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Lt General

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Index for MS # C-079.

~~MIILYAFY~~ Combat examples as basis of experience for the
organisation of map exercises, terrain appreciation, etc.

(Rudolf Koch-Erpach)

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MS # C-079

Curt Gallenkamp
General der Artillerie

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EXAMPLES TAKEN FROM WAR AS AN EMPIRICAL
BASIS FOR THE ARRANGEMENT OF MAP EXERCISES
AND FIELD DISCUSSIONS

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Kra. Rees

Gallenkamp joined the Army in March 1909, entering the 7th Field Artillery Regiment as an officer candidate, and in the same year was given his commission as a second lieutenant with seniority dating from 22 August 1908. During World War I he served in several assignments as acting General Staff Officer and in February 1918 was detached for General Staff training in courses held at Sedan. After the end of World War I and the dissolution of the Imperial German Army, he was carried over into the new Reichswehr, the 100,000 man army Germany was permitted to maintain under the Treaty of Versailles.

In 1927 Gallenkamp, then a captain, was given General Staff Corps status and from then until the outbreak of World War II rotated between the field forces and General Staff assignments, being promoted Generalmajor in March 1938. Immediately after the outbreak of War General Gallenkamp was placed in command of the 78th Infantry Division, taking part in the French and later in the Russian campaign. Promoted Generalleutnant in April 1940 he was appointed Commanding General of LXXX Infantry Corps in France on 1 April 1942, this appointment coinciding with his further promotion to General der Artillerie. On 12 August 1944 General Gallenkamp resigned for reasons of ill-health. He was placed in the Army High Command Officer Reserve Pool and removed to the Reserve Military Hospital, an Frauenberg, Bad Mergentheim, Wuerttemberg, where he was captured on 12 April 1945.

EXAMPLES TAKEN FROM WAR AS AN EMPIRICAL BASISEXAMPLES FOR THE ARRANGEMENT OF MAP EXERCISESAND FIELD DISCUSSIONS

A

On 24 July 1941 the 78th Infantry Division (with T/O of a normal infantry division of the second wave of the German Army) crossed the Dnieper at a point approximately ten kilometers south of Mogilev over a military bridge, with orders to reach Krichев as soon as possible.

Situation on 24 July 1941 at 0700 hours

The reconnaissance battalion which had crossed the river at about 0430, reconnoitering in the direction of Mogilev, reported that it had encountered strong enemy forces on the eastern bank of the Dnieper. The enemy's strength was estimated at several regiments with artillery and numerous vehicles. Heavy gunfire could be heard from the VII Corps sector to the north, where that corps was attacking Mogilev from the west. The bulk of the spearheading 238th Infantry Regiment had crossed the bridge.

Estimate of the Situation by Commander of 78th Infantry Division

"Because the 78th Infantry Division's route of advance toward Krichev passes for about seven or eight kilometers close to the strong Russian forces, reported, the flank of the advancing division, and especially its supplies, are endangered by the enemy."

The commanding general of XIII Corps was informed by telephone of this estimate of the situation, as well as of the fact that the continued advance of the division and its supplies would be jeopardized unless the situation could be brought under control. In case the advance should, nevertheless, be continued, the establishment of a supply route located further southward was absolutely essential.

Results

Owing to the critical situation near Krichev, which called for the arrival of the corps in that area without delay, the commanding general ordered the division to march on toward ^{KRICHEV} Mogilev and take the proper measures for its security. At the same time, he promised to visit the division during the morning for a conference. This conference took place about noon in a village along the route of advance.

The division commander reported the situation, as it had meanwhile developed, as follows: The attacking VII Corps had been unable to cross the river at any point. The intensity of the battle remained undiminished. Subsequent reconnaissance reports confirmed the impression that the enemy forces east of the Dnieper comprised at least one division. Moreover, heavy east-west and west-east motor traffic on the main highway had been

reported. On several occasions Russian planes had been observed.

Conclusions of the Division Commander

A safe advance of the division and its supplies would be possible only if the enemy threat was eliminated. Request was made for permission to attack.

Decision of Commanding General

The present situation at Krichev requires that all corps components should arrive as soon as possible. Therefore, although our forces require adequate protection against the enemy forces south of Mogilev, all measures will have to be taken to continue the advance toward Krichev as rapidly as possible. It is impossible to establish a new division supply route further south.

Concluding Report of the Division Commander

In this report the division commander stated that he felt obliged to say that under present circumstances he could carry out the order to advance at a rapid rate only in the event the enemy south of Mogilev was eliminated; furthermore, that an attack by the 78th Division would also substantially support the attack of VII Corps.

The commanding general regretted that he was unable to change his decision because of strict orders from army headquarters.

