

Authority **NNDT35017**
 By **43r** NARA Date **12/9**
REGIMENTAL HISTORY 358TH INFANTRY

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1944

Early morning on the first day of the month of November began for the 358th Infantry an epoch that will long be remembered by each and every soldier in the Regiment. The first day of this month came out of thick, over-hanging mist that persisted until about mid-day before relenting to the influence of a fast-fading Indiana Summer sun. The first day of the month saw the front line battalions skillfully and hopefully withdraw from the watchful eyes of FORT DRIANT and the many mighty German forts along the MOSELLE RIVER near the historic city of METZ - it saw them load on trucks and "jeeps" and head for a selected area where the guns of FORT DRIANT didn't fire and where they would train and rehabilitate. All of this proved, indeed, a mild portend of the days and nights that were to follow; at first, days of rugged training and nights of meticulous planning; later, days of bitter, bloody battles and nights of feverish preparation for tomorrow's problems. And so, the month of November was to embrace the one of the most memorable periods in the history of the 358th Infantry Regiment, and occupy a prominent place in the annals of American military operations.

As the scene opened, the 358th Infantry was under the skillful leadership of Colonel Christian H. Clarke, Jr., recently promoted to the grade of full colonel, and an outstanding officer. On his staff were officers trained by long, hard months of almost continual combat duty: Lieutenant Colonel Frederick W. Loomis, Executive Officer, who on various critical occasions commanded each battalion in the Regiment; Captain Howard A. Stotler, the new Regimental S-3 and formerly an outstanding Battalion S-3; Major William J. Falvey, hardworking, highly valued S-2; Major Walter Olson, experienced S-4; and Captain Paul R. Steckla, conscientious and efficient S-1. On the Special Staff were Captain William R. Shipe, and 1st Lieutenant Pat Parrish, Assistants to the S-3; Captain Hugo W. Pyes, Headquarters Commandant; Lieutenants Parnell J. Donohue and Tom Riddlehuber, Liaison Officers; Lieutenant Francis J. Shelton, Assistant to the S-2; Lieutenant Larry C. Lampo, Communications Officer; Captain James W. Campbell, Regimental Surgeon; Captain William Chisholm, Regimental Motor Officer; Lieutenant Melvin S. Hougren, Regimental Gas Officer; and Lieutenant William P. Flynn, Public Relations Officer.

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Wednesday, November 1, 1944 (Cont'd)

Communications in the Regiment were handled by First Lieutenant Larry C. Lampo, Regimental Communications Officer. In command of the First Battalion was Lieutenant Colonel Cleveland A. Lytle, an old Ranger and a "fighter". Heading Second Battalion was Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Schulz, outstanding young Battalion Commander. Leading Third Battalion was Lieutenant Colonel Jacob W. Bealke, the Regiment's only original Battalion Commander.

On November 1st, the two front line battalions were relieved by elements of the newly arrived Tenth Armored Division and immediately entrucked with the rest of the Regiment for a Concentration Area. The march order prescribed a route through VIONVILLE and MARS LA TOURS, the IP, and from there through JARNY, LABRY, AVRIL, AUDUN, SERROUVILLE, FILLIERES, and MORFONTAIN. By 1600 in the afternoon, the entire Regiment had completed the "close-in" of the new area, one mile West of AUDUN. Upon arrival, all efforts were made to billet men as comfortably as possible with the First Battalion and the Regimental Command Post situated in barracks, formerly used by the French Army and located near the village of MORFONTAINE; the Second Battalion in SERROUVILLE along with Cannon Company, and the 3rd Battalion in FILLIERES with Anti-Tank Company. The remainder of the day was devoted to the improvement of billets and planning for the training that was to begin on the next day. Colonel Clarke was called to Division Headquarters to be briefed on future operations involving the 358th Infantry - operations that later proved eminently successful and in which this Regiment played a prominent role.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2 1944

Gradually, the cloud lifted and each day, further plans were made for the coming operation. On this day, the Regimental Commander, Colonel Clarke, met with his Battalion Commanders and together with them attended a conference with General Van Fleet, 90th Division Commander, at the Division CP. The 358th Infantry was to cross the MOSELLE RIVER! That was the formidable operation now in its embryonic stage. Meanwhile, as the commanders conferred, the Regiment continued its program of training and rehabilitation, not without relaxation and entertainment in the way of various Special Service activities, under the direction of Lieutenant August A. Ackel. At the same time, the Regiment was placed in Corps Reserve and immediately dispatched Lieutenant Parnell J. Donohue to Twentieth Corps Headquarters as Liaison Officer. Major Falvey instituted orientation of the Regiment on enemy capabilities. Plans were made for the teaching of German weapons by a visiting team, especially qualified for this purpose.

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1944

The coming operation drew nearer and the Regiment continued on its program of training and rehabilitation of troops. Colonel Clarke conferred with Lieutenant Colonels Lytle, Schulz, and Bealke and made plans for the initiation of reconnaissance parties early in the following day. Several old forts of the Maginet Line in the Regimental area were made available to the Battalions in the training against fortified positions, training that was later to prove so valuable. Attacking a river line was practiced and special emphasis was placed on "fighting in villages and towns" along with fighting in wooded areas. Conduct in Germany was put forth as an important subject for the consideration of all company commanders. Officer and NCO Schools were conducted during the day and early evening, and all phases of training were directed towards a common objective - securing a bridgehead over the MOSELLE RIVER, and continuing the drive to the East.

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1944

The observing soldier noticed now and interesting item that aroused his curiosity. Instead of the familiar "TO" on the helmet of several commanders was a blotch of mud, and where once the familiar shoulder patch was worn, there were but a few threads. This, however, meant only one thing to the commanders concerned - the actual starting of the operation with dispatching of reconnaissance parties to the proposed site for the river crossing. Great efforts were expended to keep the plans for the future operation from the enemy. Care was taken in discussion of the plan, identification of units was concealed, the CIC and Civil Affairs proceeded to clamp down on civilians in the area. Colonel Clarke, minus shoulder patch and helmet TO, drove around in a "jeep" marked with the 43rd Cavalry designation. Reconnaissance had to be thorough and complete but could not give the slightest indication of an impending attack in the selected sector. General Patton visited the Division Command Post on this date and spoke to a representative group from the Regiment. In his rather colorful talk, he praised the 90th Division highly for its past accomplishments, and wished them the best of luck in the future operation. His message was inspiring, and increased the confidence in the success of the forthcoming drive.

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1944

As "D-Day" drew nearer, reconnaissance became more active and more objective. Upon the success of this operation depended a great deal of the entire success of the Third Army. The 358th Infantry Regiment was to cross the river in the vicinity of CATTENOM and KOECKING, the two proposed Regimental bridge-sites North of THIONVILLE by about eleven kilometers, after moving to forward assembly areas in the vicinity of CATTENOM under cover of darkness. While planning and reconnaissance continued, the Regiment proceeded with its schedule of training and rehabilitation. Lieutenants Petsche, Anderson, and Rudes, First, Second and Third Battalion S-2's respectively, concerned themselves primarily with orientation of troops in regard to the handling of German civilians and prisoners of war. It was deemed most important in the future operations that every available scrap of information from a prisoner be obtained, with the primary purpose in mind of obtaining vital information about German fortifications in front of the Division.

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1944

The 358th Infantry Regiment continued its course of preparation for the coming assault of the River line - proceeding with the training of troops and the completion of plans to minute details. The 90th Division Commander, General James A. Van Fleet, visited the Regimental Command Post on this day to confer with Colonel Clarke on the forthcoming operation. Briefing on the operation continued throughout the day as reconnaissance parties finished their work.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1944

While people in the states voted in the Presidentail Election, American soldiers in the 358th Infantry made final preparations before embarking on a momentous military operation--the crossing of the MOSELLE RIVER. The plan envisaged this Regiment's clearing the Concentration Area in the late afternoon and assembling at an intermediate assembly area in the vicinity of HAVANGE. With this in mind, Colonel Clarke dispatched Captain Shipe, Assistant S-3, with a quarter party from the three battalions and the special units to organize the assembly area in anticipation of the Regiment remaining at this location for a period of from two to four hours. It was planned that the Regiment would serve a hot meal at the Intermediate Assembly Area. With the use of the Regimental kitchen trucks and additional quartermaster transportation, the Regiment would be transported to the Assembly Area this side of the MOSELLE RIVER, in the vicinity of a Marine Camp located some three miles from the MOSELLE. In the execution of these plans, it was anticipated that the entire Regiment would close on its Assembly Area during the hours of darkness. So, late afternoon found the 358th Infantry Regiment on the road to its Intermediate Assembly area at HAVANGE. Hot chow was served the men here and at 2130, there commenced a most difficult night move. Visibility was at a minimum due to the extreme darkness of the night. However, shortly after midnight all three battalions had closed-in in the vicinity of the Marine Barracks North of CATTENOM. Company B of the 315th Medical Battalion was located in the same camp. All of this was joined later in the following day by a forward echelon of Division Headquarters. Service Company occupied an area in the vicinity of HETANGE GRANDE.

