

From Jim Morera  
m/s  
3/27/06

## **Battle of Bruyeres, 6 Oct to 26 Oct. 1944**

September 1944

O'Conner's Task Force.

**1 September** – Company G established a strongpoint on the north bank of the Arno, and at 1900 Company F supported by tanks and engineers, crossed at the bridgehead and occupied the town of Peretola. On the same night, at approximately 2100, K Company also crossed the river and entered San Mauro. Both companies immediately set up outpost guards and sent out patrols.

As in all areas long occupied by the Germans, the new sector was found to be saturated with mines. Antipersonnel mines in trees booby-trapped houses, trip wire and fields of teller mines comprised a major hazard. Lt. Lang, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Graves Registration Officer, while on a mission to recover a body of one of our casualties, was himself killed when his jeep set off a teller mine. In the same accident Chaplain Yamada and an enlisted man were wounded. Squads of Minesweepers from 232 Engineer © Co. and from the A&P Platoons of the Battalion Headquarters Companies, went over the areas, neutralizing or taping off the suspected charges.

**2 September** – A patrol from Company K, operating from San Mauro, reached as far as the town of San Martino, reconnoitering Camp Bisenzio on the way, and returned without making contact with the enemy. A patrol from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, starting from Peretola, penetrated as far as Sesto, made contact with a British patrol there and returned without casualties.

**3 September** – General SIR HAROLD ALEXANDER, Commander of the Allied Armies in Italy, visited the regimental CP and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.

**6 September** – The 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team moved by truck convoy from vicinity of SCANDICCI to an assembly area at CATTIGLIONCELLO. The route taken was South out of Florence along Highway 2 to Poggibonsi thence West along Highway 68 to Collemezzano, thence North along Highway 1 to destination. Distance covered approximately 70 miles. Weather – rainy.

**Effective 1200 6 September 44**, the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was detached from the 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and reverted to II Corps control. Effective upon arrival at Cattigliocello, the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was detached from IV Corps and reverted to Fifth Army Control. Above changes in organization directed by II Corps Staff message, dated 5 Sept 44, Commanding General 88 Division and Commanding Officer, 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT.

Upon arrival at the new assembly area, clothing and equipment shortages were checked, vehicles overhauled, and general preparations made for an intended move. The 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, rejoined the Combat Team at the assembly area.

**10 September** – Entire Combat Team moved to staging (2<sup>nd</sup> Replacement Depot) vic NAPLES. Personnel moved via truck to Piobino, thence to NAPLES BY Liberty 1600 12 Sept. The voyage was made in fair weather and was without incident. Organic vehicles ship convoy disembarking at **2400 11 Sept**. Final elements closing in approximately of the Combat Team moved to NAPLES in motor convoy, following Highways to No. 1 and No. 7, distance covered, approximately 300 miles.

Effective upon arrival at NAPLES, the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was detached from Fifth Army, and assigned to Seventh Army, and attached to NATOUSA for administration and

SOS NATOUSA for supply, in accordance with secret letter AG370.5-Y, Headquarters Fifth Army, **5 September 1944**

The following letter from Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark, Commanding General, Fifth Army, dated 7 September 44, addressed to Commanding Officer, 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, is quoted:

"I desire to commend you on the occasion of your departure from Fifth Army for the superior job you and your troops have done while assigned to Fifth Army.

"Assigned to Fifth Army in the latter part of May, your men took an active part in the capture of Leghorn. American troops of Japanese Ancestry are well known to the Fifth Army for splendid showing which had previously been made by the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion during the course of the past year. The conduct of your troops was exemplary both on the battlefield and in the rest areas. Your men have demonstrated an eagerness for combat and have proven themselves to be better than anything the enemy has been able to put against them. The courage and determination which the men of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team have displayed during their short time in combat has been an inspiration to all.

"It has been a great pleasure and privilege to have had the 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team in the Fifth Army. I wish you every success in your new assignment."

The following letter from Major General Charles L. Bolte, Commanding General, 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, dated 18 August 1944, addressed to the Commanding Officer, 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team at the time of its detachment from the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, it made a matter of record.

"The 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team came to the 34<sup>th</sup> Division on 24 June 1944, well trained, capably led, and highly endowed with a spirit and determination to win. Immediately, you won the admiration and cordial relationship of your new associates.

"To have had you earn your battle spurs with us during your introduction into combat from 26 June, near Grosseto, Italy, where you received your first baptism of fire and terminate the period of combat service with your triumphal drive on PISA on 27 July, has been a distinct pleasure to myself and this command. Hammering the enemy steadily and doggedly pushing obstacles before you, you liberated, in your short time with us, over 10 Italian towns, killed, captured, and wounded over 1000 Germans and captured and destroyed considerable quantities of enemy artillery, tanks, pillboxes and transport. Your performance has been excellent.

"Today, almost a year and a half after your historic activities, when you enthusiastically volunteered from the mainland of America and the territories of Hawaii and Alaska, to fight for your principles, you have indeed proven to all the world your devotion and loyalty to your country, your willingness and ability to fight alongside your fellow Americans and your gallantry on the field of battle.

"Now you leave us, to carry on elsewhere with your high ideals and traditional fighting spirits, is with sincere regret that the 34<sup>th</sup> Division relinquishes command of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team, after such a short but efficacious association. We shall watch with interest your continued achievements and victories."

