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HEADQUARTERS 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 35 U. S. ARMY

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20 Nov 45 HSD
Date Initials

14 January 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against The Enemy Report.

TO: The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

1. In compliance with C-3, Par. 10, AR 345-105, the following report of action against the enemy by the 35th Infantry Division during the period of 1 December 1944 to 31 December 1944, inclusive, is submitted.

2. The 35th Infantry Division, with the exception of one Battalion, began December 1944, its sixth month in combat in World War II, in Corps Reserve. Although rest, rehabilitation, and cleaning of weapons and equipment had a high priority, combat training classes were also conducted. Firing of weapons, assault of pillboxes, and the use of special assault equipment were included in the training. The assembly areas for the regiments were as follows: The 1st and 2d Battalions, of the 137th Infantry, were at BENING, BISTROFF, and HARPRICH, and the Regiment's 3d Battalion was assembled in the towns of FREMESTROFF, ALTRIPPE, and LEYVILLER, with the mission of protecting the Division N flank. The 134th Infantry assembled its troops in LIXING, VAHLEBERSING, LELLING, and BIDING; the 320th Infantry being at PONTPIERRE, GUESSLING, and VAHL.

The Division's period in Corps Reserve during December, however, was short-lived and lasted less than one day. At 2300 on 1 December the order to relieve elements of the 6th Armored Division during the night of 2-3 December was given to unit commanders. Following this relief, the Division was to attack at 0400 on 4 December and seize objectives in the vicinity of ERNSTVILLER, HECKENRANSBACH, and GRUNDVILLER. (See figure 1) The Division was then to continue the attack over the SARRE RIVER. The 134th Infantry with Company A, of the 60th Engineer (C) Battalion, and Company A, of the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion, in direct support, was on the left; and the 320th Infantry, supported by Company C, of the 60th Engineer (C) Battalion, and Company C, of the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion, was on the right. The 137th Infantry constituted division reserve. Supporting the Division was the 182d Field Artillery Group (one light and one medium Battalion reinforcing fires of the 216th Field Artillery Battalion), the 1135th Engineer (C) Group, and two truck companies, the 443d and 2905th.

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Relief of the 6th Armored Division went off as planned. The first unit to move to the front was the 3d Battalion, of the 320th Infantry, which closed into KAPPELKINGER at 0100 on 2 December. The 134th Infantry closed into vicinity of ST. JEAN ROHRBACH at 1540 and the 3d Battalion relieved elements of COMBAT COMMAND B, of the 6th Armored Division, by 2210. During the afternoon, the 320th Infantry had its 1st Battalion move to vicinity of INSMING and its 2d Battalion to vicinity of HILSPRICH. The 137th Infantry, in division reserve, moved its Battalions to LINSTROFF, ERSTROFF, and GRENING.

The 134th and 320th Infantry Regiments were now on the line of departure poised for the attack. (See figure 1) At 0400 on 4 December, during the blackness of early morning, both regiments jumped off. To produce the element of surprise, no artillery preparation preceded the attack. It was hoped the enemy would be caught napping and this was found to be true in the 134th Infantry sector. The leading battalions, the 1st and 2d, silently moved toward and into PUTTELANGE and captured sleeping enemy soldiers in foxholes and buildings. Seventy-three prisoners of war were taken in this action. Once awake the enemy countered with small arms, mortar, and artillery fire. But the damage had been done and by 0930 PUTTELANGE was declared clear by the 1st Battalion and the 2d Battalion had taken the high ground N of the town. During this time, the 3d Battalion, in regimental reserve, moved to a new assembly area at DIFFENBACH. In the afternoon and evening the two Battalions drove on to clear GUEBENHOUSE and ERNSTVILLER and outposted the towns during the night.

The element of surprise in the 320th Infantry sector was less successful. Immediately after jumping off, it ran into an enemy column of foot soldiers. The 2d Battalion, on the left, met heavy enemy resistance consisting of small arms and automatic fire, after crossing the stream N of REMERING. The 3d Battalion met considerably lighter resistance in securing the village of DIDERFING. And at 0810 the Battalion had one company entering BETTRING, another company immediately following. The Battalion then advanced on HOLVING, left one company to clear it, and proceeded. At 1850, the 1st Battalion moved from regimental reserve to advance toward BALLERING, seizing the town at 0110 the morning of 5 December. That night the Battalion proved that anti-tank minefields can be used effectively in offensive combat. Fearing the enemy might move down the road SE into the town and strike the Battalion, which had not been able to bring up its anti-tank guns, the Battalion Commander ordered a hasty minefield be laid on the road with machine guns covering the minefield. It paid dividends. Several hours later a column of enemy vehicles moved down the road. The lead vehicle hit a mine and exploded. The Battalion's machine guns opened immediately and peppered the column. The enemy turned and ran.

