

RG 407 RECORDS OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S  
OFFICE, 1917 -

WW II OPERATIONS REPORTS, 1941 - 48

101st Airborne Division

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to

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Entry 427

HM 2007

Box 11752



Corps (Airborne) advance was to be made there. At 1225  
General McAuliffe Departed for WERBOMONT, and at 1400  
the Division proper began motor march with units in the  
following order:

501st Parachute Infantry  
Attached: 907th Glider Field Artillery  
Battalion  
Battery B, 81st Airborne AA  
Battalion

81st Airborne AA Battalion  
101st Airborne Signal Company, Division  
Headquarters and Headquarters Company,  
Division Artillery Headquarters and Head-  
quarters Battery.

506th Parachute Infantry  
Attached: 321st Glider Field Artillery  
Battalion

326th Airborne Engineer Battalion (Less  
Company B)

502nd Parachute Infantry  
Attached: 377th Parachute Field Artillery  
Battalion

327th Glider Infantry  
Attached: 401st Glider Infantry (Less  
2nd Battalion)  
463rd Parachute Field Artillery  
Battalion

326th Airborne Medical Company

801st Airborne Ordnance Company

426th Airborne Quartermaster Company

Strength committed at this time was 805  
officers and 11035 enlisted men.

At NEUF CHATEAU General McAuliffe was informed by VIII  
Corps that the Division was attached to VIII Corps with the  
mission of stemming the German offensive in the vicinity

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of BASTOGNE (P555580). By means of officer guides, the march objective was changed from WEREOMONT, and the Division de-trucked in assembly areas in the vicinity of MANDE ST ETIENNE (P500595). By 0900 of the next morning, 19 December, the Division had closed in the assembly area. The trip of about 107 miles had been made largely during the hours of darkness and hampered to a certain extent by some rain and snow squalls.

At this time little was known of the enemy situation and confusion was rampant among friendly units in the area. It was realized however, by the Corps and Division Commanders that the enemy vitally needed the communications center of BASTOGNE. With this in mind, the 501st Combat Team was ordered to attack east and secure BASTOGNE. The 501st Combat Team jumped off at 0800, moved through the city and encountered enemy infantry and armor on the east perimeter. Contact was made with elements of Combat Command B 10th Armored Division, Combat Command R 9th Armored Division, and small elements and stragglers of the 28th Infantry Division. In the meantime, 506th Combat Team was ordered to attack on the left of 501st Combat Team, in the direction of NOVILLE (P587647). After stubborn enemy resistance NOVILLE was occupied by the 506th Combat Team, although enemy continued armor-infantry attacks on the town.

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Indications of attacks on all sides appeared and combat teams were promptly employed in a perimeter defense of BASTOGNE. The western defense consisted of patrols furnished by 327th and 502nd Combat Teams, and 326th Airborne Engineer Battalion. Teams Cherry, O'Hara, and Desobry, of 10th Armored Division, supported the Division in the east along with Companies "B" and "C", 705th T. D. Battalion. In the meantime Division Headquarters had moved from MANDE ST ETIENNE to Belgian barracks in BASTOGNE. The Division service area remained in the vicinity of MANDE ST ETIENNE.

At 2200 on the 19th, an enemy attack cut off the Division service area at which time the majority of the 326th Airborne Medical Company was captured. The 801st Ordnance Company and the 426th Quartermaster Company escaped capture with only slight losses. At this time the supply situation was indefinite and inadequate, and in an attempt to secure supplies for the Division, organic 2½ ton trucks had been dispatched to the Division rear base and rear army installations to pick up ammunition. When the enemy succeeded in encircling BASTOGNE there were approximately 100 of the Division's trucks in rear areas. Only a few of those which had been sent back for supplies succeeded in returning to the BASTOGNE area prior to the encirclement. The apparent difficulty of securing supplies through ground channels prompted the first air re-supply request on 20 December. The first air re-supply arrived on 23 December.

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On 20 December, the 506th Combat Team withdrew from NOVILLE and occupied RECOGNE (P569634). Armor-infantry attacks were repulsed on the east. 705th TD Battalion, Combat Command "B", 10th Armored Division, 755th Armored FA Battalion, and 333rd FA Group were officially attached to the Division.