**13-17 September** – Period of rest: cleaning, repair and inspection of equipment.

**18 September** – Training resumed. 672 Japanese-American replacements from the United States joined the Combat Team and were assigned to the various companies.

Replacements were assigned to Combat Team per paragraph 46, SO 53 Hq 24<sup>th</sup> Replacement Depot, **17 September 1944**. A ceremony of greeting for the replacements was held on **19 September**.

**21 September** – Combat Team moved from Replacement Depot #2 Nevada Area to Staging Area #1, Bagnoli, Vic NAPLES,, via truck. Distance 7 miles: weather rainy.

**21-26 September** – Combat Team quartered in Building (formerly University of Naples) in staging Area #1, awaiting further movement.

Vehicles and equipment loaded on board ship at Texas Staging Area, Naples, on **22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> September**.

**26-30 September** – Entire Combat Team (less Antitank Co.) moved from staging Area #1, to Port of Naples. Personnel embarked by means of landing craft on U. S. Navy transports. USS THURSTON, DICKMAN, CHASE, HENRICO. The transports departed in convoy at 1200 27 September, sailed NW through the Tyrrhenian Sea. Passed through the Straits of Bonifacio between Sardinia and Corsica and arrived at the port of MARSEILLES, FRANCE at 1200, 29 September. Distance of voyage – 452 miles; weather – blowing sea – heavy. Personnel debarked by means of rope ladders and landing craft and assembled in Marseilles. Entrained approximately 0100 30 September and traveled 10 miles to Staging Area near SEPTEMES, closing in at 0600 30 September. Morale – excellent.

**1 October 44** – Original Unit, no change

**2 October** – Organization, effective upon arrival at VI Corps area (11 Oct 44. The 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was attached to VI Corps for operations, administration remaining with Seventh Army.

**4 October** – The 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team was further attached to the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division for operation.

Our KIA loss for October 6, 1944 was **Pfc Cike Kawano** of E Company, 442, from Powell, NY.

**1-8 October** – 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry (less Anti-tank Co) in bivouac near SEPTEMES, FRANCE, during a week of cold and rainy weather. Daily training was held and new machine guns, mortars and rocket launchers zeroed. Half-day passes to Marseilles and Aix-en-Provence authorized for 15% quota of personnel

Our KIA loss for October 8, 1944 was **Pfc Takeo Kaneichi** of E Company 442, from Fresno, CA.

**9-13 October** – 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry (less Anti-Tank) began movement by motor convoy to assembly area near POUXEUX, FRANCE. CP at SEPTEMES closed at 0830 9 Oct. The first day's movement followed Highway 7 through Aix-en-Provence, Avignon, Valence, Regiment bivouacked near VIENNE, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> continued North through Bourg, Lions Le Saunier, Resancon, and on the second night of the trip camped near VESOUIL. On the third day the regiment closed in at destination, CP opening at CHARMOIS-DEVANT-BRUYERES (near EPINAL) at 1230 11 October 44. The trip covered 450 miles and was made under adverse conditions of rainy weather and slippery roads.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion made the trip by rail, leaving Septemes in boxcars at 1400 10 October. Arrived at Vesoul **0430 13 Oct.**, detained at 1900 and traveled by truck to Charmois-Deveant-Bruyeres, arriving at bivouac area approximately **2400 13 Oct.**



Organic transportation of the battalion moved at the same time in motor convoy. Last elements of the battalion closed in at 0730 14 Oct.

Effective at arrival at VI Corps area, the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was attached to VI Corps for operations, administration remaining with Seventh Army, as per secret letter AG 370.5C Hq Seventh Army, 4 October 44. The 442<sup>nd</sup> Combat Team was further attached to the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division for Operation.

**14 October** – Beginning at 1400 the regiment moved up by truck from Charmois-devant-Bruyeres to an assembly area near LE VOID DE LA BORDE, detrucked and marched two miles to jump-off position in the line approximately four kilometers West of BRUYERES. One casualty was sustained in the approach march, S. /Sgt. William Kato of the B Company, 100<sup>th</sup> Bn was WIA.

The 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry had direct artillery support from the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion of the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT. The 232<sup>nd</sup> Engineer (C) Company, of the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT, provided first priority mine clearance and road maintenance.

Our KIA loss for 14 October, 1944 were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Home town</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| <b>Nakamoto</b>  | Seichi            | Sgt         | 442-G       | Fresno, CA       |
| <b>Tezuka</b>    | Theodore T.       | Sgt         | 100-A       | Los Angeles, CA  |

**October 15** The terrain through which the advance was to be made is called the Foret de Faite, a mountainous and dense pine forest Northwest of Bruyeres, known to be strongly defended by gun sites, minefields and prepared Infantry positions.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn crossed the LD at 0800 in a column of companies, with F Co. leading, followed by E Co. And G Co. in battalion reserve. One machine gun platoon from H Co supported the leading rifle company, the rest of the heavy weapons provided general battalion support. F Co. met resistance three kilometers from Bruyeres, engaged in a firefight at 0930, continuing until 1230. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoons, F Co. killed five Germans during the day and took 14 prisoners. The company's losses were 1 KIA, 4 WIA. Three EM from E Co. were wounded by enemy artillery. Enemy resistance increased during the afternoon, and the battalion dug in. During the night a combat patrol from Co. G was sent to Hill 468 to contact Co., G, 143<sup>rd</sup> Inf. On the right. A patrol also maintained contact with the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn on the left.