The morning of 5 December found the attack continuing at 0800. The 134th Infantry advanced rapidly. Taking HECKENSBRENSBACH and WOUSTVILLER quickly, the Regiment had the 2d Battalion in the outskirts of SARREGUEMINES and the 1st Battalion sent patrols through the FORET DE SARREGUEMINES to the SARRE RIVER by dark. The 3d Battalion moved to a new assembly area in the vicinity of NEUFGRANGE and pushed advance elements to the high ground overlooking the SARRE RIVER.

The 320th Infantry's drive proceeded the morning of 5 December. The 1st Battalion moved on and seized RICHELING and continued to advance to the vicinity

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of WILLERWALD. The 2d Battalion reached GRUNDVILLER at 0840 and went on to HECKENRANSBACH, previously taken by the 134th Infantry, HAMBACH, and then secured SILTZHEIM. The 3d Battalion, in regimental reserve, followed the 2d Battalion and closed into HAMBACH at 1900. All Battalions conducted reconnaissance of the SARRE RIVER during the night. On 7 and 8 December, the Division moved closer to the river, made reconnaissance and preparations to cross the river. In the 134th Infantry zone, the 2d Battalion cleared SARREGUEMINES as far E as the SARRE RIVER.

The 320th Infantry's 2d Battalion sent Company F to the high ground W of ZETTING and the 3d Battalion dispatched Company L to WITTRING, both of which are river towns. The 137th Infantry, meanwhile, had moved to new assembly positions at RICHELING, HOLVING, BALLERING, DIDERFING, and BERTERING.

The order for the Division to cross the SARRE RIVER the morning of 8 December was issued the night before. During the night, the 134th and 320th Infantry Regiments continued their reconnaissance of the river and made preparations for the crossing. At 0500 the crossing began.

The 134th Infantry's 1st Battalion crossed at the railroad bridge S of SARREGUEMINES and completed the crossing at 0525. The 2d and 3d Battalions were both over 90 minutes later. Heavy resistance was then encountered. The 1st Battalion moved NE along the right side of the railroad tracks methodically clearing out the buildings in that vicinity. On the left side of the tracks, the 2d Battalion progressed and by noon entered the woods SE of SARREGUEMINES. Both Battalions battled heavy small arms and 20 mm fire. Along the E bank of the river, the 3d Battalion advanced rapidly and mopped up the town of SARREINSMING during the morning.

At 1130 the enemy counterattacked the 2d Battalion. From 13 to 15 tanks carrying infantry bore down upon the Battalion from NEUNKIRCHEN. In 15 minutes the enemy was dispersed and the attack broken up when fire from all organic, reinforcing and Corps artillery was brought down upon it. The rest of the afternoon the 2d and 3d Battalions made little gain but the 1st Battalion cleared STEMBACH, a small village bordered on the N by the railroad tracks and on the W by the SARRE RIVER.

In the 320th Infantry sector, the 2d Battalion, crossing by assault boats, landed on the E shore at 0745 where enemy machine gun fire was met. In the middle of the Regimental zone, the 1st Battalion crossed and pushed its bridgehead as far E as DIDERING, which it cleared. The crossing of the 3d Battalion was held up at ZETTING by direct fire from the E bank. The 1st and 2d Battalions gained a few hundred yards the remainder of the day and made preparations to continue the next morning. Under the cover of darkness that night, the 3d Battalion crossed at WITTRING on a foot-bridge constructed by the 60th Engineer (C) Battalion.

The enemy attempted a second counterattack against the Division on 8 December when tanks and infantry moved against the 320th Infantry. Once again, artillery, this time assisted by an air strike, broke up the attack. Organic and reinforcing artillery fired a TOT, immediately followed by the air strike,

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which, in turn, was followed by ~~another 100~~ by heavy Corps artillery. In addition, 12 Tank Destroyers from the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion fired on the attacking force from positions W of the SARRE RIVER, and knocked out at least one tank.

During this time, the 60th Engineer (C) Battalion and the supporting 1135th Engineer (C) Group attempted to construct vehicular bridges in the vicinity of WITTRING and SARREINSMING but extremely heavy enemy artillery fire prevented it.

The 137th Infantry on 8 December moved its Battalions to HAMBACH, SILTZHEIM, and NEUFGRANGE.

On 9 December the 35th Infantry Division enlarged its bridgehead over the SARRE RIVER. However, the 134th Infantry made little gain due to very heavy enemy fire. The 1st and 2d Battalions held their positions and the 3d Battalion gained several hundred yards in capturing hill 271.

