**The Encirclement of Nancy**

**Virtual Staff Ride**

**Volume 2**

**The Breakout and the Battle of Arracourt**

**(Stand 7 to Stand 12)**

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**Encirclement of Nancy**

**Virtual Staff Ride**

**Best to use two computers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Computer 1** | **Computer 2** |
| **Stand 1**  **Commercy Box** | **Stand 2 & 3**  **Pont-a-Mousson Box** |
| **Stand 4 & 5**  **Southern Bridgehead Box** | **Stand 6**  **Pont-a-Mousson Box** |
| **Stand 7 & 8**  **Breakout Box** | **Stand 9, 10, 11, & 12A**  **Arracourt Box** |
| **Stand 12B**  **Breakout Box (Visual 1-3)** |  |

**Volume 1**

**Across the Moselle**

* **Stand 7: Breakout**
* **Stand 8: Opposing Plans**
* **Stand 9: Arracourt Day 1**
* **Stand 10: Arracourt Day 2**
* **Stand 11: Arracourt Day 3 & 4**
* **Stand 12: Arracourt Day 5 to 8**
* **Stand 13: Transition to the Def**

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| **See Volume I for Stands 1 to 6** |
| Stand 1: Race Across France |
| Stand 2: Advance to the Moselle |
| Stand 3: Pont –a-Mousson |
| Stand 4: Third Army Situation |
| Stand 5: 35th Division |
| Stand 6: Dieulard |

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**NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR AND VSR TECHNICIAN**

**The virtual movement from village to village during the Battle of Arracourt (Stands 9-13) is challenging. The virtual movement directions provided with each stand are sufficient. However, because the terrain lacks significant landmarks, and all the villages are similar it is possible to get misoriented. The instructor and VSR technician should study the virtual movement routes. Additionally, they should be familiar with the following key villages: Arracourt, Juvreourt, Xanrey, Lezey, Juvelize, Ley, Moncourt, Bezange, and Rechicourt.**

Map

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**The following screen shots provide visual clues for each of the key villages. Each of the village has its own unique road network and within that network is a similitude of the first letter of the village’s name.**

Map

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Diagram, map

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Map

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Map

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**Stand 7**

**Combat Command A, 4th Armored Division Breakout  
13 -15 September 1944**

**Visuals:**

1. **4th Armored Division**
2. **4th Armored Division – CCA Breakout**
3. **4th Armored Division – Eddy’s Decision**

**Nancy Virtual Box 2**

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** Initially start with a Birdseye view of the crossing site at Dieulourad.

**A picture containing sky, water, outdoor, electronics

Description automatically generated**

**Orientation: TBD -** Currently overlooking the 80th Division’s Crossing site at Dieuloard. The orientation is the same as for Stand 6.

**Description: *Virtual Movement Directions:*** Remain with the Birdseye view of the crossing site at Dieulourad.

**7A: The 4th Armored Division** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The 4th Armored Division in the Encirclement of Nancy, by Dr. Chris Gabel, 1-5 ] **Visual 7-1: 4th Armored Division Organization**

1. **First MG Wood – then all others.** ADP 3-0 (para 1-71) states – [Training] is the cornerstone of combat readiness and the foundation for successful operations. [It] is the most important thing the Army does to prepare for operations.
   1. Here we use 4th Armored Division as an example – but could equally apply to the many of the other divisions in the Third US Army.
   2. **Evaluate the 4th Armored Division IAW the ADP 3-0 discussion on training** – which states, “Army leaders and their subordinates must remain”—
      1. Able to articulate mission orders to operate within their commander’s intent.
      2. Committed to developing their subordinates and creating shared understanding while building mutual trust and cohesion.
      3. Courageous enough to accept risk and exercise disciplined initiative while seeking to exploit opportunities within their commander’s intent.
      4. Able to operate in combined arms teams within unified action and leverage other capabilities in accomplishing their objectives.
      5. Opportunistic and offensively minded.
2. **Optional background info. The 4th Armored Division.** Before discussing the breakout – first some detail on the 4th Armored Division. [see analysis – 7B could be summed up with question X]
   1. The 4th AD was a light, but powerful, formation. The AD had 228 tanks, 225 halftracks, and 54 artillery pieces.
   2. Each TK BN consisted of one company equipped with M-5 Stuart light tanks and three companies with M-4 Sherman medium tanks. Both the light and medium tanks were fully developed, proven designs with good mobility and were especially prized for their mechanical reliability. However, the general purpose 75mm guns carried by most M-4s and the antiquated 37-mm pieces mounted on the M-5s were outclassed by the high-velocity 75-mm and 88-mm guns found on the German tanks of the day. Additionally, the German tanks had better armor.
   3. The AFABs each possessed 3 firing batteries armed with the M-7 self-propelled 105mm howitzers.
   4. All the infantry in the armored infantry BNs (AIB) rode to battle in M-3 halftracks,
   5. Other major elements of the AD were its mechanized cavalry squadron armed with light tanks and armored cars, an engineer bn, and the div trains. In addition, the corps and army attached to the AD on a semi-permanent basis - a tank destroyer BN armed with a highly effect 76-mm AT gun, an **antiaircraft artillery BN, and a BN of 155mm howitzers**.
   6. Additionally, the division occasionally borrowed IN BNs from adjacent infantry divisions because the three organic AIBs were often inadequate for the AD’s needs.
3. **Optional - Doctrine and Major General John S. Wood – PPT builds IAW the discussion below.**
   1. The doctrine under which the 4th AD operated in 1944 cast a specific mission for armored forces. According to the 1942 version of FM 17-100, Armored Command Field Manual, The Armored Division: ***The armored division is organized primarily to perform missions that require great mobility and firepower. It is given decisive missions. It is capable of engaging in most forms of combat but its primary role is in offensive operations against hostile rear areas… The most profitable role of the armored division is exploitation…***
   2. These doctrinal tenets were deeply engrained articles of faith. It is no exaggeration to say that the 4th had a distinct personality characterized by aggressiveness and teamwork. As a group, the div believed that the 4th’s proper place was deep in the enemy rear. One tank commander, long accustomed to operating behind German lines, remarked, “***They’ve got us surrounded again, the poor bastards.”***
   3. The personality of the 4th AD was a true reflection of its commander’s character. **Major General John S. Wood** took over the div in 1942 and trained it for two years before he led it into battle. This unusually long association between commander and unit fostered a high degree of rapport within the div and assured a continuity of effort from training to combat.
   4. He was known to his contemporaries as **“P”** Wood, the **“P”** standing for **“Professor.”** The distinguished British military analyst Basil H. Liddell Hart referred to “P’ Wood as ***“the Rommel of the American armored forces.”***  Like the legendary Rommel, Wood’s superiors had to restrain him rather than prod him into action. He preferred to bewilder his opponent through the **“indirect approach”** rather than to bludgeon him with brute force.
   5. Wood habitually commanded from the front utilizing a light liaison aircraft to personally channel mission-type orders from corps headquarters directly to his far-flung, fast-moving columns. Wood justified his frequent and prolonged absences from div headquarters by saying, ***“If you can’t see it happen, it’s too late to hear about it back in a rear area and meet it with proper force…”***
   6. MG Wood was close in temperament and military philosophy to his army commander, Lieutenant General George S. Patton Jr. In fact, the head of the tactical air command that supported Third Army once noted that Wood frequently **“out-Pattoned”** Patton.
4. **Optional -** The division exercised command and control over the fighting battalions through three task force headquarters designated Combat Command A (CCA), Combat Command B (CCB), and Reserve Command (CCR).
5. **Optional -** **A typical combat command consisted of one bn each of tanks, infantry, and artillery. Additionally the combat command had one cavalry troop, an antiaircraft artillery battery, a tank destroyer company, an engineer company, and combat command trains. It was also common to supplement the command with attached 155-mm howitzers.**

**7B: Exploitation – 13 September** [Gable, Encirclement of Nancy, 14-15 and The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 84 -89]

**Visual 7-2: CCA Breakout –PPT builds and virtual movements IAW the discussion below.**

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** IAW the visual drive the road from St. Genevieve to Benicourt. PPT builds IAW the discussion below. [note: times from Vanguard]

A picture containing sky, outdoor, traffic

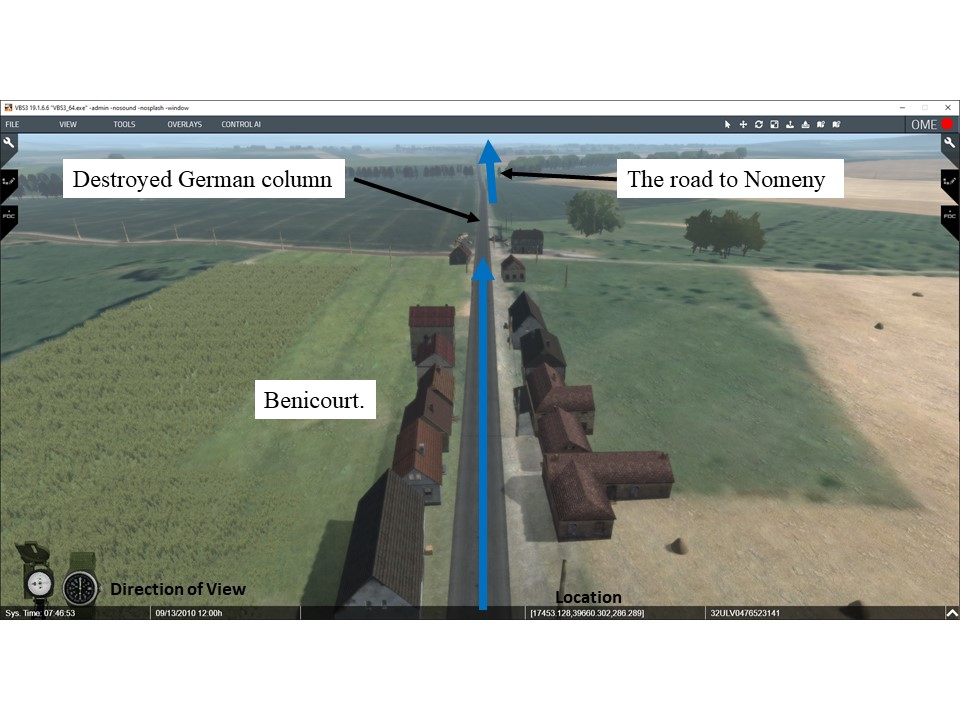
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A picture containing tree

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1. **XII Corps and 4th AD –** Discuss the CCA mission and the breakout. On the afternoon of 12 September, General Wood ordered CCA to cross through this bridgehead. **CCA did not enter the Dieulouard bridgehead to defend it. Clarke’s mission was to execute a deep attack, with the objective for the day being Chateau-Salins, some twenty miles distant.** [Gable, Encirclement of Nancy, 14-15 and The Nancy Bridgehead, 4 ]
2. At 0913 the lead elements of CCA crossed over the bridges. The command attack into Ste. Genevieve at 1000 and then broke into the clear about 1200.
3. The Combat Command was organized into 3x Task Forces. TF ABE led the way, followed by TF Jacques (Jake). A third TF, consisting of engineers, the borrowed infantry battalion, and the combat command trains laden with supplies for seven days, brought up the rear.
4. CCA picked up speed as the battle for the bridgehead was left behind. As the advance accelerated to a steady 10 miles per-hour. The frontage of the main column was the width of the small road with cavalry and light tank patrols to the flank. (D Troop - left flank and Light tanks to the right).
5. The CCA leadership was unaware that the German *First Army* had dispatched an *Kampfgruppe (KG)* from the *3rd PzGDiv* reinforced with assault guns and antitank guns to Bénicourt to contain the US bridgehead.

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** On the east side of Benicourt – pause briefly to discuss the following engagement.



* 1. About 1230, Abrams’ tanks collided with the lead elements of an unsuspecting German *KG* marching along the road near Benicourt.
  2. The tanks fought through the German column, blazing away with every gun as the enemy infantry scrambled for cover. US casualties are not recorded other than being insignificant.
  3. However, it did take time to reorganize and resume the advance to the east.

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** On the east side of Benicourt. Rise up to a low birds eye view and IAW the visual fly the route to Nomeny – pause briefly on the SE side of Nomeny IAW the PPT builds. Then rise up to a low-flight level and follow the route to Aulnois-sur-Seille.

A screenshot of a video game

Description automatically generated

1. Clarke exercised command and control from a liaison aircraft flying overhead. About 1615 (13 September) the head of the 3-mile column was south of Nomtény.

A picture containing sky, photo

Description automatically generated

***Virtual Movement Directions:***. Just short of the Sellie River and the village of Aulnois-sur-Seille, go down to road level and drive the road across the bridge and into the town. Pause to discuss the fight at the German roadblock. The continue through the town. At east edge of town again assume a low birds eye view and fly to Lemoncourt. Pause briefly just short of the village of Lemoncourt.

A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated

1. CCA met little opposition as it knifed into the German rear areas. Road blocks, and antiaircraft emplacements were quickly knocked out by the guns of the lead tanks.
2. At about 1630, in Aulnois-sur-Seille, a small German detachment tried to block or slow the US penetration. The lead tanks bowled through the hasty road block without even slowing down. Again the records show insignificant US casualties.
3. The command continued along the road toward Lemoncourt at about 10 miles per-hour.

A screenshot of a video game

Description automatically generated

1. ***Virtual Movement Directions:*** Fly down to the road just on the south side of Lemoncourt to discuss the engagement. At about 1700, CCA turned southeast after passing through Lemoncourt. Again the command collided with a German truck column that had no idea the Americans were into the German rear. After the brief fight, CCA continued toward Fresnes-en-Saulnois.

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** Then return to a low-fly level and continue to follow the route to Fresnes-en-Saulnois.

