

30TH INFANTRY DIVISION
THE BATTLE OF THE INDE



AAR from
Generalmajor Denkert
3. Panzer-Grenadier-Regiment

Willi Weiss / November 2011

Introduction

When the American offensive started on 16 November 1944, the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division was situated in the area of Wuerselen north-east of Aachen ready for defense. During the operation the division withdrew in an eastern direction on 27 November, and it occupied the main points of its defense at Altdorf, Inden, and Lamersdorf. It was important to prevent - or at least to delay - the enemy advance against the Roer and Rhine rivers.

The Terrain

The mentioned places (Inden, Lamersdorf, Altdorf) are situated in the valley of the Inde River. East of the river the terrain is elevated towards the west and can be utilized for observation of the villages of Lohn, Pattern, and Puetzlohn. In the southern part of the division sector the eastern bank of the river was higher than the western bank. The area of Lucherberg offered good observation possibilities for the Artillery and later on for heavy infantry weapons.

Tactical Situation of the German Forces

The defending forces had occupied a position of strong points on the hills west of Altdorf, Inden, and Lamersdorf. The various combat groups had good fighting power and had well organized communication with heavy weapons. They supported each other with flanking fire. In these positions they were able to repulse, during two days, all the enemy attacks. The heavy loom during the preceding combat did not permit the occupation of the entire front line, but only a strong point system. Therefore, the German forces could resist enemy artillery and air force activity, but it was difficult to prevent enemy infiltrations during the night time or breakthroughs after having captured one or several strong points. The strength of the defending forces did not allow the formation of reserves which should have been committed for counterattacks.

Therefore, the combat for the villages had to be carried out by those troops which were withdrawing from the strong points.

Combat on 27 and 28 November 1944.

With the exception of enemy artillery and air activity, the days from 24 to 26 November passed without fighting.



On 27 November the enemy continued his attacks against the bridgehead; approximately on battalion supported by tanks which attacked from Pattern in an eastern direction, and from Frenz against Lamersdorf. The main resistance line could be held after heavy fighting.

On 28 November the enemy started new attacks from the direction of Pattern and Lohn. Under cover of darkness, he succeeded in infiltrating between the German strong points, the distance between one another was too great. Some of these strong points were captured by the enemy who attacked from all directions, at 0700 Altdorf was seized by the enemy. At about the same time the enemy penetrated into the northern part of Inden, which was defended by elements of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment supported by Combat Group Nohse which was forced from elements of the Assault Battalion of the Fifth Panzer Army. A counterattack was made immediately but was unable to advance because of the stubborn defense of the enemy.

At Lamersdorf the enemy attacked three times. All attacks were repulsed. But during the darkness the enemy penetrated in the southern part of the village. A counterattack which was carried out by two officer- a few men with some assault guns was successful, and the entire area was occupied by the German forces.

Estimate of the Situation

The preceding battles of the division in the area of Inden and west of it delayed the enemy advance considerably. Each day of successful defense of the bridgehead was increasing advantage of the German forces. But if we want to continue the successful defense and to hold the undestroyed bridge, Inden should have been cleaned out. It was surprising that the main bridge of Inden, which was passable for all types of vehicles, had not been destroyed by the enemy air force or artillery. In consideration of this possibility the division had prepared bridge equipment in order to be able to cross the river, even if all the other bridges were destroyed. Of course all superfluous vehicles were withdrawn, but with regard to the battles on the west bank it could not be renounced that the combat vehicles, and the crossing possibility for these vehicles had to be secured.

Therefore, the division ordered during the night a planned counter-attack against the northern part of Inden for the following morning (29 November), simultaneously to the west and south of the village were to be defended.

Combat on 29 November 1944



The counterattack was carried out by the 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, supported by Combat Group Nohse. They advanced only slowly. It was the usual hard battle for a town where the enemy defended every house. In spite of the advance of the attack we did not succeed in recapturing the entire terrain, at the northern border of the town we had close contact with the enemy. We captured 84 men and the enemy had heavy losses. Therefore, the enemy pressure against Inden from the north ceased, which was actually a success.