The 320th Infantry had more success on 9 December. Its 3d Battalion drove NE at 0800 and seized hill 311, located a kilometer N of WITTRING. There it made contact with the 1st Battalion on the left and the 328th Infantry, of the 26th Infantry Division, on the right. Pushing on two more kilometers, the Battalion secured WEISVILLER by nightfall. Attacking in conjunction with the 3d Battalion, the 1st Battalion reached positions 300 yards N of the ZETTINGWEISVILLER road when darkness came. The 2d Battalion moved E, cleared the small woods SE of ZETTING; switched its attack to the N, and reached the S edge of the LE LEHWALD forest.

The 137th Infantry, in reserve since the beginning of the attack, prepared to move into the fight. Its 1st Battalion was dispatched to the SW part of SARREQUIMINES, closing at 0835, when it began clearing snipers in SARREQUIMINES. The remainder of the Regiment moved to the W bank of the river during darkness of 9-10 December, preparatory to crossing.

During this time, engineers of the 60th Engineer (C) Battalion and the 1135th Engineer (C) Group had difficulty constructing vehicular bridges across the river. Enemy artillery was so intense it was practically impossible to work on the bridge. Despite this handicap, they managed to complete the class 40 bridges at SARREINSMING at 2235 and at WITTRING at 2217. Construction of these bridges was greatly facilitated by the assistance of the 81st Chemical Smoke Generating Company which smoked the bridge sites effectively enough to prevent enemy observation. The company, composed of Negro soldiers, accomplished its first mission in combat despite severe artillery concentrations directed against it. Seven casualties were suffered.

On 10 December all Regiments continued the drive to enlarge the bridgehead at 0730. Continuing the attack astride the railroad track toward the NE, the 1st and 3d Battalions, of the 134th Infantry, punched at strong enemy resistance in FOLPERSVILLER and gained the high ground SE of the town overlooking the BLIES RIVER. The 2d Battalion, meanwhile, cleared out the forest of LE GRAND BOES and assembled in Regimental reserve in the NW portion of the woods.

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At daylight, the 2d and 3d Battalions, of the 137th Infantry, crossed the SARRE RIVER at the railroad bridge and immediately attacked. The 3d Battalion cleared a factory in SE SARREGUEMINES and drove NE to seize NEUNKIRCHEN. The 2d Battalion became engaged in bitter hand to hand combat, fighting from machine to machine with bayonet, rifle, machine gun, and hand grenade in a large porcelain factory E of SARREGUEMINES. This fierce fighting continued for four hours before the enemy finally withdrew. The 1st Battalion remained in SARREGUEMINES on the W side of the river.

During this time, the 320th Infantry's 1st and 2d Battalions flushed the LE LEHWALD forest. The 1st Battalion then drove on to seize PETIT VIESING FME and GRANDE VIESING FME while the 2d Battalion extended its positions to the E to include the whole N edge of the LE LEHWALD with the mission of holding the position against possible counterattack. On the right of the 1st Battalion, the 3d Battalion moved as far N as the CR about a kilometer E of the LE LEHWALD.

The Division on 11 December drove to the GERMAN border with only the BLIES RIVER between it and GERMAN soil. During the morning, the 1st Battalion, of the 134th Infantry, entered FOLPERSVILLER, and during the afternoon and evening pushed toward FRAUENBERG. The 3d Battalion cleared BLIES-EBERSING, putting both Battalions on the W banks of the BLIES RIVER.

During the morning of 11 December, the 3d Battalion, of the 137th Infantry, moved on to capture the huge airport E of SARREGUEMINES and pushed on to the BLIES RIVER to seize FRAUENBERG. The 2d Battalion continued mopping up E SARREGUEMINES, capturing a German prisoner of war camp, liberating approximately 1000 Russian, Polish, and Italian prisoners of war, some of whom had been captives of the Nazis for five years. The 1st Battalion, during this time, moved to the E part of SARREGUEMINES and occupied that part of the town.

In the 320th Infantry sector, the 1st and 3d Battalions advanced N. The 3d Battalion pushed to within one kilometer of BLIESBRUCK where it was halted by heavy enemy fire. On the left, the 1st Battalion drove to the railroad where it stopped for the night and sent patrols to the BLIES RIVER. The 2d Battalion remained in Regimental reserve.

At 0500 on 12 December, Companies B and C, of the 134th Infantry, crossed the BLIES RIVER in assault boats and moved into the town of HABKIRCHEN, GERMANY. The two companies were the first infantry in the Division and XII Corps to occupy GERMAN soil in considerable force. However, members of the two Companies were not the first individuals to set foot on GERMAN ground. Previously, at 0100 on 12 December, a patrol of one officer and three enlisted men from Company K, of the 137th Infantry, crossed the BLIES RIVER into GERMANY, reconnoitered landing sites on the E bank and returned. In HABKIRCHEN, the enemy facing Companies B and C was determined and stubborn and fought hard enough to prevent the Companies from making any further progress. The 3d Battalion, which was to cross the river on the left of the 1st Battalion, was unable to do so because of the intense artillery and small arms fire. It remained in the vicinity of BLIES-EBERSING.