A picture containing athletic game, sky, sport

Description automatically generated

A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated

1. ***Virtual Movement Directions:*** At road level drive into the village Take a right on the road that leads past the market. Just before leaving the town turn into the field to the left. Rise up in the air slightly and look to the east toward Château-Salins. At approximately 1730, the major part of CCA coiled for the night near Fresnes-en-Saulnois, only three miles from Château-Salins, after having “swept aside” enemy resistance in a penetration of some twenty miles.
   1. In this day of action CCA had lost 12 dead and 16 wounded. The damage inflicted on the enemy was very considerable: 354 prisoners; 12 armored vehicles, 85 other vehicles, and 5 large-caliber guns had been captured or destroyed. The number of German dead and wounded is unknown, but must have been high.
   2. Many of the soldiers in CCA believed the most obvious course of action was to capture Chateau-Salins, a road center of some importance.
   3. However, Chateau-Salins was a large town, and the volume of artillery fire coming from its vicinity indicated that it was held in force.
   4. However, MG Wood, who was in radio communication with Clarke, recognized that CCA had broken cleanly through the Germans defending the Moselle.
2. Wood directed CCA to exploit weakness rather than attack strength. He ordered Clarke to bypass Chateau-Salins to the south and cut the German LOC to Nancy.
3. Wood assigned the village of Arracourt as the new objective. CCA was to link up with CCB in the vicinity of the Marne-Rhine Canal. CCA was to drop its LOC to Dieulouard and reestablish the LOC with CCB on the south side of Nancy.
4. The morning of 14 September, CCA remained in laager waiting for the arrival of its trains, The trains had bivouacked during the night near Ste. Geneviève (near Dieulouard).

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** IAW the discussion below drive the road south out of Fresnes-en-Saulnois into the Gremecy Forest. Drive the dirt roads to Chambrey. Follow the road signs and M5 tank directions.

A picture containing sport

Description automatically generated

A view of a road

Description automatically generated

A view of a city street

Description automatically generated

A picture containing sky, tree, photo, showing

Description automatically generated

1. Soon after 1200, TF Abe led CCA, taking to the side roads and trails through the forest south of Fresnes-en-Saulnois. The order of march remained the same and most likely the cavalry troop and D Co’s light tanks led the way along the forest trails.

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** After the forest assume a low-fly level and continue toward Chambrey. At the village take the paved road toward Vic-sur-Seille.

A picture containing road, sky

Description automatically generated

1. At about 1300 they got back onto the good roads at Chambrey. .

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** East of Chambrey go down to road level to discuss the engagement. The return to a low-fly level and IAW the discussion below drive the roads toward toward Vic-sur-Seille.

A picture containing screenshot

Description automatically generated

1. Soon after passing through Chambrey the command again passed through and destroyed a small German column.
2. CCA then crossed to the south side of the Seille River and picked up the highway to Vic-sur-Seille.

A picture containing sky, road

Description automatically generated

1. Near Vic-sur-Seille, the command pushed south toward Arracourt along secondary roads.

A picture containing athletic game, sport

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***A screenshot of a video game

Description automatically generated***

***Virtual Movement:*** Near Arracourt go to road level to discuss the next engagement and then drive into Arracourt.



1. About 1600, near Arracourt the American tanks caught up with some of the 15th PzGd artillery and their division trains. They were moving out of the First Army zone to reinforce the German lines southeast of Nancy. TF ABE lead units inflicted significant losses upon the Germans.
   1. That day – the losses sustained by CCA had been relatively slight: 10 men killed, 23wounded, and 2 medium tanks destroyed.
   2. By the end of the day (14 September) they had taken 409 prisoners and destroyed or captured 26 armored vehicles, 136 other vehicles, and 10x 88-mm. guns.

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** Near the Church in Arracourt, rise up into the air slightly and conduct a 360 orientation of the valley.

**Arracourt orientation: TBD – general about the view**

* **Marne-Rhin Canal is 3 miles to the south.**
* **Lunville is 10 miles to the south.**
* **Nancy is 16 miles to the west.**
* **Dieulouard is 22 miles by air to the northwest, but more than 35 miles along the roads.**

**7C: South of Nancy – 11-13 September** [Gable, Encirclement of Nancy, 14-15 and The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 89 -96] **Visual 7-3: Eddy’s Decision. –PPT builds and virtual movements IAW the discussion below.**

***Virtual Movement Directions:*** None required – but could from Arracourt remain at a low-fly level and look to the south.

1. **14 Sept:** [Gable, Encirclement of Nancy, 14-15 and The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 89 -96]
   1. Here in Arracourt, CCA set up a perimeter defense that extended 6 miles to Lezey. At Lezey - astride highway N–74 – CCA snatched up several small German detachments as they came down the highway unaware that there were any Americans within miles.
   2. **35th ID and 4th AD –** talk about what is going onto the south About 14 miles to the south, elements CCB pushed north to the Marne-Rhine Canal and met with patrols from CCA.
      1. This completed the envelopment of the Nancy.
      2. And the 4th Armored Division opened up an LOC to CCA from the south.
      3. Additionally, CCB and elements of the 2d Cavalry Group battled against the 15th PzGd Div to control Luneville. **(Mech Cav Groups**)
   3. **80 ID –** talk about the situation at Dieulouard. 22 miles to the NW, the 80th Division fought off the efforts of the 3d PzGndr Div and the 553 VGR Division to push them back across the river.
   4. 30 miles to the NW, the XX Corps fought to maintain their bridgehead at Arnaville.
2. **German Army Group G –** Evaluate the decision to evacuate Nancy and the decision to hold Luneville.
   1. Not known to the American Commanders, General Johannes Blaskowitz **(*German Army Group* G),** on 14 September, had given the *German First Army commander* permission to evacuate Nancy, but told the *5th Panzer Army* to Luneville.
   2. Soon after the*553 VG Div* evacuated Nancy and retreated to the high ground north Nancy – referred to as the Nancy Curtain – more on this later.
3. **15 Sept was a decision day for General Eddy’s Decision**
   1. **4th AD** evaluate the 4th AD recommendation.
      1. With the LOC from the south now open to CCA and the division reunited, the key leaders of the 4th AD believed the reunited division’s next move was to retain the initiative and continue the offense toward Germany. [Gable, Encirclement of Nancy,16 ]
      2. The CCA commander therefore broached the matter by radio to General Wood: **“Recommend capture Sarreguemines early tomorrow in order to get crossing over Canal [des Houillitères de la Sarre] and thru lake region [east of Dieuze] while enemy is on the run.”**
      3. General Wood passed this proposal to the corps commander.
   2. **XII Corps** – evaluate Gen. Eddy decision to refuse to continue the offense.
      1. Eddy insisted that corps mission at the moment was to secure the bridgeheads and destroy the Germans in the Nancy sector.
      2. On 15 Sept, the situation in the 80th ID bridgehead had deteriorated so markedly that General Eddy ordered the CCA commander to release the 1st Battalion of the 318th Infantry, which had been attached to the combat command, and sent it back by truck to reinforce the 80th. Eddy also directed Clarke to send a company of tanks
      3. **Therefore CCA remained** (15 September), as ordered, in the Arracourt area. With fuel on-hand they sent out combat patrols to harass the Germans.
   3. That day the 35th Division liberated Nancy, but the 553 VG Div blocked their efforts to linked up with the embattled 80th Div.
4. **XIX TAC** – has not been mentioned since 13 Sept – what is their situation.Throughout the encirclement (13 -15 Sept), the fog hindered the XIX TAC’s ability to support ground operations and most of their sorties focused on air-interdiction missions further to the east.

**VSR: Switch to VSR Arracourt Box**

**Analysis:** Embedded above.

**Stand 8**

**1Opposing Plans, the Nancy Curtain and Luneville**

**14-19 September 1944**

**Visuals:**

1. **Opposing Plans - Third US Army, Objective Darmstadt**
2. **Opposing Plans - 5th Panzer Army, Plan of Attack**
3. **Opposing Plans - Panzer Divisions and Panzer Brigades**
4. **Opposing Plans – XIX TAC**
5. **The Nancy Curtain and Luneville**
   1. **5a: The Nancy Curtain and Luneville, 17 to 21 Sept**
   2. **5b: Nancy Curtain Handout**
   3. **5c: The Nancy Curtain and Luneville, 17 to 21 Sept**

**Arracourt Virtual Box: *Virtual Movement Directions (VMD):*** Low-fly position above Arracourt. Look in the directions IAW the discussion below towards the towns and areas discussed.

A picture containing screenshot

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**Part 1: Opposing Plans – First the Third US Army**

**Orientation:**

1. Currently located at the small village of Arracourt about 16 miles east of Nancy.
2. IAW the discussion below look to the towns and areas discussed.

**Description:** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 105 – 116, much reduce excerpt]

**Visual 1: Third US Army, Objective Darmstadt – PPT builds IAW the discussion below. -** ***VMD:*** Low-fly position above Arracourt. Look in the directions IAW the discussion below towards the towns and areas discussed.

1. **Third Army’s Situation and Plan** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 213-219, 195-208] On 14 Sept, Generals Bradley and Patton envisioned the US Third Army continuing the offense into Germany. (Virtual – Look to the NE – Germany border about 50 miles)
2. The night of 12 Sept, Bradley told Patton that the order to hold in place would be issued on 13 Sept and most resources would then be sent to Montgomery’s 21st Army Group. Patton asked Bradley to delay issuing the order till the 14th.
3. **Patton –** what has changed and what is the current situation. The morning of **14 Sept.** General Bradley told General Eisenhower: **“The situation in front of Patton looks very hopeful [and] he has definitely crossed the river in strength…” On the 14th,** Patton recorded **“I had made good my promise to Bradley and secured… a good bridgehead… and felt that I could with luck, keep edging toward the east” (Patton, War 131)**
   1. XX Corps across south of Metz.
   2. XIV Corps across north and south of Nancy.
   3. XV Corps across the river north of Epinal.
4. The 12th Army Group commander visited the Third Army headquarters and there approved Patton plan to continue the attack toward the Rhine.
5. Eisenhower approved the plan and on **15 Sept** wrote: “**We shall soon, I hope, have achieved the objectives set forth in my last directive [of 4 September] and shall then be in possession of the Ruhr, the Saar and the Frankfurt area.”**
6. **Patton, XX Corps, and XII Corps commanders –** discuss how Patton’s enthusiastic Optimism was tempered by some frustrations. General Eisenhower was optimistic. General Bradley was optimistic.
   1. But neither of the two was more optimistic than General Patton, and his 4th AD commander.
   2. The enemy continued to offer spirited and stubborn resistance; but the successful drive by the 4th AD had penetrated deep into the German rear and had indicated that the enemy was not prepared to defend in depth once his linear defenses along the river was broken.
   3. However, there was some frustration with the XX Corps’ situation at Metz.
      1. One 14th, XX Corps had shifted the 7th to the Arnaville bridgehead – however heavy German resistance prevented the armor from breaking out of the bridgehead.
      2. Again of the 15th and 16th, German resistance blocked the 7th AD attempts to circle behind the city.
      3. On 16 Sept, Patton visited XX Corps HQ. After the meeting MG Walker passed on Patton’s remark **– “General Patton is here and said if we don’t get across [the Seille] he is going to leave us here and contain Metz while he goes across with the rest of the Army to the Rhine…”** (Cole, 166)
   4. XII Corps had not been able to link the 35th ID and 80th ID bridgeheads into on continuous bridgehead.
7. Patton expected the XII Corps to lead off in the initial deep penetration. He directed the XII Corps to advance **“rapidly”** to the northeast, establish a bridgehead east of the Rhine, and take Darmstadt. The target date for the XII Corps attack was fixed as **18 September**.  **– Darmstadt is 106 miles NE of Saarbrucken.**
8. The Third US Army had carefully rationed supplies to support the planned offense knowing that Operation Market Garden – the Allies’ main effort – would begin on 17 September.
9. **The Fifth Panzer Army** [The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 213-219]

**Visual 2: Fifth Panzer Army Plan of Attack – PPT builds IAW the discussion below.**

1. **Manteuffel** – Overview the man. On 9 September, the *Fifth Panzer Army* HQ arrived from Holland. At the time, it consisted only of an operations staff and some communications troops. However, Hitler personally selected *General Hasso von Manteuffel* to command the *Fifth Panzer Army.*
   1. General Manteuffel was fresh from the Russian front, where he had led an armored division. Small, energetic, a popular leader with a reputation for extreme personal bravery, he had been named over many his senior to command an army. He was believed to be politically sound (important after the assassination attempt).
   2. Nonetheless, his reputation as a prewar armored specialist, enhanced by service in North Africa and Russia, testifies that Manteuffel’s assignment was not merely a political expedient.
2. ***Army Group G* and *Fifth Panzer Army* –** Overview the cancel plan. The plan called for the *Fifth Panzer Army* to assembly south of Nancy near the city of Epinal and then attack into the flank the US Third Army before it could threaten the Saar Industrial Region.
   1. Before Manteuffel could influence the situation, the maneuver space for the *Fifth Panzer Army* attack was overcome by the advance of Patton’s Army across the Moselle River.
   2. On 14 Sept, Johannes Blaskowitz, (*Army Group G)* had no choice but to tell Rundstedt that any assumption of the offensive by *Fifth Panzer Army* west of the Moselle was now out of the question. He protected himself from the imputation that he lacked the **“offensive spirit,”** by proposing a counterattack on a smaller scale east of the Moselle.
   3. Blaskowitz’s smaller scale counter-attack east of the Moselle called for the *Fifth Panzer Army* to concentrate east of Luneville. The attack was planned in coordination with the arrival of the *113th PzBde* at Sarrebourg by rail.
   4. Thereafter, the maneuver would consist of an initial attack to secure Lunéville, followed by a drive north toward Château–Salins to cut off the American armor moving east.
   5. At *OB WEST* Field Marshal Rundstedt refused to take the responsibility for such a radical change in Hitler’s plans and referred Blaskowitz’ request to *OKW* in Berlin.
   6. Twenty-four hours later *OKW* acceded to the new proposal. The *Nineteenth Army* was given permission to proceed with the new plan and to attack on 18 Sept.
3. **Manteuffel** – Overview the challenges with executing an attack on 18 Sept. The panzer army’s units were widely scattered.
   1. The ***111th PzBde*** moved from the railhead at Sarrebourg to the vicinity of Luneville, after having lost eleven Panthers through air attack and mechanical failures. Both the Panther and Mark IV battalions were present, but the brigade had not received its company of mobile antitank guns.
   2. The ***15th PzGd Div*** which had been able to make their way down from Metz to the Lunéville area before the American armor cut the roads east of the Moselle. However, a significant portion of its combat power had been stripped away to participate in the fight against the US bridgehead at Dieulard.
   3. Remnants of the ***112th PzBd****e* regrouped east of Luneville. The brigade had approximately 21 tanks.
   4. The ***11th PzDiv*** was reconstituting near Epinal. The division had less than 50 tanks.
   5. The ***21st PzDiv*** also concentrated in the vicinity of Epinal. The division had little armor and would have to fight as an understrength infantry formation.
   6. The *107t*h and *108th PzBde*s, whose tanks were still coming off the assembly lines, were ticketed as an operational reserve that could only be released when Hitler’s intuition told him the right moment was at hand.
4. On 16 Sept, *OB WEST* gave detailed orders for the counterattack.
5. The first objective would be to wipe out the American forces (from the XII Corps) which had just entered Lunéville.
6. With this blocking position in German hands the American bridgehead at Pont-à-Mousson must be erased and the Moselle line restored north of Nancy.
7. **Instructor - Summary of the plans:**
   1. LTG George Patton planned to attach on 18 Sept and push across the Rhine River into Germany. Generaloberst Johannes Blaskowitz planned for *German Army Group G* to contain the US penetration with the *German First Army* and then counter-attack on 18 Sept with the *Fifth Panzer Army* to isolate and destroy Patton’s Army.
   2. **As we move forward in the staff ride think about how the two opposing commander’s would described success and we will re-evaluate periodically during the field study how well the two opposing forces accomplished their mission.**
8. **Panzer Armies, Corps, Divisions and Panzer Brigades** (Gable, Lorraine Campaign, 9-10)

