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WAR DEPARTMENT

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

WASHINGTON

(10294)
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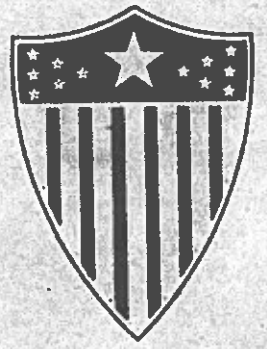
A/A Rpt - 87th Inf Div



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HISTORICAL RECORDS SECTION

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HEADQUARTERS 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 448 U.S. Army

9 February 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report For Period 1 January to 31 January 1945.

TO : The Adjutant General, U.S. Army, Washington, 25, D.C. (Thru Channels).

1 January - The attack to the North toward JENNEVILLE and PIRONPRE was resumed at 0900 by the 347th Infantry who had passed through the 345th Infantry during the night 31 December 1944 - 1 January 1945. The zone of advance was heavily mined and booby trapped. At 1100 JENNEVILLE was captured by the 3d Battalion, 347th Infantry. Counterattacks were numerous during the afternoon with the most serious one at 1845 North of JENNEVILLE. This counter-attack was repulsed at 1910. The 2d Battalion, 346th Infantry continued to contain ST HUBERT and VESQUEVILLE. Strong patrols sent into these towns reported strong enemy activity. The 1st Battalion, 346th Infantry was motorized and alerted for immediate employment in event of counterattack.

2 January - The 347th Infantry attacked 0830. The resistance was light and at 1800 GERIMONT was taken by the 1st Battalion, 347th Infantry. The 2d Battalion, 346th Infantry continued to contain ST HUBERT and VESQUEVILLE. The 3d Battalion, 346th Infantry was ordered to move to defend the VIII Corps and Division left flank and the road net in the vicinity of MASBIL and to the South on the road through PALISEUL and to coordinate defensive operations with the 87th Reconnaissance Troop. I Company, 346th Infantry, reinforced by a platoon of Company B, 312th Engineer Combat Battalion, a platoon of TDs, 691st TD Battalion and three (3) light tanks of the 761st Tank Battalion defended and patrolled road [illegible] medium tanks, [illegible] Tank Battalion and FAYS-LES-VENTURS. Four (4) were lost vicinity BONNERUE.

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3 January - The 345th Infantry was ordered to relieve the 346th Infantry. The relief of the 1st and 2d Battalions, 346th Infantry by the 2d and 3d Battalions, 345th Infantry, respectively, was completed at 2200. Company K, 347th Infantry was counterattacked at 1100, but attack was repulsed by 1135. Company B, 346th Infantry was cut off in vicinity PLASTRAY 1000. Company A, 346th Infantry was immediately sent to assit Company B. The 17th Airborne Division relieved the 11th Armored Division on our right.

4 January - At 0815, the 1st Battalion, 345th Infantry was ordered to relieve 3d Battalion, 346th Infantry on Division left flank. The relief was completed 1830. All defensive positions of 346th Infantry were taken over by the 345th Infantry. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 346th Infantry moved up to an assembly area in rear of the 1st Battalion, 347th Infantry who were preparing to attack 5 January 1945. The 347th Infantry attacked 0915, meeting heavy resistance in the vicinity of PIRONPRE. The 2d Battalion, 347th

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DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 735017

Infantry reorganized and attacked 1130. Progress was slow due to enemy counterattacks by tanks and Infantry. At the close of the day's operations, the 347th Infantry had been driven back to positions held in the morning. The 4th French Paratrooper Battalion (SAS) was attached to the 87th Division 041800A January 1945. The 761st Tank Battalion lost one (1) medium tank and two (2) medium tanks were damaged. One enemy tank was destroyed by the 347th Infantry.

5 January - The 345th Infantry continued to protect the VIII Corps and Division left flank. The 1st Battalion, 346th Infantry was alerted for immediate employment in event of counterattack. Due to heavy resistance encountered by the 347th Infantry, 346th Infantry did not attack as planned. The 347th Infantry again attacked at 0900 against heavy resistance in vicinity PIHOPRE. The 1st Battalion, 347th Infantry resumed the attack 1500 and advanced 200 yards North of the cut in HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS. The 802d Field Artillery Battalion was attached to the 87th Division 5 January 1945.

6 January - The 346th Infantry attacked 1445. At the close of the day's operations, the 3d Battalion had advanced to the high ground South and East of TILLET. The 347th Infantry attacked 0800 on HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS and again at 1600. The 1st Battalion, 345th Infantry was relieved from the mission of protecting the Division left flank by the 3d Battalion, 345th Infantry. The 761st Tank Battalion lost one (1) medium tank in HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS. The 347th Infantry destroyed one enemy tank in BOURNEUF.

