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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 1ST BATTALION AND TASK FORCE QUINN,
119TH INFANTRY (30TH INFANTRY DIVISION)
IN THE BREACHING OF THE SIEGFRIED LINE
IN THE VICINITY OF RIMBURG, HOLLAND,
2-6 OCTOBER 1944

(RHINELAND CAMPAIGN)

(Personal Experience of a Rifle Company Commander)

Type of operation described:

INFANTRY ATTACKING A FORTIFIED POSITION

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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 1ST BATTALION AND TASK FORCE QUINN,
119TH INFANTRY (30TH INFANTRY DIVISION)
IN THE BREACHING OF THE SIEGFRIED LINE
IN THE VICINITY OF RIMBURG, HOLLAND,
2 - 6 OCTOBER 1944

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of the 1st Battalion and Task Force Quinn, 119th Infantry, 30th Infantry Division, in breaching the Siegfried Line in the vicinity of Rimburg, Holland, during the period 2 - 6 October 1944.

For the purposes of orientation, it will be necessary to briefly review the events leading up to this action.

On 6 June 1944, Allied troops had launched a successful invasion on the beaches of Normandy and then conducted operations which had enabled them to sweep across France and Belgium by the middle of September. (1) Although Allied troops were to advance toward Germany on a broad front, the Supreme Allied Commander had decided that 21 Army Group would make the main effort on the north to strike at the heart of western Germany, the Ruhr. (2)

To further the main effort on the north, the United States First Army was instructed to protect the right flank of 21 Army Group, breach the Siegfried Line, capture Aachen, and assist 21 Army Group in seizing the Ruhr. (3)

(1) A-2, p. 47; (2) A-5, pp. 225-226; A-4, pp. 148-149;
(3) A-13, p. 49.

GENERAL SITUATION

By 19 September 1944, two divisions of the XIX Corps, (2d Armored and 30th Infantry) in the northern sector of the First Army, had advanced to positions northwest and southwest of Geilenkirchen, Germany. (See Map A) (4) Approximately five miles to the south, elements of the VII Corps were attempting to encircle Aachen, Germany. (5)

The United States First Army assigned XIX Corps the mission of: (1) protecting the right flank of 21 Army Group and the left flank of the First Army; (2) breaching the Siegfried Line; (3) advancing to secure a bridgehead across the Rhine River in the vicinity of Cologne. (6) *not shown*

XIX Corps assigned the 30th Division the mission of breaching the Siegfried Line in the vicinity of Marienberg Rimburg, Holland, on 20 September, and then turning south and making contact with the VII Corps to complete the encirclement of Aachen. (See Map A) (7)

DESCRIPTION OF SIEGFRIED LINE

The Siegfried Line, known to the Germans as the West Wall, was a continuous series of reinforced concrete fortifications, pillboxes and emplacements, constructed in 1939 and 1940 along the natural barriers of the German frontier. Since it was constructed prior to the time the Russians had taught the Germans the principle of strong points and an all-around

(4) A-1, p. 47; (5) A-1, pp. 48-49; (6) A-1, p. 54; A-18, p. 9;
(7) A-3, p. 107.

"neagenog" defense, individual pillboxes were dependent upon other mutually supporting pillboxes for close in defense. (8)

The primary purpose of the pillboxes was to increase the defensive potential of the terrain. In determining location of pillboxes and other emplacements the Germans made maximum utilization of the terrain. In terrain where it would be extremely difficult for tanks or infantry to attack, few pillboxes and obstacles were constructed. On the other hand, in the natural attack corridors the concentration of pillboxes and obstacles was very dense. (9) Whenever the terrain indicated a profitable use of a machine gun or anti-tank gun, the Germans constructed a pillbox. (10)

"The concrete installations themselves, in general, were 20 to 30 feet by 40 to 50 feet horizontally, and 20 to 25 feet high, of which at least half and sometimes more was underground. The walls and roofs were four to eight feet thick and at times steel plated. Each pillbox had living quarters for its normal complement. Fields of fire were limited; the path of fire generally did not exceed 50 degrees of arc. Pillboxes were mutually supporting. Four years of neglect during the high tide of German conquest had made the camouflage superb. Undergrowth, turf and disuse made the spotting of some of the pillboxes extremely difficult. Fortunately British and French intelligence had photographed and plotted the construction period and the fruits of their labors were supplemented by recent photography." (11)

In addition to increasing the defensive potential of the terrain, the West Wall had a marked psychological effect

on the German people. Soon after the West Wall was constructed, Hitler, through his propaganda agencies, began an intensive campaign to convince the German people that the West Wall was impassable thus making Germany invincible in the West. (12) With the defeat of the German armies in France, the West Wall, once more assumed major importance in the eyes of the Germans. The West Wall would be the fortress which would crush every attack of the Allies and prevent them from reaching the sacred soil of Germany. (13)

In the 30th Division's zone, the Siegfried Line consisted of a heavy belt of pillboxes, emplacements, anti-tank ditches, and extensive field fortification works located along the forward slope of a ridge overlooking a flat open valley which was approximately 500 yards wide. The Wurm River, which ran down the center of the valley, was 20-30 feet wide, four-five feet deep, with banks four-five feet high. Between the river and the pillboxes was a double track railroad bed consisting of numerous cuts and fills. The railroad ran generally parallel to the river. On the western side of the valley was another ridge which was approximately the same height as the one on the east. The southern portion of the east ridge was covered by dense woods, thus providing concealment for the pillboxes and emplacements. Rimburg Castle was located in the center of the division assault area between the Wurm River and the railroad. The castle, surrounded by a moat, provided its occupants with perfect observation up and down the Wurm River valley. (See Map B) (14)

(12) A-17, p. 145; (13) A-35, p. 176; (14) Personal Knowledge; A-14, p. 176.

DIVISION PLAN

The division plan called for an attack at 1100 20 September with two regiments abreast. The 117th Infantry on the left (north) was to attack south of Palenberg and the 119th Infantry on the right (south) was to attack south of Rimburg. (See Map C) After breaching the Siegfried Line both regiments were to turn south and make contact with elements of the VII Corps to complete the encirclement of Aachen. The 120th Infantry, in division reserve, was to make a holding attack in the vicinity of Kerkrad and be prepared to attack east or to pass through the gap made in the Line by the assault regiments and assist in the attack south. (15)

At H-120 an air strike, consisting of medium and fighter bombers, was to effect a saturation bombing of the breakthrough area, knock out the pillboxes immediately facing the assault regiments by dive bombing, and knock out German reserves which could be used for immediate counterattack. (16)

Division artillery, reinforced, planned to "blackout" enemy anti-aircraft artillery positions 15 minutes prior to the air attack on 2 October. XIX Corps Artillery and VII Corps Artillery also were to participate in this mission. (17)

The next phase of the artillery preparation was to begin after the air strike at H-Hour (1100). The 30th Division Artillery had planned an elaborate program of prearranged fires. In this program, the 4.2 mortars were to concentrate

(15) Personal Knowledge; (16) (17) A-2, p. 12.

on cutting enemy tactical wire and then maintain a rolling
barrage in front of the assaulting infantry. (18)

REGIMENTAL PLAN

Ready?
The 119th Infantry, Companies B and C, 743d Tank Bat-
talion, attached, planned to attack on a narrow front south
of Rimburg, in a column of battalions with the 1st Battalion
leading followed by the 2d Battalion and the 3d Battalion. (19)

BATTALION SITUATION

Late on the afternoon of 18 September the 1st Battalion
had broken through the enemy positions west of Groenstraat,
Holland, and had advanced to positions approximately 200 yards
east of the town. (See Map C) At 2030 the battalion consol-
idated its positions and "dug in" for the night with Company
C occupying positions to the left (north) of the east-west
road through Groenstraat and Company B occupying positions
to the right (south) of the road. Company A tied in the
rear of the battalion. Soon after the battalion arrived in
Groenstraat the battalion commander received a warning or-
der that the battalion would attack the Siegfried Line on
20 September. (20)

Interrogation of prisoners of war captured in Groen-
straat disclosed the information that the defenses of the
Siegfried Line were lightly manned. Patrols sent out by

(18) A-8, p. 12; (19) Personal Knowledge; A-8, pp. 16-17;
(20) Personal Knowledge.