At daybreak one enemy battalion supported by 10 tanks made a renewed attack against Lamersdorf from the direction of Frenz. After

heavy battles the enemy penetrated into the southern part of the village. The area of the breakthrough was blocked. The successful defense against the tanks and the artillery fire directed from the hills at Lucherberg made it possible to hold the village against enemy forces which were superior in personnel and materiel. In the early afternoon reinforced enemy forces attacked again from the northwest, west and southwest, and 24 tanks were counted. Five enemy tanks were knocked out by assault- and anti-tank guns and one tank by the infantry. When all our anti-tank weapons were destroyed - parts of them by technical defect and parts by the enemy - the occupying forces were no longer able to defend the village. The troops withdrew to the east bank of the river and the bridge was blown up. In the evening Lamersdorf was occupied by the enemy.

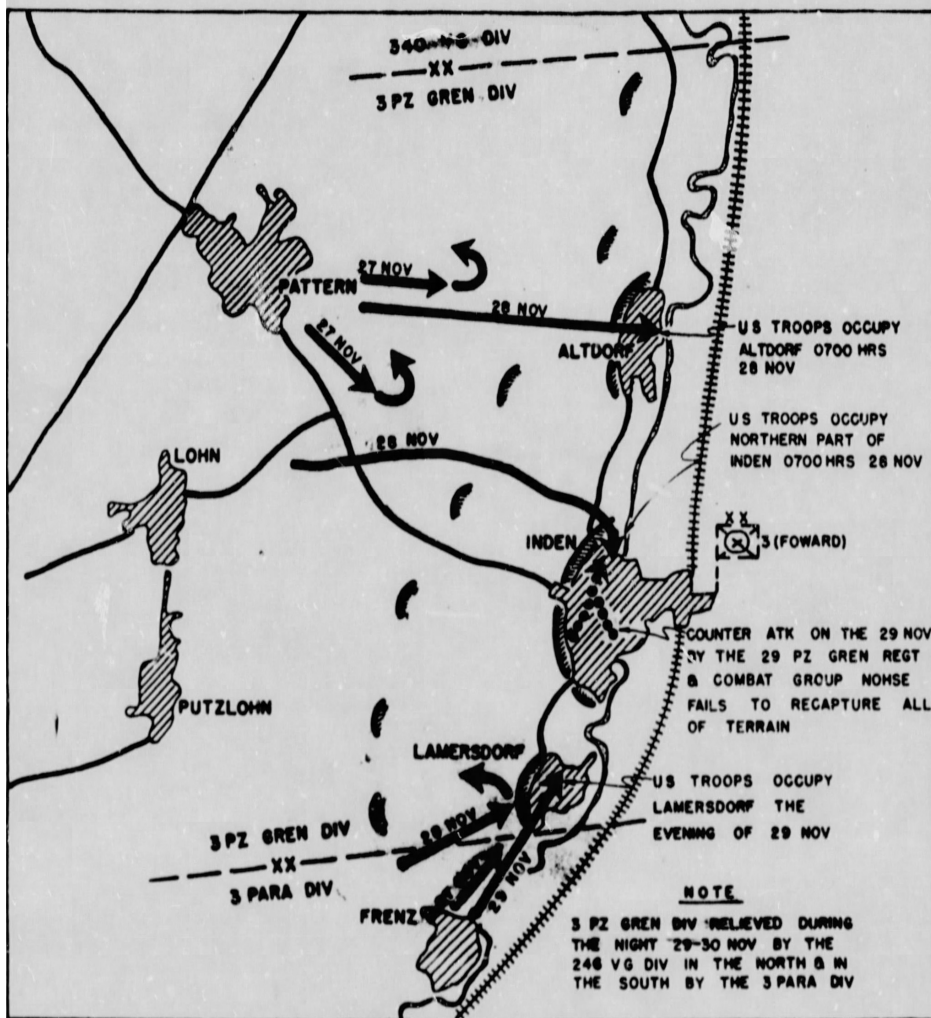
Conclusion

During the night 29-30 November the division was relieved - as far as I remember in the sector of Indcn and north by the 246th Volks Grenadier Division and in the southern sector by the 3rd Parachute Division.

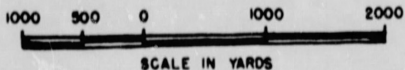
This was the end of the commitment of the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division in the Inde sector.

