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HEADQUARTERS 337TH INFANTRY

APO #85, U. S. Army,  
21 February 1945.

REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JANUARY

PERIOD 1 JANUARY - 11 JANUARY

The period opened with the Regiment in a bivouac area north of Lucca, where the Division (-) had moved to be in a position to assist the 92nd Division. Commanders and their staffs formulated plans to repel enemy attack in the Serchio Valley sector or to defend on successive defensive lines. Ground reconnaissance was conducted by officers and key non-commissioned officers in order to prepare them to initiate any plan on instant notice. The troops, meanwhile, continued a program of light training consistent with the half hour alert. On 6 January an order was received to return to the Gagliano area and prepare to relieve the 36th British Brigade. The move was made the next day and completed at 2100.

The evening of 8 January the 1st Battalion with Company "E" attached, moved by truck to a forward assembly area at Casalino (9931), closing at 090200. The next day Cannon Company emplaced their howitzers in a firing position near Casetto (9729), and after dark Companies "B" and "C" relieved the 8th Battalion of the Argyles and Sutherland Highlanders on Montecalderaro (9933).

The rest of the Regiment moved forward on 10 January - the 2nd Battalion to Sas-simo (9730), the 3d Battalion to Casalino (9931), Service and Antitank Companies to (980230). During the night the remainder of the reinforced 1st Battalion took positions on Montecalderaro, relieving the 6th Battalion of the Royal West Kents.

During daylight of 11 January, Companies "F" and "I", both in battalion reserve, took over the positions of the 5th Buffs Battalion south of the Cuccoli Ridge. After dark the remaining company of the 2nd Battalion, Company "G", relieved the 1st Recce Regiment on Marzolina, and the 3d Battalion (less one company) relieved the 2nd North Staffordshire Battalion on Farneto. At noon command of the sector passed from the 36th British Brigade to the 337th Infantry. Effective at the same time the Regiment was attached to the 1st British Division for operation.

The regimental zone had a main line of resistance of 6000 yards with the left limiting point at (973320) and the right limiting point at (996324). The defensive position included the Cuccoli-Farneto Ridge, the northwest slope of M Grande, and the Calderaro feature (Calanca, C Rovine, Vezzola, la Costa). The draws in the left of the sector were covered by platoon strongpoints on Hill 425 and Hill 386. All avenues of approach into the front line were blocked by ambush patrols. Positions were fully manned after dark and occupied as an outpost line during daylight hours. On days of poor visibility caused by fog, snow, or rain the night positions were 50% manned.

The enemy troops opposing the regiment were elements of two regiments of the 1st Parachute Division, considered one of the best German divisions in Italy. Although seemingly on the defensive, they had retaken M Castellaro, a hill captured by the Regiment in October. They also held Bursano, M Mezzano, Poggio, and Bertochi in some strength.

PERIOD 12 JANUARY - 16 JANUARY

On 12 January the 1st Battalion, 339th Infantry, was attached to the Regiment as the reserve battalion. They spent the day moving to an assembly area near C del Chin (991301) and immediately began to work on counterattack plans to restore the main line of resistance in case the enemy succeeded in breaking through.

At 1910 an enemy group infiltrated up the Fontana Morta draw, close to Calanca, but were forced back in disorder by our fire. One of the enemy was taken in the foray but in another part of the ~~sector~~ men was captured.

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JANUARY (CONT'D)

The rest of the period was spent in improving positions, siting automatic weapons to cover better fields of fire, registering in all defensive fires, and installing concertina wire entanglements and trip flares.

PERIOD 17 JANUARY - 31 JANUARY

At 170700 the Regiment reverted from attached to the 1st British Division to control of the 85th Division.

A system for the rotation of front line companies was put into effect so that troops spent no more than ten days at a time in a front-line foxhole. For two nights beginning 19 January, the 1st Battalion, 339th Infantry, plus Company "F", took over the positions on Montecalderaro; the 1st Battalion reverted to regimental reserve; Company "E" went into 2nd Battalion reserve, replacing Company "F". By 21 January two platoons of Company "A", 100th Chemical Weapons Battalion, had moved into the Clemente Valley near Casalino and were ready to fire supporting fires.

The night of 21/22 January the 3d Battalion began a round-robin turn-over completing it after daylight.

Company "G", relieved by Company "E" on 15 January in the left sector, reverted to 2nd Battalion reserve.

Beginning the night of 29/30 January the 1st Battalion, after ten days of rest and light training, took over the Calderaro sector with Company "G" attached. This relief was completed by 302200. The 1st Battalion, 339th Infantry assembled in the reserve area at C del Chin (991301) and moved to the rear the next day. Their place was taken by the 3d Battalion, 339th Infantry which cleared in by 1620.

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Snow covered the ground the whole month of January and created the problem of concealment of the patrols and supply trains that operated under enemy observation. To solve this problem the men wore white camouflage suits, mules were covered with improvised white capes.

Supply was accomplished by mule or by hand carry on trails that were impassible to vehicles. In order to keep these trails open it was necessary to constantly clear them of snow and mud.

The enemy continued his aggressive defense of the sector during the month. His patrols nightly tried to enter our lines but in no case was this successful. Enemy fire on our positions consisted of long range machine gun fire, light artillery fire, and continuous mortar fire. On a few occasions enemy rockets landed in the area.

The reserve companies of the 2nd and 3d Battalions dug the foxholes and weapons emplacements on the regimental reserve line and prepared the position for occupancy in case of necessity.

On 23 January, 250 replacements were assigned to the Regiment for training, and they were assembled in a tent camp at Service Company. A representative cadre headed by Major Hugh R. Ballantine began a period of intensive instruction for new men.

An eight head regimental shower with clothing exchange was installed and operated by Antitank Company at (973305).

During the month but three prisoners were captured, all from the 1st Parachute Division.

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, 435017

By NNJ NARA, Date 10/13

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JANUARY (CONT'D)

Strength of the command as the period opened was as follows: 137 officers, 5 warrant officers, and 3,074 enlisted men. At the end of the period the strength was as follows: 160 officers, 5 warrant officers, and 3,291 enlisted men. Two hundred and fifty two replacements joined the Regiment during the month.

Decorations awarded this month:

Distinguished Service Cross - Cpl Hugh A. Carmichael  
Pfc William D. Francisco (posthumously)  
10 Silver Star Medals (1 posthumously)  
83 Bronze Star Medals (2 posthumously)  
11 Oak Leaf Clusters to Bronze Star Medals  
20 Purple Hearts  
1 Oak Leaf Cluster to Purple Heart  
258 Combat Infantryman Badges

Company "F" cited for outstanding performance of duty in action from 23 to 29 September 1944, near Roco, Italy.

Our battle casualties for the month were as follows:

	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED MEN</u>
Killed in action	0	9
Wounded in action	0	12
Missing in action	0	1
	<u>0</u>	<u>22</u>

Total casualties - 22

By order of Colonel HUGHES:

*Henry C. Triesler, Jr.*  
HENRY C. TRIESLER, JR.,  
Major, 337th Infantry,  
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