were found, they, on the following day, 20 November 1944, were to occupy the high ground to their respective fronts, independently of each other.

"G" Company relieved "E" Company 317th Infantry from its position on the road block in the vicinity of ADAINCOURT at 0730, 20 November 1944.

The 1st Bn 317th Infantry, in position on the high ground in the vicinity of MANY, employed "B" Company to precede its advance towards the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER. Moving out at 1010 towards MAINVILLERS, "B" Company, meeting no opposition, reached the town at 1100. At 1125, "B" Company, still not meeting any opposition, entered LE JEUNE BOIS and then swung north towards CREHANGE. This town was entered at 2025 and patrols were sent across the river to establish contact with the enemy.

The 3d Bn 317th Infantry, in position southwest of ARRIANCE, moved northeast on the morning 20 November 1944, reaching the railroad tracks (106473) east of ARRIANCE at 1140. Advancing northeast through BOIS D'ARRIANCE, BOIS DE MAINVILLERS, and BOIS D'ELVANGE (comprising the southeast part of FORET DE REMILLY), the Battalion, with "L" Company leading, reached the northwest tip of the latter woods at 1520. By 1715, the 3d Bn entered ELVANGE on the south side of the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER. The enemy, having withdrawn north of the river on the previous night, offered no resistance. Reinforced platoons were sent across the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER to outpost the high ground and secure a bridgehead. "I" Company occupied the high ground across the river north of ELVANGE. No enemy opposition was met. All bridges across the river were found destroyed.

The 2d Bn (minus "G" Company in ADAINCOURT), in Regimental Reserve, moved from HERNY eastward to MANY, closing in at 1545.

On 20 November 1944, the 318th Infantry moved north to the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER, occupying PAULQUEMONT.

The 3d Bn, in position vicinity CHEMERY and BOIS DE THONVILLE, moved north at 1200. At 1236, "I" Company, leading the advance, entered the woods NEULAENDER. No resistance was encountered. The advance was continued and the first patrol entering FAULQUEMONT encountered but one machinegun and a sniper. By 1647, the 3d Bn was in FAULQUEMONT. "K" Company took up positions on the left, "L" Company on the right and "I" Company reverted to Battalion Reserve. In moving into FAULQUEMONT, crossings over the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER were made at the railroad bridge west of the town and at a low point in the river east of the town (172498). The high ground north of the town was outposted and patrols made their way as far north as TRITTELING, which was reported clear of the enemy.

The 1st Bn, holding the high ground northwest of BOIS DES TAILLES, followed the 3d Bn in its advance on 20 November 1944. The Battalion halted for the remainder of the day in the woods LE KRITZBESCHE, south of FAULQUEMONT. The 2d Bn remained in Division Reserve in the vicinity of HOLACOURT.

The 319th Infantry, with the 1st Bn on the left and the 3d Bn on the right, advanced on 20 November 1944. The mission was to extend the Main Line Of Resistance to the high ground south of VAHL-LES-FAULQUEMONT, GUESSLING-HEMERING and REMERING and to gain contact with the enemy.

At 1200, "L" Company jumped off from the woods LE GR BISCHWALD and moved north in BOIS DE GUESSLING. "I" Company moved out of VILBER on the right of "L" Company. At 1320, "L" Company reached its objective, the high ground in the northwest sector of BOIS DE GUESSLING. "I" Company, meeting no enemy resistance, was approaching its objective (north-east sector BOIS DE GUESSLING) at this time.

The 1st Bn jumped off at 1230 from the vicinity of CHEMERY and ADENANGES, with "B" Company on the left and "A" Company on the right. At 1350, "B" Company reached its objective (HILL 296) and "A" Company moved to the high ground southwest of GUESSLING-HEMERING (201469).

By 1410, both the 1st and 3d Bns held their objectives and reorganized. Preparations were made to continue the advance and seize the towns of VAHL-LES-FAULQUEMONT, GUESSLING-HEMERING, and PONTPIERRE.

At 1455 "B" Company reached the south edge of VAHL-LES-FAULQUEMONT and "A" Company swung right of the town to seize

the high ground to the east (HILL 270). By 1550, "B" Company had taken the town and "A" Company occupied HILL 270 (200485). "A" Company sent a strong combat patrol to investigate possible river crossing sites over the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER and to enter the town of PONT-PIERRE to determine enemy troop dispositions. Finding the town clear of the enemy at 1650, the remainder of the 1st Bn began to move in. The main bridge crossing the river was found blown up from the south side.

