

OPERATIONS SUMMARY - 397TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

NOVEMBER - 1944

MAP REFERENCE: France 1/25,000

NOVEMBER 7

Relief of the 179th Inf Regt completed at 1000 without incident. 1st Bn was attached to the 180th Infantry. 2nd Bn and 3rd Bn maintained defensive positions. Both battalions insured security by local patrolling. No contact with enemy. 374th Field Artillery, in support, fired 100 missions on enemy troops and two MG's dug in at (316821) and (327847). Co A, 325th Engrs battalion reconnoitered 397th Inf sector. Improved roads along 2nd Bn defensive area. No definite enemy front line existed. Very light artillery fire encountered. Fourteen man patrol of 3rd Bn fired on by A/W at (320851) on Nov 6. Received 24 replacements and 2 officers. Casualties 1 EM KIA.

NOVEMBER 8

1st Bn remained in assembly area (135655) attached to 180th Inf. 2nd and 3rd Bns continued to man defensive positions and insured security by local patrolling. No contact with the enemy. Cannon Co fired 20 Rd HE missions at (313816), presumed enemy outpost. 374th FA Bn fired numbers of missions throughout the day at enemy troops, at several enemy positions and into town of Clairupt. 325th Engr Bn Co A continued to reconnoiter and improve roads in unit sector.

NOVEMBER 9

2nd and 3rd Bns remained in position vicinity Baccarat. Elements of 2nd Bn occupied line (275856) to (289857) to (284845). Elements of 3rd Bn occupied high ground northeast and east of Baccarat. No contact with enemy. Sporadic artillery fire and mortar fire in the vicinity of Bertrichamps. Cannon Co fired 30 Rds HE missions at (314798), target hit. 374th FA Bn fired missions several times in AM at OP. Co A 325th Engrs continued to reconnoiter, improve roads and remove road

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blocks. Due to lack of prisoners, composition of opposing units is unknown. Casualties 1 EM KIA 1 EM MIA.

NOVEMBER 10

1st Bn remained in assembly area (290770). 2nd Bn moved into assembly area rear of defensive positions now held by 3rd Bn (294827). 3rd Bn Co K moved to defensive positions along high ground Northeast of Co L. Co L maintained same defensive positions as on previous day. Co I occupied positions north of Bertrichamps, 374th FA Bn fired numerous propaganda shells throughout day into Raon L'Etape and Neufmaisons. Co A 325th Engrs continued to reconnoiter, improve roads and remove roadblocks. No definite enemy front line exists and no enemy contact made.

NOVEMBER 11

1st Bn moved from assembly area east of Sainte Barbe to forward assembly area (282832). 2nd and 3rd Bns maintained same positions as on day previous. 374th FA fired a number of propaganda shells throughout day, and several rounds of HE and smoke at enemy gun (31878083). Replacements received: EM- 9 Off-1. Casualties 1 Off KIA.

NOVEMBER 12

1st Bn attacked at 0900, A Co on left, C Co on right, B Co in reserve. 2nd Bn attacked at 0900. Co F on left, Co G on right and Co E in reserve. Both battalions encountered small arms fire but throughout the afternoon experienced heavy artillery fire. No mines encountered. Casualties primarily from artillery fire. 3rd Bn remained in regimental reserve. Cannon Co fired 102 Rds HE throughout day at automatic weapons, enemy OP and prepared enemy positions. 374th FA Bn fired 242 Rds HE at enemy troops, vehicles and mortars. Co A 325th Engrs swept

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roads, removed mine fields. 1st and 2nd Bns advanced to (312816) to (326828) and positions were prepared for the night. Bertrichamps was shelled intermittently during the day. Relatively light enemy resistance was encountered. The difficult terrain favors the enemy. Enemy units are the: 7th Co 748th Regt, 708th People's Grenadiers Division in our 2nd Bn sector. 6th Co of same unit facing our 1st Bn. 3rd Co, 117th Fortress Bn opposed to our 2nd Bn sector. The enemy believed to occupy terrain to our front in depth to ridge (338825), generally along line hills 298, 403, 383, 371, 337, with 7th Co CP probably vicinity hill 383. CO of 7th Co was killed and CO of 5th Co was wounded. 33 German prisoners were taken. Casualties 11 EM KIA, 1 EM DOW, 3 Off 39 EM SWA, 1 EM LWA, 1 EM LIA.