**Visual 3: Panzer Divisions and Panzer Brigades – no PPT builds. - *VMD:*** Remain at Arracout and face south toward Lunville

1. **Instructor - 5th Panzer Army:** On paper the *Fifth Panzer Army* had two corps for the attack into the flank of the US 4th Armored Division.
   1. *LVIII (58) Panzer Corps*
   2. *XLVII (47) Panzer Corps*
   3. German Army’s also had Army artillery and/or rocket troops. However most of the Army troops were support organizations.
2. **Instructor - Panzer Corps**. The German Army had no standardized organization for the Panzer Corps.
   1. Typically, it had one or two Panzer Divisions. One or two infantry divisions and two or three artillery regiments. Additional there was also additional engineers at the corps.
   2. In 1944 it was also common to assign Panzer Brigades to the Corps as additional combat power or in lieu off the Panzer Divisions – more on these latter.
3. **Instructor - Panzer Divisions:** The *1944 PzDiv* was a superb combined arms organization. At full strength it was somewhat comparable in combat strength to the US 4th AD.
   1. It main fighting forces consisted of two tank battalions, one armored infantry battalion and one motorized infantry battalion, and three artillery battalions.
   2. The *Fifth Panzer Amry’s* PzDivs contained a vast amount of combat experience, but only a small numbers of tanks survived the retreat across France.
4. **Instructor - Panzer Brigades:** Instead of rebuilding the depleted PzDivs, Hitler preferred to devote tank production to the creation of new PzBdes that were controlled at the corps or army level. (Gable, Lorraine Campaign, 9-10; War Department, Handbook of German Military Forces, II-91: Panzer **Panzer Brigades in the West, 1944 by** Ruud Bruyns **[** <https://panzerworld.com/panzer-brigades-in-the-west-1944> ]).
5. Hitler’s belief was the smaller brigades could maneuver and react quicker than larger tank divisions.
6. Although German tank production reached a wartime peak during the summer 1944 the shortage of trained crew delayed the formation of the new units.
7. The primary nemesis of the 4th AD in the initial German counter-attack was the 111th PzBde and 113th PzBde.
   1. These PzBdes had two battalions of tanks and two truck borne PzGdr infantry battalions.
   2. This led to an establishment of approximately 90 medium tanks and 10 assault guns, making the Panzer-Brigade appear strong, equaling tank and infantry strength of a German Panzer-Division.
   3. Together the 111th and 113th PzBdes could have fielded 180 medium tanks against the 4th AD 168 medium tanks.
8. **Manteuffel** – What were the significant weaknesses of the Panzer Brigades? The brigade lacked the necessary supporting Reconnaissance, Combat Engineer, anti-tank battalion and artillery battalions which made the Panzer-Division into a lethal combine arms organization. The PzBdes had to make do with a reconnaissance company and a pioneer company.
   1. L**acked any organic artillery.**
9. **However, another key element missing from the PzBdes was their lack of experience.**
10. The key leaders at battalion and brigade level were proven combat leaders from the Russian front who had little to no experience fighting Americans.
11. The PzBdes also lack of trained soldiers and junior leaders. Most of the noncommissioned officers were from replacement and training units, while the majority of the junior officers lacked any combat experience with armored vehicles.
12. Even worse, the PzBdes were organized at their points of assembly immediately behind the front line, and had, therefore, never been able to hold combined exercises and give the commanders experience.
13. **Not at this time, but as we move forward into the field study we will periodically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Panzer Brigade concept.**
14. **General Manteuffel –**Evaluate his protest that the *Fifth Panzer Army* was not strong enough to attack on 18 September. Nevertheless, the peremptory orders that he would attack on 18 September remained in place.
    1. The *Fifth Panzer Army’s* *XLVII (47) Panzer Corps* was committed to holding the corps’ west flank against the US XV Corps and could not fulfill its assignment to participate in the 18 Sept counter-attack.
    2. Most of the *LVIII (58) Panzer Corps* was not yet in position. The reality was the c*orps* would attack on the 18th with only the *113th PzBde* and few troops of the *15th PzGd Div* (-) before the arrival of the *11th PzDiv*
    3. **Artillery:** The amount of artillery available to the *Fifth Panzer Army* is not known – other than that they were woefully understrength in artillery. As an example, the *Nineteenth Army* had lost 1,316 out of its 1,481 artillery pieces during its retreat from southern France. Manteuffel asked for additional artillery. However, none was available and he was promised support by the Luftwaffe.
15. **XIX Tactical Air Command’s interdiction against the 5th Panzer Army concentration**

**Visual 4: XIX TAC – PPT builds IAW the discussion below. - *VMD:*** Remain at Arracout and face south toward Lunville

1. **XIX TAC –** We have had very little discussion of tactical air support to the ground fight. Nevertheless, evaluate XIX TAC contribution to the fight. **of** The XIX TAC’s AAR (page 51) stated, ***“…the situation called for vigorous use of air power against enemy lines of communication, …A program of rail interdiction was inaugurated and obtained some success despite the bad flying weather.”***
2. The XIX Tactical Air Command (TAC) seriously hindered the Fifth Panzer Army’s ability to concentrate combat power for the planned counterattack.
   1. The factory-new tanks of the *111th* and *113th PzBdes* along with panzer grenadier infantry moved by rail from Germany to Sarrebourg, France.
   2. The 11th PzDiv moved by rail from the Belfort region in Southern France to the railhead at Epinal – a journey of more than 100 kilometers.
   3. From these railheads the units had to move by road to their assigned attack positions.
3. The fighter-bombers of the XIX TAC frequently attacked the rail and road movement of German units.
   1. The XIX TACs primary ground attack aircraft was the P-47D Thunderbolt. The heavy and sturdy aircraft had an armored cockpit and a massive payload capability. It was well suited to the ground attack role.
   2. The Army Air Corps’ FM 31-35, ***Aviation in Support of Ground Forces*** (19??) stated the following about Interdiction missions - ***“Air support targets not on the immediate front or flanks may include: Lines of communication, and troop concentrations in bivouac or on the march.”*** (FM 31-35, 10). IAW doctrine the railhead at Sarrebourg was frequently targeted by the XIX TAC.
4. Additionally, the commanders of German units moving into the Luneville region had to worry about the dreaded Jabo’s – the German soldier’s slang for the American fighter-bomber.
   1. The XIX TAC’s fighter-bombers had significant freedom of action when operating beyond what was called the Bomb Line (similar to today’s Fire Support Coordination Line -FSCL).
   2. If the flight lead had no specific targets, he was free to execute an armed reconnaissance beyond the bomb line and drop on his own authority –without the coordination or permission to drop from the nearest ground commander.
5. The Third Army Chronology shows that XIXth TAC focused over 70% of its sorties against AI targets – primarily German rail activity” from the 15th to 17th.
   1. On the 15th and 16th, It flew 580 sorties with less than 30% flying CAS. Bad weather reduced the number of sorties on the 17th to only 133 sorties against AI targets. XIXth TAC Bomb Damage Assessment (BDA) reports show: (Chapter 4, AAR 3d Army, Province, Patton’s Third Army, pg 73-77).
   2. 24 railroad lines cut
   3. 85 railroad cars destroyed or damaged
   4. 8 canal barrages+
   5. 15 military vehicles
   6. 23 gun installations
   7. And 41 military installations damaged or destroyed
6. The *111th PzBde* off-loaded at the railhead in Sarrebourg and conducted a road movement towards Luneville loosing 11x Panthers through air attack and mechanical failures.
7. The 11th PzDiv record is less specific, but does state, **“a few tanks were destroyed by air attack.”**
8. The air attacks on the other elements of the 5th Panzer Army concentrating in the Luneville area probably suffered similar losses.
9. The end result was that the XIX TAC slowed the 5th Panzer Army’s concentration of combat power near Luneville, and stripped away a significant portion of its combat power before it got into the ground fight.

**[The virtual terrain for the Nancy Curtain is not available in the Arracourt VSR box]**

1. **Visual 5a: The Nancy Curtain & 5b Google Earth Picture: The Nancy Curtin** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 105 – 116] **– PPT builds IAW the discussion below.**
2. **XII Corps –** On 17 Sept, Eddy delayed the attack toward Germany – evaluate why? Eddy set **18 Sept as D-Day** for the resumption of the XII Corps’ attack toward Germany, bu**t on 17 Sept** he postponed this advance in order to secure the 80th ID.
3. **35th ID** –Overview the divisions initial efforts to fight over the curtain and linkup with the 8oth ID**.** At the same time as CCA was consolidating its position at Arracourt, the 35th Div was engaged with the 553d VGD north of Nancy.
   1. **We have not built the virtual detail here at the curtain – however, the basic satellite imagery [Visual 5b] shows the excellent defensive ground occupied by the *553d VGD]***
   2. The 35th Div occupied Nancy on 14 Sept when the *553d Volksgrenadier Division (VGD)* abandoned the city and fell back to this area.
   3. The initial German defensive lines were on this hill, the village of Agincourt (below the hill to the NW) and on hill to the west.
   4. However, the main German defenses were about 3 miles to the north. French military geographers referred to the high ground north east of Nancy as **“the Nancy curtain.”** The high ground and large forests on top of the plateau provided the Germans with an excellent defensive line.
   5. The 80th Div is fighting in the Dieulouard area about 7 miles beyond the Curtain to the NE.
   6. The Germans on the **“Curtain”** prevented a link-up between the 35th ID at Nancy and the 80th ID at Dieulouard. The US XII needed to push over the “Curtain”to link the north and south bridgeheads.
4. **Visual 5c: The Nancy Curtain: XII Corps and 4th AD** talk about the commitment of CCB/4th AD. On 17 Sept, the corps commander ordered CCB, 4th AD, to attack toward Nomény to assist the 80th. [See Patton’s Juggernaut, by BG (Ret) Albin Irzyk, 168 for additional details].
   1. The CCB advance on the afternoon of 17 September proved so contested that when CCB was about halfway between the canal and Nomény, General Eddy gave word to desist from further efforts.
   2. On the 18th, CCB, 4th AD, was directed to regroup at Fresne en Saulnois and prepare for the projected corps attack northeast toward the Rhine River and Darmstadt.
   3. At Fresne en Saulnois they identified that enemy forces occupied Chateau Salins and Foret de Chateau Salins in strength. (Patton’s Juggernaut, by BG (Ret) Albin Irzyk, 168).
5. **Instructor -** From 17-21 Sept, the 35th ID repeatedly tried to push over the “Curtain.” However, each of their attacks were defeated by the stubborn German defenses. This hilltop and the village of Agincourt changed hands several times in the fighting.
   1. **One of the challenges in the fighting on the curtain was a critical shortage of artillery ammunition in the XII Corps and specifically the 35th ID.**
   2. The XII Corps and 35th ID were critical short of artillery ammunition. A terrific concentration by six battalions of American field artillery the night of 20 Sept exceeded the ability of the “Red Ball Express” to keep up with the demand and the guns fell silent.
6. **Throughout the struggle, the XII Corps commander was anxious to eliminate the resistance delaying the 80th and 35th ID and resume the advance to the Rhine.**
7. **[Note: No virtual terrain at Luneville] The Attack at Luneville, 18 September** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 220-222]  **–PPT builds IAW the discussion below -**
8. **5th Panzer Army and Mech CAV Group** overview the fighting at Luneville. [No virtual terrain] Germany. Meanwhile, there was also heavy fighting on the XII Corps’ right flank at Lunville. At Lunville the 2d Cavalry Group lacked the combat power to take control of the city.  
   1. The 15th PzGdr Div fell back from Lunéville to the shelter of the forest northeast of the city, but then returned to filter back into Lunéville.
   2. Despite Manteuffel’s misgivings that the *Fifth Panzer Army* lacked the combat power to execute a major counter-attack, he moved in the early morning of 18 Sept to concentrate for the attack.
   3. Krueger (*48th Panzer Corps*) sent the *113th PzBde*, still minus some of its tanks, north toward Blâmont and at the end of the day the brigade turned toward the canal to attack along the Myenvic road.
   4. Luettwitz (*47th Panzer Corps*), after one last pessimistic prediction about his exposed western flank, moved northward along the Meurthe River toward Lunéville. This advance was made by seventeen tanks and the armored infantry of the *111th PzBde*, which had not been engaged on the Moselle.
   5. Meanwhile the *21st PzDiv* remained echeloned apprehensively to the west of the Meurthe with its troops disposed on both banks of the Mortagne River.
   6. On the night of 17 Sept the *15th PzGd Div* had so many men in the city that a German agent sent out a report that the Americans had left. This report was relayed to Luettwitz, who headed straight for Lunéville without thought of fighting for the town.
   7. Actually, the Americans still had a small hold on Lunéville, but the cavalry needed support.
   8. The cavalry’s light armored vehicles were a poor match against German tanks, but nevertheless held the enemy advance guard in check until about 1100.
9. **XII Corps** – discuss the impact of directing the 4th AD to send CCR and a TF from CCA/4th AD to reinforce the cavalry.
   1. The cavalry requested additional antitank support. On the 18th the cavalry fought desperately to hold the town but their armored cars and light tanks were no match for the Panthers. (General Blaskowitz intervened about noon and ordered Manteuffel to press the attack and take Lunéville).
   2. The combined assault by the *111th PzBde* and *15th PzGd Div (-)* forced the cavalry back into the north part of the city.
   3. CCR and a TF from CCA/4th AR arrived and the German attack stalled.
10. **Instructor - CCB, 6th AD joined with the XII Corps and was originally assigned** to reinforce the 35th ID. However redirected CCB 6th AD to Luneville.
    1. When night came Manteuffel ordered the *111th PzBde* to disengage and by-pass Luneville for a continuation of the general advance into the flank of the Third US Army.
    2. All-day inclement weather limited the XIX TAC to only 32 sorties that day. Nevertheless, several CAS sorties supported the XII Corps fighting at Luneville.