In the coordinated attack 100<sup>th</sup> Bn also jumped off at 0800 through the thickly wooded hills with B Co. leading. Enemy resistance developed strongly, estimated at two companies supported by automatic weapons and artillery and a tank which the battalion forced to withdraw. Baker Co. fought continuously throughout the day, took five prisoners and suffered one KIA. C Co. followed B Co across the LD, exchanged small arms fire with the Germans in the woods and jug in during the afternoon. A Co. the reserve company of the 100<sup>th</sup>, was subjected to a severe artillery barrage at 1430 which caused twenty casualties, 1 KIA, 19 WIA. Co. A maintained contact with G Co., 179<sup>th</sup> Inf. On the left flank Co D supported the rifle companies although the thickly wooded area restricted the use of crew-served weapons.

During the day a total of 20 German prisoners was taken, from the 9<sup>th</sup> Co., 19<sup>th</sup> SS Police Regt., and from 223<sup>rd</sup> Grenadier Regt. Information from the POW's indicated that the CP of the 19<sup>th</sup> SS Police Regt. Was located at the ration dump, on hill 578. Targets

were brought under artillery fire. Also the location and pattern of minefields laid along the road from Bruyeres were also obtained

Our KIA losses for 15 October were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Hometown</u>    |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Hirahara         | Tomosu            | S/Sgt       | 100-B       | Honolulu, HI       |
| Matsunaga        | Kaname            | Pvt         | 100-A       | Kalaheo, HI        |
| Mayeda           | George M.         | Sgt         | 100-C       | Kelso, WA          |
| Miyoko           | Mitsuru E.        | T/Sgt       | 100-A       | Salt Lake City, UT |
| Sagami           | Yohei             | Pvt.        | 442-E       | Fife, WA           |
| Sakai            | Yoshinori         | Cpl         | 100-C       | Sacramento, CA     |
| Tengwan          | Yoshio            | Pfc         | 100-C       | Lahaina, HI        |
| Yamada           | Hideo             | S/Sgt       | 442-F       | Kihei, HI          |
| Yamamoto         | Takeo             | Pvt         | 232-Engr    | Aiea, HI           |

**16 October** – The attack was resumed 0800 and again met stiff opposition. Co. F advanced against infantry and machine gun nests to within 1000 meters of Bruyeres and occupied part of Hill 555, Northwest of town. Co. E was committed at 0800 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn left, attack Hill 555 under heavy fire, and occupied it at 1100. Further advance by the battalion across the open ground in front of Bruyeres was stopped when the Germans mounted a one-hour counterattack at 1730, preceded by an artillery barrage. The counterattack came from Hill "B" and included fire from SP Guns, mortars and three tanks, and an attempted recovery by enemy infantry. However the battalion broke up the attack after an hour's fighting, without yielding any of the hard-earned ground.

Meanwhile on the regimental left, B Co., 100<sup>th</sup> Bn. Advanced 1000 yards Northeast through the forest up to open ground at the foot of Hill 578. C Co. was on the battalion right and A Co. moved up to fill the gap caused by the advance of B and C Cos. Fighting was continuous throughout the day and enemy artillery especially active.

During the day a total 21 prisoners was taken. Information from a captured document disclosed that the town of Bruyeres was also defended by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn., 736<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Regt. Prisoners taken were from the 198<sup>th</sup> SS Police Regt., 3<sup>rd</sup> Co. Engineer Bn. 1316, and Fortress Machine Gun Battalion 49<sup>th</sup>.

The night of 16-17 Oct was spent under sporadic shelling, with a cold wind and soaking rain adding to the discomfort of the troops.

29 Officers and 300 EM over strength were transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Replacement Depot at St. Loup, in accordance with Seventh Army directive that T/O strength only would be taken into combat

Our KIA losses for 16 October, 1944 were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Hometown</u>  |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Fuji             | Abe M.            | S/Sgt       | 232-Engr    | Salinas, CA      |
| Horinouchi       | James J.          | Pfc         | 442-F       | Honolulu, HI     |
| Imai             | Tomio             | Sgt         | 100-C       | Haina, HI        |
| Katayama         | Noritada          | Pfc         | 442-E       | Waikapu, HI      |
| Kato             | Joseph H.         | Pfc         | 442-E       | Warm Springs, UT |
| Masumoto         | George H.         | Pfc         | 442-E       | Selma, CA        |

| LAST NAME | FIRST NAME | RANK | UNIT  | HOMETOWN        |
|-----------|------------|------|-------|-----------------|
| Miyazono  | Tokio      | Pvt  | 442-F | Honolulu, HI    |
| Noritake  | Yoshito    | Pfc  | 100-B | Seattle, WA     |
| Saito     | George S.  | Pfc  | 442-H | Los Angeles, CA |
| Yamaoka   | Tsutomu    | Pfc  | 442-F | Hamakua, HI     |

**17 October** – On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the action the Germans counterattacked twice early in the day to drive our forces from Hill 555. At 0730, following a heavy barrage by artillery and SP high-velocity guns, two companies of enemy Infantry attacked Cos E and F on Hill 555. At the same time an attack of similar size was launched against B and C Cos on the left. The rifle companies, supported by their attached heavy weapons and fire from 522<sup>nd</sup> Artillery Bn repulsed the attack at 0830. The Germans reformed on the wooded slopes of Hill A and Hill B and again attacked at 0930, supported by artillery and three tanks. The attack drove against the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion because of the impossibility of getting the 57mm Antitank guns into the forest, the battalion formed six bazooka teams to meet the armor, and with all available fire power drove the Germans back into the hills from which the attack had come.

