

## Historical Overview

On 19 December 1944 a small artillery column led by Major Arthur C. Parker, having already escaped the disaster of Schnee Eifel and the capture of Saint Vith, was ordered to take up position at the strategic crossroads of Baraque de Fraiture. Parker learned that he was now under the command of XVIII (Airborne) Corps and that reinforcements would be sent to him as soon as they became available.

Parker's men set up a defensive perimeter with their three remaining 105mm howitzers and were soon reinforced by elements of the 87th Cavalry Squadron and 203rd Antiaircraft Auto-Weapons Battalion of the 7th Armoured Division.

After some skirmishing with advance guard elements of 560. Volksgrenadiere Division, Parker asked permission to withdraw, receiving instead an order from to "Stand and Resist".

On 22 December, reinforcements arrived at "Parker's Crossroads"; eleven M4 Sherman tanks and two M7 Priest self-propelled \ guns from Task Force Kane (3rd Armoured Division), four M18 Hellcat Tank Destroyers from 643rd Tank Destroyer Battalion (3rd Armoured Division), a detachment of the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion and Company 'F', 325th Glider Infantry Regiment (82nd Airborne Division), led by Captain Junior R. Woodruff.

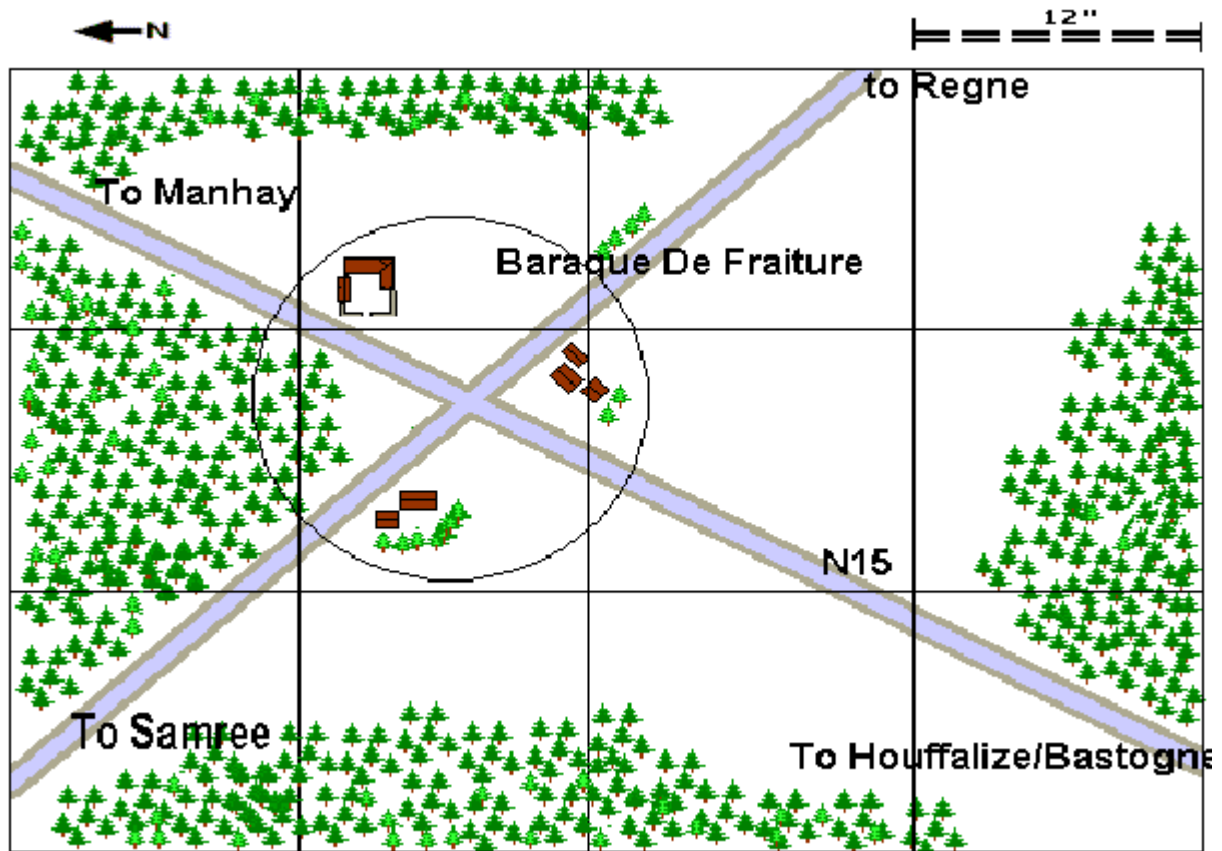
As a strategic position on the Highway N15 to Liège, Baraque de Fraiture was a prime target for 2. SS Panzer Division "Das Reich", who wanted to break through to the Ourthe Valley and from there to the Meuse. The task of crushing American resistance at Baraque de Fraiture was allocated to SS-Obersturmbannführer Otto Weidinger and his SS Panzergrenadier Regiment 4 "Der Führer".