**Analysis:**

1. **Americans -** How did the tactical fights at the Nancy Curtain and Luneville influence the Operational goal of attacking into Germany.
2. **Mech Cav Group** – Evaluate the cavalry action at Luneville. Historian William Stuart Nance stated in his book, *Sabers through the Reich ( 120 -121)*, “The action at Luneville stands as a perfect example of a defensive security operation The 2nd MCG (Mechanized Cavalry Group) absorbed the flow that otherwise would have fallen on the main body of the 4th AD whiles its attention was focused to the north and west. Moreover, the cavalry held long enough to allow the corps commander to react and develop the situation under his own terms (sending a CCRT and a TF from 4th AD and CCB 6th AD to reinforce the cavalry).
3. **Germans –** chance to talk more in the next stand

**Stand 9**

**The Battle of Arracourt**

**Day 1 - 19 September 1944**

**Visuals:**

1. **Day 1 - German and American Situation & Deployment**
2. **Day 1 - CCA, 4th Armored Division Deployment**
3. **Day 1 - Panzers in the midst**

**Arracourt Virtual Box: *Virtual Movement Directions (VMD):*** Again from a Birds eye view above Arracourt. Initially look to the NE.

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**Orientation:** Currently located at Arracourt.

**Description:** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 222 – 225 , Vanguard, 141]

1. **Visual 1: 4th German and American Situation & Deployment.**
2. **German First Army –** How and why was the situation somewhat optimistic?
   1. The US XX Corps was still battling toward the Sielle River in their efforts to encircle Metz.
   2. The US 80th ID was contained in the Dieulouard Bridgehead
   3. The US 35th ID was blocked at the Nancy Curtain – which prevented the US XII Corps from linking their bridgeheads north and south of Nancy.
   4. **And the weather was bad.**

1. **German Fifth Panzer Army –** How and why was the situation not optimistic?
   1. Meanwhile, OB WEST provided additional guidance for the the *Fifth Panzer Army’s*  counter-attack. The direction of the main attack on **19 September** now was to be changed from north to northwest, Nancy being substituted for Château-Salins as the initial army objective. This new maneuver aimed at freeing the hard-pressed *553d VGD,* rapidly being hemmed in by the XII Corps, and at restoring the Moselle line.
   2. Execution of the plan, however, was jeopardized by the US XV Corps advance across the Moselle south of Nancy, which justified all of XLVII’s fears for the security of his weak left flank.
   3. So Manteuffel ordered a general regrouping.
   4. The *XLVII Panzer Corps* was given the *15th PzGd Div* and told to defend along the Meurthe River. Its *21st PzDiv* and *112th PzBde* were fighting French and American patrols of the US XV Corps and not available for the fight for Nancy.
   5. The LVIII Panzer Corps, in return, was given the *111th PzBde* to reinforce the *113th PzBde* in the drive for Nancy. The addition doubled the maneuver strength of the Corps. Nevertheless, it was a Panzer Corp in name only with only two Panzer Brigades, no maneuver divisions, and little to no artillery.
2. **Instructor –** Orders to attack. At midnight Manteuffel phoned General Krueger and gave him instructions for the attack the following morning with accompanying threats of punishment if his orders were not strictly carried out.
   1. By 0600 all of the *113th PzBde* had to be across the canal and in position near Bourdonnay, nine miles east of Arracourt, to start the drive west toward Champenoux, twenty miles away to link up with the beleaguered *553d VGD.*
   2. The *111th PzBde* was not yet in position to support the attack.
3. **US Commanders –** Why was there waning optimism in the Third Army. 
   1. By mid-Sept, the early U.S. optimism had abated somewhat. General Wood phoned the corps headquarters to warn that **“this job of getting supplies across the river [the Moselle] and on the roads is getting to be a major problem. This will not be a very fast operation—no blitz.”** Problem seen as the weather and terrain – not the Germans.
   2. **Nevertheless, at 0030 on 18 September,** Wood gave orders (IAW the Corps orders) for the resumption of the advance on the following day:
      1. **CCA (**Arracourt) **and CCB (**Chambrey) were to attack NE toward the German border. Saarbruecken, Germany (47 road miles to the NE).
      2. **CCR**  was to hand of Lunéville to CCB/6th AD and fall in behind CCA and CCB.
   3. The German attack at Lunéville partially delayed the Corps’ attack plans. CCA was ordered to stand-down until its TF returned from Luneville; but CCB continued planning for an attack toward Saarbruecken.
   4. Inclement weather continued to hindered the ability of the XIX TAC to support ground operations and 100% of the 262 sorties on the 19th were devoted to AI missions.
4. **18 Sept is day 2 of Operation Market Garden** (Patton War, 133).
   1. Montgomery convinced Eisenhower to hold the 12th Army Group in place and send all the resources to his 21st Army Group.
   2. Bradley called Patton to warn him that the order to hold in place would come down on the 19th.
   3. **Patton –** Your thoughts on why Patton asked Bradley not to call till the night of the 19th.
5. **Visual 2: CCA, 4th Armored Division Deployment-PPT builds IAW the discussion below - *VMD:*** Remain with the bird’s-eye view above Arracourt. **4th AD** – Overview the 4th AD situation and their focus the morning of the 19th.
6. Much of CCA was concentrated near Arracourt with an outpost line to the NE.[[1]](#endnote-1)
7. The leadership was focused on resuming the offense to the northeast. Only a few outposts of light tanks and engineers screened the command’s right flank.
8. **Instructor -** XII Corps and the 4th AD were unaware that the *LVIII Panzer Corps* was attempting to concentrate two PzBdes onto the flank and rear of the 4th AD.
   1. The *113th PzBde* had made an undetected move and *w*as marshalling near Bourdonnay with orders to attack on the morning of the 19th.
   2. The *111th PzBde,* also undetected, was still several miles south of the canal with orders to group near Bures and attack at daylight.
9. **Visual 3: 113th Pz Bde Attack – Panzers in the Mist-PPT builds IAW the discussion below -113th Panzer Brigade Attack – Panzers in the Mist.** (From Vanguard, 134-135, 136-138; Tactics, 235-237 and <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/daily/wwii/first-day-at-arracourt-pattons-third-army-vs-monteuffels-panzers/>)) ***VMD:*** Move NE from Arracourt toward Juvercourt. After passing over the high ground just to the right of Juvercourt you find the village of Xanrey. From Xanrey you can identify and move to Lezey. Take up a view above Lezy looking SE along the Hwy to Bourdonnay.

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**4th AD and 5th Pz Army** – Overview the German attack. **[Note: most of the tactical detail listed here is optional – highlight in key areas the students do not cover]**

1. On the night of 18 September, TF ABE (Co. C/37th Tk BN, D/37th (-), and some armored infantry (AI) formed a combat outpost near Lezey—about 4 miles northeast of Arracourt. (Vanguard, 141).

1. TF ABE’s outpost detected the movement of the panzer brigade and harassed them throughout the night with artillery fire.
2. During the night, the *113th PzBde*, with 42 Panther tanks of the Mark V battalion and the *2113th Panzer Grenadier Regiment* in the lead, had moved from Bourdonnay in a successful night march. **The German’s achieved tactical surprise and were attacking into the flank and rear of CCA.**
   1. At daylight, the brigade pushed through the heavy fog toward Lezey and Bezange
   2. The *113th PzBde’s* Mark V battalion was organized into four armor-heavy combat teams. Each with one Tank Company and a panzer grenadier platoon (Johann Jarymowycz’s Tank Tactics, 235).
3. TF ABE’s light tanks used the fog and terrain to keep the Germans under observation and report. Additionally, Captain William Dwight, a liaison officer, joined the rear of the German column in his jeep and radioed updates to TF ABE and CCA.
4. In the meeting engagement, which followed, **the morning fog played no favorites: it protected the German armor from air attack, but permitted the American tanks to fight at close quarters where the longer range Panther tank guns had no advantage**.
5. About 0700 at Lezy, the first Panther suddenly loomed out of the fog-hardly seventy-five yards from the two American tanks.
   1. The Panther and two of its fellows were destroyed in a matter of seconds.
   2. The German column decided to turn south and look for a way around Lezey. (note: at ranges over 500 yards the Sherman’s 75mm could not penetrate the frontal armor of the Panther. These engagements were at point blank range).
6. **Instructor - Use this movement to emphasize the 4th AD combat skills and the 113th Pz Bde lack of skills.** ***VMD:*** Show the German attack diverting to the south. Then follow Captain Lamison’s attack to the south IAW the discussion and visuals. First move behind Lamison’s Ridge. Then move SW along the low ground and turn to the SE and move up to the Sherman tank at the first lone tree. When the Panthers turned away, after the abortive attack at Lezey, TF ABE raced the enemy to a commanding ridge N of Bezange-la-Petite.

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***VMD:*** Repeat the manuever to the second lone tree.

* 1. TF ABE used the ridge to screen their move and maneuver against the flank of the German column.
  2. The inexperienced German tank crews instead of turning into the American attack raced south exposing their flank armor to the Americans.
  3. TF ABE’s Sherman’s firing from his hull-down positions all but destroyed the right hand attack column of the *113th Panzer Brigade.*
  4. The fight highlighted two of the few advantages that the Sherman had over the Panther. First the Sherman was faster. Second, the Sherman had a more powerful motor on the turret traverse mechanism, and therefore the Sherman’s turret traversed faster than the Panther’s. The result was that a Sherman tank crew could lay its gun on a target quicker than its German adversary.

1. ***VMD:*** From the 2d Lone tree. Fly S just to the right of Bezange. Identify and follow the road to Rechicourt. Almost ½ to Recicourt identify and take up a position behind the M18 Tank Destroyer. Meanwhile the intrepid liaison officer, Cpt. Dwight helped position elements of C/704th Tank Destroyer BN to block another of the *113th PzBde’s* combat teams.

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1. The 704th TD BN narrative stated: ***“The lead tank destroyer, commanded by Sergeant Stacey (sic), had evidently seen the German tank at the same time as Lieutenant Leiper, and opened fire immediately. Its first round scored a direct hit, exploding the German tank. The flames of the burning tank revealed others behind it in a V­ formation, and Sergeant Stacey's next round hit a second German tank, but immediately afterwards he had his own tank destroyer knocked out by fire from a third German tank.****”*
2. Pvt Paul Colangelo, the assistant driver on one of the Hell Cats remembered, ***“After we realized they were German, we started to open fire with our M18’s. We would shoot and move, and with our speed and maneuverability, we were having a field day… like in a shooting gallery. The Germans didn’t know what was happening.”***(Vanguard, 139)
3. **VMD: Rise up and look SE.** Cpt Evan’s (C Co. 704th TD BN) positioned another TD platoon southeast of Rechicourt. His account describes the next TD action, *“****We were in pretty good position along a ridge over-looking a shallow valley. We could hear the Germans coming, but couldn’t see them because of the fog. As the fog burned off, we saw at least thirty to forty German tanks with supporting infantry… The Germans changed directions toward us. We waited and waited until they were within 1500 yards, then we fired. The two leading tanks were hit and stopped dead, aflame. The others, their crews apparently confused, turned side-ways. I really don’t know why. That’s where they made a big mistake. It was a turkey shoot! From our position, with only turrets showing, we hit eleven more as fast as we could load and shoot…”***
4. The TD company accounted for approximately 19 enemy tanks, at the expense of 1 man killed, 3 wounded, and 3 out of action TDs.
5. So far, the *113th PzBde* attack had developed as a series of consecutive jabs, generally made by a company of tanks and a platoon of infantry, as the enemy probed to find an opening in the CCA defenses.
6. Meanwhile, CCA called for reinforcements and the armored artillery ranged in on the attackers.
7. **VMD: From the M18 TD position IAW the discussion below look west, identify the trees marking Hill 246, and move to Hill 246. From Hill 246 you will be able to see Arracourt to the west.**  About 1100, a German tank column broke through the American line and seized Hill 246.

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* 1. The Germans got into a firefight with the 66th AFAB. Elements of the CCA HQ were nearby and Colonel Clark had to shelter in a ditch.
  2. About the time the Germans got onto the hill, Captain Jimmy Leach (B Co. 37th) whose company was positioned about was in a position about 4 miles northwest of Juvrecourt arrived at the CCA CP. He recalled: ***“The artillery was shooting direct fire at them and had them stymied at least. They had not spotted CCA headquarters… the Germans were concentrating on the artillery.****”* (History Channel, Greatest Tank Battles – The Battle of Arracourt. At 21:34 minutes, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sngawYf8lA8>)

1. Leach maneuvered against the German’s flank and they withdrew south to the vicinity of Hill 297.
2. After the failed morning attacks, the remnants of the *113th PzBde* regrouped east of Rechicourt near Hill 297.
3. About 1400, Major William Hunter (XO, 37th TK BN) arrived in the Arracourt area. He came from Luneville with A Co. 37th, an artillery battery, and few other supporting forces. Colonel Abrams told him over the radio, *“****Dust off the sights, wipe off the shot, and breeze right on through.”***
4. Major Hunter joined his group (A/37 (minus 1 platoon left to secure CCA HQ) with B/37 and the remaining TDs near Hill 246. The force was designated as Task Force Hunter. (details from Vanguard, 141)
5. ***VMD:*** Remain at Hill 246 and orientate SSE toward Rechicourt. TF Hunter attacked south against what he believed was a tank platoon. To conceal the movement, Hunter coordinated with the 94th Armored Field Artillery Battalion to blanket the area with smoke.