~~the 1st Battalion on the night of 19 and 20 September~~
verified this information and reported they had located several pillboxes which were unmanned. They reported that the strongest enemy defenses were in the vicinity of the town of Rimburg and Rimburg Castle. They further reported that the Wurm River could be forded by foot troops since it was only three to five feet deep. (21)

BATTALION PLAN

The 1st Battalion, two platoons, Company C, 743d Tank Battalion, attached, planned to attack with two companies abreast at 1100 20 September and seize Objective "III". (See Map D) Company C was to attack on the left (north) and Company A on the right (south). One platoon of heavy machine guns of Company D was to be attached to each company. Company B, in battalion reserve, was to support the river crossing by fire from positions in the vicinity of Broekhuizen and be prepared to pass through either company or to attack and seize the town of Merkstein-Hofstadt. The two platoons of tanks were to support the river crossing by fire from positions along the ridge in rear of Broekhuizen. (22)

On the morning of 20 September the attack was postponed until 2 October on orders of higher headquarters. Reasons for the postponement were: (1) air support was not available; (2) shortage of supplies, particularly artillery ammunition; (3) absence of adequate reserves or reinforcements

(21) (22) Personal Knowledge.

to exploit the breakthrough and to provide support in repelling enemy counterattacks; (4) fear of over-extending the line which was spread dangerously thin between the VII Corps on the south and 21 Army Group on the north. (23)

POSTPONEMENT PERIOD

General Situation

During the postponement period the 29th Infantry Division, 7th Armored Division and the Belgian Brigade were placed under the operational control of the XIX Corps. (See Map A) Corps assigned the 7th Armored Division and Belgian Brigade the mission of protecting the right of 21 Army Group. On 30 September the 29th Division relieved the 2d Armored Division in its zone to the north of the 30th Division. 2d Armored Division then moved to areas where it would be in a position to rapidly exploit the bridgehead to be established by the 30th Division. (24)

During this period, the Germans were not idle. They were making frantic efforts to strengthen the defenses of the Siegfried Line. Machine Gun Fortress Battalions were moved to the area to man the defensive positions. Extensive work was done to correct the inherent weaknesses of the Siegfried Line. To correct the two outstanding weaknesses --- limited fields of fire from pillboxes and lack of sufficient density of positions to prevent well planned

(23) A-3, p. 108; (24) A-1, pp. 54-55.

infiltration, the Germans constructed extensive field fortifications works including communication trenches between positions. (25)

Overcast skies and rain practically every day prevented the American Air Force from effectively interfering with enemy troop movements and activities during this period. (26)

Division Situation

During the postponement period all units reviewed and perfected their attack plans and at the same time carried on intensive training in assault tactics. (27)

The basic plan for the attack remained unchanged. (28) There was one addition to the artillery plan which is worthy of consideration. The decision was made to have the artillery preparation begin on 26 September by assigning the 258th Field Artillery Battalion the mission of firing its M-12 155mm self-propelled guns on all visible pillboxes in the division assault zone. (29) During the period 26 September to 2 October, this battalion fired on approximately 45 pillboxes. (30) At ranges between 2000 and 4000 yards, using a concrete bursting fuse, the M-12 was able to penetrate six feet of reinforced concrete with three to five hits. (31)

Regimental Situation

The basic plan of the regiment remained unchanged until the latter part of September, when the regimental commander

decided to attack with two battalions abreast instead of with one as originally planned. In order to tie in with the assault of the 117th Infantry on the north and thus eliminate the possibility of unreduced positions between regiments, the regimental commander assigned the 2d Battalion, one platoon, Company C, 743d Tank Battalion, attached, the mission of attacking on the left (north) of the 1st Battalion in the vicinity of Rimburg. In the initial plans the regimental commander had decided not to attack through Rimburg because it was an obvious crossing site and was strongly defended. (32) The 3d Battalion was assigned the mission of protecting the south flank of the regiment by echeloning to the right rear of the 1st Battalion. (33)

Starting on 24 September elements from each battalion, 1st, 2d and 3d, in turn, moved to the rear for two days of intensive training in assault tactics. (34)

Battalion Situation

The basic battalion plan remained unchanged. The only major change was in the method to be employed in crossing the Wurm River. Instead of fording the river, as originally planned, assault elements would be provided with lightweight duckboards which could be used as expedient foot bridges. The lead tank of each tank platoon was to tow a sled of reinforced lashed culverts which could be used as an expedient

(32) Personal Knowledge; A-12, p. 15; (33) Personal Knowledge; A-7, p. 1; (34) A-6, p. 6.

tank bridge. This would enable the tanks to cross the river immediately after the two assault companies. (35)

During the postponement period, unit commanders constantly reviewed their attack plans with their units to make sure that each individual man in the unit knew exactly where he was to go and what he was to accomplish. Within the assault companies, two platoons per company were organized into assault teams. Each assault team was divided into an assault detachment and a support. The assault detachment consisted of 16 men equipped with flamethrowers, satchel charges, rocket launchers, grenades and duckboards. The remainder of the platoon comprised the support. (36)

During hours of darkness on 24 September both platoons of tanks with Companies A, C, D, and elements of Battalion Headquarters company withdrew from their positions and moved approximately two miles to the rear to receive two days of intensive assault training. Company B remained in the area and occupied the battalion's position. All men in the rear area received instruction and training in the use of flamethrowers, demolition charges and bazookas; tactics and techniques of river crossings and assault of fortified positions. During the entire training period the necessity for rapid movement over open terrain was constantly stressed. (37)

Overprinted maps and aerial photographs showing the location of enemy pillboxes and emplacements were distributed down to platoon level. Patrols and observation posts were used to verify and supplement this information. (38)

(35) (36) (37) (38) Personal Knowledge.

On 27 September the company commander of C Company was killed and the executive officer assumed command of the company. (39)

THE ATTACK ON THE SIEGFRIED LINE

2 OCTOBER 1944:

At 0845 XIX Corps Artillery, VII Corps Artillery and 30th Division Artillery delivered the opening blow of the assault against the enemy defenses of the Siegfried Line by delivering "blackout" fire against hostile anti-aircraft artillery positions. (40)

At H-120 (0900) the air strike began. In general, the air strike was a failure. The medium bombers became confused as they approached the target area and as a result only four of the nine groups dropped their bombs. The majority of these bombs landed outside the target area. (41)

The inflammable "jelly" bombs, dropped by two groups of fighter bombers on the pillboxes facing the 1st Battalion, were ineffective because the vegetation surrounding the pillboxes was too green and damp to burn. (42)

With the completion of the air strike at H-Hour (1100), supporting artillery and mortars began delivering an intense preparation on the assault area. The 1st Battalion, following closely behind the mortar fires, began its assault with Companies A and C abreast, A Company on the right. Company

(39) Personal Knowledge; (40) (41) A-2, p. 18; (42) Personal Knowledge; A-3, p. 113.

B, in battalion reserve, followed Company C. The advance
of the north-south road at Broekhuizen was made over concealed routes which had been previously reconnoitered.

(See Map D) This advance was made without incident. Units moved rapidly across the road at Broekhuizen and were approximately 100 yards from the river before the Germans discovered the advance and began delivering heavy small arms, automatic weapon, and sporadic mortar and artillery fire on the troops. In spite of this fire, both companies continued their rapid movement forward and crossed the river on duck-board expedient footbridges which were carried by the leading assault elements. (43)

By 1200 the right platoon of Company A had advanced to the railroad tracks and Company C was busily engaged in a fire fight in the scattered patches of woods just east of the river. The intensity of the enemy mortar and artillery fire increased and the two enemy Fortress Machine Gun Companies which were manning the defenses in this area gave evidence that they intended to make a determined stand. Not only did the enemy have the pillboxes manned but he also was manning an extensive network of field fortifications throughout the woods. It soon became apparent that our artillery and mortar fire was ineffective because when the fire started falling, the enemy would take shelter in the pillboxes and then when the fire lifted he would rush out and man the fortifications and thus be ready to repel the advance of the assault troops as they approached the position. Throughout the woods the camouflage on the pill-

(43) Personal Knowledge.

boxes and emplacements ^{was} were superior thus making it virtually impossible to locate these positions at distances greater than 25 to 50 yards. (44)

Company B and the tanks initially supported the river crossing by fire from positions in the vicinity of Broekhuizen. As soon as the two assault companies had completed their river crossing the tanks advanced to the river and attempted to place the expedient bridge in position. Two tanks soon became "mired down" in the soft boggy ground just west of the river. It soon was apparent that the river banks were too wet and soft to enable the tanks to make a crossing on the expedient bridge. Supporting engineers were then given the mission of constructing a 15-foot treadway bridge across the river. Company B, remaining in position in the vicinity of Broekhuizen continued to support the attack by firing on enemy positions to the flanks of the assault elements. (45)

In the meantime both assault companies had been stopped by the final protective fires of the enemy. They were receiving enemy fire not only from their front but also from Rimburg Castle on their left flank and from the woods line and anti-tank ditch to the right front. (46)

Despite the fact that part of the enemy main line of resistance was along the railroad tracks, one platoon of Company A had been able to advance across the tracks by 1455. This platoon was soon pinned down by grazing fire from pillboxes and emplacements in the woods to their front. By 1545 approximately half of this platoon had become casualties so

(44) (45) (46) Personal Knowledge.

the company commander decided to have this platoon withdraw under cover of a smoke screen which was laid down by the battalion 81mm mortars. The smoke screen enabled litter bearers to evacuate all wounded personnel and the remainder of the platoon to withdraw without incurring additional casualties. (47)

Shortly before the withdrawal of the platoon, the A Company Commander gave his support platoon the mission of assaulting the enemy positions approximately 100 yards to the right (south) of the company. This assault was repelled. It was found that this area was covered by much of the same enemy fire which was holding up the other two platoons of the company. (48)

