

General Subjects Section
ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT
THE INFANTRY SCHOOL
Fort Benning, Georgia

ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS COURSE
1948 – 1949

THE OPERATIONS OF THE 3RD BATTALION, 357TH INFANTRY
(90TH INFANTRY DIVISION) IN THE HEDGEROW
BATTLE OF NORMANDY, 8-11 JUNE 1944
(NORMANDY CAMPAIGN)
(Personal experience of a Battalion Executive Officer)

Type of Operation described:
BATTALION IN THE ATTACK

Major Charles E. Ronan, Infantry
ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS CLASS NO 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Contents	2
Bibliography	3
Introduction	4
Terrain Study	5
Invasion Preparations	6
The Original Mission	7
A New Mission	8
Events of 11 June 1944	15
Analysis and Criticism	21
Lessons	24
End Notes	25
(Not Included, this edition)	
Map 1 -- The Plan for the Assault	
Map 2 -- Original Mission of the 90th Infantry Division Normandy Invasion	
Map 3 -- D Day Objective	
Sketch 4 -- Cross-Section of Hedgerow	
Map 5 -- 90th Division's Initial Objective 10 June 1944	
Map 7 -- Situation Map 11 June 1944	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. A History of the 90th Division in World War II
(Personal possession of author)

- B. Normandy to the Baltic
by Field Marshall, The Viscount Montgomery of Alemain
(TIS Library)

- C. First United States Army
Report of Operations 20 October 1943 - 1 August 1944, Book I
(TIS Library)

- D. Utah Beach to Cherbourg
Historical Division Department of the Army
(TIS Library)

- E. Short History of the 357th Infantry Regiment
(Personal Possession)

- F. Notes on Hedgerow Fighting France 1944
United States Army VIII Corps
(TIS Library)

- G. Normandy Hedgerow Obstacles 14 July 1944
Allied Force Headquarters ETO AGF Board
(TIS Library)

- H. The Forcing of the Merderet Causeway at La Fiere, France
History Section, E.T.O.
(TIS Library)

- I. Preliminary Operations around the La Fiere Bridgehead
History Section, ETO
(TIS Library)

OPERATIONS OF THIRD BATTALION, 357TH INFANTRY
(90TH INFANTRY DIVISION) IN THE HEDGEROW
BATTLE OF NORMANDY, 8-11 JUNE 1944
(NORMANDY CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of the Battalion Executive Officer)

INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of the 3rd Battalion, 357th Infantry, 90th Infantry Division, during the Hedgerow fighting in Normandy, France, for the period 8 June to 11 June, 1944.

For many months the American and British High Commands realized that in order to defeat the German military machine on the continent of Europe an invasion across the English Channel would be necessary.¹

The invasion plan was finally divided into two parts. OVERLORD was the code name given to the general concept of the plan. NEPTUNE was a code name given to the plans that covered the actual assault areas and the time of the attack. This breakdown was necessary in order to reduce to a minimum the number of persons who would be required to handle the highly secret material in operation NEPTUNE.²

During the planning stages of OVERLORD, it was realized that a large port would be necessary on the Continent to insure the rapid flow of men, equipment, and supplies, to the battle area. CHERBOURG, on the CONTENTIN PENINSULA, was elected as the port best suited for the purpose.³

The invasion planned in Operation NEPTUNE called for the VII United States Army Corps, to invade Europe on D Day. Initially, an airborne landing was to be made by the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions. The mission of these Airborne Divisions was to secure crossings over the DOUVE and MERDERET Rivers. These crossings included CARENTAN, PONT L'ABBE, LA FIERE, and CHEF DU PONT. From these initial points the crossings at ST. SAUVEUR LE VICOMTE and STE COLOMBE, would then be secured. By securing these crossings, enemy reinforcements would be prevented from entering the battle area from the east and west.⁴

The 4th United States Infantry Division, with a great variety of attached troops including the 359th Regimental Combat Team of the 90th Infantry Division, as Division Reserve, was to make the initial seaborne assault in the VII Corps sector. The code name given to this beach was UTAH.

The 90th Infantry Division, was to follow the 4th Division ashore on D, D plus 1, and D plus 2.⁵

Simultaneous assaults were to be made on the left of VII Corps, by the United States V Corps. Canadian and British Forces were to land to the left of V Corps.⁶

VII Corps was assigned the mission of securing the port city of CHERBOURG.⁷

TERRAIN STUDY

North of a line running from the coast to CARENTAN-PERIERES, the CONTENTIN PENSINSULA is drained by two important rivers, DOUVE and MERDERET. Neither river has high banks nor are the rivers very wide. However, they run through flatlands and during high tide the land and marshes surrounding the DOUVE and MERDERET are below sea level. The area, along either side of the rivers, is divided by many non-navigable canals.

One terrain feature which was present in the CONTENTIN PENINSULA, and about which little information was furnished to the 3rd Battalion, was the hedgerow.⁸

Through the years French farmers had developed, perhaps unknowingly, a formidable military obstacle. This obstacle was the hedgerow. These were earthen barriers interlaced with great masses of trees and shrubbery roots. These barriers were 6 to 10 feet in width at the base and rose to a height of 4

to 8 feet. From the top and sides of this earthen wall grew continuous, interlacing, bands of large trees and thick shrubbery. To facilitate the draining of these fields a ditch had been dug along the edge of the hedgerow. These ditches were often one to 2 feet deep. These, in turn, gave added protection to a defender.⁹

The fields in the CONTENTIN PENINSULA, did not as a rule, exceed 100 to 200 yards square. Being bounded on all sides by these hedgerows, each field became a strong point in the hands of the defending force. In addition, the terrain through a great portion of the CONTENTIN PENINSULA was level and observation was limited. The defending enemy had the advantage of lateral and parallel routes for supply, reinforcement, and withdrawal. An almost continuous covered route was available to any position. Because of these excellent avenues of approach, to the front and laterally, and the superior concealment afforded, a defending force could effectively cover a large front with a minimum of troops.

A minimum amount of work was required to convert this peaceful countryside into a fortress. By digging small openings, cleverly concealed firing positions, for all types of weapons, could be prepared.

Each successive hedgerow was but another mainline of resistance. By prearranged fires each field could be subjected to well-placed mortar and artillery fire.

An attacker had to clear each successive lateral and parallel hedgerow in his direction of advance in order to reduce and prevent enemy infiltration into his rear.