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WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 1944

This was D-Day! The 8th day of month, D-Day for the Twentieth Corps, found the Regiment assembled in the vicinity of the FORET de GATTENOM and a group of French barracks one mile from the river town of GATTENOM. Final preparations were made here for the long anticipated operation - namely, that of crossing the MOSELLE RIVER and establishing a bridgehead over the River. The impending operation, however, was but a part of a greater operation by the entire Twentieth Corps - the objective of which was to encircle the mighty fortress of METZ followed by the destruction of the fortress itself. The Fifth Infantry Division was to attack on D-Day out of the bridgehead area East of the MOSELLE RIVER while the Ninety-Fifth Infantry Division was to make a reconnaissance in force with one battalion crossing in the vicinity of UCKANGE while the remainder of the Division was to maintain pressure on the enemy salient on the West side of the MOSELLE RIVER. Following the establishment of the new Corps bridgehead, the Tenth Armored Division was to cross the MOSELLE, seizing the high ground North of BOULAY and continuing with a reconnaissance in force to the SAAR RIVER. Then, the Eighty-Third Infantry Division was to follow the Armor and attack Northeast toward the SAAR RIVER. The 90th Infantry Division was to play its role in the Corps picture by passing through Task Force Polk and forcing a crossing of the MOSELLE in the vicinity of KOENIGSMACHER on D plus 1 and continuing the attack to seize the high ground Northwest of BOULAY.

The Ninetieth Infantry Division was to cross the river with two regiments abreast - the 359th on the left and the 358th on the right with 357th crossing over the bridgehead established by the 358th Infantry.

The 358th Infantry, meanwhile, on D-Day, continued last minute planning and contained itself with its own problems. It had attached, for the operation, Company A of the 81st Chemical Battalion, Commanded by Captain Watts; Company A of the 712th Tank Battalion, commanded by a fighting Irishman named Lieutenant O'Reilly; Company B of the 315th Engineers, directed by Captain Simms; and Company B of the 315th Medical Battalion, commanded by Captain Crapin. To support the operation, the 344th Field Artillery Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Munson; the 105's of the 241st Field Artillery Battalion, and the 155's of the 345th Field Artillery Battalion.

Briefly, the First Battalion, 358th Infantry was to force a crossing of the MOSELLE RIVER within its zone at H Hour on D plus 1, using Engineer assault boats for the crossing. After crossing the river, it was then to seize the town of BASSE HAM on the right of the Division sector prior to daylight on D plus 1 and block all approaches from the Southeast. After securing BASSE HAM, the First Battalion was to seize the mighty bastion of Fort Koenigsmacher. It also may be noted that the First Battalion was on the right flank of the Division and had additional mission of repelling any possible counter-attack on the Division right flank.

The Third Battalion, 358th Infantry, was to force another crossing of the MOSELLE RIVER simultaneously with the First Battalion. It was to contain the town of KOENIGSMACHER from the West initially and then to continue its attack to the Regimental Objective, reaching there before dark.

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WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 1944, (Cont'd)

The Second Battalion was to cross the MOSELLE RIVER following the Third Battalion, relieving at daylight the Third Battalion, containing KOENIGSMACHER, prepared to continue on to the Regimental Objective.

The Regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon was to cross the river following the First Battalion on the same crossing site. It had the mission of forming a counter-reconnaissance screen along the Regimental right flank.

The above very briefly summarizes the Regimental Order dated D-Day, November 8, 1944. Needless to say, the entire scheme was dependent on utmost secrecy and surprise. It was essential that every leader impress upon each and every soldier involved in the operation the necessity for almost noiseless movement.

Many hours of D-Day were devoted to a better understanding among all concerned of the tactics of the assault. Fast continued movement of leading elements was stressed along with extreme secrecy throughout the assault. It was imperative in the the operation that the impetus of the attack continuously mount.

Immediately following the crossing of the Battalions, the Engineers were to put in operation a ferry and at the same time construct an infantry support bridge. Priority lists were made for the crossing of essential vehicles first - followed by the remainder of the Regiment's organic transportation.

Shortly before noon on D-Day, the Regimental Commander, Colonel Clarke gathered his officers together in the vicinity of the Command Post and presented them with a general outline of the plan and assured them its success depended on the leadership of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Regiment. His words were corroborated by those of the Division Commander, General Van Fleet, who spoke to the officers following Colonel Clarke.

Later in the day, Colonel Clarke conferred with Lieutenant Colonel Bell, Commander of the 359th Infantry Regiment, which unit was to force a crossing in the vicinity of MALLING on the left of the 358th Infantry.

It was most essential to the success of the plan that the assault units relay as quickly as possible to the Regimental Command Group the progress of their leading elements. This point was stressed again in a message from Colonel Clarke to Lieutenant Colonel Lytle of the First Battalion. It was planned to establish a ferry in the First Battalion sector but it was necessary first to determine the present locations of mines between the river and the town of BESSE HAM. If mines were discovered by the leading elements Lieutenant Colonel Lytle's Battalion, it would be necessary to establish the ferry in alongside the bridgehead established by Lieutenant Colonel Bealke's Third Battalion.

As D-Day drew to a close, General Van Fleet had words of advice to the attacking elements of the 358th Infantry. He stressed the importance of prompt reports from the assault units, of providing all around defense at night - and allowing the men to get as much rest as possible.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1944

This was D plus One for the current attack of the Twentieth Corps, and D plus One Hundred and Fifty Seven for the American Armies in Europe. This was the day when the 358th Infantry Regiment began its fight against the unpredictable MOSELLE RIVER and continued its fight against the German Army.

Everything was in readiness for the first assault waves to take to their boats. The crossing, and the traffic approaching the crossing, was to be carefully checked and regulated by an elaborate traffic control system established by the Division and supplemented by that established by this Regiment. Lt. Pat Parrish, Assistant to the S-3, along with Lt. Shelton, Assistant to the S-2, operated a forward Command Post in GATTENOM. Captain Shipe, Assistant to the S-3, was placed in charge of traffic control for the Regiment in GATTENOM. Lt. Parrish was responsible for the reporting of the progress of the river crossing from his vantage point on the bank of the river. The remainder of the Regimental Command Post remained at the Marine Barracks, one mile from GATTENOM, until such time as it could be moved forward to the town of GATTENOM.

At 0300 on D plus One, the First Battalion had already cleared the town of HUZANGE, and picked up its assault boats, the Second Battalion and attached elements had cleared its old assembly area and closed into its area in GATTENOM, and the Third Battalion was in the process of procuring its boats - all in preparation for the "jump-off" at 0330. Up until this time, very little enemy activity had been noted by forward observers. At 0330, both First and Third Battalions slipped into the water in rubber assault boats. Fifteen minutes later, Third Battalion's first wave landed without casualty on the far shore of the MOSELLE. First Battalion was delayed slightly at the start due to the muddy condition of the river bank. At 0355, Company L had reached the Cement Factory on the other side of the River. At 0443, the First Battalion reported its first wave had crossed the River successfully. Around this time, enemy artillery and mortar fire began to harass the Engineers at work on the bridge-site in GATTENOM. Ten casualties were reported by Captain Sims of the 315th Engineers. Lt. Benedict, S-3, Third Battalion reported to the Command Post that Lieutenant Colonel Bealke, Commander of the Third Battalion, was hit in the hand and being evacuated. Captain James S. Spivey took over command of the Battalion temporarily. At 0520, two companies of the First Battalion had crossed the River and were proceeding to the railroad track that ran parallel to the River. Meanwhile, as operations at the River continued, enemy shelling of the area increased, inflicting casualties on the Engineers attempting to build an Infantry support bridge. Daylight found Company C of the First Battalion in the town of BASSE HAM and Company A already on top of the strong Fort Koenigsmacher with Company B close by to support the assault of Company A on the Fort. At the same time, Lieutenant Colonel Lytle reported his casualties so far were very light in the initial phase of the assault of Fort Koenigsmacher.

