

MS # B-027

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560 and 12 Volks Grenadier Divisions

THE ATTACK AND DEFENSE BATTLE IN THE ARDENNES

(16 Dec 44 - 17 Jan 45)

HEADQUARTERS
U. S. FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
MAIN APO 757

Historical Division

23 April 1946

SUBJECT: 560th VG Div in the Ardennes Offensive.

TO : Genmaj Rudolph LANGHAEUSER.

1. In addition to the points outlined on the general questionnaire, please give what information you can in answer to the following questions:

(a) At the beginning of the offensive in the sector of LVIII Corps, 560th VG Div was on the left and 116th Pz Div on the right. But on 17 Dec, 116th Pz Div was ordered south into the sector of XLVII Pz Corps, and from that time forward 560th VG Div was on the right. Why did the divisions exchange positions? Did the change create any difficult problems in controlling cross-traffic?

(b) Did the 560th VG Div take the bridge at Dasburg? If not, where did it cross the river Our? Who did take the bridge at Dasburg? What opposition did the 560th meet east of the Our? Was it heavier or lighter than had been expected? After crossing the Our, how was the 560th able to keep almost abreast of the 116th Pz Div with its motorized units?

HENRY G ELLIOTT
WOJG AUS
Ardennes Sub-Section

107 pages

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The 560 and 12 Volks Gren Divisions
THE ATTACK AND DEFENSE BATTLE IN THE ARDENNES
(16 Dec 44 - 17 Jan 45)

Concerns: Fighting against American troops in the
Ardennes from 16 Dec 44 - 25 Jan 45)

Maps : American map 1:50,000, sheets 92,93,106,107,108
" " 1:250,000, " 6

Order of Arrangement

- I. Prefatory remarks
- II. Table of time and place (with synoptical scetch, App: 1,2)
- III. Reports of fighting (with single sketches, App: 3-17)
 - a. Attack battle in the Ardennes
 - b. Defense battle in the Ardennes
- IV. Dealing with questions according to Apps. A and B
- V. Appendices

I. PREFATORY

Before starting to deal with the subject I have been asked to write on, I must point out that correctness, completeness and exactness for this report and attached appendices cannot be claimed. This is particularly due to the precipitation of events during the major fighting described herein, likewise to the considerable period which has passed since, and the lack of data. Moreover, the natural ignorance concerning the "general situation", which existed already at that time, is to be taken into consideration. In general, the division commander can survey only his own sector and the interior wings of his neighbors. He receives orders but no reasons are given for some; thus, it is rarely possible for him to describe measures taken by the higher command on the basis of events on his own front. In many cases I will therefore be able only to answer the questions partially or inexactly which are set out in appendices A and B. Where, therefore, in my report any glaring inaccuracies appear, I will mention them in the text or will mark them with a question mark..... The maps which I have at my disposal increase the difficulties of the work further. During the campaign

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we used only German maps with German names for places; the American maps, which we are using now, are as a rule marked only with French names of places. In many cases I was, therefore, unable to find places. Likewise here, I will mark the doubtful statements with a question mark.

II. TABLE OF TIME AND PLACES

560 Volks Gren Div.

- 15 Dec 44 Command post of 560 Volks Gren Div: Concrete emplacement northwest of Arzfeld
- 16 Dec 44 Command post as previously. 0500 beginning of attack. Loss of the Our-crossing 3 km east of Heinerscheid, capture of the high terrain around Kalborn.
- 17 Dec 44 Command post: Muehle 3 km east of Heinerscheid. Loss of Heinerscheid.
- 18 Dec 44 Command post: Heinerscheid. Continued thrust toward Sassel, Asselborn.
- 19 Dec 44 Command post: Hoffelt. Surrounding of Tavigny; capture of the high terrain around Lieder--Weisswampach.
- 20 Dec 44 Command post: Cetturn. Fighting at Mont. Fighting southeast of Gouvy.
- 21 Dec 44 Command post: Nadrin: Fighting at and around Samrée. Loss of Gouvy: thrust toward the road crossing Salmoniteau, Laroche-Grandmenil, Heuffalize.
- 22 Dec 44 Command post as previously. Fighting around the hairpin-bend northwest Rochamps. Bringing up of the Group--until then on the right--to Rochamps.
- 23 Dec 44 Command post: Fuse de Lahr. Defense north of Rochamps and east of Amonines. Group Happich newly set up. Attack launched by Group Schumann at Say.
- 24 Dec 44 Command post as previously. Defense as previously in the line Wy--sharp, south of Melines--Werpín.
- 25 Dec 44 Command post as previously. Defense as previously. American counterattacks at the line Wy--hard south of Melines--Werpín.

- 26 Dec 44 Command post: Laid Prangehux. Defense in line north of Rochamps--east of Amonines--western edge Trinal--forest edges south of Trinal (east of Werpin). Continuation of the American counterattacks.
- 27 Dec 44 Command post as previously; preparations made for attack directed at Amonines. Repulse of American counterattacks in line in wooded area west of Magoster and Beffe.
- 28 Dec 44 Command post: Rochamps; continuation of American attacks at Magoster and Beffe; our preparations made to attack Amonines.
- 29 Dec 44 Command post: Muehle, one km east-northeast of Cielle. Continuation of American counterattacks; our preparations made to attack Amonines.

The 560 Volks Gren Div was again under command of the Div. commander Obst Bader, who had now recuperated from an illness. I left for the Army High Command.

12 Volks Gren Div (app: 2)

- 1 Jan 45 Command post: Cierreux. Taking over command of the Division there, about 1300 hours. The Division was on the defense west of Vielsam in the line northern forest edges south of the road Basse--Bodeux--Erria--Tri-le-Cheslaing--Grandmenil.
- 2 Jan 45 Command post: Grand Sant. Defense as previously.
- 3 Jan 45 Command post: Grand Sant. Beginning of the American counterattack against the northern defense front in the area of the breakthrough between Halleux and Grandmenil
- 4 Jan 45 Command post: Grand Sant. Defense in line north of La Chapelle--north of Hierlot--northwest of Jevigne--Xhaut si plaux--roadbend west of Mahmpre.
- 5 Jan 45 Command post: At first Bihain; after bombing attack, again Grand Sant. Defense from the line northern edge La Chapelle--northern edge Jevigne--northern edge Mahmpre.
- 6 Jan 45 Command post: Petite-Langlir. Defense from the line northern edge La Vaux--northern edge Lierneux--Baneux--portions of the woods Pifasse and Belle Haie (south and southwest of Mahmpre).
- 7 Jan 45 Command post: Petite Langlir. Defense from the line height northwest of Grand Sant--north of Verleumont--Fraiture--roadfork close south of Croix St Jaques.
- 8 Jan 45 Command post: Lomré. Defense from line northern edge Jaubieval--Hebrouval--south of Regné--south of the road-crossing 3,5 km west of Regné.
- 9 Jan 45 Command post: Lomré, later Vaux (southeast of Mont le Ban); defense from line west of Pravedroux--Ottre--Bihain--Petites Tailles.

- 10 Jan 45 Command post: Brisy. Defense from line south of Pravedroux--northern edge Petite--Langlir--Pissevotte.
- 11 Jan 45 Command post: Brisy. Defense from line: Course of the Ronce stream east of Langlir--Langlir--Pissevotte.
- 12 Jan 45 (?) Command post: Brisy. Breakthrough of the enemy south of Pravedroux and south of Langlir as far as the southern edges of the large forest area Pravedroux--Langlir--Les Tailles--Mont--Mont le Ban--Bovigny.
- 13 Jan 45 Command post: as previously. Loss of Baclain and Mont le Ban.
- 14 Jan 45 Command post: as previously. Push back of the Division to the line Sterpigny--north of Cherain--Vaux--north of Sommerain.
- 15 Jan 45 Command post: Steinbach. Withdrawal of the Division to the line Rettigny--north of Brisy. During the night of 16 Jan 45, the withdrawal of the Division, for reconstitution, commenced.
- 16 Jan 45 Command post: Niederbesslingen (Basbellain?). Withdrawal of the Division excepting one combat group. Defense at the heights south of Rettigny and south of Brisy.
- 17 Jan 45 Command post: Niederbesslingen (Basbellain?). The Division left for the area northwest of Muenstereifel. Remaining portions followed on the evening of 18 Jan 45.
- 18 Jan 45 Division staff was at Quarters Holzheim (west to of Muenstereifel). Reconstitution of the
- 28 Jan 45 Division took place in this region.

III. BATTLE REPORTS

a. The Offensive Battle in the Ardennes
(15 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

The Division was organized on the pattern of a Volks Gren Div, set up completely anew, and fully equipped. It was up to strength, the men were all extremely young in years--most of the officers and noncommissioned officers had been drawn from the army of occupation in Norway. Thus the main body of the troops and commanders had little or no fighting experience and in its leadership and composition, therefore, the Division differed from the regulations laid down for war establishment.

On 15 Dec 44, the following had arrived in the assembly area (about 30 km behind the MLR):

Div Staff--two staffs from Gren Regts with two Gren Bns each, the Rifle Company, the staff of the Artillery Regiment with three light and one heavy battalion; Staff of the Engineer Battalion with two companies. Signal battalion. Missing were:

Staff of the one Gren Regt, two Gren Bns, the Antitank Battalion with Assault Gun Company, the two Engineer Companies and portions of the Supply Service.

It was reported that the Gren Bns--still absent-- were already advancing and might arrive by the third or fourth day of fighting. The time of arrival of the Antitank Battalion and the 2nd Engineer Battalion was unknown. Transport space, which the supply service was short of, was partly obtained by allotting vehicles taken from the corps detachments. The fighting strength of the infantry consisted of about 2000 men.

2. Tactical Ratio of Subordination

The Division was subordinated to the Corps headquarter LVIII Pz Army Corps within the frame of 5 Pz Army. Assembled at the right of the Division was the 116 Armored Div, on the left, the Pz Lehr Div. The attacking infantry was organized as follows:

Right : Group Obstlt Schumann (Commander Gren Regt 1129)
with Regt Staff Gren Regt 1130 and two battalions.

Center: Reinforced Rifle Company.

Left : Group Obstlt Schmidt (Commander Gren Regt 1128)
with Regt Staff Gren Regt 1128 and two battalions.

The Gren battalions were composed of five companies:

Each had one assault company of hand-picked volunteer officers, noncommissioned officers and EM, three gren. companies and one heavy company. The strength of the companies had been fixed at 80 men. Within the companies, two or three special assault groups had been set up; these, as well as the assault companies, were reinforced by engineers allotted to them.

The main body of the Div Arty Regt had been instructed to cooperate with the attacking group on the right, portions on the groups in the center and at the left. Numerous corps and army artillery --particularly mortar brigades--were allotted for cooperation with the Division to support the attack.

I do not remember details of formation of artillery; however, the support of the artillery was completely adequate. (App 3)

3. Task to be fulfilled by the Division was:

To assemble at 0500 on 16 Dec 44 for attack, to break through the enemy MIR--the latter was well built out and reinforced by being linked to numerous concrete emplacements in the West Wall--, to capture the Our-crossings at Ouren (two), likewise at Muehle, three km east of Heinerscheid (one) and, as first target of attack, to reach the high terrain on both sides of the road St Vith, Diekirch (Ettelbrueck)

between Weisswampach and Heinerscheid.