The hedgerow also affected the roads. As a result of the building of the hedgerows, the roads traversing the CONTENTIN PENINSULA appeared sunken.¹

INVASION PREPARATIONS

The 90th Infantry Division, comprising in part the 357th, 358th, and 359th Regimental Combat Teams, arrived in England early in April 1944.¹¹ Division Headquarters, was established in Birmingham. The remainder of the Division, less elements of the 359th R. C. T., occupied Battalion and Regimental Camps in the Midland's area. Elements of the 359th Regimental Combat Team were attached to the 4th Infantry Division in DEVONSHIRE.¹²

The 357th Infantry less the 1st Battalion, plus the Division Clearing Company and Company A, 315th Engineer Combat Battalion, occupied CAMP KINLET. This camp is about 30 miles southwest of BIRMINGHAM.¹³

The battalion was very busy for the next five weeks. Equipment and supplies needed to complete the T/O and E allowances were requisitioned. Training was pushed with emphasis on long fast road marches with full combat loads. Night problems were conducted twice weekly.

General Omar Bradley visited the battalion at CAMP KINLET, and before leaving asked what training was being conducted for hedgerow fighting. This was the first knowledge the battalion had received that hedgerows would constitute a problem. Because the hedgerows of Central England were very similar to those encountered in the United States, and the fields were rather large, the hedgerows did not leave the impression of being a difficult problem.¹⁴

The battalion solution, as approved by Regiment, called for the fire of automatic weapons and 60mm mortars to be directed at hedgerow corners. It was believed a defender would most likely locate his automatic weapons at these points. Several problems were rehearsed of this type of operation.¹⁵

On 13 May the 3rd Battalion moved, with the remainder of the Regiment, to a marshaling area at CAMP RACE COURSE, CHAPSTONE, MONMOUTHSHIRE. The final steps for the invasion were made at this location. Vehicles were waterproofed and basic loads of ammunition were completed. The basic load was not the one prescribed by War Department Directives, but one worked out by the Battalions and Regiment. The combat vehicles, of the battalion would not be available for several hours following the landing, therefore every effort was made to forestall any possibility of ammunition shortage.¹⁶ By reducing personnel impediments to be carried, extra space on vehicles was available for ammunition. Each rifleman was issued extra small arms ammunition. Personnel, of the battalion

headquarters, were to carry extra mortar ammunition. Much detailed planning and shifting of equipment was necessary to allow for this increased ammunition.

Certain critical items of equipment were not available. These included extra bolts and firing pins for the 30 caliber machine guns, and the long firing pins for the 57mm antitank guns. These long firing pins were needed to fire the British high explosive type ammunition, which was part of the basic ammunition load. When the Battalions sailed for NORMANDY there was an average of 1 1/2 spare bolts and firing pins at the each 30 caliber machine gun and only one long firing pin for the three 57mm antitank guns.¹⁷

On 15 May Colonel John Sheehy was replaced as Regimental Commander of the 357th by Colonel P. D. Ginder.¹⁸ On 13 June Colonel Ginder was relieved and Colonel Sheehy assumed command of the Regiment.¹⁹ On 15 June Colonel Sheehy was killed when his vehicle was ambushed.²⁰

THE ORIGINAL MISSION

VII Corps plans called for the 90th Infantry Division to land on UTAH BEACH on D, D plus 1, and D plus 2. The 359th Regimental Combat Team was to be attached initially, to the 4th Infantry Division, as Division reserve.²¹ Upon landing, the Division(-) was to go into an assembly area, south of the SINOPE River, in the vicinity of CRISBECQ. The Division was then to be committed on the right of the 4th Infantry Division, and drive north along the coast toward BARFLEUR. At this point, the Division was to turn west and, in conjunction with the 4 Infantry effect the capture of "WATSON", the code name assigned to CHERBOURG.

Division assigned the 357th Regiment the right sector of the Division zone. Regiment, in turn, assigned to the 3rd Battalion, the right sector of the Regimental zone.²²

The battalion made detailed plans for its subordinate units to include platoons. A thorough study was made of the terrain through the use of relief maps and intelligence reports.²³

On 4 June the Regiment moved, by rail, 30 miles to CARDIFF, WALES. At this point, the Regiment embarked for the "far shore". The 3rd Battalion was assigned to the SS BIENVILLE.²⁴

5 June was spent assembling the convoy in the BRISTOL CHANNEL, near SWANSEA, WALES.²⁵ The briefing of platoon leaders and noncommissioned officers commenced on 5 June and continued to 8 June. They were briefed as to the general plan in the specific mission assigned to their units. Following this, each man in the battalion was fully informed of all details as to the assigned mission of his particular squad and company. Maps were issued and each squad was also briefed as to the general mission of higher units.²⁶

On 0200 hours, 6 June the convoy sailed for the coast of France. The convoy arrived without incident, off UTAH BEACH, at about 0830 hours, on D plus 2. The landings were accomplished by use of landing craft and wading the last few yards through the surf.²⁷

The only major casualty, suffered by the Division in the landing occurred on D plus 1 off UTAH BEACH. The SS SUSAN B ANTHONY, transporting the Division Headquarters Advance Detachment, and the 2nd Battalion of the 359th Infantry, struck a mine and sank. No lives were lost in this sinking. However, all equipment other than individual arms and equipage went down with the vessel.²⁸

When the 3rd Battalion landed it was directed to a new Division assembly area. This area was bounded by TOURQUEVILLE, REUVILLE, AUDOUVILLE-LA HUBERT, and ECOQUENEAUVILLE the Division Command Post was located at LOUTRES. The regimental area was near the village of ST MARTEN.²⁹ The battalion went into its assigned assembly area and organized a perimeter defense. This was necessary because of the great number of hedgerows in this area.³⁰

A NEW MISSION

By D plus 2, the assault troops, already ashore in NORMANDY, had not been able to secure their assigned D Day objectives. The 82nd Airborne Division had encountered heavy enemy resistance, along the MERDERET RIVER, and was unable to gain its objective areas, which ran west along the north side of the DOUVE River, to PONT L'ABBE, thence north and west of GOURBESVILLE to the MERDERET River. At this point, the 4th Infantry Division's objective area was to run in a northerly direction to QUINEVILLE. The 4th Division, in turn, was unable to push forward to its assigned objectives. The 82nd Airborne had been able to secure a bridgehead over the MERDERET River, west of STE MERE EGLISE, at LA FIERE and CHEF DU PONT, but was unable to fully exploit these bridgeheads.³¹

On 9 June General Bradley directed that the CONTENTIN PENINSULA be cut off before CHERBOURG was captured. General Collins, VII Corps Commander, therefore directed the 90th Division (-359 RCT) be committed through the 82nd Airborne Division, at the LA FIERE and CHEF DU PONT bridgeheads.

The Division objective was the area including the high ground between ORGLANDES and COLOMBY, south to STE COLOMBE, to include the bridge over the DOUVE River at that point, and south to STE SAUVEUR LE VICOMTE. An intermediate objective was assigned embracing the high ground from GOURBESVILLE south through PONT L'ABBE, and including the bridge at that point over the DOUVE RIVER.³²

The 357th Infantry was to move to the LA FIERE crossing of the MERDERET RIVER, east of STE MERE EGLISE on the morning at 10 June, and under cover of darkness, relieve elements of the 325th Glider Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division.

