

Paris

UNIT: 313th FA Bn

PERIOD: 11 Nov 1944

ACTION: Seizure of the bridge at HAN-SUR-NIED

SOURCE: Capt Raymond Talcott, Ln O, 313th FA Bn to 1st Bn 317th Inf

PLACE AND DATE OF INTERVIEW: ST AVOLD, France, 1st Bn 317th Inf CP
15 Dec 1944

INTERVIEWER: 1st Lt S. J. Tobin

MAP: Scale 1/50,000 METZ - Sheet N, 34-13 - GSGS 4471

NOTE: No records were used during the interview.

When the 1st Bn, 317th Inf, reached the woods (040442) overlooking HAN-SUR-NIED, the Armored Inf (see TF Godfrey, 6th Armd Div interview) were out in front along the main road leading down to the bridge. The 1st Bn 317th was formed in column of companies. A Co in the lead, C and then B Co.

A Co deployed in the woods on the left and made ready to support the attack by the armored infantry.

Meanwhile Capt Talcott located an OP in the edge of the woods at (038442) overlooking the town. At the time of the attack, no artillery communications were available. The captain's radio could receive but would not transmit. In addition, the radio of the FO with Co C was out of order and would not work. The only radio in operation was that of the FO with A Co.

The infantry jumped off in the attack at approximately 1300 and were pinned down almost immediately by terrific fire consisting of 20mm flak, 88's, artillery and MG's. The main enemy AA positions were located along the road above the town in the vicinity of (059447). The road in the vicinity of (040440) was under intense 20mm fire and there were many fragmentation casualties from the HE, 20mm fire.

There were many wounded in the ditches along the road who were calling for the medics. Capt King, the 1st Bn Ex O, was wounded about 1330. Capt Talcott saw the need for taking these positions under fire and blocking their observation. By about 1330, the FO with Co A set up his radio and began contacting his unit. The Capt planned to mix smoke with the HE to provide some concealment for the troops who were pinned down on the forward slope of the hill and to interfere with enemy observation.

At about 1415 Capt Talcott received information that 3 tanks had reached the bridge and that part of A Co was in the town and that other men from A and C Cos were digging in behind the railroad bank west of the river. In the meantime, the Capt had been trying to get artillery fire on the hill without much success. One of his FO's and two men from his party were wounded by shell fragments.

The Capt then got into his jeep and drove down the slope where he saw Lt Col Sterling Burnett, 1st Bn CO, and Col John L. Hines Jr., CCA 6th Armd Div CO. There he told Col Hines of the need for smoking and shooting up the enemy positions. The Col said that the 6th Armd artillery would fire on the hill.

Capt Talcott then left to go to BECHY to get a radio and inform the FA and Div Gqs of the situation. At the forward edge of the woods he saw Lt Hackett from Co D and told him to get the men moving to the bridge.

At BECHY, he contacted Col Ellery, CO 313th FA Bn who said he would get fire on the positions as indicated by Capt Talcott. After reporting the situation to Col Johnson, Div C/S and to Col Lewis, CO 317th Inf, he returned to the woods overlooking HAN-SUR-NIED and about 1530 brought up two radios.

Panini

UNIT: 313th FA Bn

PERIOD: 11 Nov 44

ACTION: Seizure of bridge at HAN-SUR-NIED

SOURCE: Capt Robert M. Bingham, S-3, 313th FA Bn

PLACE AND DATE OF INTERVIEW: 313th FA Bn CP near ST AVOLD, France
14 June 1945

INTERVIEWER: 1st Lt S. J. Tobin

NOTE: Bn unit journal was used during the interview

On the morning of 11 Nov, the 313th FA Bn was in direct support of the 317th Inf. The Bn CP and fire direction center was located in the railroad station at SECOURT (944403). A battery was at (955398), B battery at (953398) and C battery at (954397).

During the morning traffic along the main road to HAN SUR NIED was heavy and there was no opportunity for the Bn to displace forward. At the time HAN SUR NIED was at extreme range from the gun positions some 11,000 meters. The only mission fired prior to displacing forward was on an anti-tank gun in the Gros D'ETang woods at (04084316) which was harassing the advancing column. This gun was reported knocked out by the air observer at 1458 hours.

At 1615 the Bn CP displaced forward to LUPPY (982434) arriving at 1700. Meanwhile the batteries had moved up to the following positions, generally along the LUPPY-TRAGNY (006408 road: A battery (994418), B battery (9934420) and C battery (991420).

After emplacing, the Bn fired an air observed mission BP registration at (02504524) at 1745 hours. However, no fire missions were called for later that day.

During the afternoon while the 313th FA Bn (105mm howitzers) was displacing forward, the 974th FA Bn (155mm howitzers) of the 404th Group in general support took over the fire missions of the 313th

in support of the 1st Bn 317th Inf. At the time the 512th FA Bn (9105mm howitzers) of the 404th FA Group also displaced forward.

The weather during the afternoon of 11 Nov was fairly clear however, bad weather and heavy traffic on the roads made it impossible for the Bn to aid the 1st Bn 317th Inf as they were out of range until they moved forward. The only fire mission was the AT gun which was knocked out.

FO's from the Bn, however, worked with the infantry and observed fire of the 974th FA Bn on the HAN SUR NIED area.