4. Weather

There was slight frost, a thin layer of snow, clouds, at times it was foggy, weather unsuitable for air activity.

5. Course of the Day

During the night of 14 Dec 44, portions of soldier guides, belonging to the attacking groups and artillery, had been brought forward to the single sectors of the positional Division (26 Volks Gren Div). On 15 Dec 44, they took over the usual data, particularly the plans of the mines, and checked the lay-out of minefields. At twilight on 15 Dec 44, the main body of the positional Division withdrew from its position in order to assemble farther south for the attack.

At twilight, the divisional attacking troops moved on from the assembly area under the command of the parties of guides and reached (finding a very quiet front) the assault positions by about midnight.

At about 1800, the divisional command post was occupied--namely a concrete emplacement in the West Wall--close south of Binscheid (northwest of Arzfeld). The infantry was formed in details as

follows:

Group on the right: One battalion each north and south of the road Eschfeld--Savenig. Ahead of them was the Assault Company, behind it--ranged out in deep echelons--the main body of the battalion.

Group in the center: Assault Platoon ahead, behind it--deep echeloned--the main body, about three km southwest of Eschfeld.

Group on the left: Ahead, one battalion with assault company, behind that the other battalion--all those were in deep echelons on both sides of the road--1,3 km northwest of Reipeldingen, Karschelt, Muehle, three km east of Heinerscheid.

6. The Enemy

It was known that opposite our Division the enemy had posted about one Regiment of the 28 American Inf Div in a well-built-out position; the latter being heavily surrounded with mines and reinforced by concealed West Wall pill-boxes. Strength of the occupation declined gradually from north to south, because in that direction the nature of the terrain did not call for such a strong occupation. The enemy artillery was

considered to be strong and was well registered in. It was not presumed that strong enemy reserves were behind the 28 Am Inf Div.

7. Losses

There were none.

(16 Dec 44)

1. Fighting Strength: The same as on 15 Dec 44
2. Tactical Formation: " " " " " "
3. Tasks: (App 3)

Group Schumann was ordered to advance on either side of the road through Eschfeld--Rorscheidt--Sevenig--Ouren, break through the enemy MLR at Sevenig, capture at least one crossing over the Our, at Our or Paterskirche and build, for the time being, one bridgehead on the other side of the Our.

Group Rifle Company was ordered to advance according to prismatic compass, through the undergrowth toward the Our, set up there an infantry crossing and hold themselves in readiness for an enveloping attack against Lieler or Kaborn on the other side of the Our--depending on the development of the situation.

Group Schmitt's aim was to advance on either side of the road northwest of Reipeldingen--

Karschelt--Muehle--east of Heinerscheid, then to break through the enemy MLR east of Karschelt, to capture the Our crossing at the Muehle, and build a bridgehead on the other side of the Our.

4. The Weather

It was the same as on 15 Dec 44, heavy early morning fog, weather unsuitable for air activity.

5. Course of the Day

At 0500 the Division assembled to launch an attack (in complete darkness) without artillery support. At 0530 the zone of attack was lit up by search-light-batteries about 5-8 km behind the MLR; at the same time the artillery was given permission to start their barrage.

The Group Schumann very soon met with strong resistance outside of and on both sides of Sevenig. All attempts to make their way out by a detour around that place came to naught against the heavy fire they ran into. However, the Assault Company of the battalion on the left--south of Sevenig--managed to fight its way out, broke through the enemy's foremost line and pushed through as far as the Our; already at about 0700 they had succeeded in taking into their possession the Our-bridge--on the south--undamaged. As however the companies of the battalion

on the left, following up, was caught in the enemy defense barrage, and an enemy counterthrust with tanks was launched against the assault company out of Ouren, this crossing was lost again at about 1000, causing no heavy losses.

The numerous attempts which were made during the course of the day, to launch the attack again, all failed.

The Group Rifle Company lost its way in the darkness when heavy fog was prevailing and on account of the impassable forest terrain; it ran into heavy enemy defense-fire and was dispersed. However, it contained enemy forces between Sevenig and Karschelt.

The Company could not be used again before 18 Dec 44 as it could not be concentrated before that day.

The Group Schmitt broke through the enemy defense and forced itself over the crossing on the Our at the Blasted bridge three km east of Heinerscheid, in the forenoon. Already, during the course of the forenoon, the group succeeded in enlarging the bridgehead, in spite of stiff resistance, to such an extent that for the time being a provisional crossing over the remnants of the bridge was rigged up and thus the advanced commanders of the army engineers

were able to make a start with the building of the bridge (the job was expected to last until the afternoon of 17 Dec 44 as there was a lot of clearance-work to be done); the road from Karschelt to Muehle was covered with felled trees and sown with mines which had to be taken up before every traffic could move that way. By the evening of 16 Dec 44, Group Schmitt had fought for the exit of the forest terrain east of Heinerscheid and captured the heights west and south of Kalborn.

The Division had thus laid the foundations for the continuation of the attack (capture of at least one Our-crossing and securing of this crossing by means of a bridgehead).

6. The Enemy

The situation of the enemy was as expected; he had suffered considerable losses and the number of prisoners we took from him was correspondingly heavy.

7. Losses on our own Side

Our losses in infantry were very heavy. The battalions, launching the attack, had also heavy losses, caused by mines and enemy artillery activity, excepting the Rifle Company regarding the absence of which nothing could be found out for the time being.

As in the course of all the German combats, the losses in officers were considerably higher than those of non-commissioned officers and EM's.

By the evening of 16 Dec 44, the losses of the infantry amounted to about 1000 men (included in this figure, however, were those of the Rifle Company which had in the meantime been located again). Those losses suffered by the divisional troops were very slight except among the engineers.

(17 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

On the morning of 17 Dec the combat strength in the advanced line was thus around 1000 men. On this morning, the two Gren battalions, which had previously been missing, were reported to have arrived, after very strenuous marches, in the area of Waxweiler. They should have started off at twilight on 17 Dec 44 and have reached the area Rabiden--Reipeldingen--Dahnen by the morning of 18 Dec 44. The Engineer Battalion (staff and one company) had still a combat strength of some 100 men.

2. Tactical Organization

It was the same as on the previous day,

only the group in the center had been withdrawn; the divisional artillery's mainpoint of effort was transferred to Group Schmitt; forces of Group Schumann were increasingly dependent on the Corps' and army artillery.

As the Group Schumann was initially unattached and then for a short time was subordinated to the neighbor on the right and finally was committed on the left by Group Schmitt, I will now commence to describe the events which took place in the vicinity of Group Schmitt.

3. Tasks (likewise App 3)

The Division was ordered to take Heinerscheid and then continue its attack through Sassel, Asselborn and Hachéville-Heffelt. Group Schumann's mission was to renew its attack against Sevenig, capture an Our-crossing at Our and likewise the high terrain at Weisswampach.

Because this Our-crossing had not yet been captured the 116 Pz Div was led around to the rear of 560 Volks Gren Div and was committed at the crossing around Muehle (east of Heinerscheid).

4. Weather

It was the same as on 16 Dec 44, unsuitable for air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 3)

During the morning of 17 Dec 44, Group Schmitt assembled for the attack directed at Heinerscheid and took at noon into its possession--in cooperation with an armored reconnaissance battalion (presumably 2 Pz Div or Pz Lehr Div) which was advancing from the south over Pasburg, Marbourg, Fischbach les Cheveaux to Heinerscheid;--after bitter fighting, the place and the heights at Heinerscheid. The attack was hindered, particularly by well placed artillery fire coming from the direction of Lieler. Likewise during the afternoon of 18 Dec 44 these batteries were still firing at the northern exit of Heinerscheid and thus increased the difficulties of supply considerably. When Heinerscheid had been captured, Group Schmitt advanced as far as Hupperdange and took this place, meeting little enemy resistance.

Group Schumann assembled again for an attack directed at Sevenig on the morning of 17 Dec 44. However, it was repelled.

As of the morning of 17 Dec 44 the divisional command post was at Muehle, three km east of Heinerscheid.

As by noon of that same day it was clear that we could not reckon to put in order the bridge at Muehle before noon of the following day (owing to

clearing up work on road of approach) the 116 Armored Division was ordered by the staff of the corps headquarters to cross over at Pasburg.

6. The enemy who evidently had at his disposal only local reserves, put up a stiff defense in the line Harspelt--Sevenig--northern portion of the undergrowth, likewise at Heinerscheid, where he assembled to launch a counterthrust with tanks from the north and was able to break into the town temporarily again. Where Heinerscheid had been captured the resistance was smashed there.

7. Losses among the Group Schmitt were not too heavy, in the case of Group Schumann they were again very high.

(18 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

The Rifle Company, again gathered together and reinforced, became once more subordinated to the Group Schmitt. On the morning of 18 Dec 44 the Group assembled with about 600 men of the infantry. The battalions, brought up later, had in general reached their march destination, reported however that considerable casualties had been suffered during the

march (about 100 men of each battalion). These were caused by the damp weather, the long marches at night, and considerable difficulties of terrain. Group Schumann reported that its combat strength consisted of about 300 men; that of the divisional troops remained unchanged on the whole.

2. Tactical Organisation

This was unchanged for Group Schmitt. One of the battalions, brought up later, was expected to be allocated and subordinated to the Group by the morning of 19 Dec 44.

Group Schumann was subordinated to the neighbor on the right (I do not remember the division), for the attack which was to be launched anew in the morning of 18 Dec 44, directed at Sevenig. Likewise a battalion was brought up and subordinated to Group Schumann by the next morning. On 18 Dec 44 the divisional command post had been transferred to Heinerscheid.

The main body of 116 Armored Division had crossed the Our at Pasburg.

3. Task (App 4)

The Division was ordered to continue the attack and to push forward to Tavigny.

4. Weather

I do not remember the weather conditions, presumably they had improved, there was no enemy air activity.

5. Course of the day

Group Schmitt continued launching the attack, it met little enemy resistance, but faced considerable difficulties of terrain (very bad roads, extraordinarily uneven ground) and reached the area of Asselborn by the evening.

Group Schumann attacked Sevenig again within the formation of the right neighbor division and was again repelled (App 3).

6. The Enemy

The enemy was badly mauled, offered little local resistance except toward Group Schumann.

7. Losses

Losses sustained during fighting were not very heavy; however, there were many casualties during the march owing to over-exertion.

(19 Dec 44)

1. Fighting strength

The fighting strength was brought up to about 900 men in the case of Group Schmitt and about

600 men for Group Schumann. The rearward battalion--near Group Schmitt--was set aside by the Division as reserve for the former. x

The Antitank Battalion reported that it had reached the area of Daleiden; it had lost 20% of its assault guns during the march within a short time.

The Engineer Company which was previously absent, reported its arrival in Arzfeld; it was to be brought up later from there by the corps columns to the Division. Likewise the supply services--still absent--reported their arrival in the supply area at Arzfeld.