On 23 December, on the 8th day of the Battle of the Bulge, "Das Reich" began their attack on the crossroads.

By Dawn on the 24th the crossroads was in German hands. The survivors of the 87th Cavalry left on foot during the night but nevertheless managed to recover one of their own vehicles; an armoured car used by an SS reconnaissance unit! Woodruff's 'F' Company managed to escape with 64 men left out of 116. The Germans reported that several tanks over 34 halftracks and jeeps were found destroyed at the crossroads.

The 589th Field Artillery Battalion, Parker's unit, was obliterated.

*"We will run no more. Here we will stand and fight and here we will make a difference." (Major Parker)*



Map/Terrain Notes

- All woods are classed as 'Dense with Underbrush'.
- All roads are classed as 'Paved'.
- All Buildings are stone.
- North is to the Left of the Map

## **Major Elliott Goldstein, 589th Field Artillery Battalion** **(vice Major Arthur C. Parker)**

### **Situation**

Having escaped the destruction and capture of 106th Division at Schnee Eifel and the encirclement of Saint Vith, your battered command now finds itself under the command of General Ridgeway's XVIII (Airborne) Corps (presently commanded by General Gavin of the 82nd Airborne Division). General Hasbrouck of 7th Armoured Division meanwhile, has given you direct orders to take up defensive positions at the strategically significant crossroads of Baraque de Fraiture.

You have been here since the 19th and in that time you have dug in well enough and are ready for the enemy. Thankfully, you have received reinforcements from the 82nd Airborne Division, 7th Armoured Division and most recently from the 3rd Armoured Division. However, the enemy has been harassing you for days now with constant probes, infiltrations and mortar fire, wounding Major Parker and a number of others in the process.

Several probes and limited attacks by the 560th Volksgrenadier Division have been beaten off over the last day or two, but among the prisoners was a reconnaissance officer from the élite 2nd SS Panzer Division, which is a worrying development. The 'old men and boys' of the Volksgrenadiers are one thing, but SS panzer troops are an entirely different prospect. Your boys are already pretty jumpy at the prospect of falling into the hands of the SS - it's said that the SS massacred a battalion of American prisoners a few days ago, not to mention the wild rumours of SS men in American uniforms and vehicles murdering GIs in their sleep!

This morning, the 2nd SS played their first hand - a surprise dawn attack from the northeast by an SS company was cut to pieces by your attached airborne boys and anti-aircraft machineguns. This was followed by a larger, battalion-sized attack from the southwest, which was beaten off in fine style by your boys. However, initial jubilation was short-lived, as these same SS troops have since infiltrated into the woods to the north of your position and have cut communications to the other two Glider Infantry companies (from 2/325th GIR) to the north of your position.

The Germans have continued to mortar and shell your positions sporadically throughout the day and the sound of massed tank engines to the south suggests that they still have plenty of cards to play.

After the morning's attacks, you personally braved German infiltrators to make a quick dash up the road to Manhay to scrape up some reinforcements. Thankfully, you found elements of 3rd Armoured Division emplaced in the town, and have returned with a platoon of Shermans, whose help will be most welcome.

It is now nearly four o'clock in the afternoon and the dusk is starting to close in.

However, the enemy artillery fire has suddenly intensified and you can clearly discern the sound of tank engines roaring in the distance. It sounds like the enemy commander is about to play his ace...