Company C was also encountering determined resistance. After cleaning out the small patches of woods to the south of Rimburg Castle, Company C made several unsuccessful assaults on the pillboxes and emplacements to their front. In one of these assaults the left platoon suffered 15 casualties including the platoon leader and all non-commissioned officers of the platoon. (49)

By 1550 the assault of the 1st Battalion had definitely been stopped. During this time the battalion commander had been considering the courses of action open to him for committing his reserve company. He had no room on the left to maneuver or employ his reserve due to the fact that the 2d Battalion was immediately to the left of the 1st Battalion. After considering the possibility of committing the reserve on the right of Company A he decided against this

(47) (48) (49) Personal Knowledge.

course of action because it was his opinion that the re-
serve would be subjected to and stopped by the same fire
which had stopped the other two companies. For these rea-
sons he decided to hold Company B mobile and to have Com-
panies A and C continue their efforts to advance. At the
first indication of any weakening of the enemy defense,
Company B would be committed immediately against that point.
The battalion commander was also of the opinion that, when
the tanks were able to cross the river and move to posi-
tions where they could deliver direct fire on the enemy,
both companies would have little difficulty in penetrating
the enemy defenses. (50)

Although the river was under direct enemy observation
and covered by small arms fire, by 1555 the engineers had
completed construction of a 45-foot treadway bridge over
the river. Both platoons of tanks immediately crossed the
river but were only able to advance a very short distance
before they became "mired down". (51)

The 2d Battalion on the left (north) of the 1st Bat-
talion had also been stopped by the enemy defenses in the
vicinity of Rimburg Castle. (52)

Throughout the afternoon, the division commander had
been constantly putting pressure on the regimental comman-
der to "hurry up" and advance to Objective "U". (53) The
division commander reminded the regimental commander that
the 117th Infantry on the north had captured its objective
at 1450. (54) As a result of this pressure, at 1620 the

(50) Personal Knowledge; Statement of Lt. Col. Robert H. Her-
long, 1st Bn Cdr, on 2 Oct 1944; (51) (52) (53) Personal
Knowledge; (54) A-9, p. 1

~~regimental commander assigned his reserve Battalion (3d~~
Battalion) on the right of the 1st Battalion. (55)

Throughout the remainder of the afternoon the 1st Battalion was unable to advance. The 2d Battalion advanced a short distance but was still unable to seize Rimburg Castle. By 1850 Company L had succeeded in crossing the river and advancing abreast of the 1st Battalion before being stopped by heavy enemy fire. The other two companies of the 3d Battalion were unable to cross the river. (56)

At 1900 when it became apparent that the 1st and 3d Battalions would be unable to advance further, regiment ~~ordered both battalions to consolidate their positions and~~ "dig in" for the night. The 2d Battalion continued its attack on Rimburg Castle and by 2045 had the castle surrounded. It was then instructed to "dig in" for the night. (57)

Thus, at the end of the first day, the enemy was still in command of all critical terrain in the area. The 1st Battalion's only accomplishment for the day was the establishment of a bridgehead across the Wurm River. (See Map D) (58)

During the night tank recovery vehicles successfully removed the tanks from their "bogged down" positions east of the Wurm River. The tanks then occupied positions in the vicinity of Broekhuizen. (59)

At 2400 engineers began construction on a trestle bridge to span the blown gap over the Wurm River at Rimburg. (60)

(55) (56) Personal Knowledge; (57) Personal Knowledge; A-9, p. 1; (58) (59) Personal Knowledge; (60) A-11, p. 5.

At 0700 the 1st Battalion resumed the attack against the enemy positions to its immediate front, but again both companies were stopped by intense small arms and automatic weapons fire. Enemy artillery and mortar fire was even heavier than it had been the previous afternoon. (61)

The 2d and 3d Battalions were also unable to advance. (62) By 0800 the engineers had completed a 60-foot trestle bridge over the Wurm River at Rimburg. (63) One platoon of tanks crossed the bridge and began to assist the 2d Battalion in its attack on Rimburg Castle. (64)

Organization of Task Force Quinn

At 0815 the regimental commander of the 119th Infantry decided to capitalize on the success of the 117th Infantry by a move north through the 117th's positions, then turning south to flank the enemy positions in his own regimental area. (65)

Since he had committed his reserve battalion the previous afternoon, it was necessary to organize a special task force for this operation. Task Force Quinn, under command of the regimental executive officer, was to consist of Company B (reserve company 1st Battalion); Company I (reserve company 3d Battalion); Company B, 743d Tank Battalion; and Company C, 803d Tank Destroyer Battalion (self-propelled). Units of the task force were directed to move to Rimburg

(61) (62) Personal Knowledge; (63) A-7, p. 1; (64) Personal Knowledge; A-10, p. 7; (65) A-10, p. 8.

and the company commanders to report to the regimental command post at 0900 to receive the attack order. (66)

The general plan was for the task force to move north, cross the river in the 117th's sector and then turn south attacking enemy positions in the 119th sector from the north flank. (See Map D) Tanks and tank destroyers were to advance north to Marienberg on the road running parallel to and east of the Wurm River. They were to cross the river on the treadway bridge east of Marienberg. Since the road to be used by the tanks and tank destroyers was under direct enemy observation, infantry units were to move north over a concealed route to the west of the road. Infantry units were to cross the river on the foot bridges which had been used by the 117th for their crossing. One platoon of infantry was to accompany the tanks to provide local security for the tanks after they had reached the other side of the river.

The plan was for the tanks to move at maximum speed between Rimburg and Marienberg with the infantry platoon riding on the tanks. Tanks and the main infantry force were to meet on the east side of the river in the vicinity of Palenberg and then launch a coordinated attack south on the enemy positions. Company I and the tanks were to attack through the upper (eastern) half of the woods and Company B through the lower (western) half of the woods. The tank destroyers were to occupy positions in the southern part of Palenberg to protect the left flank and rear of the task force. (See Map D) On order of either infantry unit com-

(66) Personal Knowledge; A-10, p. 59.

under the tank destroyers were prepared to move south to provide close support for the attack. The task force was given the mission of cleaning out the entire area across the regimental front. (67)

Task Force Attack

At 1015 the leading elements of the task force moved out along routes as indicated above. The movement to the crossing sites and the river crossings were made without incident. By 1050 the task force had turned south and had made contact with the enemy in the woods in the 117th's sector. By 1200 the task force had captured a total of 85 prisoners and advanced to the boundary of the 119th Infantry. Although the enemy resistance became stronger the task force continued to advance capturing a factory, four pillboxes and 50 prisoners. By 1250 the task force had advanced to the east-west road north of Rimburg Castle where the right platoon of Company B made contact with the left elements of the 2d Battalion. (68)

Members of the 2d Battalion informed the B Company Commander that the 2d Battalion had captured Rimburg Castle and that Company C had captured two pillboxes south of the castle. They also stated that the 2d Battalion and Company C had been unable to advance beyond the railroad track. At this time the tank destroyer company moved forward and reverted back to regimental control. Two platoons of the task force tanks were turned over to the 2d Battalion, since

(67) (68) Personal Knowledge.

the woods south of the east-west road were too dense for tanks to move through. The task force again resumed the attack and by 1450 had completely cleaned out the area in front of the 2d Battalion thus allowing that unit to start moving east up the road toward Objective "U". (69)

In the movement south of the east-west road the one platoon of tanks had been moving along the open ground just outside the left (east) edge of the woods. When it attempted to move into the open ground farther east of the woods it received direct fire from the area in the vicinity of Objective "U" and from the area in the vicinity of Merkstein-Hofstadt. When the task force had advanced approximately 300 yards south of the east-west road it was decided that the tank platoon should take up a position along the edge of the woods in order to protect the left flank of the task force. (70)

Company I, in the upper (east) half of the woods, continued its advance without encountering resistance. On the other hand, in the lower (west) half of the woods, Company B was encountering determined resistance from pillboxes and emplacements which, of necessity, made its advance much slower than Company I. (71)

At 1512 the I Company Commander reported to the Task Force Commander that his company had advanced completely through the woods and was on the task force objective, yet had made no contact with the 1st or 3d Battalions. The I Company Commander was confused as to his location because in reality he was just south of the Rimburg-Merkstein-Hof-

(69) (70) (71) Personal Knowledge.

stadt road, or 500 yards short of his reported position.

(See Map D) The Task Force Commander ordered Company I to hold up until contact was made with the 1st and 3d Battalions. In the meantime, Company B had reduced the pillboxes and emplacements in front of Company C and was advancing against the enemy positions in front of Company A. (72)

At 1522 the Task Force Commander requested Company B to report its location. The B Company Commander informed the Task Force Commander that the leading elements of his company were engaged in cleaning out enemy positions in front of Company A. (See Map D) After receiving the report the Task Force Commander informed Companies B and I that the Task Force was dissolved and that both companies would revert to their organic commands. (73)

1st Battalion Attack

After the dissolution of the Task Force the B Company Commander switched his 300 radio to the 1st Battalion channel to report his situation and request further orders. The battalion commander advised him to hold up where he was and that his company would revert to battalion control as soon as Companies A and C had passed through his positions as they advanced to capture Objective "U". (See Map D) Company C was able to move straight forward to the upper (east) edge of the woods because the task force had already

(72) Personal Knowledge; A-19, p. 11; (73) Personal Knowledge.