After this exchange of views the division commander visited his regimental commanders. For the evening and night he assigned them observation, reconnaissance and security sectors and he also ordered new comprehensive

reconnaissance carried out to the east and northwest

At approximately 1600 hours, when reconnaissance had almost been completed, a division staff motorcycle messenger delivered the following telephone message from the commanding general:

(See Sketch 1)

"If commander of 78th Division believes that the order to advance on Krichev — which remains urgent — cannot be carried out without an attack against the enemy group south of Mogilev, he is herewith granted a free hand to launch an attack on 25 July. In case the attack should be executed, the division will be attached to VII Corps."

The division commander withdrew for a short time and then dictated to the commanders present the following order:

Division Assembly Order Preparatory to an Attack on the
Morning of 25 July

(1) Enemy forces numbering at least one Soviet division in the area south of Mogilev endanger the ordered advance of the division in the left flank. The enemy situation to the northeast, where heavy motorized traffic has been reported, is not yet clear.

(2) On the morning of 25 July, the 78th Division will attack and destroy the enemy group south of Mogilev. For the duration of the attack the division will be attached to VII Corps.

(3) For this purpose the following units will be assembled prior to 0600 hours on 25 July:

(a) The 195th Infantry with 4th Battery, 178th Artillery, attached in the following area: The left flank on the Dnieper — the right flank about five kilometers to the east. Boundary separating it from 238th Infantry will run approximately along the line indicated in Sketch 2.

It will be the mission of 195th Infantry to concentrate its main effort on pinning down the enemy on its front on both sides of the road to Mogilev and to push him steadily northward.

(b) The 238th Infantry, in the area bounded by the line separating it from 195th Infantry and a line about 1.5 kilometers to the east, separating it from the 215th Infantry (approximately indicated on sketch).

The task of the 238th Infantry will be to concentrate its main effort on the right, attack the enemy on its front and to drive him back. The regiment will direct its main attention to the prevention of any enemy action against the left flank of the 215th Infantry attacking on the right of the 238th Infantry.

(c) To the right of the boundary line separating it from the 238th Regiment, the 215th Regiment will organize its forces on both sides of the road leading northward to the Dnieper bend and echeloned to the right rear.

It will be the regiment's mission, by means of a powerful thrust northward as far as the Dnieper bend, to prevent Soviet forces stationed westward in the Dnieper bend from escaping eastward. The 238th Infantry will be responsible for protection of the left flank of the 215th Infantry. The speed of the 215th Regiment's advance will decide the success of the

over-all attack.

(4) The commander of 178th Artillery will concentrate his entire fire power (less the 4th Battery, which is to be attached to 195th Infantry) to the rear of the right flank of the division in such a manner that the massed fire of the regiment can be observed while it first supports the attack of the 215th Infantry, and then the right flank of the 238th Regiment.

In this area such forward observers as are needed will be attached to the assaulting infantry units. In addition, all preparations will be made to have the batteries follow the attacking infantry closely by echelons during the advance.

(5) The 178th Engineer Battalion will reach point (x) behind the front of the attacking 215th Infantry by 0600 hours, 25 July, and will remain there under my command.

(6) By 0600, 25 July, the main body of the 178th Panzer Jaeger Battalion will assemble in area (y) behind the 215th Infantry and to the right, in such a manner that it can repulse any armored assault against the attacking 215th Infantry Regiment. For this purpose it will reconnoiter in a northeasterly direction the enemy motorized forces which have been reported.

(7) The 178th Reconnaissance Battalion will reconnoiter in a general easterly direction in the area adjacent to the Panzer Jaeger battalion (see sketch) and will protect the right flank of the attacking 78th Infantry Division.

(8) The 178th Feldrekruten* Battalion will reach area (x), formerly the area of 178th Engineer Battalion, prior to 0800, 25 July, and will remain there under my command.

(9) Division Reserves:

(a) The 238th Infantry Regiment must not commit the battalion held in reserve behind the right flank without my permission.

(b) The 178th Engineer Battalion

(c) The 178th Feldrekruten Battalion

(10) The 178th Signal Battalion will establish wire and radio communications between the division command Post (at z) and the command posts of the three infantry regiment commanders and the command post of the 178th Artillery Regiment.

(11) The closing in assembly positions will be reported to me at my command post by 0600, 25 July.

(12) The beginning of the attack will be ordered on the morning of 25 July.

(13) During the division's attack I shall first be with the 238th Infantry Regiment, and later in the sector of 215th Infantry Regiment. The division command radio station will accompany me wherever I go.

/s/ Gallenkamp

Generalleutnant
and Division Commander

* Field recruit training battalion

Nothing new developed until the morning of 25 July. At 0545 the division ordered the attack to start at 0630. At 0600 reports from all attached units regarding closing in assembly positions had arrived at the division command post. The action commenced as planned at 0630 in clear sunny weather.