The regimental line of advance was to be LA FIERE Bridge, LE MOTHEY, AMFREVILLE, GOURBESVILLE, ORGLANDES and STE COLOMBE.

The Regimental order was issued at 1200 hours, 9 June. The 3rd Battalion was to attack on the regimental right with the 2nd Battalion on the left. The boundary between battalions was the main highway running along the indicated route of advance.³³

The Battalion Commander, accompanied by the Battalion S-2, S-3 and Company Commanders went forward, at 1400 hours, to reconnoiter routes and make arrangements for the relief of elements of the 325th Glider Regiment.

The Battalion Commander, with his party, returned about 1700 hours and immediately issued his order. The Battalion order called for K and L Company to lead the assault. A platoon of heavy machine guns, from M Company, was assigned to each of the assault companies. The 81mm platoon was initially to be in general support from a position west of the LA FIERE Bridge.

The lead element of the Battalion was to cross the Battalion initial point at 0100 hours on 10 June. The Battalion command post was initially to be established near the railroad overpass east of the LA FIERE Bridge and was to move forward on the Battalion Commander's order. The Battalion Executive was to check all units at the initial point.³⁴

The Battalion area was broken up by innumerable hedgerows. The Battalion Commander directed that all Company commanders thoroughly orient unit guides before darkness so they would be familiar with their routes to the initial point. The Battalion Executive, prior to darkness, checked with each company as to guides and was informed that all were well oriented and there would be no trouble.³⁵

Confusion began when the Battalion moved forward. K Company crossed the initial point on schedule. L Company was not present. I Company was ordered to follow K Company. L Company arrived at the initial point as the last of I Company crossed. The unit guides had become lost in the maze of hedgerows and oriented themselves through the sound of the other elements marching down the road. No other difficulties were experienced at that time.³⁶

The sudden changing of the Division's mission, resulted in a very serious handicap to subordinate units. There were insufficient maps for issue to all officers and key noncommissioned officers in the Battalion. The maps, which had been issued for the invasion and initial mission, did not cover the new area over which the Division was now to attack. What maps were issued were not of uniform scale. Certain roads did not appear on all maps. This later resulted in the 3rd Battalion and L Company following wrong roads in the vicinity of AMFREVILLE.

The Battalion started to relieve elements of the 325th Glider Regiment, west of the MERDERET River, at 0400 hours. At the time the relief was being effected the enemy was very active. The Battalion was opposed in its initial action, by the 1057th Grenadier Regiment, of the 91st Division.³⁷

During the next few hours, the bridge over the MERDERET River was under enemy fire. One prime mover of a 57mm antitank gun, of the second Battalion, was struck on the bridge and abandoned.³⁸ The bridge was of concrete construction and 60 feet long. This river was 30 feet wide and two to 5 feet deep. In spite of the furious battle, that had been previously raged by the 82nd Airborne Division and the enemy, the bridge was intact.³⁹

The Battalion Executive established the Battalion command post at the designated point, on the left side of the road, and proceeded to await further instructions. Radio communication was maintained with the Battalion Commander. The command post was soon moved to the right of the road to allow German "overs", directed at the LA FIERE Bridge, a clear field of fire. By 0900 hours, the initial advance of the Battalion had left the Battalion command post about 2000 yards in the rear. The Battalion Commander, however, directed the command Post remain at its location.

Around 0800 hours, a call came over the radio asking the Battalion Executive to find the Artillery Liaison Officer, assigned to the Battalion. He had not been seen for some two hours. An attempt was made to locate him, by searching with a jeep and by radio to other units, but to no avail. Later the Liaison Officer returned to the battalion observation post and stated he had gone to locate his battalion.⁴⁰

At 0930 hours, the Regimental Executive called the Battalion command post and asked its location. Upon being informed, his terse reply was, "What the hell do you think you are, Division Reserve?" The Regimental Command Post was then located near CAUQUIGNY, about 1200 yards ahead of the 3rd Battalion command post. The Battalion Commander was contacted and informed that the command post was moving up in the vicinity of LE MOTÉY.

When the Battalion Executive, with the command post personnel, arrived near the LA FIERE Bridge, their crossing was delayed for 15 minutes. The Regimental S-1, with other personnel, had established temporary headquarters in a barn near the bridge. They informed the group, from the 3rd Battalion, that it was time for the enemy to interdict the bridge. Unknown to all, the enemy had fired his last round at the bridge some 30 minutes earlier.⁴¹

The Battalion Executive located the Battalion Commander at the observation post some distance to the right of LE MOTÉY. Evidence of bitter fighting could be seen on all sides. Along the hedgerow there were many dead American Paratroopers and enemy.⁴²

The Battalion's advance continued from hedgerow to hedgerow. The enemy was not making too determined a stand consequently AMFREVILLE was entered shortly after 1200 hours and the Battalion pushed on through the town. On the northern outskirts of town the enemy was well disposed in strength and the Battalion's advance was halted. The Battalion Executive selected a building across from the church as a Command Post. To avoid confusion, the inhabitants of the town were ordered indoors.⁴³

While proceeding into AMFREVILLE the Battalion lost contact with L Company, which was on the Battalion's right. It was impossible to contact them by radio, runner or signals. The Battalion Executive went forward to the observation post, which was about 300 yards from the command post, and consulted with the Battalion Commander. The Battalion Commander was worried over the apparent loss of L Company and directed the Executive to contact Regiment and secure a company from the Reserve Battalion to assist the attack. I Company had been committed.

Several hours later the Battalion Executive was informed that L Company, had turned off from the direction of the attack at AMFREVILLE and advanced far to the right. The maps issued to L Company were not detailed and roads that appeared to be main roads on the ground, were not shown on the maps. There were no troops on the Battalion's right and L Company Commander did not note the gradual change in the direction of the attack. This was possible due to the great number of hedgerows, small fields and lack of ground observation. About 1530 hours, L Company was back in contact with the Battalion.⁴⁴

The Battalion Executive's attempt to contact Regiment by telephone was unsuccessful. The Battalion Motor Officer, Lt. Bowman, was briefed on the situation, given a written message and sent to Regiment. A short time later a member of Battalion Headquarters Company, ran into the command post and stated an enemy force was entering town between the 3rd Battalion and the 2nd Battalion on its left. The Executive's rapid check verified the fact that a small group of enemy had infiltrated between the battalions. The Battalion Sergeant Major was ordered to cover the left flank, through which the enemy was coming, with drivers and other personnel around Battalion Headquarters. The S-1 was called and instructed to prepare to defend the command Post with all other men available. The Battalion Commander was notified by telephone of the situation. He suggested moving the command post forward toward the observation post, or back toward Regiment. While the Battalion Executive was talking to the Battalion Commander, Lt. Bowman returned from Regiment and reported the Regimental Commander had taken little heed of the 3rd Battalion's message.⁴⁵

Informing the Battalion Commander of this Battalion Executive was directed to return to Regiment and explain the situation and try to secure another company. The location of L Company was still unknown at this time.