By 21 December, the Division was completely encircled by the enemy and he continued his armor, infantry, and artillery attacks. Enemy armor and infantry repeatedly infiltrated, affording our organic and attached artillery battalions in addition to AT and TD units an opportunity for direct fire on enemy tanks and infantry. All attacks were beaten off. Although all wire lines to VIII Corps had been cut, normal radio channels were open and, in addition, radio-link equipment attached to the Signal Company from VIII Corps provided radio telephone and teletype facilities throughout the operation.

On 22 December, an enemy proposal that the Division surrender or be annihilated received the reply of "Nuts" from General McAuliffe. Shelling on the scale threatened by the enemy did not take place, but infantry-armor attacks, artillery concentrations, and nightly aerial bombardment by the enemy continued. The first air support by fighter bombers was furnished on the 22nd and this was of great help to the Division, particularly in view of the shortage of artillery ammunition.

By this time food supplies as well as ammunition had become critical, and it was necessary to requisition food from civilian sources. An abandoned U. S. Army bakery in BASTOGNE was also a source of considerable amounts of flour and lard. A Division hospital had been set up in BASTOGNE and was being operated jointly by several of the unit medical detachments. Fortunately, an abandoned U. S. Army medical dump was found also in BASTOGNE and this was of great value to the hospital. During the period of encirclement, snow fell in the area and our troops were at a distinct disadvantage due to lack of snowshoes. Only about one-half of the Division had overshoes. All available white cloth was requisitioned for camouflage purposes, and burlap bage were found and used to keep the men's feet warm.

On 23 December, two Division pathfinder teams parachuted into a field near the Division CP and guided the 241 plane re-supply later in the day to the DZ. On the 26th and 27th additional re-supply missions were flown, including 42 gliders. The percentage of recovery on parachute re-supply was 95%, on glider re-supply 100%. This re-supply was of great assistance to the hospital and enabled our artillery to continue its vital mission. "K" rations which were dropped and the ten glider loads of gasoline were also very welcome. Parachutes and A-5 containers were collected and sent to the hospital for the comfort of the patients, many of whom were lying on cement floors.

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During the 23rd and 24th, enemy activity continued on all sides with particularly heavy attacks in the 327th Glider Infantry sector. In order to strengthen this sector, lines were shortened on the 23rd. Also on the 23rd, friendly night fighter cover was furnished to combat the nightly enemy aerial bombardment. Close fighter bomber support was maintained on all sides by the IX and XIX TAC's. On the 24th, the Division forces were re-grouped with four regiments on line forming a perimeter defensive position around BASTOGNE. At this time the Division order of battle was as follows:

Combat Team 501st Parachute Infantry:  
Batteries B(AT) and F(AA) 81st Abn Bn.  
2nd Platoon, Co B, 705 TD Bn  
Team O'Hara, CCB, 10 Armd Div

Combat Team 506th Parachute Infantry:  
Battery A (AT), 81st Abn AA Bn  
1st and 2nd Platoons, Co C, 705 TD Bn.

Combat Team 502nd Parachute Infantry:  
Battery C (AT), 81st Abn AA Bn  
Team Anderson, CCB, 10 Armd Div  
3rd Platoon, Co C, 705 TD Bn  
3rd Platoon, Rcn Co, 705 TD Bn.

Combat Team 327th Glider Infantry:  
326th Abn Engr Bn with attached 2 platoon 9  
Armd Engrs.  
Btry E (AA), 81st Abn AA Bn  
Team Roberts, CCB, 10 Armd Div.  
1st and 3rd Platoon, Co B, 705 TD Bn  
2nd and 3rd Platoon, Rcn Co, 705 TD Bn

Reserve:  
CCB, 10 Armd Div (less detachments) consisting of  
Team Cherry, Team Arnsdorf, Elements of 9 Armd Div  
Btry D, 81st Abn AA Bn.

