

NARRATIVE HISTORY  
Of the  
399th INFANTRY REGIMENT  
in COMBAT

FRANCE  
1-31 JAN.  
1945

MAP REFERENCE

BITCHE  
EASTERN FRANCE  
1:50,000  
First Premiere Edition  
XXXVII-13  
Reproduced at the Ordnance Survey 1944  
from French 1:50,000 map dated 1939.

The German counter attack designed to drive us from the Bitche area hit our 1st Bn at 1700 hours on New Year's eve. The blow, preceded by a signal of eight red, white and yellow flares, came as no surprise and found us in strong positions on Schoenberg and Shimberg hills S and SE of Bitche with MGs and S/A coordinated and our infantry in formidable entrenchments which we had had two weeks to prepare.

The first Kraut bid struck our "B" Co., holding high ground on Schoenberg, on our 1st Bn's right flank. Pushing SE from Bitche, the enemy cut across. RJ-304 on the Bitche-Lemberg road and started up Schoenberg hill in force. Under the withering fire of our MGs, the grey clad horde wavered and broke, leaving numerous casualties along the slopes of the hill. The first round was ours and not one of our men was lost.

At the stroke of midnight, the New Year was rung in to the screams of the onrushing Krauts as they stormed the "B" Co. positions for the second time. This attack was again repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy. The fortunes of war now turned against us. On our right flank, the, 117th Rcn Sqn was forced to fall back 2000 yards under heavy enemy pressure, leaving our entire right flank exposed.

At 0230 hours of New Year's day, under brilliant moonlight, the Krauts began to capitalize on the withdrawal of the 117th Rcn. Striking from due E, they forced a Co. "B" outpost of eight men to withdraw from its position on our 1st Bn's extreme right flank. The outpost put up a valiant fight. They had killed 26 of the enemy in the previous attack, but in the face of an enemy force estimated at 100 men they were compelled to pull back to the cover of the woods 250 yards to their rear.

As rapidly as possible, we shifted our available reserves to our threatened right flank so as to prevent a flanking movement. The Krauts were not long in coming. Dawn was just beginning to light the Winter sky when a tremendous artillery barrage hurtled against our right flank, and then the reinforced Krauts made their fourth attempt to turn our flank.

This time the enemy was more successful. One section of our MGs was forced to withdraw 200 yards to alternate positions. At this juncture an understrength platoon from "C" Co. was thrown into the breach. After a bitter struggle, they succeeded in driving back the Krauts and restoring our lost position. Temporarily, at least, the enemy had had enough. They dug in to hold what ground they had gained while reinforcements were brought up. We had perfect observation of the enemy's movements and throughout the morning continued to blast RJ-304 and every attempt the Krauts made to concentrate troops for a resumption of the attack.

At 1200 hours, however, we received word from a "C" Co. platoon that the Krauts had hurled 100 men into an attack against their positions and that the enemy seemed in a fair way toward outflanking them on the right. Coordinating their attack, the Krauts at the same time stormed "B" Co's. entrenchments for the fifth time from both the N and E with an estimated 200 men. Ignoring cover and concealment, and screaming oaths at the hated "Ami", the enemy rushed our positions in waves,

persisting in their attack in the face of our concentrated MG and S/A fire.

The 2nd MG Plat from "D" Co. under T Sgt Rudolph Steinman alone estimate that they killed at least 100 of the enemy. But despite their fearful losses, the Krauts overran the outnumbered "C" Co. Plat and broke through to the rear of our "B" Co. CP and A & P personnel were rushed into the breach, but the Kraut horde could not be halted. The "C" Co. Plat continued the uneven fight until all except four men were either killed or captured.

Our "B" Co. also put up a valiant fight to retain its positions. By committing all available CP personnel and firing over 400 rounds they managed to hold their CP location for two hours. In this effort Capt Altus E. Prince, the "B" Co. commander, was greatly aided by the accurate fire orders of S Sgt William Bartscher of our 925th FA Bn. S Sgt Bartscher directed fire against the encircling Krauts to all points of the compass within 100 yards of our troops.