By 0800 on the morning of the 9th, both First and Third Battalions were across the river and on their initial objectives. Part of Second Battalion had crossed and two companies of this battalion, Companies E and G, were given the mission, by Colonel Clarke, of mopping up the far bank of the MOSELLE, from which some machine gun fire was being directed on the Third Battalion. Each battalion had a forward Command Post across the MOSELLE and at the same time maintained a rear Command Post near the embarkation point in order to coordinate the movement of supplies and equipment across the River.

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1944

Lt. Petsche, S-2 of the First Battalion, arrived at the Regimental Command Post to inquire about litter teams dispatched across the river earlier and also to present Major Falvey, Regimental S-2, with the PW information from prisoners captured. Some artillery targets were discovered which Major Falvey immediately relayed to the supporting artillery.

Captain Shipe, acting Executive Officer of the Third Battalion, reported over a foot of water on the main road from CATTENOM to the river. All indications pointed to further flooding by the MOSELLE and the earliest estimate for completion of a bridge was noon on the following day, the Tenth of November.

During the night all battalions concentrated their efforts on ferrying across supplies and ammunition. The river was described as a "raging torrent" and bridging the river was a nigh impossible feat, according to the Engineers. It was contemplated a ferry would be in operation by 0400. At 0300, Captain Drury, Assistant Division G-2, informed the Regiment of eight tanks reported to be to the right flank of the 359th Infantry Regiment. A half-hour later, G-2 reported that the 359th Infantry had been hit by the tanks in the vicinity of KERLING and were forced to withdraw to better ground.

Captain Beville reported at 0333 that the River was still rising and about fifty feet from the last house in CATTENOM. Lt. Parrish verified the report from his forward Command Post and Division was duly informed.

Report was received that Lt. Robert Corns, one of the original 358th Inf., officers was hit again and evacuated. Captain Stevens was assigned to Second Battalion and assumed command of Company F.

Captain Shipe of Third Battalion reported early on the morning of the tenth that he expected to be in radio contact with his Battalion commander, Captain Spivey soon having sent him a 610-radio and a supply of miscellaneous communications equipment.

At 0645, on the morning of the tenth of November, the Engineers working at the River reported that a float would be in operation in a matter of a few hours, raising the hopes of everyone that soon support weapons and vehicles would be able to cross the river to assist the assault force over there. But it was to be some time yet before this was to be realized for the river continued to rise, and the current continued to menace even the shipment of supplies and ammunition by assault boats. However, it was reported that all three battalions had sufficient ammunition and rations on hand to continue throughout the day due to the unceasing efforts of supply crews throughout the night. Lt. Elwell, Ammunition and Pioneer platoon leader of the Third Battalion, and who later was to become the S-3 of that battalion, made several trips across the river during the night and took his supply parties over long, hazardous routes in order to keep his front line companies supplied with needed ammunition and rations for the days' fighting.

As the Regiment began its second day across the river, anxiety for the construction of a treadway bridge increased. But the bridge did not go in and the best means of transportation across the river was a motor launch, one of sixteen procured by the Regimental S-4, Major Walter W. Olsen, through Division supply officer.

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1944 (Cont'd)

In mid-morning, the MOSELLE RIVER was reported to have reached its flood stage and that by 1900 at night it was to have dropped to its near normal level.

Meanwhile, the First Battalion still squatted on top of Fort Koenigsbacher, in need of explosives to blast the Germans out of the Fort. Lieutenant Colonel Lytle, from on top of the Fort, requested three thousand pounds of Composition 2. A plan was considered in which the artillery liaison planes would be employed to drop the compound within reach of the First Battalion forces. Captain Andrews Artillery Liaison officer with the 358th Infantry, contacted Major Gonn of the 34th Field Artillery who believed the plan was feasible and who personally made an air reconnaissance over the ground to select a spot for the landing of the high explosive. So, five cub liaison planes winged their way over the MOSELLE and dropped a quantity of explosive in the vicinity of the cement factory. This and larger amounts of the compound sent over later were delivered into the hands of Company A's Lieutenant Neal, who personally placed the satchel charges against the tunnel entrances on the West side of Fort Koenigsbacher.

Colonel Clarke, after establishing a forward Command Post in the river town of CATTENOM proceeded, by boat, with Captain Hugo H. Pyes, Headquarters Commandant, and a skeleton staff crew across the river to direct the fighting from the East side of the MOSELLE. His headquarters was established in the Cement Factory along with the Command Posts of the Second Battalion and Third Battalion. In a water-flooded basement in this building, the reports of the progress of the attack were received and the plans for the continuation of the Regiment's attack were issued.

Since the attack started, not a man on the East side of the river slept under a blanket, if he slept at all. So, mid-afternoon saw the efforts of the S-4 and the Regimental Surgeon concentrated on delivering enough blankets to protect the wounded from further exposure. The original plan was to drop blankets by cub plane as they did the C-2 compound for the First Battalion. This plan was dropped, however, when Lieutenant Aughtry arrived at the Command Post on the West side of the river with his plan for delivering supplies under cover of darkness and by means of a route he himself had reconnoitered across the river. Between the last bit of daylight and 0400 in the morning, Lt. Aughtry led six assault boat convoys across the river with supplies of blankets, rations, and ammunition, along with an additional quantity of C-2 for the elements of the First Battalion working on the Fort.

As the troops closed in for the night on the Tenth of November, the Third Battalion had reached its objective for the day, occupying the high ground on the left of the Regimental sector with Companies K and L and Company I in a supporting position behind them. The Second Battalion organized for an attack on the town of VALMESTROFF in the morning, while the First Battalion contained Fort Koenigsbacher, preparing to wipe out resistance from within the Fort on the morning of the eleventh.

Meanwhile, during the night, the battle against the MOSELLE continued. Still another plan was devised for the shipment of equipment and supplies to the other side of the river. Captain Underwood, Liaison Officer to 2nd Battalion, was dispatched to the 206th Engineers to pick up four, four-and-one-half-ton trucks to load them with the Battalion Commanders' jeeps and supplies and be pre-

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pared to take them across a bridge which the 359th Infantry expected to have in operation in the vicinity of MALLING. However, it was to be some time before this plan was to materialize due to the height of the river in that sector.

Throughout the night, hand carrying parties carried supplies and ammunition over the long supply routes to the front line companies. Though the extreme darkness of the night forced the Engineers to cease ferrying activity, Lt. Aughtery S-3 of the First Battalion, continued his trips across the water throughout the entire night. Early morning hours found the battalions and their assault elements well supplied with necessary ammunition and rations to carry on the day's fighting.

Evacuation of wounded throughout the early phase of the operations continued to be indeed a serious problem. It was necessary, first, for the wounded to be hand-carried on litters over miles of rough country to the ferrying site - where they were then loaded into boats and brought across to the other side of the river where ambulances of Company B, 315th Medical Battalion, waited to rush them to the Collecting Company.

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1944

The eleventh of November, or D plus Two, in this operation was to prove eminently successful for the 358th Infantry. Also, on the same day, the Regiment was to lose an outstanding officer in 1st Lieutenant Max Short, Executive Officer of Company K, and a leader in the well-known Company K "Kraut Killers". The story is told that Lt. Short issued orders that no man would fire until the enemy was within fifty-yards - when his company was counter-attacked by a sizable enemy force. His orders were carried out to the last man and his men not only beat-off the counter-attack but accounted for the annihilation of most of the attacking force.

During the day, Companies A and B continued the assault on the Fort with the assistance of a platoon from the 315th Engineers. At 1600, the German garrison started escaping through the tunnels to the East end of the Fort into the Second Battalion area. Company G was ready for the move and captured over two-hundred and forty prisoners as they came out of the Fort, while elements of the First Battalion followed into the Fort cleaning out the resistance from within. The entire garrison of three hundred and one German troops was captured and killed in the attack by the American troops. After the Fort fell, A and B companies moved back to BASSE HAM to obtain a much needed rest after three days and nights on top of the Fort - while Company G remained at the Fort to maintain contact with Company G and the Second Battalion.

