

G-3

SECRET

G-2 PERIODIC REPORT

From: 172100 July 1944
 To : 182100 July 1944
 35th Inf Div
 182100 July 1944

No. 11

Maps: France 1/25,000. Sheets ST JEAN DE DAYE, ST LO.

1. ENEMY SITUATION AT END OF PERIOD:

- a. Enemy front line - No contact with enemy along entire front other than mortar fire in right sector and artillery fire in center sector.
- b. Defensive organization - Mines and booby traps along roads and in buildings throughout area occupied by the Division (See mine map attached).
- c. Supply and evacuation establishments - PW reports show supply establishment at LA MANCELLIERE (508576).

2. ENEMY OPERATIONS DURING PERIOD:

- a. General summary - Enemy withdrew from positions along entire front under cover of darkness this morning leaving considerable amount of abandoned equipment.
- b. Operations of component elements:
 1. Anti-aircraft Artillery - Artillery liaison plane fired on by AA btry (see overlay).
 2. Artillery - 88 fire interdicted bridge in center of sector throughout period (see overlay)
 3. Aviation - One ME 109F over area (520717) tree-top level, flying SE, no bombs dropped, no strafing, mission undetermined.

3. MISCELLANEOUS:

- a. Thirty-eight prisoners were taken during period. Total for operation 542.
- b. Weather - Showers tonight and tomorrow morning, low overcast during morning becoming broken during the afternoon.
- c. Study of enemy plans for future operation is set forth in translation of captured document attached. Entitled "Combat procedure against numerically and materially superior opposing forces."
- d. Password - TRUTH reply MYSTIC from 1200 19 July to 1200 20 July 44.

4. ENEMY CAPABILITIES: No change.

John T. Hoyle
 JOHN T. HOYLE
 Lt Col, GSC
 AC of S, G-2

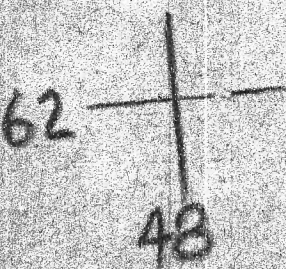
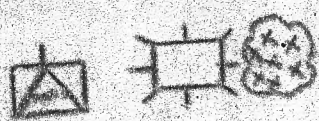
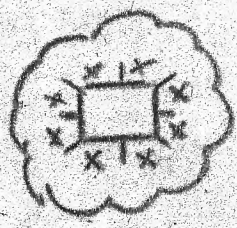
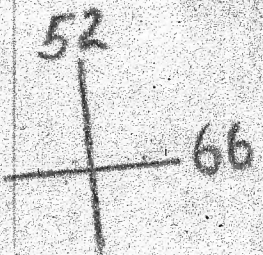
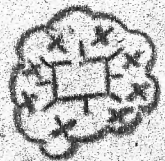
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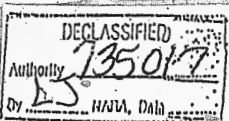
G-2 Periodic Reports will be destroyed within 24 hours after receipt in all units below Division level.

#11

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Authority 135017
By ES HWA, Dalb

Overlay To accompany G-2
Periodic Report No. 11
MAP REF. 1:25,000



C O P YAfter Reading Destroy

Commanding General - 2d Parachute Corps
 Asst Chief of Staff - G-3(Br.B.) Registry No. 1164-44
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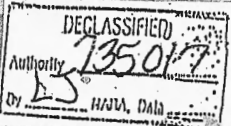
Field Hq
 26 June 1944

Combat Procedure Against Numerically and Materially Superior Opposing Forces

1. Daily reports from the front show that our losses are too high compared to the achievement. These by the most part are caused by artillery and mortar fire. These steady losses reduces our combat strength nor can further replacements be expected. They must be reduced since our reserves are rapidly disappearing. Reinforced shelters, deep fox holes, well camouflaged trenches, taking advantage of natural cover in each and every prepared position, etc., will reduce our losses considerably. It is every officers and every non-commissioned officers responsibility to see that men under adverse conditions, take above protection measures.

2. It is a mistake when opposed by a materially superior enemy to have the front lines too strongly manned during the day time. The front lines cannot entrench deeply enough to prevent recognition by the enemy, therefore, they will suffer heavier casualties. They will suffer most from enemy artillery and mortar fire. If the front lines are strongly manned it will not be possible to effect a defense in depth nor to launch an immediate counterattack. In this type of country automatic weapons fire will not stop an enemy attack (especially if smoke is employed or the attack is made at night) but: a. By pre-determined field of fire by our heavy weapons (including artillery and mortar fire) covering the potential areas of approach and penetration. b. By so thoroughly concealing the strength of MLR the enemy is deceived. c. By immediately executing a counter-thrust in the MLR as soon as the enemy has penetrated our lines.