No gain was reported in the 137th Infantry zone. The 1st Battalion began its mission of protecting the division left flank by patrolling the BLIES RIVER where it runs S past SARREGUEMINES into the SARRE RIVER and had its defenses

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tested by groups of enemy who would move to the GERMAN border and fire across the BLIES.

Against a hail of machine gun and tank fire, the 3d Battalion, of the 320th Infantry, inched its way forward to the outskirts of the river town of BLIESBRUCK. Resistance was fierce and even with the aid of an air strike by P-47 Thunderbolts, the Battalion was unable to enter the town. In the left portion of the 320th Infantry sector, the 1st Battalion made preparations to cross the river at a point about a kilometer NW of BLIESBRUCK. Assault companies protected the engineering equipment as it was brought forward to the river's bank.

The third counterattack of the month directed against the division occurred at 0015 on 13 December and consisted of armored vehicles and infantry. The brunt of the attack was received by B and C Companies of the 134th Infantry. The attack threatened the Companies' positions in HABKIRCHEN on the E bank of the BLIES RIVER. Although their lines bent, the riflemen fought back stubbornly and held their positions. Heavy fighting continued until 0400.

During the early morning darkness of 13 December, the 35th Infantry Division began its offensive, which, if successful, would force the enemy in the division zone of advance to do all his fighting on his home ground. But first a bridgehead over the BLIES RIVER, the last major obstacle before the SIGFRIED LINE, had to be established. Following a successful river crossing, the plan was for the 137th Infantry to seize the ground in the vicinity of BLIESRANSBACH, the 134th Infantry the area in the vicinity of WOLFERSHEIM, and the 320th Infantry had the limited objective of NIEDER-GALLBACH, and the area to the S of it. (See figure 2) If successful, the drive would place the division at the gates of the SIGFRIED LINE.

At 0400 the attack moved off with L Company and part of I Company, of the 134th Infantry, crossing the river and entering HABKIRCHEN. There they joined forces with the 1st Battalion (A Company had previously crossed the river) and at 0843 repulsed a counterattack in the town together. The remainder of the day was spent in holding the town and in getting the remaining elements of the 3d Battalion across the river. The 2d Battalion, in regimental reserve, moved to BLIES-EBERSING.

Also jumping off to cross the river at 0400, the 137th Infantry succeeded in crossing elements of its 3d Battalion just N of HABKIRCHEN. Extremely heavy fire from entrenched enemy on dominating ground to the N prevented any other elements from crossing and those across from movement. The 1st Battalion continued the mission of protecting the division left flank. This flank protection was necessary because the enemy still held the salient bordered on the W by the SARRE RIVER and on the E by the BLIES RIVER that sticks out like a peninsula at, and N of, SARREGUEMINES.

Attacking an hour earlier than the rest of the Division (0300), the 1st Battalion, of the 320th Infantry, crossed the river and attacked strategic hill 312, NW of BLIESBRUCK. Against comparatively light resistance, it reached the hill by close of daylight. From this ground, the Battalion commanded the area

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as far N as REINHEIM. The 3d Battalion, during the morning, smashed at the enemy-filled houses in BLIESBRUCK with the support of tank destroyers from the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion and Company C, of the 737th Tank Battalion, but made only small gains. However, by afternoon, it managed to clear a portion of the town. Stiff resistance continued. The 2d Battalion remained in Regimental reserve.

Heavy fire from enemy held high ground N of the BLIES RIVER continued to slow the progress of the Division on 14 December. The 2d Battalion, of the 134th Infantry, crossed the river at 0400 in the 320th Infantry zone and advanced to the area a kilometer NE of BLIES-EBERSING. Clearing HABKIRCHEN house by house, the 1st and 3d Battalions pushed further into the town. All front line troops of the 134th Infantry were now in GERMANY.

The 137th Infantry's 3d Battalion moved its remaining elements across the river and engaged the enemy in HABKIRCHEN with the 1st and 3d Battalions, of the 134th Infantry. At 1000 it drove toward the Regiment's first objective.

At 0500, the 2d Battalion, of the 320th Infantry, moved out of Regimental reserve to attack N in conjunction with the 347th Infantry, of the 87th Infantry Division, and reached positions about a kilometer W of BLIESBRUCK. The 1st Battalion remained on hill 312 but dispatched Company A to clear the remaining enemy from BLIESBRUCK while the 3d Battalion attacked N and reached positions about a kilometer N of BLIESBRUCK.