Capt Prince was finally successful in disengaging his troops from the enemy, rejoining the remainder of his Company with the loss of only three wounded who were killed when an attempt to evacuate them by jeep resulted in the driver being hit and the jeep careening over a bluff into the valley below.

Following up their advantage, the Jerries continued the attack. The remainder of "B" Co. fought on grimly until at 1500 hours only a narrow escape gap remained between "B" Co. and the rest of the battalion. Orders now arrived from Regiment for "B" Co. to fall back on "A" Co. which had been holding positions on Baker's left flank. Singly, and in twos and threes, the Baker men left the house in which they had taken shelter and began the dangerous attempt to rejoin the balance of the 1st Bn., Capt Prince and S Sgt Bartscher, who had so brilliantly directed the fire of the 925th, were two of those who did not make the "A" Co. positions.

In order to cover the withdrawal, a platoon of 81mm mortars from "D" Co. under Lt. Joseph H. Nageotte remained in position at the edge of a clump of woods on Schoenberg. The Dog Plat fired to minimum range and expended over 1000 rounds of ammunition before silencing their mortars. By this time, the enemy was upon them and they were engaged in a bitter small arms fight while they successfully withdrew their mortars under enemy fire.

Darkness had now fallen and our first battalion withdrew under its protective cover joining "A" Co. in forming a defense line running SE from Freuden Farm to the Reyersviller road.

Conservative estimates list enemy dead in this action at 300 besides numerous casualties observed. We lost 49 men and two officers, all of whom are missing in action.

Our 2nd Bn, entrenched further N, made only light contact with the enemy and maintained its previous positions although rocket fire fell intermittently in its sector. Identified enemy units facing our 2nd Bn were classified as the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Cos of the 58th MG Bn.

On our RRL, our 3rd Bn now took over the important mission of protecting our entire right flank exposed by the withdrawal of the 117th Rcn. In preparation, one platoon from "L" Co. was moved from our left flank to Hochfirst. But at 1430 hours, reinforcements arrived with "K" Co. of the 255th Infantry Regiment moving into the 3rd Bn position to assist in defending the important high ground at Hochfirst. The remainder of the 3rd Bn., 255th Inf., arrived in our 3rd Bn sector three hours later, considerably strengthening our right flank.

The enemy made one serious attempt to turn our flank at 1600 hours when they launched an attack against our "I" and "L" Cos. An "I" Co. outpost on Speckkopf was hit by 20 Jerries and forced to withdraw to the main body of the Company. Due to the thinness of our lines, a gap existed between the "I" Co. 1st and 3rd Plats dug-in on the forward slope of le Rundenkopf hill and an additional 30 enemy poured through this space and advanced W approximately one-half mile to Kollert hill. To counter this threat, Capt Olson, "I" Co. commander, shifted his 2nd Plat and an attached platoon from "L" Co to the rear of Kollert hill where the breakthrough was contained, darkness precluding further operations. During the night, we withdrew slightly to form a continuous line while the enemy remained in the positions he had gained.

There was no time for rest during the night of the 1-2 of January. Under cover of darkness, our regiment regrouped and reorganized positions in preparation for continuation of the Kraut attack. Our lines now faced generally E and N with our main strength concentrated on high ground on Spitzberg hill.

At daybreak, the 3rd Bn., 255th Infantry Regiment, which had held a portion of our line through the night, relinquished its positions to CT-141 of the 36th Infantry Division and returned to its regiment.

The night had passed with no further material change in our lines, although with daylight heavy vehicular movement was reported by our 1st Bn around Reyersviller and Schorbach. An abortive attack against our positions on a hill E of Lemberg and several S/A fire-fights to the left of "A" Co. ended with the enemy's withdrawal.

Fourteen bombs from four low flying enemy planes landed in our "A" and "B" Co. sectors. Enemy artillery was light, however, and pressure against our 1st Bn. relaxed considerably.

In our 2nd Bn sector, "G" Co., which was in positions NE of Hottviller extending to RJ at grid Q740539, successfully withdrew to high ground in the 73 52 grid square, appreciably lessening their danger of being cut off by infiltration and enabling the 2nd Bn to prepare a stronger front against the enemy who had taken up positions in two draws N of the Bitche-Hottviller road and due E of "G" Co's. new positions. Enemy movement against our 2nd Bn defenses failed to materialize, however, and the sector remained quiet.