By nightfall, the Third Battalion, under the command of Captain James Spivey, had taken hill 252 and consolidated for the night in that vicinity.

Throughout the night of the eleventh of November, the supply battle and the fight against the MOSELLE RIVER continued. Efforts at the waters' edge were coordinated by Lt. Colonel Frederick H. Loomis, Executive Officer of the Regiment, who assumed responsibility for the pushing of supplies and ammunition across the river and the coordination of efforts of the Infantry and Engineers to span the MOSELLE with a permanent tread-way bridge.

On the night of the eleventh, the outlook was far better than it had been since the start of the attack on the river. The Third Battalion had gained its objective at 1800, the mighty Fort Koenigsbacher had been defeated, and the Second Battalion, less G Company, was on the outskirts of the town of VALMESTROFF, prepared to take the town in the morning.

Among the many outstanding feats of the day performed by members of the 358th Infantry were those of Lieutenant Harris E. Neil and Lieutenant William B. Kilpatrick, assisted by Lieutenant Baird, all of Company A. Under the direction of these officers, this company remained in the open on top of the fort for three days and nights while the enemy was still active beneath them inside the Fort. While the siege of the Fort lasted, it was necessary for all supplies to be hand-carried up the exposed side of the hill on which the fort was built. While the men fought on the topside, they were subjected to severe artillery fire - observed fire - adjusted from enemy observation posts located on the opposite end of the very same Fort. Lt. Neil himself personally placed the satchel charges of C-2 against the immense steel and concrete doors to the tunnels. His deeds on this occasion have been highly appreciated by the Regiment and will long be remembered by the men who fought with him.

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At the end of the day's fighting in the Second Battalion area, it was reported there were some twenty-eight wounded, eighteen of them in serious condition, on the far side of the River. Thus the evacuation of wounded did indeed present a serious problem to add to the many other problems involved in the assault of the MOSELLE RIVER line. Arrangements were made with the Regimental Surgeon, Captain Campbell, to evacuate the wounded to the Aid Station on the river and then transport them across the water in assault boats.

At 2130, on the night of the 11th, Brigadier General Van Fleet called Lieutenant Colonel Loomis, the Regimental Executive Officer, to convey his congratulations to all 358th Infantry personnel who took an active part in securing the Objective and taking Fort Koenigsacker. His order for the following day was to improve positions and to continue on to the Objective.

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1944

The twelfth of November, D plus four, and still the fight against the slowly receding MOSELLE RIVER continued. Partial success was achieved with one plan to ship vehicles and anti-tank guns across by means of heavy artillery M-5 prime movers and trailers across the 359th Infantry bridge at MALLING. By 0400 on the morning of the twelfth, one anti-tank gun had been moved across the bridge in the fashion described. Captain Underwood succeeded in getting across with three four and one half ton trucks on which he had loaded three jeeps and sufficient supplies to alleviate even the most critical situation. This was accomplished before the enemy artillery fire knocked out the 359th Infantry bridge. The latest reports from the Engineers were that the bridge at CATTENOM would be in operation sometime in the afternoon - now that the water had begun to recede at a faster rate. In order to facilitate the building of the bridge, however, it was necessary for the work at the water's edge to be screened. For this purpose, additional smoke pots were requested and the Chemical Mortar Company was given the job of establishing a smoke screen throughout the day.

Meanwhile, the shipment of food, ammunition, and gasoline had a high priority at the water's edge. Boats went back and forth continually throughout the day with these supplies. The supply lines on the East side of the MOSELLE were at this time long and hazardous and required the assistance of all members of the Battalion Headquarters Companies in addition to the ammunition and pioneer platoons. Cooks from the Regimental Field Train were recruited into service on the East side of the river and assisted the troops on that side in getting supplies to forward elements of the battalions. A great deal of the day was spent in demining roads and mine fields in the sector. This was the first time, the German plastic and wooden mines had been encountered and extra precaution had to be taken in removing the mines. At one place near BASSE HAM, several onehundred pound air bombs were found alongside of the road wired with igniters and placed for use as anti-personnel mines.

Shortly after noon, the Second Battalion had reported capturing the town of VALMESTROFF - and were reorganizing in that vicinity, and moving the Battalion Command Post into that town.

During the day the companies of the First Battalion concentrated on rest and reorganization. At 1500, Company B moved to the vicinity of VALMESTROFF and took up a defensive position there. Company A outposted the town of BASSE HAM and Company C established a defensive position around Fort Koenigsmacher and arranged to contact Company B from there.

On the right of the Regiment, the 95th Infantry Division was endeavoring to cross the MOSELLE RIVER in the vicinity of THIONVILLE. A patrol was sent out from the Second Battalion to attempt to contact some elements of the 95th Division reported to be on this side of the river. Shortly after this patrol was dispatched, however, small arms fire was heard in that direction, and the patrol was believed to have been ambushed.

Throughout the day, the Regiment anxiously awaited the arrival of the O'Reilly Tank Company of the 712th Tank Battalion. Up until this time, it had been impossible to ferry the tanks across. However, the condition of the river favored the tank now and Lieutenants Shelton and Riddlehuber and Taylor awaited the arrival of the tanks in the vicinity of the MALLING FERRY site.

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1944 (Cont'd)

The Regimental Military Police Company, Commanded by Lieutenant Paul H. Rines, figured closely in the operations both at the River and also in the town of ELZANGE in the Third Battalion sector and in VALMESTROFF, in the Second Battalion sector. The MP's were used mainly in the regulation of traffic and the control of civilians.

Many problems arose during the day that increased the difficulties confronting the Regiment. Supply routes were constantly lengthening and becoming more hazardous. On the Third Battalion's supply route to ELZANGE, it was necessary for the ammunition and pioneer platoon leader to secure the assistance of the available men in the MP Platoon attached and the Engineers in order to fill in an enormous tank ditch that blocked the route. While returning along the route at one time during the early evening, Lieutenant Elwell met some party on the road that could not give the pass-word. The identity of the party was soon realized when they opened fire on Lt. Elwell. The officer immediately took cover and started returning fire. After the fire had ceased Lt. Elwell discovered that he had wounded one German and taken nine prisoners.

The earliest estimate on the bridge at CATTENOM was that it should be completed by 0830 in the morning. Until then, it was still necessary for all supplies, rations, and equipment to be brought across the river in assault boats and transported by hand-carry to the companies of the battalions.

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 By **13r** NARA Date **12/9**

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1944

During the early morning hours of the thirteenth of November, the Regimental S-2, Major William Falvey, accompanied by Lt. Donohue, Regimental Liaison Officer, proceeded from the forward Regimental Command Post in the town of KOENIGSMACHER across the river to confer with Lieutenant Colonel Loomis at the Rear Command Post. They returned forward a few hours later with the information that the bridge being constructed would possibly be ready by 0800 in the morning.

Prior to daylight arrangements were made with Major De Pew, S-3 of the 357th Infantry, for the tanks and TD's which that Regiment had across the river to come to the assistance of the 358th Infantry in the event the 358th Infantry was counter-attacked by enemy tanks.

Damn found work on the bridge progressing rapidly in spite of the many difficulties encountered. While the Engineers worked on the bridge, ferrying activity was practically at a stand still due to the number of boats needed for the construction of the bridge. It was very likely that this day would see the bridge in operation and the rest of the Regiment across the MOSELLE with the long-awaited vehicles and equipment.

The Second Battalion prepared to attack a Fort in its sector and a supply of C-2 compound was brought to them from the First Battalion. The Third Battalion prepared to assault a hill on which there were believed to be a few Germans. After taking the hill, Captain Spivey, the Battalion Commander, expected to attain his objective and halt. The First Battalion remained with one company in BASSE HAM on the right flank of the Division, one company at the Fort, and another in the town of VALMESTROFF.

At 1700, on the 14th of November, D plus Six, the long awaited bridge across the MOSELLE RIVER was completed. With the bridge, along came communications across the river. The long fight against the river ended as the first 358th Infantry anti-tank vehicles and guns rolled across the bridge.