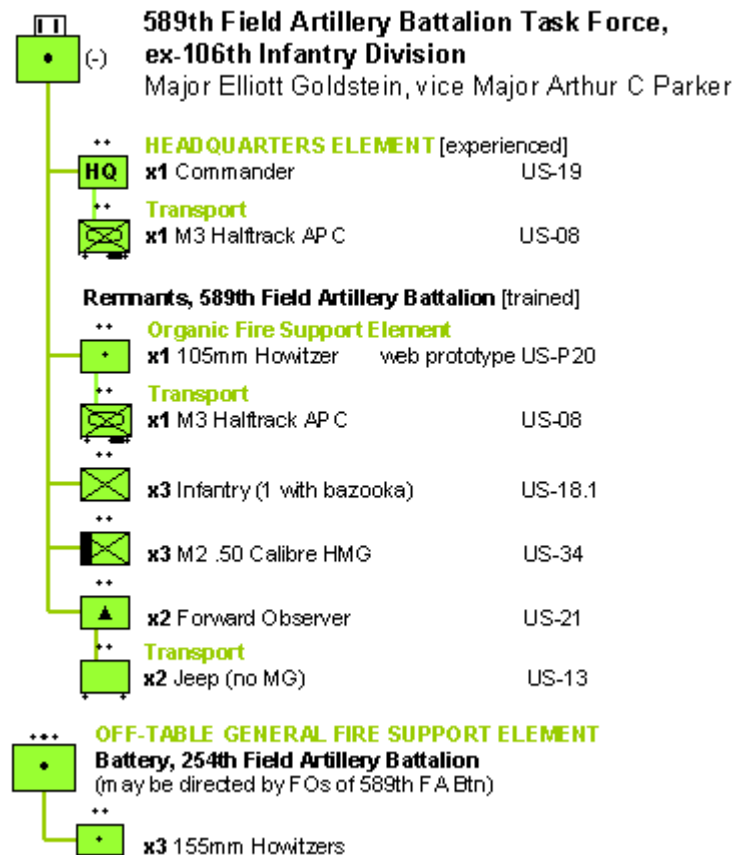
## Mission

You are to establish a defensive position at the crossroads of Baraque de Fraiture and are to hold it at all costs.

## Execution

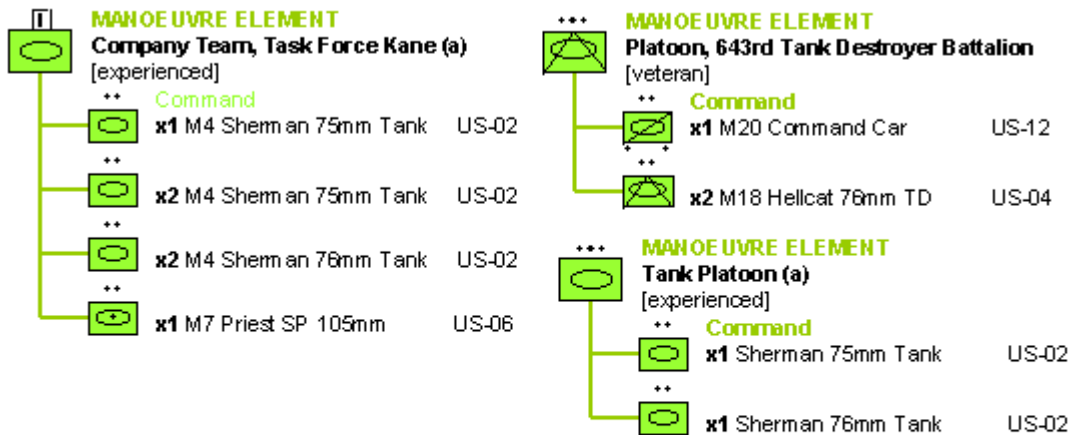
Friendly Forces are detailed in the order of battle below; they are a chaotic mixture of units from four different divisions and include raw recruits alongside hardened veterans. They've all done well so far, but this will be the real test.

Overall command is being exercised by remnants 589th Field Artillery Battalion



Attached elements of the 3rd Armored Division

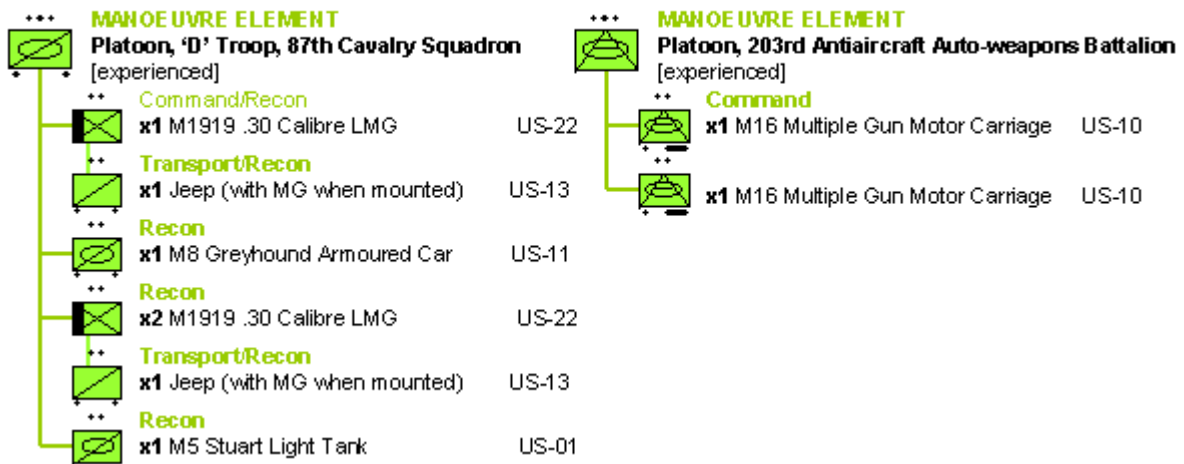
### Attached Elements, 3rd Armoured Division



(a) Accounts differ as to how many tanks were present from 3rd Armoured Division. One account states that the tank company was withdrawn soon after arrival on the 22nd, leaving just the Priest platoon behind. However, a platoon of Shermans (probably from Task Force Kane) definitely reinforced the position at 1300hrs on the 23rd. Therefore, if you want to create an even greater challenge for the US forces, delete the five Shermans from Task Force Kane.

