

**Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) Libraries
HQ Donovan Research Library
Armor Research Library
Fort Benning, Georgia**

Report date: October 1950

Title: 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team War Diary

Author: Office, Chief of Army Field Forces, Fort Monroe, VA

Abstract: Historical combat information on the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team in Korea. Includes War Diary extracts dated October 1950.

Number of pages: 6 p.

Notes: From the MCoE HQ Donovan Research Library, Fort Benning, GA. Documents collection. Call #: DS917.1 .U4187A (Oct. 1950)

Classification: Unclassified; Approved for public release

OFFICE, CHIEF OF ARMY FIELD FORCES
Fort Monroe, Virginia

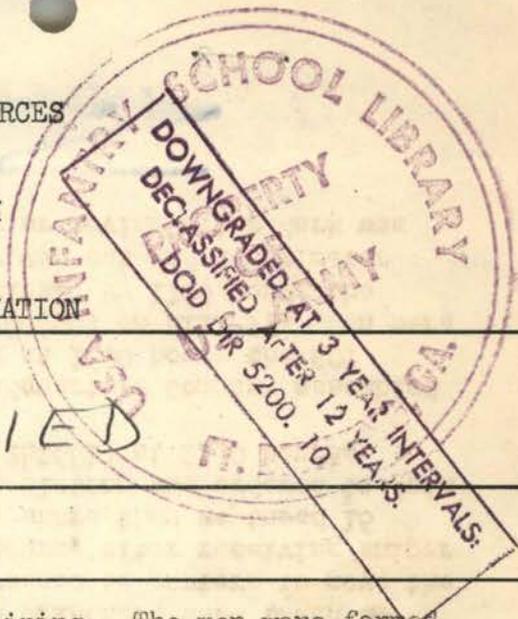
COMBAT INFORMATION BRANCH
PLANS DIVISION G3

DISSEMINATION OF COMBAT INFORMATION

SOURCE: 187th ABN RCT War Diary

DATE: October 1950

DECLASSIFIED



REFER
TO

ITEM

G3 D/A
G4 D/A
G3 (20)
G3(40)
G3(60)
G3(70)
G3(80)
G4
R&D
Schools
Colleges
A Abn Cen
Armies

Reveille was at 0230 hours. It was raining. The men were formed by plane loads in stick order and shuttled to Kimpo AFB.

At 0400 hours drawing and fitting of parachutes began. Word was received that the jump would be postponed for three hours.

At 0700 hours the drop was delayed another three hours. The ceiling was spotty at about 800 feet to 1000 feet. At 1030 hours the order was given to "chute up". Aircraft were filled to capacity. A typical C-119 type aircraft carried two sticks of 23 men each, fifteen monorail bundles, and four door bundles. The ships were so filled that some of the men had to sit on the floor to find space. Each man, besides a main parachute and a reserve, carried a light pack, water, rations, ammunition, a .45 caliber pistol and a carbine or M-1 rifle. An extra griswald container filled with small arms or light mortar ammunition was carried by some.

At 1100 hours (station time) the troops were ready and at 1200 hours the first aircraft was airborne. Each aircraft followed successively. Some fuselages scraped the ground on take off.

The armada of 73 (seven had been scratched) C-119s of the 314th Troop Carrier from Ashiya AFB, Kyushu, and 40 C-47s of the 21st Troop Carrier from Brady AFB, Kyushu, flew over the Han River Estuary to rendezvous before proceeding north along the West Coast of Korea to the Sukchon - Sunchon Area. At 1355 hours the airborne force turned east on the base leg approach to the drop areas.

At eight minutes out (1357 hours), the monorail doors were opened, door bundles were pushed out into the slip stream and held in place by the first man in each stick. At four minutes out (1401 hours) the red light was on. Sticks were checked. There was no flak. The green light came on. The troop aircraft debouched approximately 74 tons of Equipment and 1470 men from the first two serials on Drop Zone William south of Sukchon.

Incl 11

REFER
TO

ITEM

Light sniper fire only was received. Individuals formed quickly into small units of squad and platoon size heading for the high ground overlooking the drop zone.

The 1st and 2d Serials consisted of the 1st Battalion, Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Support Company, Company A, 127 Engineer Battalion, Medical Company and Service Company. The First Battalion with the 1st platoon of Company A 127th Engineers and one Forward Air Control Party attached was assigned the mission (1) of clearing Sukchon of enemy forces, (2) securing the high ground north of Sukchon, (3) establishing a road block at 23469, (4) to prevent enemy withdrawal to the north, (5) patrolling north to the river in the vicinity of Sinanju (240860), (6) contact the Second Battalion in the vicinity of Maeman-ni (396680), (7) being prepared to move South toward Pyongyang on order, (8) designating one company to be Combat Team reserve on landing.