NOVEMBER 13

1st Bn scheduled to attack at 0900, held up by enemy counter-attack. Repulsed counter-attack with artillery and mortar fire. Bn communications disrupted. Attack delayed until 1200. Formation: Co C on right, B on left and A in reserve. Bn objective high ground north Raon L'Etape. Unfavorable weather conditions and terrain slowed attack. 2nd Bn attacked at 0900 G on right, F on left, E in reserve. Both Bns encountered light small arms and artillery fire. No mines encountered. Most casualties from artillery fire, 3rd Bn moved from regimental reserve. Exact location undetermined because of failure of communications. Cannon Co fired 36 Rds HE in front of 2nd Bn (335819). Observed fire, target hit. 374th FA fired 454 Rds HE throughout day at enemy troops, enemy counter-attack and mortars. Enemy forced to move back to high ground north of Raon L'Etape. Prepared positions along Raon L'Etape Neufmaisons road. Artillery fire inflicted heavy casualties. 13 German prisoners taken. (Total 46). Casualties 5 EM MIA, 2 EM KIA, 2 Off 27 EM SWA, 1 EM SWA, 2 EM LWA.

OPERATIONS SUMMARY - 397TH INFANTRY REGIMENT CONTINUED:

NOVEMBER 14

1st Bn resumed attack at 0900, B Co on right, A Co on left, C Co sent to secure Clairupt (324804). Co's A & B advanced under mortar and artillery fire. Minor casualties from shrapnel and light SA fire. No mines encountered. 2nd Bn remained in position as of day before pinned down by heavy artillery, mortar, automatic and SA fire. 3rd Bn attacked at 0800, Co's L, K and I. Encountered opposition at (344816) where Bn received heavy artillery, mortar, automatic and SA fire from ridge vicinity (348817) - (346810). Heavy casualties reported. Cannon Co fired 102 rds HE at enemy mortar, automatic weapons throughout day. 374th FA fired 197 rds HE at different types of targets throughout day. Enemy well dug in. Artillery fire coming from vicinity Pexonne and mortar from east side of Neufmaison Raon L'Etape road. Co A, 325 Eng removed daisy chain (306813), mine field removed (313810). Rd cleared to La Chique (316813). Co B, 636 TD Bn sent 2 TD's to Clairupt. Co A 753 TK Bn moved to positions in Clairupt. Received mortar fire. 1 German prisoner taken (Total 47) 74 EM SWA, 12 EM MIA, 1 EM LWA, 1 EM SIA, 1 EM LIA, 2 Off SWA.

NOVEMBER 15

1st Bn secured Clairupt (234804) and advanced under heavy fire. Enemy counter-attacked and was repulsed. 2nd & 3rd Bns remained in position and received a barrage of different types of fire. Cannon Co fired 122 HE rounds at enemy emplacements, automatic weapons, mortar and communication lines between 0830 and 1900. The 374th FA fired 12 HE and approximately 200 H rounds at mortars and machine guns between 0700 and 1018. Co A 325 Eng maintained rd (305813)-(330827). Co C, 83 CML fired smoke to obscure enemy observation in Thiaville. Enemy buildings hit and set afire, 636 TD fired 20 Rds harassing fire at hill mask N. of Raon L'Etape. Co A 753 TK fired 50 Rds at same spot. No appreciable change as a result of operations this date. 29 German prisoners taken. (Total 76) Casualties 8 EM KIA, 2 Off 34 EM SWA, 1 EM LWA, 1 Off 18 EM MIA, 1 EM LIA, 1 Off 2 EM SIA.