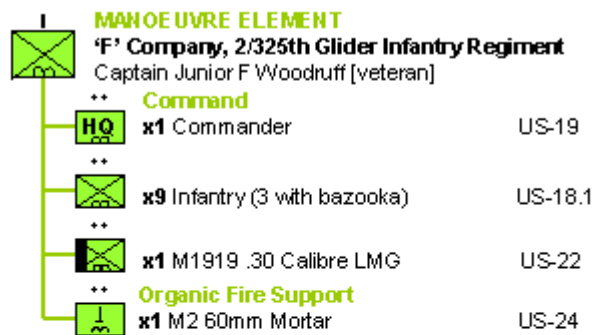
### Attached elements of the 7th Armored Division

#### Attached Elements, 7th Armoured Division

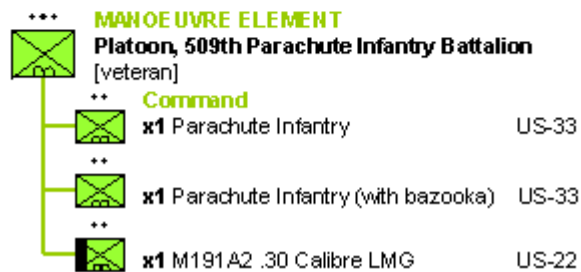


### Attached elements of the 82nd Airborne Division

### Attached Elements, 82nd Airborne Division



### Attached Elements, XVIII (Airborne) Corps Reserve



Further reinforcements are unlikely to be forthcoming in the near future, so you'll have to make do with what you've got. However, artillery support may be available from the 254th Field Artillery Battalion (XVIII Corps Reserve), though communications are difficult and other units are competing for their attentions (there is therefore a -1 modifier on all Call For Fire rolls).

All troops start dug-in, guns in Improved Positions, and vehicles with no defensive benefit. All your forces must be deployed within the area indicated on the map, but deploy with markers until you open fire or are spotted. Add only 4 dummies (the Germans have a good idea of where you are). Although the attacks so far have all come from the eastern quarter (top of the map), it is quite clear that tanks are moving to the south and the woods to the north are thick with infiltrators and snipers. An all-round defence is going to be essential.

Following the failure of their battalion-strength hasty attack this morning, you can expect Enemy Forces to consist of at least one infantry battalion, reinforced by tanks and artillery. The 2nd SS clearly have the resources to mount such an attack and they have been quite obviously preparing something for much of the day.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

- If you hold (have troops in or were the last to occupy) all three groups of buildings by the end of Turn 12 (1800hrs), you have a total victory.
- If you hold two groups of buildings you have achieved a partial victory.
- Anything else and it's history!

## **Briefing for SS-Obersturmbannführer Otto Weidinger, SS Panzergrenadier Regiment 4 "Der Führer"**

### **Situation**

SS-Brigadeführer Lammerding, commanding 2. SS Panzer Division "Das Reich", has identified the crossroads at Baraque de Fraiture as being of prime importance to the division's drive to the Meuse valley; it sits astride the N15 Bastogne-Liège Highway and is also situated on one of the highest plateaux in the Ardennes.

Elements of 560. Volksgrenadiere Division have been in contact with American forces at the crossroads for a few days now and report it to be defended by the enemy in approximately company strength (thought to be from the American 7. Panzer Division, which was badly battered recently at St Vith) - though even this weak force proved to be too much for the Volksgrenadiere and they have left it for 'Das Reich' to deal with!

Lammerding has therefore directed your Kampfgruppe to take this strategic feature. He is quite sure that an experienced officer such as yourself will be up to the task (you note with irony that the most experience Lammerding has had as a commander is that of executing whole villages of 'terrorist sympathisers' and sucking up to the party élite, though these thoughts had better be kept to yourself!).

The seizure of Baraque de Fraiture will allow the division to move through Manhay and the Ourthe Valley to the Meuse, thus penetrating the Allied line in the Ardennes and breaking out to the more open 'Panzer Country' beyond.

After refuelling from a supply convoy yesterday, your regiment conducted a careful 'relief in place' during the night. Your men quietly took up positions to the south and west of Baraque de Fraiture, while 560. Volksgrenadiere Division withdrew. This was carried out with the strictest sound discipline and luckily you did not receive the attentions of the enemy artillery. You are grateful for this small mercy - similar movements in Normandy would frequently attract terrible volumes of enemy artillery fire.

