

34. A Frenchman interrogated during the assembly of the Bn had told Vandervoort that he believed only a few Germans were at Neuville and that they would be found in the outlying houses. Turnbull was in Neuville by the time that the Bn got in to Ste. Mere Eglise, and the message that he had taken it came in about the time that the CP was set up. He mined the road to the north of the village and set up a position to the east of the road, on favorable high ground. Another mine block supported by a few men was set up to the south of Neuville covering the cross roads.

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 Col. KRAUSE and the officers and men of
 Companies D and E, in Company interviews
 provided the material. It was so identified
 WITHIN THE PERIMETER at the time the sten-
 ographer made the notation in his transcription. *SLIDE*

1. By these measures taken north and south of STE. MERE EGLISE,
 the position became fairly well stabilized within the village, and
 the defense was able to further organize itself. Company "I" had
 eased the pressure toward the south, and the Germans continued to
 draw off. They did not come up again that day in any force.
 TURNBULL's platoon had checked the threat from the north for at
 least 9 to 10 hours, holding it to within a few hours of darkness.
 The general position within the perimeter, therefore, became more
 satisfactory as the day wore on. There were not many additions to
 the ranks through any men coming in, as the battalion had already
 found nearly its total strength available after the jump.

2. However, snipers were hanging onto the flanks of the vil-
 lage and KRAUSE was also getting fire from close up. Because of the
 difference in the sounds made by a bullet going over and one coming
 from close range, the men began to feel the presence of the enemy
 in the buildings near them, so KRAUSE had all of the buildings
 searched again and they found three or four snipers who managed to
 evade the first clean-up.

3. Patrols were in constant use. In fact, there were enough
 small detachments of the enemy moving in the general vicinity that
 the runner service to the regimental CP took on the nature of in-
 filtrating patrol action, in that the runners would be sent up on
 occasion under cover of protecting riflemen. This was especially
 so during the day. At night they could move around without great

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NEUVILLE-AU-PLAIN

Action of 3d Platoon, "D" Company, 505th Parachute Infantry

(This account is prepared via the group interview method from a group of eight of the survivors.)

1. There were 42 men in the platoon, and moving via the hedgerows they proceeded directly to NEUVILLE, getting no fire as they moved along. Pvt EDWARD EASTON was first scout, and he said the men moved along behind him on both sides of the road. Lt TURNER B. TURNBULL was the officer in charge. They got entirely through the hamlet. They then proceeded about 40 yards beyond the hamlet and deployed along the hedgerows setting up a road block north of the houses, and covering it with a bazooka and two riflemen. To the right of the road was convenient high ground and the machine gun and most of the platoon were disposed on that side. However, one squad was to the left of the road. They took up this defensive position and waited. They were in position only about 30 minutes and then the Germans moved against them from the north.

2. About one company of Germans were seen coming down the road by the men on the right, though they were not visible to the squad on the left flank. They were marching in a column of twos, and were not delivering any fire forward. Lt ISAAC MICHAELMAN, assistant platoon leader, ran across from the right-hand group to the squad on the left, and moving in behind the group of houses so that the approach was not visible to the enemy, he got this squad forward about 250 yards, with the idea of hitting the company from the flank and driving them off. When first sighted the Germans had

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been about 400 yards up the road, and by the time the left-hand squad had gotten forward and taken position, they had drawn almost even with them. There had still been no firing. Pvt JOSEPH C. HUDY and Lt MICHAELMAN moved up to the second floor of one of the buildings for observation. This squad had been a mortar squad. Their mortars had been lost on the jump, the mortar bundle having blown up. They therefore took over a machine gun. Sgt ROBERT NILAND, Pfc HORACE H. BROWN, and Pvt JOHN P. SLAVIERO were at the gun, and Pfc BROWN was the gunner. Pvt HAROLD DUNNEGAN was also in this group. The gun was set up in a ditch outside the hedgerow, and pointing down the road and in position to traverse the fields on both sides. In the meantime, the two right-hand squads at the rear had begun to fire on the enemy and the Germans had deployed along the hedges and ditches. They were replying to this fire from the front, and had not yet detected the position of the men on the left. MICHAELMAN, observing from the top of the house, got hit in the ~~butts~~ ^{buttocks}, and this was the first sign that the Germans had spotted the gun position. The enemy then started moving around to the left to envelop the gun position. The men could see them as they went past open spots in the hedgerows, moving off to the left at a distance of about 300 yards. By this time the gun had opened fire and was kept in action, firing bursts of six to eight rounds and traversing toward both flanks. Pfc STANLEY W. KOTLARZ was on the extreme left with a tommy gun. He gave them some fire, but felt that it was doing no good because of the extreme range. As the enemy still came on in numbers around that flank, the feeling became general

among the squad that the situation was too hot. MICHAELMAN also felt it, and ordered them to withdraw back to the main position. MICHAELMAN lead the way, hobbling along using his rifle as a cane, and the rest of the men followed him back along the hedgerows.

5. Now this was the opening of the action from the viewpoint of the men along the line. These additional details are supplied by the battalion commander. At STE. MERE EGLISE he had been able to borrow a pair of crutches and also acquire a jeep from a glider, and had come on back to the platoon to bring up two 57 AT Guns for support of the position. According to the briefing which he had been given, the principal tank threat would come from the north, and therefore he wanted to get these guns to the outpost. As he came into the hamlet he saw a paratrooper standing on the edge of the road waving an orange flag, and the story he subsequently learned was that a Frenchman had come into the position on a bicycle and had told the platoon leader that he was moving in advance of a full column of German prisoners who were coming in under guard of some American paratroopers. The paratrooper was trying to give them the friendly identification when Lt Col VANDERVOORT got there, and it was just a brief moment after this time that the ruse was discovered. One of the guns on the right opened fire and the Germans promptly fanned out in a military formation. At this position there were two machine guns, 2 BAR's, one bazooka, and the balance of the riflemen. VANDERVOORT had left one of the AT guns at the intersection below the hamlet, and the other was brought right into the center of the built-up area. The squad from the left came on back and rejoined the group on the right, MICHAELMAN going on back