After assembling, Companies "A" and "B" pushed Northwest to take Hill 104 overlooking the town of Mamil-ri. There were approximately 1800 enemy in Sukchon and the vicinity north of the town. All enemy fire received by the First Battalion was sniper fire. Company C took Hill 97 after being delayed by mortar fire and a preplanned air strike on the hill. Company "C" then reverted to Regimental reserve and remained on Hill 97 north of the village of Chang-ni. At 1550 hours the first Battalion opened its command post at coordinate 265647. First Battalion took all assigned objectives for the day, then displaced its Command Post to 258668.

The first platoon, Company "A", 127th Engineer Battalion after assembly, proceeded north in rear of Company "B", reaching the town of Songnani-ni (270646) at 1530 hours. They were delayed 45 minutes by enemy fire in the town of Sukchon. Fifteen prisoners were taken by SFC Marcuso and his squad. These were impressed as porters to move the Engineer equipment on handcarts. At 1745 hours, after receiving sniper fire, the platoon reached Namil-li (247662) where they captured 16 prisoners and killed 5 enemy soldiers. The platoon was ordered to join Company "B" in the vicinity of Poegun-san (242681) at 2130 hours.

At 1410 hours the 187th Regimental Headquarters Company assembled at the dykes along the Ch'oeryong River and at 1600 hours the RCT Command Post was established at Chary-ni (280650) on Hill 97. Men were dispatched to the drop zone to recover bundles. By 1700 hours the Command Post was dug in, the password was given out and a perimeter defense was established. No fires, smoking or moving after dark was allowed.

REFER
TO

ITEM

The Medical Company immediately started collecting Medical bundles and caring for those injured in the jump. A combination Collection and Clearing Station was set up at the north end of the drop zone, sheltered by the dykes of the Ch'oeryong River. However, no method of evacuation was as yet available. The actual number of jump injuries on DZ William was 25. The Second Battalion on DZ Easy had 20 injuries.

Support Company dropped its Company Headquarters, excess personnel and one 90-mm gun section on DZ William. The 3/4 ton trucks were removed to the RCT S-4 Central and the 90-mm guns placed in reserve. The position was occupied at 1700 hours by which time the First and Third Battalions had moved out of Mortar range.

One aircraft, Number 33, contained 24 personnel from Service Company who all jumped on DZ William, established a Regimental Supply Point across a fordable spot on the Ch'oeryong River and started collecting supplies.

The Battalion Commander of the 674th Field Artillery Battalion met members of the Battalion as they came off the drop zone in the vicinity of coordinates 280648. He directed commanding officers "C" Battery and "A" Battery to place their batteries in position in the vicinity of coordinates 273649 and 279649, respectively. An Observation Post was located on Hill 97. Headquarters Battery was established in and near the village of Chang-ni (277654).

The executive officer of Battery "C" had difficulty getting his door-load, a hand cart, out of the plane. As a result his stick landed approximately one and one-half miles east of the drop zone. Upon landing he shot and killed one of four enemy soldiers running toward him. The others fled. After assembling his stick, fifty to seventy-five enemy soldiers attacked the paratroopers. The enemy was repulsed. The stick then fought its way back to the drop zone killing ten more of the enemy on the way back. Later Corporal Marshall Crow, a member of this stick, was found dead in his parachute. Apparently he had been killed by a "burp gun".

The Heavy Equipment Drop was Serial Number 4 on DZ William and Serial Number 5 on DZ Easy. This was the first time that heavy equipment had been dropped in combat. By arranging the heavy drop to arrive twenty-five and thirty minutes, respectively, after the first serial, it was possible for the men to be on the DZ to recover the equipment. All equipment organic to an Airborne Infantry Regiment, was dropped including 3/4 ton trucks, 90-mm towed anti-tank guns, 105-mm Howitzers and a special mobile radio transmission set, the equivalent in weight of a 2 1/2 ton truck.

REFER
TO

ITEM

At 1415 hours Serial Number 4 dropped seven Howitzers, seven jeeps and 1125 rounds of ammunition for the 674 Field Artillery Battalion alone. Of these, six Howitzers and six jeeps were in usable condition. The chutes of one Howitzer and one jeep, belonging to "C" Battery, left the plane but failed to extract the Howitzer and jeep. The Howitzer was completely demolished. One jeep in "C" Battery had a broken rear axle. The ammunition delivered by the heavy drop was on pallets (24 rounds per pallet) with G-5 canopies. About ten percent of the shells in the load were damaged. However, the projectiles and fuzes were serviceable. No ammunition exploded when it landed.

