

### SECTION III

#### THE MOSELLE RIVER BRIDGEHEAD ESTABLISHED

The 317th Infantry attacked the river line 0400, 12 September 1944, with the 2d Bn and 3d Bn abreast, the 2d Bn on the left, the 3d Bn on the right. The 1st Bn, in reserve, was to follow the 2d Bn.

At 0433, "E" Company, 2d Bn 317th Infantry was across the canal and 300 yds east of the crossing site north of DIEULOUARD. By 0555 the 2d Bn 317th Infantry was across the river with the leading company of the 1st Bn following.

The 1st Bn 317th Infantry, crossing where the river branched out to form an island, was across the island to the eastern branch of the river at 0650. By 0830, the 1st Bn was on its objective in the vicinity of BEZAMONT. The 2d Bn seized its objective, STE GENEVIEVE RIDGE, by 0755.

The 3d Bn seized its objective, the high ground northwest of AUTREVILLE-SUR-MOSELLE, at 0812. A strong enemy counterattack coming from the vicinity of VILLE-AU-VAL was repulsed by "I" Company at 1735.

Organization for the defense of the ground gained was commenced immediately after the battalions had reached their objectives. One foot bridge and one Infantry support bridge were completed on 12 September 1944 for the crossing of the 317th Infantry. One heavy pontoon bridge and another Infantry support bridge were in the process of construction on 12 September 1944.

The 2d Bn 318th Infantry (minus "G" Company which outposted the west bank of the MOSELLE RIVER from BELLEVILLE to POLPEY) left the forward assembly area southwest of DIEULOUARD at 0500, 12 September 1944 and was in DIEULOUARD at 0755. Major General McBride ordered the 318th Infantry to cross the river and concentrate in the vicinity of BEZAUMONT. By 1230 the 2d Bn and half of the 3d Bn were across the river.

The 2d Bn (minus "G" Company) closed into the vicinity of BEZAUMONT the afternoon of 12 September 1944 and occupied road blocks at LOISY, PONT-DE-MONS, and VILLE-AU-VAL. The 3d Bn closed into an area to the rear of the 2d Bn.

Defensive positions were prepared and all units were alerted for an enemy counterattack that night.

During the day, 3621 rounds of artillery ammunition were expended to support the river crossing. Forty-four booby traps were removed from the east bank of the MOSELLE RIVER on 12 September 1944 by the 305th Engineer Bn.

The 319th Infantry continued to outpost the river line in its zone and reconnaissance in force was continued to the east along the west edge of FORET DE HAYE. The 2d Bn 319th Infantry outposted the river line from POMPEY to GONDREVILLE while the 3d Bn made a reconnaissance of the west edge of FORET DE HAYE. Patrols making the reconnaissance received heavy enemy fire and the town of GONDREVILLE received heavy enemy artillery fire.

The 1st Bn 319th Infantry was in Regimental Reserve in the vicinity north of TOUL.

On 13 September 1944, the Division maintained its bridgehead east of the MOSELLE RIVER and opposite DIBOUARD, against strong counterattacks. The estimated strength of the enemy counterattacks was two battalions of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment reinforced with artillery and tanks.

At 0555 the enemy made a counterattack on STE GENEVIEVE from the northeast. "G" Company was forced to withdraw to the south thus falling back on "E" and "F" Companies. These latter companies remained in position and repelled the enemy counterattack. "G" Company then reorganized and with support from the 702d Tank Bn restored its positions at STE GENEVIEVE.

The 1st Bn, on the high ground northwest of LANDREMONT, repelled an enemy counterattack from the southeast. The enemy launched another counterattack at 0700 from the vicinity of AUTREVILLE-SUR-MOSELLE, but this was repulsed by the 1st Bn.

The 318th Infantry received the main hostile counterattack in the vicinity of LOISY. "F" Company, at the road block north of LOISY, was forced to the south by strong hostile action at 0600. The enemy seized LOISY and continued south in the direction of BEZAUMONT. The Regimental CP south of LOISY was overrun. The enemy counterattack was halted at 0835 with heavy casualties to the enemy (including over 200 PW's), but only after his advance units had almost

reached the bridges at DIEULOUARD. Since the enemy had observation of the bridgehead, heavy artillery was received on the bridges during the entire period. By 0930, the enemy was cleared from the area south of LOISY.

At 1510 the 3d Bn had retaken LOISY and reestablished the road block north of the town. Company "E" maintained its road block at VILLE-AU-VAL, and "G" Company maintained a road block east of BEZAUMONT against light counterattacks.

The 319th Infantry reconnoitered the west edge of FORET DE HAYE. The 2d Bn, with "G" Company 318th Infantry attached, outposted the river line from BELLEVILLE to POMPEY inclusive. The 3d Bn maintained the bridgehead east of TOUL until relieved by the 1st Bn. This relief was accomplished by 1405, 13 September 1944. The 3d Bn then assembled in Regimental Reserve, east of TOUL.

CCA 4th U. S. Armored Division began crossing the MOSELLE RIVER at DIEULOUARD at 0830 and passed through the 80th Division. The 1st Bn 318th Infantry was attached to CCA. At 1245, leading elements of this command were reported southeast of ST GENEVIEVE.