Division and reinforcing artillery played a vital role in the establishment of the bridgehead across the BLIES RIVER and the drive into GERMANY. Firing numerous TOTs, harassing and interdiction fires, the artillery had devastating effect on the enemy and was responsible for breaking up several counterattacks. The effect of the artillery on the enemy is well brought out by the statements of prisoners of war taken in this action, as reported by division IPW teams. This is what three of the prisoners said:

Sergeant from the 9th Co., 38th Regt., 17th SS Division:
 The Battalion of which this PW was a member came into position on the high ground E of HABKIRCHEN, two days before he was captured. His Battalion received artillery fire, light and medium caliber, after midnight on 12 December. The artillery came in concentrations and as single rounds. The PW estimated there were at least 50% casualties in the Battalion during the night. The artillery fire forced them to withdraw to the woods to the NE. The next morning they were ordered to return to their original position to prepare for a counter-attack. They were to be reinforced for the counterattack with rear echelon troops and others.

Corporal from the 5th Co., 165th Regt., 36th Division:
 The Battalion came to the area E of HABKIRCHEN from BOLCHEN and to the BOLCHEN area from FORBACH. The PW stated that the mission of the Battalion was to blow the bridge at HABKIRCHEN, destroy the bridgehead, and take up positions near the bridge site. Most of the artillery went over his company, but landed on the units following. He said the artillery fire was very heavy and accurate and that it landed squarely in the lanes of attack.

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1st Lt, Fus. Co., 165th Regt., 36th Division: This PW was company commander of the Fus. Company, formerly the Fus. Battalion. He received an order to attack the American bridgehead at HABKIRCHEN during the early morning hours of 13 December. His company moved out and was caught in artillery fire at BLEISMENGEN. It suffered some casualties there and the PW ordered his men to take cover in the cellars of the town. The attack was continued from BLEISMENGEN about 0500-0530 on the morning of 14 December. His company again received artillery fire this time about 300 yards N of HABKIRCHEN along the road. It suffered a good many casualties and the attack was broken up. A portion of his company fled and the balance dispersed and were either killed or captured. This attack was to have been coordinated with an attack by the 17 SS from the high ground to the E of HABKIRCHEN. He said he asked for artillery support from the German artillery but it never came. He described the artillery as being very heavy and entirely too accurate. His information indicated that the American bridgehead was very lightly held, only four houses in HABKIRCHEN were thought to be occupied.

The drive into Germany continued to be resisted stubbornly on 15 December. The 134th Infantry's 1st and 3d Battalions attacked the few remaining strongpoints in HABKIRCHEN, accounting the town clear by noon. The 1st Battalion then became Regimental reserve and the 2d Battalion moved NW and pushed into BANNHOLZ woods by the end of the day. The 2d Battalion held its positions a kilometer NE of BLIES-EBERSING and patrolled the woods to the N.

While the 1st Battalion, of the 137th Infantry, continued to protect the division left flank and the 2d Battalion, less G Company, remained in Regimental reserve, the 3d Battalion, with G Company attached, attacked the Regiment's 1st objective, reaching it early in the morning. The Battalion continued N, entered BRIETTERWALD woods, where it received a counterattack consisting of 5 enemy tanks and 75 infantrymen. Driven from the S edge of the woods, the Battalion fell back to positions S of hill 330. Supported by artillery and tanks, the Battalion counterattacked immediately but was unable to re-enter the woods. Company B, of the 737th Tank Battalion, was attached to the regiment at 1855.

During the morning of 15 December, the 1st Battalion, of the 320th Infantry, had Company A continue mopping up BLIESBRUCK on the N side of the BLIES RIVER while the remainder of the Battalion drove on to an area W of REINHEIM. The 2d Battalion overcame heavy resistance and seized NIEDER-GALLBACH during the afternoon. The 3d Battalion supported the attack on REINHEIM.

The push into GERMANY continued to make progress slowly. Resistance remained stiff and comparatively few prisoners were taken. On 16 December, the 2d Battalion, of the 134th Infantry, was attached to the 137th Infantry and went into position in the 137th Infantry zone. It then attacked with the 3d Battalion, of the 134th Infantry, driving into the woods about a kilometer N

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of REINHEIM. The 1st Battalion, of the 137th Infantry, which had been protecting the division left flank, was relieved of this mission by the 2d Cavalry Group during the afternoon.

In the 320th Infantry sector, the 1st Battalion cleared REINHEIM and moved to hill 352 to maintain contact with the 3d Battalion on the right and the 2d Battalion, of the 134th Infantry, on the left. The 2d and 3d Battalions worked together to attack and seize GERSHEIM. The town, separated by the BLIES RIVER, was occupied in the E portion by the 2d Battalion and in the W by the 3d Battalion.

The morning of 17 December, the Division attacked again. The 2d and 3d Battalions, of the 134th Infantry, continued clearing the woods N of REINHEIM. During the afternoon, the 3d Battalion was relieved by the 1st Battalion, of the 137th Infantry, and moved to an assembly area vicinity of FOLPERSVILLER for rest and reorganization.