Within minutes after the completion of the bridge all of the tactical transportation of the Regiment had joined the battalions on the East side of the MOSELLE - bringing additional supplies of ammunition and rations. Along came the TD's and shortly afterwards the tanks. In a matter of hours, the 34th Field Artillery had displaced to supporting positions on the East side of the MOSELLE RIVER. Throughout the night, all efforts were concentrated on getting as much of the Regiment's and its attachment's transportation and equipment across the river.

Before the bridge was completed, the personnel of two entire regiments had crossed the river in the vicinity of CATTENOM. But, just before the completion of the bridge, and in one of the last attempts to cross the river before the bridge was in, a new hazard presented itself. As the water receded on the far shore near KOENIGSMACHER, the mines that had been planted on the edge of the river, became exposed. What was a hazard became a menace when Lt. Vann, a veteran supply officer with the Third Battalion, in an attempt to bring supplies across the river in a duck, hit a mine and suffered a compound fracture of the leg. The presence of mines on the shore and even under the bridge meant an additional problem for the engineers - and contributed to the delay before the bridge was finally completed.

Authority NND 735017

By 13r NARA Date 12/9

HISTORY

358th Infantry

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1944

0915 on the 14th of November saw the entire 358th Combat Team across the MOSELLE RIVER - thus ending an epic struggle against what proved a formidable obstacle for several days.- Immediately, supply routes were consolidated, and the guns of the supporting TD company were made available to the Battalions.

The order for the day called for the Second Battalion to take the town of DISTROFF, and the Third Battalion to take the town of INGLANGE, while the First Battalion was to march to VALMESTROFF remain in Regimental Reserve.

At 1355, The Second Battalion reported observing fifty enemy half-tracks on the road from DISTROFF to STUCKANGE. At first, it was believed the vehicles might be elements of a 95th Division reconnaissance party. At 1450, the vehicles were reported as German by an eye witness, Lieutenant Colonel Schulz. Immediately, the 34th Field Artillery went to work on the column, firing on the tanks and half-tracks along the road.

During the day, the Regimental Command Post moved to the vicinity of ELZANGE and was installed in some German barracks located near the town. The Regimental Field Train, under Captain Louis Jacks, established itself in BASSE HAM.

The situation in the Third Battalion sector was clarified with a report from an I Company patrol sent to the town. Germans still held the town with a strong detachment of Infantry and tanks and around the town these forces were well dug-in and so placed to defend the town against our attack. Captain Spivey notified Colonel Clarke at 1610 that he intended to pull Company I back a bit and hit Inglange with artillery during the night and then take the town in the morning. So far, he had had no word from a patrol from Company I that had been sent into the town the day before. Guesses were that the patrol, almost the size of a platoon, had been captured.

Meantime, the Second Battalion continued its attack on the right of the Regimental sector. At 1715, with Company F leading, and with a platoon of the 773rd Tank Destroyer battalion in support, the Second Battalion entered the town capturing 30 German prisoners and 24 American soldiers. The 24 Americans turned out to be the Company I patrol Captain Spivey had dispatched the previous day. They were to have gone to INGLANGE, but instead turned up in DISTROFF. The non-commissioned officer in charge of the group reported he had entered DISTROFF when the town was filled with the enemy, and that he hid his men in the cellars until the Germans withdrew from the town.

The 357th Infantry, on this Regiment's left flank, was informed by S-3 Stotler, through Lieutenant Riddlehuber, of the plan to contain the town of INGLANGE for the night and to take the town in the morning. The status of the town was of great importance to the 357th Infantry as it rested on the boundary between the regiments and was later to be a link in the main supply for that regiment.

As Captain Stotler and Colonel Clarke conferred on plans for the continuation of the attack in the morning, S-2 Falvey arranged with the 34th Field Artillery to fire propaganda shells into the towns of STUCKANGE, BUDING, and METZERVISSE, where the enemy was known to be concentrating for the night. Major Falvey also planned to hit METZERVISSE with HE along with the propaganda on the strength of a report from Master Sergeant, Interrogator for the Regiment, and head of the Regimental IPW Team. Midener

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1944 (Cont'd)

The prisoner went so far as to locate with the point of a pin the exact house in the town of METZERVISSE in which the remainder of his unit were billeted for the night.

Plans for tomorrow were that the Second Battalion would mop-up any resistance left in DISTROFF and push out patrols. The Third Battalion was to attack the town of INGLANGE at 0630 in the morning, mop up the town and then push out patrols to the Southeast.

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th. Infantry

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1944

Shortly after midnight, in the very early morning of the fifteenth of November 1944, three battalion liaison officers, Lieutenants Rice, Taylor and Captain Underwood headed their jeeps toward their respective battalion CP's with the Regimental attack order for the day. Briefly, the 358th Infantry according to the order, was to resume the attack at 0630, shortly after day-break with the second battalion on the right and the Third Battalion on the left, with the First Battalion in Regimental Reserve. Attached were Company A of the 712th Tank Battalion and Company A of the 81st Chemical Mortar Company, the latter with its big 4.2 mortars. In support, the 344th Field Artillery Battalion and Company B of the 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion.

The Third Battalion was ordered to seize the town of INGLANGE, a key town on the extreme left of the Regimental zone, later to send a patrol to its objective, following with the Battalion. The Second, occupying the town of DISTROFF, on the Division right flank, was to dispatch a patrol to METZERVISSE to the Southeast at 0700, and then follow with the rest of the Battalion to seize its objective. Each battalion was to be assisted by a platoon of the O'Reilly Tank Company from the 712th Tank Battalion.

The hours preceding dawn were uneventful, so to speak, with the enemy sending a few rounds of mortar fire in and whipping in some sporadic, high velocity fire, while the 344th Field Artillery continued to interdict enemy towns, crossroads, valleys and hills.

During the night, it appeared that the enemy made a few plans also. For right at the crack of dawn, they assembled exactly eleven half-tracked armored vehicles, two heavy self-propelled guns mounted on Mark V chassis with multiple mounts, four high velocity anti-tank guns, and two battalions of infantry from the 25th Panzer Division. After a heavy barrage of mortar and artillery fire, they pushed all of this into the town of DISTROFF, held by the Second Battalion, 358th Infantry. Upon receipt of the first word of the counter-attack, Colonel Clarke alerted the First Battalion to move in support of either the Second or Third Battalions, the latter also threatened with a counter-attack receiving considerable heavy artillery and mortar fire. Major Falvey notified G-2 of the counter-attack at DISTROFF and everyone else was duly oriented on the situation. Right about this time, Lieutenant Byron C. Clarke, Liaison Officer to Division, arrived and received the picture. Colonel Clarke, meanwhile, coordinated the resources of the Regiment - getting the Reserve Platoon of TD's to the support of the Second Battalion along with the Reserve Platoon of tanks. Colonel Clarke communicated with the 357th Infantry on the left asking for their situation and giving them the situation in this sector. Battalion liaison officers were sent to their battalions to communicate by phone and radio on the progress of the operations. Another 300-radio was established on Colonel Clarke's order at the Regimental Command Post in contact with Major Wallace, Executive Officer of the Second Battalion, who immediately assumed command of the Second Battalion forces in the town of DISTROFF. Meanwhile, a bitter house to house fight was being waged in the town of DISTROFF - involving everyone from company supply sergeants to battalion staff officers - firing everything from bazookas to Colt Automatics - out of windows and doors and from the rooftops. There was a great deal of hard fighting before the town was again cleared. At one point, Company G in its entire strength, was reported captured only to be reported later as back in action with the Company Commander Captain Lodge, missing along with Captain Watts of the 4.2 Chemical Mortars. Two Captains helmets placed together and some on-the-scene reports led to the belief the two captains had been captured.

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1944 (Cont'd)

Shortly after 1000, General Van Fleet visited the Regimental Command Post and conferred with Colonel Clarke who oriented the General on the situation. General Van Fleet praised the Regiment and the battalion for beating off the severe counter-attack. Eventually, after hard fighting, the counter-attack was repulsed and the enemy withdrew from DISTROFF, taking some prisoners with them. The Third Battalion, under the command of Captain Spivey, patrolled to INGLANGE and reported that the town was clear of Germans. He stated his plans for entering the town as soon as his companies were able to get under way.

Colonel Clarke issued orders for the mopping-up of DISTROFF and the consolidating of positions there. He then contacted Colonel Lytle of the First Battalion and explained the plan for his battalion, that of moving to METZERVISSE by way of DISTROFF or straight across from their present location. Meanwhile, all battalions concentrated on reorganization and preparation for the attack.

