

AFTER ACTION REPORT
80TH INFANTRY DIVISION

DECEMBER 1944

PREFACE

At the beginning of the period covered by this report advance elements of the Division were occupying the high ground West of Pfarrebersweiler (Q3657). Temporary defensive positions had been occupied after the advance from the Seille R. to the above location East of St Avold.

First

The 80th Infantry Division continued to occupy temporary defensive positions, regrouping its forces and resting its personnel.

Division Artillery fired fifty-two (52) missions.

Five (5) prisoners were captured.

Second

Units continued to occupy positions, regroup forces and service equipment.

Division Artillery fired seventy-five (75) missions.

Four (4) prisoners were captured.

Third

Preparations were made for continuing the attack to the East.

Boundaries were readjusted with the 6th Armored Division on the South flank.

Elements of the 6th Armored Division relieved elements of the 2d Battalion 318th Infantry Southeast of Henriville (Q3656).

Patrols operated deep into hostile territory.

Division Artillery fired seventy-three (73) missions.

Sixteen (16) prisoners were captured.

Fourth

The 318th Infantry launched a coordinated attack 0730A to seize Pfarrebergweiler (Q3657), Tentelingen (Q4156), and Kochern (Q3661). This attack was preceded by a fifteen (15) minute artillery preparation. One (1) Company of the 702d Tank Battalion and one (1) Company of the 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached to the 318th Infantry and supported the attack. The attack proceeded according to plan. Objectives were seized. Pfarrebergweiler (Q3657), Tentelingen (Q4156) and Kochern (Q3661) were liberated. Three-hundred-twenty-seven (327) prisoners were captured during the operation.

Division Artillery fired thirty-seven (37) missions.

The attack was supported by fire by the 319th Infantry.

The 317th Infantry remained in Division Reserve.

Fifth

Upon the capture of the Division Objective the 318th Infantry organized the position for defense.

The 2d Cavalry Group continued to protect the Division left flank and cleared the town of Freyming (Q3161).

Division Artillery fired one-hundred-fifty (150) missions.

The 317th and 319th Infantry Regiments continued to maintain defensive positions.

Sixth

The 318th Infantry maintained its positions and established contact with the 6th Armored Division on the right and the 2d Cavalry on the left.

The 317th Infantry remained in Division Reserve.

The 319th Infantry extended its position to the North occupying Merlebach (Q3361).

Patrols were active to determine enemy dispositions.

Division Artillery fired fifty (50) missions.

The 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion was released from attachment.

The 80th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop maintained contact between the 80th Infantry and the 6th Armored Divisions

Seventh

The 80th Infantry Division was ordered by XII Corps to a rest area in the vicinity of St Avoird.

The 6th Armored Division relieved front line units and the 80th Division closed into assigned areas-1710A.

Three (3) Field Artillery Battalions remained in positions to respond to calls for fire from the 6th Armored Division.

The 313th Field Artillery Battalion moved to Fontenay (Q732) to participate in a demonstration of the Posit Fuze.

The relief of the 80th Infantry Division by the 6th Armored Division terminated the 80th Infantry Division's one-hundred-second (102d) consecutive day of contact with the enemy. The 2d Cavalry Group was released from attachment to the 80th Infantry Division.

Eighth to Fifteenth (Inclusive)

During this period units of the 80th Infantry Division continued to rehabilitate and train personnel and service equipment.

Plans were made for future operations.

December

Division Artillery (less 313th Field Artillery Battalion) remained in position and responded to calls for fire from the 6th Armored Division.

Sixteenth

Upon Orders received from XII Corps the Division began movement to a forward assembly area in the vicinity of BINNING (06549) preparatory to launching an attack to the North to breach the SIEGFRIED LINE in the ZWELBRUCKEN area.

Seventeenth

Units of the 80th Infantry Division closed in the Forward Assembly Area in the vicinity of BINNING (06549).

Eighteenth

The 319th Infantry relieved elements of the 25th Cavalry Squadron in the Southern half of the Division Zone.

Orders were received from XII Corps alerting the Division for movement to the North to concentrate in the vicinity of LUXEMBOURG (P8491) to assist in repelling the hostile attack in the Zone of the VIII Corps.

During the night 18-19 Dec the 319th Infantry was relieved by elements of the 12th Armored Division.

Nineteenth

The 80th Infantry Division began movement by motor to a Forward Assembly Area in the Zone of the 4th Infantry Division. The Division was assigned to the III Corps.

Twentieth

The 80th Infantry Division Command Post opened at the Headquarters of the 4th Infantry Division at LUXEMBOURG (P8491) at 0200A.

Field Order Number 22 was issued directing the occupation of a Reserve Battle Position in the Zone of the 4th Infantry Division.

The 80th Division units closed into designated sectors.

Twenty-first

Occupation of the Reserve Battle Position continued.

The 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion was attached to the 80th Infantry Division.

The 808th Tank Destroyer Battalion was released from attachment.

Preparations were made to attack to the North to repel hostile forces advancing on the City of LUXEMBOURG.

Forces were regrouped and units were prepared to advance at 220600A.

Twenty-second

The 80th Infantry Division advanced to the North at 0600A with the 318th and 319th Infantry Regiments abreast; the 317th Infantry in reserve.

The 318th Infantry gained contact with hostile forces South of ETTLEBRUCK (P8240).