The 137th Infantry's 3d Battalion attempted assault after assault on the BREITERWALD forest but made little progress and suffered heavy casualties. During the night, the Battalion was relieved by the 1st Battalion. The 2d Battalion continued to clear the forest N of REINHEIM.

Attacking out of GERSHEIM into the factory area N of the town, the 2d Battalion, of the 320th Infantry, seized the area, outposted to the W, and made contact with the 347th Infantry, of the 87th Infantry Division. The 1st Battalion encountered a farm a kilometer W of GERSHEIM strongly and stubbornly defended by the enemy. By dark, however, the Battalion had the farm surrounded on three sides. Elements of the 3d Battalion moved to the NW to envelope the left of the enemy and assist the 1st Battalion.

On 18 December, the 134th Infantry (less one Battalion) became Regimental reserve. The 1st Battalion was attached to the 137th Infantry and the 2d Battalion was relieved from attachment to the 137th Infantry. This relief was effected during the night of 18-19 December.

The 1st Battalion, of the 137th Infantry, drove the enemy back in the BREITERWALD forest and reached the N edge of the woods. However, it continued fighting tanks and infantry by-passed during the advance. During this time the 2d Battalion was attacking BLIESMENGHEN meeting strong resistance. The 3d Battalion remained in assembly area at NEUNKIRCHEN and continued to reorganize.

The attack on the farmhouse by the 1st Battalion, of the 320th Infantry, continued. After fighting all day, the Battalion succeeded in taking the farm at 1500. The 3d Battalion remained at GERSHEIM but had elements assist the 1st Battalion.

On 19 December, the Division was ordered to hold and consolidate. The only major activity was in the area of the 1st Battalion, of the 137th Infantry which repelled several counterattacks during the night of 19-20 December.

During the morning of 20 December, the 1st Battalion, of the 134th Infantry, received heavy counterattacks by tanks and infantry and was pushed back to the S edge of the REINHEIMWALD forest.

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While this was happening in the Division sector, the enemy launched a large scale counter-offensive against the First Army N of LUXEMBOURG. In order to be prepared to counter this blow with ready reserves, several divisions were pulled out of the line and dispatched to that area. Included was the 35th Division. During the night of 20-21 December, the relief of the Division began. The 346th Infantry, of the 87th Infantry Division, relieved the 320th Infantry in its zone. Late in the morning the 137th Infantry was relieved by the 324th Infantry, of the 44th Infantry Division. The 134th Infantry, already in division reserve, moved back to its assembly area immediately. The division assembled in the vicinity of ERNSTVILLER, GUEBENHOUSE, GRUNDVILLER, RICHELING, REMMERING, UBERKINGER, HOLVING, and ST. JEAN ROHRBACH. The 737th Tank Battalion and the 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion were detached from the division and sent into the fight in the ARDENNES.

On 22 and 23 December, the Division moved to METZ where it was released from XII Corps and placed under direct control of Third Army.

At METZ, the Division was completely out of the line for the first time since it landed in France on 7 July 1944. On Christmas Day, the troops, billeted in warm buildings in the city, ate a hearty meal, and were given passes into the town.

On 26 December the Division moved from METZ to the area N of ARLON along the BELGIUM-LUXEMBOURG border. Here it was to assist in the Third Army drive into the S flank of the enemy salient. For the operation, the Division was placed under the control of III Corps. The 654th Tank Destroyer Battalion was again attached to the Division.

On 27 December, the Division attacked N without reconnaissance from positions along the S bank of the SURE RIVER, with the 137th Infantry on the left, and the 320th Infantry, on the right, with the 134th Infantry in division reserve. The 4th Armored Division was on the left and the 26th Infantry Division on the right. (See figure 3)

The attack moved off at 0800. The 137th Infantry moved by truck along a road in the 4th Armored Division zone to a point SW of TINTAGE in order to cross the river in friendly territory and made considerable gains until it reached SURRE. There it met bitter resistance and only after a hard struggle was it able to capture the town.

The 320th Infantry experienced difficulty in crossing the SURE RIVER. Resistance from the N banks of the river was very strong but the 3d Battalion, on the left, managed to wade elements across by noon. The 2d Battalion got a company across during the afternoon. Later the resistance lessened and by dark the 2d Battalion was in BOULAIDE and BASCHLEIDEN, and the 3d Battalion was moving N.

As the Division moved up for the attack during the morning, it passed through and relieved the 6th Cavalry Squadron which had been holding in this sector.

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At 0600 on 28 December, the 35th Division continued its drive against the S flank of the enemy salient. The 137th Infantry made only slight gain during the day. The 2d Battalion made small gain to the N of SURRE and the 3d Battalion drove to the hill SW of VILLERS - LA - BONNE - EAU where very heavy small arms, mortar, and artillery fire was encountered. The Battalion's attempts to enter the town were all repulsed. Then, to assist the 3d Battalion, the 1st Battalion moved out of Regimental reserve to the left of the 3d Battalion.

