

HEADQUARTERS 100TH BN 442D RCT
A PO 464 US ARMY

24 July 1945

SUBJECT: Operational Reports

TO : C. O. 442 RCT, APO 464, US Army (Attention S-3)

1. In compliance with Memorandum, Hqtrs 442 RCT, dated 18 July 1945, pertaining to Operational Reports, the following reports are hereby submitted.

FIRST BATTLE OF BELVEDERE.

On the 25th of June, 1944, the 100th Infantry Bn (Separate) moved into their forward assembly area near the town of Suvereto after a march of approximately 13 miles from their bivouac area. At 0600 hours, 6 June 1944, the regiment received an attack order to take the strongly defended town of Belvedere, dominating the Suvereto Sasseta highway. The 2nd Bn was to pass through the 142nd Inf Regt and the 3rd to take over the 517th Parachute Regiment sector while the 100th Bn remained in reserve.

The 100th Bn moved out of their assembly area at 0630 hours, and after a march of approximately six miles, reached the reserve area south of Belvedere at 1130 hours. No sooner had the Bn arrived at their area when it was committed to make an attack. The jump off time was set at 1200.

Despite the very short notice, the Bn Commander made his plans and oriented his company commanders by map study of the area. There was no time for a thorough ground reconnaissance.

At 1200 hours, the Bn moved out with the Bn in column of Companies, with B Co leading, followed by A Co, Command group, C Co (in reserve) and the 81mm Mortar platoon. HMG platoons were attached to the two leading companies.

Following the route as shown on the attached sketch, the two leading companies advanced east of Belvedere and reached a high point northeast of the town. When advanced elements (scouts of B Co) neared this high ground, they found several enemy telephone lines which they immediately cut and found that the enemy had an OP on this hill. Finding that their communication lines had been severed, the enemy personnel fled in the direction of the town of Belvedere. Upon reaching this high ground, B Co located a large enemy force including tanks, half tracks, trucks, enemy vehicles of all types and an enemy battery of SP howitzers which was firing on friendly troops to the southeast.

Unable to secure prompt artillery fire on the enemy, the C.O. of B Co immediately sent his 2nd platoon down the draw to clean out the battery of SP howitzers, with supporting fire from the light machine

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gun section. 2nd platoon was followed by the third echeloned to the left rear. The first platoon followed up as company reserve echeloned to the right rear.

The third platoon deployed on the high ground overlooking the road junction to give covering fire to the 2nd platoon. The 2nd platoon then moved forward and with excellent fire and movement, captured the entire battery of SP howitzers numbering three guns located on the west side of the road running to Sassetta. The third platoon then swung left and took positions on the high ground overlooking the secondary road running northwest from the town of Belvedere. With the two platoons in position, the Bn now controlled the entire road network leading out of the town. Meanwhile, the first platoon executed a very sharp flanking movement and proceeded to enter the town from the Northwest. After a fierce firefight in which they knocked out and captured two MG positions and several snipers with machine pistols, the first platoon entered and occupied the northern half of the town. From their positions, the third platoon, upon locating enemy movement near a house to their immediate front, dispatched a squad to take the installations, covered by the rest of the platoon. This squad successfully attacked and took this enemy position which turned out to be a Co CP and captured two half tracks armed with machine guns, a truck and eleven jeeps. This squad was then fired on by a Mark IV tank which was successfully knocked out by a bazooka team working with the squad. During the attack, several of the vehicles tried to escape but they were shot up by BAR fire from positions in the 2nd platoon sector. After cleaning up several enemy positions, the second platoon moved over to the right to support A Co which was then in position to attack the high ground to the northwest of the town. The 3rd platoon also moved over to tie in with the second and took up defensive positions. At 1530 one platoon of C Co was committed to take up positions between the town and the left flank of the 3rd platoon, completing a defense against possible counter attacks. Heavy machine guns were sent down to the 3rd and 2nd platoon areas to take up positions. Shortly afterwards, a column of enemy personnel was sighted marching on the road to the south of Belvedere. The heavy machine guns immediately opened up, firing at an approximate range of 800 yards and completely routed this enemy formation, inflicting heavy casualties.

Meanwhile, to completely seal all escape routes to the north and northwest, A Co was ordered to execute a flanking movement. The C. O. of A Co, maneuvering his company to the right of B Co sent his 1st platoon northwards along the road on the east side and the 2nd platoon on the west side, keeping his third platoon in reserve. Both platoons ran into very heavy fire from machine gun positions, but with excellent use of fire and movement, they knocked out all enemy resistance and overran the Bn CP and motor pool. To trap the enemy, the 3rd platoon

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was sent on a wide encircling movement from the left. This completely cut off all routes of escape and after a brief firefight, the motor pool was captured and much equipment and personnel were captured.

By 1700 hours, A Co had fought its way into the town of Michelino, adjoining Belvedere and had overcome almost all enemy resistance. The successful attack by the battalion completely routed the enemy and they retreated in disorder. The battalion was then reorganized and pursued the enemy further north. No resistance was met and the battalion moved into a defensive position in the vicinity of Pisciareello, on high ground overlooking Sassetta.

The battalion remained in this defensive position for the night of the 26th. The following morning at 1030 hours, orders were received to attack the town of Sassetta. At 1200 hours, the Bn moved out with A Co along the main road leading into the town, C Co on the right, and B Co following A Co. This attack was preceded by a preparatory fire by the 522nd Artillery and ~~our~~ heavy mortars. ^{C, F, D Co} C Co entered the town from the south as A Co worked around from the west and northwest. After silencing several machine guns and snipers, C Co entered the town and occupied the southern portion of the town. A Co then entered from the left and left rear and cleaned out scattered enemy resistance. By 2100 hours the town was completely cleaned out of enemy personnel and a road block was securely set up at the northern entrance to the town. The following day, the battalion moved to the northern outskirts of the town and took up defensive positions, covering the network of roads leading north from Sassetta.

In operations against the enemy on the 26th and 27th of June, 1944, the Battalion had killed a known total of 178 German SS troops, wounded 20, and captured 86 of the enemy. A summary of captured vehicles and guns is as follows: 8 trucks, 19 jeeps, 13 motorcycles, 2 AT guns, 5 tanks, 3 horsedrawn carts, 2 command cars, 2 half tracks, 1 81mm mortar. One Bn CP including radios, maps, etc. was captured intact. Dozens of small arms, machine guns, and machine pistols, with thousands of rounds of ammunition were also taken. Our casualties included 4 killed, one DOW, and 16 wounded.

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