OPERATIONS SUMMARY - 397TH INFANTRY REGIMENT CONTINUED:

NOVEMBER 16

All Bns attacked at 1200 towards the Division objective at (161630 A). Co's B on right, A on left, C in reserve. Co's G on right, E on left, F in reserve. Co's L on right, K on left, I in reserve. 1st and 3rd Bns encountered little enemy opposition and seized their portion of objective. 2nd Bn's attack never developed due to artillery and mortar fire and remained vicinity (3581). No mines encountered. Cannon Co fired 94 Rds HE at enemy emplacements. The 374th FA fired 178 Rds HE at harassing and mortar targets. Enemy appears to have fallen back to prepared positions on north slope of high ground south of Raon L'Etape, and to prepared positions vicinity LaTrouche. Enemy SP guns firing from Raon L'Etape - Celles road with artillery positions from LaTrouche to Celles. At about 1100 CO 397th and CO Cannon Co were ambushed at strong point vicinity (348806). 28 German prisoners were taken. (Total 104) Replacements - 6 EM. Casualties 1 Off KIA, 2 Off 35 EM SWA, 1 EM SIA, 1 EM LIA.

NOVEMBER 17

1st Bn withdrew from Division objective. C Co patrolled Raon L'Etape - Neufmaisons road from (349804) to (346823). 2nd Bn moved to east through 1st Bn 399th and established position. Bn attached to 398th at 1310. 3rd Bn extended positions to occupy, hold and mop up hill mass north Raon L'Etape. No contact with enemy. Strong combat patrol reconnoitered southeast Raon L'Etape. Patrol fired on at 1515 vicinity (350795) from vicinity (352791). 374th FA Bn marked (385781), (368752), (38-72), (368752) 4 Air Corps. Co A 325th Engrs cleared mines from LaChique to (328803) and is constructing bridge across Meurthe River. Enemy appears to have abandoned prepared positions in valley east of Raon L'Etape, and to have moved to LaTrouche and toward Celles. Prepared positions exist on north slope of hill mass southeast of Raon L'Etape. 14 German prisoners taken. (Total 118).

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NOVEMBER 18

1st Bn moved from assembly area (340799) at 1300, attacked toward the southeast, 2nd Bn position unchanged. 3rd Bn continued to hold and mop up hill mass north of Raon L'Etape. Patrol fired on at (344787) from (349784), small-arms fire. Cannon Co fired 71 Rds HE at enemy emplacements. AT Co mine platoon removed mines and booby traps along main road running through Raon L'Etape. 374th FA fired 98 Rds on various types or targets. 325th Engrs, Co A cleared roads, checked sewers for charges, removed timber and mines. 60 to 90 enemy were observed in vicinity (353782). Enemy was strongly emplaced in tunnel and we could not displace them by dark. Three hundred enemy in tunnel vicinity (363727). About 15 enemy in mine shaft vicinity (351782), holding unknown number of civilians as hostages. 19 German prisoners were taken. (Total 137) Casualties 17 EM SWA, 6 EM MIA, 1 EM LWA.

NOVEMBER 19

1st Bn attacked at 0730 to the SE of Raon L'Etape and was in contact with the enemy. Battalion received heavy opposition from small arms, mortar fire and well fortified positions. 2nd Bn attached to 399th Infantry as of 1400. 3rd Bn in Division reserve with L Co re-enforcing 57 mm anti-tank guns establishing a listening post on hill NE of Raon L'Etape. Cannon Co at 0430 commenced firing missions at enemy emplacements. 94 Rds were fired up to 1800. The 374th FA fired at various targets from 0845 to 1645, 226 Rds HE. Co A 325th Engrs cleared out mines filled two shell craters, de-activated booby trap houses in Raon L'Etape, removed two road-blocks, removed two 500 pound Teller mines and two 5 pound repair charges at (330799). 753rd Tank Bn Co A supported the 1st Bn. 83rd CML Bn fired 320 Rds of smoke at screening tops targets and 330 HE Rds. The regiment aided in pushing across LaPlaine River in spite of stiff opposition on the high ground south-east of Raon L'Etape seized the heights, and occupied positions commanding the road and valley

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above Sainte Brayen. Replacements received: 161 EM. Prisoners taken: 47 (total to date: 184). Casualties were: 2 Off and 28 EM SWA, 2 EM LWA, 2 Off and 28 EM MIA.