The 3d Bn continued its advance on GUESSLING-HEMERING at 1530 with "E" Company on the left and "I" Company on the right. At 1610, the Battalion occupied GUESSLING-HEMERING and pushed on to the high ground to the north and northeast.

Both battalions consolidated positions, with the 1st Bn in PONT-PIERRE and the 3d Bn north of GUESSLING-HEMERING. The 2d Bn remained in Regimental Reserve in the vicinity of VILDER.

On 21 November 1944, the Division continued to enlarge its bridgehead across the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER and to protect the north (left) flank of XII Corps. Strong patrols sent to the front and flanks established the enemy's Main Line Of Resistance as HAUTE-VICNEULLE - BAMBIDERSTROFF - TRITTELLING - TETING.

Having lost the line of the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER, the enemy determined to make an attempt to utilize the high ground on which the MAGNOT LINE had been constructed. The old fortifications were being used as command posts and shelters for troops. Field fortifications were prepared around these strong points. An anti-tank ditch, dug by impressed civilian labor from nearby towns, ran the length of the western slope.

"G" Company 317th Infantry contacted elements of the 6th Armored Division in CHANVILLE (west of FORET DE BEMILLY), at 1300.

The 1st Bn 317th Infantry continued to occupy CREHANGE and vicinity; the 3d Bn continued to occupy ELVANGE and the high ground to the north; the 2d Bn remained in Regimental Reserve vicinity MANY on 21 November 1944.

At noon 21 November 1944, the 1st Bn 318th Infantry moved from the woods LE KRITZBESCH (south of FAULQUEMONT) into the town itself. "A" Company set up an outpost for the town on the road to TRITTELLING, while "B" Company moved

out to TRITTELING to outpost to the northeast. "1" Company 3d Bn outposted REDIACH to the northwest. "B" Company moved from TRITTELING to LAUDREFFANG, reaching the latter town at 1945. The enemy launched a counterattack from the east that cut off "B" Company from the remainder of the Battalion. A patrol left PAULQUEMONT to establish contact with the company, but due to heavy enemy automatic weapons fire, was not able to reach LAUDREFFANG. Plans were drawn up to employ the remainder of the 1st Bn, plus one company of tanks, for the relief of "B" Company.

The 319th Infantry enlarged its bridgehead across the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER on 21 November 1944. At 1640, the Regiment was ordered to occupy and organize for defense, the Main Line Of Resistance from TRITTELING, south to the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER, west of PONT-PIERRE, thence southeast to the high ground northwest of HEMERING (183534-191498-217485).

At 1650, the 1st Bn was ordered to move immediately from PONT-PIERRE and outpost the Main Line Of Resistance from TRITTELING to the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER, west of PONT-PIERRE (183534-191498). The remainder of the Battalion, to be held in PAULQUEMONT, closed in at 2300, 21 November 1944.

Arrangements made with the 318th Infantry provided for the 1st Bn 319th Infantry to relieve elements of the 318th Infantry in the vicinity of TRITTELING at daylight 22 November 1944.

At 1705, 21 November 1944 the 3d Bn in position north of GUESSLING-HEMERING, was ordered to extend its line to the west and tie in with the 1st Bn west of PONT-PIERRE (191498). This was completed by darkness.

The 2d Bn 319th Infantry remained in Regimental Reserve vicinity VILLER.

Field Order Number 17, issued 1800, 21 November 1944, provided for the 80th Division (reinforced) to continue to protect the left (north) flank and rear of XII Corps by occupying a defensive position from GUINGLANGE eastward to HILL 333 (northwest edge of BOIS DU STEINBESCH), thence along the high ground on the eastern side of BOIS DU STEINBESCH south to PONT-PIERRE and southeast to the high ground north and northeast of GUESSLING-HEMERING.

The 317th Infantry was to revert to Division Reserve

and establish road blocks in the vicinity of HEMILLY and GUINGLANGE. The 318th Infantry was to occupy the left (north) sector of the Division Zone, while the 319th Infantry was to occupy the right (south) sector of the Division Zone.

