

HEADQUARTERS 337TH INFANTRY

AGO #85, U. S. Army,  
20 July 1944.

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Restricted Classification  
Removed For  
Executive Order 10601

REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JUNE 14 - 337 INF R&T  
PERIOD 1 JUNE - 4 JUNE

As the month opened the Regiment was disposed as follows: Company "I" was just south of Hill 891, the rest of the 3rd Battalion echeloned to the rear; 1st Battalion was 1600 yards north of the town of Lariano; 2nd Battalion, in reserve, had two companies in Lariano cleaning out scattered resistance. An attack was set to start at 0600 on 1 June.

At 0600 the 1st and 3rd Battalions started advancing and the 2nd Battalion was ordered to complete the cleaning out of Lariano without delay. The 3rd Battalion was ordered to relieve the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry on Castel d' Ariano and then to push to the north. The 1st Battalion had advanced 1000 yards. At 0820 the 2nd Battalion reported Lariano clear of all enemy and moved to an assembly area in reserve in the vicinity of the town. The Battalion then moved out following the route of the 3rd Battalion to relieve them on Hill 891. The 2nd Battalion was to remain on the hill until relieved by a battalion of the 339th Infantry and was then to move to reserve position near Hill 655 in the center of the Regimental zone. The 3rd Battalion acting on order moved out without awaiting relief to take M. Fiore (Hill 715) and prepared to seize Hills 726 and 766 or to assist the 1st Battalion in their capture. As the 3rd Battalion moved down the north slope of Hill 891 the leading companies ran into heavy small arms and machine gun fire and harassing mortar and sniper fire and by 1600 had only advanced 800 yards. In the meantime, the 1st Battalion about 1000 yards northeast of Hill 891 with an exposed right flank was having considerable difficulty in the thick wooded draws. Motorized patrols and numerous snipers constantly harassed the troops who pushed forward slowly. Several times the enemy drove wedges behind the advancing troops. At one time a whole platoon of Company "p" was surprised by the enemy and taken prisoner. Once the Battalion CP was surrounded and the infiltrating Germans were repulsed only after every available man was rounded up to scout out and kill the enemy. By 1600 the Battalion had worked its way to Hill 891, taking several hills on the way. The 2nd Battalion had reached Castel d' Ariano and taken over control from a battalion of the 143rd Infantry. Elements of the 339th Infantry moved up to occupy this hill and the 2nd Battalion was alerted for possible mission of taking Hill 736 and 766. The 3rd Battalion used tank destroyers to good advantage and was able to continue its advance. During the afternoon the Regimental CP moved to a railroad station in Lariano. The late afternoon was spent in repulsing enemy suicide counterattacks made by small groups of Germans fighting desperately to disorganize our lines and gain time for their now retreating forces. At dark Via Latina was crowded with German vehicles hurriedly moving to the northwest. All artillery was directed on the highway with devastating results. The battalions continued to send captured Germans to the rear as we inched forward. At 2100 the 1st Battalion was solidly entrenched on Hill 655, having used tanks in its assault. Enemy patrols continued to attempt to infiltrate through our lines but without success. The 2nd Battalion moved to the right rear of the 1st Battalion with the mission of mopping up the rear area and protecting the Regimental right flank. After dark the 3rd Battalion moved up abreast of and to left of the 1st Battalion.

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At 020200 the attack order was issued with objectives as follows: 1st Battalion, Hill 450 and nose running north; 3rd Battalion, Hills 726, 736, and 766 (M. Ceraso). At 0450 a preparation by six artillery battalions boomed forth to pave the way for the attack scheduled at 0530. A new technique was tried: First, a fifteen minute preparation was placed on targets immediately in front of the troops lifting to far targets for ten minutes. Then the original close-in targets were refired for fifteen minutes as the infantry moved forward. On time, the 1st and 3rd Battalions resumed the attack with tank and tank destroyer support. They encountered armored cars and infantry and were held up initially. At 0700 the 3rd Battalion withdrew, reorganized, and then pushed on. All battalions were ordered to advance with all possible speed with the mission of cutting Highway 6.