Our 3rd Bn was not so fortunate. After they had fought off several minor attacks during the night, including a serious bid against our "I" and "K" Co. positions, the 3rd Bn was attacked by approximately 100 Krauts at 0700 hours. The enemy supported by tanks advanced behind a heavy artillery preparation in a sustained attack they succeeded in infiltrating on our "I" Co's. right flank, and we

were forced to fall back to prepared positions in the vicinity of grid Q730473. In order to strengthen our lines, "K" Co drew back to the rear of hill 427. At the same time, "L" Co, on our 3rd Bn's left flank was hit by an enemy force of approximately the same strength as had attacked "K" and "T" Cos, forcing Love Co. to withdraw several hundred yards. Having gained high ground, the enemy now seemed content to consolidate his positions, digging in from Spitzberg S along the Lemberg-Bitche road. Our "L" Co., however, launched a counterattack to effect the relief of "K" Co., 398th Infantry, which had been attached to our combat team and was in a bad way. After two attempts had been repulsed, we finally were successful in regaining high ground at 1630 hours.

"C" Co. of CT-141, now joined in defense of our 3rd Bn. sector, bolstering our positions against continuation of enemy pressure.

During the afternoon we moved our CP to Montbronn.

The enemy was held in check throughout the 3rd of January while we improved our positions and prepared for possible resumption of the Kraut attack. Enemy lines now ran generally N and S from Simserhoff just E of the Nousseviller-Bitche road (Q745525) through Freudenberg Farm, le Steinkopf and Spitzberg.

No physical contact was made by either our 1st or 2nd Bns although intermittent rocket and artillery fire fell in both Bn sectors.

"L" Co. attempted to move further onto high ground at le Steinkopf but was repulsed and forced to return to original positions after eight hours of effort.

At 2400 hours, the 3rd Bn, 255th Infantry Regiment was again attached to our regiment, closing into reserve positions in the vicinity of Lambach at 0300.

CT-399 again maintained all positions through January 4th. Extensive patrolling of enemy positions was initiated with patrols reconnoitering hills 415, 427 and the village of Reyersviller. One of our combat patrols from Co. "K" 255th Infantry, consisting of 26 men, was dispatched to Reyersviller and killed 30 enemy at a cost to ourselves of one man killed and one injured.

The enemy maintained pressure along our entire front, particularly in our "A" Co. sector, and seemed bent on driving us from high ground. In this objective, the Krauts achieved little success.

The town of Lemberg was battered by 125 rounds of enemy 88mm and 105mm fire, while occasional rocket and artillery fire fell on our "E" and "B" Co. positions.

January 5th passed with the enemy showing little inclination to continue their attack. It was ascertained through PWs that elements facing us were the 1st, 3rd and 6th Cos. of the 1127th VG Regt., 359th VGD, entrenched on a line running N and S along the 74 grid east of Reyersviller with the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Cos. of the BG Heitman generally south of Bitche.

Patrol action was extensive but no other contact was made with the enemy during the period

PWs taken in 66 days of combat now totaled 641.

At 0900 hours of January 6th, relief of the 3rd Bn, 255th Infantry Regiment, which had been holding positions on our right flank, was begun by the 2nd Bn, 398th Infantry. Relief was completed at 1225 hours and the 2nd Bn, 398th Infantry Regiment, was attached to CT-399.

No small arms contact was made with the enemy during the period. A day and night patrol dispatched to Reyersviller was forced to withdraw when MGs opened up on them at the edge of town.

Enemy lines ran generally N and S from le Bitchberg about one mile NE of Hottviller, bellying SE through Freudenberg Farm along the 75 grid line, SW through a draw to le Steinkopf and thence due S to grid Q745470.

Enemy units in contact were identified as 1/BG Heitman, the 1st and 3rd Cos. 1127th VGR, and the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Cos., 1127th VGR, known as the BG Kuhne.