3. Task (App 5)

The Division was ordered to continue the attack through Tavigny directed at Houffalize and try to get into its possession the Ourthe crossing.

Group Schumann (App 3) still within the formation of the neighboring division on the right, had been ordered to launch an attack again on Savenig--Ouren and to capture the high terrain around Lieler--Weisswampach.

4. Weather

I do not remember what the weather conditions were, there was no enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 5)

Group Schmitt advanced quickly through Weiler and along the road south of this town toward Hacheville--Hoffelt, meeting only slight enemy resistance on the outskirts of villages and fringes of woods; however, it could not continue to advance toward the west owing to the lack of roads across the terrain between these places and Tavigny (boundary of Belgium and Luxemburg); thus it had to make a detour at Troine. For this reason the Group did not reach the area east of Tavigny before dusk, in spite of its excellent march performance. When it was reported that the place had been occupied by American armored troops, the Group Schmitt, together with armored spearheads of the 116 Armored Division, which had arrived at the same time, launched an attack at Tavigny and captured it, destroying at the same time 15 American tanks (9 of these at least in close combat with infantry weapons).

On the morning of 19 Dec 44, Group Schumann (App 3) launched another attack against Sevenig--Ouren and was able to capture the high terrain around Lieler--Weisswampach, meeting only weak enemy forces.

On the morning of 19 Dec 44, the divisional command post was transferred to Hoffelt.

6. The Enemy

At Tavigny fresh formations were spotted,

I cannot remember to which units they belonged, presumably it was an armored unit which was retreating to the west.

It is probable that only weak covering detachments of the 28 American Inf Div were standing opposite Group Schumann.

7. Losses

Group Schmitt had moderate losses, those of Group Schumann were bearable.

(20 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Schmitt had a combat strength of about 850 men; Group Schumann about 550 men. The divisional troops were almost up to strength with very few losses suffered at that time. Horses were suffering from exhaustion. The Antitank Battalion with Assault Gun Company had not yet been brought up, whereas the Engineer Battalion with about 200 men combat strength had again been gathered.

2. Tactical Formation

It was the same as on the previous day. Divisional reserve was as follows:

The Regt staff, which had been absent

and had arrived in the meantime (Gren Regt 1129), one gren battalion at Group Schmitt, Engineer Battalion and the Antitank Battalion, the arrival of which was expected no later than by the evening of 20 Dec 44.

3. Task (App 6)

The Division was ordered to turn off north toward Brisy and aim to capture Mont, Wibrin, Nadrine, advancing through Sommerain.

Task set for Group Schumann was: to push forward within the formation of the division on the right through Hautbellain toward Gouvy and to capture the road from St Vith through Gouvy to Chevain (App 7).

4. Weather

It was brightening up, colder, no enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 6)

During the early morning of 20 Dec 44 Group Schmitt assembled again in spite of the exhaustion of its troops and horses; by noon the foremost elements arrived at the main road from Grandmenil to Heuffalize where it was joined by the road from Chevain. There the Group was fired at by all kinds of weapons from the direction of Mont. It assembled for the attack along with tanks of 116 Pz Div; Group Schmitt was standing

south of the road from Fontenaille to Mont, and panzer elements north of the road.

The assault gun company of the antitank battalion, which had arrived in the meantime, was now brought to the scene by the Division. The enemy was unable to hold the high terrain around Mont against the combined attack we launched at about 1500, and withdrew to the west before twilight approached. Group Schmitt moved forward again immediately after the battle and its foremost elements arrived at Nadrine while the main body had reached the region Wibrin. Group Schumann (App 7) arrived in the region Hautbellain without fighting; there, however, it met strong enemy forces which were holding the southern forest edge at Sur la Haie de Bellain as well as the triangle of road and rail lines there. Attempts made repeatedly to launch other attacks, even by making detours to the east and the west, failed. The Group was not able to move until the morning of 21 Dec 44.

Div command post as of the morning of 20 Dec 44, Cettun.....

6. Enemy

The enemy troops which had been in action at Mont, did not presumably belong to 28 American Inf Div, nor did those committed at Gouvy,

it would appear, belong to this Division. In these two battles, the enemy had suffered considerable losses, at Mont we had lost numerous tanks.

7. Losses

On 20 Dec 44, both Groups suffered only slight losses during fighting. On the other hand, Group Schmitt sustained considerable casualties in men as well as horses, caused through over-exertion.

(21 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Schmitt had an infantry combat strength of about 800 men, Group Schumann about 500 men. Several assault guns were unfit for use as they had been technically damaged. The combat strength of the remaining divisional detachments was almost normal.

2. Tactical Organisation

This was the same as on 20 Dec 44. When Gouvy had been captured, Group Schumann was again subordinated to 560 Volks Gren Div.

3. Task (App 8)

Task set for the Division was to continue the attack, to capture the road Salmchateau--Larache at Samré and to continue to advance toward

Bochamp--Amorines. The task set for Group Schumann (App 7) was to brush aside any enemy resistance at Gouvy and then to follow on the heels of the Division through Chevain--Mont le Ban--Direz (App 8). Group Schumann received, during the march, orders to turn off north--east of Direz--on the main road there to take into its possession the road crossing at Salm-chateau, Laroche, Grandmenil, Hoffalize, and to block the road to the east, north and west.

4. Weather

It was clear, some frost, no enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 8)

Owing to the extraordinary over-exertion of the previous days the foremost elements of Group Schmitt did not assemble at Nadrin before 0900 on 21 Dec 44. In the sections of the wood east and south of Samrée the Group met strong enemy resistance and at about noon it assembled for the attack east of the road Nadrin, Samrée, on about the level of Bevismenil. Likewise, the Pz Regt of 116 Pz Div assembled for the attack directed at Samrée, which was reported to be well fortified. The corps staff brought up strong artillery and mortar brigades for this attack.

At about 1500 the infantry of Group

Schmitt had fought their way through, almost as far as the road from Salmchateau to Laroche and the main body was then standing east of the road Nadrin, Samrée. One Gren Battalion was still at the disposal of the division.

At the same time, the 116 Pz Div moved forward to attack against Samrée after a fairly heavy artillery barrage had been laid down particularly with salvoes of rockets, and captured this place, destroying numerous enemy tanks (at least 10).

Group Schmitt took advantage of this success and captured the main road and forest edges north of it (terrain around Fuse de Lahr). The enemy withdrew in the direction of Rochamps.

Appendices 7 and 9: Early on 21 Dec 44, Group Schumann started forward again in an attack directed at the railroad triangle southeast of Gouvy; likewise, elements of the right neighbor simultaneously moved out of Ourthe against Sta. Gouvy. We soon succeeded in throwing out the enemy, considerably weakened as he was by then, and in capturing the portions of the wood at Sur la Haie de Bellain, Sta. Gouvy and Gouvy. Group Schumann moved further to the west as soon as the fighting had ceased and reached the area south of Petites Tailles and Tailles without fighting; there it ran again into enemy forces who evidently

aimed to keep open the crossroads Salmchateau, Laroche-Grandmenil, Houffalize for retreating American forces. An attack was launched immediately which enabled us to push the enemy out of Tailles and Les Tailles toward the north, but the cross-roads, however, could not be captured on that day.

When twilight approached, the spearheads of 2 SS Pz Div (Reich), coming from St Vith, arrived at the command post of Group Schumann. Their task was to attack toward the northwest on 22 Dec 44.

As of noon of 21 Dec 44 the division command post was at Nadrin.

6. The Enemy

At the north of Samrée the Division was doubtless standing opposite a fresh enemy (of 83 American Div ?). At Gouvy there were evidently enemy covering troops. At the road crossing there was strong enemy lateral security. I do not remember to which division these enemy troops belonged.

7. Losses were very slight.

(22 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Combat strength was the same as on the previous day.

2. Tactical Organization

The entire Division was again under the division commander. On the whole, no changes had taken place.

3. Task (App 10)

The Division was ordered to continue the attack together with Group Schmitt over Rochamps, Amonines, toward Piennes; Group Schumann was ordered to assemble, when the attack had been launched, the 2 SS Pz Div and bring it up again to 560 Division.

4. Weather

The weather was clear; there was some frost. As far as I remember there was no enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 10)

At daybreak Group Schmitt went into action east of the road Samrée, Rochamps. It overcame small enemy resistance at Rochamps, then, at 1000 met strong enemy forces at the hairpin-bend 1,7 km northwest of Rochamps in the forest and along the railroad lines.

While Group Schmitt assembled for attack, the Reconnaissance Battalion of 116 Pz Div was brought up to it for support of its effort. In tough, tenacious infantry combat, rendered more arduous by well placed enemy artillery fire, Group Schmitt fought its way

forward steadily and took into its possession the forest exit east of Amonines by the evening.

The Pz Reconnaissance Battalion of the 116 Pz Div did not take part in the attack. At about 1400 it had been withdrawn to be used elsewhere.

On this day, the main body of 116 Pz Div launched an attack south of 560 Volks Gren Div along the road Rochamps--Revantave--toward Magoster and Beffe; it reached this line by the evening. A stronger enemy armored group (about 20-25 tanks) was surrounded at that time in Marcouray.

By the evening of 22 Dec 44, the greatest portion of Group Schmitt had reached the final stage of attack which had commenced on 16 Dec 44. Since that day the Group had marched 120 km, fought numerous battles--some of them heavy ones--undergoing considerable difficulties owing to the weather and the very unfavorable terrain (alternations of both weather and terrain already from the beginning of the assembly, 14 Dec 44).

Group Schumann (App 10) reached the terrain southwest of the crossroads, following the attack of 2 SS Pz Div. There it assembled and, when dawn approached, started off for Samrée--Rochamps--Revantave. It arrived there by the early morning of 23 Dec 44.

Div command post: Nadrin

6. Enemy

Fresh enemy troops were standing opposite Group Schmitt (presumably the same American division as on 21 Dec 44).

7. Losses

Group Schmitt had suffered heavier losses, mostly due to artillery fire; other casualties were caused through exhaustion.

(23 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Schmitt had about 700 men; Group Schumann about 500. There were considerable casualties among draft animals as a result of exhaustion. Casualties to motorized prime movers were not unbearable, likewise those of assault guns, they were due to lack of technical equipment. There was no shortage of food supplies, but there was a shortage of gasoline; however, we looted a larger quantity at Samrée and this decreased the difficulties.

2. Tactical Organization

This was the same as on the previous day.

3. Task (App 11)

The Division was ordered to continue the

attack together with Group Schmitt and to capture Fisenne, south of the Group. Group Schumann together with 116 Pz Div was to attack across the line Magoster--Befte and capture the road from Erezée to Hotton at Say.

4. Weather

It was clear, some frost, little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 11)

We did not succeed in prosecuting the attack in the direction of Amonines because strong enemy formations were occupying both the town and the steep heights north of it. Likewise in the flank and the rear of Group Schmitt the enemy, who had occupied Odeigne, Freyneux and Lamormenil, caused us considerable trouble. The 1560 Engineer Battalion was committed to instal blockings as a security against the enemy. Toward evening, Group Happich was set up anew, consisting of the Regt Staff 1130, the Gren Battalion which was to be kept available, and the Engineer Battalion. They were ordered to build a security line against the enemy. On the same evening, they were able to push forward sufficient security forces.