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A19 K05 - 1st A18 Div

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See 919

Artillery:

907th Glider FA Bn: Direct support of 501 CT.  
321st Glider FA Bn: Direct support of 506 CT.  
377th Prcht FA Bn: Direct support of 502 CT.  
463rd Prcht FA Bn: Direct support of 327 CT.  
333rd FA Group: General Support  
420th Armd FA Bn: General Support  
755th FA Bn: General Support.

Christmas Day found the Division heavily engaged with the enemy. At 0300 an attack of regimental strength was launched against the town of CHAMPS (P5262). The attack succeeded in penetrating the town but was repulsed after violent hand to hand fighting. A later attack in the vicinity P5161, supported by tanks, breached our perimeter but our lines were restored by 1200. A total of 27 enemy vehicles were knocked out and one Mark IV captured. Both the 502nd and 327th Combat Teams with supporting artillery and TDs were involved in these two fights. Sporadic enemy shelling and aerial bombardment on the Division CP, gun positions, and other installation continued. By this time, contact had been made with elements of eight enemy divisions.

On December 26 elements of the 4th Armored Division made contact with our outposts, and during the evening, representatives of the 4th Armored reported in to our CP. Wire communication was established with VIII Corps. By this time, five of our liaison pilots had arrived and landed on an airstrip in the vicinity of BASTOGNE. This was of great assistance in the functioning of our artillery battalions. Enemy armor-infantry attacks were repulsed in the

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P19 K05 - 1st 218 Div

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south and west. On this date our effective strength was 711 officers and 9516 enlisted men.

For the next two days, the division was under command of III Corps, being released from that organization and again placed under command of VIII Corps on 29 December. With the road to the south open again it was possible to evacuate all of our accumulated wounded and sick. This was done on 27 December, and, on the same day 540 prisoners were evacuated to the south. Additional medical units were brought in to BASTOGNE and relieved the shortage of medical personnel and equipment. At this time the job of graves registration was also taken over by an VIII Corps graves registration unit, this having been handled by our Civil Affairs team. The supply situation now cleared up rapidly.

On 27 December, Major General Taylor arrived from Washington, D. C. and assumed command of the Division. Two minor enemy attacks in the west were launched in the early morning but never reached our lines due to our artillery fire. Indications were at this time that the enemy was preparing to consolidate his gains in order to prevent his salient from being cut off.

On 28 December, infantry, and infantry-armor attacks were repulsed in the 501st and 327th sectors. Enemy continued night bombardment and strafing of BASTOGNE and vicinity. Contact was made by CC "A" 9th Armored Division with 327th

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Glider Infantry in the south. The 333rd FA Group was relieved from attached to the Division and the 969th FA Battalion was attached to the Division.

On 29 December, some friendly light AA units moved into BASTOGNE and during the night BASTOGNE was bombed and strafed by three aircraft, one of which was reported knocked down by our AA fire.

30 December witnessed the most concentrated bombing and strafing attack yet experienced and, as a result, many of the civilians evacuated. By this time the city of BASTOGNE had been severely damaged by enemy bombing and shelling and hardly a pane of glass remained intact in the city. During the day, friendly air support was continued, and our artillery supported the attack of the 6th Armored Division on our right.

On 31 December, CC "R" 9th Armored Division was relieved from attached to the 101st Airborne Division. An infantry attack of regimental scale was launched by 26th VG Division in the sector of the 502nd Combat Team. The enemy occupied high ground on our front, but was driven off. Contact with the 9th Armored Division on the left and 6th Armored Division on the right was maintained. Division artillery continued to assist the attack of the 6th Armored Division on the right and 11 Armored Division which was now abreast of and on the left

of CC A 9th Armored Division. By this time the corridor into BASTOGNE had been considerably widened and our defense line was not longer necessary in this sector. Supplies and evacuation were normal. At this time our only definite contact with enemy forces was with the 26th VG Division although at one time or another during the period at least four infantry and four armored divisions had been engaged. All during the period, many major and minor enemy attacks were broken up by infantry-artillery-air-anti-tank teamwork. Information from PW's captured documents, and patrols, not only were of great value in breaking up these attacks, but also enabled our artillery to disorganize enemy build-ups and break up their attacks before they reached our lines. At the close of the period, our effective strength was 754 officers and 9685 enlisted men.