~~cleaned out that portion of the woods. Company A attempted~~
to move straight forward but the enemy to their front gave indications that he still intended to make a determined fight to hold the position. Company A then "side-slipped" over to the left and moved up through Company C's old sector. (74)

When the battalion commander was informed of the enemy situation in the woods he ordered Companies A and C to attack south through Company B and clean out all of the woods north of the Rimburg-Merkstein-Hofstadt road before proceeding to Objective "U". (See Map E) Approximately 45 minutes had elapsed between the time that Company B had been ordered to hold up and the time that Companies A and C attacked south. Thus the enemy was given ample time to reorganize and strengthen his positions. (75)

In the middle and lower (west) half of the woods, Companies A and C were able to advance approximately only 20 yards beyond the line held by Company B before they were stopped. On the upper (east) edge of the woods, elements of Company C moved up to the rear of Company I. After being passed through, Company B took up positions along the upper (east) edge of the woods to the left rear of Company C. When Company B attempted to move out of the woods to secure better fields of fire the company was immediately subjected to grazing machine gun fire and direct tank fire from the high ground to the east and also from enemy positions in the vicinity of Merkstein-Hofstadt. (76)

(74) (75) (76) Personal Knowledge.

At this time the battalion was subjected to the most intense artillery fire it had received in the whole attack so far. During one period of 40 minutes an enemy battery concentration landed on the battalion every five seconds. (77)

At 1700 the 1st Battalion was ordered to consolidate positions and "dig in" for the night. Company I was attached to the 1st Battalion for the purpose of coordinating defenses and artillery protective fires for the night. (See Map E) (78)

Since the 2d Battalion had been unable to advance beyond the edge of the woods it took up defensive positions in the eastern edge of the woods just north of Company B. (79)

4 OCTOBER:

With the exception of artillery fire there was no enemy action along the 1st Battalion's front until 0250 when an enemy combat patrol of platoon strength was brought under fire by Company B. (See Map E) After being subjected to small arms and 60mm mortar fire the patrol withdrew. (80)

Preceded by a two hour artillery preparation, the enemy launched a vigorous counterattack at 0500. Four tanks, followed by a battalion of infantry (2d Battalion, 149th Regiment, 49th Division), assaulted Company I's position and succeeded in overrunning a portion of Company I's defenses. (See Map E) By 0800 the enemy had forced Company I to withdraw through the 1st Battalion. Company C was also driven

(77) Personal Knowledge; A-10, p. 60; (78) A-19, p. 12;
(79) (80) Personal Knowledge

back approximately 150 yards before the counterattack was finally stopped by Companies A and B, with the assistance of American and German artillery. American artillery was falling on the rear of the enemy and his own artillery was getting "beautiful" tree bursts on his leading elements which were immediately in front of the 1st Battalion positions. (81)

At 0940 American planes on armed reconnaissance strafed too close to the 1st Battalion with the result that one man was killed and two were wounded. However, the planes inflicted numerous casualties on the enemy and knocked out several tanks in Merkstein-Hofstadt. (82)

The 1st Battalion resumed its attack against the enemy but was unable to make much progress. Company A in the lower (west) edge of the woods stubbornly continued driving against the enemy and by 1400 had managed to advance 125 yards before it was stopped by intense fire from pillboxes to its front and by flanking fire from enemy positions on the high ground in front of Company C. (83)

All during this period the company commander of C Company was "talking a good fight" and "advancing slowly" on his 300 radio, but on the ground his company had not advanced one foot. It became readily apparent to the A and B Company Commanders that Company C was making no effort to advance. A short time later the B Company Commander overheard the C Company Commander instruct his platoon leaders not to move forward until after Company A had moved forward.

(81) Personal Knowledge; A-2, p. 17; A-3, p. 119; (82) Personal Knowledge; A-19, p. 14; (83) Personal Knowledge.

The B Company Commander informed the A Company Commander of what he had overheard. During the remainder of the afternoon neither company was able to advance. (84)

At 1800 the battalion was ordered to "dig in" and establish its defenses for the night. (See Map F) Regiment also instructed the battalion that it would continue the attack at 0700 the following morning. (85)

The battalion plan was for Company B to pass through Company A at 0645 the following morning and for Companies B and C to attack abreast. (See Map F) When the battalion commander had finished giving his instructions the B Company Commander stated that there was one point which he wanted to get definitely straightened out before the attack started the next morning. He first mentioned the order of the C Company Commander which he had overheard that afternoon and then asked, "Is Company C actually going to attack tomorrow morning or is it going to do its fighting by making phoney advances over the radio as it did today?"

The company commander of C Company denied that he had issued the order to his platoon leaders and there was then a heated exchange of words between the two company commanders. The B Company Commander offered to send for his communications sergeant and radio operator who had also overheard the conversation. The A Company Commander stated that to the best of his knowledge not a single man of Company C had moved forward. The battalion commander then put a stop to all the bickering by stating that the whole

(84) (85) Personal Knowledge.

matter would be dropped then and there. He also made it perfectly clear to the C Company Commander that he expected him to exert every effort to move his company forward the next morning. (86)

5 OCTOBER:

The attack "jumped off" as planned at 0700 with Company B on the right and Company C on the left. When Company B had advanced about 10 yards, intense fire from two mutually supporting pillboxes 50 yards to its front and fire from the high ground to its left flank forced the company to return to its original positions. Company C was also unable to advance. (87)

After several futile attempts to advance, both companies were withdrawn approximately 75 yards and the area was completely blanketed by artillery and mortar fire. This fire was delivered on a time schedule. At the second the mortar and artillery fire lifted both companies rushed forward, but when they passed their original positions they were stopped by enemy fire. This same procedure was repeated several times without success. It became apparent that when the artillery began falling the Germans would move into pillboxes and dugouts. Then as soon as the artillery lifted they would rush back and man their positions before the 1st Battalion could advance beyond their original positions. (88)

(86) (87) (88) Personal Knowledge.

The B Company Commander was of the opinion that his company could reduce the pillboxes and enemy positions to his front if he could figure out some way to eliminate the flanking fire from the high ground in Company C's sector. It was also his opinion that Company C was not making an all out effort to advance. (89)

Although Company B at this time consisted of but two rifle platoons of approximately 20 men each and a skeleton weapons platoon, plus an attached platoon of heavy machine guns, the company commander decided that on the next assault he would have ~~one rifle platoon~~ assault the high ground in Company C's area and the other rifle platoon assault the pillboxes and "dug in" positions in his own company area. (See Map F) (90)

The general plan was to have all men in both platoons move forward rapidly employing marching fire as they advanced. The two light machine guns of the company were to be attached to the left platoon and the gunners were to be instructed to fire their guns from the hip. The heavy machine guns were to fire on the flanks of the platoons and at pillbox embrasures. One flamethrower was to be used by each platoon and the right platoon was to have two satchel charge teams. The flamethrower teams were to be located as far forward as possible so that they could start squirting the flame on, or in the general vicinity, of open enemy emplacements. (91)

At 1030 the B Company Commander called battalion and

(89) (90) (91) Personal Knowledge.

requested that his company be furnished two flamethrowers. After making the request, the company commander oriented his platoon leaders on the plan of attack. He stressed the fact that the success of the entire plan depended on a rapid, simultaneous movement forward, with all men delivering maximum fire on the enemy positions. The time of the assault would depend upon the time of arrival of the flamethrowers. Platoon leaders then returned to their platoon. A check of the platoons revealed that there was not a man left in the company who knew how to operate the flamethrower. (92)

At 1130 the engineer platoon leader and two of his men arrived at the company with the flamethrowers. The company commander explained his situation and requested the platoon leader to let him use the two engineers to operate the flamethrowers. The platoon leader explained that due to the fact that the engineers had suffered so many casualties in this operation, the division commander had issued the order that engineers would not be used on assault missions. The division commander felt that the remaining engineers would have to be saved to construct bridges, prepare demolition charges, refill flamethrowers and perform other engineer work which required engineer training. The company commander took the only course of action which was open ... he withdrew four riflemen to a position 100 yards in rear of the main line and had the engineers give them instructions in the operation of a flamethrower. (93)

(92) (93) Personal Knowledge.

When both platoon leaders informed the company commander that their platoons had been briefed on their mission and all men were in position, the company commander gave the order for the assault to begin. The sudden fury of the attack coupled with the psychological effect caused by flames licking at his positions startled the enemy and before he could regain his balance, the assault troops were overrunning his position. Satchel charges placed against the rear doors of pillboxes and hand grenades dropped down the ventilators encouraged the Germans occupying the pillboxes to surrender.