Chronology of Attack on the Morning of 25 July

Shortly after 0700 the 195th Infantry Regiment and the western elements of 238th Infantry Regiment successively contacted weak enemy outposts which they were able to push back without severe fighting. The 215th Infantry Regiment rapidly advanced several kilometers up to the southern edge of the woods without meeting hostile troops.

After 0730, enemy resistance stiffened along the entire division front. The 195th Infantry Regiment could now barely inch forward, while the western flank of the 238th Infantry Regiment lagged behind. Although heavily supported by artillery, the eastern flank could barely keep abreast of the attacking 215th Infantry Regiment. One after the other, six to eight enemy batteries of light and medium caliber entered the battle.

By 0830 the Panzer Jaeger battalion had reported heavy traffic on the highways leading east and northeast from Mogilev - "the traffic being about equally heavy in both directions" - and that some villages and small woods were occupied by the enemy.

The reconnaissance battalion reported: "So far no enemy contact."

At 0930 the 195th Infantry Regiment was fighting its way stubbornly

and slowly northward along both sides of the road to Mogilev.

Along a road leading in a northwestern direction toward Mogilev, the 238th Infantry Regiment encountered a section of swampy brook terrain with several brooks which was tenaciously defended. Only on its eastern flank did the regiment, by employing a reinforced company of the reserve battalion, penetrate deeply into the wooded zone.

Believing that the 215th Infantry Regiment would continue to advance rapidly, the division commander had moved his command post to the sector of this regiment situated along the road leading toward the bend in the Dnieper.

About 1045 the division command post received the following message: "The 1st Battalion, 215th Infantry Regiment has reached the Dnieper bend. Regiment is organizing for defense against enemy surrounded to the west and relief attacks from the northeast and east." (See Sketch 3)

Development of the Situation up to 1300

As the result of blocking off enemy action from the east, the tenacious resistance before the 195th Infantry, as well as before the western flank of the 238th Infantry, had abated by 1300. Both regiments were now able to gain more ground northward.

On the other hand, the situation of the 215th Infantry Regiment grew progressively more difficult.

Situation of the 215th Infantry in Detail:

Facing westward, the forward 1st Battalion had to repulse an increasing number of attempts to break out by the surrounded Soviet infantry units.

Strong elements of the 2d and 3d Battalions, 215th Infantry Regiment had to be committed against Soviet motorized forces brought up for the relief of the surrounded troops along the roads from the northeast and north.

The bulk of the 178th Artillery Regiment was regrouping against these enemy units in the difficult wooded terrain. The Commander of the 215th Infantry Regiment considered the situation of his regiment neither particularly simple nor especially grave.

There was no evidence of any participation by VII Corps from the west. The intensity of the battle remained unchanged as compared with the previous day.

The division commander ordered the 238th Infantry Regiment to concentrate all available forces on its right flank in order to bring the necessary relief to the 1st Battalion, 215th Infantry Regiment by its appearance at the Dnieper.

In addition, the engineer battalion was moved behind the right flank of the 215th Infantry and the Feldrekruten battalion moved closer to the division's right flank.

It had not been possible to establish contact with the VII Corps, fighting on the western bank of the Dnieper (radio code unknown).

The Situation up to 1800 Hours

The 195th and 238th Infantry Regiments reported substantial progress and the capture of great numbers of prisoners and large quantities of materiel. (See Sketch 4) The arrival of the right flank of the 238th Infantry Regiment at the Dnieper bend had relieved the 1st Battalion of the

215th Infantry Regiment.

Further developments in the zone of the 215th Infantry, especially the commitment of new enemy forces in a southeastern direction, which extended the fronts prompted the 215th Infantry Regiment's commander to speedily employ this 1st Battalion for extending his right flank in the defense. The zone of fire of the 178th Artillery Regiment also had to be turned more and more in an eastward direction.

The threatened outflanking of the 215th Infantry Regiment compelled the division commander to commit the engineer battalion in a counterattack on the right (southern) flank, adjacent to the regiment, at about 1800 hours.

By this time the bulk of the Panzer Jaeger battalion had also been thrown into the battle in order to strengthen this sector of the front.

The 178th Feldrekruten Battalion was moved up directly behind the right flank of the division.

The reconnaissance battalion reported clashes with weak enemy groups. It had been impossible to obtain definite information concerning the strength of enemy forces holding a wooded section of terrain east of the division's right flank. The inhabitants of the region stated that the woods were occupied by strong Russian forces. Fire prevented all observation of the wood.

By nightfall the resistance of the encircled Soviet forces had practically ceased. The counterattack by the engineer battalion had provided security for the division's right flank and had brought the