The Division extended and consolidated its bridgehead to the southeast, capturing the high ground in the vicinity of FALAISE. The enemy counterattacked from the east and southeast at 1155, and "K" Company was forced from the high ground in that vicinity. Companies "I" and "K" held their positions in vicinity of FALAISE.

The 2d Bn consolidated its position on STE GENEVIEVE RIDGE and LANDREMONT RIDGE.

The 1st Bn consolidated its position northwest of LANDREMONT, then moved east at 1045, with HILL 340, southwest of SERRIERES, as its objective. At 1645 the Battalion had moved to a position northeast of LANDREMONT and by 2045 had moved to the area just north of HILL 340. This position was consolidated for the night.

At 0900, 14 September 1944, the 3d Bn 318th Infantry attacked north, with MOUSSON HILL as its objective. One company (minus one platoon) of medium tanks of the 702d Tank Bn preceeded the infantry. The attack progressed rapidly, ATTON was captured, and the objective was taken at 1350. The enemy immediately launched a counterattack, but this was successfully repulsed.

One platoon of tanks was disengaged from the Battalion on MOUSSON HILL at 1800 to aid the 317th Infantry. Again, at 2130, the enemy launched an attack against the 3d Bn 318th Infantry on MOUSSON HILL, but this attack was also repulsed.

The 2d Bn maintained its road blocks. "C" Company reverted to 318th Infantry from the mission of patrolling the river line from BELLEVILLE to POMPEY.

The 319th Infantry maintained its bridgehead east of FOUL. The 1st Bn held the bridgehead, the 2d Bn outposted the river line from POMPEY to GONDREVILLE. "E" Company sent two platoons to clear the woods north of LIVERDUN. The 3d Bn was in Regimental Reserve.

The enemy, coming out of the FORêt DE PACQ, counter-attacked at 0600, 15 September 1944 from the northeast. Enemy tanks and infantry attacked STE GENEVIEVE at 0741. The 2d Bn 317th Infantry was forced to give ground on STE GENEVIEVE RIDGE by 0900, in the face of heavy enemy fire supported by two Mark VI tanks.

Meanwhile, the 1st Bn 317th Infantry, in position just north of HILL 340 and east of SERRIERS, was ordered back to LANDREMONT to render support to the 2d Bn. At 0925, the 1st Bn met light enemy resistance south of LANDREMONT, but continued to push northward, reaching the high ground northwest of LANDREMONT by 1725.

The 3d Bn, on the morning of 15 September 1944, attacked and seized the high ground at PALAISE, north of AUTREVILLE-SUR-MOSELLE. The ground lost to the enemy on the previous day was regained.

The 1st Bn 318th Infantry, released from attachment to CCA 4th Armored Division, moved at 1600 to the west from ARRACOURT with one company of medium tanks of CCA in support. Hostile forces were encountered in the vicinity of NOMENY at 1700. Heavy fighting took place and temporarily held up the advance. The Battalion halted for the night in the vicinity of NOMENY. The 2d Bn 318th Infantry maintained road blocks and provided Regimental Reserve.

The 3d Bn, on MOUSSON HILL, continued its defense of that position. An emergency artillery barrage was fired on enemy troops and tanks located at the base of MOUSSON HILL. Hostile artillery barrages were received on the hill at 0650, employing two tanks and infantry. This at-

tack, plus two other enemy counterattacks were successfully repelled. However the enemy succeeded in forcing its way into ATTON, thereby cutting off the supply route of the 3d Bn.

The Germans carried the attack from ATTON to the vicinity of LOISY, but were stopped there with the aid of the Cannon Company and Headquarters Company of the 3d Bn 318th Infantry, the latter not having reached MOUSSON HILL. The 1st platoon of "B" Company 305th Engineer Combat Battalion also assisted in repelling this counterattack.

It was on this day, 14 September 1944, that Brigadier General Edmund Searby, Division Artillery Commander, was killed in action on MOUSSON HILL while assisting in the repulse of a German counterattack.

Hostile armor was active during the day. The enemy employed approximately 40 tanks. Twenty-two of these tanks were reported destroyed.

The 1st Bn 318th Infantry, released from attachment to CCA 4th Armored Division, was ordered to move to the west from the vicinity of MOMENY and attack STE GENEVIEVE from the east, thereby hitting the left flank and rear of the enemy forces.

The 319th Infantry, as part of Task Force Seebree, advanced eastward at 0600 toward NANCY through FORET DE HAYE. The 1st Bn led the advance. This Battalion advanced one mile without meeting enemy resistance. Combat Team 134 of the 35th U. S. Infantry Division passed through the 1st Bn and moved on towards NANCY. Over 40 trees and 150 mines were removed by the 305th Engineer Combat Battalion on the road to NANCY during the advance of the Task Force Seebree.

The 1st and 3d Bns 319th Infantry moved by motor to the bridge crossing site at DIEULOUARD, detrucked and then moved to the east side of the river on the evening of 15 September 1944. The 1st Bn took up a defensive position in the vicinity of LOISY, while the 3d Bn occupied positions south of LANDREMONT in Division Reserve. The 2d Bn, outposting the river line from LIVERDUN to GONDREVILLE, continued to protect the Division's right flank.