Once again there was no change in our lines during the period covered by January 7th. An enemy patrol of 5-7 men was driven off by "B" Co outpost at 0600 hours. We initiated night patrols by our 2nd and 3rd Bns as far as Sussels Farm (Q748519) and le Spitzberg, but no contact was established although mortar fire fell on our 3rd Bn patrol. Enemy activity was again heard in Reyersviller.

At 0745 hours of January 8th, the 3rd Bn moved forward to retake high ground on Spitzberg and Signalberg, dominated by hills 427 and 415. The task was made doubly difficult by the fact that these hills were devoid of cover and any approach to them would be observed by the enemy who had had almost a week to dig-in.

A blistering artillery preparation on reported and suspected Kraut positions preceded the attack and then, with Co "A", 753rd Tank Bn in support, our 3rd Bn moved from cover of the woods toward its objective.

Co. "I" was the first to push off. Passing through Co. "K", the "Greyhounds" skirted the edge of the woods in a maneuver to flank and bypass the three enemy companies holding hills 427 and 415 from the S. The enemy laid down heavy mortar and S/A fire, but "I" Co. continued to advance steadily toward their line of departure. By 1000 hours the Item Co. men were SE of hill 427 and paused for further tank coordination having by-passed both hills. One hour later, the advance was resumed and by 1145 hours the "I" Co. objective at grid Q750474 had been reached.

Following the advance of "I" Co, "K" Co., moved to the head of a draw at grid Q747480 while a platoon of Co. "C" moved into positions vacated by Co. "L" S of the Reyersviller road to act as a block covering the Love Co. drive from the draw at Q738492. "L" Co. had no sooner crossed its LD, however, when it was met by a hail of mortar and 88mm fire from Reyersviller which forced them to return to their original positions.

At 1430 hours, after a daring tank reconnaissance by Lt. Col. Elery M. Zehner, Love Co. again attempted to drive up the draw in coordination with tanks. This time they were more successful and by 1800 hours had reached high ground on Signalberg and established con-

tact with "K" Co. in the vicinity of hill 427 and a platoon from "E" Co., 398th Infantry, at RJ-402.

During the afternoon, the enemy, seeking to reestablish his positions, hurled two counter attacks against "K" and "I" Cos. with an estimated 160 Krauts. These attacks were beaten back after fierce fighting in which we were assisted by Co. "F", 398th Infantry, attached to the regiment. Intense mortar and artillery fire continued to fall on "K" and "I" Co's. positions from Reyersviller where the Krauts maintained positions in a draw.

Our 2nd Bn confined its activity to patrolling by "G" Co. which attempted to raid enemy positions at Schorbach. After endeavoring to by-pass enemy MG emplacements at grid Q748524 from three different angles, however, they were forced to return without accomplishing their mission.

Positions previously established by our 1st Bn were maintained.

Forty-nine PWs were captured to swell our regimental total to 693 for 69 days of combat.

The enemy made every effort on January 9th to regain positions on Spitzberg and Signalberg lost to "I", "K" and "L" Cos. the previous day. Several attempts to infiltrate through a draw between the two high points with as many as 50 men were beaten back with heavy loss to the enemy.

Action in our 1st and 2nd Bn sectors was slack and artillery fire on their positions was considerably lighter than during the preceding period.

An additional 29 PWs were corralled, most of them by our 3rd Bn. Our regimental total now stood at 722.

Enemy casualties were estimated at 50 WIA and KIA for the period.

There was no change in our 1st and 2nd Bn positions on January 10th.

In our 3rd Bn sector, "F" Co., 398th Infantry, attempted to drive the enemy from the draw between Signalberg and Spitzberg, thereby securing the right flank of "L" Co. and the left flank of "K" Co. against enemy infiltration and flank attack. Proceeding NE through the woods leading to the head of the draw, "F" Co., supported by a platoon of tanks from Co. "A", 753rd Tank Bn., attacked enemy positions at 0745 hours. After an initial advance of 100 yards, however, they ran into heavy artillery, mortar and S/A fire from the SE along the forward slope of Spitzberg, forcing them to withdraw to their original positions after three hours of effort. Until 1630 hours, not even a rifle popped on the 3rd Bn front. But as darkness was closing in, the enemy attacked "I" Co under cover of a smoke screen. "I" Co. waited until the smoke had lifted and then laid down such effective fire that the enemy was completely repulsed.