7 January - The 1st Battalion, 345th Infantry relieved the 347th Infantry at 0550. The 1st Battalion, 345th Infantry continued the mission of containing HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS. The 2d Battalion, 346th Infantry passed around the East of the 3d Battalion, 346th Infantry to attack at 0800. The 3d Battalion, 346th Infantry resumed the attack on TILLET. The 691st TD Battalion (Towed) destroyed two (2) enemy tanks in the vicinity of BOURNEUF.

8 January - The 1st Battalion, 345th Infantry continued to contain HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 346th Infantry attacked TILLET at 0001. Resistance was heavy on all fronts throughout the day. The 1st Battalion, 345th Infantry was forced to withdraw from BOURNEUF due to a heavy counterattack.

9 January - At 0100, the 3d Battalion, 345th Infantry with mission of protecting Division left flank was relieved by the 87th Reconnaissance Troop and moved to vicinity East of POIROY and attacked at 1000, through HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS. The 1st and 2d battalions, jumped off in a coordinated attack at 1000. The 1st battalion, 346th Infantry advanced to vicinity (423608). The 2d

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Authority NND 735017

Battalion, 346th Infantry advanced to its objective (428609). A strong enemy counterattack consisting of Infantry and tanks forced the 2d Battalion back to (434593). The exposure to the cold weather in the attempt to advance toward TILLET and the high ground northeast of it had reduced the combat efficiency of the 346th Infantry considerably. Two platoons, Company A, 22d Tank Battalion of the 11th Armored Division, attached 87th Division 091700A January 1945.

10 January - The 2d and 3d Battalions of the 345th Infantry were relieved by the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 347th Infantry. 346th Infantry organized the positions they held at the close of operations on 9 January 1945. The 347th Infantry continued to contain ST HUBERT and the area West of HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS. The 691st TD Battalion knocked out one (1) enemy tank. The 70lst Tank Battalion lost one (1) tank and destroyed one (1) enemy tank. The 87th reconnaissance troops now protects the Division left flank with the 347th Infantry and the 4th French Paratrooper Battalion (S.A.S.). The 6th British Airborne Division closed in on the left flank of the 4th French Paratrooper Battalion (S.A.S.). HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS was practically cleared today. I Company, 346th Infantry captured TILLET at 1450. 87th Division passed to defensive operation on Corps order at 2400.

11 January - All elements of the 346th Infantry were relieved by the 2d Battalion, 345th Infantry at 0400. The 347th Infantry occupied FONTENUE and PIRONFRE. HAIES-DE-TILLET WOODS was completely cleared. C Company, 347th Infantry occupied VAUX-CHAMPAGNE at 1625. 3d Battalion, 347th Infantry occupied ST HUBERT at 2000.

12 January - C and E Companies, 345th Infantry were attached to the 3d Battalion, 345th Infantry. Two platoons of Company A, 22d Tank Battalion were relieved 121000A January 1945. Company E, 347th Infantry was ordered to seize and hold TONNY and ARNEKLOUP. 1st Battalion, 347th Infantry began movement at 1030 cross-country through FORET DE FREYR WOODS to take LAVACHERIE. LAVACHERIE was occupied 1305. Company E, 347th Infantry occupied TONNY and ARNEKLOUP at 1750. Strong patrols of the 2d Battalion, 347th Infantry were sent forward to MARIVILLE. The 2d Battalion, 345th Infantry occupied FOCHET at 1300 and occupied CHERU at 1515. At 1720, the 2d Battalion, 345th Infantry met light resistance vicinity STEINCHT, which was quickly subdued. At 1745, the double road junction (448630) was taken and held by Company E, 345th Infantry. Towns captured this date were [illegible], FOCHET, CHERU, STEINCHT, TONNY, ARNEKLOUP, LEJEUNE and LAVACHERIE.

13 January - At 0900 the attack was resumed by the 2d Battalion, 345th Infantry through BOIS-DE-STEINCHT WOODS with strong patrols to ROUMONT. At 1000, leading elements were reported at (446258). 1st Battalion, 347th Infantry resumed the attack at 0835 and reached the northern most Division objective, the bridge over the L'OURTHE RIVER - (421007) at 0900. The bridge over the L'OURTHE RIVER had been destroyed by the enemy. The 2d Battalion, 347th Infantry attacked at 0800. At 1000, leading elements were reported 500 yards East of HORNU/VILLE. At 1300, all Division objectives were occupied.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 735017

The Division CP opened in FREUX LA RUE at 1100. At 1600, 87th Division was alerted for movement to vicinity of [redacted] by VIII Corps.