The Battalion Executive ordered the S-1 to withdraw the command post, three blocks to the south and take charge during his absence. After making these arrangements, the Battalion Executive left by foot, for the Regimental Command Post and contacted the Regimental Commander.

The Regimental Commander stated he had no available force to send to the assistance of the 3rd Battalion. The Battalion Executive suggested a company be secured from the 1st Battalion, which he thought was in Regimental Reserve. The Regimental Commander stated he did not have the 1st Battalion as he had been forced to send it forward to relieve the 2nd Battalion, which had suffered 50% casualties. Without thinking, the Battalion Executive immediately remarked he could not conceive of the 2nd Battalion sustaining such heavy losses. The 3rd Battalion had not suffered any such losses and he believed that the opposition encountered by the 2nd Battalion was no heavier. He further stated that only occasionally had the sound of firing been heard from the 2nd Battalion sector during lulls in the 3rd Battalion's firefight.⁴⁶

The Regimental Commander appeared rather surprised by this impetuous statement of the Battalion Executive. He turned to the Battalion Commander of the 2nd Battalion and asked him if he had 50% casualties. Not until this time, had the Battalion Executive noticed the presence of the 2nd Battalion Commander, who had been standing nearby and apparently had heard the entire conversation. Also standing near the group was Lt. Charles Ryder, Jr. who had been an assistant Regimental S-3. The 2nd Battalion Commander, in reply to the Regimental Commander's query, stated that his Battalion had suffered between 50 and 60% casualties.⁴⁷

The Regimental Commander finally directed that the 2nd Battalion Commander get a company together and take it forward to assist the 3rd Battalion. The Battalion Executive was ordered to guide the company forward.

The 2nd Battalion Commander and the 3rd Battalion Executive left for the 2nd Battalion area, about 400 yards to the rear. When they reached the 2nd Battalion area they met Captain Domries, of G Company, leading a long column out of the woods. The Battalion Executive was surprised to see such a long column and apparently organizationally intact. He asked Captain Domries if that was the entire Battalion. "Hell no, major, this is just my company." He replied. When questioned as to the number of

casualties the 2nd Battalion had suffered, he answered, "I do not know, Major. My Company has suffered more than the others and my losses are not over 3 to 5%. I don't know why in hell we are back here."⁴⁸

The 2nd Battalion Commander and the Battalion Executive, followed by G Company, proceeded towards AMFREVILLE. Upon nearing AMFREVILLE, and in the absence of any action by the Battalion Commander and because the road was narrow and sunken, the Battalion Executives suggested that security forces be put out to the front and flanks. The Battalion Commander directed the Battalion Executive to take charge. Captain Domries was then directed to place local security.⁴⁹

No activity of any kind was observed when the force arrived at the southwest edge of AMFREVILLE. The designated location of the Battalion command post was unoccupied. The town square was empty. The complete absence of troops and activity in the town startled and alarmed the Battalion Executive. He ordered G Company to halt.

The 2nd Battalion Commander turned to the 3rd Battalion Executive and stated he had "battle fatigue" and that he was going to the Aid Station. He told the Executive to take over the command and with this terse statement, the 2nd Battalion Commander departed for the rear.⁵⁰

The 3rd Battalion Executive directed Captain Domries to secure a patrol of 6 men and 1 officer and have that report to him immediately. During the organization of the patrol, the Battalion Executive informed Captain Domries that he was to remain in the town with his company. He was to deploy his company as protection against any enemy infiltration.

The Executive's plan was to go forward to contact the 3rd Battalion Commander. The 3rd Battalion's wire-line was still in position, however there was no telephone available with which to tap the line.

The patrol proceeded to the last known observation post of the Battalion, which was in the orchard to the north edge of town. Upon reaching the orchard they found that it was deserted. They then pushed forward taking advantage of the hedgerows running parallel with the direction of their advance. Still all was quiet with no trace of friendly or enemy troops.⁵¹

Proceeding about half a mile, the Battalion Executive became more perplexed and confused as to the situation. The wire-line had come to an end some 100 yards forward of the orchard. In his haste to cover ground and find the Battalion, he found he had outdistanced the remainder of the patrol almost 75 yards. As he was crossing diagonally, an open field, a burst of automatic fire opened upon him. He hit the dirt, quickly looked to the rear but could see no sign of his accompanying patrol. Again hedgerows limited vision to the open field. He proceeded, by crawling, to the opposite side of the field and dropped into a previously prepared enemy position beside the hedgerow.

After securing his breath, he noted that it was quiet again. He wondered if perhaps he had mistaken enemy fire for friendly fire. Perhaps he thought, it was part of M Company who had mistaken him for the enemy because the Division was wearing gas impregnated herringbone twill fatigue uniforms which were about the same color as the uniform worn by the enemy.⁵²

There was no way out of the hole except the direction, which he had entered, so he cautiously crawled out. Still worried over his failure to locate the Battalion and because there had been this fire directed at him, he put speed ahead of better judgment and started for the gate some 75 yards away. Nearing the gate he noticed his patrol frantically gesturing to him to hit the ground. After crawling the last few yards to them, they informed him that an enemy patrol or outpost was in position behind the hedgerow 50 yards away. The only firing by either side had been the one burst by the enemy.⁵³

The patrol returned to AMFREVILLE. By this time it was 1900 hours, G Company had just received word from the Regiment as to the location of the 3rd Battalion. They had withdrawn from AMFREVILLE a short time after the Battalion Executive's departure for Regimental Headquarters. The position to which they had withdrawn was to the left of the AMFREVILLE-GOURBESVILLE Road, into the area of the 1st Battalion. Contact had been broken off with the enemy. G Company had been ordered to return to the 2nd Battalion.⁵⁴

The Battalion Executive arrived in the 3rd Battalion area and found them preparing to move out. The S-3 informed him that the Battalion was to attack at 2000 hours and that the Battalion Commander had gone to the Regimental Command Post to secure the attack order. If he did not return in time additional information would be furnished by the Regimental S-2, who was somewhere along the line of march.⁵⁵

The 3rd Battalion moved out in Battalion column preceded by the Battalion Executive and the S-3. Where the Battalion was going, the line of departure, supporting fires, adjacent units, direction of attack, and other similar matters were unknown.

The Regimental S-2 was met after the Battalion had marched some 300 yards north, he explained that Regiment was to continue the attack on GOURBESVILLE, with a 1st Battalion on the left, and the 3rd Battalion on the right. The present road was to be the boundary between the battalions. The time of attack was 2000 hours and the line of departure was a poorly defined line forward of an open field. A 10 minute artillery preparation was to be fired at 1950. The artillery preparation commenced as the S-2 finished his brief and fragmentary instructions.