On the morning of 25 Dec 44, Group Schumann assembled for attack (north of 116 Pz Div) from the area of Magoster, directed at Say, and by the evening it had taken into its possession, from

strong enemy troops, the line Wy--close south of Melines; here stood the 116 Pz Div as far as hard east of Worpin.

On the evening of 23 Dec 44, 560 Volks Gren Div was ordered to take over also the sector of 116 Pz Div, as this Division was ordered to attack further along the southern bank of the Ourthe on the morning of 24 Dec 44.

Likewise, the guarding of the enemy tank group, which had been surrounded at Marcouray, had to be taken over by 560 Volks Gren Div. By midnight, the relief of 116 Pz Div had been carried out without friction.

On the evening of 23 Dec, Group Schumann reached the final stage of the attack which had commenced on 16 Dec 44. The march and fighting performances of the Group were considerable, its state of exhaustion significant.

Div command post: Fuse de Lahr

6. Enemy

All along the front of the Division enemy forces had been reinforced.

7. Losses

There were heavy losses among both Groups, further casualties, particularly among the horses, caused through exhaustion.

(24 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Happich had about 400 men (when one engineer group had been transferred to guard the surrounded Pz Group at Marcouray); Group Schmitt had about 450-500 men, Group Schumann about the same number. There were about 20% casualties in horses.

2. Tactical Organization (App 11)

Tactical organization was the same as on the previous day. (For sector boundaries see sketch, App 11)

Div command post: Fuse de Lahr

3. Task (App 11)

The Division was ordered to hold the line which had been reached until formations for attack had been brought up. The area north of Rochamps was to be cleared of enemy forces.

4. Weather

It was cloudy, there was little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 11)

Group Happich commenced its attack from Rochamps toward Freyneux and Lamorwenil with a platoon

from the assault gun company, which had been subordinated to the Group for a temporary period. Whereas those portions, moving on ahead toward Freyneux, were repelled north of this place, they succeeded in taking Lamormenil. In the afternoon, they had to clear out of the place again, as enemy forces posed against them were superior in strength. The Group remained close south of the town.

Group Schmitt and Group Schumann kept themselves in readiness for defense and held the line they had reached.

South of the Ourthe, thrusting toward Hotton, the right wing of 116 Pz Div, had reached the area of Hampteau.

6. Enemy

The enemy had brought up further reinforcements, there was increasing enemy artillery fire.

7. Losses

Group Happich had considerable losses. Group Schmitt and Group Schumann had suffered slight losses only.

(25 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Happich had about 300 men, the

number of troops in Group Schmitt, Group Schumann, and the troops of the Division remained almost unchanged.

The Assault Gun Company had about twelve tanks ready for commitment.

2. Tactical Organization.

This was the same as on the previous day. Division command post was at Fuse de Lahr.

3. Task (App 12)

The Division was ordered to hold the line it had reached; Group Schmitt was instructed to establish contact with Group Schumann.

4. Weather

It was fairly cold, cloudy, there was little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 12)

Group Happich launched several thrusts against Freyneux and Lamorvenil; these, however, failed. Group Schmitt extended its left wing as far as Mignofa and made an effort to take Amonines, enclosing the town from the south. The attempt failed, however, because of the fierce lateral fire coming out of Amonines toward the northern slope of the height south of that town. For the evening of 25 Dec 44 a panzer grenadier regiment of the 2 SS Pz Div had been kept in readiness, this, together with Group Schmitt, was ordered to take Amonines.

On the morning of 25 Dec 44, an enemy counterattack was launched against Group Schumann. During fierce fighting they were pushed back to the forest edges east of Wy, the western edge of Trinal, and the height southwest of there, as well as the forest edge east of Werpin.

As far as the Division is concerned, 25 Dec 44 is to be considered as the beginning of the enemy counter-operation.

6. Enemy

All along the divisional front the enemy had been considerably reinforced, particularly his artillery. As far as I remember, a further fresh American division (82 ?) appeared opposite the 560 Volks Gren Div on this day.

7. Losses

Losses increased after whole groups were captured while defending various forest areas.

(26 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Happich had 250-280 men, Group Schmitt had about 400 men, Group Schumann around 300 men --infantry battle strength.

2. Tactical Organization

This remained unchanged. The SS Pz Regt had not yet been brought up. Divisional command post was Laid-Prongeleux.

3. Task (App 12)

Group Happich was ordered to hold the line already reached. Group Schmitt was again to establish contact with Group Schumann. The latter was ordered to defend itself in the line of the forest edges east of Wy--western edge Trinal--heights southwest of Trinal--forest edge east of Werpin. There, contact over the Curthe was to be kept up with 116 Pz Div.

4. Weather

It was clearing up, increasingly frosty; there was little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the day (App 12)

Group Happich held the line it had reached against several enemy thrusts which were launched out of Freyneux and Lamormenil.

On 26 Dec 44 Group Schmitt was able to take the heights south of Amonines, although temporarily only. It was unable to hold it permanently.

Group Schumann was further attacked-- according to an obvious plan--by enemy forces far superior in strength, and during the course of the day was

pushed back to the line north and west of Magoster-- western edge of the small woods northwest of Beffe-- forest center between Werpín and Beffe. At the southern wing the heavy weapons of 116 Pz Div were successfully used as support in the defense fighting over the Ourthe. The enemy armored group which had been surrounded at Marcouray was dissolved after its tanks had been blown up.

6. Enemy

The enemy was still far superior in number.

7. Losses

Losses were considerable, particularly in Group Schumann.

(27 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Happich had about 220-250 men; Group Schmidt around 350; Group Schumann had about 250 men. Otherwise things were almost unchanged. The rapid consumption of infantry combat strength caused the Division headaches.

2. Tactical Organization

This was the same as on the previous

day. Division command post was: Laid-Prangeleux. The Division became subordinated to the 11 SS Pz Corps.

3. Task (App 12 and 13)

Task set for the Division was that it should aim to defend the line it had reached and prepare for continuation of the attack on its right wing; likewise bringing up fresh forces (presumably the SS Pz Div Hitlerjugend--H.J.).

4. Weather

This was the same as on the previous day.

5. Course of the day (App 12 and 13)

The 2 SS Pz Div captured Odeigne which was on the right of Group Happich. Group Happich held the line it had reached. During the evening, advanced elements of the SS Pz Div H.J. arrived at Group Schmitt and made preparations for the attack to be launched at Amonines.

Group Schumann was further attacked by superior enemy forces, even at night. By the evening of 27 Dec 44 it had to be taken back to the line: western edge of Magoster--western edge of Baffe. By launching a counter-thrust it was able to clear out enemy forces which had made a rather deep breakthrough into the forest terrain east of Rendeux.

6. Enemy

The position of the enemy was unchanged, he was still far superior in strength.

7. Losses

Losses were considerable in Group Schumann.

(28 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Happich had about 200 men, Group Schmitt was unchanged, Group Schumann had 180-200 men.

About eight assault guns were fit for use in combat, all of them were used by Group Schumann.

2. Tactical Organization

This was unchanged. Division command post was: Rochamps.

3. Task (App 13)

Task set for the Division was to attack in conjunction with SS Pz Div H.J. Amonines and heights north of it; likewise to push further on to Brezee, Fisenne. Group Happich and Group Schumann were to defend the contemporary line. The line of demarcation between the 2 SS Pz Div and 560 Volks Gren Div was transferred farther to the west. The 2 SS Pz Div was to capture Freyneux and Lamormenil.

4. Weather

It was cloudy, little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 13)

The 2 SS Pz Div attacked on the right of Group Happich and captured Freyneux and Lamormenil. Group Happich was able to confine attempted enemy breakthroughs at these places. Group Schmitt was not yet able to launch the attack planned previously, because the SS Pz Div H.J. had not arrived yet. It was able to repel an enemy thrust which was launched out of Amonines to the south by means of a counter attack.

Opposite Group Schumann, the enemy continued his attack both night and day and captured Magoster and Beffe. During the course of the day the Group was pushed back to the forest edges east of Magoster and Beffe.

6. Enemy

The condition of the enemy was unchanged, he was still as strong as before.

7. Losses

Group Happich and Group Schmitt had only moderate losses; among Group Schumann they were considerable and in particular many of our men were taken prisoner when single groups were surrounded which were defending themselves during fierce fighting.

(29 Dec 44)

1. Combat Strength

Group Happich had about 200 men, Group Schmitt about 350, Group Schumann had only about 150.

2. Tactical Organization

SS Pz Div H.J. took over the sector of Group Schmitt. On the evening of 29 Dec 44 it was to be withdrawn and brought up to Group Schumann via Rochamps. Inside Group Happich and Group Schumann the form of organization remained unchanged. Divisional command post was at Muehle, one km northeast of Cielle on the morning of 29 Dec 44.

3. Task (App 13)

The Division was ordered to put up a defense in the line east of Amonines--east of Magoster--east of Beffe--western edge of the forest south of Beffe.

4. Weather

It was clearing up; enemy air activity was increasing.

5. Course of the day (App 13)

Whereas no important enemy activity took place near Group Happich or Group Schmitt, the enemy continued his attacks against Group Schumann as fiercely as previously. We had to reckon that during

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the course of the day the advanced line would be pushed back to the forest edges on both sides of Revantave. During the forenoon of 29 Dec 44 the actual division commander, who had been ill until that time, arrived at the command post; he took over again the command of the Division. I was freed for other missions at the Army High Command of the 5 Pz Army and left the command post of 560 Volks Gren Div toward noon.

15 May 1946

Signed: Langhaeuser

b. Defense Fighting in the Ardennes

12 Volks Gren Div

At 1300 on 1 Jan 45 I arrived at the command post of 12 Volks Gren Div at Cierreux, three km southeast of Salmchateau. I had come straight from the Army Group and was instructed to take over command of the Division in order to deputize for the contemporary division commander Genmaj Engel who had been wounded on 28 Dec 44. Conditions there were as follows: (App 14)

Enemy activity was generally slight; as far as I remember the 82 American Airborne Division stood opposite the right wing of 12 Volks Gren Div; out in front of center and the left wing stood the 75 American Division. The 12 Volks Gren Div was subordinated to LXVI AK; on the right of this Division stood 62 Volks Gren Div (XIII AK).

Line of demarcation was about as follows:

Western edge Erria--eastern edge La Chapelle--
eastern edge Gernechamps--eastern edge Grand Sant.

On the left 560 Volks Gren Div was committed.

Line of demarcation was about as follows:

Main road Grandmenil--Houffalize.

The 2 SS Pz Div (Reich) assembled at the rear of the left wing approximately in the area of Petites Tailles--Les Tailles--Dinez for new employment. The 12 Volks Gren Div with its three grenadier regiments was sent in as defense to the most advanced line northwest of Vielsam. The greater portion of it was standing in the following line: Forest edges south of the road Basse Bodeux--Erria--Bra--Tri le Cheslaing--Grandmenil. The Division had at its disposal nine grenadier battalions and one rifle battalion, the average combat strength of which was 300-350 men. The artillery of the Division was up to strength, its main body stood around Lierneux, a light battalion northwest of Fraiture. The assault gun company from the Anti Tank Battalion had at its disposal about twelve assault guns fit for use; its main body was standing south of Lierneux and one platoon in the vicinity of Malempre.