At the end of the day, Colonel Clarke conferred with Lieutenant Colonel Stilwell and worked out plans for the next day with S-3 Stetler. At the same time officers in the Regiment mourned the loss of one of the Regiment's outstanding officers, Lieutenant Wendall T. Nickerson, one of the original officers who had been in action all through Normandy, across France, and here on the East side of the MOSELLE RIVER.

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1944

In the early morning on the sixteenth of November, Major Falvey, Regimental S-2, received a call from Captain Foster of the 34th Field Artillery. "Falvey? Got an eraser?" - this in a slow Texas drawl. "Well, just rub off that town of STUCKANGE from the map. I don't reckon it's there any more." And so the 34th Field Artillery began the day for the 358th Infantry, firing at likely targets to the front of the Regiment.

Orders for the day were that the Regiment would continue its present mission. The Third Battalion was to take the town of INGLANGE while the Second Battalion was to continue on to METZERVISSE on the right of the Regimental Sector. At 0730, Lieutenant Donohue picked up the report that the Third Battalion had two platoons of the famed Company K "Kraut Killers", commanded by Captain McHolland, in the town of INGLANGE. Twenty-five minutes later, the Third was reported half-way through the town, receiving some harassing artillery fire. Lt. Donohue reported the progress of the Battalion to G-2 and G-3 and also the 357th Infantry - the adjacent regiment on the left and to whom the town of INGLANGE was of considerable importance. Meanwhile, the Second Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel Schulz, awaited word from a sixteen man patrol dispatched at dawn to METZERVISSE.

More confidence in the security of the regimental right flank came from a message locating the 90th Division Reconnaissance Troop in the vicinity of STUCKANGE. Simultaneously, Captain Perry Beville, veteran S-3 of the Second Battalion, reports on the patrol sent earlier to METZERVISSE. Two men returned with the message that a group of enemy was found dug-in along the draw South-east of DISTROFF. Several men of the patrol were reported wounded, the remainder pinned down by enemy fire.

News from the Third Battalion now was that INGLANGE had fallen after a fight and that the battalion had captured some three pillboxes, more than thirty prisoners and one anti-tank gun.

Following the capture of INGLANGE, events moved rapidly. Major Falvey dispatched on-the-spot interrogator, Sergeant Midener, to question the prisoners, and Colonel Clarke and General Weaver immediately left for Inglange to investigate the possibilities for an armored push. Captain Hugo H. Pyes, Headquarters Commandant, and Lieutenant Larry C. Lampe, Regimental Communications Officer, left on reconnaissance for a new Command Post location at INGLANGE. The Third Battalion reverted to Regimental Reserve, and the First Battalion was alerted to move to the support of the Second Battalion, via the most expeditious route, and to tie with the Second on the Objective.

The Second Battalion jumped-off at 1500 for the town of METZERVISSE, supported by a mission of Corps Artillery on the town. As Company F reached the outskirts of METZERVISSE, Corps Artillery fires were lifted, and the battalion closed on the town taking some twenty prisoners. Lytle's Battalion then slipped in on Schulz's left - securing the objective. Efforts then were directed to consolidation of the days gains and the coordination of all-around defense.

As the day's progress was reviewed, attention again focused on the magnificent work of the O'Reilly tank company in assisting the Second Battalion in taking METZERVISSE. Twice in two days, "O'Reilly's boys", as they were referred to, proved their strength to the 358th Infantry.

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1944 (Cont'd)

And now with the battalions consolidated, reports were submitted to Division and Lieutenant Riddlehuber was dispatched to the 357th Infantry with the Regiment's dispositions. Lieutenant Clark brought from Division orders for the following day and encouraging news on the "big picture". The Tenth Armored Division was reportedly "rolling along", meeting little opposition and gaining miles. The picture indeed was good - but for the 358th Infantry, it meant another day of hard, rough fighting.

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1944

Today, First Battalion was to attack South to the woods on the left of the Regimental zone, while the Second Battalion was to attack the town of METZERESCHE. According to the order, the Second Battalion, after moving into the West end of the woods, was to coordinate its attack with the First Battalion.-- each of the assault battalions maintaining liaison with the other. The Third Battalion, meanwhile, was to move as Regimental Reserve into position at METZERVISSE.

At 0630 the First Battalion moved off in the attack with B and C Companies in the lead, and A Company in Reserve. The battalion continued to move forward and seized the intermediate objective, meeting no resistance, the Third Battalion reported already closed in on the town of METZERVISSE. The First Battalion then organized on the Intermediate Objective and prepared to move out again in a coordinated attack with the Second Battalion. Noon found the Third Battalion closed in the vicinity of METZERVISSE as Regimental Reserve. The Regimental Command Post moved to the town of INGLANGE and closed there at 1300.

News now of a counter-attack against the Second Battalion. This came at 1330. First Battalion was notified of a threatened counter-attack in the sector. The First had been attacked but had received considerable high velocity fire from the area West of METZERESCHE. The report of the counter-attack in the Second's sector resolved itself a half hour later into a definitely increased amount of artillery in the area. The battalion had also had information of a number of dug-in enemy in front of them. However, the coordinated jump-off time was 1500 and both battalions moved out at that time - Second Battalion still receiving heavy artillery fire.

One series of events during the early afternoon provided an excellent example of coordination of fighting forces. At 1420, the First Battalion reported receiving direct fire from what appeared to be a tank in the vicinity of concentration 203. The 357th Infantry was notified of the firing on the First Battalion and asked to check its TD unit's firing. At 1435, the 357th Infantry's tanks were engaging the enemy tanks firing on the First Battalion. Shortly, the firing of the tank was stopped.

At 1440, the tanks attached to the Second Battalion were reported in the town of METZERESCHE and at 1500, the Second Battalion reported having closed in on the town.

The First Battalion, meanwhile, preceded to the high ground South of the town of METZERESCHE - where they halted and contacted the Second Battalion. During the day, the First Battalion encountered extremely heavy artillery fire but met with little opposition in gaining the Regimental Objective.

The Staff of the Third Battalion had undergone some recent changes which included the appointment of Lt. Richard Elwell as Battalion S-3, Lt. Jack Goodman as Supply Officer, and Lt. Bird, as the Battalion Motor Officer. Captain James S Spivey commanded the battalion with Captain William R. Shipe as battalion Executive Officer.

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1944

At 0900 on the 18th of November, the First and Third Battalions came abreast of each other and prepared to move off to the town of LUTTANGE, the First Battalion having the mission of cleaning out the woods South of the town of METZERESCHE on the way. So far in the day, not a round of enemy artillery had been fired, indicating a general withdrawal of the enemy from the immediate sector confronting the Regiment. Both Battalions moved to the Regimental Objective, encountering no resistance whatsoever, and 1240 the First Battalion reported being on the Objective - and at the same time, the Third Battalion reported being on the outskirts of LUTTANGE. Effective at 1500, the Regiment went into Division Reserve.

With the Regiment in Division Reserve, the Regimental Commander consulted with the Regimental Supply Officer Major Olson on the possibility of obtaining "B" Rations for the troops for the evening meal - and a clean change of dry socks and clothes. Instructions were given to battalions to rest for the time being and reorganize. The First Battalion and the Third Battalion remained at LUTTANGE, with the Second Battalion at METZERESCHE, and the Regimental Command Post and Special Units in the town of METZERVISSE.

Today, the first enemy air activity was sighted for the first time in several weeks. Around noon, two enemy planes were reported in the Regimental sector.

Authority NND 735017By JBR NARA Date 12/9

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1944

Late on the night before, word was received from Division G-3 that the 358th Infantry was to be attached to the Tenth Armored Division - to be effective either on the 19th or the 20th of the month. At 1000 on the morning of the 19th, the Regiment was placed on a three-hour alert status - and to be able to move in that time from its present location. Lt. Bonehue was immediately dispatched as Liaison Officer with the Tenth Armored Division.