At 1500 hours, Battery "C" had two Howitzers in position on the drop zone, at coordinates 272641, and ready to fire. At 1450 hours Battery "A" had four Howitzers in position and the first round on the way. These rounds were fired on a registration point. In all, about six missions were fired on D Day by these two Batteries using about sixty rounds of ammunition. Battery "C" registered to the South from the drop zone, and later moved to the vicinity of 275648. At nightfall about five hundred rounds of ammunition were on hand in the battalion area.

The Third Battalion, dropped on DZ William in two Serials (Number 6 and Number 7) with the mission of (1) seizing and securing Objective 2, (2) preventing enemy withdrawal to the north or resupply to the south, (3) establishing a road block at 260610 (4) being prepared to move south toward Pyongyang on order.

A report as of 1400 hours indicated that the Third Battalion was ready to proceed to the objective. At 1630 hours the Third Battalion was at (270618) extending to (283625). By 1700 hours the Third Battalion had secured all its objectives and was prepared to resume the attack south along the railroad and road to Pyongyang. The Battalion was disposed on the high ground 3,000 yards south of Sukchon. Company "I" occupied the left half of the defensive position, Company "K" the right half with a road block on the Sukchon - Pyongyang Road, and Company "L" was in reserve. No casualties were suffered due to enemy action. Forty-two prisoners were taken.

The third platoon, Company "A", 127 Engineer Battalion, attached to the Third Battalion, was attached further to Company "K" and was placed on the railroad track south of Sukchon. It ambushed eight enemy soldiers, killing six.

REFER
TO

ITEM

The Second Battalion with the second platoon, Company "A", 127 Engineer Battalion, the 4.2 inch mortar platoon of Support Company, one section of 90-mm anti-tank guns, Battery "B", 674 Field Artillery Battalion, the Second Pathfinder Team, and one Forward Air Control Party dropped on DZ Easy in the vicinity of Sunchon from Serials Number 3 and 5 at 1420 hours. The Second Battalion made contact with the enemy at this time, moved out and secured its objectives with marked success, Company "E" seized objective Easy, the town of Changsan-ni, (510646) and proceeded to establish a road block on the bridge across the Kumchon River south of Sinhung-ni (515645). Company "F" moved out into the attack toward the town of Sunchon where they encountered scattered sniper fire. The Second Battalion Command Post was located in the small village south of Chung-ni (506656). Company "G" remained in Battalion reserve with one platoon securing the road blocks on the bridge on Kumchon River west of the town of Toran-dong (482659).

Battery "B", 674th Field Artillery was attached to the Second Battalion. The original plan envisioned a Headquarters Battery detachment of two officers and forty men in addition to Battery "B" with the mission of supplementing the battery communication and fire direction center personnel. However, on D-1 the aircraft failed to arrive at Kimpo AFB due to mechanical difficulty. Consequently, the detachment was reduced to one officer and two men.

The monorail of one of Battery "B"'s planes failed to function resulting in the Battery receiving only half of its fire direction equipment. However, enough was still on hand for Battery "B" to function as a firing battery.

When the heavy drop serial came over twenty minutes later, two 1/4 ton trucks and 105-mm Howitzers were dropped. One vehicle had a broken drive shaft which was repaired and the other had a bent wheel. One Howitzer became detached from its chute and was a complete loss; the other had the right shield sheared off, but was otherwise operable.

The operative piece was in position and ready to fire in fifty minutes from the time it dropped. Coordinates of its position were 507649. The Battery fired two missions the first day. Six hundred rounds were recovered from the drop zone in usable condition.

Over

5

105079

REFER
TO

ITEM

The second platoon, Company "A", 127 Engineers attached to the Second Battalion, was unable to prepare the bridge across the Kumchon River south of Sinhung-ni for demolitions since it was under fire and Company "E" was attacking the enemy. The platoon was then ordered to accompany Company "F" to outskirts of Sunchon and to reconnoiter a railroad bridge. On the way into Sunchon the platoon was pinned down by fire from the 6th Republic of Korea Division at 1730 hours. After a brief encounter, contact was made and the firing ceased.

Support Company's 90-mm anti-tank gun section ran into difficulty. One set (gun and 3/4 ton truck) had to be cut loose when it partially broke loose inside the aircraft, while the other set was dropped late and lit in enemy held territory.

With the exception of intermittent shelling observed to the far South, East and West from Hill 97, the night passed without event.

Meanwhile, back at Kimpo AFB, the overland detail was prepared to move out to contact the RCT at Sukehon.

Also, back at Kimpo AFB, this day was D+1 for the remaining assault elements and Battery "A" of the 88th Airborne Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion. The troops at Kimpo had all their equipment loaded ready for the D+1 drop by 2200 hours.