

80th Div 100

UNIT: 2nd Bn 318th Inf 80th Div.

PERIOD: 28 Dec⁴⁴ to 9 February 45

ACTION: Attack toward and the crossing of the Our River.

SOURCE: Bn S-3 (Source: 318th Infantry for name).

PLACE & DATE OF INTERVIEW: Hettlingen, Germany, 28 Feb 1945

INTERVIEWER: Lt R. J. Cochran.

MAP: TRIER (Sheet #22)
Scale 1/50,000

On the 28th Dec 1944 the 2nd Bn 318th Inf was in ASSENOIS, BELGIUM ~~BE~~ Orders were received on the afternoon of the 28th and on the 29th Dec the Bn was moved by truck to SCHEIREN (822 38) LUXEMBOURG. The Bn closed in SCHEIREN at 1630 the same day and was moved into billets. In Scheiren the Bn relieved the 80th Div Rcn troop. G company outposted the river line just west of DIECHERCH (862 418). The companies were interchangeable with one company remaining on outpost a few days then another company replacing it. Patrols were sent along the river continuously and some patrols crossed the river. This was especially difficult due to the extreme cold and the ice which had formed on both sides of the river. None of these patrols reported anything of note.

On the 2nd of Jan 1945 Capt W. J. Wood relieved Lt Col Gardner as Bn commander. Lt Col Gardner was transferred to Regimental Hq where he became regimental executive officer.

At 2145 5th Jan the 1st Bn of the 2nd Inf relieved the 2nd Bn. G company was on outpost and was relieved by B company 2nd Inf.

On the 6th of Jan the Bn moved from SCHEIREN to NIEDERFULLEN (784 407). Road blocks were established in and around the town. The remainder of the troops went into billets. Companies took turns manning the road blocks. Defensive positions were prepared around NIEDERFUELLEN in the event of a possible German counterattack. Patrols were sent in and around the area

(79-84)

On Jan 13th the 2nd Bn moved from NIEDERFUELLEN to ETTLEBRUCK (8240) relieving the 1st Bn on the high ground (82-41). Patrols were sent into the vicinity of BURDEN (8243) where they located mine fields and enemy installations in that area.

Interdictory artillery and mortar fire was received on the defensive positions during this period. Casualties very light. The 351st Engr Bn relieved the 2nd Bn on the 18th of Jan whereon the Bn moved back into ETTLEBRUCK.

On the 20th of Jan an attack was ordered on BURDEN (7# (83438). This commenced at 1625. E company was on the right, G company on the left. F company was to clean out the peninsula (8344). One platoon of HMG went with G company. The other platoon was to go into position guarding the neck of the peninsula after it had been cleared by F company.

One platoon of tanks and one platoon of TD's were attached to the Bn for this operation.

At 1815 20 Jan BURDEN was taken by E company. G company outposted the high ground north of BURDEN (82444). 8 prisoners were taken by E company.

At 2108 a patrol was ordered to BOURSCHEID (8047). Instead of going to BOURSCHEID the patrol took a left turn and went into WEISCHEID (80443). A heavy snow was falling and visibility was very poor. This patrol reported back that "BOURSCHEID" was clear of enemy. As a result of this misinformation the Bn was ordered to move in at 0200 21 Jan and occupy BOURSCHEID. Another patrol was ordered to BOURSCHEID Ahead of the column. This patrol too took the wrong turn and moved into WEISCHEID. However, this time the enemy was waiting for them and ambushed the patrol taking 3 prisoners. (Interesting sidelight to this story is that on the following day the 3rd Bn 318th captured WEISCHEID and found 2 of the men who had been taken prisoners. One of them had

been wounded and when the Germans evacuated the area they left the other man to look out for him.) The remnants of this patrol reported back and it was realized that a mistake had been made. However, there was no time to spare now so the Bn moved on down the main road to BOURSCHEID in approach march formation. Order of march company G followed by E, one platoon of HMG with G company, F company, one platoon HMG, the 81 mm mortars, and the tanks and TD's remained in BURDEN.

About 800 yards NW of BURDEN 15 prisoners gave up to G company without a fight. At 0615 the leading elements reached the high ground SE of BOURSCHEID and deployed to attack the town. Order of attack company G on right and E on left. One platoon of E company remained in Bn reserve. The platoon of HMG went into position on the high ground to deliver overhead fire. Word was sent back to start company F and the supporting weapons forward.

By 0800 G company was in the edge of town and engaged in a heavy fire fight. E & G companies were both pinned down.

At 0825 the first of the tanks and TD's arrived on the high ground and went into position to protect the exposed flanks of the Bn. These tanks and TD's brought heavy fire into the town relieving the pressure on the two forward companies.

In the meantime F company arrived on the high ground. One platoon of F was sent to aid E company. The remainder of F moved around the west of BOURSCHEID and occupied the high ground north of town.

At 1400 21st Jan the Bn OP moved up into town. E company completely cleaned the town by 1600. G company moved up to the right of F company on the high ground. After E company had finished the clearing they too moved up to the high ground, SE of town. The Bn CP now moved up into the town.

The main road between WARKEM (82-41), BURDEN, and BOURSCHEID had to be cleared of snow by bulldozer before any supplies could be brought up.

Approximately 50 prisoners were taken in BOURSCHEID. The Bn had 25 casualties for the whole operation.

On the 23rd Jan the 2nd Bn was relieved by company D 351st Engr. The Bn rested in the immediate area until 25th Jan to a position NE of DAHL (735499) where it relieved the 319th Inf. The Bn remained in defensive position here, sending out occasional patrols and coming under sporadic artillery and mortar fire. At 1040 on 27 Jan entrucked at DAHL and moved to the vicinity of BEAUFORT (96-48) relieving 1st Bn 22nd Inf. Relief was completed at 1940. The Bn occupying the high ground north of BEAUFORT (956485). Patrols were sent across the Sauer River and into WALLENDORF (96-423). Enemy found to be occupying WALLENDORF but not the ground SE of the town.

On the 5th Feb engineer assault boats were brought up into the E company area then were carried by the companies to positions under cover near the crossing site (973413).

The 2nd Bn was to be the first Bn across the river. F company was to be on the left and E & G on the extreme right. All companies were to cross at the same time. HMG's and 81 mm were in position on the high ground on this side of the river to cover the crossing.

At 2300 6th Feb the troops started moving to their crossing sites. H hour was 0300 7 Feb.

At H hour F company proceeded across the river without opposition. E company and G company were having difficulty getting there boats to the river from their positions where they had left them. The ground was slippery and the banks were too steep. E & G finally managed to get the boats down on the bank about day light.

However by this time F company had stirred up the enemy on the far shore. E & G were observed and the enemy commenced to pound them with artillery and mortar fire. MG fire also was heavy.

The Bn CO then directed E & G companies to infiltrate to F company's crossing site.(978413). After arriving at the site the men were sent across, a boat or possibly two at a time. An enemy MG position about 50 yards downstream made the crossing double difficult. Any boats that drifted down were immediately raked with fire. The engineers on hand at the original crossing claimed to have no knowledge of assault boats and as a result the infantry had to maneuver the boats themselves. Late on the afternoon of the 7th more engineers arrived and took over the ferrying operations.

About 1800 9th Feb the Bn CP moved across the river with the remainder of the troops. The CP was set up in a bunker just across the river under a high bank.

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