The entire day was spent on rehabilitation of troops and rest and relaxation for them. Church services were held throughout the Regiment and hot meals were the order for the day.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1944

The Regiment continued to obtain much needed rest but remained on a three hour alert until the arrival of Lt. Clark with the new order placing the Regiment on a one-hour alert. The Regiment was to be ready to move on one-hour notice anytime after 0730 on the 20th of November. All units were duly alerted - but at the same time continued the process of rehabilitation of troops. At 1500 in the afternoon, further word was received from the armored division that the move would probably not be before 0600 on the following day.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1944

0830 on the following morning of the 21st found quartering parties on their way to the sector occupied by the Tenth Armored Division to arrange billets for their units. H Hour was tentatively scheduled for 1200. At 1130 the Regiment was ordered to move at 1200 and immediately proceeded to carry out the movement order. The IP was METZERVISSE and the route was from METZERVISSE through INGLANGE, ELZANGE, KOENIGSMACHER, and SIERCK. 1600 in the afternoon found all three battalions, the Special Units, and the 34th Field Artillery closed in their areas. The Regimental CP and the Second Battalion were located in SIERCK - the Third Battalion in RETTEL - and the First Battalion in MANDERIN.

Soon after arriving at the new location, Colonel Clarke was called to the Command Post of the Tenth Armored Division to confer with General Morris, the Division Commander. Units were notified of no indications of a move during the night or the next day.

However, at 1015, the First Battalion, 358th Infantry was attached to CCA of the Tenth Armored Division and Lieutenant Rice left as Liaison Officer with the Combat Command.

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By 13r NARA Date 12/9

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1944

Early morning on the 22nd of November brought Lt. Byren G. Clark to the Regimental Command Post with the information that the first battalion would not move today. Shortly afternoon on the same day, Captain Stotler, Regimental S-3, brought back the information from the Tenth Armored Division that the Third Battalion was now attached to CCA and that the First Battalion was relieved from attachment. One company of the Third Battalion was to be alerted to move on short notice. Captain Spivey, after being briefed on the situation by S-3 Stotler left on reconnaissance in the CCA sector.

Once again, plans were to be changed. Mid-afternoon brought Lt. Clark again to the Command Post with the information that the entire plan for the Regiment was changed and that the Regiment would lead in a coordinated attack in the morning. Lt. Ridlehuber left for the CCA Command Post to contact the 358th Infantry reconnaissance parties in that area and return them to the Command Post for the change in orders.

At 1600 the Regimental Commander, Colonel Clarke held a meeting of battalion commanders, special unit commanders, the Battalion S-3's and the Regimental Staff at which time he presented them with the complete picture of the situation confronting the Regiment. After the orientation the battalion commanders left for a brief reconnaissance before darkness set in.

The general picture, as described on the mosaic by Colonel Clarke, was that this Regiment was to establish a bridgehead, so to speak, for the armor. The armor had pierced the dragon's teeth at one point but there were several pill-boxes in the area that the 358th Infantry would probably encounter when it attacked. H-Hour was set for 1000 on the following morning.

As the battalion commanders proceeded with their reconnaissance, Captain Stotler and Colonel Clarke conferred with General Morris at the Tenth Armored Command Post. They returned shortly after 2300 to begin work on the details for the next day's operation.

Authority NND 735017

By 13r NARA Date 12/9

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1944

The general situation on the morning of the attack found the Task Forces of Combat Command "A" of the Tenth Armored Division on a broad front with the most advanced element piercing the belt of dragon's teeth in the center of the sector. The suggested plan was that the Regiment be employed on a narrow sector along one main axis. The plan finally put into form, however, involved two axis with the Second Battalion scheduled to attack along the main road from BORG to MUNZINGEN while the Third Battalion was to attack along the road from WOCHERN to SINZ. The Regiment was to jump-off at 1000 in the morning in the attack.

The twenty-third day of the month found the 358th Combat Team closed-in in Germany - with the Regimental Command Post located approximately a mile and a half from BORG on the main road leading Southwest out of the town. The Second Battalion established its Command Post in BORG and the Third Battalion placed its Command Post in WOCHERN. The First Battalion remained in Regimental Reserve in the vicinity of the towns of PERL and OBER-PERL. The Second Battalion assembled in the woods to the East of BORG, prepared to attack towards the North while the Third Battalion was to assemble near WOCHERN and proceed through the woods East of the main highway from WOCHERN to TETTINGEN, then cutting to the North to take the towns of TETTINGEN and BUTZDORF on the main highway from WOCHERN to SINZ.

The Second Battalion was to move at 1130 with E and F companies in the assault. They no sooner moved out from their assembly area, reported Lieutenant Colonel Schulz, when they received a heavy barrage of high velocity fire from what was identified by the Second Battalion as tanks belonging to the Tenth Armored Division. This information was reported to the Command Post of the Tenth Armored Division and the attack of the Second Battalion was postponed until 1100 in the afternoon.

At 1530, the leading elements of the Second Battalion were reported in the dragon's teeth while the reserve company, just proceeded to move towards the high ground just west of the town of OBERLUKEN. Here the Second Battalion prepared to spend the night - with instructions from the Battalion Commander for the men to dig in in that location. A portion of Company G had been able to get on top of the hill while E and F companies dug-in among the dragon's teeth.

The Third Battalion advanced through the woods against a great deal of small arms fire, artillery, and many pillboxes. During the day they took a total of eighty-four PW's and had about seven casualties. The Third, by 1700, had cleared the woods but would wait, upon decision of the Battalion Commander, until daylight before entering the town of TETTINGEN. During the day's fighting, the Third Battalion lost one of its outstanding officers when Lieutenant Pat Parrish, Company Commander of Company I, was wounded in the hip.

Both assault battalions buttoned-up for the night, while an assault element along with the engineers proceeded to knock out a pill box in the Second Battalion sector. The Second Battalion sent in thirty-eight more PW's for interrogation.

1800 found the Regimental Commander, Colonel Clarke, in conference with several officers from the Tenth Armored Division. The subject of the conference concerned the closer coordination of the infantry and the armor.

The orders for the next day were for Company G to continue the assault on the hill at daylight, while the two battalions were to jump-off at 0800. Second Battalion was to have one platoon of tanks from the Tenth Armored attached for the operation. Battalion commanders were duly informed of their missions for the following day. Colonel Clarke requested that Captain Caldecott, in command of the First Battalion, report for briefing at the Regimental Command Post in the morning.

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REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Inf ntry

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1944 (Cont'd)

so that the Captain would have a complete picture of the operations in the event it became necessary to commit the First Battalion.

Authority NND 735017
 By 43r NARA Date 12/9

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1944

Activity started early in the morning with the arrival of Lieutenant Donohue from the Command Post of CCA with a message from General Althouse, the Commander. The message read "Attack vigorously in zone of CCA at daylight and break deadlock. If no progress is made by 1200 I propose to lead the attack personally with my Headquarters". Colonel Clarke was awakened and called the Tenth Armored Division and gave them the plans for the 358th Infantry for the morning's attack. The Tenth Armored stated to Colonel Clarke that the status of the 358th Infantry had not changed and that it was attached to the Tenth Armored Division and not to CCA.

The Second Battalion continued the attack at 0630 in the morning with Company G jumping off at that time to take up a position on top of the hill. At noon, came the report from Second Battalion that the pillbox at OBERLUCKEN had been knocked out by the battalion.

The Third Battalion moved out in the attack at 0800 in the morning with Company "K" mopping up a pillbox in its sector. Company I was temporarily delayed in jumping off due to the shortage of ammunition. Company K was also temporarily delayed by a strong counter-attack which it beat off.

The First Battalion was alerted to move and ordered to leave its assembly area in OBER-PERL at 1200 and attack the town of OBERLUCKEN. At 1530, the battalion jumped off and proceeded, meeting little resistance until reaching the town of OBERLUCKEN. After A and B companies had taken about 1/3 of the town, darkness forced the companies to hold where they were for the night. Company B took twenty-five prisoners in its assault on the town.

Captain Spivey reported at 1730 that the Third Battalion had captured all pillboxes between him and the town, one of them as big as forty by 60 feet, and that he would not enter the town at night but wait until daylight.

Meanwhile, as the night set-in, detailed plans were made for the coordination of a night defense with the First and Second Battalions with Company A and Company G tying at the South edge of the First Battalion town.

Plans for tomorrow were that Second Battalion would continue the attack on the hill supported by fire of the First Battalion, while the First Battalion continued to reduce the town of OBERLUCKEN. Third Battalion was to jump-off at 0730 with Company I on the left and Company K on the right to continue with the same mission.