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JUNE (CONT'D)

By 0920 the 1st Battalion had gained Hill 625. Supported by fire from the 2nd Chemical Battalion, the 2nd Battalion was committed on the right of the 1st Battalion to plug the gap on the Regimental right flank and by 1000 was nearing Via Latina with enemy tank and sniper opposition. By 1200 the 1st and 3rd Battalions were at the foot of Hill 631, were overcoming enemy resistance, and were moving up the hill. At the same time the 2nd Battalion was making rapid progress on the right with the aid of tanks although the enemy captured about thirty 2nd Battalion troops during the advance. The Battalion became somewhat disorganized in the thick woods but continued toward the road to their front. At 1330 the other two battalions were also on the move, had taken some prisoners, and reported the enemy abandoning self-propelled guns and much equipment. The 3rd Battalion was ordered to take Hill 786 assisted by the 1st Battalion. An hour later our troops were moving over Hill 640 with little opposition and were approaching M. Ceraso. By 1530 they were preparing to attack the hill, and the 2nd Battalion had cut the road in their sector and continued to advance. Again all organizations were urged to ruthlessly wipe out all resistance, to push forward vigorously, and to cut Highway 6 as soon as possible. By 1840 M. Ceraso was in our hands after a sharp fight with a group of prisoners. At 2200 the 1st and 3rd Battalions halted for the night and organized a strong defense on the hill with orders to advance 2000 yards to Hill 518 at dawn and then to seize a portion of Via Maremmana. In the meanwhile tanks and tank destroyers had joined 2nd Battalion at 2030 and they had forced their way two miles ahead to Hill 357, a scant 1200 yards south of Highway 6. The Battalion was two miles now out in front of the rest of the line with no other units on either flank. Prisoners they captured were from the 1059 Panzer Grenadier Regiment, which had moved up to reinforce the battered Hermann Goering Division. The Regimental CP had been temporarily set up in the woods all day and now moved to the vicinity of Colle Fojano. German aircraft made a futile effort to slow our advance by strafing and bombing during the night and a counterattack against Hill 786 by about forty Germans was thrown back with losses to the enemy.

Just before dawn an order was received which changed our mission: The Regiment was ordered to take Hills 531 and 518 and then swing to the left and change our route of advance from north to northwest. The Regimental order assigned objectives as follows:

1st Battalion - Hill 531  
2nd Battalion - Hill 600  
3rd Battalion - Hill 600

Upon their capture, 1st Battalion was to revert to Regimental reserve and the other two battalions were to continue toward Monte Compatri, bypassing Rocca Priora. It was later than 0600, the scheduled H-Hour, when all battalions jumped off but by 0900 all objectives were taken without much resistance. An artillery concentration prepared for Rocca Priora was cancelled when troops of an adjacent unit entered the town. All along the line the enemy had broken contact and was withdrawing. The 2nd and 3rd Battalions now in approach march formation moved west on parallel roads and the 2nd Battalion followed at 1000 yards. By 1400 the 1st Battalion was way out in front and had reached the Regimental objective, the 2nd Battalion was 2000 yards to their east, and the 3rd Battalion had cleared Rocca Priora. The Regiment was then ordered into an approach march formation in column of battalions. The 2nd Battalion, with all the armor, passed through the fatigued 1st Battalion to lead off, with 3rd and 1st Battalions following in that order. The 2nd Battalion took Monte Compatri without much trouble. We were now in the valley that led to Rome and the attack was pressed with vigor. Between Monte Compatri and Monte Forcio Catone, the Germans chose to take a stand which delayed our advance. The 2nd Battalion spent the afternoon wiping out this resistance. By early evening the delaying position began to crumble and 125 prisoners including 5 officers were taken and escorted to the cages. By 2000 the 2nd Battalion had pushed out to a point 2000 yards north of Frascati, destroying pockets of resistance, tanks, and armored half-tracks, and cleaning out the two towns on the way. In this position the battalion was far ahead of units on its flanks and was ordered to hold and rest during the night. The Regimental CP moved to Monte Forcio Catone and the other two battalions went into bivouacs, the 3rd Battalion west and the 1st Battalion east of the town. Local security was stressed during the night less an enemy attack attempt to separate our forces.

