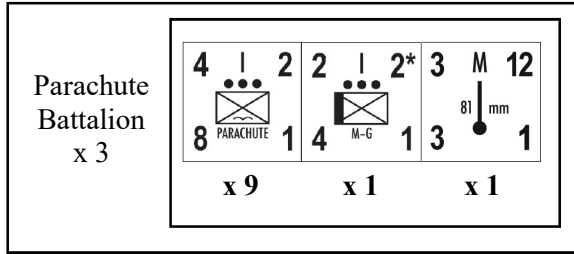




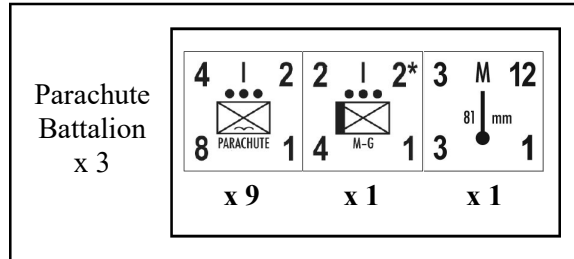
US 101st Airborne Division

September, 1944

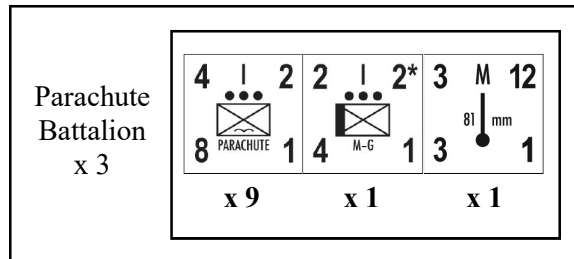
501st Parachute Regiment



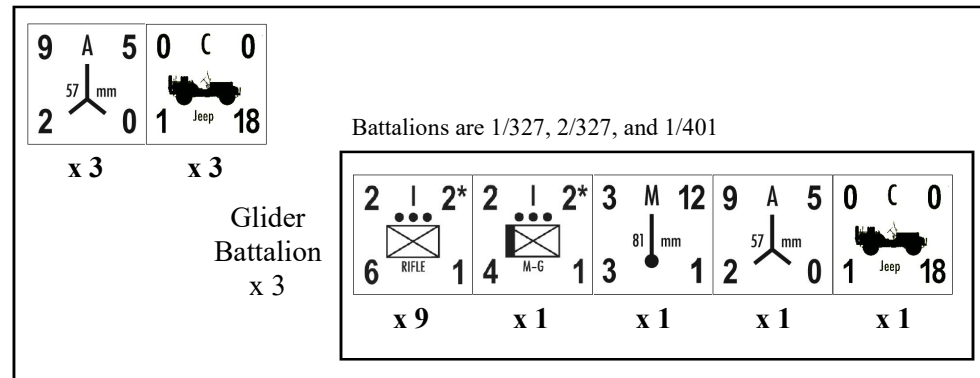
502nd Parachute Regiment



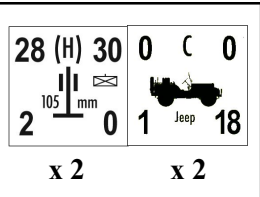
506th Parachute Regiment



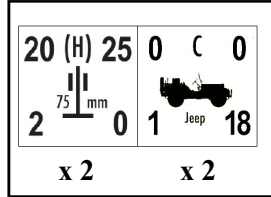
327th Glider Infantry Regiment



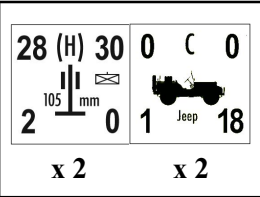
321st Glider Field Artillery Battalion



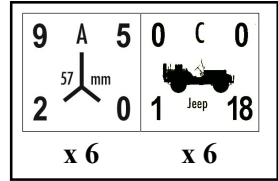
377th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion



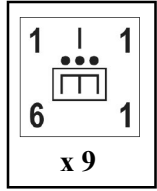
907th Glider Field Artillery Battalion



81st Airborne AA Battalion



326th Airborne Engineer Battalion



Battalion contained AA and AT batteries. AA batteries left behind on this operation.

By Greg Moore
gregpanzerblitz.com
April, 2024

The Screaming Eagles were given the job of capturing several key bridges near the beginning of the XXX Corps route to the Rhine. Three parachute regiments were dropped on the first day to accomplish this, with the artillery and the glider regiment scheduled to come later.

The 501st Regiment was dropped 10 miles north of Eindhoven and successfully captured the important bridges near Veghel over the Willems-Vaart Canal and the Aa River within a few hours.

The 502nd Regiment was tasked with defending the primary drop zone and providing the link between the other 2 regiments until the 327th Glider Regiment arrived to take over. A battalion was sent north to capture the bridge over the Dommel river at St. Oedenrode, which it successfully accomplished by nightfall. Another battalion was sent west to capture the road and rail bridges near Best, but failed, after running into elements of the depleted but still dangerous German 59th Grenadier Division. Best would not fall under permanent Allied control until it was secured by the British 15th Division on Day 10.

The 506th Regiment landed 6 miles north of Eindhoven and a battalion marched southeast to the bridge over the Wilhelmina Canal at Son, only to see it blown up by German forces as they approached it. Though engineers were able to build a temporary footbridge that allowed the battalion to cross, the effort to capture Eindhoven by the end of the day was halted at nightfall a mile or so away. On day 2, the 506th advanced to Eindhoven and defeated the lone German company defending the city. The Guards Armoured Division arrived a few hours later from the south to officially complete the link up with the 101st.

Due to bad weather, only some of the 327th Glider Regiment arrived on Day 2 with only 2 of its battalions, and with only a small part of the division artillery with it. The rest of the regiment, along with all the missing artillery did not arrive until Day 7, when the weather finally cleared.

The 101st Airborne spent the rest of the operation trying to hold open the route from Eindhoven to Veghel against multiple major German attacks from the east and the west, including 2 attempts by the powerful 107th Panzer Brigade to destroy the bridge at Son. This stretch of road became known as Hell's Highway and was only successfully held part of the time, despite help from the Brits.