Following a brief conference with your officers last night, you decided that the best policy given the weak state of the enemy defences would be to opt for a hasty attack. Therefore, just before dawn, a single company from SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Schulzer's II. Bataillon attempted to launch a surprise attack from the northeast, closely followed by the rest of the battalion en masse from the southeast. However, the initial 'surprise' attack was utterly cut to pieces - apparently by multiple flak guns - and the follow-up force could make no further headway. The survivors of II. Bataillon have however, managed to lodge themselves firmly in the village of Fraiture (to the northeast), and in the woods to the north of the crossroads - the defenders are now effectively surrounded. However, II Bataillon has suffered terrible casualties in this assault and Dr Müller's Medical Platoon is presently overwhelmed.

With the failure of Schulzer's hasty assault, you have spent the day preparing a more

deliberate assault. While keeping the defenders pinned down by sporadic harassing mortar and artillery fire, you have brought up SS-Sturmbannführer Heinz Werner's III. Bataillon and supporting elements in the form of StuGs, panzers and artillery. Heinz Werner is your best friend and you trust him implicitly - you have been through a lot together and if anyone can crack the enemy position, it is Heinz.

This time the defenders will be crushed!

### Mission

You are to crush the American defences at Baraque de Fraiture, thereby opening the route to Manhay.

### Execution

The crossroads at Baraque de Fraiture is strategically vital to the continued success of Das Reich's, and indeed to II SS Panzer Korps' and VI Panzer Armee's offensive. It must therefore fall.

The bulk of your forces come from SS Panzergrenadier Regt. 4 'Der Führer' of the 2nd SS Panzerdivision 'Das Reich', spearheaded by the 3rd Bataillon. The recent massive influx of recruits, following the division's reconstruction after Normandy, means that the overall quality of the regiment might not be what it once was. However, your officers and NCOs are all hardened veterans of Russia and Normandy and you know and trust every one of them.



(-) **SS Panzergrenadier Regiment 4 'Der Führer',**  
**2. SS Panzer Division 'Das Reich'**  
SS-Obersturmbannführer Otto Weidinger



(-) **III. Bataillon, 'Der Führer'**  
SS-Sturmbannführer Heinz Werner

SS-Obersturmführer Horst Gresiak's 7. Kompanie of SS Panzer Regiment 2 has been attached to your regiment for the offensive; you have got to know him over the last few



days and he seems competent enough. Lammerding has also sent a company of StuGs and a battalion of artillery to help you and they will prove most useful.

The attack will commence at 1600hrs with a preparatory artillery barrage. Werner's III. Bataillon will then attack from two directions at once, while II. Battalion will divert the enemy's attention to the north. III. Bataillon's attack is detailed as follows:

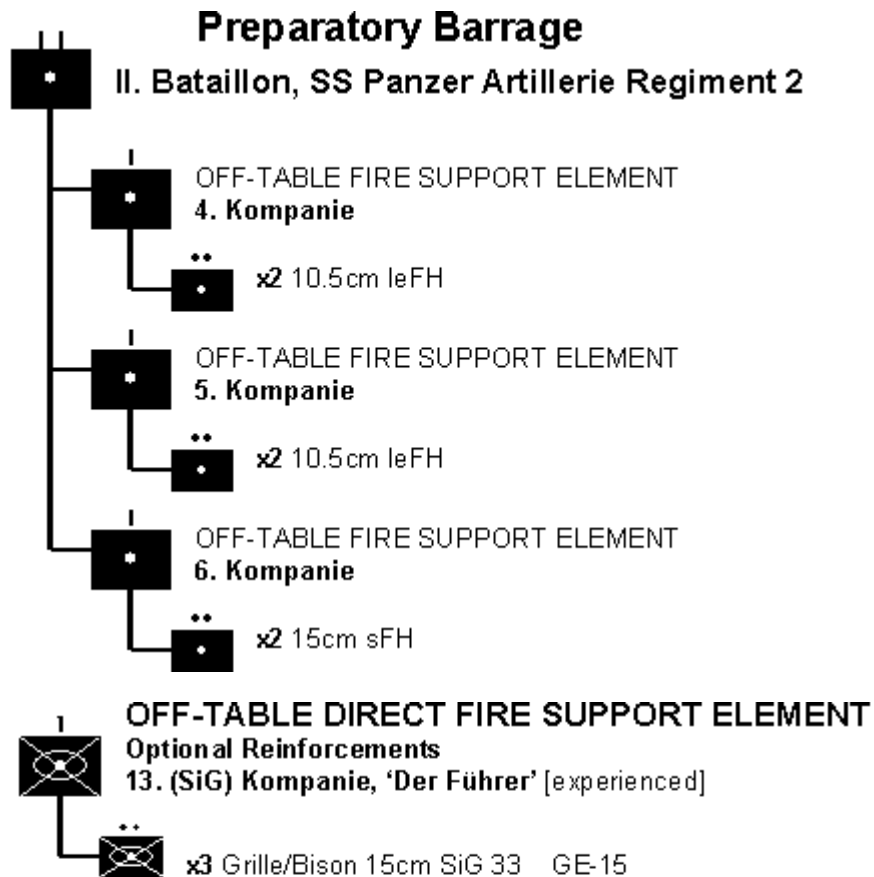
- 9. Kompanie of III. Bataillon will attack from the southeast, supported by the PzKpfw IVs of 7. Kompanie, I. Bataillon, SS Panzer Regiment 2
- 10. Kompanie of III. Bataillon will attack from the southwest, supported by the StuG IIIs of 2. Kompanie, SS Panzerjäger Abteilung 2.
- The Staff and 11. Kompanie of III. Bataillon will remain in reserve to the south.
- Support elements from 8. ('Schwere' - Heavy) Kompanie of III. Bataillon will be allocated to the assault elements as Werner sees fit.