14 January - The 345th and 347th Infantries occupied the Division objectives. 346th Infantry began movement at 0800 to the vicinity of [redacted], LUXEMBOURG (907037), and closed at 1600. The mission given the Division was to relieve the 4th Infantry Division in defensive positions along the SAUER RIVER. The 691st TD Battalion and the 549th AA Battalion remained attached to the Division. The 802d Field Artillery Battalion was relieved from attachment to the 87th Infantry Division.

15 January - The 347th Infantry began movement at 0800 from Division objective to vicinity RODENBOURG, LUXEMBOURG and closed at 1530. 87th Division CP opened in vicinity of SANDWEILER at 1300. The 345th Infantry was attached to the 17th Airborne Division as of 0800. The 761st Tank battalion and the 4th French Paratrooper Battalion (S.O) were relieved from attachment to Division at 0800. All elements of the 87th Division, less CT 345, 335th Field Artillery Battalion and 60th Field Hospital closed in vicinity East of LUXEMBOURG by 2200. 87th Division assigned to XII Corps.

16 January - The 346th Infantry completed relief of the 8th Infantry at 0855. The 345th Infantry was relieved from attachment 17th Airborne Division as of 0800 and began movement to the vicinity of [redacted], LUXEMBOURG (990275) and closed in at 1430. 347th Infantry completed relief of the 22d Inf at 2140. Both Regiments continued to defend the SAUER and MOSELLE RIVERS, improving and maintaining those positions.

17 January - At 0900, Commanding General, 87th Division assumed command of the 4th Division sector. The 12th Infantry was attached to the 87th Division until relieved by the 345th Infantry. The 335th Field Artillery Battalion (Medium) closed in at 1000. The 1252d and 1255th Engineer Combat Battalions were attached to the 87th Division. The 4th Division is now on our left and Task Force Reed, 2d Cavalry Group, on our right. Division CP opened in RODENBOURG at 1400.

18 January - The 12th Infantry was relieved from attachment 87th Division. In conjunction with an attack by the 4th, 5th and 80th Divisions to our North, the Division demonstrated a river crossing in our zone to attempt to draw enemy forces away from the points of actual penetration. At 0001 strong patrols from 346th Infantry were sent to BORN, HINKEL and [redacted]. Patrols were sent from the 347th Infantry to STEINHEIM and POHL. At 0001, patrols from both Regiments were ordered to return through OPLR prior to 0300. At 0330 all troops simulated a preparation for attack and river crossing with increased activity firing both small arms and artillery. All troops continued to consolidate and improve defensive positions preparing for airborne attack and antimechanized attack.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 735017

rotation policy was put into effect allowing each battalion four days in regimental reserve and eight days in the front line. Reinforcements are being received and trained to build up Division strength.

19 January - Division continued consolidating defensive positions and active patrolling continued. Maximum use of time and facilities were used for maintenance and training in squad and platoon tactics. Also, the training assault teams for attack on fortified areas was initiated.

20 January - Division continued defensive operations. 1252d Engineer Combat battalion was relieved from attachment 87th Infantry Division. Rest policy for troops to visit LUXEMBOURG was initiated.

21 January - Division continued defensive operations. During the night 20-21 January 1945, the 346th Infantry occupied new defensive positions forward of those previously occupied. Three-day pass policy for troops to PARIS was initiated.

22 January - 87th Infantry Division continued defensive operations.

23 January - 346th Infantry captured MASSUL BILLIG at 0235. Defensive operations continued. Familiarization firing was conducted for reinforcements.

24 January - Orders were received from XII Corps [illegible] for movement to vicinity of HOUFFALIZE, BELGIUM.

25 January - Advance billeting parties departed to the vicinity of HOUFFALIZE, BELGIUM at 0600. 76th Division was ordered to relieve the 87th Division in position and first elements began closing in vicinity ROBERTVILLE, LUXEMBOURG shortly after midnight. First elements of the Division began movement to the vicinity of HOUFFALIZE at 1100. CT 346 was relieved by CT 384 at 2225. Advance Division CP opened in ORTSIMBACH 2230. Elements of the 346th Infantry withdrew from HOUFFALIZE when relieved by the 76th Division. The Division is now again under command of the VIII Corps.