In the 320th Infantry zone, the 0600 attack also made little gain. The 2d Battalion drove against considerable resistance to take the high ground about a kilometer NW of BASCHLEIDEN. The 3d Battalion continued its attack to the N and secured the four road junction N of BASCHLEIDEN. The 1st Battalion remained in reserve vicinity of BOULAIDE.

The 134th Infantry, in Division reserve, moved by motor to vicinity of WARNACH during early morning. The 3d Battalion immediately went into action, relieving the 1st Battalion, of the 318th Infantry, of the 80th Infantry Division, which had been attached to the 4th Armored Division.

The 29th of December found the Division again attacking. H-hour was 0800. The 1st and 2d Battalions, of the 137th Infantry, pushed to the N edge of the SURRE WOODS while the 3d Battalion made little gain in its drive into VILLERS-LA-BONNE-EAU.

Meanwhile, the 320th Infantry's 2d Battalion was engaged in bitter battle with enemy around a farm SE of HARLANGE. The attack of the 3d Battalion met equally stiff resistance S of HARLANGE and gained little ground.

The 134th Infantry came out of Division reserve and attacked N and NE. The 3d Battalion, already committed, pushed toward LUTREBOIS and seized most of the town by dark. The 1st Battalion moved into MARVILLE, three kilometers SE of BASTOGNE, where it made contact with elements of the 101st Air Borne Division in besieged BASTOGNE pocket. The 2d Battalion moved to fill the gap between the 3d Battalion and the 3d Battalion, of the 137th Infantry.

The enemy on morning of 30 December launched an extremely heavy counter-attack with tanks and infantry of the 167th Volksgrenadier and 1st SS Panzer Divisions against the 137th and 134th Regiments. Companies K and L, of the 137th Infantry, in the town of VILLERS - LA - BONNE - EAU were surrounded by elements of the enemy and very heavy pressure was placed against the rest of the Regiment.

The 134th Infantry, hit hard by this counterattack, held its positions throughout the day. The 320th Infantry, missed by the counterattack, jumped off at 0800 but met very strong resistance from HARLANGE and the farm SE of the town.

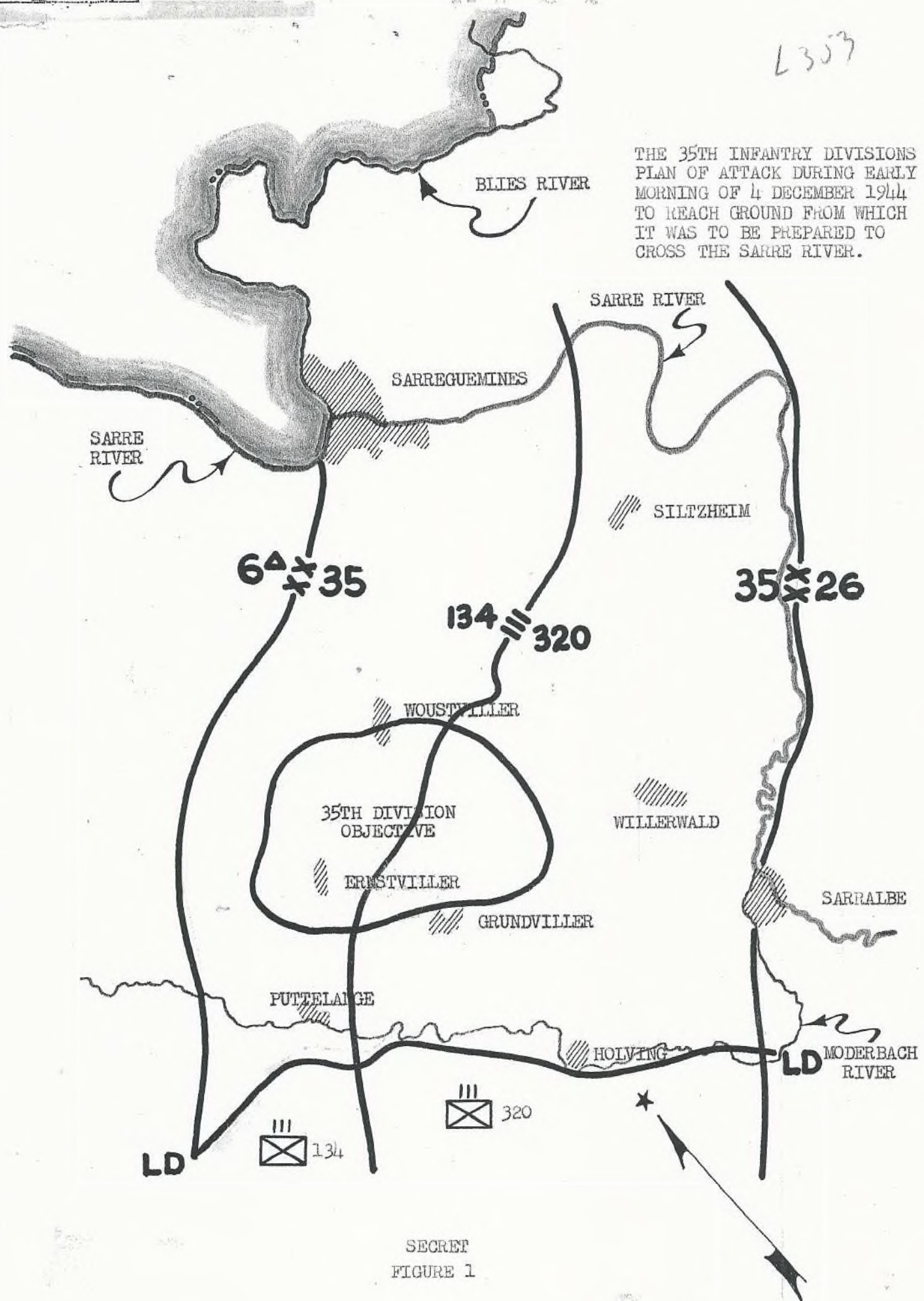
The counterattack, which had the mission of cutting the ARLON-BASTOGNE highway, was repulsed. The infantry in repulsing it had much assistance from the air corps and artillery. The enemy was continually strafed and bombed and subjected to severely heavy artillery fire.