Enemy Forces are known to consist of roughly a company of infantry, supported by some towed artillery pieces, multiple anti-aircraft cannon and a few tanks. Thankfully, their artillery does not seem to be giving them much support and the fighter-bombers are, for the time being, grounded by the weather.

On a personal note: Remember that the citation for the oak leaves to add to your Knight's Cross (earned during your actions to keep the Falaise Pocket open in August 1944) is still pending. Failure here will undoubtedly mean the cancellation of that award.

## DEPLOYMENT AND REINFORCEMENTS:

Preparatory Fire



These units take part in the preparatory barrage. When the barrage ends, they revert to on-call Off-table fire support.

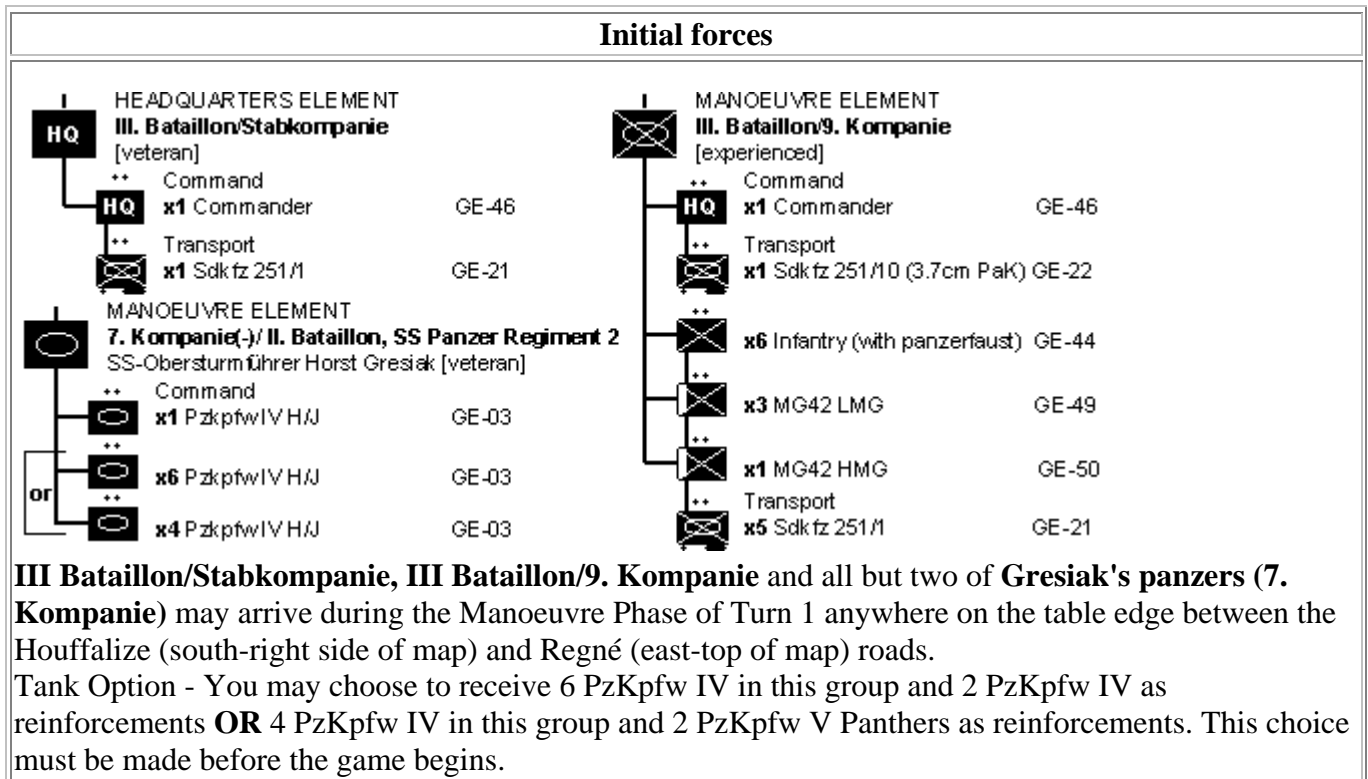
If the necessary reinforcement roll is made, the Grille company can enter the board as on-board fire support elements. They may then spot for themselves or conduct direct fire.