Immediately both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> Bns resumed the offensive subject again to artillery and mortar and automatic weapons fire from the German held Hills A and B. In addition the Germans had fortified the houses at the foot of these Hills, arming them with machine guns which commanded the flat land between Hill 555 and Hills A and B. Both battalions found themselves pinned down by this fire and faced with the necessity of reducing these houses before resuming the advance. The Germans were well dug in, and their positions resisted artillery fire.

Baker and Charley Companies, aided by 4.2 mortars, worked on the houses along the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn. Front, finding themselves opposed by 15 machine guns and two AT guns. G Co. went around to the regimental right flank, and aided by four tanks, cleared out the houses on the road running SE-NW along the foot of Hill 555. Cos E and F advanced to the tip of the woods. The intense automatic and small arms fire coming across the open terrain forced them to remain in this position for the remainder of the day. Prisoners taken during the day – 3.

During the night, a 15-man patrol from 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, Co. G. guided by an FFI partisan, reached the road junction at the edge of Bruyeres at 0200 meeting no opposition and returned at 0250. Additional reconnaissance patrols were immediately sent out, one from B Co., towards Hill 578 which drew fire and withdrew, and a daylight patrol from 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, Co. G, which penetrated the fringe of Bruyeres and returned at 0700 18 Oct without encountering the enemy.

Our KIA losses for 17 October, 1944 were as follows:

| Last Name | First Name | Rank | Unit    | Hometown     |
|-----------|------------|------|---------|--------------|
| Ajitomo   | Tokio      | Pvt  | 100-C   | Lahaina, HI  |
| Chibana   | Henry M.   | Pfc  | 442-G   | Koloa, HI    |
| Ikehara   | Kikuichiro | Pfc  | 442-F   | Wahiawa, HI  |
| Kanaya    | Walter E.  | Pvt  | 442-2Hq | Helemano, HI |
| Kokubu    | Jimmie T.  | Cpl  | 442-G   | Portland, OR |
| Komoto    | Nobuo      | Pfc  | 442-E   | Selma, CA    |



| LAST NAME | FIRST NAME | RANK                | UNIT  | HOMETOWN    |
|-----------|------------|---------------------|-------|-------------|
| Otake     | Masanao R. | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. | 100-C | Lahaina, HI |
| Shigeta   | Hideo      | Pfc                 | 100-A | Paia, HI    |
| Tagami    | Yoshio     | Pvt                 | 442-F | Wahiawa, HI |
| Tanji     | Mitsuo     | Pfc                 | 442-F | Wahiawa, HI |

**18 October** – The fall of Bruyeres. All-out attack on Hills A and B, and occupation of Bruyeres. Following a half-hour artillery preparation, Cos F and G assaulted Hill B, with Cos I and L of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion committed on their right. At the same time, the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion attacked Hill A. All units met bitter opposition.

At 1100, Baker Co. Had reduced resistance in the houses at the foot of Hill A and was fighting up the slope. Co. A went around to the left, where its 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon silences a machine gun nest in a house, taking nine prisoners, then dashed across the open flat and followed B Co. up the hill. Hill A was taken at 1420, and the battalion dug into defensive position to guard against possible counterattack. B Co. took 45 prisoners during the day, lost 1 KIA, 14 WIA. C Co., in a day-long firefight on the hill, captured 21 prisoners, casualties 2 KIA, 9 WIA.

The attack on Hill B began at 1000 and was successful after eight and a half hours of bitter fighting. F Co., jumped off, found its advance held up by a machine gun at the foot of the hill, destroyed it by accurate fire from a 60mm mortar crew. At 1200 the company was engaged in a firefight in the open area between Hill 555 and Hill B. Co G on the right of the battalion sector also forced its way up the steep side of the hill. During the fight the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn radio RP was hit by enemy artillery and communications temporarily interrupted. I Co. was next to G on its right and L Co. went around the base of the hill. North of the road net into Bruyeres, there were street fighting to clear house by house. Contact was made with C Co. of 143<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, who entered the town from the South at 1830.

By nightfall the town was under control, although a barricaded group of Germans continued to resist in the center of the town. L Co. sent a patrol to the eastern outskirts at the foot of Hill D, where they were informed by the French inhabitants that 15 Germans were in a house to their rear. At the same time machine pistols opened up and the patrol had to fight it way back to the company. K Co. the reserve Co. of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn., entered Bruyeres at 1700, after having disposed of snipers on the way.

During the day the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions took 61 prisoners, bringing the day's total for the regiment to 134. Enemy losses in killed and wounded were proportionately heavy.

The regimental forward CP moved up during the day, from Le Void de la Borde to a position along the trail on Hill 555. Weather was cold and the rain continued to fall for the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive day. Supply and evacuation presented a difficult problem, as road blocks had to be cleared by engineers and the vehicles and truck drawn weapons found themselves mired in mud over their wheels.

The 141<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery Bn. And the 93<sup>rd</sup> Armored Field Artillery Bn. Were attached during the day to the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, to reinforce the fire of the 522<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion.