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* 1. Captain Spencer (A/37) attacking to the east of Rehcicourt quickly identified that there were 12 enemy tanks south of the village instead of 4 but continued the attack.
  2. Much of the fog had now burned off and the Germans were able to use their long range advantage. A Co. lost 3 tanks, six men killed, and four wounded. The killed included two lieutenants.
  3. ***VMD Optional:*** Follow the B’37 attack to the lone tree. While Spencer’s company kept the Germans occupied, Leach’s company swept along the west side of the village and struck from the west. The enemy tanks, now facing A Co, had exposed their flank to B Co.
  4. Captain Jimmy Leach recalled, ***“A Company went around on the left on the highground and dropped down.. and here was a German lager of over a dozen Panther Tanks. A Company immediately started shooting at them and they return fire at A Company. We lost 3 Shermans, A Company lost its commander and two platoon leaders… I gave by the left flank -Let’s go.’ When we were right in the middle of them. I hit them broadside… I hit them on the flank and my guns… went right thru their side armor…****”* (History Channel, Greatest Tank Battles – The Battle of Arracourt. At 22:45 to 25:00 minutes, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sngawYf8lA8>)
  5. B Company’s fire destroyed 9 of the enemy tanks and forced the others to retreat.

1. Late afternoon and early evening, the 37th TK BN swept north clearing the German Infantry from Bezange and then assembled in the vicinity of Lezey.
2. The remnants of PzBde 113 regrouped near Moncourt.

**Analysis:** In the initial attack, the *113th Panzer Brigade* had several significant advantages over Combat Command A.

1. **Germans –** What was the impact of the intense pressure from Berlin influence for the *Fifth Army’s* attack immediately? The insistence on immediate attack resulted in the *Fifth Panzer Army* committing its forces in a piecemeal manner – the Army attack consisted of 1s Panzer Brigade.
2. Bring up the picture of “Rosie the Rocketeer.” What impact did the weather have on the fight?
   1. Low fog meant that the only air support provided to CCA during the fight was Because of the low fog, the XIX Tactical Air Command was not able to provide air support to CCA during the fight.
      1. Major Charles Carpenter, the commander of the division’s artillery liaison planes made a contribution to the fight “Rosie the Rocketeer.”
      2. He was known as “Bazooka Charlie” and his plane was named “Rosie the Rocketeer”. Carpenter had mounted six bazookas on his aircraft. During the fighting that morning he is given credit for knocking out one enemy tank and damaging another.
   2. Weather also influenced the tank on tank fight. The Panther Tank was significantly superior to the American Sherman in a tank on tank duel. The Panther’s frontal armor was all but impervious to the Sherman’s 75mm gun at anything other than point blank range. The Panther’s high velocity 76mm gun could easily pierce the Sherman’s frontal armor out to 2000 meters (Tactics, 240 and 258). The fog made it a point blank fight.
3. **Evaluate the American estimate of the situation.** The American leadership concluded that the German armored attack had spent itself. Patton came to Arracourt and talked with General Wood. Both agreed that CCA should begin the push toward Germany the next morning. Patton, Eddy, and Wood believed the attack was nothing more than a local counter-attack, and that due to the heavy enemy losses there was no further threat. (Vanguard, 144)
   1. CCA reported that forty-three enemy tanks, mostly factory-new Panthers destroyed and that its own losses had been only six killed and thirteen wounded; three American tank destroyers and five M–4 tanks had been knocked out.
   2. General Krueger reported that he had fifty tanks damaged or destroyed on 19 September. Such a figure would seem to account for one of the two tank battalions in the 113th PzBde, but German battlefield recovery and repair still had high standards.

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**Stand 10**

**The Battle of Arracourt**

**Day 2 - 20 September 1944**

**Visuals:**

1. **Battle of Arracourt - Day 2, American and German Situation the Night of 19 September and Early Morning 20 September**
2. **Battle of Arracourt - Day 2, CCA on the Morning of 20 September**
3. **Battle of Arracourt – Day 2- Tank Battle at Ley**
4. **Battle of Arracourt – Day 2, Night Assault on Moncourt**

**Nancy Virtual Box 3A:  *Virtual Movement Directions (VMD):*** Initially from a birds-eye view above Arracourt looking to the NE. Shift to the directions as noted in the discussion below

**Orientation: Same as before.**

A screenshot of a video game

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**Description:** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 226 - 229]

1. **Visual 1: Situation the Night of 19 September and Early Morning 20 September –PPT builds IAW discussion.**
2. **Instructor -** Elsewhere, the *Fifth Panzer Army* had been no more successful on 19 September.
   1. The *111th PzBde*, supposed to be north of the canal that morning, was misdirected along the way by a French farmer and the brigade’s lead elements did not make contact with the *113th PzBde* at Bures until late in the afternoon.
   2. The *111th PzBde* did not reach Krueger in full strength. Some of its tanks had not yet come up from the depots, and low flying American planes had inflicted much damage on the column during the march north.
   3. South of Lunville elements of the US XV Corps had pushed the *21st PzDiv* back to the Meurthe R.
      1. Additionally, Patton had directed the XV Corps to shift from an East advance to a NE advance.
      2. The XV Corps was to take responsibility for Luneville and the new boundary between the XV Corps and XII Corp would be the Marne-Rhine Canal.
   4. The *15th PzGd Div* was in a blocking position between the canal and Luneville. With the XLVII Panzer Corps thus heavily engaged General Luettwitz had to tell his superiors that he had no troops to attack north of the canal.
3. **Instructor -** In the *German* ***1st Army*** the situation was somewhat more positive.
   1. 14 miles to the west, *553 VGD* was still holding the 35th IN Div at bay along the Nancy Curtin and preventing their link with the 80th Div at Dieulouard.
   2. 22 miles to the NW at Dielouard, the *3d PzGd Div* was still blocking the US 80th IN Div attempts to expand the bridgehead to the Seille River.
   3. 7 miles to the north, the *559 VG Div* at Chateau-Salins, blocked CCB attempts to advance toward the German border.
   4. 25 Miles NW of Arracourt, *17th SS PzGd Div* had stopped the U.S 7th AD from breaking out of the Arnaville bridgehead.
4. **Instructor – Other US situation**
   1. **CCR 4th AD moving up behind CCA and CCB.**
   2. **CCB 6th AD on order to join with 35th ID as soon as the XV Corps took responsibility for Luneville.**

1. **Instructor -** Inclement weather in the area prevented the XIX TAC from providing CAS missions. However, 165 sorties hit 71 AI targets and reported significant success.
2. **Visual 2: CCA, 4th Armored Division Morning of 20 September – PPT builds IAW discussion.**

1. **4th AD –** Overview the preparations to resume the offense.
   1. 4th AD is the XII Corps’ main effort and CCA is 4th AD’s main effort.
   2. The night of 19 Sept, the 35th TK BN (-) [one medium tank company detached] and the balance of the 10th AIB joined with CCA near Arracourt.
   3. With the reinforcements, Col Clarke put in motion his orders to resume the offense toward Germany. On the morning of 20 Sept CCA began to move out toward the NE – moving slowly because of dense fog. [*The Nancy Bridgehead*, prepared by subordinate commanders and staff of Combat Command A, 4th AR DIV. Fort Knox, KY, 1947, 21]
   4. The 4th AD leadership were aware that the shattered remnants of the *113th PzBde* were assembled near Ley and Moncourt. However, US leaders estimated them at 50% or less strength and that they poised no significant threat to the 4th AD offensive movement.
   5. **At 1130,** TF Oden was just to the north of Morville-les-Vic. About the same time, TF Abe was closing on Dieuze. [*Vanguard,* 147]
2. **German Army Group G and 5th Pz Army –** Overview General Manteuffel efforts to cancel the attack. VMD: Reorient toward the large ridge to the SE and look toward Arracourt. Then shift to a position behind the 155mm Howitzers near Arracourt and look back at the top of the ridge..) Soon after 1130, General Wood radioed Col Clarke that enemy tanks had returned to the attack near Arracourt and that a TF Abe must be sent back at once.

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* 1. The *111th PzBde*, somewhat battered from the fighting at Luneville, but still combat effective, had maneuvered north using the Foret-de-Parroy as cover and crossed over the canal near Parroy without being detected by the US forces. (After the Battle, 38).
  2. The bulk of the *two PzBdes* remained stationary between Ley and Bures, while General Manteuffel tried hard to persuade Blaskowitz that the attack must be abandoned. [information from, *Tank Tactics*, by Roman Jarymowycz, 38]

1. **4th AD & 5th Pz Army –** Overview the 111th Pz Bde’s attack. **(show ppt build**
   1. *LVIII Panzer Corps* made a gesture toward carrying out the army group commander’s orders to resume offensive operations and sent patrols toward Rechicourt and Arracourt. [Tank Tactics, 238]
   2. **A combat patrol of the *111th PzBde*** (about 8 Panther tanks) slipped through the fog and past the tank destroyer screen and threatened CCA command post.
   3. **Another combat patrol of the *111th PzBde* marshalled at the small village of Bures** andmaneuvered against a limbered battalion of 155mm howitzers from the 191st Field Artillery Battalion.
   4. The 191st FA BN readily handled the attack by firing high explosive at one thousand yards, and by the appearance of the rear guard tanks. – the Germans lost two tanks and retreated. [Nancy Bridgehead, 19]
2. **4th AD – Overview Colonel Clark’s Decision (show ppt build).** 
   1. Colonel Clarke decided to have most of his combat command to turn back and sweep up the entire area **“once and for all.”**
   2. **TF ABE:** Clarke ordered TF Abe to counter-attack to the south and west with the goal of clearing out the German forces that had penetrated between Lezey and the Marne-Rhine Canal. [Vanguard, 147].
   3. **TF ODEN:** TF Oden sent back a combat team under the BN XO (Major Kimsey) to clear the ground south of Rechicourt.
3. **Instructor -** Meanwhile further to the north, **CCB** continued to push to the NE in an effort to bypass Chateau – Salins.
4. **Visual 3: Tank Battle at Ley – *Kampfgruppe Junghannis –* PPT Builds IAW discussion. VMD:** TF on west side of Lezey, then look SE & point out Ley, Hill 260 and Hill 241 (both hills marked with lone trees- but very distant**) 4th AD & 5th Pz Army** overview the tank battle at Ley.

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- **VMD:** IAW the discussion follow the TF Abe attack toward Ley. Initially follow Rt 55 until due north of Ley. Then move up to the crest of the ridge just to the right of “the barn near Ley.” IAW visual 12-3c.

1. By midafternoon, Colonel Abrams had assembled a force consisting of three medium tank companies of the 37th and two companies of the 10th AIB on the west side of Lezey.
   1. The 94th AFAB (105mm) to support the attack.
   2. And the 191st Artillery (155mm) at Arracourt also provided supporting fires.
2. General Krueger, commanding the *LVIII Panzer Corps*, and Col. Heinrich Bronsart von Schellendorff, the commanding officer of *111th PzBde*, were concerned that the remnants of the *113th PzBde* lacked to combat power to block CCA.
   1. Col Schellendorff dispatched a battlegroup to the high ground south of Lezey to prevent the US forces from penetrating the German lines along Rt. 55. [Tank Tactics, 238-239]
   2. The battlegroup was designated *Kampfgruppe Junghannis* include a company size element each of PzKw IVs, Panzer Grenadiers, and anti-tank guns.
   3. *KG Jung’s* positions on Mannecourt Hill (Hills 260 and 241) dominated Rte. 55.
3. The TF ABE advanced boldly to rapidly closing the distance against the more powerful guns on the PzKw IVs and AT guns. The attack shattered PzBde 113’s defensive line at Ley and the unit’s remnants withdrew to the SE.[Vanguard, 148, Tank Tactics, 240].
4. TF Abe captured Ley with loss of only one tank. However, C Co. coming over the hill crest east of Ley, ran head on into the fire of *KG Jungs’* tanks and AT guns from Hill 241. [Vanguard, 148-149].
   1. As they came up to the slope, *KG Jungs’* tanks and towed AT guns opened fire and knocked out one Sherman. C Co. returned fire and in a fight lasting about three minutes C Co. lost five more tanks-but destroyed 5 to 7 Pz IVs.
   2. Abrams brought up B Co., but with darkness approaching- elected not to continue the attack. [Vanguard, 149].
5. **Abrams elected not to continue the attack** and left *KG Jung* in control of the hill, and the Germans claimed victory in their dispatches to the 5th Panzer Army.
6. As in most cases of this kind the estimates and reports of losses differ considerably with the headquarters.
7. The 4th AD After Action Report says that the 37th Tank Battalion lost 7 tanks and destroyed 18 of the enemy’s. The CCA Operations Journal records: “. . . 37th lost 12 tanks and knocked out 8 enemy tanks.”
8. The Fifth Panzer Army report states both sides lost 11 tanks in the fight around Ley.
9. **Task Force Kimsey at Bures.** While, TF ABE fought at Ley, Team Kimsey secured the area near Rechicourt-la-Peitie.
10. **Visual 4: Night Assault of Moncourt**[The Lorraine Campaign, 226 – 229; and *Patton’s Vanguard,* 150-151]
11. **Instructor - *VMD:*** Remain in position in the vicinity of the “barn near Ley,” rise up slighty in the air an look back to Ley and then IAW the discussion below scan to the west to discuss the night attack against Moncourt. Prior to the night of 20 September, the 37th TK BN had never attacked at night. Cpt Leach (B Co) stated: **“ ‘The book’ said that tanks could not be successfully employed in the dark.”** (History Channel, Greatest Tank Battles – The Battle of Arracourt)

Diagram

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* 1. Captain Leach’s statement was in-line with their Armored Force doctrine which recommended that the use of tanks at night be limited to local defense in delaying actions and in the pursuit. The Armored Force Field Manual, Tactics and Technique (1942) states:
  2. Para, 58a. Night Operations. - **In general, night operations of armored units will consist of night marches, movement into position, and defense**. Collision with hostile tank units at night will be rare because of the protective reconnaissance and security elements.
  3. Para, 58d. Tank Units. **- The use of tank units in night operations will be limited to local defense except in delaying action and pursuit… They are not used in night attack except against a badly beaten enemy under favorable conditions of visibility and terrain or in limited objective attacks over previously reconnoitered ground.**