After receiving the order the Battalion Executive informed Captain Thompson, of L Company, of the order and stated L Company would attack on the Battalion's right. He then instructed the S-3 to get all Company Commanders forward at once. He hurried forward to locate the vaguely defined line of departure and to select an assembly area for last-minute orders and coordination. The area was located and the Battalion moved in. As the Company Commanders arrived they were informed of the situation. The artillery fire ceased before the Battalion had closed into the area.⁵⁶

Before the attack moved out, the Battalion Commander arrived in the Battalion area but he had little additional information. There was no time for Company Commanders to properly orient their Platoon Leaders. Maps were critical. Had they been available there would have been no time for a map study. The Regimental order stressed speed. The terrain would be the same as the Battalion had encountered all day, continuous hedgerows.

The attack commenced 2030 hours. After moving forward about 150 yards the Battalion encountered a murderous band of small arms and mortar fire. It seemed impossible for anyone to survive it. The Battalion assault troops answered with a withering fire. Despite this, all was in favor of the defenders. From their prepared positions, in the hedgerows, they could observe our advancing men. Our men fired blindly. Our fires sweeping the area struck the hedgerows doing little damage and fires directed at the top of the hedgerows were also ineffective. The Battalion command post was under small arms and mortar fire for the next two hours, however no casualties were suffered by this group.⁵⁷

The attack continued until 2300 hours. No appreciable gain was made. Company commanders and platoon leaders exposed themselves almost needlessly trying to lead their units forward. Captain James Thompson, of L Company, was killed in this attack. Lt. Thomas Maguire, L Company Executive was critically wounded. Captain Richard Shaw, of I Company, was critically injured and litter bearers were unable to get to them until late the next morning. This was also a severe blow as Lt. Howard, Executive Officer of I Company, had been killed earlier in the day.

Gradually the attack broke off, and at 2330 hours the Battalion pulled back to the line of departure. L Company remained in position to provide security during the night for the remainder of the Battalion.⁵⁸

The Battalion Executive organized the Battalion defense position. The Battalion being on the Division's right, with an exposed flank, organized its position on three sides tying in with a 1st Battalion on the left.

The Battalion Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon, under the leadership of Lt. Sherran, assisted with the evacuation of the dead and wounded during the night.

By 0200 hours, 11 June the Battalion defense was completed and reorganization was well underway. The night was broken by continual exchange of small arms fire by L Company with enemy patrols.

The 3rd Battalion's loss in officers had been heavy in the first day of fighting. Seven officers had been killed or wounded.⁵⁹

EVENTS OF 11 JUNE, 1944

By daylight, 11 June all was quiet along the 3rd Battalion's front. The Battalion Commander left for the Regimental Command Post about 0700 hours. At 0750 hours supporting artillery commenced firing. This fire continued until 0800 hours.

The Battalion Executive called all Company Commanders to the Battalion Command Post, which was in the center of the Battalion area, to await the return of the Battalion Commander. The Battalion Commander arrived about 0800 hours and issued the order calling for an attack at 0800 hours. It was the same mission and objective as previously given to the Battalion, "Secure GOURBESVILLE and continue the attack to ORGLANDES."

Again the Company Commanders had no time to brief their Platoon Leaders. Two junior lieutenants found themselves in command of companies. Platoon Sergeants were now leading platoons in several cases.

The attack moved off about 0830 hours with K Company replacing L Company in the assault. The attack bogged down as it had the previous evening.⁶⁰

The Regimental Executive called the Battalion Executive around 1000 hours and stated that E Company was being sent forward to reinforce the attack of the 3rd Battalion. When the conversation was completed, F Company Commander approached and stated he was to assist the 3rd Battalion. The Battalion Executive remarked that the Regimental Executive had just telephoned and said that E Company was to assist the 3rd Battalion. In order to clarify the situation, the Battalion Executive called Regiment. There was some technical delay before the Regimental Executive could be contacted and the situation reported to him. He directed F Company to remain and when E Company arrived to send it back to the 2nd Battalion. Before the conversation ended E Company Commander reported in. The Regimental Executive asked to speak with him and then instructed E Company Commander to return to his parent Battalion. Approximately 10 minutes had transpired since F Company Commander had reported in. The Battalion Executive looked for F Company Commander but could not find them. The Battalion Sergeant Major stated that F Company Commander had pulled out when he saw E Company Commander arrive. Regiment was again contacted and advised of the situation and after a three-way conversation with the new Commanding Officer, of the 2nd Battalion, and the Regimental Executive Officer, it was found that a conflict in orders, between 2nd Battalion and the Regiment, had caused the confusion. Both companies, for the present, were to remain under 2nd Battalion's control.⁶¹

During the latter part of the morning, the Battalion Executive noted an increasing number of men moving to the rear on the road separating the 1st and 3rd Battalions. He immediately checked and found that many were self-appointed attendants to walking wounded on the way to the Battalion Aid Station.

In one incident, four men were found moving to the rear. They were stopped and questioned. One individual had been struck in the buttocks by a mortar fragment. The second one was helping the wounded man to the Aid Station. The third, who was carrying two rifles and two packs, stated he was carrying the wounded man's equipment to the rear. The fourth, a platoon sergeant of K Company, a large, powerful looking individual, was going along to see that the other two men returned to their unit. One man, with pack and weapon, continued to the rear. Three men, with a Battalion runner, returned to K Company.⁶²

This incident resulted in the establishment of guards along likely avenues of drift to halt such retreating persons. The Battalion Transportation Officer and certain noncommissioned officers of Headquarters Company were assigned areas to watch. The Battalion front was narrow and lines of drift were well defined because of the terrain obstacles, the ubiquitous hedgerow. All unwounded individuals returning to the rear were halted and directed to the battalion command post, where they were impressed

as to the effect of such actions on their part. They were told that actions such as theirs would cause a panic and headlong disorganized retreat. They were then placed in charge of a man from the battalion command post and moved back to the assault companies.⁶³

Radio conversations between the Battalion Commander and the Company Commanders disclosed to the command post that the attack was making little progress. Artillery fire was limited. The impossibility of forward observers to adjust fire was attributed to the fact that their field of observation was limited to the width or length of fields, which seldom extended 150 yards. A great amount of mortar fire was used. Platoon Leaders were handicapped by their lack of maps. Locations were hard to report as each field and hedgerow looked alike. There was very little direct communications between the Battalion Command Post and the Battalion Observation Post during the morning of the 11 June.⁶⁴

During this period, the first real trouble developed from snipers. In the 536 radio nets considerable mention was made of this type of enemy activity. A sniper was located somewhere adjacent to the Battalion Command Post and occasionally fired into the field where the Command Post was located. Only one casualty resulted from this sniper when the First Sergeant of M Company suffered a severe flesh wound in one leg while he was leaving the Battalion Command Post. The entire area was strewn with enemy wire lines. Some of these lines led into trees but upon investigation by small arms fire no enemy was found.⁶⁵

Around 1400 hours, the Battalion Commander notified the Battalion Command Post that the Battalion was being withdrawn 400 yards to the rear for reorganization. The Battalion Executive started the troops, in the vicinity of the command post, back towards the assembly area. The Battalion withdrew without difficulty to the designated area.