January 11th was spent primarily in instituting boundary changes. Switches were accomplished under cover of darkness with little interference from the enemy.

"F" Co., 398th Infantry, was relieved by "I" Co., 255th Inf-

antry, at 2339. Co. "F", upon being relieved, moved to positions held by our "A" Co. Some enemy MG fire was encountered in this operation.

Heavy Weapons Co. of our 1st Bn was relieved by our 2nd Bn. Total relief was not completed until 0730 hours. The closeness of the enemy to our positions made movement exceptionally hazardous except in small groups.

Enemy artillery and mortar fire was the lightest since we occupied our present positions.

Highlight of January 12th was the replacement of Lt. Col. Elery M. Zehner, who had been acting as Regimental Commander, by Col. Edward J. Maloney. Lt. Col. Zehner reassumed command of our 1st Bn.

On the fighting front, action for the second straight day was confined to sniper fire and intermittent enemy mortar and artillery shelling of our positions from the vicinity of Reyersviller.

Activity continued light on January 13th, positions remaining status quo.

An exceptionally successful raid by a platoon from "A" Co on a known enemy MG position just N of le Steinkopf and S of the Reyersviller road resulted in the capture of an enemy heavy MG, and the killing of five Krauts at a loss to ourselves of one killed and one wounded.

At 1230 a composite 3rd Bn Plat relieved a platoon from our "B" Co. on high ground W of Steinkopf.

Our sector remained static through January 14th. The period was spent in improving our positions and in preparation for relief of our 3rd Bn by our 1st Bn under cover of darkness.

No enemy contact was made although mortar, MG and S/A fire harassed our troops.

January 15th was spent with the regiment, improving its positions. The 1st Bn relieved the 3rd Bn as planned and the 3rd Bn went into regimental reserve in the vicinity of Siersthal and Lambach. Upon taking up its positions, our 1st Bn began laying concertina wire under cover of darkness.

Improvement of defensive positions continued through January 16th with the 2nd Bn laying concertina wire in its sector. A 2nd Bn combat patrol from "F" Co. consisting of eight men was dispatched at 2200 hours with the mission of capturing a prisoner and obtaining information on enemy positions. The patrol succeeded in overpowering a sentry and returning without the enemy being the wiser.

Heavy mortar fire was received in our "G" Co. sector.

Our 3rd Bn remained in reserve.

Co "C" relieved the composite 3rd Bn platoon on position W of Steinkopf. A 3rd Bn patrol sent to recover a jeep at grid Q745483 on hill 427 accomplished its mission, drawing the jeep out of no-mans-land with the aid of a rope attached by one of the platoon members who had crawled to the vehicle unobserved by the enemy.

Summation of Division OB and our own IPW reports have identified the following enemy units as facing us on January 17th.

the 58th MG Bn along high ground E of Schorbach (Q74 53); one sniper Co. in the vicinity of grid Q75 51; the 5th Co. and elements of the 4th Co., BG Swiebrucken (formerly called Heitmann) entrenched due east of Bitche (Q750505); the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th, and 7th Cos. of the 1127th Regt. holding, a line running generally N and S along the 75 grid from NW Reyersviller to the woods bordering Spitzberg; the 1st BG Sweibrucken in the vicinity of grid Q755474; and the 5th, 6th Cos., 1126th VG Regt in positions east of the Lemberg-Bitche road at grids Q753471 and Q752468. Supporting artillery has been identified as 5/159 and 13/410 VAK.

Mortar fire was much heavier in our 1st Bn. sector with 110 rounds falling on their positions during the day.

The 2nd Bn engaged in night patrolling. All units continued improvement of positions.

The situation remained static for the eighth day as January 18th came and went with no contact save the dispersal of a 31-man enemy patrol by "A" Co. when the Krauts attempted to reconnoiter our positions at grid Q745483.