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JUNE (CONT'D)

At 0600 the 3rd Battalion using the 2nd Battalion front line as a line of departure moved in advance guard formation with the mission of taking high ground north of Highway 6, five miles closer to and near the outskirts of the city of Rome. The other two battalions followed in column. A task force of one motorized rifle company supported by tanks, engineers, and artillery was organized under the 3rd Battalion Executive Officer for the purpose of continuing through Rome after the 3rd Battalion took their objective, and seizing two bridges over the Tiber River west of Rome. At the same time the Fifth Army Commander went word to all elements that public and private property in Rome were to be protected and not fired upon unless the Germans chose to defend the city.

Tanks, tank destroyers, and the I and R Platoon joined the 3rd Battalion and the reinforced battalion moved speedily forward without enemy contact. The I and R Platoon raced ahead and by 0830 had passed the Regimental objective and entered the suburbs of Rome - the first element of the Division to reach the Eternal City. The 3rd Battalion Task Force was ordered forward to carry out their mission of securing the Tiber bridges. At the Rome city limits the Task Force was halted by an armored unit on the road ahead which had run into a strong point covering the highway and was attempting to nullify it. As the 3rd Battalion, with the other two battalions trailing in column, approached the Regimental objective our mission was changed and we were ordered to turn southwest and take up a defensive position astride Highway 7 to halt the enemy withdrawal by that route. The 3rd Battalion at 1500, approaching the highway, ran into a fire fight but continued forward. At this time the enemy was attempting to evacuate his troops and equipment from the Rome area in the face of the unexpected Allied drive converging on the city and he made every effort to delay our troops before his retreat turned into a rout. All spare troops in the area were thrown into the fight and innumeral snipers had to be flushed out of every straw stack, ruined building or patch of woods. Often the Germans withheld their fire until our leading troops had passed and then fired into the column. A few skirmishes netted a total of 152 prisoners, including 7 officers from fifteen miscellaneous units. Cannon Company moving into a firing area captured 40 Germans and killed fifteen others before they could put their guns in position. At 1700 the move south was stalled short of Highway 7 by VI Corps units speeding toward Rome on this road, and the Task Force was still unable to advance. We requested permission to bivouac all organizations in present position and to withdraw the Task Force. The former request was granted but the Task Force was ordered to try to accomplish its mission using another route. At dark the I and R Platoon set out to find an alternate route into the city but at 2000 were fired on short of the city limits. They demolished several guns and a half-track, captured five prisoners, and killed several of the enemy. During the night all battalions sent motorized patrols to the west to comb the roads to the Tiber River but met no enemy. The Regimental CP was set up southeast of Rome.

PERIOD 5 JUNE - 9 JUNE

The morning of 5 June, the Regiment remained in position, while reconnaissance parties looked for a route through Rome. At 1230 the Regiment began the march through Rome to a bivouac area on the other side. As our foot troops marched through the city the Roman populace by the thousands thronged the streets to give the liberators of their homes a hysterical welcome. The Regiment was quartered on the grounds of the ancient Italian Forte Trionfale and the CP was set up within the thick walls of the fort. All organizations had closed into their areas by dark. That night our service train was bombed and strafed on the road southeast of Rome with several casualties.

During this period the German Army rushed pell mell toward their Florence line stealing each others transportation in an effort to escape. Much enemy equipment littered the roads - some destroyed by the allied airforce and some demolished by the Germans themselves in the face of our continued resistance. A full pursuit was ordered in an effort to disrupt the German retreat. To cover their withdrawal, the enemy employed small delaying forces of infantry armed with automatic weapons in half-track personnel carriers, supported by self-propelled guns or a few tanks.

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JUNE (CONT'D)

These were forced back by the flanking moves of our infantry or by artillery fire.