1 Jan 45 (App 14)

There was not much activity at the front during the day. The weather was good, it was fairly cold. The enemy air force was very active; it attacked the Division's artillery positions, likewise numerous

targets in the rearward terrain, with fighter bombers and bombing formations. The Division did not suffer any considerable losses.

(2 Jan 45)

On this day conditions were the same as on the previous day. Enemy air activity was considerable. The division command post was transferred to Grand Sant.

3 Jan 45 (App 14)

1. Combat Strength was the same as previously.
2. Formation was the same as previously.
3. Task: Defense
4. Weather was the same as previously, very considerable enemy air activity.
5. Course of the Day

At dawn the enemy attacked along the entire front with far superior forces, putting up a heavy barrage and committing numerous tanks. At the right and left wing of the Division was the center of gravity of attack lay; the enemy presumably intended to take first Hierlot and then Malempre. Although he succeeded in pushing back the Division on the entire

front, he was unable to break the line and push forward into the depth of the main field of combat. During the evening the attack slowed down and the Division stood in about the line: southern edge of the forest northwest of Hierlot--forest exit 1,5 km north of Lansival--1,5 km northwest of Jevigne--Xhout si Ploux--forest Glade 1,5 km northwest of Malempre at the road-bend.

The situation between Xhaut si ploux and the road-bend nearby in the woods was somewhat vague. By the morning of 4 Jan 45 when a lull in the attack supervened we were able to check and improve everywhere the contact along the front lines.

6. Enemy

We could not recognize any freshly brought up divisions, but even those enemy forces which had already been recognized were superior to ours both in men and equipment. During the first day of attack the enemy presumably suffered considerable losses.

7. Losses

Our own losses were considerable but did not, however, yet endanger our combat strength.

4 Jan 45 (App 14)

1. Combat Strength

This was about 8-10% less than on the previous days. The Rifle Battalion was not yet put into action.

2. Tactical Organization

This was unchanged. Combat post was at Grand Sant.

3. Task

The Division was ordered to defend the MLR which it had occupied on 3 Jan 45.

4. Weather

It was unchanged, fine, fairly cold. Enemy air activity was very considerable over the artillery positions and in the nearward terrain.

5. Course of the Day

As dawn approached the enemy continued his attacks, which had commenced on the previous day, with renewed violence; during fighting, swaying hither and sither, in which the Division suffered heavy losses, it was pushed back to the general line northern edge LA Chapelle--northern edge Jevigne--northern edge Malempre --road fork 2,2 km southwest of Malempre. Fighting was particularly fierce on the left wing of 62 Volks Gren Div and the right wing of 12 Volks Gren Div around Hierlot and the forest exits north of Malempre. In spite of that we were able to keep up the contact all along the front.

There was merely some doubt concerning contact with 560 Volks Gren Div on the left wing of our Division; it was presumed that the right wing of this Division was standing at Odeigne. During the night of 5 Jan 45 the corps headquarters put there, along the important long road, into action the Armored Reconnaissance Battalion from 2 SS Pz Div into the forest area Belle Haie to serve as a protection for the boundary along the main road; these precautions were taken to avoid surprises.

6. Enemy

I do no longer remember whether a further enemy division (3rd American Pz Div ?) was committed on that day; in any case, the enemy's attacking power had not decreased, although he must have suffered heavy losses.

7. Losses

Our own losses were considerable; while defending Hierlot stubbornly a larger number of prisoners were taken, these were troops of the Division.

(5 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

The Gren Bn had a combat strength of about 250 men; losses of guns through fighter bomber

attacks (as far as I remember) three guns; there were casualties among assault guns caused by damage from artillery fire and technical defects.

2. Tactical Organization

This was unchanged. The Reconnaissance Battalion of the 2 SS Pz Div was subordinated to the Division and sent to the Rifle Regiment from the Battalion on the left. It was the Rifle Regt 27, Obstlt Lemm. A platoon of assault guns, of the Group on the left, became subordinated to the Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. Likewise an Army engineer battalion--the combat strength of which was about 350 men--was brought up and subordinated to the Division.

Until the forenoon of 5 Jan 45 the Division's command post remained at Grand Sant and was then moved to Bihain toward noon.

As, during forenoon, the enemy attacked all the towns within a distance of six to eight km, with bombers--according to a clearly perceived plan--and Bihain was not yet attacked, although Grand Sant was, the Division moved its command post again to Grand Sant at about 1400, and thus it escaped the attack launched at Bihain.

Until the morning of 6 Jan 45 the command post remained at Grand Sant; at that time this town

was already being heavily pased with enemy artillery fire.

3. Task (App 15)

The task was to continue the stubborn defense of the contemporary MLR.

4. Weather

It was clear, some frost; enemy air force was particularly active.

5. Course of the Day (App 15)

After a lull in the fighting which had commenced at dawn on 4 Jan 45, the enemy attacked again with very strong forces, at about 0900 on 5 Jan 45. The main point of effort of the attack was at Odrimont and La Chapelle on the right wing of the Division, at Lansival and Jevigne at the center and Malempre on the left wing. The enemy succeeded in pushing back the Division again--this was mainly due to the superior number of his tanks--, although the Division put up a defense in which it suffered many losses, and violent house to house fighting took place. When twilight approached the Division held the approximate line: Northern edge of La Vaux--height northwest of Lierneux--Boneux--firebreak in the wood 1,5 km southeast of Malempre--forest area Belle Haie.

When fighting around Odrimont (62) and La Chapelle (12) had ceaded a gap had been forced bet-

ween 62 Volks Gren Div and 12 Volks Gren Div which could not be filled even with the forces of both divisions. For this reason the Division committed the subordinated Army Engineer Battalion on the heights northeast of La Vaux between Menil and La Vaux to seal off the breach. At the northern edge of Lierneux and west of this town the Rifle Battalion, which had up to that time been held strictly in reserve, and a newly brought up gren. battalion of 326 Volks Gren Div, were committed for the defense.

For 6 Jan 45 the Division could thus again face the enemy with a closed front, ready for action. Somewhat unclear were the conditions on the left wing at which contact could no longer be established as the 560 Volks Gren Div was heavily decimated. For this reason the Armored Reconnaissance Battalion of 2 SS Pz Div kept under surveillance the main road and those places which would offer the most favorable possibilities for encirclement to the enemy.

6. Enemy

Unchanged, by far superior in strength.

7. Losses

The Division's infantry forces had suffered heavy losses, the average strength of the gren battalions--which had been committed up to then--was 150 men. Losses among the artillery and of assault guns

were bearable.

(6 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

On the morning of 6 Jan 45 about 2000 infantrymen, including the local reserves, were occupying a front line of about 9 km in length as the crow flies, in extremely uneven terrain sprinkled with villages and dotted with patches of woodland.

2. Tactical Organization

At the right stood the Gren Regt 48 with subordinated Army Engineer Battalion. In the center stood the Gren Regt 89 with subordinated Rifle Battalion 27 and Gren Battalion of 326 Volks Gren Div; at the left the Armored Reconnaissance Battalion of the 2 SS Pz Div. Division command post was at Petite Langlir.

3. Task (App 15)

To defend the contemporary MIR the towns of Lierneux, Fraiture, Verlermont and Regné were ordered to be held still as local strong points. They were to be held onto the end.

4. Weather

I do no longer remember how the weather

conditions were, they were definitely not bad; enemy air activity was strong.

5. Course of the Day (App 15)

Even during the night of 5 Jan 45 the enemy did not continue his activity in attack except for strong artillery harrassing fire being sent over into rearward terrain. Not until 0800 did the enemy begin attacking activity. The main point of effort was on the right wing at Lierneux and Fraiture. On the right wing the enemy attacked with heavy tanks in superior strength putting down a heavy smoke screen and was able to push back the initially weak defense front to the town of Brux and La Vaux. There, stubborn hand to hand fighting took place which favored first one opponent and then the other; likewise around Lierneux and Boneux. Whereas Brux, La Vaux and Lierneux were lost during the day, we were able to hold Boneux until twilight approached. But in order to maintain the coherence of the front we evacuated Boneux voluntarily during the night of 6 Jan 45.

The division command was unable to keep in view any fighting which took place in the forest area west of Boneux and in the wooded sectors Pifosse and Belle Haie. During the night of 6 Jan 45, however, it was ascertained that the eastern bank of the Gehe-stream (flowing west of Fraiture toward Lierneux) was kept as

the MLR, adjoining; The Armored Reconnaissance Battalion of 2 Pz Div covered the main road on both sides of the fork in it south of Croix St Jaques. Several enemy attempts to encircle this defense force by passing them to the west and pushing forward to the road crossing, were repelled. During the whole day contact was kept with the neighbor division (62) on the right, whereas with the neighbor on the left (560) it was completely interrupted on the evening of 6 Jan 45. For this reason the Division posted a mixed combat group (1 gren company with 2 cm self-propelling guns (Pz Arty Bn), several assault guns) into the forest area southeast of Odeigne.

6. Enemy

The enemy's power of attack was as strong as before, his infantry, standing opposite our Division, was estimated to have at least 6000 men, his armored force at least 100 tanks. It was presumed that the enemy artillery consisted of at least twelve battalions. His fighter bomber attacks and bombing attacks were launched throughout the day; fortunately they caused little damage within the area of the Division.

7. Losses

Our losses were again very heavy, particularly at Brux, La Vaux and Lierneux.

(7 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

Our infantry combat strength had decreased during the course of fighting in the previous two days; thus, the battalions had merely an average of 100 men at their disposal in their front line. Therefore, the Division decided to dissolve the Field Replacement Battalion, allot its recruits to the fighting battalions and put them into action. In this way the combat strength of each battalion was brought up to 200 men. During the night of 6 Jan 45 the replacement troops were brought up and allotted to their respective positions without any particular difficulty. Any losses suffered by artillery and other divisional troops were insignificant.

2. Tactical Organization (App 15)

No changes occurred in this. The divisional command post was now at Petites Langlir.

3. Task: Defense

4. Weather

I no longer remember what it was like, probably it was good in general, with lively enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 15)

While the enemy continued his attacks even during the night and now, for the first time, against the left wing on 6 Jan 45, the usual lull in the fighting supervened at fall of darkness and lasted until daybreak the next morning. The enemy then resumed his attacks with redoubled ferocity, with artillery and armored forces, making frequent use of smoke screens. The main points of effort were at Grand Sant and Fraiture. During fierce fighting the enemy was able to push back the Division to the general line: northern edge Joubieval--Hebrouval--road crossing 1,5 km southwest of Fraiture. Fighting was particularly fierce around Fraiture and Regné. These towns, although stubbornly defended and in various parts repeatedly retaken during counter thrusts, in spite of weakness of infantry and small numbers of tanks, were finally encircled by the enemy and forced to capitulate.