1. **4th AD –** No need to discuss the tactical action – Instead evaluate why CCA executed a night attack and was it a violation of their doctrine. Nevertheless, the CCA leadership decided to continue the attack into the night. Possibly Colonel Clarke and LTC Abrams based their decision with emphasis on key parts to the doctrine:
   1. The attack against KG Jung on Hill 241 had failed because the Germans had a better long range at gun and the weather allowed them to use it.
   2. Night attack allows CCA to use its strengths – Artillery and point blank tank fire.
   3. Possibly not a violation of doctrine.
      1. A “badly beaten enemy”
      2. – and a “limited objective over previously reconnoitered ground”
2. **Instructor – Optional detail for the attack**.
   1. The assault force consisted of 3 TK CO’s and 2 AIB CO’s.
   2. It was a common practice to pair tank companies and armored infantry companies. The pairing of the two companies was referred to at the time as a “Team” (Vanguard, 242).
      1. The pairing encouraged combined arms tactics at the company level. The infantrymen were to protect the tanks from the dreaded panzerfaust and the tanks provided support to the infantry.
      2. However, the pairing of companies did present command and control challenges. (Tank Tactics, 212-213).
         1. The armored infantry were sometime reluctant to dismount from their half-tracks.
         2. The infantry wanted the tanks to lead and the tanks wanted the infantry to lead.
         3. Individual platoons of tanks or infantry sometimes did not work well together because the platoon leaders often only responded to the orders of their own company commander.
   3. CCA preceded the attack with a heavy artillery barrage. It was for the 94th AFAB the first time using the “on call” barrage. The unit history states: ***“All details were worked out in advance on several numbered concentrations in the target area. Fire was brought down by the task force commander through the artillery liaison officer and lifted by the forward observer with the leading element.”***  The history goes on to say that it was highly successful and a standard practice in future operations.
   4. The attack was successful and it was reported ***“[we] slaughtered them as they cowered in their foxholes.”*** Additionally, TF ABE lost no vehicles and did not report destroying any vehicles.
   5. The CCA history stated that the attack was ***“a well-coordinated night attack.”*** [Nancy Bridgehead, 21]. Unfortunately, the night attack on Moncourt included the friction normally associated with a night attack and as result some troops of the 10th AIB, which had entered the town first, were killed by the American artillery fire. [Cole, 226 - 229]

**Analysis:**

1. **German Army Group G & 5th Pz Army – What was the impact of this small tactical fight?**
   1. When Abrams took Moncourt on the night of the 20th, Manteuffel (*5th Pz Army*) seized the opportunity to report that his lines had been broken at Ommeray, some two and a half miles farther east.
   2. He received permission to withdraw the *LVIII Panzer Corps* (58) to a new and shorter line between Gélucourt and Lagarde. The Corps defensive line was approximately 9 miles long and now about 5 miles.
   3. Blaskowitz’ also provided a lecture on tactics and an order to counterattack. He was far from satisfied by the events of 20 and 21 September, and in the *Army Group G* War Diary noted critically **“the Fifth Panzer Army shows a marked tendency to limit itself to defensive action.”**
2. **Review of Operational Plans:**
   1. LTG George Patton planned to push across the Rhine River into Germany within the next month.
   2. Generaloberst Johannes Blaskowitz planned for *German Army Group G* to contain the US penetration with the German First Army and then counter-attack with the *Fifth Panzer Army* to isolate and destroy Patton’s Army.
   3. **Evaluate the success of the two opposing commander’s in meeting their desired end-state.**

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**Stand 11**

**The Battle of Arracourt**

**Day 3 to 4**

**21- 22 September 1944**

**Visuals:**

1. Battle of Arracourt: Day 3 and 4 – Try Again
2. Day 4 - General Situation of the 4th Armored Division and LVIII Panzer Corps
3. Day 4 - US Cavalry at Juvelize
4. Day 4 - CCA Blocks the Advance of the 11th Pz Bde
5. Day 4 - The Nancy Curtain

**Nancy Virtual Box 3B, *VMD:*** Return to Lezey and look to the directions IAW the discussion.

**Orientation:** Currently located at the village of Lezey**.**

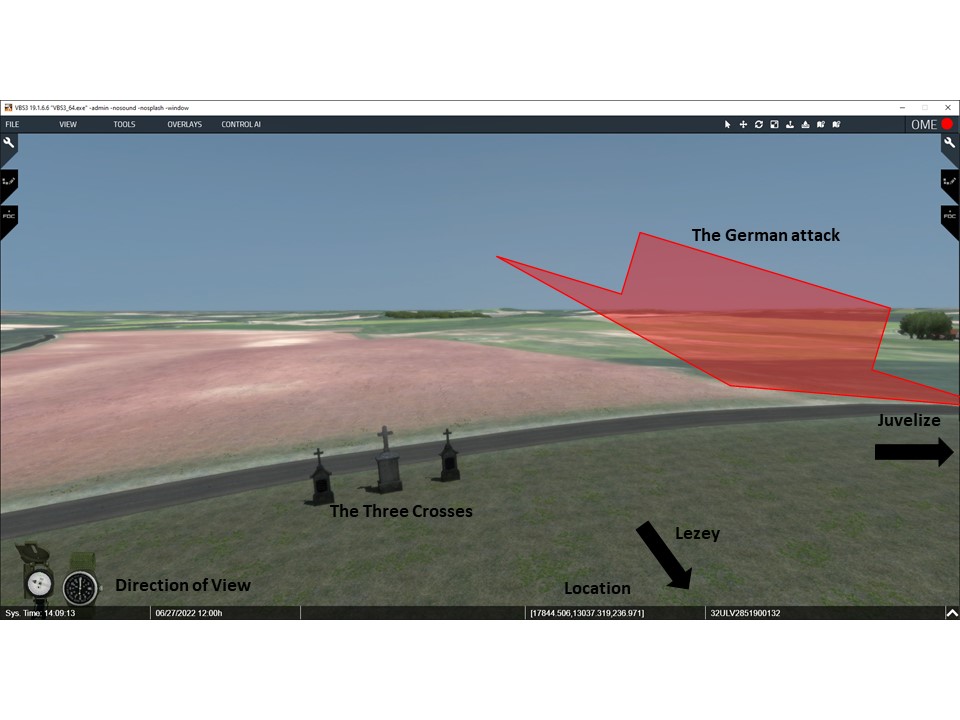
**Description:** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, 229 - 233]

1. **Visual 1: Battle of Arracourt: Day 3 and 4 – Try Again. – PPT IAW discussion below. *VMD:*** Remain at Lezey
2. **XX Corps** – overview the situation. [details from Cole, 171-175]
   1. From the 19 – 22 September the 5th ID and the 7th AD battled unsuccessfully to break through the German defensive line along the Sielle River at the village of Sillegny. In one attack the 38th AIB lost 3 Battalion commanders.
   2. US attacks greatly hindered by shortages of artillery ammunition and fuel, and lack of close air support due to the bad-weather.
3. **XV Corps –** overview the situation [details from Cole, 205]
   1. XV Corps had liberated Luneville on 20 Sept and assumed responsibility for the area south of the Marne Rhine Canal.
   2. The Corps was steadily pushing elements of the XLVIII Pz Corps to the east.
4. **XII Corps –** overview the situation.
   1. Throughout the day of fight on the 20th, the 4th AD had held the initiative, but the additional armored weight given the *LVIII Panzer Corps* by the *111th PzBde* prevented any clear-cut decision.
   2. The decision was made to pull the lead elements of CCA and CCB back from Hamponot and Dieuz, and clear the area of German units. CCA again consolidated in the vicinity of Arracourt.
   3. The Americans spent the third day of the battle (21 Sept) consolidating their position in the area and clearing the surrounding villages. In most cases they found that the Germans had retreated back across the canal and destroyed the bridges.
   4. General Wood (with the concurrence of Gen Eddy) made the decision that the division would resupply and conduct maintenance of the 22d and then resume the offense toward Germany on 23 September.
5. **Patton –** evaluate the statement. These events resulted in one of the few recorded instances of pessimism on the part of General Patton. General Eddy phoned Patton to say that the Germans were determined to hold. Then, says the XII Corps commander, **“Much to my surprise, Patton replied, ‘It may be impossible to complete the mission which we started out on, but we could kill a lot of Germans trying.’ ”**
6. **German:** 
   1. **Instructor – highlight the new front. W**hen Abrams took Moncourt on the night of the 20th, Manteuffel (*5th Pz Army*), received permission to withdraw the *LVIII Panzer Corps* (58) to a new and shorter line between Gélucourt and Lagarde.
   2. **Germans – Overview the guidance to resume the attack.** 
      1. Despite Manteuffel’s request for a general withdrawal, *OB WEST* ordered a new plan of attack to close the gap opening between the *First* and *Fifth Panzer Armies*.
      2. Rundstedt instructed the *First Army* to gather reserves for an attack southeast from Delme. The *Fifth Panzer Army*, reinforced by the *11th PzDiv* whose advance elements were just coming up from Sarrebourg, was ordered to strengthen its right wing and attack to the north so as to meet the *First Army* drive near Moyenvic.
   3. **Germans – evaluate the change of command for Army Group G.** 
      1. The failure to achieve an early and brilliant victory in the armored counterattack also provided Hitler with an excuse to get rid of Blaskowitz, who, was deemed not politically acceptable.
      2. On **21 September** Hitler relieved General Blaskowitz and gave the command of *Army Group G* to **General der Panzertruppen Hermann Balck** ; Colonel Friedrich von Mellenthin was appointed as chief of staff.
      3. General der Panzertruppen Hermann Balck
         1. On the Eastern Front, Balck commanded the 11th PzDiv, and led the *XLVIII* Panzer Corps (58) in many fierce battles.
         2. Both Balck and Mellenthin came to the West with no experience against the Western Allies.
         3. Politically, Balck long had held the reputation of being an ardent Nazi. His personal bravery was well established (he had been wounded six times), he was known to be an optimist, and he had a long record of successful offensive operations.
         4. When Balck took over his new command on 21 September he immediately ordered the *First Army t*o start its drive past Château-Salins, still in German hands, toward Moyenvic, and set 0700 **(22 September)** the next morning as H Hour for an attack by the right wing of the *LVIII Panzer Corps*.
7. **Visual 2: Day 4 - General Situation of the 4th Armored Division and LVIII Corps – PPT builds IAW discussion - *VMD:*** From Lezey look NE.

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1. **XXII Corps and 4th AD** – evaluate the XII Corps’ estimate that the Germans no longer had to strength to conduct offensive operations.
   1. On the 22d, General Wood, unaware of the impending German attack, ordered the 4th AD to conduct maintenance. He planned to attack on the 23d with both combat commands to clean out Château-Salins where the garrison thus far had defeated all attempts to take the town.
   2. Then on to Germany.
   3. TF ABE was in a tactical assembly area at Lezey and TF ODEN was north of Arracourt – both were conducting maintenance.
   4. The XII Corps reinforced the 4th AD with the 9th TD Group and 42d Cav Sqd. They were brought up to hold the ground between Ley and the canal (Tactics, 21)
   5. The 25th Cav Sqd, was screening CCA’s left flank and observing the roads between Dieuze and Moyenvic.
2. **5th Pz Army overview the plan of attack. VMD:** Move up to the vicinity of the 3 crosses and look to the NE.

****

* 1. Unknown to the Americans, the LVIII Panzer Corps had shifted the 111th Pz Bde, reinforced with the remnants of the 113th Pz Bde, to the large woods NE of Lezy.
  2. The first phase of the German attack aimed at the seizure of the high ground near Juvelize (our current location) with the *111th PzBde.* Then in the second phase, the *11th PzDiv* would continue the attack to Moyenvic and link with the *German First Army*.

