

27, 28 November 1944

The 8th Infantry maintained a defensive line opposing enemy positions. Elements of the German 942nd and 984th Infantry Regiments continued to defend strategic positions opposite the Regimental Sector, delivering artillery, mortar and sporadic machine gun fires upon our troops. As the enemy regrouped his forces, relieved some combat units in the line and prepared to intensify his defensive action to screen the development of successive lines of resistance, the 8th Infantry sent patrols out to establish outposts, capture prisoners and determine the extent of any changes in the enemy situation or deployment. On the 27th, the 1st Battalion sent a strong patrol to the south of the position occupied by Company B, which met heavy small arms fire from well established positions further to the south. Company C then sent a combat patrol to ([coordinate 045404](#)) where it encountered a large group of enemy infantry men. 3rd Battalion patrols, having encountered German infantry at several points, drove them back into their own lines and continued approximately 800 yards toward the east without meeting further German resistance. A short time later, patrols from the 1st and 3rd Battalions made contact with each other, ([coordinate 043415](#)) clearing a substantial area along the Regimental Front of enemy personnel. On the following day the Regiment again sent aggressive patrols along the front. The 1st Battalion maintained contact with the 24th Cavalry Squadron, during which new well prepared enemy positions were discovered near a Y in the road which the Germans had blocked previously and which they apparently felt would be the focal point of an 8th Infantry attack ([coordinate 056431](#)). The 3rd Battalion sent a patrol to contact the 4th Cavalry Squadron through an area occupied by hostile troops at several points. After the patrol had returned, having obtained information more clearly defining the location and deployment of the enemy, 4.2 mortars fired into this area in an attempt to dislodge the enemy at these points which promised to be a material harassing factor to subsequent advances by the 8th Infantry units. During the early part of the day, a Company I outpost received a heavy enemy counterattack. After a short effective fire fight, Company I repelled the enemy attack, having inflicted many casualties upon them with rifle fire. In the afternoon, the 2nd Battalion relieved the 3rd Battalion on the front line. Engineers, continuing to work against time under heavy fires, pushed supply routes ahead toward all battalion sectors.

29 November 1944

The regiment was ordered to continue the attack, the 1st and 2nd Battalions jumped off abreast, the 1st Battalion on the right and the 2nd Battalion on the left. The 3rd Battalion remained in Regimental Reserve. The 8th Infantry, opposed by the German 942nd Infantry Regiment, forged steadily ahead until the 1st Battalion, with Company B on the right and Company C on the left, met heavy enemy small arms and machine gun fires. Both companies, pinned down and unable to go forward ([at coordinate 052432](#)) pulled back at 1115 so that supporting artillery could plaster the enemy in this locality, prior to a resumption of the drive.

After the artillery had thoroughly covered these positions, Companies B and C were able to advance and attain material gains. The 2nd Battalion, with Company G on the left and Company F on the right, although meeting stubborn enemy resistance and heavy artillery and automatic fires, continued to advance until Companies F and G reached positions well forward of adjacent units ([coordinates 049430](#) and [048432](#)). As the attack progressed during the day, an increasing volume of enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fires were delivered upon our troops by the enemy who resisted stubbornly at every point of attack and only fell

back when driven out of their emplacements by a combination of devastating forces which they could not withstand.

30 November 1944

The 1st Battalion attacked at 0845. The 2nd Battalion moved forward at 0900. Both Battalions immediately came under heavy small arms and machine gun fires. The enemy defended his position with increasing ferocity. When the 3rd Battalion was committed in the attack at 0930, it commenced moving from its assembly area to a position in the rear of the 1st Battalion. Supporting tanks thrust into enemy territory from a position between Companies A and B. A few minutes later, when the enemy launched a counterattack, Company B fought desperately to push the enemy back. The Germans, attacking in force with rifle grenades and rocket launchers were thrown back. The 3rd Battalion, in spite of heavy enemy fire, advanced to the south and came abreast of the 1st Battalion. Coordinated advances by tanks and infantry pushed the enemy back at many points, but the enemy resisted at other points with increasing fury. At 1640 the Regiment started to dig in for the night after a day of the bitterest type of fighting.

1 December 1944

During this period, the 4th Infantry Division continued to attack to the east and northeast against heavy enemy resistance. Important terrain features were captured during the day's operations that proved vital in the planning for our attack: on 2 December to secure objectives in the vicinity of [\(F-062433\)](#), the town of [Gey, Strass](#), and the high ground in the vicinity of [\(F-070373\)](#). A total of 128 prisoners of war were taken.

The 8th Infantry, with Company A, 4th Medical Battalion; one platoon of Company A, 4th Engineer Combat Battalion; one platoon of Company D, 70th Tank Battalion; Company A, 70th Tank Battalion; Company A, less one platoon, 803d Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP), and Company C, 87th Chemical Battalion, attached, attacked at 0815 with the 1st and 2d Battalions abreast, and endeavored to drive the enemy from well dug in positions from which he was employing small arms and machine gun fire to the greatest advantage. By 1015, both battalions had encountered enemy mine fields, both antipersonnel and antitank, and small arms fire within the regimental sector was described as the worst that had been encountered on this front.