26 January - CT 345 was relieved by CT 417 at 0730. CT 347 was relieved by CT 304 at 0030. The 1255th Engineer Combat Battalion and the 691st TD Battalion (Towed) were relieved from attachment 87th Infantry Division. The relief of all organizations of the Division, except the 335th Field Artillery Battalion was completed 0730. Major General [illegible], Commander of the 76th Division assumed command of the SAULM-HOUFFALIZE sector 0600. All organizations of the Division, except 335th Field Artillery Battalion, closed in the vicinity North of LIBRAMONT and HOUFFALIZE, BELGIUM at 2030. The 3d battalion, 346th Infantry attacked at 1400 passing through the 513th Infantry of the 17th Airborne Division and captured [illegible] at 2230. 70lst Tk Battalion and 811th TD Battalion were attached to 87th Division 26 January 1945. Command of the 17th Airborne Division's sector passed to Commanding General, 87th Division at 2100.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 735017

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27 January - During the night 26-27 January 1945, all elements of the 17th Airborne Division were relieved by the 87th Division, relief was completed at 0730. The 347th Infantry relieved the 194th Infantry. The 346th Infantry attacked at 0600, capturing DUELER, THOMMEN and GRUFLANGE by 1100. The 345th Infantry was in Division Reserve vicinity LIMERLE. The 3d Battalion, 346th Infantry moved to ST VITH to relieve elements of the 7th Armored Division in that city. The relief of the 7th Armored Division was completed at 1900. The 312th Engineer Combat Battalion supported the advance of the Division by clearing heavily mined roads and road blocks and erecting bridges where necessary. The Division's advance Northeast to ST VITH crossed the fronts of the 84th and 30th Infantry Divisions which were withdrawn for further action elsewhere. The 82d Airborne Division is now on our left flank. The Division CP opened in HAUTBELLAIN at 1100. The 347th Infantry in its advance captured MASPELD, BRACHT, OUDLER and BURG-REULAND. The 602d TD Battalion was attached to the Division 27 January 1945.

28 January - The 3d Battalion, 345th Infantry (motorized) moved to positions East of ST VITH to relieve elements of the 7th Armored Division. The relief was completed 0130. The remaining elements of the 345th and 346th Infantry Regiments closed in ST VITH at 0945. The Division zone of attack was narrowed and the 347th Infantry was relieved by the 4th Infantry Division. Upon relief by the 4th Division, the 347th Infantry passed into Division Reserve in the vicinity of THOMMEN and GRUFLANGE. The 81 th TD Battalion was relieved from attachment to the Division. The 4th Infantry Division assumed command of the 347th Infantry sector at 1030. The Division CP opened at GRUFLANGE 1500. The zone of advance was covered with numerous road blocks, mines and snow-bound roads; the chief road block being the overhead railroad bridge Southwest of ST VITH.

29 January - The 345th Infantry attacked at 0830 and captured the towns of SCHLIERBACH and SELZ. The 347th Infantry closed in NEIDINGEN and FREITFELD. The Division Air-Ground liaison Section coordinated two close support missions with results of disabling thirty (30) to forty (40) enemy vehicles.

30 January - The 345th Infantry attacked at 0830 and captured HODGEN. CT 346, with a detachment of the 312th Engineer Combat Battalion, a detachment of the 761st Tank Battalion and Company A, 602d TD Battalion departed from ST VITH at 0200, passing through the 82d Airborne sector to an assembly area in vicinity of HERRESBACH and prepared to attack ANDLER at daylight. The 347th Infantry began movement to SCHLIERBACH. The 345th Infantry continued to attack to the East.

31 January - The 345th Infantry continued the attack and captured AMELSCHEID, HEUEM, and ATZERATH and passed to Division Reserve. The 346th Infantry captured SCHONBERG and ANDLER. ANDLER was strongly defended and required a considerable amount of fighting to secure it. Upon occupation of ANDLER, the 346th Infantry passed into Division Reserve.

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DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 735017

The 347th Infantry moved East to pass through the 345th Infantry and 346th Infantry and continue the attack. The 1st Battalion, 347th Infantry moved to the vicinity of ADLER prepared to attack MANDERFELD on 1 February 1945. The 3d Battalion, 347th Infantry attacked to the Southeast and occupied LAUDESFELD and prepared to attack AUW on 1 February 1945.

MONROE T. DEVRIES
1st Lt, F. A.,
Division Historian

15 Incls:
After Action Rpts Fr -
G-1 - Incl No 1
G-2 - Incl No 2
G-4 - Incl No 3
Mil Govt - Incl No 4
345 Inf - Incl No 5
346 Inf - Incl No 6
347 Inf - Incl No 7
Div Arty- Incl No 8
312 Engr Bn - Incl No 9
312 Med Bn - Incl No 10
87 Sig Co - Incl No 11
87 Q M Co - Incl No 12
787 Ord Co - Incl No 13
735 Tk Bn - Incl No 14
549 AAA Bn- Incl No 15