Upon arrival in this area, the Battalion Executive supervised the reorganization of the Battalion. The Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon issued ammunition of all types from the vehicles. Water and K rations were delivered to each company. The Company Commanders and Platoon Leaders reorganized their units to fill vacancies caused by the day's fighting.

At 1445 hours, the Corps Commander arrived in the Battalion assembly area and asked for the Battalion Commander. He was informed that the Battalion Commander had left minutes previously for the Regimental Command Post. The Corps Commander then asked the Battalion Executive what the Battalion was doing back in an assembly area and who had ordered them back. The Executive explained that the Battalion was reorganizing but could not answer on what command level the order to withdraw had been issued. The failure of the Battalion Executive to answer this question did not impress the Corps Commander in the least. Inquiring directions to the Regimental Command Post the Corps Commander departed.⁶⁶

The Battalion Commander returned to the assembly area, accompanied by the Regimental S-2 and S-3, around 1500 hours. The Battalion Commander told the Battalion Executive that the Regimental S-2 had been sent by the Regimental Commander, to assist with the forthcoming attack. Also that E Company was to be attached to the 3rd Battalion for the attack. The Battalion Commander, the Regimental S-2 and Regimental S-3 did not know the exact location of E Company at this time. The Staff and Company Commanders were quickly assembled. The Battalion Commander then stated that the Corps Commander was at the Regimental Command Post and had ordered an immediate attack.⁶⁷

The Battalion Commander issued his order, the 3rd Battalion would attack along the right of AMFREVILLE-ORGLANDES Road, bypassing GOURBESVILLE, which would be on the Battalion's right. The disposition of companies and supporting platoons would remain the same. The time of attack was set for 1530 hours. The line of departure was the same as used earlier in the day and the Battalion Command Post would return to its previous position.⁶⁸

At this time the Company Commander of K Company stated he would not lead his company forward again under such conditions. He said the time between the present and the hour of attack was insufficient to clear the assembly area, let alone march to a line of departure. He further stated he had personally led his company forward twice in the past 18 hours over the same terrain and under the same

circumstances. The orders in all attacks had arrived so late that not one of his Platoon Leaders or noncommissioned officers had been briefed beyond a few words as they were advancing to the line of departure. The failure of the Battalion to achieve success in the two previous attacks, over the same area, had driven the men's morale and spirit to a breaking point. He stated he was not physically afraid and would serve as a rifleman but he felt he was failing his men if he ordered them into another attack that was destined for failure before it started.⁶⁹

The Battalion Commander relieved K Company Commander of his command and appointed the Regimental S-2 acting Company Commander.

Immediately the Company Commanders returned to their companies to prepare for the attack.

The Battalion Executive then spoke to the Battalion Commander and suggested that, if at all possible, additional time should be secured from the Regiment before launching another attack. He stressed some of the same points K Company Commander had mentioned and added the fact that since the enemy was fighting a defensive battle the Battalion should get properly set, once, before attacking.⁷⁰

The Battalion Executive then turned to the Regimental S-3, who had heard all of the discussion, and asked him if he thought the Regimental Commander would postpone the time of attack in order to allow the Battalion time to formulate a plan and also have time to contact and explain the plan to E Company.

The Regimental S-3 stated he would return to Regiment to see what could be done.

During this time the Battalion was being formed. K Company's new Commander was trying to assemble his Officers and Noncommissioned Officers for one brief moment of instruction. The Battalion started to move out at 1530 hours.⁷¹

The Regimental S-3 returned as the Battalion had started to move, and announced that Regiment had postponed the attack until 1800 hours. The Battalion was halted and the companies ordered to disperse.⁷²

This delay afforded the Battalion Commander and his staff their first opportunity to prepare plans for a coordinated attack. The plan called for the Battalion Commander to swing far to the right, with I and K Companies, and attack the enemy's left flank. The Battalion Executive was to attack to the front, with E and L Companies. Over the same ground as the two previous attacks. The Artillery preparatory fires would be omitted, it was thought the element of surprise might be gained by the Battalion. The machine-gun platoons would be attached to I and K Companies. The 81mm mortar platoon would be in general support of the left attacking force.

The force under the Battalion Executive was to delay its attack until the force, under the Battalion Commander, arrived at a certain field, which could be observed from the line of departure of the force on the left. The Battalion Commander would also signal by radio when his force reached that point. Radio silence was to be observed by the Battalion until the Battalion Commander signaled his readiness to continue the attack.

The Battalion Command Post would be set up at the point occupied during the two previous attacks. The Battalion S-2 was to be in charge of the Battalion Command Post.

The Regimental S-2 was relieved of command of K Company and K Company's original Commander returned to his company.

FOOTNOTE:

In justice to all concerned, a further statement should be made on the incident involving K Company Commander. After his company had been returned to him, he continued to lead it for several weeks. In the meantime, the Battalion suffered the loss of one Battalion Executive wounded and two Battalion Executives killed. K Company Commander was promoted to Major and assigned as Battalion Executive. However, he delayed his reporting to the Battalion Command Post for several hours in order to properly orient his successor. While engaged in assisting his successor, he was killed by enemy action. He did not live long enough to serve as Battalion Executive, except in name. The Battalion Commander, for whom he was to serve as Executive, was the one mentioned in this monograph (From reports of others.)

The Regimental S-2, Battalion S-2 and Battalion S-3, were to accompany the Battalion Commander's force. The Battalion Executive's Command group was to consist of a radioman and an artillery Forward Observer.⁷³

Completing his order, the Battalion Commander directed that all individuals deliver marching fire when approaching enemy positions in the coming attack. This fire was to be directed at the hedgerow to their front. The men on the flanks were to fire down the hedgerows parallel to the line of attack. Speed of movement should be stressed in clearing all open areas. Companies would attack with two platoons abreast. Company Commanders should keep well forward behind their lead platoons.

About 1720 hours, the Battalion Commander, with I and K Companies, left on the previously designated line of departure on the right.

Meanwhile E Company Commander arrived and the Battalion Executive explained the Battalion's plan of attack. In addition, he informed E Company Commander that his company would attack in the left zone as the base company. The left flank of E Company was to guide on the road, which was the boundary between the 1st and 3rd Battalions. This was stressed in order to maintain direction of advance and to prevent the bypassing of enemy automatic weapons, which might infiltrate between the 1st and 3rd Battalions.