New Years Day found the 101st Airborne Division still engaged in defending BASTOGNE from heavy enemy attacks on the west, north, and east of the town. Contact had been made with the 4th Armored Division, which had fought its way to the BASTOGNE area from the south. Our wounded had been evacuated, and supplies were rolling in on trucks instead of being dropped via parachute and glider.

The countryside was heavily laden with snow, and although our troops had adapted themselves to the cold and snow as much as possible, the overshoes and certain additional heavy clothing, which were brought up at this

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time and during the next week, were most welcome. Vehicles were camouflaged with white paint, and a limited number of the much-needed white snow suits were supplied.

Effective strength at the beginning of the period was 766 officers and 10,147 enlisted men.

On New Years Day, 1945, the Division continued to maintain its defenses of BASTOGNE and assist by artillery fire the attack of the 11th Armored Division on our left and the 6th Armored Division on our right.

On 2 January, CC B, 10th Armored Division, with Co F, 327th Glider Infantry attacked and occupied SENONCHAMPS (P5157) and the high ground to the north of the town. Next day the 327th Glider Infantry established patrol contact with the 11th Armored Division at MANDE ST ETIENNE (P5059). The 506th Parachute Infantry cleared a portion of BOIS JACQUES (P580619-) P591614). The 501st Parachute Infantry was relieved in its sector by the 6th Armored Division and assembled in preparation to clear the north portion of BOIS JACQUES.

At this time four enemy divisions were in contact with the 101st Airborne Division, and information from a PW indicated a coordinated enemy attack. Task Force Higgins was therefore organized on 3 January 1945. Brigadier General G. J. Higgins, Assistant Division Commander, was placed in command, and his troops consisted of the following:

327th Glider Infantry

502nd Parachute Infantry

Team Cherry, CC B, 10th Armored Division

Companies B & C, 705th TD Battalion.

Although the force of the expected enemy attack was considerably lessened by our heavy artillery concentration on the enemy assembly areas, the attack was the heaviest to date. A strong tank and infantry attack was repulsed by Task Force Higgins in the vicinity of MONOVILLE (P5463) between 1330 and 2200 on the 3rd. In the meantime 2nd Battalion, 327th Glider Infantry was attached to 502nd Parachute Infantry for the purpose of restoring the MLR, which had been breached by this attack. 501st Parachute Infantry attacked in BOIS JACQUES at noon but later withdrew to a line P594615-P600603, in order to strengthen their position and establish contact with the 6th Armored Division on the right.

On 4 January Task Force Higgins again threw back a strong tank-infantry attack in the vicinity of CHAMPS (P5262) between the hours of 0500 and 1200. 1st Battalion, 502nd Parachute Infantry counterattacked to restore our MLR, which had been breached by the German attack. During the morning a light enemy tank attack was repulsed by the 501st Parachute Infantry also. Although our troops knocked out 20 enemy armored vehicles during the 48 hour period

Task Force Higgins was dissolved on 5 January, and the Division continued maintaining defensive positions and re-grouping of forces.

Active patrolling along the regimental fronts was carried on during 6, 7, & 8 January. On 7 January the Division Command Post moved from the Belgian Barracks in BASTOGNE, which was still absorbing considerable enemy artillery fire and aerial bombardment, to ISLE LE PRE (P5356). A Division Rear Command Post was opened at SIBRET (P4954).

On 9 January an attack to seize NOVILLE (P5864) was initiated on Division order by the 506th Parachute Infantry. By this time the 17th Airborne Division, which had previously relieved the 11th Armored Division on our left, was moving up and was effecting relief of the 327th Glider Infantry.

10 January orders were issued to continue attack on NOVILLE and clear north portion of BOIS JACQUES. Relief of the 327th Combat Team was completed by the 17th Airborne Division, thus shortening our lines. The 501st Parachute Infantry, which had seized RECOGNE (P5763) the night before, was then relieved by 327th Glider Infantry and attacked to seize BOIS JACQUES. In the Afternoon the regiments withdrew to their original MLR's and held these positions on 11 January.