The neighboring division on the right (62) was engaged in fierce fighting around Garonne during this day, but contact was kept up. Contact to the neighbor division on the left (560) remained uncertain. On the evening of 7 Jan 45 the right wing of the Division stood in the area 1,5 km northeast of Chabrenez.

6. Enemy

On 7 Jan 45, the enemy must have suffered considerable losses in men as well as tanks. In spite of that he lined up again with unbroken power of attack on the morning of 8 Jan 45. The Division was unable to find out whether new formations had been brought up or replacements had been used to fill up his formations which had been committed already.

7. Losses

Likewise during that day the Division suffered considerable losses in infantry, particularly on the right wing (H.Pionier Battalion), among the Gren Battalion of 326 Volks Gren Div and the Fues. Regt 27, as well as in the case of the Armored Reconnaissance Battalion of the 2 SS Armored Div which was subordinated to this Regiment. The Division was unable to bring up replacements for these losses. Moreover, during the night of 8 Jan 45 the Gren Battalion of 326 Volks Gren Div (consisting only of remnants of its forces) had to be withdrawn and again brought up to the 326 Volks Gren Div.

(8 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

On the morning of 8 Jan 45 the combat

strength of the infantry battalions was on an average of about 150 men. As far as armored vehicles were concerned, the Division had at its disposal about ten assault guns; this included those of the subordinated Armored Reconnaissance Battalion of 2 SS Pz Div.

2. Tactical Organization

Nothing had changed within the Division. As far as I remember, the boundary of the Division on the left was shortened to the east to increase the defense power of the Division during that day (see sketch, App 16). A Pz Gren Regt of the 2 SS Div, which at first was subordinated to the 560 Volks Gren Div, was thrown into the gap between 12 and 560 Volks Gren Div. The division committed on its right wing, a pionier company of the Pionier Battalion 12 and their unit, became subordinated to the badly worn out Heeres Pionier Battalion. The 326 Volks Gren Div was newly thrown in between the 12 and 62 Volks Gren Div. On the morning of 8 Jan 45 its left wing was standing at the eastern edge of Janviéval (Gren Regt 751). Divisional command post was at Lomré.

3. Task (App 16)

Defense.

4. Weather

It was cloudy, there was little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 16)

The fierce fighting which had taken place during the past few days, causing heavy losses, had weakened the combat strength of the Division to a great extent. Thus the reduced sector could no longer be effectively defended unless replacements were being brought up soon. Therefore, the Division did everything in its power to be adequately supplied by the superior authorities. At first a reconnaissance company of an SS Pz Div was brought up and subordinated to Ottré (I no longer remember the number and name of the company, may be it was the "Hohenstaufen"). Already during the forenoon the line of demarcation--to the regiment on the right of the Division its main points of effort--on both sides of Joubiéval was broken through by the attacking enemy; he pushed through from the west and the east toward Pravedraux. On the Division's right wing fierce fighting took place around Joubiéval and later also around Ottré. By the evening, these towns were finally in the hands of the enemy. West of them he attacked with less power of assault than during the previous days. During the evening he took Hebrouval and tried to capture the heights south of the road between Hebrouval and Regné. However, this attempt failed. Likewise the neighbor on the left (SS Pz Gren

Regt) fended off the assault directed at Petites Tailles. At twilight on 8 Jan 45 the situation was as follows:

To the right of the Division the line was rather thinly occupied (we were not sure what the situation was there) between Pravedroux and the area two km east of the southern edge of Ottré. From there the Gren Regt 48 with subordinated remnants of the Gren Regt 89 was engaged in defense along with remnants of the Heeres Pionier Battalion and Reconnaissance Company of the SS Pz Div as far as the southern edge of Ottré; from there, as far as the eastern edge of Bihain, stood the Fues. Regt 27; adjoining it, as far as Petites Tailles (including the town), stood the SS Pz Gren Regt of the 2 SS Pz Division.

6. Enemy

It was beyond doubt that the enemy had brought up fresh forces, namely the 2nd American Armd Div which was standing from the center to the left wing of our own Division.

7. Losses

On 8 Jan 45 we had suffered considerable losses at Joubiéval and Ottré, particularly by way of prisoners taken by the enemy when these towns were encircled. Along the remainder of the Division's front losses were only slight.

(9 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

The average combat strength of the Gren Bn consisted only of 100 men (SK); the regimental staff of the Gren Regt 89 had been withdrawn for other employment. Losses in the case of the artillery and tanks were small. Signs of extreme exhaustion were obvious among the men of every unit; this was due to strain caused by the major battle which had been raging for six days already.

2. Tactical Organization

On the right stood the staff of the Gren Regt 48 with subordinated remnants of the Gren Regt 48 and 89, the Army Engineer Battalion and a Reconnaissance Company of an SS Pz Div. In the center stood the Fusilier Regt 27 with subordinated remainder of the Pz Reconnaissance Battalion of the 2 SS Pz Div and 11 Pz Bn of the SS Pz Regt of 2 SS Pz Div which had been newly subordinated. (They had at their disposal five to six tanks.) At the left stood the SS Pz Gren Regt which had been newly subordinated; it had been adjoining the left wing up to then. (For sector boundaries, see sketch, App 16.)

It had been reported that 500-1000 men were being brought up as replacements. They were to be ready for assignment by the evening of 9 or 10 Jan 45. The divisional command post was at Lomré, later at Vaux (2,5 km southeast of Mont le Ban).

3. Task (App 16)

Task was defense.

4. Weather

I no longer remember the weather conditions, they were probably cloudy; there was little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 16)

On 9 Jan 45, enemy activity opposite our Division had been reduced considerably compared with the previous days; the enemy was presumably regrouping. Thus the Division was able to put up a successful defense in spite of its weak combat strength and had not been driven back very far by the evening of 9 Jan 45. At twilight it stood in the following line: South of Pravedroux (neighbor on the right)--northern edge of Petite Langlir--northern edge Bihain--northern edge Petites Tailles. West of the road from Grandmenil to Houffalize--at about the height of Petites Tailles--a further regiment of 2 SS Pz Div, belonging to the neighbor on the right, adjoined.

6. Enemy

No new observations were made concerning the enemy.

7. Losses

Losses suffered were insignificant, however, everywhere extreme exhaustion was evident.

(10 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

Each grenadier battalion had eighty to ninety men, the Division had at its disposal eight to ten tanks and assault guns when it included the subordinated SS units. The Division's artillery consisted of only three light and one heavy artillery battalion, altogether there were only thirty pieces.

Divisional command post was at Bisnj.

2. Tactical Organization

Unchanged. On 10 Jan 45 the expected replacements were transported by trucks to Hautbellain--Gouvy and taken over by us.

3. Task (App 16)

Further defense.

4. Weather

It was cloudy, here and there snow, colder; little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the day (APP 16)

On 10 Jan 45 the enemy activity in attack was on the whole slighter than during the previous days, however, there was more than on 9 Jan 45. More violent fighting was raging on the right of 12 Volks Gren Div at and south of Pravedroux, between Ottré and Petite Langlir, around Bihain and on both sides of the main road around Petites Tailles and Les Tailles.

It was impossible to obtain a clear picture concerning the fighting which was taking place near the neighbor on the right. North of Langlir the enemy was generally repelled. Bihain and Petites Tailles were lost after bitterly conducted fighting; the enemy broke into the wooded terrain south of these towns. No reports were obtainable concerning the situation of our neighbor on the left..

For the evening of 10 Jan 45 the Division ordered a withdrawal movement to the following line: Course of the Ronce stream east of Petite Langlir--northern edge of Langlir--Langlir stream--Pisserothe. This line was to be defended on 11 Jan 45.

During the night of 10 Jan 45, 600 men replacements, mostly elderly, inexperienced in fighting, were brought up and thrown into the fighting line.

6. Enemy

No new observations were made.

7. Losses

Losses were moderate.

(11 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

The two regiments (48 and 27) committed in the front had had put at their disposal one battalion each consisting of 300 replacements. These battalions took over the defense on both sides of Langlir. The combat strength of the divisional troops remained unchanged.

2. Tactical Organization

The Division had to turn over the Reconnaissance Company, already badly worn down, to its SS Pz Div. This caused a weakening of the right wing. On the left wing the Division turned over the SS Pz Gren Regt to 2 SS Pz Div. The divisional boundaries were moved accordingly (see sketch, App 17). On the left of the Division, 2 SS Pz Div was now in command. Divisional command post was at Brisy.

3. Task (App 17)

Further defense

4. Weather

It was cloudy; there was little enemy air activity.

5. Course of the Day (App 17)

At dawn on 11 Jan 45 the enemy again launched a major attack after very heavy artillery fire had been directed at us and sent in numerous tanks. Already during the forenoon it was reported to the Division that the enemy, facing the neighbor on the right (Division unknown), had forced his way through as far as the fringes of the wood northwest and west of Bovigny and attacked Bovigny. Therefore, the Division took security measures by installing blockings on the roads leading from Bovigny into the Division's flank and by making ready half the number of its tanks, assembling them at these roads.

We were able to repel the enemy everywhere on the right wing and center of our Division, suffering only modest losses in terrain.

On the left and right wings of our neighbor on the left (2 SS Pz Div) the situation remained somewhat unclear during the whole day; the enemy was involved in violent fighting with us in the wooded area there. However, he was unable to achieve decisive successes anywhere. Likewise on the line of demarcation of 2 SS Pz Div the second half of the tanks which

still were available, subordinated to the Fusilier Regt 27, fought very successfully around the wooded paths toward the south; a number of enemy tanks were put out of action there.

At twilight, course of the front line could be considered as follows: Road from Bovigny to Langlir--center Langlir--road from Langlir to Pisserotte. On 12 Jan 45 this line was to be held. Up to then the enemy had generally ceased to launch any attacks after darkness had fallen and concentrated on local activity only. However, on the evening of 11 Jan 45 he increased his artillery fire directed at Langlir with such violence that we had to reckon the attack would continue even during the night.

At 2000 the enemy commenced his attack --his main point of effort being Langlir--and took this town after fierce fighting. When the fighting had slowed down, the advanced line was at the roadfork hard south of Langlir.

6. Enemy

On 9 and 10 Jan 45 the enemy had evidently reorganized and assembled again, according to plan, on 11 Jan 45. Opposite our Division stood, doubtlessly, the 3 and 2 American Armd Divs; opposite the right wing stood, probably, portions of an American infantry

division.

7. Losses

Losses in infantry were considerable, particularly at Langlir. Likewise a number of tanks and assault guns were put out of action.

(12 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

The two new battalions had suffered particularly heavy losses during the night; exact numbers could not be obtained. However, presumably the battalions had lost more than half of their strength, most of these men had been taken prisoner. Likewise the older troops of the Division had suffered heavy losses. The entire combat strength of infantry by no means amounted to more than 600 men on a front 4,5 km wide (as the crow flies) during the night of 11 Jan 45 and on 12 Jan 45. On 12 Jan 45 the Division had at its disposal altogether five tanks and assault guns.

2. Tactical Organization

Nothing had changed within the Division. On the morning of 12 Jan 45, SS Pz Div (Hohenstaufen) was again thrown in on the right of the Division's left wing which stretched as far as Baclain (town exclusive).