1. **The US Cavalry at Juvelize - Visual 3: The US Cavalry at Juvelize** (organizational details from “World War II US Cavalry Groups –European Theater” by Gordon Rottman, 8-12) - ***VMD:*** Remain at the three crosses.
2. **5th Pz Army and Mech Cav Group** overview the initial 111th Pz Bde Attack.
   1. The morning of **22 September** was fogbound and murky, giving the German assault force protection from the dreaded Jabo’s. (German slang for fighter-bomber).
   2. The attack toward Juvelize began nearly three hours late because of difficulties getting the *111th PzBde* and the *11th PzDiv* into position. (Attacked at midmorning, Tactics, 241)
   3. The *111th PzBde* attacked from the woods near Blanch-Eglise with the initial objective being the high ground at Juvelize (Vanguard, 151).
3. The initial impact of the German attack fell upon the 25th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mechanized) near Juvelize.
   1. The 25th Cav was a 755-man combined arms organization designed primarily for reconnaissance or screening.
   2. It was organized with a Headquarters and Headquarters and Service Troop, three Reconnaissance Troops, a Light Tank Company, and an Assault Gun Troop.
   3. Its combat power consisted of M8 Armored cars, M5A1 light tanks, and reconnaissance jeeps. The armored cars and light tanks were fast and maneuverable, but hopelessly outclassed in any fight with a German tank.
   4. The assault gun troop had 6 M8 Self-propelled howitzers – the “General Scott.” It mounted a short 75mm howitzer – the same light field piece used by airborne units. Again the gun was all but useless against tanks.
   5. Attached to the cavalry was C Company of the 704th Tank Destroyer Battalion which provided them was some excellent anti-tank capability.
   6. The 111th *PzBd*e attack pushed through the cavalry screen, but then had to fight through the US tank destroyer company. Fortunately, the tank destroyers succeeded in slowing the enemy attack and allowed time for TF ABE to get ready to fight. During the fight Captain Evans distinguished himself and was awarded the DSC (Gill, *Tank Destroyer Forces WWII*, 71). The DCS citation stated, ***“After a fierce exchange of fire with an enemy tank, this intrepid officer ran from his armored car to a disabled tank-destroyer and with its gun destroyed the hostile tank. He then went on foot through intense small arms and heavy weapons fire to another of his platoons and remaining in an exposed position for two hours, directed it in the repulse of the enemy attack.”*** (DCS citations. <https://www.tracesofwar.com/persons/40587/Evans-Thomas-J.htm>).
   7. But was able to seize the high ground at Les Trois Croix and the village of Juvelize.
4. **Instructor - VMD:** From the Three Crosses look to the south. The attack caught TF ABE by surprise. The unit was conducting maintenance and in some cases the tanks and half-tracks had their tracks off the vehicles and they were replacing worn links. (Vanguard, 152).
5. **4th AD, XIX TAC and 5th Pz Army – Overview the tank battle at Juvelize. Visual 4: CCA Blocks the Advance of the 111th Panzer Brigade –** PPT builds IAW discussion. - ***VMD:*** Remain at the 3 crosses looking down on the TF Abe assembly area.
6. As the cavalry and the TDs blunted the German attack the sun finally broke through fog. The XIX TAC flew into the area, strafing and bombing, further slowing the momentum of the German attack
7. Fortunately for TF ABE - the Germans paused on the high ground at Juvelize and did not continue the attack - they had seized their designated objective.
8. The 111th PzBde informed LVIII Panzer Corps that he had achieved his objective, and would continue the attack upon further orders. He was informed that additional panzers would be sent forward to reinforce his advance, and that supporting artillery fire would be provided from an area near Bourdonnay.
9. The end result was a significant pause in the German attack.
10. ***VMD:*** IAW visual 11-4 show the TF ABE attack and the German retreat. Meanwhile, while Col Clark counterattacked with TF ABE. [Vanguard, 152-153 and Map No. 6, Lorraine Campaign, Cole, 232].
    1. Part of the TF blocked the PzBde’s advance.
    2. Then the bulk of the TF maneuvered around the Germans west flank.
    3. The German attack collapsed and retreated back to he NE.
    4. ***Major Gerhard Tebb (German Tank BN commander)***remember his Panther was hit repeatedly as he tried to retreat to the safety of the woods.
    5. ***Lieutenant Horst Gitterman*** remembers *von Manteuffel’s* anger when he saw the panzers retreating. He remembered him yelling at *Lt Hans Bunze*l (his company commander) in his damaged Panther and threatening him with court-martial. *Getterman* remembered *Bunzel* standing his ground and opening his coveralls to display his numerous awards for bravery and then *Manteuffel* calming down.
    6. ***Major Tebb*** remembered that Colonel Heinrich von Bronsart-Schellendorff (the Bde commander) was close by him and near Les Trois Cross. He saw the commander’s SPW hit by fire. The Col dismounted and then calmly walked toward the enemy. The colonel was hit by automatic weapons fire and fell. The staff believed he sought death in the battle because of the squandering of his armor in a useless attack. [Note- Colonel Seckendorff, commander of the 113th PzBde, was killed the next day, apparently by an American P–47].
11. In the fighting CCA destroyed 14 to 17enemy tanks and reported five enemy tanks retreated to safety.
12. Even though only 9% of the XIX TAC’s sorties that day focused on CAS targets they still provided valuable support to the ground fight. The P–47’s from the XIX TAC broke up the remaining attackers, with the help of the armored field artillery, and cut them down as they straggled back to the northeast. Manteuffel’s urgent pleas for help from the Luftwaffe remained unanswered and he reluctantly sent his last armored reserve, a few tanks from the *113th PzBde*, east of Lezey to hold astride the Moyenvic–Bourdonnay road.
13. The German attempt to reach Moyenvic had ended in disaster. By the end of the day, the *111th PzBde* was reduced to only seven tanks and 80 men and the *LVIII Panzer Corps* reported that a continuation of the attack ***"is absolutely impossible."***[Cole, 232-233]
14. The scheduled continuation of the attack by the *111th Panzer Grenadier Regiment,* which was marching up from the *11th PzDiv*, was called off as useless.
15. **35th Div, XIX TAC & 1st German Army – overview how the situation changed on the Nancy Curtain. Visual 5: The Nancy Curtain – No Virtual**
16. Also on the 22d the Germans also suffered a defeat on the Nancy Curtain. On the 21st, XII Corps had reinforced the 35th Division with CCB, 6th AD. On the morning of 22d, the reinforced 35th Div and the 80th Division attacked with the goal of linking the southern bridgehead to the northern bridgehead.
17. CCB assembled in the Forêt de Grémecey and then, on ***22*** September, began a turning move to the southwest with the aim of taking the Curtain from the rear. (Cole, Map XI). Early on the morning of 22 September CCB moved out toward the Seille River, using radio to maintain contact with the 35th Division. Although the enemy forces were surprised by the appearance of the American tanks in their rear, their stiff resistance briefly halted CCB on the Seille River. However, by noon, CCB was into Armaucourt.
18. The German lines were cracking under the pressure exerted by the armored columns. At noon, the 35th Div attacked and rapidly pushed up and over the Nancy Curtain.
19. The Germans fled north. The XIX TAC arrived to bomb and strafe the four-mile-long column of infantry, horses, vehicles, and guns moving painfully toward Leyr (a small village about 1 mile west of Armaucourt). [Note: highly possible that many of the attacks against the retreating German columns counted as AI not CAS].
20. The 35th ID passed over the Nancy Curtain and linked with the 80th ID.

**Analysis:**

1. Evaluate the ability of the 5th Panzer Army to once again achieve tactical surprise at the time and place of the choosing?
   1. The XII Corps and 4th AD continues to focus on resuming the offense and continually focuses on what they believe to be in front of them to the northeast. Then fails to focus on possible threats to the flank.
   2. The XII Corps and 4th AD believes they have destroyed the offensive capability of the local German forces and in turn is surprised when the enemy resumes offensive operations.
2. Evaluate how the fighting on the 22d and Operation Market Garden impacts Gen. Patton’s ability to make “Rock Soup.” Time is running out for Patton to make a breakout before all the resources are directed toward Montgomery’s Army Group.

**Stand 12**

**The Battle of Arracourt**

**Day 5 to 8**

**23-26 September 1944**

**Visuals:**

1. **U.S. Third Army and German Situation 23 -25 Sept**
2. **LVIII Panzer Corps Attack, 25 Sept**

**Orientation: Arracourt Virtual Box, *VMD:*** Initially from the Three Crosses look to the directions IAW the discussion.

1. Currently near Juvelize at the Three Crosses. The forward position of CCA.
2. Chateau-Salins is 7 miles to NW and is held by the *559 VGD*.
3. US intelligence believes the *5th Panzer Army* no longer has the capability to conduct offensive operations. Their MLR is:
   1. 4 miles to the east near Dieuze
   2. And 5 miles south along the Marne-Rhine Canal

**Description:** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from The Lorraine Campaign, by Hugh M. Cole, 236 - 244]

1. **Visual 1: U.S. Third Army and German Situation 23 -25 Sept- PPT builds IAW the discussion –**
2. **XX Corps** – overview the direct impact of Operation Market Garden on the Corps order of battle. [details from Cole, 171-183]
   1. On the 23rd, the 7th AD was pulled out of the line and sent north to join the US 1st Army (Operation Market Garden Ongoing)
   2. The 5th ID initiated a pause to stockpile artillery ammunition before making another effort to push over the Seille River.
   3. On the west side of Metz and 90th ID continued to push into the city. However, daily advances were measured in yards.
3. **XV Corps – overview the situation in the south.** [details from Cole, 205] XV Corps secured Luneville and turned the *15th PzGD* along the Meurthe R.and forced them back to Vezouse R.
4. **All Germans –** Overview the situation.
   1. The ***XLVII Panzer Corps*** line along the Vezouse R. was very weak.
      1. 15th PzGD had only two regiments.
      2. The 21st Pz Div at 1/3 strength with very few tanks.
      3. The 112th PzBde also about 1/3 strength with only 7 tanks
   2. The ***XLVII Panzer Corps*** was drastically understrength and not only fighting the US XV Corps but also facing elements of the US Seventh Army.
   3. Additionally, ***OB West*** informed ***5th Pz Army*** to expect and airborne drop behind the Vezouse line. [No drop planned or executed]
   4. ***5th Pz Army*** did not believe that the ***XLVII Pz Corps*** could hold and requested permission to abandon the salient.
   5. **Army Group G** refused to allow the withdrawal and directed that the ***5th Pz Army*** must continue with the attack to link with the ***German 1st Army***.
      1. Two days before, Hitler had repeated his orders that contact must be established with the *553d VGD*, that all the enemy north of the Marne-Rhine Canal must be destroyed, and—specifically—that the *First Army* and *Fifth Panzer Army* must join in the Château-Salins–Moyenvic sector.
      2. To effect this junction Field Marshal Rundstedt reinforced the *559th VG Div* with the remnants of the *106th PzBde* in support. At the same time General Priess and the *XIII SS Corps* took command east of Nancy.
5. **XII Corps – overview the situation and plans in the corps sector.** 
   1. The 80th and 35th ID continued to push toward the Seille River and expand the Dieulouard Bridgehead.
   2. 4th Armored Division: **23 September (Day 5):** After the German attack on **22 September** the 4th AD planned attack toward Chateau-Salins and then on to Germany was postponed again. The division again took the next day (23 Sept) to resupply and conduct maintenance in preparation for resuming the offense toward Germany. Attack planned for 24 Sept.
6. **4th AD and XIX TAC overview the 24 September (Day 6) 1st German Army Counterattack.** 
   1. On the **morning of 24 September**, CCB was concentrated near Château-Salins and was prepared – on order - to continue the offensive to the northeast toward the German Border
   2. At dawn a heavy concentration of artillery fire hit CCB and two regiments of the *559th VG Div* had attacked on three sides of the CCB perimeter.
   3. This coordinated attack threatened to have serious results when, about 1000, the skies briefly cleared over the battlefield.
   4. The XIX TAC’s P–47’s came into the fight in what was reported as ***“impossible weather conditions.”*** In fifteen minutes the attack was broken and the Germans were in flight, leaving eleven wrecked tanks behind them and about three hundred dead.
   5. The Third US Army AAR stated that the ***“fighter-bombers were instrumental in breaking up local tank counter-attacks…”*** (page 51).
   6. The bad weather forced the XIX TAC’s fighter-bombers to disperse all over the region to find airfields that were not covered in bad weather.
7. **All -** What impact did the failed German counterattack have on American and German Plans.
   1. The German attack forced the XII Corps to postponed the planned attack - again - to evaluate the German threat.
   2. The night of **24 September, Rundstedt** hadappealed to OKW to abandon the *Fifth Panzer Army* counterattack and send the remaining armor north to the Aachen front, where an Allied break-through seemed imminent.
   3. Hitler ordered Manteuffel to continue the fight. General Manteuffel asked for two new Pz Div’s to replace the crippled and decimated PzBdes. There were no reserves at hand, however, and he had to be content with elements of the *11th Pz Div*. that had finally arrived in the AO.
8. **25 September (Day 7) – The 11th Panzer Division Attacks [Cole & Gable] - Visual 2: LVIII Panzer Corps Attack – PPT builds IAW the discussion - *VMD:*** From the Three Crosses Look to the NE, N, NW and then to the south IAW the discussion.
9. **5th Pz Army – The LVIII Pz Corps finally has a Panzer Division in it order of battle. Overview the strengths and weaknesses of the 11th Pz Div. Is there a significance to its western front experience?** 
   1. The *11th Pz Div*, popularly known as the “Ghost Division,” was one of the most famous armored units in the Wehrmacht.
   2. It had distinguished record on the Russian front. In Feb 1944 the Div was badly mauled and had to be transferred to southern France for rest and reorganization.
   3. In August, it was given the difficult task of covering the retreat of the Nineteenth Army. On 18 Sept, it was moved to reinforce the *Fifth Panzer Army* near Nancy.
   4. Although the *11th PzDiv* had lost heavily during the Rhone Valley battles it still had some artillery and most of its infantry. The div had only the *110th and 111th Panzer Grenadier Regiments*, sixteen tanks, and two batteries at his disposal—hardly the force required for an advance to Nancy.
10. **5th Pz Army, 4th AD and XIX TAC – Overview the LVIII Pz Corps attack.** 
    1. All told, the *LVIII Pz Corps* had about 23 tanks and 2 BNs of artillery.
    2. The fate of the *111th Pz Brig* on 22 September had prompted General Manteuffel to seek for surprise on **25 September** by moving the axis of his attack farther to the north.
       1. The *11th PzDiv* assembled in the woods south of Dieuze.
       2. On the night of 24 September scouting parties reported that Moyenvic was unoccupied and that Marsal was only weakly held.
    3. The 11th PzDiv scouts had also identified the seam between CCA and CCB, 4th AD. CCA was centered around Lezey and CCB was centered near Chambrey – about 5 miles west of Vic-sur-Seille.
    4. The main attack by the *11th PzDiv* jumped off the next morning at 0900 **(26 Sept)**—two hours later than scheduled—because of a steady downpour that slowed up tanks and guns as they moved into position. The thin cavalry screen on the American north and east flank was easily brushed aside.
    5. The Germans seized Marsal, where they reorganized to fan out in attacks toward the south. One prong of the German drive continued through Moyenvic and by noon had come to a halt at Vic-sur-Seille—finally effecting the junction with the *First Army* which Berlin had decreed.
    6. At about 1000, General Manteuffel ordered a general advance along the whole *LVIII Panzer Corps* front. At noon the enemy began to shoulder his way against CCA’s north flank in an attempt to widen the corridor of assault. Ten + tanks and about a BN of infantry rolled down from the north and hit CCA north of Juvelize and Ley, but were handily beaten off by CCA tanks, infantry, and artillery—which outnumbered them and held positions on the slopes above the German line of approach.
    7. German attack corps had a fair number of artillery pieces (about two battalions), but, just as in the case of the relative armored strength, the American superiority was pronounced; at least six field artillery battalions were brought into play during the course of the battle.
    8. These attacks continued sporadically throughout the afternoon and evening in a steady rain which curtained off the battleground and left the decision to men, tanks, and guns.
    9. The enemy occupied Moncourt, but the Americans kept their hold on Juvelized and the ridge north of Arracourt.
    10. **The steady rain throughout the day protected the 11th Pz Div from the XIX TAC’s fighter-bombers. Because of the adverse weather conditions, they flew zero sorties that day.**

**Analysis:**

1. What did the LVIII Pz Corps accomplish and what did it not accomplish?
   1. Accomplished - 5th Pz Army and 1st Army are now connected (Hitler’s directive)
   2. Not accomplished - Push the Dieulourd bridgehead back to the east side of the Moselle.
2. Evaluate the decision move the CCB/4th AD to the Arracourt area. {During the night General Wood moved CCB down to take over the line of the 320th Infantry (—) between Réchicourt and the canal, on the right flank of CCA, while the 35th ID occupied the former CCB sector west of Châlteau-Salins]. 4th AD is consolidating and transitioning to the defense.