The 319th Infantry first contacted hostile elements in MERZIG (P7538).

Heavy fighting developed at ETTLEBRUCK.

MERZIG (P7538) and NIEDERFEULEN (P7941) were captured by the 319th Infantry. One-hundred-twenty-five (125) prisoners were captured.

In this action great quantities of enemy material were destroyed and heavy casualties inflicted. The enemy forces attempting to advance to the Southwest were completely repulsed.

Twenty-third

The attack continued to the North. During the night 22-23 December the 2d Battalion 319th Infantry advanced to the North to seize HEIDERSCHEID (P7444).

The 317th Infantry passed through the 318th Infantry and advanced on BOURSCHED (P8047).

The 318th Infantry reverted to Division Reserve with the mission of containing ETTLEBRUCK (P7444) and protecting the Division right flank.

HEIDERSCHEID (P7444) was seized and cleared at 1100A.

The 3d Battalion 319th Infantry seized T DLEK (P7547).

The 1st Battalion seized the high ground Southwest of KIELEN (P7846).

During this action the 702d Tank Battalion destroyed three (3) enemy tanks. The 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion destroyed ten (10) enemy tanks.

Three-hundred-ninety (390) prisoners were captured.

Seven (7) kilometers of ground were gained.

Twenty-fourth

The enemy counterattacked HEIDERSCHEID during the morning. This attack was repulsed and heavy enemy losses were inflicted.

The enemy also launched an attack against the 1st Battalion 319th Infantry position West of KIELEN. This attack was repulsed.

The 318th Infantry (- 3d Battalion was attached to the 4th Armored Division and began movement to the B. STOGNE area. (See Annex No 1.)

The 3d Battalion 318th Infantry continued to contain hostile forces in ETTLEBRUCK.

Twenty-fourth

Thirty-nine (39) prisoners were captured.

Twenty-fifth

The attack was continued.

The 317th Infantry after passing through the Zone of the 318th Infantry launched an attack with the 1st and 2d Battalions to seize KEHLEN (p7846) and BOUSCHHEID (p8047). Due to heavy enemy resistance and extremely rugged terrain the towns were not captured.

The 318th Infantry continued the attack and seized KINDEL (p7647).

Heavy artillery concentrations had been placed on ETTLEBRUCK in addition to direct fire from elements of the 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion and the 702d Tank Battalion. Hostile troops not destroyed by these fires vacated ETTLEBRUCK.

Elements of the 3d Battalion 318th Infantry entered ETTLEBRUCK and established listening posts.

The 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion destroyed two (2) enemy tanks, one (1) cargo truck and one (1) Half-track.

The 702d Tank Battalion destroyed three (3) enemy half-tracks and four (4) anti-tank guns.

One-hundred-eight (108) prisoners were captured.

Twenty-sixth

The 317th Infantry held ground previously gained and outposted the S.M. R. vicinity of ETTLEBRUCK.

One-hundred-forty-two (142) prisoners were captured.

Division Artillery in support of Infantry Regiments fired one-hundred-fifty-two (152) missions.

The 80th Division was assigned to XII Corps.

Twenty-seventh

The 317th Infantry occupied and maintained defensive positions west of KEHLEN.

The 3d Battalion 318th Infantry patrolled ETTLEBRUCK and maintained defensive positions.

The enemy launched a counterattack in an attempt to seize ETTLEBRUCK. The 1st Battalion 318th Infantry repulsed this attack inflicting heavy enemy losses.

Forty-eight (48) prisoners were captured.

Twenty-eighth

The 80th Division temporarily assumed the defensive as directed by XII Corps.

The 318th Infantry (- 3d Battalion) was released from attachment to the 4th Armored Division and began movement to its assembly area in the vicinity of COLAR (p8135).

The enemy again launched a counterattack against the 1st Battalion 319th Infantry positions Northeast of RINGEL. This attack was repulsed with heavy losses.

Division Artillery fired one-hundred-thirteen (113) missions.

Since the beginning of the 80th Infantry Divisions attack of 22 Dec, sixteen (16) miles of ground were gained, twenty (20) enemy tanks destroyed and one-thousand-six-hundred-eighty-two (1682) prisoners were captured. By this action the threat to LUXEMBOURG was eliminated.

Twenty-ninth

Infantry Regiments continued to maintain and strengthen defensive positions.

Division Artillery fired one-hundred-thirteen (113) missions in support of the defense.

Thirtieth

The enemy again attempted to seize the high ground in the vicinity of RINGEL. (p7648). Again the counterattack was repulsed, and heavy losses inflicted on the enemy.

Forty (40) prisoners were captured.

Division Artillery fired one-hundred-fifty (150) missions.

Thirty-first

Defensive positions were maintained and improved.

Infantry Regiments patrolled aggressively to determine enemy dispositions and identifications.

Division Artillery supported the defense by firing one-hundred-four (104) missions.

Thirty-four (34) prisoners were captured.

GENERAL

During the month of December two-thousand-seven-hundred-forty-seven (2747) prisoners were captured and thirty-five (35) enemy tanks destroyed by 80th Division units.

Since the Division became Operational it has captured eleven-thousand-four-hundred-seventy-six (11476) prisoners and destroyed one-hundred-nine (109) enemy tanks.

A.G. ELEGAR
Lt Col, GSC,
AC of S,G-3.