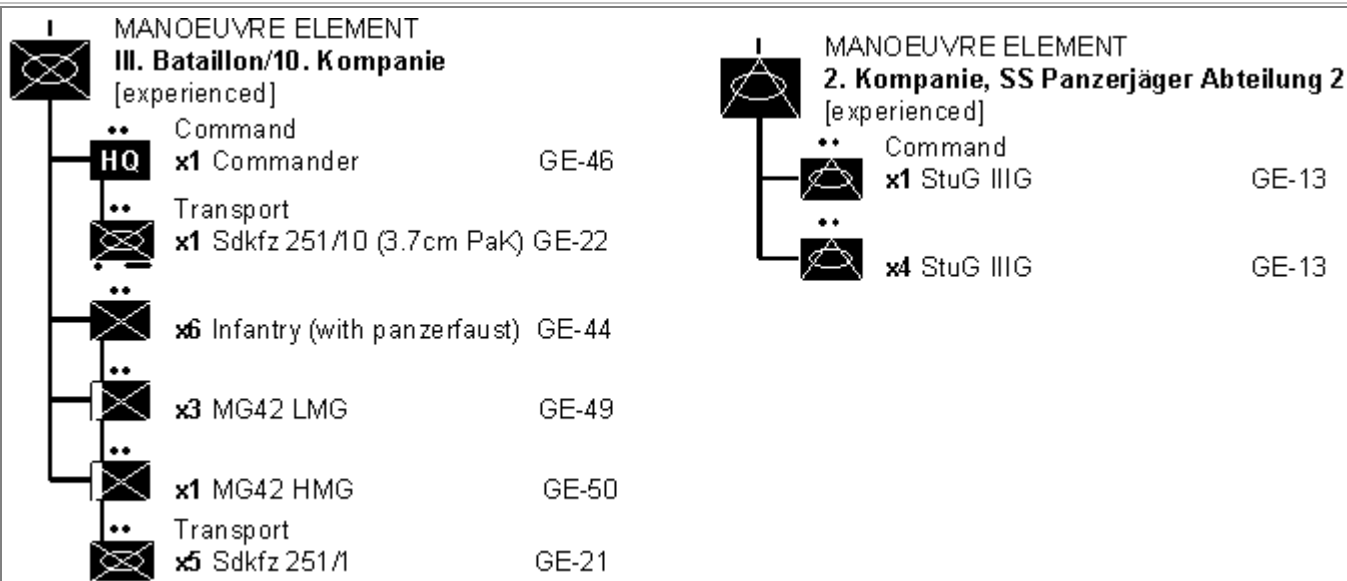
Until the company moves on the board, IDF missions from this company must be conducted by company, and individual sections may not fire independently.

II. Bataillon, SS Panzer Artillerie Regiment 2, has enough ammunition to fire a 30-minute preparation fire for your attack. This must be plotted prior to your assault, but you have good intelligence on enemy positions. The 15cm heavy infantry guns from 13.Kompanie will be available in tactical support thereafter.






- The pre-plotted missions may consist of three turns of HE, followed by one turn of smoke. HE missions can be specified to be Shelling, Concentration, and Thickened Concentration.

- Fire missions in the pre-plotted missions may not be fired by sections. The smallest fire mission that may be used is a company.
- The pre-plotted missions are plotted after the US forces place their unit markers, but before the exact nature of the units is revealed
- Pre-plotted missions may choose different mission types and locations on each of the 3 turns, but the pre-plotted attacks may not be changed once the game begins.
- Pre-plotted missions automatically arrive. However, resolve call-for-fire to see if a danger-close situation exists. German fire is assumed to originate from the South (right hand side of the map)
- The 15cm infantry guns must take part in the HE part of the barrage. On turn 4 and later, they can conduct on-call HE missions as off-board direct fire. They also may arrive as reinforcements to conduct on-board support. Before they arrive on the board, they may not fire as individual sections, but must conduct company shelling and concentration missions.