**Stand 13**

**The Third US Army Transitions to the Defense**

**Visuals:**

1. **4th Armored Division Salient**
2. **The US Third Army Transitions to the Defense: 25 -26 Sept.**
3. **Battle of Arracourt 27 Sept (Day 9) to 29 Sept (Day11)**
4. **The Gremecy Forest**
5. **Third US Army Resumes the Offense**

**Orientation: Nancy Virtual Box 3, *VMD:*** Remain at the Three Crosses (near Juvelize)

1. **Visual 1: The 4th Armored Division Salient - *VMD:*** Look NE initially. [From The Lorraine Campaign by Dr. Christopher Gabel, 22]
2. Instructor - Operation Market Garden officially ended on 25 Sept 1944 with the withdrawal of the decimated British 1st Airborne Division to the south side of the Rhine River. Nevertheless, significant fighting continued in an effort to consolidate the ground taken by the allied forces.
3. **Patton & 4th AD - In a later discussion we will look at the impact on the Third US Army, but for now evaluate the impact of the logistical Crisis and Patton’s orders not to dig-in on the 4th AD.** 
   1. **Logistics Crisis:**
      1. Even with the Red Ball Express running at full capacity, logistical support was inadequate to sustain operations by all of the Allied forces on the continent.
      2. GEN Eisenhower continued to believe that the best route into Germany would be across the relatively flat lands of northern Europe.
      3. Accordingly – in late September, GEN Eisenhower decreed that the main Allied effort would continue to be the British 21st Army Group. The 12th Army Group, including Third Army, was to hold its present positions until the logistical crisis receded.
   2. **Patton’s Order:**
      1. IAW orders, the Third US Army transitioned to the defense on the 25Sept and indefinitely postponed all orders to continue the offense toward Germany
      2. LTG Patton was unwilling to yield the initiative to the enemy, so he ordered **Third Army not to dig in, but rather to establish outpost lines and maintain active, mobile reserves.**
   3. **The 4th AD:** On Visual 13-1 show the change of the front lines. ***VMD:*** Look to the SW toward Xanrey.

**A picture containing screenshot

Description automatically generated**

* + 1. The 4th AD reorganized its front with a slight withdrawal to the west (and southwest), as part of the shift to the defensive. This shortened the line and provided more defensible ground.

A picture containing sky, screenshot

Description automatically generated

* + 1. ***VMD:*** Move to the barn on the ridge between Xanrey and Juvrecourt and look back to the NE. CCA pulled back from the forward positions at Juvelze to the high ground near Xanrey and CCB occupied the high ground on CCA’s right flank.

1. **Instructor or 5th Pz Army -** General Manteuffel seized the opportunity offered by the American withdrawal to report the uncontested occupation of Juvelize, Lezey and Coincourt as “victories,” and then prepared to resume the attack toward the west.
2. **Visual 2: The US Third Army Transitions to the Defense, 25-26 Sept. PPT IAW the discussion - *VMD:*** Remain on the ridge between Xanrey and Juvrecourt- no movement required. [From The Lorraine Campaign by Dr. Christopher Gabel, 22]
3. **XX Corps – what was the impact? T**he Germans had defeated all efforts of the XX Corps’ 5th ID and 7th AD to cross over the Seille River and circle behind Metz.
   * 1. The 5th ID transitioned to the defense and withdrew their defensive line several miles back from the Sielle River. Additionally, the div started intensive training for urban combat and stockpiling artillery ammunition.
     2. On the west side of Metz and 90th ID continued to push into the city. However, daily advances were measured in yards. T
4. **XV Corps – what was the impact?**  The Corps consolidated their hold on the Foret de Moundon, but transitioned to the defense.
   1. The 2nd FR AD suspended its efforts to push over the Vezouse River.
   2. The 79th ID suspended its efforts to push into the Foret de Parroy.
   3. The emaciated ***XLVII Panzer Corps*** had survived and held the line in what it believed to be a hopeless fight.
5. **XII Corps:** Within the XII Corp’, the order to transition to the defensive also impacted the 8oth and 35th IDs.
6. **80th ID – what was the impact?** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from Cole, 105 - 116]
   1. The 80th ID was heavily engaged in the Dieulouard bridgehead attempting to clear any threat to the bridgehead. The withdrawal by the *553d VGD* on 23 September allowed the 80th ID to extend eastward.
   2. When Patton relayed General Eisenhower’s directive halting offensive operations by the Third Army, he directed that “limited objective” attacks would be continued and that the 80th ID must push on toward the Seille River, where a proper defense line could be organized.
7. **35th ID – what was the impact?** [Narrative, unless otherwise noted, from Cole, 105 - 116]
   1. The division was responsible for holding a bridgehead over the Seille River and defending the Nancy Highway between the 35th and 4th AD.
   2. The apex of this salient was in the Forêt de Grémecey.
   3. The 35th did dig-in for a deliberate defense because the *XIII SS Panzer Corps* (primarily the *553* and *559 VGD’s*) transitioned to the offense in an effort to push the 35th IN back across the Seille River and drive toward Nancy. For on this toward the end of the discussion
8. **The XII Corps only gave up ground in the 4th AD sector.**
9. **Visual 3: Battle of Arracourt, 27 Sept (Day 9) to 29 Sept (Day 11) – PPT IAW the discussion - *VMD:*** From the ridge line between Xanrey and Juvrecourt initially look NE.
10. **Instructor -** The XII Corps’ transition to the defense did not end the Battle of Arracourt. The German *Fifth Panzer Army* continued the attack for three more days.
11. Fifth Panzer Army & 4th AD – overview the last few days of the Battle of Arracourt.
    1. **On 27 September (Day 9)**, The *11th Panzer Division* reinforced with the remnants of the *111th and 113th Panzer Brigades* attacked all along the 4th AR DIV salient.
       1. At Xanrey the US forces controlled the high ground and had an overwhelming artillery advantage and easily defeated the German attack.
       2. ***VMD:*** Move ESE toward Bezange to the vicinity of Hill 265 which is SW of Bezange and look E. At Bezange, the German attacks bent the American lines, but never broke through.

A screenshot of a video game

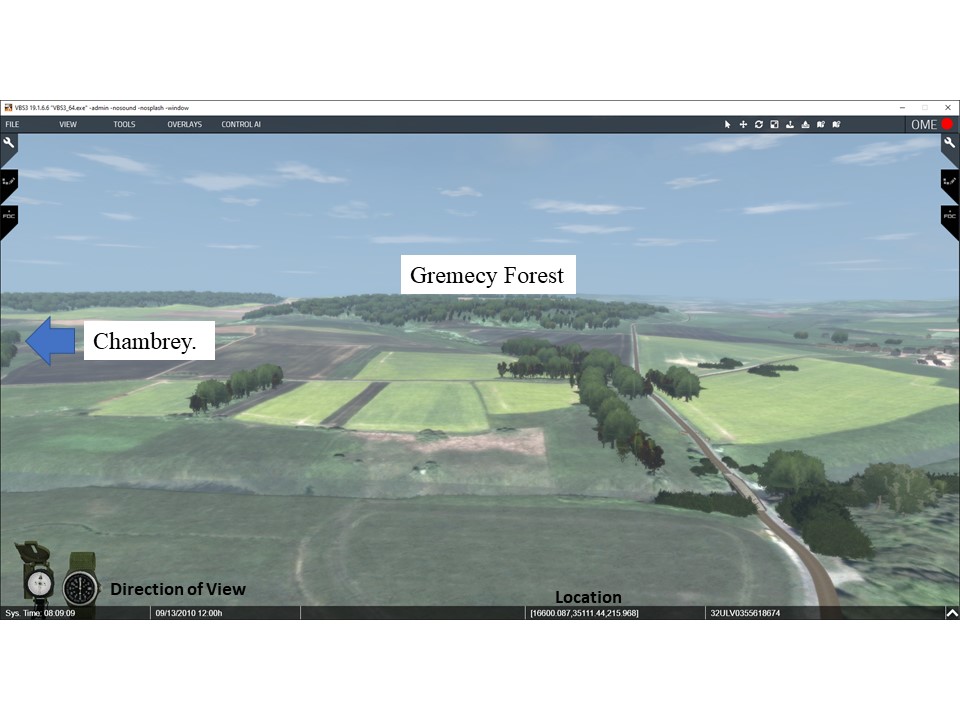
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* + 1. Bad weather throughout the day limited the use of tactical air support.
  1. ***VMD:*** Move to SW over Rechicourt then continue on toward the Foret de Behmont. Short of the stop at the lone tree that marks Hill 318 and look to the SE toward Bures. **On the 28th (Day 10)**, the reinforced *11th Panzer Division* redirected their main effort toward Hill 318 with supporting attacks against Hill 265. Germans were not able to break through the American lines. Again heavy fog limited the use of tactical air support.

1. **On the 29th (Day 11)**, the reinforced *11th Panzer Division* continued with their main effort toward Hill 318 and a supporting attacks at Hill 265.
   1. The attack began shortly before daylight and by 1015 the Germans took the crest of Hill 318. Throughout the morning heavy fog blanketed to area.
   2. At 1100, the fog lifted around 1100hrs and P-47 Thunderbolt strikes and massed artillery was brought against the Germans. **4th AD, XIX TAC and 5th Pz Army** what was the impact of the XIX TAC joining the fight.
      1. The initial air attacks were limited to strafing because the fighter-bombers had been diverted from a planned mission over Metz and their bomb racks were armed with nothing more than propaganda leaflets.
      2. At mid-afternoon the German forces broke under the pressure of the air-attack and retreated toward the canal. After three days of incense fighting, with little sleep and heavy casualties, many of the German units disintegrated.
      3. The 11th PzDiv commander later recalled: “*In a few minutes, eighteen of our tanks and several armored personnel carriers were burning! Our own infantry retreated, strangely enough not pursued by the enemy ... As a result, any chance of winning our final objective had been frustrated…”*
   3. **4th AD, XIX TAC and 5th Pz Army** what are your thoughts of no pursuit. The 4th AD did not pursue because its units were exhausted and a shortage of fuel.
2. **Instructor - The 29 Sept attack represented the last major attempt by *Fifth Panzer­Armee* to cut off the Third US Army's spear head near Arracourt.**

**VSR: Switch to the Breakout CSR Box.**

1. **Visual 4: Gremecy Forest – PPT IAW the discussion - *VMD:*** Move to a position near Chambrey looking north into the Gremecy Forest.

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1. **35th ID: Instructor - While the 4th AD fought on the open and rolling terrain near Arracourt – the 35th ID was fighting from old WWI trenches in the dense Gremecy Forest. (**from CSI BATTLEBOOK I CSI BATTLEBOOK\_11-B FORET de GREMECEY-FOREST. 1985 Staff Group 11B). **35th ID and First German Army –** overview the fighting in the Gremecy Forest.
   1. On **26-27 September**, the German *XIII SS Pz Corps* *(First Army)* launched a deliberate attack to penetrate 35th ID sector and re-take Nancy.
   2. By the **28th**, the Germans had established a foothold in the Forest. A US counterattack on the **29th** was defeated.
   3. On the 29th – the same day the *5th Pz Army* abandoned the attack at Arraacourt – the  order *XIII SS Pz Corps* to halt the attack.
   4. Nevertheless, the commander of the *XIII SS Pz Corps* believed there was a good chance of success and launched its heaviest assault with elements of four divisions.
   5. The 35th ID steadily was forced back, and the division commander committed his last reserves. The Commander, XII US Corps, worried that the Germans would isolate and destroy the 35th ID east of the Seille River, ordered the 35th ID to withdraw behind the river.
   6. The Third Army Commander personally countermanded the order and directed XII Corps to counterattack and reinforced the XII Corps with elements of the newly arrived 6th Armored Division.
   7. **Patton –**why did Patton insists that the 35th ID hold the bridgehead over the Seille River?
   8. The 35th ID held. On 1 October the 6th AD attacked through the 35th ID and seized key terrain north and east of the Foret. 35th ID consolidated the gains and relieved 6th AD that night. The Germans began their withdrawal, and on 2 October 35th ID cleared the Foret de Gremecy of enemy forces and transitioned to the defense.
2. **Visual 5: The Third US Army Resumes the Offense - PPT IAW the discussion - *VMD:*** None – **Instructor - x**
3. **On 3 October,** a stringent gasoline rationing was imposed on the Third US Army and the XII Corps was forced to remain relatively dormant until the logistical situation improved.
4. **On 10 November**, Third Army received orders to resume full-scale offensive operations. Patton's objective was still the Rhine River. Metz liberated on 22 Nov.
5. However, rain, mud and fog negated tactical air support, and reduced Patton’s Third Army to little more than a crawl as the German forces retreated toward the German frontier.
6. In early December, the XII Corps leading elements pushed across the German border and the Germans withdrew into the West Wall. Several isolated forts at Metz continue to hold out. The last one surrenders on 13 December.
7. Patton’s Third Army Lorraine campaign, which began in September with the promise of dash to the Rhine River and imminent victory, ended in December with Third Army turning over the sector to US Seventh Army and then rushing north to help avert disaster in the Ardennes.

**Analysis:**

1. Introduction:
   1. Generalmajor *Friedrich von Mellenthin*—Chief of Staff of the *5th Panzer Army*—stated: ***“… our attacks on the XIIth Corps at Gremecey and Arracourt appeared to have some justification. When Balck took over Army Group G on 21 September it looked as though the Americans were determined to force their way through to the Saar and the Rhine, and General Patton might well have done so if he had been given a free hand. At that time the West Wall was still unmanned, and no effective defense could have been made there. From our point of view there was much to be said for counterattacking the spearheads of the XIIth Corps to discourage the Americans from advancing farther. Although our attacks were very costly it appeared at the time that they had achieved their purpose, and had effectively checked the American Third Army.”* (***Panzer Battles*, Mellenthin, x)
   2. From September through November –
      1. Third Army claimed to have inflicted over 180,000 casualties on the enemy.
      2. But to capture the province of Lorraine, a problem which involved an advance of only 40 to 60 air miles, Third Army required over 3 months and suffered 50,000 casualties, approximately one-third of the total number of casualties it sustained in the entire European war.
2. Who won the Lorraine campaign?

1. 1. The line was only thinly outposted on the night of 18–19 September since Colonel Clarke had a relatively small force at hand: **Eddy Diary:** The 37th Tk Bn (—), 53d Armd Inf Bn (—), C Co, 10th Armd Inf Bn, 166th (C) Engr Bn, C Co., 24th Armd Engr Bn, C Co 704th TD Bn, the 66th and 94th (—) Armd FA Bns, and the 191st FA Bn. (The Nancy Bridgehead)
      1. Two companies of medium and one of light tanks.
      2. A battalion (-) of armored infantry.
      3. A battalion of engineers.
      4. A company (-) of tank destroyers.
      5. Three battalions of artillery

   [↑](#endnote-ref-1)