(94)

The psychological effect of the flamethrower was increased when one German who had been set on fire ran screaming through the area before he was finally burned to death. The company advanced approximately 200 yards before the Germans were able to stop the assault. During this advance, the left platoon, which had initially attacked east to overrun the positions on the high ground in front of Company C, turned south and gradually moved back into its own company area to assist in the "mop up" of enemy positions. After Company B had cleaned out the enemy positions to their front, Company C moved forward and came on line with Company B. (See Map F) (95)

Throughout the rest of the afternoon, neither company was able to advance and at 1700 the battalion was ordered to consolidate positions and "dig in" for the night.

(96)

(94) (95) (96) Personal Knowledge.

During the night, the battalion received instructions from regiment to resume the attack at 0700 the following morning and clean out the remainder of the woods. The battalion was also informed that as soon as it accomplished this mission it would revert to regimental reserve and would be given an opportunity to reorganize and would receive replacements. (97)

6 OCTOBER:

The attack "jumped off" at 0700 with Company B on the right and Company C on the left. Initially both companies were advancing slowly. By 0800 Company B had reduced one pillbox and cleared all of the woods in its zone north of the Rimburg-Merkstein-Hofstadt road. (See Map F) Since Company C had not advanced up on line with Company B, the battalion commander ordered Company A which had been following Company C to move down and protect the flank and rear of Company B by echeloning to the left rear of Company B. (98)

When Company A was in position, Company B crossed the Rimburg-Merkstein-Hofstadt road and began advancing south. By 1210 Company B had reduced four additional pillboxes, cleaned out 900 yards of woods and had captured the battalion objective. (See Map F) During this advance south, a battalion wire team had been closely following the advance of Company B by bounds from one pillbox to another. (99)

(97) (98) (99) Personal Knowledge.

~~Upon arrival at the objective, the B Company Commander~~
reported his position to battalion by 300 radio. The bat-
talion commander informed the company commander that he had
additional instructions for him but that he would wait and
give him these instructions over the telephone. In less
than five minutes the telephone line was in and the bat-
talion commander informed the company commander that regi-
ment had assigned the battalion the mission of capturing
Merkstein-Hofstadt and setting up defensive positions south
of the town. (100)

The battalion commander also passed on the information
that engineers had cut a road through the railroad embank-
ment in the vicinity of the blown-out overpass to enable a
platoon of tanks to move forward and assist the battalion
in its mission. To accomplish his mission the battalion
commander planned to attack with Company B plus one platoon
of tanks on the right and Company C on the left. (See Map F)
The battalion commander wanted to know how soon the companies
would be ready to attack. The B Company Commander informed
the battalion commander that his company could attack in
ten minutes but that he did not know anything concerning
Company C inasmuch as he had been out of physical contact
with that company since before he had crossed the Rimburg-
Merkstein-Hofstadt road. (101)

The battalion commander seemed quite surprised at this
statement because the C Company Commander a short time be-
fore had reported over his radio to battalion that his com-

(100) (101) Personal Knowledge.

pany was in physical contact with Company B and was moving forward slowly. The B Company Commander strongly suggested to the battalion commander that he should come forward and personally check on the situation. (102)

The battalion commander arrived at Company B approximately 15 minutes later and after satisfying himself that Company C was at least 500 yards to the rear of Company B, he called the C Company Commander on the radio and asked him to report his position in relation to Company B. The C Company Commander assured the battalion commander that he was abreast of and physically tied in with Company B.

The battalion commander replied, "That's damned funny because I am with Company B and I have personally looked over the entire area and I can't find a single man from Company C. Now get off your ass and get your company up here damned quick." (103)

About 15 minutes later, a very sheepish company commander and his company arrived at the Company B positions. (104)

In the meantime, the platoon of tanks had arrived and the platoon leader joined the battalion commander and the company commanders to receive the battalion attack order. Companies B and C were to attack abreast with Company B being given the responsibility for cleaning out the major portion of the woods. Company C was assigned the responsibility for cleaning out that portion of Merkstein-Hofstadt lying east of the north-south road running through the town. Company B was responsible for cleaning out that portion of Merkstein-Hofstadt lying west of the north-south road. The

(102) (103) (104) Personal Knowledge.

~~Company A was to initially operate on the right of Company B.~~

(See Map F) After arriving in the town the tanks were to assist the companies as the situation dictated. Company A in battalion reserve was to follow Company B and protect the right flank of the battalion. (105)

By 1400 Company B had cleaned out the woods in its zone, taken 20 prisoners and advanced to the edge of Merkstein-Hofstadt. Since Company C at this time was still somewhere in the woods the B Company Commander changed his plan and ordered his left platoon plus the platoon of tanks to take over Company C's mission. The right platoon was to assume responsibility for accomplishing B Company's mission. This plan was made possible by an arrangement made between the A and B Company Commanders which provided for Company A to follow Company B into the town and to provide close support for Company B. (106)

By 1630 Company B had cleaned out the northern part of Merkstein-Hofstadt and was making satisfactory progress in cleaning out the southern half of the town. In cleaning out the northern part of the town, Company B had captured 15 prisoners. At 1715 Company C arrived in Merkstein-Hofstadt and assisted Company B in cleaning out the remainder of the town. C Company Commander's only explanation of the cause for his late arrival in the town was that his company had been held up by artillery fire. (107)

By 1845 the battalion had consolidated its position and had established its defenses east and south of Merk-

(105) (106) (107) Personal Knowledge.

Personal Knowledge. (See map F) (108)

The regimental commander informed the battalion commander that the division commander and corps commander had praised and commended the battalion for its stubborn aggressive fighting in clearing out the wooded pillbox area. (109)

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS 2 - 6 OCTOBER

During the period 2 - 6 October the 1st Battalion had conducted itself in such a manner as to warrant the praise and commendation of the corps and division commanders for its relentless, stubborn and aggressive fighting over extremely difficult and unfavorable terrain against a determined enemy.

In five days of attack the 1st Battalion had made an opposed river crossing and had captured 19 pillboxes, one enemy town, one enemy factory, 245 enemy soldiers and an undetermined quantity of enemy equipment. The 1st Battalion paid a high price for these accomplishments. In accomplishing the battalion mission, the rifle companies sustained a total of 354 casualties.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

While the operation described in this monograph is a battalion action, to correctly analyze the operation it is necessary to briefly consider some of the decisions and plans

(108) Personal Knowledge; (109) A-20, p. 16.

✓ of higher headquarters which had a direct influence on the battalion operation.

The decision of higher headquarters to postpone the attack from 20 September to 2 October enabled the Germans to improve and reinforce the defenses of the Siegfried Line, thus changing the operation from a normal attack against light opposition to that of a full scale assault on well defended fortified positions. While it is true that the division was not entirely prepared logistically, it is my opinion that the Germans were still less prepared and that the division could have accomplished its mission much more rapidly and with fewer casualties had the attack taken place on 20 September.

✓ In my opinion the initial attack area selected by the regimental commander was unsatisfactory. South of Rimburg the thick woods and steep slopes of the ridge east of the Wurm River provided the enemy with excellent observation on the entire assault area. The woods also provided adequate concealment for the enemy pillboxes and thus precluded the effective use of artillery and tank fire on the pillboxes. The enemy was also able to bring frontal and flanking fire on all troops as soon as they crossed the Wurm River. Rimburg and Rimburg Castle to the north of the attack area also provided the enemy with excellent observation and firing positions on the entire area.

A few days before the attack the regimental commander apparently realized that he had made an error in judgment

in the selection of the attack area. Apparently, in an attempt to rectify the situation, the regimental commander widened the attack zone by initially committing another battalion to attack immediately north of the 1st Battalion through Rimburg. This again, in my opinion, was a poor decision. I believe it would have been a much better plan to simply shift the attack area north and attack through Rimburg in a column of battalions.

The air strike preceding the attack was a complete failure. In the 1st Battalion's sector the medium bombers missed the entire target area. The "jelly" bombs which were dropped by the fighter bombers were ineffective due to the fact that the vegetation in the attack zone was too green and damp to burn. Even from a psychological point of view the air strike was a failure as evidenced by the fact that prisoners, when questioned as to the effect of the air strike, asked "what air strike?". *The failure of the air strike could*

Preparations for the attack were complete and thorough with exception of the fact that the regimental and battalion commanders failed to make necessary arrangements to enable Company B to receive the special assault training course.

The orders for launching the attack on 2 October were simple, thorough and complete. The smoothness with which the attack unfolded gave evidence that there had been adequate planning and coordination at all levels of command. *were*
The completeness and flexibility of the plan *was* demonstrated

when the expedient tank bridge failed and engineers with the necessary equipment were immediately available to construct a treadway bridge. The speed with which the battalion advanced across the Wurm River attested to the effectiveness of the training and orientation of the individual soldier.