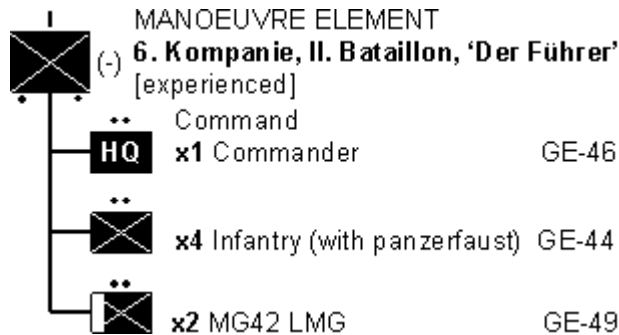
**III Bataillon/10. Kompanie** and the **StuGs (2. Kompanie Abteilung 2)** may arrive during the Manoeuvre Phase of Turn 1 on the Samrée (west) road.(bottom of the map)

- ATTACHMENTS**  
**(III. Bataillon/ 12. (Schwere) Kompanie, 14.(Flak) Kompanie)** [experienced]
-  Organic Fire Support  
**x3** Sdkfz 251/2 (8cm GrW) GE-23
  -  Organic Fire Support  
**x2** Sdkfz 251/9 (7.5cm KwK) GE-24
  -  **x2** Sdkfz 10/4 (2cm Flak) GE-19
  -  **x1** 7.5cm PaK 40 GE-41
  -  Transport  
**x1** Sdkfz 251/1 GE-21

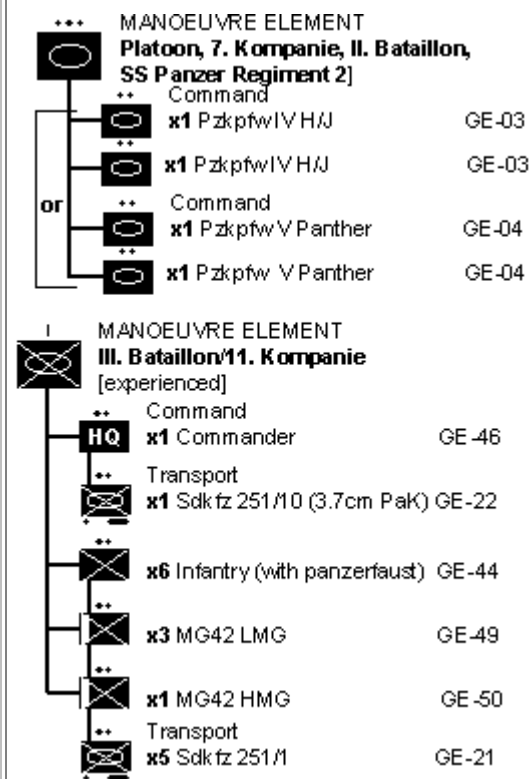
Units in **III Bataillon/12. Kompanie** and the Flak Guns from **12. Kompanie** must be attached to Panzergrenadier companies (9, 10, 11) or headquarters of III. Bataillon as you see fit. This allocation is done before the game begins and may not be changed. Units attached to 11. Kompanie arrive as reinforcements with the rest of their unit.

## Reinforcements.

There are 3 groups of reinforcements.



Group 1: **II Bataillon/6. Kompanie** arrives in the woods between the Regne and Manhay roads.



Group 2: **III. Bataillon/11. Kompanie** and a **Panzer Platoon from (7. Kompanie)** may arrive on the table edge anywhere on the southern or eastern table edges. Designate one of the panzers as the platoon commander. You only get Panthers if you chose to receive 4 PzKpfw IV on turn 1 instead of 6.

Group 3: **13. (SiG) Kompanie** (see above under the preparatory fires) may arrive as an on-table Fire Support Element if so desired, on the Houffalize (south) road. Note that this company may only enter the board on a turn in which they did not provide indirect fire support. If the company has fired in the Indirect Fire Phase of that turn, it must wait until the next turn to move onto the board, but need not roll again. If they come on the board, they must all come as a group and cannot leave the board. Until they come on-board, they may continue to provide indirect direct fire support. When they arrive on board, designate one of them as the command vehicle

Starting on turn 4 and at the beginning of each Manoeuvre phase, roll a d10. On a 9 or 0, one group of reinforcements arrives. Continue rolling each turn until the end of the game or all three groups have arrived.

When a group arrives, roll again to see what you get. For the first group:

1-5:Group 1

6-8:Group 2

9-0:Group 3

When the second group arrives, each remaining group should have a 50% chance of arriving (1-5,6-0). The third group is automatic.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

- If you have conquered (no enemy troops in the buildings and you were the last to occupy them) all three groups of buildings by the end of Turn 12 (1800hrs), you have achieved a total victory.
- If you have conquered two of the three groups of buildings by the end of Turn 12, you have achieved a partial victory.
- If your regiment obliterates every US vehicle or gun in the area, you will recommend Werner for oak leaves to add to his Knight's Cross.