Divisional command post was at Brisay.

3. Task (App 17)

Defense

4. Weather

It was cold, cloudy and very dark during the night of 11 Jan 45. Enemy air activity was moderate.

5. Course of the Day (App 17)

The enemy launched another attack--I believe around midnight--and attempted to take possession of the two roads leading through the forest toward Langlir to Baclain and to Mont le Ban. The Division had prepared these roads for blockings. Now the enemy was advancing against the roadfork hard south of Langlir, exploiting the very dark hours. Our replacement battalions, having very little power of resistance, he succeeded in breaking into the depth of the defense, taking by surprise our infantry forces to such an extent that they fled, leaving the roads completely open to the enemy.

On the early morning of 12 Jan 45 the enemy thus stood at the southern exit of the large woods 1,7 km northwest of Baclain and 1,5 km northeast of Lomré. Here, we succeeded again in bringing him to a standstill. By the evening he had pushed back the very weak advanced line as far as the road Baclain--

Mont le Ban, Aux Aiwes, but the towns of Baclain and Mont le Ban were still held. The fighting around Lamré was particularly violent; there, the weak armored group of the Division (four to five tanks and assault guns) was particularly successful in repelling the enemy.

6. Enemy

Although superior in infantry, tanks and artillery and in spite of his successful activity in attack which had continued during the night, the enemy did not take advantage of these favorable circumstances and gave our Division the opportunity to reorganize its defense again. Although the enemy continued to launch attacks, even at night, he concentrated always on local targets only.

7. Losses

On 12 Jan 45, we suffered losses which were significant. Of those 600 replacements (inexperienced in battle) committed during the evening of 10 Jan 45 there remained thirty to fifty men only by the evening of 12 Jan 45, all the others had been, most of them, taken prisoners. Although the infantry, the artillery we had from the start, and the weak armored group had not suffered many actual casualties, this meant a great loss as they had already been weak in strength from the beginning.

(13 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

In the front stood about 300-350 men in infantry, in a line 4,5 km wide; the artillery had about 25-27 pieces, four to five tanks and assault guns.

2. Tactical Organization

Nothing had changed.

3. Task (App 17)

Defense.

4. Weather

It was clearing up; enemy air activity was increasing.

5. Course of the Day (App 17)

During the night of 12 Jan 45 (I do not remember the exact time) the enemy broke into Mont le Ban. Throughout 13 Jan 45 fighting was taking place around this town; the enemy was finally in possession of it by the evening. Likewise, on the right wing fierce fighting was going on around Baclain. There too the enemy did succeed, in spite of the efforts of the tanks of SS Pz Div Hohenstaufen, in taking this town although not until that evening. A greater threat facing the Division was the unclear situation concerning contact

on the left wing (to 2 SS Pz Div). Already during the early afternoon, enemy tanks appeared there at the eastern exit of the woods, west of Mont le Ban, south of the road from that place to Aux Aiwes and forced a battery, standing about 1,5 km southwest of the town, into close combat. At twilight we were able to withdraw this battery which had not suffered any losses.

6. Enemy

No fresh enemy forces were spotted. His oppressive superiority in weapons of all kinds, compared with ourselves, made it impossible for our Division to find the explanation for his hesitating attitude.

7. Losses.

Losses, although moderate, caused a further serious weakening of the Division's combat strength.

(14 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

There were only 300 infantrymen, although the width of the sector remained the same as before.

2. Tactical Organization

An army panzer division (presumably 116) was thrown in between 12 Volks Gren Div and 2 SS Pz Div. By the morning of 14 Jan 45 its foremost elements had

reached the vicinity of Sommerain and were immediately put into action on the heights northeast and north of this town. This was a relief for the Division's seriously threatened left wing. An antiaircraft artillery battalion was brought up to the Division to serve as antitank defense; it was committed in the area Rettigny--Bisy. This Battalion, with its 2 cm guns, was able to be used very successfully in the infantry fighting.

Divisional command post: Brisy.

3. Task (App 17)

Defense

4. Weather

It was fine, pretty cold. There was strong enemy air activity consisting of numerous fighter bomber and bombing attacks, among other places, Brisy and Ourthe were attacked. Also the HQ, Oberquartiermeister (8 km east of Cherrain, App 2), was seriously damaged.

5. Course of the Day (App 17)

On the morning of 14 Jan 45 the Division occupied a general defense line as follows: Along the road Sterpigny--Cherrain--Sommerain. The towns of Sterpigny and Cherrain were still in the Division's hands. (For sector boundaries see sketch 17.) The fact that the enemy limited his activity to single

local attacks only, directed at the towns of Sterpigny, Cherrain and Vaux, and did not launch a containing attack on 14 Jan 45, was surprising for the Division as it had at its disposal hardly more than the necessary infantry and was completely exhausted after major fighting lasting eleven days. Although the towns mentioned were lost during the course of the day, the divisional command post was able to remain at Brisy until twilight. It was only the left wing which caused us headaches, as it could not be ascertained how far the enemy had pushed forward past Sommerain to the south and the southeast toward Brisy. During the night of 15 Jan 45 the Division withdrew to the outskirts of the towns of Rettigny and Brisy as well as to the heights between these towns.

6. Enemy

The enemy pressure on the Division's right wing and center was comparatively weak; he was evidently afraid of suffering too heavy losses in infantry and tanks as the terrain was exposed.

7. Losses

Losses were still moderate; however, it was a hardship for the Division to endure any at all.

(15 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

The infantry combat strength still amounted to about 250 men. Losses suffered among the artillery and the remaining divisional troops were not worth mentioning.

2. Tactical Organization

The Division received orders to withdraw with all its elements for reconstitution during the night of 16 Jan 45. Because of that a gren regt staff (presumably staff 48) was already during the night of 15 Jan 45 no longer committed and all the fighting infantry elements of the Division were subordinated to the Fusilier Regt 27.

The following line was to be defended:
Renglez--Rettigny--Brisy (towns inclusive).

The Division was presumably subordinated to the 11 SS Pz Corps on that day. Divisional command post was at Steinbach.

3. Task (App 17)

Further defense.

4. Weather

I do not remember the weather conditions, they were probably fine.

5. Course of the Day (App 17)

On 15 Jan 45 the enemy launched only weak attacks and was unable to take possession of the towns of Renglez, Rettigny or Brisay before the evening. At twilight the Division withdrew, as ordered, from contact with the enemy and left a mixed fighting group (a battalion fusilier Regt 27), consisting of about 150 men collected from all the remaining portions, an artillery battalion and a number of 2 cm guns on self propelled gun carriages, under the command of a foreign division (presumably 116 Pz Div) facing the enemy on the heights south of Rettigny--Brisay.

6. Enemy

Nothing particular to report concerning the situation of the enemy.

7. Losses

There were only slight losses.

(16 Jan 45)

1. Combat Strength

In the front stood about 150 infantry, about 100 men were on the road.

2. Tactical Organization

For the retreat as well as for the portions which had been put into action on 16 Jan 45, the

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Division was subordinated again to the Corps Headquarters, Gen Lucht (LXVI Army Corps).

3. Task

The Division was ordered to reach in night march the reconstitution area northwest of Minster-eifel; other troops, still fighting, were to follow later. Divisional command post was to be at Niederbesslingen.

4. Weather

It was fine; the enemy air force was very active.

5. Course of the Day

How matters progressed with those troops still in action, is unknown to me.

The Division's retreat was carried out without friction; no losses were suffered.

6. The enemy

No comments.

7. Losses

Details concerning losses are unknown to me, presumably they were slight.

(17 Jan 45)

On the evening of 17 Jan 45, the combat

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group, still in action, was given orders to remain in the position for another day. It was not withdrawn until twilight of 18 Jan 45 and then brought up to the Division. In thirteen days of major fighting the enemy had been able to push back our Division 19 km as the crow flies. He had fought with the main body of at least two of his divisions against our Division on 3 Jan 45. During that time he committed strong portions of at least two further divisions (Pz Divs) and yet he had been unable to force a breakthrough. However, our Division had lost its entire infantry.

1 Jun 46

Signed: Langhaeuser

IV. REPORT ON QUESTIONS
(according to appendices A and B)

I. Appendix A

(The questions are not repeated here; the numbers and letters used in the answers correspond to those of the questionnaire)

1. a. See report

b. " "

c. " "

d. " " ; special tactics are
not known to me

e. " "

f. " "

g. " "

h. " "

g. " "

h. " "

i. " "

j. " "

k. " "

2. As the Division had been set up in Denmark and its foremost elements had not arrived at the Eifel before 6 Dec 44, such an assumption could not be drawn before 7 Dec 44.

I was assigned to take part in the planned offensive during a conference which took place

at the Army High Command of 5 Panzer Army, I believe, on 10 Dec 44. All persons participating in this conference were ordered to keep matters strictly secret even from their nearest colleague (for instance the first General Staff Officer of the Division) until the great day arrived.

Beginning of Attack--'O'-Day.

Initiation of immediate colleagues and the regiment commanders--'K'-Day.

Initiation of the battalion commanders--'M'-Day.

When 'O'-Day had been fixed for 16 Dec 44, 'K'-Day (12 Dec 44) had already passed; thus final initiation took place within a very short time. Besides that, the usual security measures were ordered to be carried out (radio silence, camouflage, movements taking place at night only etc).

3. See report

4. " "

5. Denmark, there were no special allotments etc.

6. The gasoline required was almost always available; it was only on 21 Dec 44 that a temporary shortage occurred. However, it could be overcome as some was looted around Samrée.

Apart from this supply of loot which we won only once, the Division received all its supplies from the usual supply route. Whether it was planned to take into consideration looted supply, is unknown to me. The Division captured altogether about twenty tons. Concerning the remaining loot, see report.

7. The main reasons for our failure was, in my opinion, that the troops which had been committed during the offensive, were not nearly strong enough in numbers. I am of the opinion that at least fifty divisions would have been required to carry things through successfully. At our disposal were, as far as I remember, about twenty-two divisions.

a. Terrain and weather caused the greatest difficulties; however, they were not the decisive factor.

b. The situation there is unknown to me.

c. Reason and situation there are not known to me.

d. For tactical measures, taken by the Division, the enemy air force, in spite of its everlasting and numerous attacks, did not produce any decisive results. But to what extent it effected the operative measures of the higher command, I cannot say. I

presume that the effect was a considerable one, in fact, possibly decisive.

e. See figure 6..

f. The American countermeasures effected us on about the sixth day of attack. I had expected this for about that date.

g. No special comments.

II. Appendix B

1. a. The 116 Pz Div (at first on the right) and 560 Volks Gren Div (at first on the left) were exchanged during the night of 16 Dec 44, because at that time only one Ourthe crossing around Muehle three km east of Heinerscheid, on the left wing of 560 Volks Gren Div, had been taken and 116 Pz Div was to be put into action as soon as possible.

No particular difficulties arose while this was being carried out, as far as I remember.

b. The bridge at Dasburg was not taken by 560 Div but presumably by 2 Pz Div. The main body of 560 Div crossed the bridge three km east of Heinerscheid, some portions at Ouren on 19 Dec 44.