At 1740 hours, E and L Companies moved out to their line of departure. All was quiet when they arrived.⁷⁴

The Battalion Executive, accompanied by his Radio Operator, moved to a position where he could observe the open ground to the right which the Battalion Commander's force was to reach before he signaled the commencement of the attack. Shortly after arriving at this point, the Battalion Commander's force was observed passing the prearranged line. No signal came over the radio. After waiting a few minutes the Battalion Executive returned to the force on the left and ordered the attack forward.⁷⁵

During the first 300 yards only sporadic fire was encountered from the enemy outposts. The Battalion Executive took position in the interval between companies and online with E and L Company Commanders. This was necessary in order to maintain contact. By positioning himself further to the rear additional hedgerows would have an obscured visual observation of the attacking elements.

After advancing 300 yards it became apparent that the Battalion Executive had decided properly in keeping well forward. E Company began to shift to the right. Quickly the order was given to E Company to swing back and maintain direction along the road. As E Company readjusted its line of advance, the advanced platoons crossed the hedgerow and came under heavy small arms fire. The attack faltered and men began to hit the ground.

The Battalion Executive called to E Company Commander and asked what was wrong. E Company Commander answered that a large stone barn in an open field ahead was an enemy strong point and fire was coming from it.⁷⁶

The wooden portion of the barn in question was burning already from a fire started in it some time earlier in the day. This building had been used by the enemy for storing small arms and 88mm ammunition. The suspected small arms fire was, in fact, only small arms ammunition exploding from the heat of the fire.⁷⁷

E Company was ordered to get up and push on across the field. As the men started forward, the entire building was rocked by a violent explosion. The Battalion Executive in the right platoon of E Company hit the ground. The air was filled with flying rocks many of which were to 2 to 3 feet square. A rifleman, lying some 8 or 9 feet from the Battalion Executive, was struck across his shoulders by one of these large rocks and undoubtedly killed instantly.⁷⁸

Again the attack was ordered forward. Four hedgerows had been crossed and the enemy fire had been light. Passage through the hedgerows was being affected through holes opened in the previous attacks. In the distance firing could be heard in the area of the right attacking forces.

After the fourth hedgerow had been cleared, the ground dropped to a well traveled narrow sunken road. On the far side of the road, in E Company's area, was a rather large woods. To the right of this there was an open field, which was bounded on the forward and rear side by the usual hedgerow. On the right of this field was another woods of about equal size to that in front of E Company. This woods on the right was directly in the line of advance for L Company.

Quickly grasping the situation, from his position between the companies, the Battalion Executive called to E and L Company Commanders and ordered them to push straight through the woods to their front. The open field lying between the woods was a perfect target for enemy mortar and artillery fire, should they try to cross it.

As the Battalion Executive reached the road he changed his course to avoid the open field and started to the left to pass through the woods with E Company. As he was approaching the woods he heard heavy enemy small arms fire open up on the two platoons of E Company, which were well in the woods.⁷⁹

Climbing up on the bank of the road, to a position where you could observe through the hedgerows, the Executive noted men of E Company rushing from the woods to the open field. The Battalion Executive ran down the road about 25 yards and through a gate into the field and yelled and waved to the panicky men, ordering them back into the woods. By this time, some of the men were already entering L Company's sector. While this was taking place, the feared enemy mortar and artillery fire came down on the open field, causing still more fright and disorder. Men began to rush blindly in all directions.

The exodus of men from the wood ceased as quickly as it began.

Among those seriously injured by the enemy fire was the Battalion Executive. He was assisted out of the field by a rifleman, from the support platoon of L Company, to a position at defilade along the sunken road. Three other wounded men made their way back to the same position.

Shortly after reaching the road the Battalion Executive became unconscious.⁸⁰

In order to draw proper analysis of the action of the 3rd Battalion, it is necessary that this narrative be carried through briefly for another three or four days. The material contained from here on was secured in the months following, from various members of the Battalion and other Officers in the Regiment.

The attack of the force on the right ran into heavy opposition and it was unable to pierce the enemy position.

The Battalion Commander, being unable to contact Battalion Executive by radio, made a personal check for the attack on the left. He found that E and L Companies had cleared the woods in the push forward a short distance before they were halted. By darkness the Battalion's attack was halted.⁸¹

On 12 June, little or no progress was made. However, on that day a French civilian reported to Regimental Headquarters that a number of wounded American Paratroopers were located in a barn southeast of GOURBESVILLE. Lt. Charles Ryder, Jr. led a patrol to bring these injured men back.

While on this errand of mercy, Lieutenant Ryder found an approach to GOURBESVILLE from the east. This intelligence was reported to the Regimental Commander. The 3rd Battalion was then shifted east of their original line of advance and on 15 June GOURBESVILLE was captured.⁸²

Shortly after the capture of GOURBESVILLE, Lieutenant Ryder accompanied the Regimental Commander on an inspection of the enemy positions around GOURBESVILLE. They found the enemy had prepared their strongest positions along a line running from GOURBESVILLE southwest through LES LANDES toward LA LANDE.⁸³

The defenses were prepared in depth to include four hedgerows. It was the most elaborate and well-prepared defensive position observed by either of the two officers, in that part of NORMANDY. During this tour they observed several hundred enemy dead. The Regiment suffered 703 casualties in the first four days of combat.⁸⁴

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

In a review of this operation it is very noticeable that the Battalion was confronted with an operation for which it had little training. The failure of higher Commanders to properly inform subordinate units of unusual terrain to be encountered was a serious planning error. The lack of information and failure to properly appreciate the terrain on which the Battalion was to attack was the most serious defect in the Invasion training and planning.

The task assigned the Battalion was very difficult. The area was of vital importance to the enemy. The unique terrain was ideally adapted to the defense.

For nearly a month detailed plans and studies had been made for an operation over entirely different terrain against a different type enemy defense.

When the Battalion was suddenly assigned its new mission the maps, which had been issued in plentiful supply were of no value. Maps that covered the new area were scarce and not of uniform scale or detail. This resulted in confusion to artillery observers and unit commanders. Loss of direction also resulted from use of different type maps.

Had reconnaissance been pushed aggressively the weakness of enemy positions near GOURBESVILLE would have been discovered sooner and the attack would have moved ahead with fewer casualties and on schedule. In the absence of proper reconnaissance and information the attack was directed at the center of a heavily defended position.

Personal courage of the officers reflected great credit to the units. However, failure to show proper initiative in a new and difficult situation is a failure of many officers in their initial combat experience. It is under such circumstances when individual initiative is of the greatest need.

The aggressive action to halt straggling and rearward movement of combat troops was taken by the Battalion. This must be watched by all platoon and company officers and noncommissioned officers.