We continued our positions both on the line and on high ground W of Hochscheidt ridge where the 3rd Bn was in reserve.

Intermittent artillery and mortar fire fell in Lambach and Siersthal.

Our 3rd Bn relieved our 2nd Bn on position during darkness of the 18th-19th January. Relief was completed at 2355 hours with "L", "I" and "K" Cos. replacing "F", "G" and "E" Cos. respectively. Enemy contact was made by "L" Co. on our right flank at 0200 hours when a four man Kraut patrol was apprehended attempting to reconnoiter our lines. The patrol was driven off with one Kraut killed.

Enemy artillery and mortar fire was exceptionally light. We spent the period in further improvement of our front line positions.

One PW was captured.

A new CP was opened in Enchberg.

Activity continued defensive on both sides of the lines through January 20th and 21st with extensive patrolling and intermittent mortar, artillery and MG exchanges. The Krauts, however, seemed to be getting somewhat bolder in their patrolling.

A direct hit by our artillery on a group of ten Jerries clustered around a Volkswagon, resulted in the killing and injuring of all of them and the destruction of the vehicle.

January 22nd was the twelfth day of comparative inactivity with action limited to harassing artillery fire delivered on known enemy positions. Increased Jerry patrolling lent emphasis to the possibility that the enemy was testing our defenses preparatory to an attempt to break our hold on high ground.

Cold weather, with snow flurries added to the hardships of our front line troops on January 23rd. The 141st Infantry Regiment was withdrawn from our right flank and their positions were taken over by the 398th Infantry.

Our own 1st Bn was relieved on position by our 2nd Bn; Cos. "E", "F" and "G" relieving Cos. "C", "B" and "A" respectively. During this movement, one man was killed and two men were wounded when two enemy

mines, laid in a cleared area, exploded

Our 1st Bn., now in Division reserve, established a Bn CP with Cos. "A" and "D" in Enchenberg, while Cos. "B" and "C" moved from Lambach to Siersthal.

Exchanges of harassing fire between our 2nd and 3rd Bns and the enemy in the vicinity of Reyersviller continued until nightfall.

Intelligence reports indicate the Germans are capable of launching an aggressive attack against our positions with one Infantry Division and one Panzer or Panzer-Grenadier Division along the 73 grid line. Our men, holding entrenchments we had had two weeks to prepare, watched and waited.

Our 1st Bn remained in Division reserve through January 24th while our 2nd and 3rd Bns held the line, improving positions and harassing the enemy with MG and 57mm HE fire including 20 rounds from a captured enemy 75mm howitzer which was turned on the Krauts in the Reyersviller sector by our AT Co.

During the night, a four man enemy patrol infiltrated our "L" Co. positions and was making off with one of our MGs during a change of guard when they inadvertently tripped the trigger and were forced to flee, leaving the gun behind.

With the assistance of one Company from the 157th Engineer Bn, assigned in support of the regiment by XV Corps, improvement of our front line positions continued on January 25th. Concertina wire was laid and reserve positions were further developed.

Our 1st Bn reverted to regimental control at 0001 and moved into positions in the vicinity of Glassemberg, Lambach and Siersthal. Weapons training and firing was conducted throughout the day for replacements. Occasional mortar and sniper fire was received during the period from Reyersviller and Freudenberg Farms.

Our 3rd and 2nd Bns engaged in night patrolling to le Steinkopf and Freudenberg Farm.

Again there was no change in our positions on January 26th although our time was well spent in further improvement of our reserve entrenchments at Legeret Barracks and installation of 550 yards of concertina wire in our 3rd Bn sector.

Our 1st Bn. remained in forward reserve and continued training of replacements.

One Polish PW was captured by our "G" Co.

Vigorous patrolling action by our 2nd and 3rd Bns highlighted January 27th. While the regiment continued the improvement of its defenses with the aid of one Company of the 157th Engineer Bn and two Companies of the 163rd Engineer Bn attached, our 2nd Bn dispatched three night patrols to investigate enemy positions on high ground in the vicinity of Steinkopf.