Additional identifications of enemy units encountered: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Cos. 736<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Regt; 1<sup>st</sup> Co. 716 Engineer Bn. Company Rode, Battle Group Ahrens, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Cos, 198<sup>th</sup> Fusilier Bn: 2<sup>nd</sup> Co., 192<sup>nd</sup> Panzer Grenadier Regt.

Our KIA losses for 18 October, 1944 were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Hometown</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Fukumura</b>  | Ichiji            | Pvt         | 442-E       | Lihue, HI       |
| <b>Hosoda</b>    | Max M. Jr.        | Sgt         | 100-B       | Chicago, IL     |
| <b>Kijima</b>    | Tadashi           | Sgt         | 442-2Hq     | Pauwela, HI     |
| <b>Morimoto</b>  | Toshiaki          | Pfc         | 442-F       | Hakalau, HI     |
| <b>Ogawa</b>     | Edward            | Pfc         | 100-C       | Ashton ID       |
| <b>Yoshinaga</b> | Akira             | Tech4       | 442-G       | (unknown)       |

**19 October**— While L Co. completed the mopping up of Bruyeres on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the remaining elements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. Pushed onward from the town and assaulted Hill D. The battalion jumped off at 1000 with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn on the left and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn on the right. Once again our forces were subjected to heavy artillery fire but the enemy Infantry was dislodged and the Hill was secured by 1145. The battalions reorganized and attacked again at 1300 with the objective of reaching the railroad embankment 2000 yards East of Bruyeres on the edge of the Foret de Belmont. Cos E and G from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn and Cos I and K from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn made the push. Enemy troops dug in behind the embankment held up the advance at 1600, and SP guns from the vicinity of Belmont shelled the forward companies. An artillery mission was called on the SP's and the four rifle companies fought up to their objective at 1800. 16 prisoners were taken. Inasmuch as the units on the flanks had not advanced, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns comprised a salient of 2000 yards into the enemy lines. The area occupied by I and K Cos. was thickly mined.

During the day, the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn was in regimental reserve on Hill A, and at 1700 moved into Bruyeres, leaving Co. A on the hill to guard the roads leading down from North. A reconnaissance patrol was sent to Hill C to ascertain enemy strength. It drew small arms and machine gun fire and retired.

The regimental CP moved into Bruyeres at 1500. The Germans shelled the town continuously during the day and night. As a result of the bombardment by both our own and enemy artillery, and the house-to-house fighting, practically every building had suffered some demolition. However the 232<sup>nd</sup> Engineer © Co. swept the road net and the military value of the town was unimpaired. Because of the shelling, combat traffic regulations were put into effect—no 2-1/2 ton trucks except signal vehicles allowed during daylight hours, with a maximum of one vehicle passing every two minutes.

Our KIA losses for 19 October, 1944 were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Hometown</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Horiuchi</b>  | Paul F.           | Pfc         | 442-E       | Salinas, CA     |
| <b>Kanetomi</b>  | Jiro              | Pvt         | 442-G       | Kirkland WA     |
| <b>Kondo</b>     | Henry M.          | Pfc         | 442-E       | Pasadena, CA    |
| <b>Nishimura</b> | Wilfred K.        | Pfc         | 100-A       | Honolulu, HI    |



**20 October** – The day began with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns dug in 75 yards from the railroad embankment, answering heavy sniper fire from the flanks and from Hill D. This small arms fire also interdicted the road leading around Hill D towards Belmont and the road junction where the engineers were attempting to mine-sweep in preparation for a tank advance.

During the night, German snipers had also attacked a supply party from Hq Co. 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Carrying rations to the front and in the action Lt. Charles O. Farnum, 0-297242 Commanding Officer of Hq Co. 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Was killed. It was evident that some Germans had infiltrated under cover of darkness back to Hill D, and Co. F, the reserve Company of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn, with an additional platoon from Co. H armed with carbines, was ordered to neutralize this fire.

At 1000 the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion assaulted Hill C to the North with all three rifle companies in the attack.

At 1030 German Infantry counterattacked the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns front along the railroad track.

With the firefight on Hill D, the 100's assault on Hill C, and the German counterattack increasing in intensity on the front, all our forces were committed simultaneously in heavy fighting.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns with Cos E, G, I and K on the line, met the counterattack and repulsed it at 1100. However forward movement was prevented by the German MLR along the railroad track and at the edge of the woods beyond, and fire from Hill 505. The Germans had machine guns on the flanks and mortars emplaced in the woods which covered thick mine fields in front of them and raked the zone of advance. The Prisoner reported that the forces confronting the two battalions were elements of the previously identified 726 Grenadier regiment

The 100<sup>th</sup> Bn. After a battalion firefight, reported Hill C taken at 1200. However it required several more hours of sharp fighting to completely clean the hill of the numerous enemy pocket. After the hill was secured the 100<sup>th</sup> moved over to Hill D, leaving B Co. on Hill C to make contact with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry (3<sup>rd</sup> Division), who garrisoned the hill after the 100<sup>th</sup> withdrew

In the fighting on Hill D a soldier from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, Co. F was wounded and his platoon sergeant, T Sgt Abraham Ohama sent to his rescue. Sgt Ohama was in turn hit, and as he was being carried down the hill by litter bearers the Germans opened up again, killing him on the stretcher. Incited by this act, the company charged headlong up the hill, engaging the Germans in hand to hand, tree-to-tree fighting. Fifty Germans were killed and seven captured. As a result of the two days fighting, over 100 German bodies were counted on the hill.