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On 12 January orders were issued to clear the northern portion of BOIS JACQUES, capture high ground in the vicinity of BOURCY (P6264), and capture FOY (P5762). At this time supporting troops and attachments were as follows:

501st Parachute Infantry

Attached: Btry B, 81st Abn AA Bn  
Co B, 811th TD Bn  
907th G11 FA Bn (Direct Support)

502nd Parachute Infantry (-3rd Bn)

Attached: Btry C, 81st Abn AA Bn  
Co C, 705th TD Bn  
Team Cherry, CC B, 10th Armored Div  
1st and 2nd Plat, Co C, 326th Abn Engr Bn  
377th Prcht FA Bn (Direct Support)

506th Parachute Infantry

Attached: Btry A, 81st Abn AA Bn  
Co C, 609th TD Bn  
3rd Plat, Co C, 326th Abn Engr Bn  
321st G11 FA Bn (Direct Support)

327th Glider Infantry

Attached: Co B, 705th TD Bn  
Co A, 326th Abn Engr Bn  
463rd Prcht FA Bn (Direct Support)

General Support Artillery:

420th AFA Bn  
687th FA Bn  
755th FA Bn

Division Reserve:

3rd Bn, 502nd Parachute Infantry  
705th TD Bn (- Co B & C)  
326th Abn Engr Bn (-Co A & C)

By 0900, 13 January 1945, the 506th Parachute Infantry had seized FOY. On the night before the 502nd Parachute Infantry had been relieved in its sector by 11th Armored.

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Division and jumped off in the attack at 0830. The 501st Parachute Infantry had cleared BOIS JACQUES to a line P580618 - P591613 on the 12th. At 0915 on 13 January the 327th Glider Infantry attacked through the positions of the 501st Parachute Infantry in BOIS JACQUES.

On 14 January the Division continued its attack to seize the NOVILLE (P5864) BOURCY (P6264) RACHAMPS (P6067) area. At 0700 the 506th Parachute Infantry withdrew from FOY under heavy enemy armor-infantry pressure and re-occupied the town at 1000. The next day NOVILLE and high ground to the northwest were seized by the 506th Parachute Infantry. The Division continued its attack on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of January with the line BOURCY-NEUFMOULIN (P6264-P6168) as the final objective. By 1030 on 17 January, when the 502nd Parachute Infantry completed the seizure of BOURCY, all objectives of the Division had been taken.

The attacks of the last several days were coordinated with attacks of the 6th Armored Division on the right and the 11th Armored Division on the left. By means of Commanders' conferences, excellent liaison work, good communications, and continuous front line flank contact, the 3 divisions were mutually supporting to the distinct advantage of all concerned. The fighting

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had been carried on under the most difficult of conditions; heavy snow covered the ground, the terrain was rolling and thickly wooded, the enemy was stubborn and well dug-in. The enemy threw everything he had at our troops; intense small arms fire, nebelwerfer and assorted artillery, armor sometimes dug-in as a direct fire weapon, sometimes mobile in its primary offensive role, and, as always, a few used as roving artillery. Fighter-bomber support furnished by XIX TAC was of great assistance during these attacks.

On the morning of 17 January the 101st Airborne Division was ordered into Corps Reserve, and by 0800 on 18 January, relief of the division by the 11th Armored and 17th Airborne Divisions was completed. Units were assembled and moving to rear areas, but before this move was completed, orders for the Division to proceed to Alsace to participate in operations there with the Seventh Army were received.

Accordingly plans were made to move the Division to the vicinity of DRULINGEN, a distance of 162 miles. The usual transportation problem was solved in this case by 112 loton trucks and 98 2½ton trucks furnished by VIII Corps and Third Army. The movement itself, however, turned out to be an exceedingly difficult and uncomfortable journey from the very start. Our engineer battalion, which had been engaged mainly in road clearance work for the past

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two weeks, now had to work night and day clearing roads in bivouac areas and assisting trucks in getting onto the main highway. They were reinforced by a battalion of Corps Engineers and extra Corps equipment. The first regiment departed for the Seventh Army area on the afternoon of 19 January, and the movement of the entire Division was not completed until 22 January. Because of heavy snows prior to and during the movement the majority of the convoys consumed 36 hours on the road in completing the trip.