At 0800, 22 November 1944 the 317th Infantry was directed to assemble in Division Reserve in accordance with Field Order Number 17, Division Headquarters.

The 1st Bn 317th Infantry began movement from OREHANGE and vicinity at 0930. Elements of the 318th Infantry took over the 317th's sector on the north side of the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER. The Battalion closed in MAINVILLERS at 1045.

At 1510, the 3d Bn was directed to move back into its reserve position and establish road blocks in the vicinity of GUINGLANGE and HEMILLY. Movement to the rear began at 1520. The Battalion closed into HERNY at 1700. "E" Company manned the road blocks at GUINGLANGE and HEMILLY.

The 2d Bn 317th Infantry, which had been in Regimental Reserve, remained in MANY on 22 November 1944.

The 318th Infantry effected the relief of "B" Company from LAUDREFANG on 22 November 1944 and extended its bridgehead across the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER to the north, taking up defensive positions on the left flank of the Division Zone.

The 1st Bn 318th Infantry (minus "B" Company in LAUDREFANG), reinforced by one company of medium tanks 702d Tank Bn, launched an attack to the north from FAULQUEMONT at 0730. Moderate enemy resistance was encountered. At 0847, "A" Company, with "C" Company on the right, reached the high ground west of LAUDREFANG. The advance was halted here to establish contact with "B" Company moving out of LAUDREFANG under light enemy mortar fire. Contact with "B" Company was established at 0847. At this time, "A" and "C" Companies began to withdraw to former Main Line Of Resistance positions at FAULQUEMONT, closing in former positions at 1019. "B" Company occupied the vicinity of BRUDSTUDENT PME (west of LAUDREFANG - 192541).

Meanwhile the 2d Bn 318th Infantry, in Division Reserve vicinity HOLACOURT, moved by truck on the morning 22 November 1944 to FAULQUEMONT and reverted to Regimental control. The Battalion then moved by foot from FAULQUEMONT to occupy the left sector of the Regimental Zone. The sector was outposted

by employing "I" Company in the vicinity of HILL 383 (155553). The remainder of the Battalion closed into DORVILLE.

The 3d Bn (minus "I" Company) 318th Infantry, in FAULQUEMONT, occupied the right sector of the Regimental Zone and moved to CITES DES CHARBONNAGES. "I" Company moved from the high ground south of REDLACH to HILL 406 (176545), where defensive positions were dug in.

"B" Company rejoined the 1st Bn in FAULQUEMONT late in the afternoon 22 November, moving from vicinity BRUND-STUDENT FME (192541). The 1st Bn then went into Regimental Reserve, remaining in FAULQUEMONT.

The 319th Infantry completed adjustments of its Main Line Of Resistance on 22 November as directed the previous day. By 1130, both the 1st and 3d Bns were in position.

The 1st Bn, in FAULQUEMONT, employing "A" Company and one platoon of "B" Company, outposted its Main Line Of Resistance from FRITTELING to the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER, west of PONT-PIERRE (183534-191498).

The 3d Bn (minus "K" Company) moved from position north of GUESSELING-HEMERING to VAHL-LES-FAULQUEMONT.

"K" Company 319th Infantry maintained the 3d Bn's Main Line Of Resistance from the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER, west of PONT-PIERRE (191498), to the east edge of HEMERING.

The 2d Bn, in Regimental Reserve, remained in the vicinity of VILLER on 22 November.

Field Order Number 13, issued 2330, 22 November 1944, provided for the Division to attack north and northeast at H-Hour, D-Day and breach the MAGINOT LINE within the Division Zone. Line of Departure was to be the present front lines. The 318th and 319th Regiments were to push the attack, with the 317th Regiment in Division Reserve.

The 808th Tank Destroyer Bn was attached to the Division, one company each attached to the 318th Infantry and 319th Infantry, with the remainder of the Battalion in Division Reserve.

The 2d Cavalry Group was to protect the left (west and north) flank of the Division.

The 30th Infantry Division occupied defensive positions north of the NIEMD ALLEMANDE RIVER on 23 November 1944, protecting the left flank and rear of XII Corps.