At 1200 the 3d Battalion was committed between the 1st and 2d Battalions and simultaneously the 2d Battalion endeavored to flank the enemy positions from the north. By 1445 the 1st and 2d Battalions had cleared most of the mine fields and reported that the enemy now seemed to be softening up somewhat. Company C had advanced to the vicinity of [\(F-054429\)](#) at which point they were considered to be through the enemy's main line of resistance. Further advances were not evidenced by nightfall and preparations were begun for continuance of the attack on the following day.

The 12th Infantry, with Company B, 4th Medical Battalion; one platoon of Company B, 4th Engineer Combat Battalion; Company B and Company D, less one platoon, 70th Tank Battalion; Company B, 803d Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP), and Company D, 87th Chemical Battalion, attached, moved out at 0900 to seize the line of departure from the vicinity of [\(F-062408\)](#) to [\(F-065394\)](#) in preparation for the attack with the 1st and 2d Battalions on Gey. Their progress was very slow throughout the day; the attacking battalions encountering many strong points and heavy artillery fire. At 1115, the 1st Battalion reported that the enemy in an

estimated strength of one platoon had infiltrated from the northeast, attacked the 1st Battalion CP, and severed lines of communication but by 1330 this force was eliminated and communications restored.

By 1500, the 1st and 2d Battalions succeeded in reaching the high ground overlooking Gey and were bringing up supporting weapons after eliminating several enemy strong points.

The 22d Infantry, with the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion of CC "A", 5th Armored Division; Company C, 4th Medical Battalion; one platoon of Company C, 4th Engineer Combat Battalion; Company C, 70th Tank Battalion; Company C, 709th Tank Battalion, and Company C, 803 Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP), attached, moved into the attack at 0835.

By 1000, the 3d Battalion had reached its objective in the vicinity of [\(F-065393\)](#) and was proceeding to dig in. In the interim, the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion and the 2d Battalion of the 22d Infantry were making very slow progress against heavy resistance consisting of small arms, machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire.

At 1100, the 46th Armored Infantry Battalion was ordered to withdraw to the hill in the vicinity of [\(F-0537\)](#) to the positions they had occupied on the previous night. The 1st Battalion had been committed between the 2d and 3d Battalions with the mission of advancing and attacking southeast in front of the 2d Battalion to relieve the pressure in this vicinity.

The general advance made by the regiment was slow throughout the day and the resistance encountered was considered extremely heavy especially on the right flank, but the 1st and 3d Battalions had reached positions from which they could support by fire the attack on **Gey** and Strass. The 46th Armored Infantry Battalion was detached from the 22d Infantry and reverted to control of CC "A" of the 5th Armored Division at the close of the period.

During the day's operations, the 24th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (less one troop) with the 4th Reconnaissance Troop (mechanized) attached continued to maintain road blocks within the division zone of action and maintained contact between all attacking echelons.

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HURTGEN -- "DEATH FACTORY"

HURTGEN WAS a cold, jungle hell -- a death factory. Blocking approaches to Cologne and the Ruhr, Hurtgen was a "must" objective. The terrain was difficult enough -- steep hills, thick woods, numerous creeks, poor roads. Across the front stretched belts of mines and barbed wire rigged with booby traps. Dug-in machine guns were set up to spray the entire area with interlocking fire.

Artillery, doubly dangerous in the woods because of tree bursts, was zeroed in on every conceivable objective. Weather was pure misery -- constant rain, snow, near freezing temperatures. Living for days in water-filled holes, usually without blankets, troops had no escape from cold and wet.

Before the main offensive got underway, the 12th rushed south to aid a division under heavy enemy pressure. The regiment fought bitterly for eight days, attacking and counter-attacking without flank support. Although it suffered heavy casualties, the 12th returned to join the division's assault Nov. 16.

On the south flank of the offensive, the 4th attacked through the forest toward Duren. Again, its front was extended. To the left of the 12th, now commanded by Col. R.H. Chance, was the 22nd and the 8th, the latter now led by Col. R.G. McKee. For three days the regiment struggled to crack the first enemy lines.

Every yard was difficult, dangerous. Firebreaks and clearings were mined. In the thick woods, German positions couldn't be detected more than five yards away. Yet, Nazi outposts could observe the 4th's approach. Every move brought instant artillery and mortar fire.

The line of wire and mines seemed impossible to crack. Machine guns and artillery blunted every attack. Reaching a firebreak which crossed the front, the 70th Tank Bn. finally broke the wire, rolled beyond. Infantry followed in tracks made by tanks after armor had detonated anti-personnel mines.

In pushing the front forward 1000 yards, the division suffered heavy casualties the first five days. The next enemy line was as tough as the first. The identical procedure had to be repeated.

Another five days produced another destroyed line, another mile gained. Germans brought up fresh regiments, counter-attacking daily. Often, companies were caught before they had a chance to get set. It took another battle to throw back stubborn Germans. After every advance, men spent hours digging holes and cutting logs to cover them. Artillery often whined, burst in the trees before shelters could be finished.

After a day and night of vicious fighting, the 22nd reached Grosshau Nov. 27, wiping out German defenders before going on to the last strip of the forest beyond the town. **Still in the woods, the 8th and 12th crashed the third MLR, which was as rough as the others. The Nazis had overlooked no bet. Every approach was covered with every device of defensive warfare. Neither skill nor genius could find an easy way. It took sheer guts to win.**

After three days, both regiments shattered the last line and broke through near the east edge of the forest. Then came welcome news. Relief! The 22nd moved to Luxembourg Dec. 3, followed by the 12th four days later and the 8th on Dec. 13.