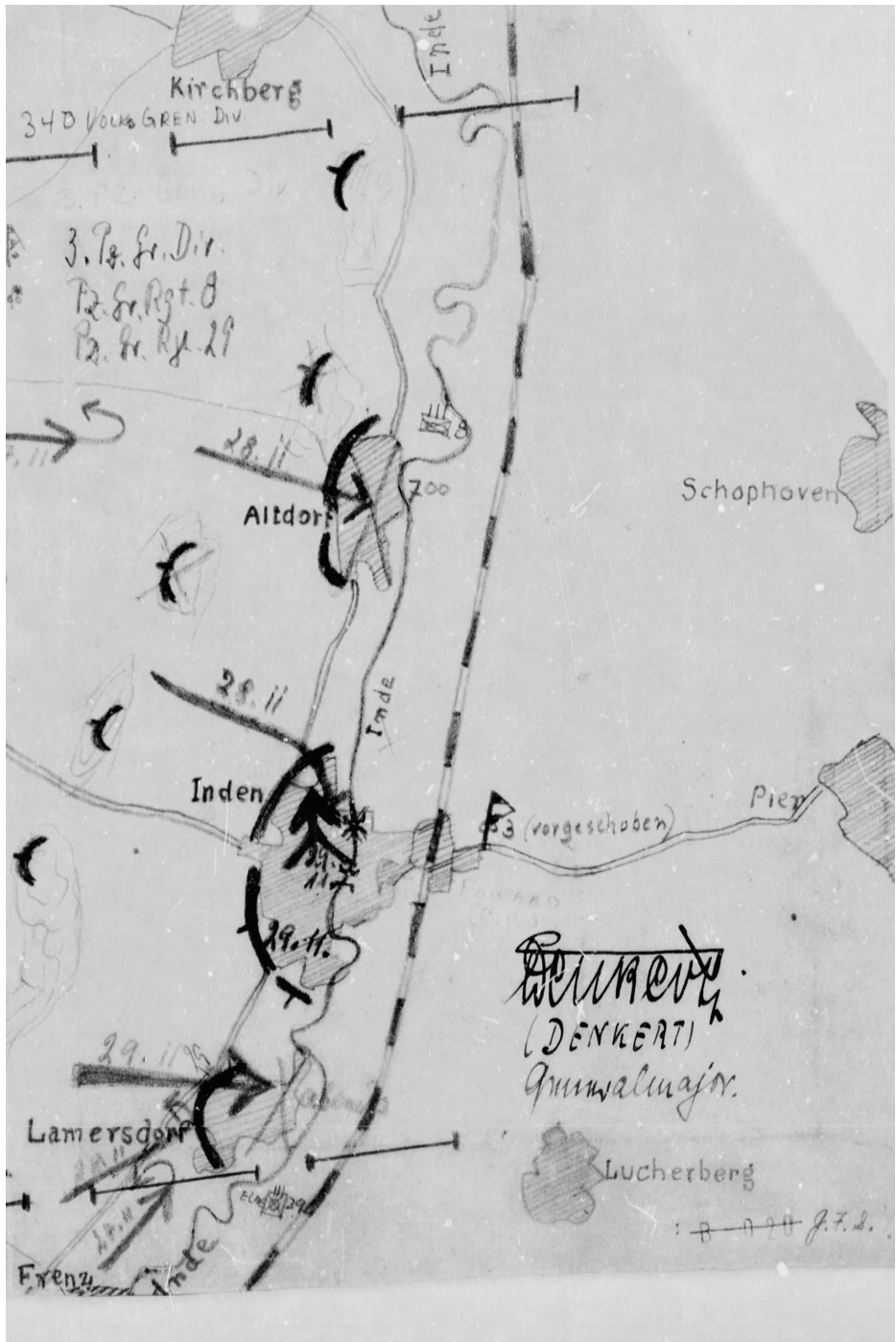
The division had heavy losses because of the hard defensive battles since 16 November. But its resistance had delayed the enemy thrust towards the Roer, which had a certain influence on the general situation.

signed, Denkert - Generalmajor



**3 PANZER GRENADIER DIV
INDEN BRIDGEHEAD
27-29 NOV 44**





Kirchberg

340 Volksgren. Div.

3. Pz. Gren. Div.
3. Pz. Gr. Div.
Pz. Gr. Rgt. 8
Pz. Gr. Rgt. 29

Altdorf

700

Schophoven

Inden

B3 (vorgeschoben)

Pier

Lamersdorf

Lucherberg

Denkert
(DENKERT)
Quartiermeister

1:100000 J.F. 2.