NOVEMBER 20

1st Bn attacked at 0730 to the southeast with strong patrols to the front. B Co remained in reserve while A & Co's advanced to seize town of Sainte Blaise. Battalion encountered S/A and A/W. 2nd Bn at 1200 was released from the 399th Inf control. 3rd Bn moved from position N of Raon L'Etape to the E and S into position rear of 1st Bn, then relieved 1st Bn of securing Sainte Blaise and occupied positions on high ground east of Sainte Blaise and Cannon Co fired 36 HE Rds at (351782). Co A 325th Engrs Bn swept road, removed mines, booby traps and road-blocks. We seized the town of Sainte Blaise and occupied almost all of the high ground SE of Raon L'Etape, and positioned ourselves for the attack eastward of Moyennmoutier. Replacements received: 43 EM. Prisoners taken: 62 (Total to date: 246) Casualties were: 1 Off 15 EM SWA, 1 EM MIA, 1 EM DOW, 1 EM SIA.

NOVEMBER 21

1st Bn attacked at 0645 to seize town of Moyennmoutier. Without opposition, seized it at 1000. Combat patrols supported move east while battalion re-organized. Battalion advanced under light S/A and A/W sniper fire. 2nd Bn reverted to Regimental reserve at 1030, and 1130 set up in Moyennmoutier and remained in Regimental reserve. Battalion secured town of Sainte Blaise with one company, while one platoon offered security to artillery (356771). 3rd Bn attacked at 0645 to protect right flank of 1st Bn and mop up enemy entrenchments. Cannon Co fired 47 Rds HE. Anti-Tank with Engineers swept mines and moved debris along road from Sainte Blaise to Moyennmoutier. Unit occupied Sainte Blaise (356765) and Moyennmoutier (390759) moving to east (406765). Casualties were 1 EM SWA, 1 EM LWA, 1 EM MIA.

OPERATIONS SUMMARY - 397TH INFANTRY REGIMENT CONTINUED:

NOVEMBER 22

1st Bn attacked at 0730 to the NE. Heavy mortar fire was encountered vicinity Senones holding up advance several hours after which battalion advanced to vicinity La Petite Raon receiving S/A and A/W fire. 2nd Bn at 0800 received mission to advance to the E and seize Vieux-Maulin. Bn was held up in rear of 1st Bn until mortar fire lessened, then moved on mission bypassing south of Senones and seizing Vieux-Maulin encountering S/A, light mortar and sniper fire. 3rd Bn attacked at 0730 to seize town of Senones. A/W, S/A, sniper and mortar fire was encountered SE of town on NE slope of hill 520. Bn infiltrated and seized Senones, occupying for night. Engrs Bn and AT Co swept mines and removed debris from Moyennoutier to Senones. 374th FA fired 90 Rds HE at mortars, S/A enemy OP and MG positions. Casualties: 2 Off and 10 EM SWA, 4 EM MIA, 1 EM DOW. Prisoners taken: 12. (Total 326).

NOVEMBER 23

1st Bn in regimental reserve in Le Petite Raon moved at 1300 to Les Puid continuing in Regimental reserve. 2nd Bn moved from Vieux-Maulin at 0700 to the E along axis hill 730 Le Saulcy Belval. Road blocks, craters and mines were the only enemy resistance. Bn closed into Sainte Blaise 2330. 3rd Bn at 0700 moved from Senones securing Belval, then closed into Sainte Blaise at 2300 encountering road blocks, craters, mines and sniper fire along way. Engrs Co A 325th and A-T Co swept roads from Senones to Vieux-Maulin. Casualties: 2 EM SWA, 2 EM MIA. Prisoners taken: 8 (Total 334).

