

THE HEDGEROW FIGHTING

So far the Third Battalion of 325th Regiment had been largely leaderless and its several components had moved tactically on their own initiative, once they reached the western shore. Too RAE'S company, suddenly precipitated into the action, was acting in an independent role. Each small band took up a sector and then proceeded to deal with its local situation in detail. It was surprising, in view of the general circumstances, how quickly an orderly pattern began to develop from these diverse operations.

It happened that way largely because junior officers, in the emergency, were capable of fast thinking on their feet. Having made his decision to continue down the main road with Company F, CAPT HARNEY saw a knot of men from Company G—three cooks and a radio operator—standing at the road fork, doing nothing; he added them to his force and was glad later that he did it, for the cooks fought with "unusual courage" throughout the afternoon. The Company then continued on along the road, spraying the hedgerows with automatic fire as they moved along and grenading the edges of the fields where there were likely to be fire positions. RAE had been coming along behind and as the two groups got on up to the crossroads, thus coming into ground which had not been swept by any of the earlier-arriving companies, RAE asked HARNEY if he had better employ his men. HARNEY told him: "Take all of the men now moving along on the left side of the road, pass down