Upon arrival in the DRULINGEN AREA (V6030) the Division was ordered to take over a quiet sector of the XV Corps front, and preparations were being made to move into position. However, before taking over this sector, the Division was ordered to VI Corps. This necessitated a movement from DRULINGEN to the vicinity of HOCHFELDEN (Q8817), which was made with little difficulty, the Division closing in this area on 26 January.

On 27 January relief of the 222nd Infantry along the south bank of the MODER RIVER from SCHWEIGHAUSEN (Q0025) west to (Q9427) was completed with the 327th Glider Infantry on the right and the 501st Parachute Infantry on the left. On 31 January our sector was extended 3500 yards to the west to include PFAFFENOFFEN

(Q9027), the 506th Parachute Infantry taking over the new sector. From the 27th to the 31st of January our operations consisted of manning the defensive line along the river, reconnaissance patrolling, and harassing enemy positions with our artillery. The enemy on the opposite side of the river was likewise engaged in sporadic artillery and mortar fire on our positions and some patrolling.

The period of relative quiet in this sector afforded our troops some time for rest, recreation, re-equipping, and cleaning up. Accordingly, shower baths were set up, moving pictures were secured and shown, a Red Cross Club was installed in HOCHFELDEN, three of our Red Cross girls moved into the area with doughnuts, mail service was established, and regular distribution of Stars & Stripes was made. Most of the troops were now under a roof of some kind, which was a welcome change from the fox-holes occupied by the majority in the Bastogne Area. Arrangements were made to procure replacements for property shortages, and many of these shortages were made up before the close of the period. As of 31 January 1945 our effective combat strength was 674 officers and 8968.

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NND 6735017

HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
APO 472 U. S. Army

By Pernell / ds MRS, Date 7/22/00

AFTER ACTION REPORT for JANUARY 1945

Narrative

At the opening of this period the 101st Airborne Division was still engaged in defending BASTOGNE from heavy enemy attacks on the west, north, and east of the town. Contact had been made with the 4th Armored Division, which had fought its way to the BASTOGNE area from the south. Our wounded had been evacuated, and supplies were rolling in on trucks instead of being dropped via parachute and glider.

The countryside was heavily laden with snow, and although our troops had adapted themselves to the cold and snow as much as possible, the overshoes and certain additional heavy clothing, which were brought up at this time and during the next week were most welcome. Vehicles were camouflaged with white paint, and a limited number of the much needed white snow suits were supplied.

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Effective strength at the beginning of the period was 766 officers and 10,147 enlisted men.

On New Years Day, 1945, the Division continued to maintain its defenses of BASTOGNE and assist by artillery fire the attack of the 11th Armored Division on our left and the 6th Armored Division on our right.

On 2 January, CC B, 10th Armored Division, with Co F, 327th Glider Infantry attached, attacked and occupied SENONCHAIPS (P5157) and the high ground to the north of the town. Next day the 327th Glider Infantry established patrol contact with 11th Armored Division at MANDE ST ETIENNE (P5059). The 506th Parachute Infantry cleared a portion of BOIS JACQUES (P580619) - (P591614). The 501st Parachute Infantry was relieved in its sector by the 6th Armored Division and assembled in preparation to clear the north portion of BOIS JACQUES.

At this time four enemy divisions were in contact with the 101st Airborne Division, and information from a PW indicated a coordinated enemy attack. Task Force Higgins was therefor organized on 3 January 1945. Brigadier General G. J. Higgins, Assistant Division Commander, was placed in command, and his troops consisted of the following:

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327th Glider Infantry

502nd Parachute Infantry

Team Cherry, CC B, 10th Armored Division

Companies B & C, 705th TD Battalion.