There was no infantry-tank team operation during this period. No tanks were operated in the 3rd Battalion area. The lessons learned in use of infantry-tank teams and hedgerows are not applicable in this monograph.

There was not enough confidence placed in the effect of artillery fire. The statement of Major Ryder shows the effectiveness of this fire. Where preparatory fires were used the slowness of the infantry attacks nullified, to a great extent, the shock action of artillery fires on a defender. The fault lay with the infantry, not with the artillery.

Communication was not maintained. The loss of contact with L Company was an example. The replacing of the 2nd Battalion with the 1st Battalion and lack of this knowledge on the part of the 3rd Battalion further brings out the fact that proper contact and communication was not maintained. Alternate means of communication should have been provided to coordinate the attack of the two forces on the evening of 11 June.

The lack of communication between the Battalion Executive and the Battalion Commander, during the time relief was being secured from Regiment, is another example of failure to maintain contact.

Timely issuance of orders by higher commanders must be made in order for subordinates to properly prepare for the operation. Throughout the period covered in this monograph no time was allowed for the Battalion Commander to make a reconnaissance or for Company commanders to issue, other than fragmentary, orders to the platoon leaders. There was not even sufficient time to make a proper map study. The exception to this occurred on the afternoon of 11 June.

The failure of commanders to keep abreast of the situation of subordinate units by frequent visits themselves or by staff officers resulted in faulty reports misleading them in the use of reserve units.

An almost complete lack of reconnaissance and intelligence of the enemy dispositions was a serious fault on all levels.

The actions of K Company Commander are normally not to be commended, however, in this particular situation it is noted that it did bring to the attention on higher commanders the necessity for

subordinates being offered time in which to make their plans. It is the actions of the small unit commanders and leaders that, in the final analysis, determines the success or failure of the attack. The fault did not rest on the Battalion Commander, he was simply under pressure and was carrying out orders.

It is believed that the frontage assigned the platoons was not sufficiently wide and, that by bunching an increasing number of casualties resulted. In terrain such as the Battalion was operating over, squads should be assigned certain fields to clear before moving to another field. Indian style tactics must be employed. Detailed maps should be available. Successive phase lines should be set.

Where ground observation cannot be secured the use of liaison aircraft would have aided Battalion and company commanders.

The failure of the Battalion attack plan, for 1800 hours 11 June, to provide for artillery fire was faulty planning for the element of surprise had been lost. This was the only attack in which the infantry attack could have been coordinated with the artillery fires. The full force of the attack was lost. With artillery preparation the enemy position may well have been taken.

The confusion attending the assignment of E and F Companies to the 3rd Battalion on 11 June was the result of confused orders.

The withdrawals of the 3rd Battalion on the afternoon of 10 June and 11 June from front-line positions could have resulted in a most serious situation. A strong, alert, aggressive enemy could have struck quickly and jeopardized the entire Corps' position.

The ordering of the attachment of E Company to the 3rd Battalion on 11 June without knowledge of its whereabouts on the part of the 3rd Battalion Commander or the Regimental S-2 or S-3 was an exhibition of very poor staff work in control. No time was allowed to contact E Company had its whereabouts been known.

LESSONS

1. Familiarization of all commanders and their subordinates with the plan is necessary to ensure that the attack is pushed with all speed and force possible.
2. Noncommissioned officers must be well informed at all times in order to temporarily replace Officer casualties in platoons.
3. Artillery is the best assisting arm infantry has and all infantrymen must be thoroughly convinced of this even though the effects cannot be directly observed.
4. In close terrain the initiative of the individual soldier plays a dominant role.
5. Disciplined troops are essential to victory. Officers and noncommissioned officers can ensure discipline by example in quick decisive action to forestall any breach of combat discipline.
6. Straggling must be stopped by officers and noncommissioned officers within their own units.
7. There is a tendency on the part of green troops in combat to exaggerate their losses. Continuous checking of Battalion aid stations in regimental medical companies must be made to substantiate these reported losses.
8. Maps are often as important as ammunition, especially in close terrain where visual observation is limited. The best maps available should be issued. Maps of a uniform scale should be issued to all subordinate units.
9. Communication must be maintained at all times and especially in close terrain where visual observation is limited.
10. Alternate means of communication must be provided to ensure the success of coordinated attacks between adjacent units.
11. Use of maximum fire by attacking infantry will provide the final screen necessary for the closing assault on enemy positions.

12. Patrols should carry sound power telephones for wiretapping when operating over areas in which friendly fire has been placed.

13. All individuals must be instructed that the care of the wounded is the duty of aid men.

END NOTES

- (1) B, p.1
- (2) D, p.2
- (3) D, p.1
- (4) D, p.3-4
- (5) D, p.10
- (6) B, p.29
- (7) D, p.10
- (8) Personal knowledge
- (9)-(11) Personal knowledge
- (12) A, P.3
- (13) E, P.21
- (14) Personal knowledge
- (15) Personal knowledge
- (16) Personal knowledge
- (17) Personal knowledge
- (18) E, p.22
- (19) D, p.129, 212
- (20) E, p.26
- (21) D, p.10
- (22) Personal knowledge
- (23) Personal knowledge
- (24),(25) E, p.23
- (26),(27) Personal knowledge
- (28) A, p.5
- (29),(30) Personal knowledge
- (31) D, p.75
- (32) D, p.125,126
- (33),(34) Letter, Dec 48, major T T Kilday, Personal possession
- (35),(36) Personal knowledge and statement at the time by Capt J Thompson
- (36a) Personal knowledge and observation, letter Major T T Kilday, Dec 48
- (37) D, p.126, H, p.72
- (38),(39) Personal observation
- (40) Personal statement Major T T Kilday, 10 June 44
- (41) Personal observation
- (42),(43) Personal observation and Personal knowledge
- (44) Letter, Dec 48, major T T Kilday, Personal possession
- (45) Personal statement, Lt Bowman, 10 June 44
- (46) Personal knowledge
- (47) Personal knowledge and statement of Major Chalres Ryder, Jr, Dec 48
- (48) Personal knowledge
- (49) Personal knowledge
- (50)-(53) Personal knowledge
- (54) Letter, Dec 48, Major T T Kilday and Personal knowledge
- (55),(56) Personal knowledge
- (57) Personal observation and statement from observers made at the time
- (58) Personal observation and statement from observers made at the time
- (59)-(61) Personal knowledge
- (62)-(66) Personal knowledge and personal observation
- (67)-(69) Personal knowledge
- (70)-(72) Personal knowledge and personal observation
- (73)-(78) Personal knowledge
- (79)-(80) Personal knowledge and observation
- (81) Personal statement Major T T Kilday
- (82) Personal statement, Major Charles Ryder, Jr, Dec 48
- (83) Personal statement, Major Charles Ryder, Jr, Dec 4 (84) E, p.26