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 FIGURE 1

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L 503

GERMANY



THE 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION
 SITUATION AS IT JUMPED OFF
 THE MORNING OF 13 DECEMBER
 1944 TO PENETRATE THE GER
 MAN BORDER IN FORCE.

SCALE : 1/ 100,000

GERMAN BORDER

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 FIGURE 2

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AREA HEED BY
 SURROUNDED
 AMERICAN TROOPS

BASTOGNE

35TH DIV
 OBJ

LONGWILLY

WARDIN

UNCLASSIFIED

2D
 OBJ

44

35

137

2D
 OBJ

320

35 X 26

HARLANGE

1ST
 OBJ

SURRE

1ST
 OBJ

26TH INFANTRY
 DIVISION

TINTANGE

SURE RIVER

137

320

PLAN OF THE 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION THE
 MORNING OF 27 DECEMBER 1944 AS IT
 ATTACKED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE 26TH
 INFANTRY DIVISION AND THE 4TH ARMORED
 DIVISION TO STRIKE THE SOUTH FLANK OF
 THE ENEMY SALIENT AND RELIEVE SURROUNDED
 AMERICAN TROOPS HOLDING THE IMPORTANT
 ROAD CENTER OF BASTOGNE.

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 FIGURE 3

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On the last y of December, the Division's attempts to attack met with little success. Attempts to relieve the situation of K and L Companies, of the 137th Infantry, failed and the companies were given up for lost when it was learned from PWs that the companies had been destroyed or captured.

3. The number of Prisoners of War captured by the 35th Infantry Division during December 1944 was 1704.

4. The number of replacements received by the 35th Infantry Division during December 1944 was 3779.

5. Awards and decorations awarded to personnel of the 35th Infantry Division during December 1944 were as follows:

Silver Star				Sol Medal		Bronze Star Medal				Air Medal	
Reg	Post	MIA	OLC	Reg	Post	Reg	Post	MIA	OLC	Reg	OLC
OFF	21	9	1	4		70	4		13	4	6
EM	43	15		1	2	1	207	19	7	12	1
Recommendations Fwd to Higher Hq						Awarded by Higher Hq					
Cong Medal			DSC			DSC		LM		BSM	
of Honor			:			Reg Post		: Reg Post		: Reg Post	
Reg Post			Reg Post			Reg Post		Reg Post		Reg Post	
OFF				1		OFF	1	1	1	1	
EM	1			3		EM	2	2		1	

The number of Purple Heart Awards awarded was 369, with 89 OLCs.

6. Battle casualties for the 35th Infantry Division during December 1944 were as follows:

KIA --- 141
DOW --- 64
SWA --- 90
LWA --- 657
LIA --- 122
MIA --- 222
CAP --- 16
Total 1312

Battle casualties for attached units total 30.

For the Commanding General:

Richard G. Chadwick
RICHARD G. CHADWICK
Lt. Colonel, A.G.D.
Adjutant General

6 Incls

- Incl 1. Copies of GO #55 thru 59, Hq 35th Inf Div, Dec 1944.
- Incl 2. G-1 Journal w/supporting papers.
- Incl 3. G-2 Journal w/supporting papers.
- Incl 4. G-3 Journal w/supporting papers.
- Incl 5. G-4 Journal.
- Incl 6. Three sketches.

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