NOVEMBER 24

1st Bn minus A & C Co's, one platoon of HMG and one section of 81 mm mortars in Regimental reserve. 2nd and 3rd Bns in Division reserve. AT Co secured the supply lines vicinity of Senones. 325th Engrs Co A improved main routes between Senones and Sainte Blaise. The Division continued to attack NE with the 399th

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passing through leading elements of the 397th Infantry. Casualties: 1 Off and 3 EM LWA. Prisoners taken: 81 (Total 415) Replacements: 73 EM.

NOVEMBER 25

1st Bn: status same as day before. 2nd and 3rd Bns patrolled mission E of Sainte Blaise. Casualties: 1 EM - SWA, 1 EM LWA. Prisoners taken: 14 (Total 429) Replacements: 13 Off and 89 EM.

NOVEMBER 26

1st Bn moved from Champenay at 1300 by shuttle movement and closed into assembly area of Raon L'Etape, at 2115. 2nd Bn moved from Sainte Blaise at 1325 by shuttle movement and closed into assembly area at Raon L'Etape at 1910. 3rd Bn moved by motor from vicinity Sainte Blaise at 1230 and closed into assembly area at Raon L'Etape at 1845. All other parts of Regiment and combat team moved by motor to vicinity of Raon L'Etape. Casualties: None. Prisoners taken: None. Replacements: None.

NOVEMBER 27

1st Bn moved from Raon L'Etape at 0928 by motor and closed into assembly area Neuwiller at 2115. The 2nd Bn moved from Raon L'Etape at 0946 by motor and closed into assembly area Brnoisheim at 2100. 3rd Bn moved from Raon L'Etape at 0904 by motor and closed into assembly area Hattmatt at 2015. AT, Cn Co, 325th Med Det, 325th Engrs moved by motor to Dossenheim. 374th FA moved by motor to Ernoisheim.

NOVEMBER 28

The combat team was attached to the 45th Infantry Division and remained in the 45th Division reserve. Bns performed local patrolling missions. Replacements: 31 EM.

OPERATIONS SUMMARY - 397TH INFANTRY REGIMENT CONTINUED:

NOVEMBER 29

1st Bn moved from Neuwiller at 0930 taking positions formerly held by 157th 1st Bn. Occupation completed at 1500. 2nd Bn moved from Enrolsheim at 0700 to Weinbourg, closing in at 1010. 3rd Bn moved from Hattmatt at 0745 to Weiterswiller closing in at 1000. Cn Co moved from Dossenheim to Ingwiller 80 Rds at probably enemy positions.

NOVEMBER 30

1st Bn moved from positions at 0800 along Ingwiller-Wimmenau road with A Co on left and B Co which remained in position on right. C Co followed A Co in reserve. Bn met enemy resistance shortly after jump off, of S/A fire and A/W fire from the NE. Later in the day mortar fire was encountered. C Co was committed and advance continued, with A Co on the left and C Co on the right of the road. 2nd Bn secured Weinbourg and sent C Co to (793314) and took up positions. One rifle and weapons platoon of E Co was sent to Sparsbach as security. 3rd Bn less K Co, which remained in Weiterswiller as security, moved NE along road. The Bn encountered mortar fire at (798311) and had to infiltrate one platoon at a time. The Bn closed into positions at 1600A. Cannon Co fired 231 Rds HE at probably OP's, mortar positions, enemy personnel. 374th fired 153 Rds of HE at automatic weapons, road blocks, enemy personnel and gun positions. The 325th Engrs Co removed roadblocks N along road leading out of Weinbourg. Prisoners taken: 4 (Total to date: 433).