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UNIT: 3d Bn 318th Inf Regt, 80th Inf Div.

PERIOD: 8 Nov - 4 Dec 1944.

ACTION: LORRAINE Campaign (SEILLE & NIED River Crossings)

SOURCE: Lt John Bier, S-3 3d Bn, then S-2.

PLACE AND DATE OF INTERVIEW: DIETMANSRIED, GERMANY, 3d Bn CP,  
22 June 1945.

INTERVIEWER: Lt S. J. Tobin.

MAPS: 1/50,000 - Title	Sheet No	GS GS No
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Note: The Unit History was used during the interview.

At the time of the attack to cross the SEILLE River, the 3d Bn 318th Inf was in regimental reserve. They crossed the river at 0830 in the zone of the 2d Bn and went into ROUVES (879344). That afternoon they were given the mission to take the high ground NW of NOMENY (893334) and to take the town from the rear. Resistance from the town was not expected. I Co moved toward NOMENY but was held up by enemy infantry dug-in on the high ground north of the town. A platoon of tanks from B Co 702d Tk Bn arrived to support the company at about 1700. The tanks and infantry drove the enemy off the high ground and the remaining Germans withdrew into NOMENY. Heavy casualties were suffered by I Co, in the fighting the CO was wounded and there were approximately 75 other casualties.

The next morning 9 Nov, I Co reinforced by other elements of the Bn moved in and took NOMENY against very light resistance. The town was mopped up and 200 PWs were taken by about 1200. During the afternoon the Bn, still in reserve, moved through MAILLY (909356) and then to PHLIN (931358) where they spent the night.

The next day 10 Nov, they moved through VULMONT (950372) to MONCHEUX (976385) and spent the night in town with the 2d Bn.

During 11 Nov they followed the 2d Bn through TRAGNY (006409) THIMONVILLE (020405) to FLOCOURT (030423) where they passed through

the 2d Bn at 1530 and attacked ST EPVRE (050425) which was taken without resistance. A railroad bridge across the NIED River in the vicinity of (0642) was secured and the demolitions on the bridge neutralized. Defensive positions were consolidated along the river in the vicinity of ST EPVRE for the night.

The next day 12 Nov the Bn crossed the bridge and moved into BAUDRECOURT (0641) which had been taken by elements of the 6th Armd Div. Considerable enemy artillery fire was received in the town during the night. The next day the Bn moved from BAUDRECOURT to VATIMONT (0743) closing at about 1800. Defensive positions in the area were consolidated in conjunction with elements of the 6th Armd Div.

On the 14th of Nov, the Bn made a tactical march through ARRAINCOURT (120423), BRULANGE (132419) and moved up to THICOURT (136440) THONVILLE (140424) where they took up defensive positions in conjunction with elements of the 6th Armd Div. K Co outposted the north sector of THICOURT and I Co set up defensive positions in THONVILLE. During the evening L Co went with the task force from the 6th Armd to take CHEMERY (157454). The task force met heavy resistance from prepared positions about 1 km NE of THONVILLE. A number of tanks were knocked out and the task force withdrew. Positions were maintained in the area throughout the 15 of Nov. Plans were made and meetings were held with the units of the 6th Armd Div to attack the enemy positions east of THICOURT and THONVILLE the next day. Armored elements were to make a double envelopment and the 80th Div was to move up in the center between THICOURT and THONVILLE. One armored spearhead was to move out from the vicinity of THICOURT and turn south to take the enemy positions in the vicinity in the flank or rear. The other spearhead was to move out from a position about 1500 yards SE of THONVILLE cross the ridge, turn north and envelop the enemy positions in the area.

The next morning 16 Nov, the attack jumped off with K Co on the left, I Co on the right, one platoon of tanks from B Co 702d Tk Bn was in support. The attack was to jump off at 0700, however enemy artillery was received on their forming up positions which delayed

their advance for approximately an hour. A very heavy artillery preparation was fired on the enemy positions with excellent results prior to the attack. About 0800 the infantry got under way and together with elements of the 6th Armd Div all objectives were taken. Several hundred PWs were captured. The town of CHEMERY (157455) was taken and positions were maintained in the vicinity of CHEMERY until the 20th of Nov.

On 20 Nov, the Bn moved up to FAULQUEMONT (1750). No resistance was met in the town, but a blown bridge south of the town held up vehicular traffic until it could be repaired. Traffic was resumed by about 1900 that evening. The town of FAULQUEMONT was pretty badly beaten up. Corps artillery had shelled it and there were numerous shell craters in the roads. The Bn stayed in FAULQUEMONT during the 21st, and on the 22d moved up into the woods overlooking BAMBIDERSTROFF (167567). Positions were consolidated during 23 and 24 Nov and preparations were made to attack to the north on the 25th.

On the morning of the 25th, the 3d Bn jumped off in a coordinated attack with the 2d Bn at 0800. Co C 610th TD Bn was in support. A 30-minute artillery preparation was fired. BAMBIDERSTROFF was taken by 0900 without great resistance. Heavy casualties were suffered from the MAGINOT forts in the edge of the BAMBESCH woods north of BAMBIDERSTROFF. Troops had to cross the open ground to continue the attack to the NE. The forts in the BAMBESCH woods were in the 2d Bn sector and placed murderous fire on the troops of the 3d Bn which had to cross their field of fire south of the woods. This was stopped when the pillboxes were taken by elements of the 2d Bn which were sweeping the woods toward the east, after taking HAUTE VIGNEULLE (140564). The forts were manned with MGs only. There were some large caliber French guns in them, but they did not fire probably due to a lack of ammunition. TDs in support of the 3d Bn were very effective in neutralizing the pillboxes. B Co 610th TD Bn had the new 90mm guns which was able to penetrate the reinforced concrete of the pillboxes, some of which were 5 or 6 feet thick. Several forts were taken, surrendering immediately after being hit by the TDs. Others gave up when they found themselves surrounded. Lt Bier said

that this was the first evidence on the part of the Germans of any willingness to surrender and also this was the first appearance of any Hitler Youth. Approximately 125 IWs including a Bn CO were taken during the day. Positions were then consolidated for the night on the high ground south and west of LONGEVILLE (2050). The anti-tank ditch which stretched across the area from the BAMBESCH woods to the high ridge to the right of the Bn sector was bridged during the afternoon to enable vehicles to cross.

On the morning of the 26th, the 3d Bn attacked at 0800 with the mission of taking the high ground north of LONGEVILLE in the vicinity of (198598). This was taken against no resistance by 0830. Enemy entrenchments were found in the area but were unoccupied. Immediately after arriving, the enemy launched a counterattack on the position which was broken up by extremely accurate artillery fire. During the remainder of the day three more attacks were launched. L Co had 20 men captured during the day and other elements of the Bn suffered a few casualties.

The 1st Bn pushed through the 3d Bn on the morning of 27 Nov and attacked east to clear the LONGEVILLE woods. The 3d Bn moved back into LONGEVILLE and the next morning 28 Nov moved into ST AVOLD (250565) where they stayed until 1 Dec.

On the 1st of Dec the Bn moved to MACHEREN (300563) where they stayed until the 3d of Dec when they moved into SEINBOUSE (340576).

On the morning of the 4th the 3d Bn moved up to FAREBERSVILLER (365578) and jumped off in an attack with the 2d Bn to take the high ground west of THEDING. The attack was preceded by heavy artillery preparation and the objective was taken against slight resistance.