The first patrol consisting of three men from "E" Cos, made no contact. The second three man patrol dispatched from "G" Co, however, apprehended three Krauts in an OP about one-half mile SE of Reyersviller. The three "supermen" surrendered. The third patrol investigated a hedgerow on the N slope of hill 427 and reported seeing seven enemy.

The 3rd Bn patrol comprising eight men from "I" Co., ran into

difficulties. The patrol, dispatched to reconnoiter Freudenberg Farm, had approached within twenty yards of a barn when they were detected by five enemy guards who gave the alarm to about 25 additional Krauts. Our heavily outnumbered patrol managed to withdraw after a brisk fire fight.

The addition of the three PWs captured by "G" Co, raised our regimental bag to 734 for 88 days of combat.

During darkness of January 28th, the enemy moved boldly to within 400 yards of our "F" Co. positions while an estimated 20 Kraut snipers with one entrenched not further than 200 yards from our lines. One of our own snipers definitely killed three these men and possibly more before being wounded himself. Thirty rounds of 50mm Jerry mortar fire fell on our "F" Co's positions during the period.

Contact was also close in our 3rd Bn sector with harassing enemy mortar and MG fire continuous throughout the day.

Our 1st Bn remained in reserve spending the period in training reinforcements and orienting troops on the new M18-TD.

The 3rd Bn, 398th Infantry Regiment, was attached to our combat team and took up positions on our right flank N of Lemberg, and along the Lemberg-Bitche road.

On January 29th, 600 additional yards of concertina wire was added to our defenses.

A raid by a platoon from Co. "E" reinforced by a HMG squad from Co. "G" on Steinkopf hill resulted in the capture of twelve enemy before moonlight forced the raiders to withdraw.

Sporadic sniper fire continued to harass "I" and "L" Cos.

Our PW total for 90 days of combat climbed to 746.

Our sector remained relatively quiet on January 30th with the exception of enemy S/A sniper fire on our "I" and "F" Cos. from Freudenberg Farm.

We answered with harassing 50 cal MG fire on enemy positions surrounding Freudenberg Farm and Reyersviller and some very effective 57mm AT sharpshooting on Freudenberg and pillboxes S of the farm. One house was observed burning as a result of our 50 cal fire and two direct hits, were scored by the 57s on the pillboxes.

Our 1st Bn, continuing in reserve, maintained its program of training replacements.

The 3rd Bn, 398th Infantry, returned to control of its own regiment at 0600 hours.

Our Field Artillery had something of a field day. Our Cannon Co. fired 25 rounds at reported enemy positions with good results. Our 925th FA laid direct fire on Reyersviller and heavily smoked enemy positions on Steinkopf hill. In all, a total of six batteries of 105mm and one battery of 155mm hurled 80 rounds against Steinkkopf. This fire was so effective that the enemy began firing S/A and MGs at random. Enemy fire decreased considerably after our bombardment.

Our 3rd Bn. was relieved by our 1st Bn during darkness of January 30th, while harassing of the enemy continued to good effect.

Co. "E" bore the brunt of enemy action throughout the period. Contact was not made, but sniper duels and intermittent artillery and mortar fire kept our men on their toes.

We continued our night reconnaissance patrolling and maintained our position without difficulty.

As our third month of combat ended, a recap of PWs revealed that CT-399 had added a total of 746 prisoners to the imposing bag of the AEF in France.

HEADQUARTERS 399TH INFANTRY  
A.P.O. #447 U.S. Army

5 March 1945

SUBJECT : Regimental History.  
TO : TAG, War Dep't., Washington, D.C.  
(Through channels).

Transmitted herewith Regimental History of 399th Infantry Regiment for  
month of February, 1945.

(signed)  
EDWARD J. MALONEY,  
Colonel, 399th Infantry,  
Commanding.

7 Incls:

- 1-Regt'l History (in quin.)
- 2-Copy S-1 Strength Reports.
- 3-Copy S-2 Periodic Reports and Overlays.
- 4-Copy S-2 Journal
- 5-Copy S-3 Periodic Reports, Overlays and Operations Instructions.
- 6-Copy S-3 Journal.
- 7-Copy S-4 Periodic Reports.