The artillery preparation was adequate and well planned. Close supporting fires were well coordinated and effectively assisted the 1st Battalion in its advance to the edge of the woods east of the Wurm River. By following closely behind these fires the 1st Battalion was able to advance forward rapidly with the minimum number of casualties. The nature of the terrain made it impossible for artillery and mortars to effectively render close supporting fires in the attack on the pillbox area. In my opinion, the only failure on the part of the artillery was that of not providing adequate counter battery fire. From the standpoint of the artillery this failure was unavoidable because it was caused by the lack of an adequate supply of ammunition.

On 2 October the regimental commander, due to pressure from higher headquarters, prematurely committed his reserve battalion in an area where there was little chance for a successful operation. This reserve was committed prior to the commitment of the reserve companies of the attacking battalions.

WTP When the regimental commander decided on 3 October to capitalize on the success of the regiment on his north, it

was necessary to organize a special task force consisting of elements of two different battalions plus tanks and tank destroyers. If the regimental commander had not prematurely committed his reserve, it would have been available to accomplish this mission.

Task Force Quinn, which was operating successfully, was prematurely dissolved and units turned back to their organic commands before the task force had completed its mission, thus making it necessary for the 1st Battalion to assume responsibility for the mission. During the delay caused by this ~~change the Germans were given an opportunity to reorganize~~ and reinforce their positions. It is my opinion that if the task force had not been dissolved, it would have been able to accomplish its mission before the hours of darkness on 3 October. As it was, it took the 1st Battalion two and one half days to accomplish the mission.

After the dissolution of the task force the 1st Battalion was given the mission of cleaning out the woods to the south. The battalion, with two companies abreast, launched an attack south which was immediately stopped. In my opinion, the battalion commander failed to make maximum utilization of the terrain by overlooking the possibility of using Company I's position on high ground as a base from which to launch an attack on the rear of the enemy.

- Company C's lack of aggressiveness and failure to keep abreast of the company attacking on its right enabled the enemy to inflict numerous casualties by firing into the flank of the right company.

Practically all of the battalion commander's information on the battalion situation was obtained from radio reports of the company commander rather than on his own personal observations. As a result of the false reports concerning the location and movement of Company C the battalion commander was improperly informed as to his battalion's true situation. Even though there was a critical shortage of officers and small unit leaders within the battalion, I believe that the battalion commander should have immediately relieved and preferred charges against the C Company Commander when he discovered that the C Company Commander was submitting false reports.

The attached tanks were of little assistance to the battalion in this operation due to the nature of the terrain. Had the terrain been such that the tanks could have been used in close support of the infantry, the mission probably could have been accomplished much sooner and with fewer casualties.

The distribution of overprinted maps and aerial photographs down to platoons was of material assistance to the small unit leaders in making their attack plans and in explaining and showing each man exactly where he was to go and what he was to accomplish. These maps and photographs accurately depicted the location of approximately 80 percent of the enemy's permanent installations. Information obtained by the use of patrols and observation posts was effectively used to verify and supplement this information.

The Germans effectively utilized field fortifications to supplement the defenses of the pillboxes. These fortifications gave "close in" protection to the pillboxes and proved very effective against assault teams moving up to place satchel charges on the pillboxes.

The chief weakness of the German defenses of the Siegfried Line was the lack of adequate reserves with which to counterattack before the American troops could consolidate their gains in the penetrated area. If the Germans had counterattacked on the afternoon of 3 October they probably would have been able to reduce the penetration and reestablish their original line.

It is my opinion, that the battalion with the exception of Company C, rightfully deserved the praise and commendation given it by the corps and division commanders for its relentless, stubborn and aggressive fighting over extremely difficult and unfavorable terrain against a determined enemy.

LESSONS

1. The attack of a fortified position requires careful, thorough, detailed preparation and planning.
2. Fortified positions can be successfully reduced by a determined and aggressive attack.
3. Commanders of all echelons should be well forward where they can personally observe what is going on and thus be able to base their estimates of the situation on personal

knowledge supplemented by reports, rather than on reports alone.

4. Reports submitted by commanders at all levels must be accurate and complete.

5. Incompetent and non-aggressive leaders must be immediately relieved.

6. Commanders of all echelons must keep abreast of the situation and be prepared to capitalize on or exploit successes of their own or adjacent units.

7. Reserves should be committed only if the commitment will directly influence the outcome of the action.

8. In the attack, infantry troops need an organic, heavy caliber, direct fire weapon which can be transported by hand over terrain which precludes the use of tanks or other direct fire weapons.

9. Commanders of all echelons must carefully study their subordinate commanders and avoid putting pressure on those who do not need it. Such pressure from higher commanders often results in the premature commitment of reserves.

10. In the attack of a fortified position commanders must make the maximum use of patrols and observation posts to supplement intelligence reports of enemy positions.

11. In the attack of a fortified position each soldier of the attacking force should be trained in the use and operation of all special assault weapons.

12. While it is possible for infantry troops using organic weapons and with no special assault training to reduce pillboxes, it is highly desirable that special assault equipment be provided and that all troops receive special assault training.

13. In planning an attack of a fortified position, the assault area must be carefully selected. An area in which the pillboxes and emplacements are located in open terrain is most desirable.

14. Close supporting artillery and mortar fires cannot be effectively utilized in dense woods.

15. Commanders should make every effort to preserve the tactical unity of all elements of their command. In the formation of special task forces, it is far better to have two rifle companies from one battalion than to have one company from one battalion and one from another battalion.

OK
16. If possible, the commander of a special task force should be the commander or executive officer of the unit supplying the majority of the troops to make up the task force.

*Also whether
CO. or 2nd Lt. can be
released.*

*Depends on
size of task force
& availability for
a 2nd Lt. less
1st Lt. or similar
cust.*

17. Field fortifications are an effective supplement to the defenses of a pillbox area and provide close in protection for the pillboxes.

18. Saturation bombing by medium bombers prior to the attack and close support by fighter bombers during the attack is desirable providing the operation is well planned.

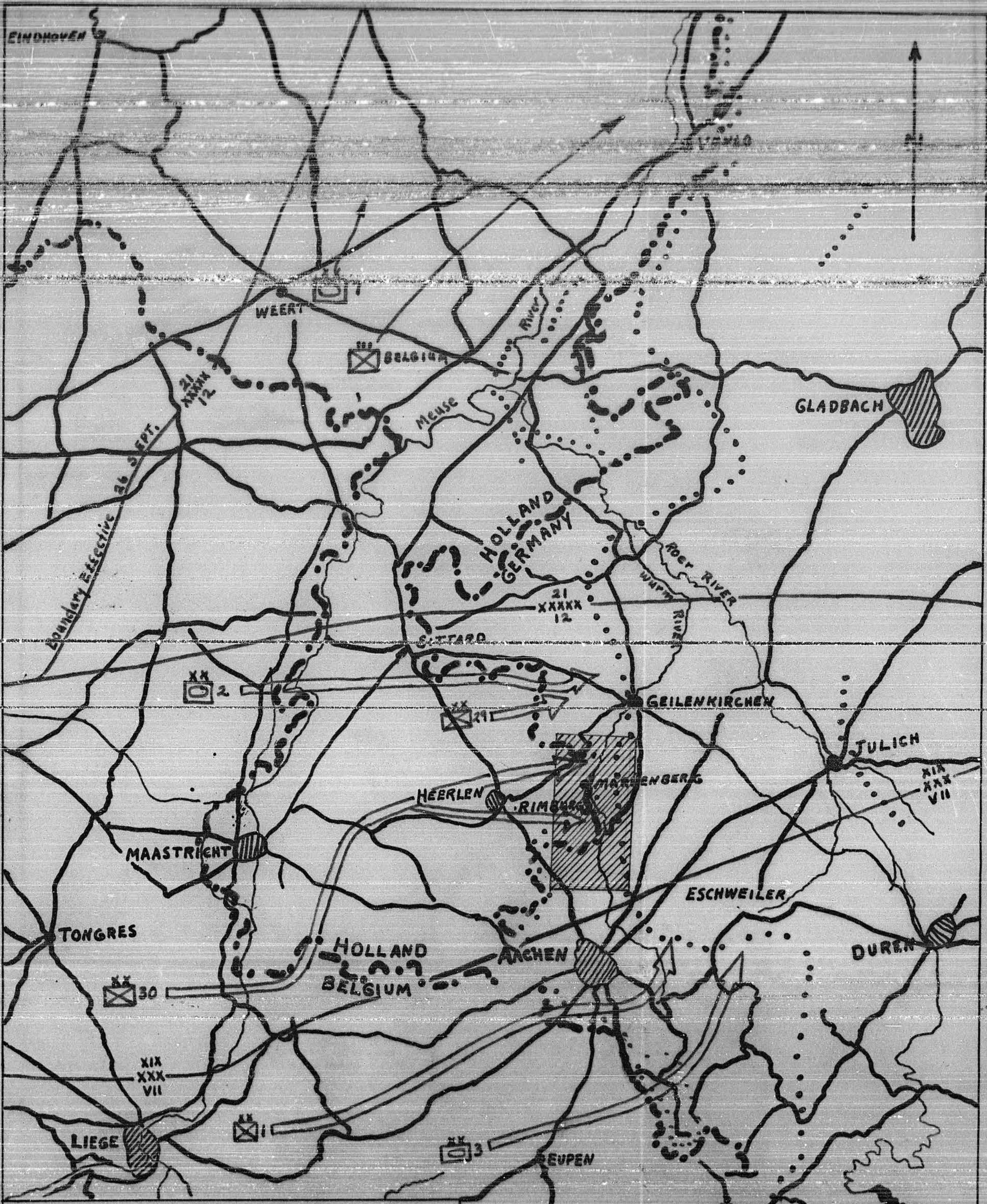
and coordinated and the infantry unit commanders are furnished facilities for direct communication with the planes.