At 1300 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion reported German tanks and infantry moving South out of Belmont 2 kilometers distant, with the evident intention of striking our left flank. The Regimental Commander ordered Felber Force out to meet them. At the same time an air mission was called on this new threat.

Felber Force moved out slowly, held up by mines and SP fire from Vervezelle. A TOT barrage was put on the latter target and the tanks moved as far as the hairpin turn where they were held up.

The enemy armor moving down the road toward them was bombed and strafed by fighter-bombers and brought under artillery fire. The air support had no opposition and reported seven direct hits on the enemy column.

From 1645 to 1705 four battalions of artillery laid down a preparatory fire on the German positions in front, and at 1710 the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns. Attacked again. Both battalions crossed the railroad track but the dug-in Germans and fields of antipersonnel S mines halted further progress. In the fighting K Co. Killed a German Major and his party and secured his documents which contained plans for the defense of the sector, and additional identification. They were sent to G-2 by special messenger.

During the day Bruyeres was heavily shelled by enemy artillery. A total of 97 Prisoners were captured.

During the afternoon and evening of the 20<sup>th</sup>, when the second attack of our battalions failed to make headway, and with Felber Force contained along the road on the left flank, the Divisional Commander and the Regimental Commander planned a surprise move to outflank the enemy MLR.

The plan took shape with Co. F and Co. K organized as a special Task Force under the command of Major Emmett O'Conner, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Executive Officer, A squad of wiremen and minesweepers from Hq Co. 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. Was attached and Lt. Nilges of the regimental staff acted as S-3. The mission of the Task Force was to move South behind our lines during the night to a point opposite the ridge of the Bois De Borement, to move along the tip of the ridge at dawn to an assembly area, and strike North at the enemy left flank at 0900. At the same hour, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns were to renew their attack from the front, and the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn swinging South and following the path of the Task Force, was to push further along the ridge toward the town of Biffontaine. The attack of the Third Division and the presence of Felber Force on the road to Belmont secured the left Flank.

The plan was executed with precision and achieved a notable success.

Our KIA losses for 20 October, 1944 were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u>   | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u>         | <u>Unit</u>             | <u>Hometown.</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Farnum Jr.</b>  | Charles O.        | 1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. | 442-2 <sup>nd</sup> Hq  | Orangeburg, SC   |
| <b>Fujitani</b>    | Ross K.           | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. | 100-C                   | Kealahakua, HI   |
| <b>Furukawa</b>    | Tatsumi           | Pvt                 | 100-A                   | Concord, CA      |
| <b>Hadano</b>      | Hatsuji           | Pfc                 | 442-2 <sup>nd</sup> -Hq | Puunene, HI      |
| <b>Hattori</b>     | Kunio             | Pfc                 | 100-D                   | San Jose, CA     |
| <b>Inakazu</b>     | Ben, M.           | S/Sgt               | 442-I                   | Honolulu, HI     |
| <b>Kameoka</b>     | Bob T.            | Pfc                 | 442-F                   | Hanford, CA      |
| <b>Kato</b>        | Yoshio            | Pfc                 | 442-M                   | Seattle, WA      |
| <b>Kuroda</b>      | Robert T.         | S/Sgt               | 442-H                   | Aiea, HI         |
| <b>Miyaguchi</b>   | Masayuki J.       | Pfc                 | 442-H                   | Ewa, HI          |
| <b>Nagato</b>      | Fumitake          | Pfc                 | 442-G                   | Brawley, CA      |
| <b>Ohama</b>       | Abraham J.        | T/Sgt               | 442-F                   | Sanger, CA       |
| <b>Okada</b>       | John T.           | Pfc                 | 442-G                   | Palo Alto, CA    |
| <b>Okamoto</b>     | Ralph S.          | Pfc                 | 442-F                   | Honolulu, HI     |
| <b>Shigemura</b>   | Masao F.          | Pfc                 | 442-H                   | Seattle, WA      |
| <b>Shimabukuro</b> | Tomoaki           | Pvt                 | 442-2 <sup>nd</sup> Hq  | Waianae, HI      |

| LAST NAME | FIRST NAME | RANK                | UNIT  | HOMETOWN  |
|-----------|------------|---------------------|-------|-----------|
| White Jr. | Floyd E.   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. | 442-G | (unknown) |

**21 October.** The Task Force crossed the IP at 0500 and reached its forward assembly area at 0740, completing its long "end run" without opposition. At 0900 all elements attacked. The Task Force moved down off the ridge through the woods and into the enemy flank, one company assaulting and one in support. At 0925 they reported reaching the open ground at the foot of the ridge and cleaning out resistance in houses. At 0945 Colonel Pence ordered them to turn left and strike the enemy rear.

Meanwhile the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns. Jumped off abreast, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> on the left and the 3<sup>rd</sup> on the right. They crossed the railroad track and moved into the forward slope of Hill 505. The enemy engaged them in a firefight, but, attacked from both front and rear, gave ground rapidly. At 1030 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn reported I and K Cos. Going around Hill 505 against lessening resistance, at 1200 the battalion had over-run the positions on Hill 505 and was pressing forward to make contact with the Task Force. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn was temporarily held up by tanks at 1130, but called artillery on them and resumed the advance on the regiment's left.