3. I am under the impression that some people tend to regard the foremost outpost as MLR and consequently allow their defense in depth to be insufficiently manned. Before the actual MLR you must have observation posts to prevent a surprise enemy attack even though a preparatory artillery barrage be employed. It is the function of those outposts to bear the initial impact of the enemy assault and to prevent his reconnoitering of the MLR. The observation posts, as well as the combat outposts, will be placed in advanced parts of our territory. It is a disgrace to the troops in the area before the MLR to allow a single penetration by the enemy. Obstacles, mines, snipers, patrols should make such a penetration impossible. A reconnaissance in force of the MLR should be immediately recognized and counter measures so employed that the effort is destroyed at birth. A few successes will inspire our troops with confidence of having overcome a numerically superior enemy. If possible, the forward outpost should advance leaving behind dummy positions in order to notify the effectiveness of the enemy artillery fire. If the enemy assault is concentrated in a narrow sector after a heavy preparatory artillery barrage our forces should counter-attack his flank. We must immediately employ the same methods of defense as of 1918. From deep zones of defense, from numberless well camouflaged defensive strong points, with well chosen field of fire will



the successful counter-thrust and counter-attack emerge. Inter-locking fields of fire must cover the entire front. By the courageous counter-attacks of our reserves will the penetration of our enemy be stopped and destroyed.

4. It is the mission of the infantry to separate the enemy infantry from supporting tanks by well aimed single fire. Well entrenched, well camouflaged and clever exploitation of terrain, they let the tanks approach. Well coordinated sudden fire at close range is destructive to the enemy. The anti-tank troops will destroy the tanks by surprise fire from the flanks. The defensive weapons further behind the lines (including artillery) will remain camouflaged and silent. This is essential to counteract a tank penetration.

5. Artillery and mortar batteries in their prepared positions are responsible after artillery preparation. The enemy cannot receive any supporting fire. They must pin down the enemy reserves by concentrated fire and destroy them. Whoever in the heat of the battle waits for a call from infantry for supporting fire sends the fire too late. Because of scarcity of ammunition we cannot afford to fire at random. The units must have their own special observer to see the effects of the fire on the target. The observers in the forward outposts will be totally concerned with the infantry actions. Therefore, Battalion and Battery Commanders will have to employ tactics, observe and direct the fire themselves to get best results in the heat of the battle.

6. Channels of communication will be disrupted by fire, therefore we have to rely on radio and messengers. The Battalion and Company messengers should be thoroughly familiar with routes. The same applies to supply columns and evacuation columns for wounded.

7. Goldbricks and stragglers will be most severely dealt with. The efficient non-com or officer will attend to this. A lightly wounded man will not need support to get to the first aid station. Those supporting helpers are goldbricks. Whoever leaves his friends in the heat of the battle with only a light wound while he can still fight well is a coward and should be treated as such.

Signed: MEINDEL

Translated by M/Sgt Van Petten
Cpl Leo Laub

DECLASSIFIED

Authority

By

NARA, Dab

LA VIRE RIVER

18 July 1944

The LA VIRE RIVER from St. Lo to LA MEAUFRE averages about 100 feet in width, maximum depth of river about 10 feet, the average depth being about 5 feet. It has been reported that the depth 60 feet below the Bridge at FORT NEPERT is only 2 feet. The speed of flow is less than 3 kilo per hr. Bottom is lime silt.

Banks of the LA VIRE north of ST LO are moderate, varying from 12% to a maximum of 26%. Banks are of slate covered with about 3 feet of firm, easily workable ground. Road approaches in section considered from ST LO to 473640 are steep on the east bank though the west bank in this area averages about 10 to 12%. North of 473640 both banks are moderate about 10 to 14%.

Between ST LO and LA MEAUFRE there are three locks located at the following points: 484700, 470642 and 493634. South of ST LO are additional locks and two dams, however, there is no lake or reservoir which could be used by the enemy to flood the lower parts of the river. By opening all of the locks and corresponding spillway openings of the river control system the river can be drained to about 1 foot depth in about 12 hours. The river is tidal to about 5076. It is unfordable for vehicles from ST LO to the sea.

The closing of the lock at 484700 and the damming effect of the destroyed FORT NEPERT bridge has caused a rise in the river level to near maximum.

North of ST LO there are few positions which would offer serious obstacle to an assault crossing of infantry. The road net work on both sides is adequate to support such an operation, however, heavy traffic would be mostly confined to the class 3 or 4 roads which are attainable from the river principally at the bridge locations above.