*Obviously
yes. Essential?*

19. In the defense of a fortified position, local infantry reserves are essential. These reserves should be located where they can be employed to launch a counterattack as soon as any portion of the fortified position has been penetrated.

20. In an attack the enemy should never be given time to reorganize and consolidate his positions.

21. Terrain permitting, a tank-infantry-artillery-engineer team is the most efficient and effective team for the reduction of fortified positions.



MAP A
SITUATION XIX CORPS

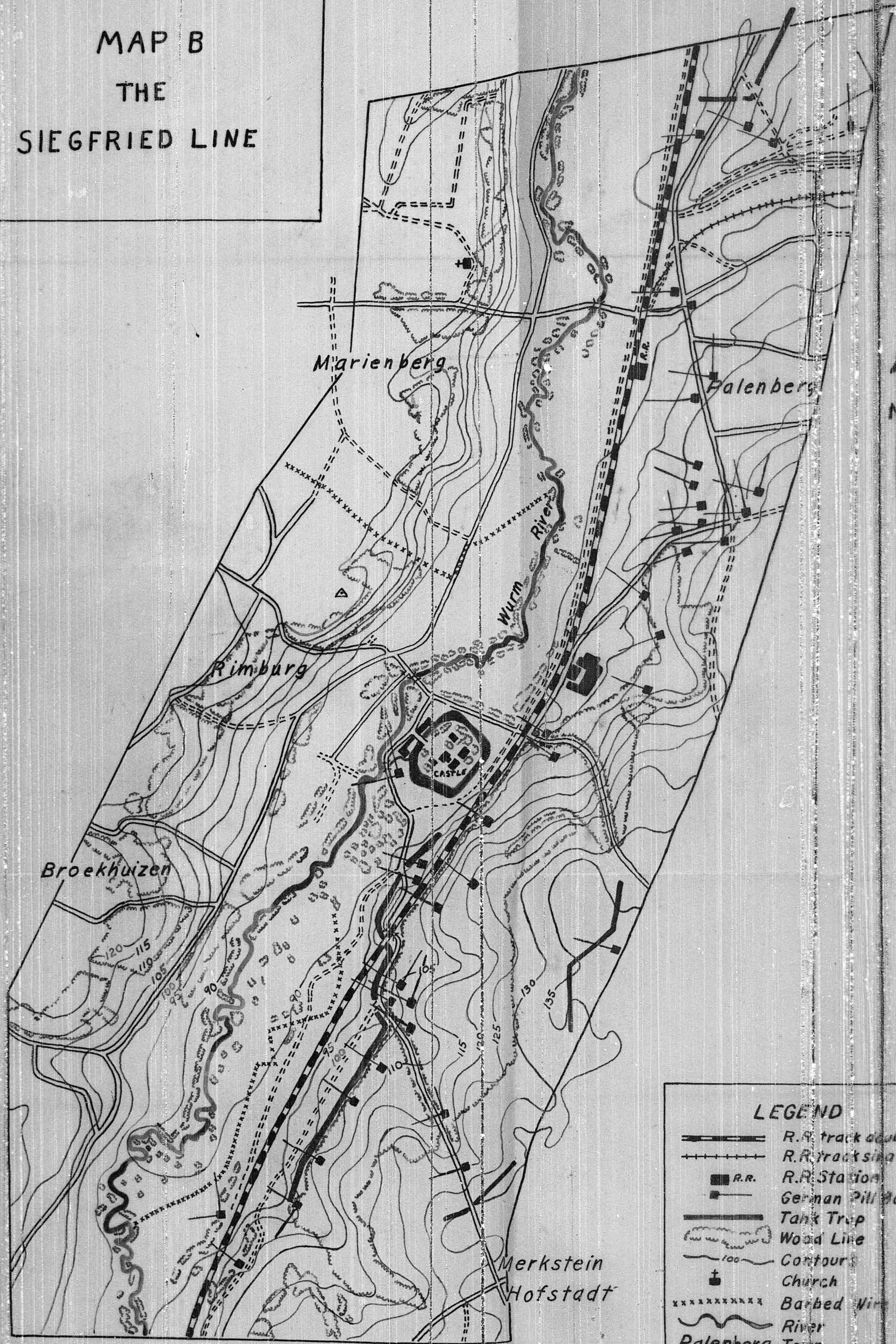
SCALE 1:250,000 OR 1 INCH EQUALS 6.25 MILES



▨ AREA MAPS B AND C

••••• FORTIFIED LINE

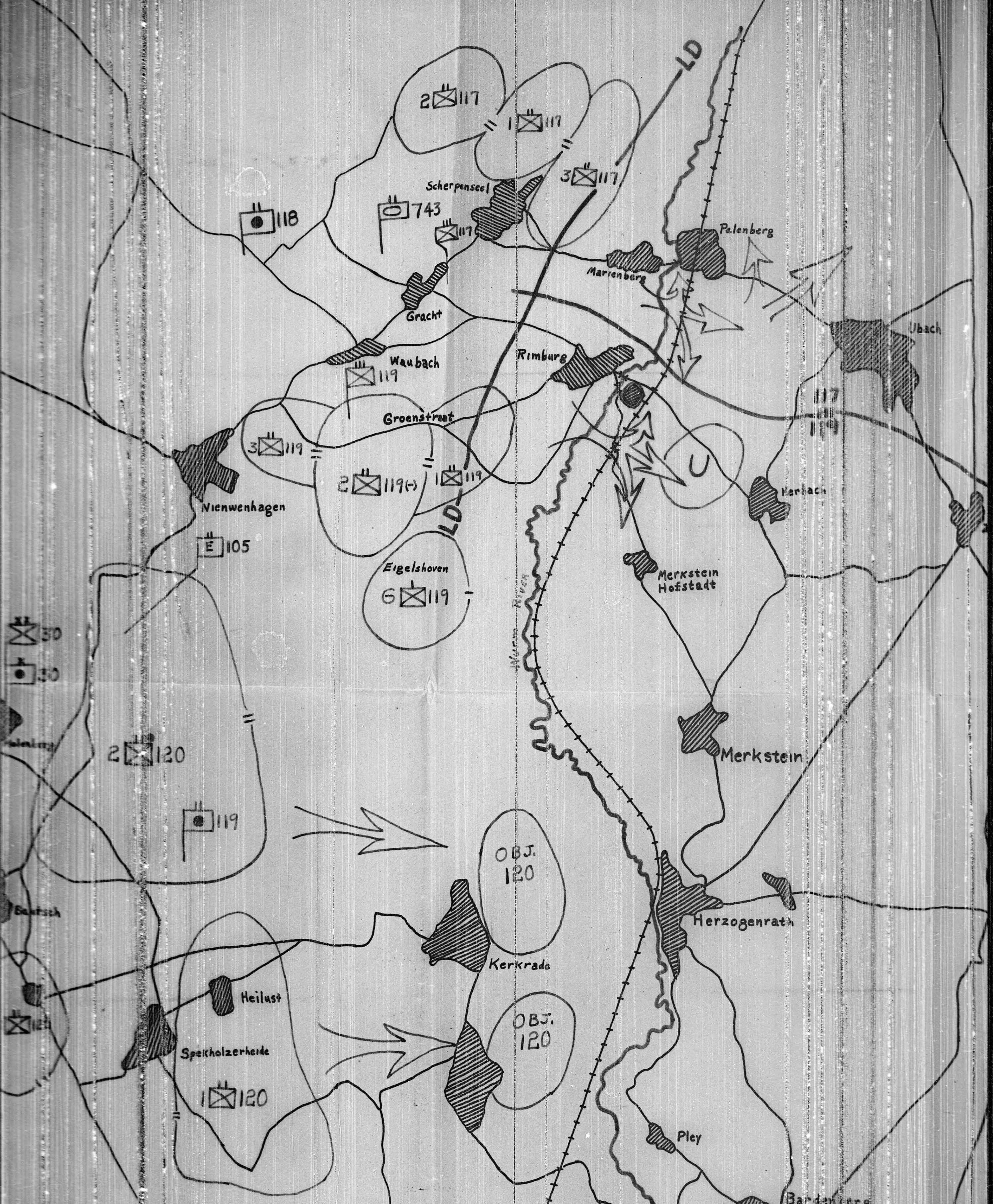
MAP B
THE
SIEGFRIED LINE



1000 500 0 1000 2000 3000 YARDS
SCALE - 1:10,000 CONTOUR INTERVAL - 5 YARDS

LEGEND

	R.R. track double
	R.R. track single
	R.R. Station
	German Pill Box
	Tank Trap
	Wood Line
	Contour
	Church
	Barbed Wire
	River
	Palenberg-Town
	Trig. Station
	Road