The Task Force engaged the retreating Germans in a stiff fight in a group of houses. They fought from house to house, killing and capturing many of the enemy foot troops, and dislodged a tank with bazooka fire.

At 1430 K Co. made contact with the Task Force and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn half an hour later, after which Cos F and L reverted to the control of their respective battalions.

During the operation the Task Force killed 80 Germans, captured 54 prisoners, 1 Antitank gun, 3 ammunition carriers and a large quantity of rifles and machine pistols, in addition to being the key factor in a regimental advance of four kilometers during the day against positions which had previously resisted assault. The cost of the operation was three men wounded in action. O'Conner's Task Force awarded the PUC.

Concurrent with the above action, the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion was working along the tip of the ridge running through the Bois De Boremont and the Foret de Belmont, following the trail used by the Task Force. They passed the point where the Task Force turned North at 1400 and continued toward their objective, the high ground around Biffontaine. B Co. protecting the rear of the battalion, was twice engaged by German combat patrols as the battalion pushed deep into enemy territory. The 100<sup>th</sup> reached its objective at 1530 and occupied a strategic position cutting off Belmont from Biffontaine and completing a loop around the Germans in the sector. In order to reach its position, the battalion had to accept difficulties in communications and supply, as they were a mile from the nearest friendly troops and the forest trail over which they had come was patrolled by enemy combat groups. The battalion had tied into the wire laid by the Task Force and extended it, but had reason to believe that the Germans had tapped the line.

During the day a total of 72 prisoners were captured, interrogated and turned over to Division. Lieutenant General TRUSCOTT, Commanding General VI Corps, visited the regimental CP in Bruyeres during the mid-afternoon. The town was again shelled by German Artillery.

Our KIA losses 21 October, 1944 were as follows:



| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Hometown</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Hasegawa</b>  | Kiyoshi           | Pfc         | 100-C       | Papaikou, HI    |
| <b>Komatsu</b>   | James K.          | Pfc         | 100-B       | Honolulu, HI    |
| <b>Shoji</b>     | Toshiaki          | Pvt         | 442-E       | Livingston, CA  |

**22 October.** During the night, a platoon from 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion with an FFI guide established a road block on the trail along the ridge of the Foret de Belmont, to guard against a German attack on the rear of the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn.

A patrol from Co. L made contact with the 100<sup>th</sup> during night, and at daybreak a platoon from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. With a jeep, left to reconnoiter a supply route.

A and C Cos. Of the 100<sup>th</sup> moved along the high ground North of Biffontaine and B Co. went around the hills to the West of the town and took up a position commanding the road to Les Poulieres. The enemy counterattacked, supported by artillery, nebelwerfers and flak gun fire, and firefights broke out on three sides of the exposed battalion. The situation was aggravated by shortage of water and ammunition and by the lack of evacuation facilities of the wounded.

To combat the threatening supply problem, five tanks from Felber Force left Belmont, with attached platoon (3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Co. A) riding on the tanks. They carried ammunition and water and attempted to reach the 100<sup>th</sup> via the Belmont-Biffontaine road, but met fifty Germans manning a road block and the tanks were unable to get through. The infantry platoon dismounted and attempted to make contact by foot but were unsuccessful because of the dense unfamiliar forest and the impenetrable darkness which soon fell. Four of the infantrymen were killed and four wounded in the fighting. Another platoon of light tanks tried the route originally used by the 100<sup>th</sup> along the ridge of the Foret de Belmont, but bogged down. The platoon from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. Led by Lt. Brenner, had more success, and mapped a jeep trail from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. to the 100<sup>th</sup>. At 1530 a carrying party with rations, water and ammo, protected by a combat patrol from Company G, reached the battalion and temporarily relieved the situation. The 100<sup>th</sup> fought off the attack and developed their positions.

Meanwhile another bitter fight was in progress on the right flank, where Cos E and F met a group of 100 Germans on wooded Hill 703. From a prisoner it was learned that the Germans had come down to Les Paulieres during the night on bicycles and had moved to Hill 703 to cut off the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn., Cos E and F, ordered to protect this line and clear the area on the right on the regimental sector, met them near Col de Arnelle, in a close combat fight with automatic weapons and grenades, destroyed the hostile force and took six prisoners

During the night of the 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, a patrol composed of 25 men from G Co. and H Co., led by an FFI guide, were sent on a mission to reconnoiter a route for the attack of the 141<sup>st</sup> Infantry on the following day. The patrol scouted the trail for a distance of approximately four kilometers, starting at Belmont. They investigated the roads, finding them soft but passable for light vehicles, evidently not mined. They observed a German patrol in the darkness, but as their mission was reconnaissance only, our patrol did not challenge

Our KIA losses for 22 October, 1944 were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Hometown</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Fukuba</b>    | Shigeo F.         | Pfc         | 442-F       | Olaa, HI        |
| <b>Kitagawa</b>  | Roy J.            | Pfc         | 442-E       | (unknown)       |
| <b>Mukai</b>     | Hachiro           | Pfc         | 442-F       | Morgan Hill, CA |
| <b>Tsukano</b>   | Ichiro            | Pfc         | 100-D       | Pepeekeo, HI    |
| <b>Yasui</b>     | Hideo             | Pfc         | 442-E       | Olympia, WA     |

**23 October** – Capture of Biffontaine. The 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion had but the Belmont-Biffontaine road, cleared the hills around Biffontaine and set up defensive positions on all sides. In the morning they were ordered to attack Biffontaine. At 1000 Co. C descended on the town, supported by Co. A. Co. C met bitter resistance, fighting the Germans from, house to house, but pushing the attack despite their isolated position. Forced to conserve ammunition, low on water and with limited communications, they nevertheless outfought the Germans, inflicting heavy losses, capturing two enemy officers and 23 men in the town. Among the prisoners was a German Major from the Signal Corps, who subsequently proved very valuable to Division as a source of intelligence.