At the end of the day came a report from Captain Simms of the 315th Engineers that the pillbox knocked out in the Second Battalion area was a large one - eighty by thirty by fifteen feet - with walls four feet thick - and armor steel doors two inches thick. Three hundred and seventy eight pounds of C-2 compound was used to blow open the doors and neutralize the guns in the fort.

The story was told, about Captain Dyke, of the attached TD Company that while reconnoitering for positions he wandered out in front of Company G's front lines and stumbled into a fox-hole. After asking the occupants if they were from Company "G" he recognized them for the Heinies they were and finally pulled out his gun. He and the other officer with him captured about eight prisoners and then quickly made for their own lines.

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1944

Third Battalion reported at 0700 in the morning that the Germans had infiltrated behind Company K and that the battalion had lost contact with the company. One patrol was unable to contact them but efforts were being continued and the battalion was to attack as soon as possible. The Second Battalion consolidated on top of the hill while the First Battalion continued to mop up the town of OBERLUCKEN. There was still enemy in the town and also some enemy tanks.

At 1400, the Third Battalion still had TETTINGEN and were mopping up the town while BUTZDORF was still reported to be in the hands of Company K. Second Battalion continued to work on the hill, while the First Battalion maneuvered around in the town of OBERLUCKEN in an effort to wipe out enemy resistance there. While the First Battalion continued to mop-up the town, it was hit by a severe counter-attack by Infantry and tanks from across the front of the Second Battalion. First Battalion, however, succeeded in holding off the attack, and held the territory it had taken in the town.

Throughout the day, considerable high velocity fire continued to fall on Third Battalion and Second Battalion from what appeared to be a hill about seven hundred yards in front of the leading tank in the Tenth Armored column. Colonel Clarke conferred over the telephone with CCA on the possibility of the tanks maneuvering so as to reduce the tank or whatever was firing from the hill.

At 1815, Lt. Elwell, S-3 of the Third Battalion, reported a serious situation in the Third Battalion. Captain Spivey was reported to be leaving for the Regimental Command Post to see Colonel Clarke. However, Colonel Loomis and Captain Stotler, accompanied by the Regimental Adjutant Captain Steckla, went down to the Third Battalion to see Captain Spivey.

Captain McHolland, famed company commander of the Company K "Kraut Killers" was reported killed, and a great share of Company K annihilated when the enemy sent tanks down the road from SINZ into the town of BUTZDORF. Company K, without tank support itself, fought the tanks with every available weapon but were eventually cut off by the counter-attacking force. First reports from the town were that nine men remained out of two platoons of riflemen and that the fate of several others was uncertain.

Second Battalion reported to the Command Post through Lieutenant Anderson, Battalion S-2, that the Second Battalion was receiving direct tank fire from the same hill from which they had been fired upon all day. He reported that the strength of the battalion was exceedingly low - totalling not more than one hundred riflemen in the three rifle companies. His battalion also had suffered with severe colds and numerous cases of trench foot, a new but menacing obstacle in the war.

At 1945, Colonel Clarke, accompanied by Major Falvey, left for the Command post of the Tenth Armored Division to confer with the Commanding General. Captain Stotler, when he returned from Third Battalion, also left for the armored division to participate in the conference with the Commanding General. The complete story of Company K came to light when Lieutenant Colonel Loomis and Captain Stotler and Captain Steckla returned from the Third Battalion. Total known strength of Company "K" was thirty-five enlisted men and no officers. Only one officer was left in Company I. It appeared that Company K fought all night long at BUTZDORF. Finally two enemy tanks cut off the company and killed and captured a great deal of the men. Company K did have two tanks of the Tenth Armored Division when it first entered the town, but when it was attacked by the enemy tanks, the company could not muster the support to hold against the enemy.

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 By 13r NARA Date 12/9

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1944

The relief of the 358th Infantry began during the early morning hours of the 26th of November as Third Battalion withdrew its elements from the town of BUTZDORF and proceeded to its assembly area in the vicinity of RETTEL along the MOSELLE. The relief of the battalion was indeed a tactical success, as the battalion closed into its rear assembly area without mishap and apparently without the enemy knowing of such relief. The relief of the Second Battalion and First Battalion was coordinated with the advance elements of the armored division and "left up to the men on the ground", in the words of General Morris, Tenth Armored Division Commander. By 2130, the entire Regiment had closed in its assembly area with the units of the regiment located in the same towns they had occupied prior to the attack.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1944

Today the Regiment was to rejoin the 90th Division - with the promise of five or six days rest - and the opportunity to rehabilitate the troops. A quartering party was dispatched to the vicinity of VECKRING to arrange for billets for the troops while the remainder of the Regiment prepared to move to its new location. The route designated was through SIERCK, KOENIGSMACHER, ELZANGE, INCLANGE, BUDING, to VECKRING.

1300 on the 27th day of November brought the new Regimental Command Post to VECKRING. By 1515, all three battalions had closed into their areas in the German barracks near the town. The remainder of the day was devoted to the improvement of billets and resting the men. Plans were made for the procurement of equipment, clothing, and shower facilities.

The health of Colonel Clarke, the Regimental Commander, had, for the past few days, been impaired by a severe cold and accompanying fever. Despite his ill health the Colonel continued to remain at his post as Regimental Commander until the Regiment was relieved from its mission with the Tenth Armored Division and again brought under the control of the 90th Division. When the Regiment finally arrived in the sector of the 90th, Colonel Clarke followed the advice of the Regimental Surgeon, Captain Campbell, and allowed himself to be evacuated to the hospital.

Lieutenant Colonel Loomis notified General Van Fleet of the temporary loss of the Regimental Commander, and, effective at this time, the Regimental Executive Officer, Colonel Loomis was in command of the 358th Infantry.

Authority **NND 735017**By **13r** NARA Date **12/9**

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

358th Infantry

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1944

Throughout the 28th day of the month, the companies of the regiment took advantage of the opportunity to continue resting and cleaning-up. The type of training varied with the units, according to the needs of each individual outfit. Primary emphasis was placed on improving the condition of Ordnance equipment, and on personal hygiene.

During the morning, Lt. Colonel Loomis, now the Regimental Commander, held a meeting of the battalion and special unit commanders and the members of the regimental staff. During the meeting, Lt. Colonel Loomis emphasized the importance of seizing the opportunity now at hand to rehabilitate the troops. He explained that in all probability the Regiment would have about five or six days in Division Reserve. After a brief orientation on the prospective operations facing the Division and the Regiment, the Colonel invited each of his regular staff officers to speak on the phase of operations with which he was most concerned.

Captain Stotler presented the Corps picture and reviewed the several possibilities in which the Division and the Regiment might be employed. Major Falvey described briefly the extent of enemy resistance being encountered by forward elements of the 90th Division and also the 95th Division. Captain Stecila reminded the officers that the present status of the Regiment afforded an opportunity to catch-up on administrative work, while Major Olson promised showers for them and an issued of clean clothing.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1944

It was contemplated by Division Headquarters, that the 358th Infantry would be moved, in the near future, to an assembly area on the Division Right flank. Battalion and Special Unit reconnaissance parties were dispatched to the selected areas. However, the regiment received no further indication for a move on the following day, so all units planned to continue with their own plans for the rehabilitation of troops. A great deal of test firing and practical shooting with small arms and heavy weapons was carried out in the area surrounding the Regimental area during which time every soldier had the opportunity to test his own weapon.

On this day, Major Spivey led a provisional battalion made up of men from all units in the Regiment, in an impressive parade through the streets of METZ. During the ceremony several awards of the Croix-de-Guerre were made to members of the Regiment by the French Government.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1944

The 30th of the Month brought to a close an epic month in the combat career of the 358th Infantry. It saw the regiment perform one of the most magnificent river crossings in modern military history - it saw the capture by the First Battalion of the Fort Koenigsmaecher - the mighty bastion on the East bank of the MOSELLE. The month of November meant many days and nights of hard fighting for the Regiment, over terrain that would prove a formidable obstacle to the best of an Army. It meant, too, the loss to the Regiment, of many outstanding soldiers and officers.

And now, as the Regiment licks its wounds and attempted to replace the depleted ranks, there loomed, in the not too distant future, another operation involving a river - the SAAR RIVER.