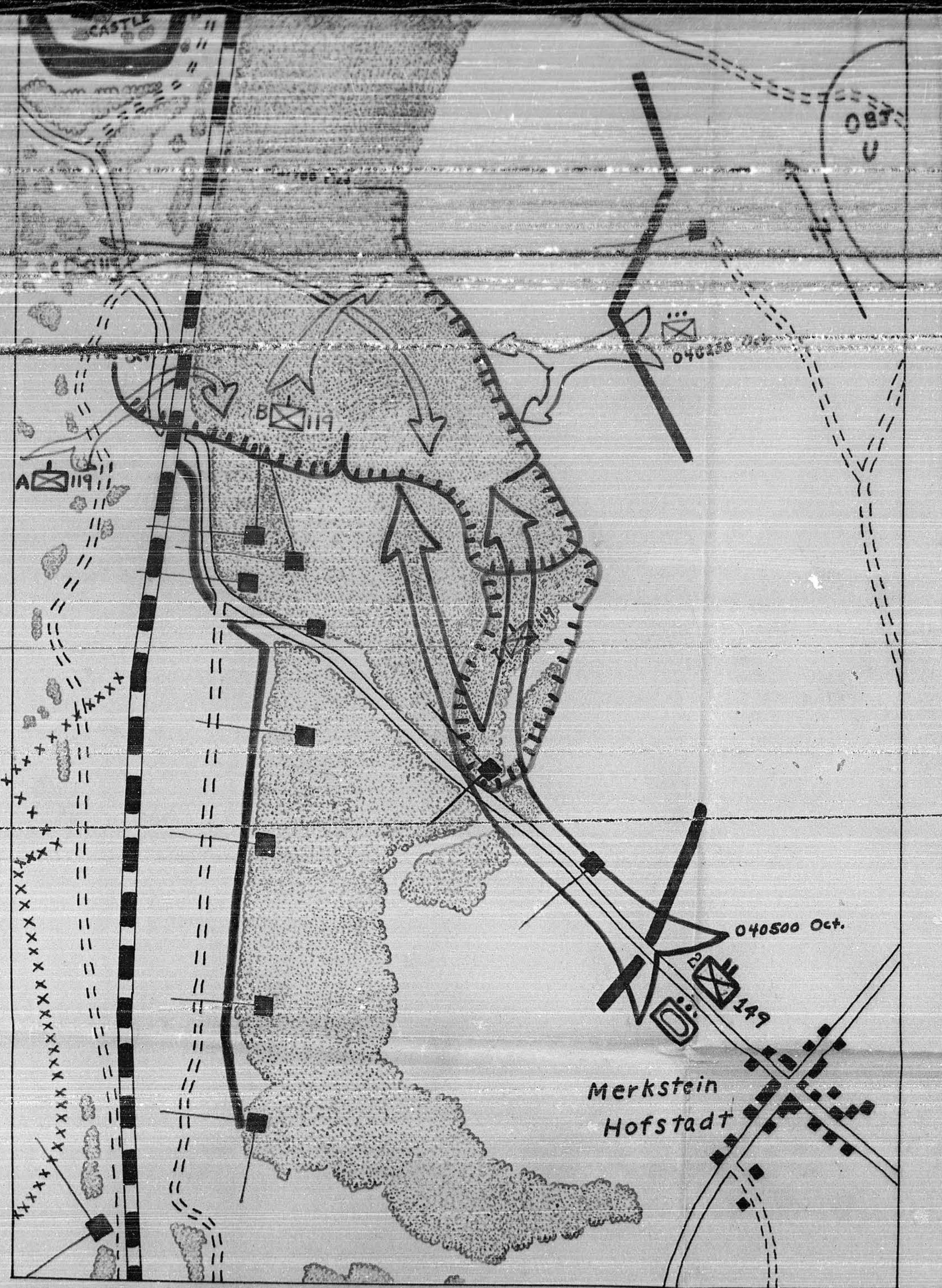


MAP

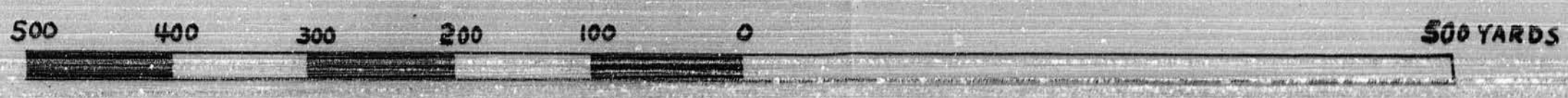
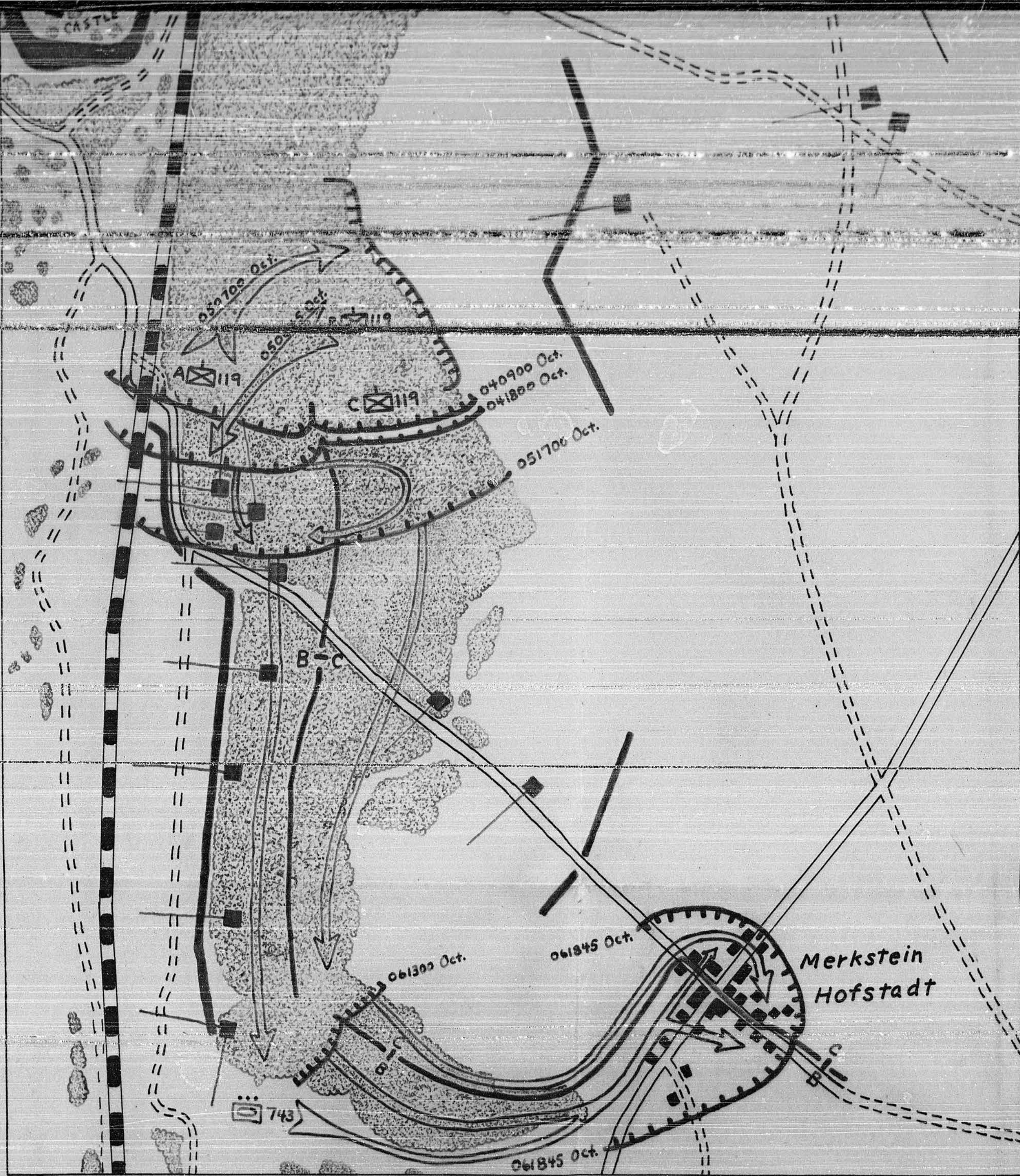
THE ATTACK PLAN

SCALE 1:25,000








MAP E
THE COUNTERATTACK
 SCALE 1/5000
 B.R. track double
 G German Pill Box
 Tank Trap



MAP F

ADVANCE TO MERKSTEIN-HOFSTAUT

SCALE 1:5000

 R.R. track double
 Fragment Fall Box
 Tank Trap