Although the force of the expected enemy attack was considerably lessened by our heavy artillery concentration on the enemy assembly areas, the attack was the heaviest to date. A strong tank and infantry attack was repulsed by Task Force Higgins in the vicinity of MONOVILLE (P5463) between 1330 and 2200 on the 3rd. In the meantime 2nd Battalion, 327th Glider Infantry was attached to 502nd Parachute Infantry for the purpose of restoring the MLR, which had been breached by this attack. 501st Parachute Infantry attacked in BOIS JACQUES at noon but later withdrew to a line P594615-P600603, in order to strengthen their position and establish contact with the 6th Armored Division on the right.

On 4 January Task Force Higgins again threw back a strong tank-infantry attack in the vicinity of CHAMPS (P5262) between the hours of 0500 and 1200. 1st Battalion, 502nd Parachute Infantry counterattacked to restore our MLR, which had been breached by the German attack. During the morning a light enemy tank attack was repulsed by the 501st Parachute Infantry also. Although our troops knocked out 20 enemy armored vehicles during the 48 hour period 3 - 4 January, the enemy attacks were not as heavy as had been expected. This was due in a large part to our accurate and devastating artillery fire, which was made possible by good intelligence.

Task Force Higgins was dissolved on 5 January, and the Division continued maintaining defensive positions and re-grouping of forces.

Active patrolling along the regimental fronts was carried on during 6, 7, & 8 January. On 7 January the Division Command Post moved from the Belgian Barracks in BASTOGNE, which was still absorbing considerable enemy artillery fire and aerial bombardment, to ISLE LE PRE (P5356). A Division Rear Command Post was opened at SIBRET (P4954).

On 9 January an attack to seize NOVILLE (P5864) was initiated on Division order by the 506th Parachute Infantry. By this time the 17th Airborne Division, which had previously relieved the 11th Armored Division on our left, was moving up and was effecting relief of the 327th Glider Infantry.

10 January orders were issued to continue attack on NOVILLE and clear north portion of BOIS JACQUES. Relief of the 327th Combat Team was completed by the 17th Airborne Division, thus shortening

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our lines. The 501st Parachute Infantry which had seized RECOGNE (P5763) the night before was then relieved by 327th Glider Infantry and attacked to seize BOIS JACQUES. In the afternoon the regiments withdrew to their original MLR's, and held these positions on 11 January.

On 12 January orders were issued to clear the northern portion of BOIS JACQUES, capture high ground in the vicinity of BOURCY (P6264), and capture FOY (P5762). At this time supporting troops and attachments were as follows:

501st Parachute Infantry

Attached: Btry B, 81st Abn AA Bn  
Co B, 811th TD Bn  
907th Gli FA Bn (Direct Support)

502nd Parachute Infantry (-3rd Bn)

Attached: Btry C, 81st Abn AA Bn  
Co C, 705th TD Bn  
Team Cherry, CC B, 10th Armored Division  
1st & 2nd Plat, Co C, 326th Abn Engr Bn  
377th Precht FA Bn (Direct Support)

506th Parachute Infantry

Attached: Btry A, 81st Abn AA Bn  
Co C, 609th TD Bn  
3rd Plat, Co C, 326th Abn Engr Bn  
321st Gli FA Bn (Direct Support)

327th Glider Infantry

Attached: Co B, 705th TD Bn  
Co A, 326th Abn Engr Bn  
463rd Precht FA Bn (Direct Support)

General Support Artillery:

420th AFA Bn  
687th FA Bn  
755th FA Bn

Division Reserve:

3rd Bn, 502nd Parachute Infantry  
705th TD Bn (-Co B & C)  
326th Abn Engr Bn (-Co A & C)

By 0900, 13 January 1945 the 506th Parachute Infantry had seized FOY. On the night before the 502nd Parachute Infantry had been relieved in its sector by 11th Armored Division and jumped off in the attack at 0830. The 501st Parachute Infantry had cleared BOIS JACQUES to a line P580618 - P 591613 on the 12th. At 0915 on 13 January the 327th Glider Infantry attacked through the positions of the 501st Parachute Infantry in BOIS JACQUES.

