they could. A patrol had gone northeast to find another passage around the far side of the swampy ground. They had met heavy opposition and returned to report that route blocked for any movement in that direction.[16] The night was cold, particularly for those soldiers who had waded through the swamp. Thus ended D-Day for the 2nd Battalion of the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment.

Summary

When the first day of combat ended for the 501st, Colonel Johnson's regiment, it was well dug in around the locks in perimeter defense, but the highway bridges and railroad bridge stood unscathed, still in use by the enemy.

The battalions were scattered over the countryside. It would take many days to get the survivors back to their units. By D plus 2, less than half of the 2,300-man force was able to assemble.

For 1st Battalion, the situation was critical. The battalion had to be reorganized. Its command personnel were gone. Lieutenant Colonel Carrol and two of his staff members, Lieutenant John W. Atkinson, S-1, and Captain Thomas Chastant, S-3, were ambushed shortly after getting together near a crossroad and all three lost their lives. S-2 officer Captain Charles Seale, and S-4 leader Lieutenant Newt Holt, worked their respective ways back to the battalion a week or so later. Major Phillip Gage, Jr., the executive officer, had been badly wounded while attacking a machine-gun nest and was captured. Captain Simmons, Headquarters Company commander, and the two medical officers, Captain Robert Blatherwick and Lieutenant Tom Johnson, had been captured. The three line company commanders were missing from their units on D-Day—Captain William Paty of Able Company was badly wounded and captured; Baker Company commander, Captain Loyal Bogart, was far south of his drop zone and lost his life at Graignes; Captain Robert H. Phillips of Charley Company was to return a week later with the 17 survivors of his misdropped group.

In the interim, the skeleton battalion was commanded by Lieutenant Harry Howard of the 81mm mortar platoon. On

D-DAY
with the
SCREAMING
EAGLES

George E. Koskimaki