

HEADQUARTERS III U. S. CORPS
3RD INFORMATION AND HISTORICAL SERVICE
(Team "K")

23 January 1945

ARDENNES CAMPAIGN
134th Infantry Regiment, 35th Infantry Division
26 December 1944 to 12 January 1945

At 1300 on the 26th of December, the 134th Infantry Regiment closed in the vicinity of ~~MERTZ~~ ^{WENZIG (P 7638)}. On the 28th it moved to WARNACH (P5642), where at 1300 oral fragmentary orders were received from Division directing that the 3rd Bn be alerted to relieve the 1st Bn 318th Infantry Regt, 30th Infantry Div which had been holding the right flank, covering the thrust by the 4th Armored Div to relieve BASTOGNE (P5557).

The Battalions were to attack at 0800 on the 29th formed in a column of battalions, 3rd, 1st, and 2nd. Co A 654th Tank Destroyer Bn, the 161st Field Artillery Bn, and Co A 60th Engineer Combat Bn were in direct support of the attack. A platoon of the attached Tank Destroyer Co was directly supporting each battalion. An Engineer platoon leader and a Tank Destroyer platoon leader were with each battalion CO. The Regimental objective was NEFFE (P5657).

At this time the Regimental headquarters was at SAINLEZ (P5448) where it had moved on 29 December. On the same day the 3rd Bn moved to (P553510) preparatory to the jump off northward. Earlier the same day the 1st and 2nd Bns made a covered march to the vicinity of SAINLEZ. At this time the 3rd Bn 137th Infantry Regt was at (P572493).

At 290800 the attack started. The orders directed that any opposition be pushed to the right and contained while the next battalion in the column bypassed the containing force and continue to the northeast. The 3rd Bn in the lead marched northward up a valley and swung to the northeast to occupy LUTREBOIS (P5653). The 1st Bn moved past of the left and occupied and outposted the high ground south of MARVIE (P5755). By 1530 on the 29th the 1st Bn had reached MARVIE, and had established contact with the 101st Airborne Div around BASTOGNE. At 1415 the 2nd Bn was committed on regimental order to fill the gap existing between the 3rd Bn 134th Infantry Regt, and the 137th Infantry Regt on the right.

At LUTREBOIS the 3rd Bn ran into enemy opposition. Co L fought into town while Cos I and K occupied the high ground south of the town. From a captured map it was learned that the town of LUTREBOIS was close to the boundary between the 167th Volksgrenadier Div and the 1st SS Panzer Div. The 3rd Bn captured prisoners from the 167th while the 2nd Bn on the right took men from the 1st SS.

The difference in prisoners from the two divisions is worthy of note. Although physically there was not too great a difference, the older replacements were to be found in the 167th. The 1st Bn received a good type of replacement. But it should be emphasized that there were many

excellent soldiers in the ranks of the Volksgrenadier outfit. More deserters come from the 167th than from the 1st SS. However, after surrender, the SS men were more meek, probably in anticipation of retribution. At least they were not arrogant. There were complaints by the men that their officers had withdrawn in time of danger leaving them to hold the positions. In some cases, men had not seen their company commanders for two days. Possibly a selective withdrawal had taken place.

Poles, Czechs, and Roumanians were among the prisoners. After the officers had deserted their units, leaving the physical misfits and older men, the foreigners were willing to surrender. Not so, with the Germans. Often when Germans were captured on patrol or as messengers, they sought to give the impression that they had been on their way to surrender. However when they counter-attacked they were tough and tenacious. This did not last however. Some prisoners appeared excessively thirsty, others hungry. On the other hand, some stated that their food had been good.

On the 30th at 0445 the enemy counter-attacked. From a captured map the enemy plan was indicated. One force was to attack southwest from the high ground south of LUTREBOIS (P5653) and move west to cut the ARLON (P5 5)-BASTOGNE (P5557) highway, and then swing northward to BAS-TOGNE. A second force would make a larger envelopment by cutting the secondary road, beyond the main highway, to BASTOGNE and then moving north paralleling the advance of the first force.

The enemy initially attacked with infantry, but at 1025 enemy tanks were reported moving northwest from LUTREMANGE (P5851) along the LUTREMANGE-LUTREBOIS (P5653) road. More than 25 tanks were counted along this road; One proceeded as far as (P565533). Enemy infantry reached within 150 yards of the chateau at LOSANGE (P555516). Parties of the enemy filtered

through gaps existing where the 2nd Bn was thinly spread. No enemy reached the main highway. Co E was dispatched to aid the 3rd Bn, and became involved in the fight west of LUTREBOIS (P5653). This company after working with armored infantry from Combat Command A 4th Armored Div rejoined the 2nd Bn on the evening of the 30th.

That evening the counter-attack had been stopped. The regimental lines had not been pushed back, but enemy tanks and infantry had infiltrated through gaps caused by the lengthening of the lines. More than twenty enemy tanks were knocked out that day by the combined action of tanks, tank destroyers, artillery, and anti-tank units. Of these, some were probably retrieved by the Germans (opinion of Major Carroll).

The Fire Direction Center was at HONVILLE (P5547). Co C, 3rd Chemical Bn in support of the regiment was put in direct support of the 3rd Bn. Cos I and K directed artillery fire on enemy tanks along the LUTREMANGE (P5851)-LUTREBOIS (P5653) road.

The night of the 30th the line was composed from south to north as follows: Cos I (137th Infantry Regt), E, F, K, I, L, the 51st Armored Infantry Bn, and Co A, 24th Engineer Combat Bn. Co L had been partially cut off in LUTREBOIS and the town had been abandoned to the enemy.