On the Division right flank, the 35th Infantry Division continued the attack to the east. Leading elements were reported in the vicinity of ST JEAN ROHRBACH (3747). The 95th Infantry Division began movement to concentrate south-east of METZ on the Division's left flank. The 5th Infantry Division continued to assault forts in the vicinity of METZ.

The 317th Infantry, in Division Reserve, remained in positions occupied the previous day, with the 1st Bn in HAINVILLERS, and 2d Bn in MANY, and the 3d Bn in HERNY. Regimental patrols, on the Division left flank, established contact with elements of the 95th Division at FRECOURE (0454).

At 1135, 23 November 1944, the Commanding General announced H-Hour, D-Day, to be 0800, 25 November 1944.

The 318th Infantry made minor adjustments within the Regimental Zone on 23 November 1944. The 1st Bn, in Regimental Reserve at PAULQUEMONT, moved north to CITES DES CHARBONNAGES, closing in at 1500.

The 2d Bn was directed to send a reinforced platoon to occupy HILL 310 (west of BASSE-VIGNEULLE) to protect the Division left flank. This was accomplished by 1730.

The 2d and 3d Bns remained in front line positions, the 2d Bn vicinity DOEVILLER, with "F" Company in the vicinity of HILL 383 (155553) and the 3d Bn in CITES DES CHARBONNAGES, with "I" Company in the vicinity of HILL 406 (176545).

The 319th Infantry adjusted its Main Line Of Resistance and consolidated Battalion positions.

The 2d Bn, in Regimental Reserve at VILLER, closed into a new area at PAULQUEMONT at 1015.

The 3d Bn (minus "K" Company), in VAHL-LES-PAULQUEMONT, moved to PAULQUEMONT also, closing in at 1745.

The 1st Bn adjusted the Main Line Of Resistance with "C" Company outposting the line from HILL 406, eastward to

the high ground north of LAUDREFANG, thence south to the vicinity of LA FILATURE FME (172547-199546-197533). "C" Company closed on this line at 1630.

The 610th Tank Destroyer Bn (Self-Propelled) was attached to the Division on 23 November. The 808th Tank Destroyer Bn (Twd) was to revert to Division Artillery control upon physical relief by the 610th Tank Destroyer Bn.

The Division enlarged the bridgehead north and northeast of the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER and readjusted positions on 24 November 1944 in preparation for the attack the following day.

The 317th Infantry, in Division Reserve, moved to forward assembly areas. The 2d Bn, in MANY, moved north of the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER to relieve elements of the 1st Bn 319th Infantry on the line from the vicinity of TRITTELING to the NIED ALLEMANDE RIVER, west of PONTPIERRE (183534-191498). Relief of the 1st Bn 319th Infantry was completed by 1600. The 1st Bn 317th Infantry, in MAINVILLERS, moved northeast to close in CREHANGE at 1600, 24 November 1944. The 3d Bn, in HERNY, began movement to MAINVILLERS at 1745 and closed in late that night.

Minor adjustments on the left flank were made by the 318th Infantry, 24 November 1944. The 2d Bn, occupying the left sector of the Regimental Zone, extended its left flank, employing two platoons from "G" Company for this purpose. One platoon occupied HAUTE-VIGNEUILLE, while the other occupied the high ground northeast of the town. "F" Company continued to hold HILL 383 (155553), with the remainder of the Battalion in DORVILLER. The 1st and 3d Bns remained in CITES DES CHARBONNAGES with "I" Company occupying HILL 406 (176545). Preparations were made for the attack on 25 November 1944.

On 24 November 1944, the 319th Infantry strengthened its Main Line Of Resistance in preparation for the attack on 25 November. The 2d Bn, in FAULQUEMONT, moved out at 0513 to relieve "C" Company. At 0730, "F" Company passed through REDLACH and moved towards HILL 400 (188550). Enemy fire from pillboxes held up the advance on this hill. Meanwhile, "G" Company moved onto the high ground north of TRITTELING. "C" Company was relieved at 0800 and returned to FAULQUEMONT. "E" Company 2d Bn, in reserve, moved into REDLACH at 1230. The assault on the pillbox in "F" Company area continued throughout the day but the pillbox was not reduced. The 2d Bn 317th Infantry relieved elements of the 1st Bn 319th Infantry northeast of FAULQUEMONT by 1600. The 1st and 3d Bns remained in FAULQUEMONT.