During the morning an attempt was made to evacuate the wounded to the rear. Two squads of litter bearers from the 100<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. Medical Sections led by **2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. James Kanaya**, C-1695679, a recently combat-commissioned officer, made the attempt. The litter train also consisted of some PW's who were used as litter bearers, as every available man was needed on the front lines. Among the litter patients were Capt. Young O. Kim, 0-349640, Commanding Officer of Co. A. After proceeding a short distance the litter train was beset by a large enemy combat patrol, working along the battalion supply route. Capt. Kim, although seriously wounded in the arm and suffering a loss of blood, managed to escape and made his way back accompanied by a litter bearer. It is believed that the wounded and medics were captured by the enemy, as no trace of them has been found.

Companies B and D maintained their positions on the hills overlooking Biffontaine. Contact patrols were sent to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn and to Co. F, 143<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, the unit on the right flank.

A carrying party, consisting of 113 replacements who had been assembled at the Service Co. areas in Bruyeres, protected by a patrol from G Co. reached the battalion late in the afternoon, with ammunitions, food, water and medical supplies. A and C Cos. occupied Biffontaine, which the Germans promptly shelled.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion continued on its mission of cleaning enemy troops in the forest area East of Belmont. Because of the extent of the sector, the battalion was widely spread out. One half of K Co., worked toward a point North of Biffontaine in order to relieve pressure on the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn. Two strong combat patrols went and reduced a pocket where 50 enemies were resisting. A patrol from Co. L went North for a mission to contact the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, on the left flank. The patrol reached its objective at the appointed time, but the friendly patrol failed to appear. The 111<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, working to clear the Belmont-Biffontaine road in the battalion sector found its path impeded by automatic weapons fire from a group of enemy manning a road block. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. Brought their mortars on the enemy position, bracketing the road block, and 18 Germans surrendered to the Engineers

During the day, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was in regimental reserve, except for the machine gun section from Co. F, who were left to guard the trail on the summit of Hill 625. The section was relieved by Co. G, 143<sup>rd</sup> Infantry at 1600 and came down off the hill and joined the battalion in its assembly area near Belmont.

Felber Force occupied Belmont, maintaining its road blocks as a protection to the left flank of the regiment.

During the day elements of the 141<sup>st</sup> and 143<sup>rd</sup> Infantry made contact with our troops and put themselves in position to pass through our lines. A short rest was in prospect.

The regimental CP, Service Co. area in Bruyeres and Belmont were shelled heavily during the day. A total of 55 prisoners were taken. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. also recaptured 12 British Colonial soldiers from the Germans.

The Infantry platoon attached to Felber Force (3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Co. A) sent over the route between Belmont and Biffontaine which the tanks had attempted to take on the previous day. They search for two men who had been wounded and knocked off the tanks, but could not find them. A Frenchman reported that two Japanese-American soldiers had come to his house for aid, but had left shortly afterward.

Our KIA losses for 23 October, 1944 were as follows:

| <u>Last Name</u> | <u>First Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Hometown</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Fuyumuro</b>  | Edward S          | Pvt         | 100-D       | Aiea, HI        |
| <b>Honda</b>     | Richard M.        | Pfc         | 100-C       | Honolulu, HI    |
| <b>Sugiyama</b>  | Itsuo             | Pfc         | 100-A       | Kukuhale, HI    |
| <b>Suyama</b>    | George W.         | Sgt         | 100-A       | Harve, Mt.      |

**24 October** – The 100<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bns maintained defensive positions until relieved by the 141<sup>st</sup> and 143<sup>rd</sup> Infantry respectively. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. closed into the assembly area near Belmont at 1400, less one platoon of L Co., which stayed overnight in its position. The 100<sup>th</sup> Bn. closed at 1730. Felber Force was detached from the 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. Seven enemy stragglers were rounded up while the relief was being completed.

The battalions had a momentary and much needed rest billeted in houses around Belmont. Hot food was served and all personnel, by order of the Division Commander shuttled back to Laval for a hot shower. Clean clothes and two pairs of wool socks per man were issued. The replacements who had been sent back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Replacement Depot on the 16<sup>th</sup> rejoined the regiment, and the companies reorganized. Officers and men were paid for the month of September.

Lieutenant General PATCH, Commanding General, Seventh Army, visited the Regimental CP and the 100<sup>th</sup> Bn. during the day.

Weather continued cold and rainy. The service Co. area in Bruyeres was again shelled

Report was received that the 141<sup>st</sup> Infantry, which had relieved the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. was being counterattacked. At 1400 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was alerted attached to the 141<sup>st</sup> Infantry, and prepared to resume combat on the following day..

Our KIA loss for this day was, S/Sgt Shiro Togo of A Company, 442<sup>nd</sup> from Kahuku, HI.



On 26 October, 1944 **Pfc Teruo Fujioka**, of L Company 442<sup>nd</sup> from Kahuku, HI was KIA.