At 310000 the attack was continued by the 2nd and 3rd Bns. Five enemy tanks were observed in LUTREBOIS. The 3rd Bn again tried to move through the town, but enemy in the wooded high ground northeast of town held up progress. Meanwhile the 2nd Bn was holding on the north and the 2nd Bn remained on the right flank of the regiment maintaining contact with Co I 137th Infantry Regiment. These positions were held during the 31st of December and the 1st of January.

On 2 January, the 2nd Bn closed with the 3rd Bn thereby drawing in the regimental right flank. Co F remained at (P568513 covering the gap. The 3rd Bn renewed its attempts to take LUTREBOIS (P5653) and succeeded in occupying half of the town.

On the same day the 1st Bn received orders to attack a road junction at (P588552). Cos A and B jumped off at 1330 while Co C remained to hold the high ground south of MARVIE (P5755). At the end of the day, Co A on the left and Co B on the right were along the line (P586555-592554). The 2nd Bn was on high ground southeast of LUTREBOIS, and the 3rd was holding half of that town. The 1st Bn had established contact with the 5th Armored Div on its left, south of WARDIN (P5956).

The attack was continued on the 3rd of January. The 1st Bn took the road junction. While the 2nd Bn remained on the high ground to the southwest, the 3rd Bn strove to make its way through the rest of LUTREBOIS. Co F on the right flank was relieved by the 2nd Cavalry Sq and reverted to the 2nd Bn.

On the night of the 3rd preparations were made to move the 1st Bn back through MARVIE to an assembly area prior to the continuation of the attack at 040830. The battalion spent the night of the 3rd at (P561551).

At 0700 on the 4th the 1st Bn jumped off, companies abreast to take the road junction at (P569533). The same morning at 0745 the 3rd Bn resumed attacking the northeast portion of LUTREBOIS and by 1045 was in complete occupation of the town.

The 1st Bn with Co B on the left, Co C on the right and Co A in reserve pressed its attack to the southeast. Co C overran its objective

and ended up at (P577327). Co B succeeded in capturing a Battalion CP north of LUTREBOIS (P5653). As yet there was no contact between the 1st and 3rd Bns.

The night of the 4th, the 3rd Bn was holding the town, the 2nd still on the high ground to the southwest, and Cos A and B in contact. Radio contact was maintained with Co C which drew back to rejoin the rest of the Battalion. Only 50 men succeeded in getting back.

On the 5th the 3rd Bn continued the attack and succeeded in getting two companies into the woods northeast of LUTREBOIS. These were promptly counter-attacked and withdrew.

At 1400 on the 5th, the 1st Bn 320th Infantry Regt was attached to the 134th Infantry Regt. Co 2 was placed on the left flank of the 1st Bn 134th. Enemy had infiltrated at (P573534) in a northern direction. Apparently the enemy was being pushed to the north from the 137th Infantry Regt sector in the vicinity of LA TANNERIE (P5750) and LUTREMANGE (P5851).

- The morning of the 6th, the 1st Bn 320th Infantry Regt attacked to the southeast toward the high ground due north of LUTREBOIS. By evening, Cos A and B were within 100 yards of LUTREBOIS TRAIL. The disposition of forces from the northeast to southwest was as follows: Co B 320th, Co B and remains of Co C, 134th, Co A 134th, 1st Bn (minus Co B) 320th, Cos I and K in LUTREBOIS, and Co L on high ground south of town, Cos G F and E, A task force made up of the MP platoon, Anti-tank platoon, and the I & R platoon, all of the 134th.

On the 7th the attack was pressed. On the right the 1st Bn 320th

abreast of the 134th's 1st Bn, followed by the 3rd Bn, with the 2nd Bn covering the right flank and rear was the formation. The 3rd Bn having insufficient space to follow the lead battalions, stayed in town. The attack continued through the 7th and 8th of January.

On the evening of the 8th, the 1st Bn 134th Infantry Regt relieved Cos A and B of the 320th.

On the 9th the 1st and 2nd Bns pushed northward while the 3rd Bn 134th ^{the attack pushed out the morning of the 9th at} and the 1st Bn of the 320th assembled at (P570546). ^{At 1000 A} Task Force from the 6th Armored Div moved to the vicinity of SEWS (P) to strike an enemy strongpoint in a woods at MARTAIMONT (P582555).

On the 10th the ^{two} ~~1st and 2nd~~ Bns abreast with the Task Force from 6th Armored Div attacked in a southeastern direction. The 2nd Bn 320th Infantry Regt was attached to the Task Force. On the 11th the attack turned to the left and moved up the LUTREBOIS trail in a northeastern direction. The formation was as follows: 2nd Bn 320th on left of trail, 3rd Bn 134th on the right, 1st Bn 320th echeloned to the right rear followed by 1st Bn 134th echeloned in like manner. On the 11th the lead battalions reached a line along the road (P584547-593538).

On the 12th the objective (NEFFE P5857) was reached. The 2nd Bn 320th had been detached from the 6th Armored Div and attached to the 134th Infantry Regt. In the twelve days of the move, more mortar ammunition had been fired than in the whole French campaign.

Source - Major ^{initials?} Carroll, S-3, 134th Infantry Regt.

Interviewer - 1st Lt Wm J. Dunkerley, T/Sgt C. J. Angulo (notes).

Date of Interview - 16 January 1945.

Map Reference - GSGS 4041-Sheets EASTOGNE NE and SE, 1:25,000.