The enemy resistance east of

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Our came up to our expectations.

Why the 560 Div was able to remain beside--and portions of it ahead of 116 Pz Div (motorized division)-- is unknown to me (compare my preface). The fact is that the march and fighting performances of 560 Div were outstanding.

2 Jun 46

Signed: Langhaeuser

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Appendix I

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-a-

21 and 22 Dec 44

20 and 21 Dec 44

21 and 22 Dec 44

divisional staff, Group Schmitt, Group Happich,
Rifle Battalion
Group Schumann
engagements

15 and 16 Dec 44

Appendix I

scale 1: 250,000

referring to fighting

of the 560 Volks Gren Div

16 - 29 Dec 44

(map: American map
1: 250,000, page 6)

Signed: Langhaeuser

15 May 1946

Scale of Engagements of 12 Volks Gren Div
from 3 - 16 Jan 45. 1: 250,000

(American map 1: 250,000 page 6)

commencing on 3 Jan 45.

until 3 Jan 45	unti 3 Jan 45
until 8 Jan 45	" 8 Jan 45
until 11 Jan 45	" 11 Jan 45
	8 and 9 Jan 45
until 12 Jan 45	" 12 Jan 45
until 16 Jan 45	" 16 Jan 45
	6 and 7 Jan 45
	16 and 17 Jan 45

Appendix 2

(assault position and first targets of attack
of 560 Volks Gren Div on 16 Dec 44)

-c-

p.m. 19 Dec 44

0800 hrs 16 Dec 44

a.m. 18 Dec 44

two battalions Group Schumann0500 hrs 16 Dec 44 Artillery GroupSchumann560 Volks Gren Div

a.m. 17 Dec 44 1600 hrs 16 Dec

560 Volks Gren Div

2,4 km to Hupperdange

560 Volks Gren Div Gren Fues. company
17 Dec 44

16 Dec

16 Dec 44 1700 hrs Artillery Group Schmitt
approximately 0930 hrsGroup Schmitt

two battalions

noon of 17 Dec 44

elements of the Armored Demonstration Div ?

16 Dec
1700 hrs(map 1: 50,000 American
page 107 and
108)

116 Pz Div

Armored Demonstration Div

16 Dec 44
17 and 18 Dec 44
19 Dec 44

first target of attack

Scale 1: 50,000 for Group Schmitt
on 18 Dec 44

to Burg-Reuland
St Vith

to Tavigny

Group Schmitt

18 Dec 44

p.m. 18 Dec 44

Group Schmitt

to Burg-Reuland
St Vith

to Perenbach

to Piekirchen-
Ettelbruck

560 Volks Gren Div

18 Dec 44

Appendix 5

Scale 1: 50,000

for Group Schmitt on 19 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000 page 107)

Group Schmitt
p.m. 19 Dec 44

116 Pz Div.

unsuitable

for movement

of troops during

winter

560 Volks Gren Div

a.m.19 Dec 44

Group Schmitt

a.m.19 DEC 44

nach Troisvierges

to Perenbach

Appendix 6

Scale 1: 50,000

for Group Schmitt on 20 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000 page 106 and 107)

From
Grandmenil

foremost elements of Group Schmitt
2400 hrs 19 Dec 44

from Gouvy

elements of 116 Pz Div

Group Schmitt

1500 hrs 19 Dec 44

560 Volks Gren Div

a.m. 20 Dec 44

to Bastogne

Group Schmitt

a.m. 19 Dec 44

Appendix 7

Scale 1: 50,000 for Group Schumann

on 20 and 21 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000 page 107)

to St Vith
to Vielsalm

to Burg-Reuland
and St Vith

Position of neighbor

on the right

21 Dec 44

Group Schumann

21 Dec 44

Group Schumann

20 Dec 44

20 Dec 44

21 Dec 44

p.m. 19 Dec 44

to Helmerscheid

to Troisvierges

Appendix 8

Scale 1: 50,000

Group Schmitt on 21 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000, page 92 and 106)

to Amonines--
Pisenne

116 Pz Div

Group Schmitt

a.m. 21 Dec

to Bastogne

Corps Artillery
and Mortar Brigade

560 Volks Gren Div

Group Schmitt

noon 21 Dec 44

a.m. 21 Dec 44

Appendix 9

Scale 1: 50,000

for Group Schumann on 21 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000, page 92,93,106,107)

Group Schumann

p.m.21 Dec 44

to

Salmchateau

to Grandmenil

regiments

command post

Schumann

to Bouigny

to Gouvy

to Houffalize

elements of the 2 SS Pz Div

p.m.21 Dec 44

to

Houffalize

to Laroche

to Plsenne

Scale 1: 50,000

Group Schmitt on 22 Dec 44 and

Group Schumann during 22 Dec 44

and night of 22 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000 page 92)

to Grandmenil

2 SS Pz Div

regimentsl command post
Group Schmitt
p.m.22 Dec 44

2 SS Pz Div

Group Schumann
p.m.22 Dec 44

Group Schmitt p.m.22 Dec 44
final stage of attack

from Salmchateau

Group Schumann
a.m.23 Dec 44

Armored reconn.batt.116 Pz Div

2 SS Pz Div
a.m.22 Dec 44

22 Dec 44

Group Schumann
during the night of 22 Dec 44
the day of 23 Dec 44

116 Pz Div

560 Volks Gren Div
as of 23 Dec 44

foremost edge of blockings
to Marcouray by Engineers 1560

to Laroche

Group Schmitt
a.m.22 Dec 44

to Madrin

from Houffalize

to Plenne

Scale 1: 50,000

Group Schmitt on 22 Dec 44 and
Group Schumann during 22 Dec 44
and night of 22 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000 page 92)

to Grandmenil

2 SS Pz Div

regimentsl command post
Group Schmitt
p.m.22 Dec 44

2 SS Pz Div

Group Schumann
p.m.22 Dec 44

Group Schmitt p.m.22 Dec 44
final stage of attack

from Salmchateau

Group Schumann
a.m.23 Dec 44

Armored reconn.batt.116 Pz Div

2 SS Pz Div
a.m.22 Dec 44

22 Dec 44
Group Schumann
during the night of 22 Dec 44
the day of 23 Dec 44

116 Pz Div

560 Volks Gren Div
as of 23 Dec 44

foremost edge of blockings
to Marcouray by Engineers 1560

Group Schmitt
a.m.22 Dec 44

to Laroche

to Nadrin

from Houffalize

Scale 1: 50,000 for 560 Volks Gren Div
on 23 and 24 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000, page 92)

to Hotton

Group Schumann

p.m. 23 Dec 44

116 Pz Div

Group Schumann

Group Schmitt

a.m. 23 Dec 44

to Opeigne

2 SS Pz Div

116 Pz Div

Group Schumann

23 Dec 44

116 Pz Div during night of 23 Dec 44

during night of 23 Dec 44

and the day of 24 Dec 44

foremost edge of blockings

bridges which had been blown up 2 Pz Div

Group Happich

560 Volks Gren Div

from

Salmchateau

20 tanks to Laroche

to Eotton

Ersee
Pisenne

Appendix 12

Scale 1: 50,000 for

560 Volks Gren Div from 25-27 Dec 44

Group Schumann

Group Schmitt

Group Schumann

26 and 27 Dec 44

covering forces of

SS Pz Div H.J.

2 SS Pz Div

evening of 27 Dec 44

evening of 27 Dec 44

Group Schumann

560 Volks Gren Div Group Happich

26 and 27 Dec 44 23-29 Dec 44

a.m. 25 Dec 44

" " 26 " "

" " 27 " "

116 Pz Div

560 Volks Gren Div

American map 1: 50,000

page 92 and 106

from
Salmchateau

93-

to Hottan

to Erzebe...
to Erzebe...

Group Schmitt
covering forces of H.J.

SS Pz Div H.J.

Group Schumann

a.m. 27 Dec

Group Schumann

p.m. 27 Dec 44

Group Schmitt

p.m. 29 Dec 44

2 SS Pz Div

560 Volks Gren Div

p.m. 28 Dec Group Schumann

Group Happich

560 Volks Gren Div

from
Salmchateau

116 Pz Div

a.m. 27 Dec

" " 28 "

" " 29 "

560 Volks Gren Div

a.m. 29 Dec 44

Scale 1:50,000

for the 560 Volks Gren Div

on 28 and 29 Dec 44

(American map 1: 50,000, page 92
and 106)

Scale 1: 50,000 referring to
the situation of 12 Volks Gren Div
from 1 - 15 Jan 45 a.m.
(American map 1: 50,000, page 92 and 93)

Appendix 14

to
Basse--Bodeux

a.m. 3 Jan 45
" " 4 " "
" " 5 " "

Gren 48

62 Volks Gren Div

Gren 89

Fues 27

Army Engineer Batt

Fues. Batt 27

Armored Reconnaissance Battalion

2. SS Pz Div

12 Volks Gren Div

560 Volks Gren Div

4-5 Jan 45

12 Volks Gren Div

2-6 Jan 45

560 Volks Gren Div

to Grandmenil

to Houffalize

Scale 1: 50,000 referring

Appendix 15

to the situation of 12 Volks Gren Div

from 5 - a.m. of 8 Jan 45

(American map 1: 50,000, page 92 and 93)

62 Volks Gren Div

Army Engineer Batt

to Grandmenil

Gren Batt Fues Batt
of 326 Volks Gren Div

Group 89

Fues 27

Group 48

mixed combat group

Army Engineer Battalion

5 and 8 Jan 45 a.m.

SS Pz Gren Regt

12 Volks Gren Div

a.m. 6 Jan 45

5 Jan 45

a.m. 7 Jan 45

1000 - 1400 hrs

12 Volks Gren Div

560 Volks Gren Div

12 Volks Gren Div

a.m. 8 Jan 45

12 V.G.Div

6 and 7 Jan 45

to Odeigne

to Bouffalize

to Laroche

Appendix 16

Linke Div Gruppe

Rechte Div Gruppe

Art Corps

751 Gren Regt

326 Volks Gren Div

early morning 11 Jan

Pz Gren Regt

2 SS Pz Div

27

560 Volks Gren Div ?

11 SS Pz Regt

SS Pz Gren Regt

Sketch of order of Battle, Scale: 1:50,000

Position of 12 V.G.D. from 8-11Jan (early)

(American map pages 93 and 107)

early 8 and 11 Jan 45

9 -(early)

10 "

Div Group. 9-11 Jan
(morning)

12 Volks Gren Div

8-9 Jan 45

From Grandment 1

?

11 Jan 45

326 V.G.D.

2 SS Pz Div

SS Pz Div 'Hohenstaufen'

11 Jan 45 morning

" " " evening

12 " " 13 Jan 45 afternoon

13 " " 12 - (9 Jan 45)

14 " " morning 116 Pz Div

15 " " " 12 V.G.D.

16 " " " 10 to 14 Jan 45 12 V.G.D. from early on 11 to early on 16 Jan 45

Same map Scale

12 D.

12 D.

toward Housfulse

toward Steinbach

toward Niederbaslingen