At 1100 on 6 June, the Regiment was alerted for passing through the 359th Infantry. This Regiment operating on the right of the Division soon had regained contact with the fleeing enemy northwest of Rome on both sides of Highway 2. Arrangements were completed in the evening and the CP was installed in a farmhouse 800 yards northeast of Posta della Storta. During the night our organizations moved up behind the line, and the combat team with a tank company, a tank destroyer company, and a reconnaissance platoon attached began the advance, the 1st Battalion on the left, the 3rd Battalion on the right, the 2nd Battalion motorized and ready to sweep up the highway if resistance was not strong. After the assault elements had advanced abreast of the 358th Infantry on our left six miles without meeting the enemy in force, the 2nd Battalion, reinforced with all the armor and reconnaissance elements, was ordered up the highway in swift pursuit to gain contact with the enemy. The other two battalions were halted on a line between Lake Martignano and Highway 2, pending the outcome of the 2nd Battalion's motorized advance. At the same time, the 358th Infantry, was pinched out by Lake Bracciano to their front, and again elements of the Regiment were alone spearheading the Corps advance, greatly impeded by numerous blown bridges. Close support by our organic engineers facilitated the movement. On the high ground 3000 yards south of Monterosi, the German rear guard turned to snap at the 2nd Battalion with five tanks and some infantry, supported by artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire. Our troops detrucked, deployed along the hill, and prepared to move in on the town. The attached trucks were used to shuttle the 1st and 3rd Battalions up to the line and the CP moved up behind the hill. The 3rd Battalion moved on line with the 2nd Battalion and at about 1600 both battalions continued the advance. A little over an hour later the 3rd Battalion occupied Monterosi, capturing some prisoners, destroying some self-propelled guns, and confiscating large stores of new ordnance material. The Germans taken prisoner had orders to infiltrate as best they could to the area of Florence. Many mines were encountered on this day. During the afternoon, the 1st Battalion, motorized, was attached to the Howse Task Force, a reinforced armored regiment operating under 85th Division control, and moved to Monterosi to await orders. The attacking battalions, one on each side of Highway 2, moved northwest meeting only token resistance. At dark the CP moved to a villa on Lake Monterosi and the Regiment was given trucks and ordered to be prepared to reinforce the Howse Task Force. The 2nd and 3rd Battalions were halted for the night astride Highway 2 on the ridge line overlooking Sutri. They organized a hasty defense and sent patrols to the town.

On 8 June the Regiment held fast and Division ordered the Howse Task Force north on Highway 2. Our 1st Battalion moved out at 1100 to join the task force, were committed in the afternoon, and at 1730 ran into German infantry in the hills two miles north of Ronciglione. They received light casualties from 88mm and machine gun fire but continued to advance. By dark the 1st Battalion had passed Passo Montagna meeting only slight opposition.

The next day as the 1st Battalion, still with the task force, approached Viterbo all forward movement was ordered halted when an armored division cut across the sector. In the afternoon the Regimental alert was cancelled and all organizations bivouaced where they were.

PERIOD 10 JUNE - 30 JUNE

On 10 June at 1000 the Division's leading elements were relieved by the 3rd Algerian Division, the Howse Task Force was disbanded, and the 1st Battalion moved back to Monterosi. The rest of the Regiment spent the day in rehabilitation. At this time some of our men who had been captured by the enemy in the Lariano sector began to drift back to the organization. They had been aided in their escape by Italian partisans and they told tales of German cruelty to prisoners, of the scarcity of the foe's equipment, and of the confusion in the retreating German columns.

The next four days were spent in light training, relaxation, and inspections. On 15 June, the Regiment moved by motor through Rome to a rest area on the grounds of the Castel Fusano, near the resort town of Lido D' Roma on the sea. The next intensive period of training was begun to include technical and tactical subjects, physical conditioning, disciplinary drill, and preparation for future combat. Special attention was given the training of replacements, and in studying lessons learned in the late campaign. Known distance and combat ranges were set up and much time was spent in marksmanship and weapons firing. All squads and platoons

REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JUNE (CONT'D)

participated in several small unit assault exercises. A fortified area was constructed and each battalion ran this course twice firing live ammunition. Two tank destroyers and a company of medium tanks were attached for training and the battalions worked closely with them in practice operations.