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On 14 January the Division continued its attack to seize the NOVILLE (P5864) BOURCY (P6264) RACHAMPS (P6067) area. At 0700 the 506th Parachute Infantry withdrew from FOY under heavy enemy armor-infantry pressure and re-occupied the town at 1000. The next day NOVILLE and high ground to the northwest were seized by the 506th Parachute Infantry. The Division continued its attack on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of January with the line BOURCY-NEUFMOULIN (P6264-P6168) as the final objective. By 1030 on 17 January, when the 502nd Parachute Infantry completed the seizure of BOURCY, all objectives of the Division had been taken.

The attacks of the last several days were coordinated with attacks of the 6th Armored Division on the right and the 11th Armored Division on the left. By means of Commanders conferences, excellent liaison work, good communications, and continuous front line flank contact the 3 divisions were mutually supporting to the distinct advantage of all concerned. The fighting had been carried on under the most difficult of conditions; heavy snow covered the ground, the terrain was rolling and much of it thickly wooded, the enemy was stubborn and well dug-in. The enemy threw everything he had at our troops; intense small arms fire, nebelwerfer and assorted artillery, armor sometimes dug-in as a direct fire weapon, sometimes mobile in its primary offensive role, and as always a few used as roving artillery. Fighter-bomber support furnished by XIX TAC was of great assistance during these attacks.

On the morning of 17 January the 101st Airborne Division was ordered into Corps Reserve, and by 0800 on 18 January relief of the division by the 11 Armored and 17th Airborne Divisions was completed. Units were assembled and moving to rear areas, but before this move was completed, orders for the Division to proceed to Alsace to participate in operations there with the Seventh Army were received.

Accordingly plans were made to move the Division to the vicinity of DRULINGEN, a distance of 162 miles. The usual transportation problem was solved in this case by 112 10ton trucks and 98 2½ton trucks furnished by VIII Corps and Third Army. The movement itself, however, turned out to be an exceedingly difficult and uncomfortable journey from the very start. Our engineer battalion, which had been engaged mainly in road clearance work for the past two weeks, now had to work night and day clearing roads in bivouac areas and assisting trucks in getting onto the main highway. They were reinforced by a battalion of Corps Engineers and extra Corps equipment. The first regiment departed for the Seventh Army area on the afternoon of 19 January, and the movement of the entire Division was not completed until 22 January. Because of heavy snows prior to and during the movement the majority of the convoys consumed 36 hours 12 on the road in completing the trip.

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Upon arrival in the DRULINGEN area (V6030) the Division was ordered to take over a quiet sector of the XV Corps front, and preparations were being made to move into position. However, before taking over this sector, the Division was ordered to VI Corps. This necessitated a movement from DRULINGEN to the vicinity of HOCHFELDEN (Q8817), which was made with little difficulty, the Division closing in this area on 26 January.

On 27 January relief of the 222nd Infantry along the south bank of the MODER RIVER from SCHWEIGHAUSEN (Q0025) west to (Q9427) was completed with the 327th Glider Infantry on the right and the 501st Parachute Infantry on the left. On 31 January our sector was extended 3500 yards to the west to include PFAFFENOFFEN (Q9027), the 506th Parachute Infantry taking over the new sector. From the 27th to the 31st of January our operations consisted of manning the defensive line along the river, reconnaissance patrolling, and harassing enemy positions with our artillery. The enemy on the opposite side of the river was likewise engaged in sporadic artillery and mortar fire on our positions and some patrolling.

The period of relative quiet in this sector afforded our troops some time for rest, recreation, re-equipping, and cleaning up. Accordingly, shower baths were set up, moving pictures were secured and shown, a Red Cross Club was installed in HOCHFELDEN; three of our Red Cross girls moved into the area with doughnuts, mail service was established, and regular distribution of Stars & Stripes was made. Most of our troops were now under a roof of some kind, which was a welcome change from the fox-holes occupied by the majority in the Bastogne area. Arrangements were made to procure replacements for property shortages, and many of these shortages were made up before the close of the period. As of 31 January 1945 our effective combat strength was 674 officers and 8968 enlisted men.

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910 KMS. West

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