

Back at the Battalion CP I learned that the Regimental Liaison Officer had just left, having delivered orders to assault Bouvron and to destroy the church tower just as the Colonel and I had worked out the plan. In essence, we proposed to send out a large patrol composed of two rifle platoons plus a demolition team. The team would push rapidly into the village, about five miles distant from our outposts. The rifle platoons would capture and hold the village while the demolition experts emplaced the TNT and destroyed the tower. At that point, the patrol would return to the shelter of our lines prudently and without waiting on ceremony. Simcox's heavy mortars (the Colonel was not aware that we would put twelve tubes instead of the six issue ones into action) plus the customary artillery support should enable the patrol to slice through the enemy's light defenses if it moved fast; so the over- riding need would be to push through or around any German defense.

Two platoons from the reserve company, K, were nominated for the operation, McCoy's and Daly's with the latter in overall command inasmuch as he was the most aggressive of all the nine rifle platoon commanders in the Battalion. Here, it is fit to mention that both these officers were KIA before

the war ended.

The staff worked out the details and the orders were issued to the commanders involved in the attack by 2000. It all looked most promising:\ enough men under an outstanding and energetic commander with generous fire support. We not only had plenty of extra ammo but also the six extra tubes for the heavy mortar support.

The movement got off to an excellent progress at first with little resistance to overcome. And Colonel McClune arrived at the temporary observation post we had established for the attack when things were at their best. To all appearances the Battalion had a successful operation well in hand. Another hour at the rate Daly was going would see the tower blown down. But just as happened

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in "The Aeneid", "*Diis aliter visum*". Minutes after the Colonel arrived enemy rifle and machine gun fire increased in volume and accurate artillery fire began to slow down the advance. Then all in the OP heard plainly trucks (loaded with Jerries) pull into Bouvron. Shortly thereafter Daly's progress stopped entirely, and he reported that he was

unable to push forward or to maneuver around the stiffening resistance as he had been doing.

Accordingly, I recommended to Colonel McClune that the attack be called off and the patrol be brought back into our lines.

Fortunately, Colonel McClune had been present during most of the attack and knew what Daly was facing. About noon he agreed. I had our mortars cover the front with white phosphorus shells for the smoke protection with rounds of high explosive interspersed to keep Fritz from getting ideas of close pursuit. Under this cover the platoons returned with no difficulty. We lost one man killed and two wounded; the Germans lost eight men whom we captured and an unknown number KIA and wounded.

From the accounts of the participants, it was evident that Daly had performed excellently; his maneuvering and clever use of fire and cover could not be faulted. Furthermore, to keep the men moving, he exposed himself recklessly. His actions merited a Distinguished Service Cross, the Nation's second highest award for valor, and I put him in for one which was later approved and awarded³