The troops were given ample time for recreation. Everyone had a chance to visit Rome several times, and the majority of the enlisted men spent a few days at the Fifth Army Rest Center. A Regimental bathing beach was cleared and used extensively, and a club for enlisted men was opened in a former night club by the sea. Each night the special services officer presented movies, USO shows, and soldier shows to large audiences. Showers and clothing exchange units were available throughout the period. The Regimental bugle and drum corps was reorganized and provided the music for numerous battalion retreat parades. At a Regimental parade, Major General John B. Coulter, decorated the Regimental colors and the company guidons with combat streamers and presented nine Silver Star Medals to officers and men of the Regiment.

During the period the Regiment advanced from the Lariano sector to a point 46 road miles north of Rome and captured a total of 473 prisoners of war including 13 officers.

Decorations awarded this month:

18 Silver Stars  
58 Bronze Stars  
74 Purple Hearts  
1614 Combat Infantryman Badges

Our battle casualties for the month were as follows:

|                   | <u>OFFICERS</u> | <u>ENLISTED MEN</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Killed in action  | 7               | 39                  |
| Wounded in action | 3               | 109                 |
| Missing in action | 2               | 63                  |
|                   | <u>12</u>       | <u>211</u>          |

Total casualties - 223

Strength of the assigned command as the period closed: 149 officers, 5 warrant officers, and 3,437 enlisted men. Attached were 32 officers and 245 enlisted men.

For the Regimental Commander:

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

85  
APO #85, U. S. Army,  
4 September 1944.

REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JULY

Regimental operations during the month of July consisted of training, rehabilitation, and administrative moves. The month opened with the Regiment in a bivouac area on the sea near Lido d' Remo. From 1 July to 12 July an intensive period of training was conducted in preparation for future combat. Subjects stressed were firing of all weapons, small unit combat exercises, battalion attack of permanent land fortifications, combined operations with tanks and tank destroyers, and battalion river crossing problems. Recreation in the form of passes to Remo, daily periods of bathing, and nightly movies and shows were provided for all troops. A club for enlisted men was opened on the beach.

On 13 July the Regiment moved to a bivouac area in the mountains near Roccastrada and spent the next few days in physical conditioning and mountain warfare training. Another motor move on 19 July put the Regiment in an area near Rosignano where training continued. Part of an Italian mule group was attached to the Regiment for training and much time was spent in learning how to use pack mules. On 30 July the Regiment moved again, this time to an area near Valtorra.

The 3rd Battalion participated in the Fifth Army honor guard on 28 July to welcome King George VI of England to the Fifth Army sector.

Our only enemy contact was with German anti-personnel mines which caused four casualties, and harassing German airplanes that bombed and strafed but failed to inflict casualties.

During the month the following men were commissioned 2nd Lieutenants as a result of outstanding ability during combat:

- 2nd Lieutenant Gale E. Cline, Infantry
- 2nd Lieutenant William A. Stokes, Infantry

Decorations awarded this month:

- 28 Silver Star Medals (2 posthumously, 1 missing in action).
- 114 Bronze Star Medals (3 posthumously, 2 missing in action).
- 192 Purple Hearts.
- 7 Clusters to Purple Heart.
- 486 Combat Infantryman Badges.

Strength of the assigned command as the period closed: 170 officers, 5 warrant officers, and 3,452 enlisted men. Attached were 11 officers and 253 enlisted men.

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FOUO Dir. 5200.8, Sept. 27, 1968 the Regimental Commander:  
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CLASSIFICATION  
**CANCELLED**  
BY [Signature] IN THE ADJUTANT  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 9 Aug 46

[Signature]  
HENRY C. TRIESLER, JR.  
Major, 337th Infantry,  
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