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Auth: CG 35th Inf Div

Initials *R.L.C.*

Date *18 Mar 1945*

HEADQUARTERS 134TH INFANTRY
APO 35 US ARMY

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: Report After Action Against Enemy.

TO : The Adjutant General
Washington 25, D.C.
(Thru Channels)

See you later

1. In compliance with the provisions of Par 10 G3, AR 345-105, submitted below is report after action against the enemy for the 134th Infantry covering the period 1-28 February 1945:

1 February 1945

At 0800, the advance elements of Combat Team 134 crossed the IF at BOXHORN, LUXEMBOURG, enroute to rejoin the 35th Division in the vicinity of GRAVENVOEREN, BELGIUM. The assignment of that organization to XVI Corps of the Ninth Army was involved in the change. Upon arrival at the new area, the Combat Team ceases and attachments reverted to parent unit control. The motor march was made under cloudy skies and cool weather through BASTOGNE, MARCHE and LIEGE.

2 February 1945

The troops were engaged in rest, rehabilitation and orientation, with full use being made of all recreational facilities.

3 February 1945

The recreational and orientation program was continued.

4 February 1945

Orders were received and reconnaissance was made to relieve the 155th British Brigade near BOCKET, GERMANY. The training film on non-fraternization in Germany was shown and discussed by commanders with all troops.

5 February 1945

Final reconnaissance and preparations were made to relieve the British unit and the movement order was issued to unit commanders at 1600. Road conditions required a detailed route reconnaissance, as the combination of wet weather and heavy vehicles, along with some cratering, had created one of the poorest road-nets that the unit had encountered to date. A USO Camp Show, two Red Cross Clubmobiles, and several motion picture shows were made available to all units.

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R. L. C.
Adjutant General
134th Infantry
20 July 1945

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6 February 1945

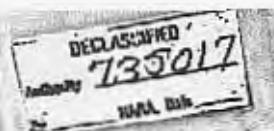
The movement from GRAVENVOEREN, BELGIUM, to the vicinity of BOCKET, GERMANY, began at 0700. Upon arrival in the new area the regiment constituted division reserve and were billeted as follows: 1st Battalion, WALDFEUCHT, GERMANY; 2d Battalion, and Headquarters Company, BOCKET, GERMANY; 3d Battalion, BREBEREN, GERMANY; Anti-Tank and Cannon Companies, KONINGSBOSCH, HOLLAND; Service Company, SAEFFELEN, GERMANY. All movement in the area was greatly hampered by the extremely poor condition of the roads and the deep mud due to the recent thaw. Late in the evening the order was received to prepare to move to the south and relieve the 1st Battalion, 406th Infantry and elements of the 35th Division Reconnaissance Troop with one battalion. A training cadre of two officers and eleven enlisted men was sent to the reinforcement depot at TONGRES, HOLLAND, to indoctrinate and train reinforcements for a period of two weeks.

7 February 1945

An 0800 meeting was held at the Division Command Post and was attended by regimental and battalion command groups, plus the Regimental Executive Officer. The latter returned to the Regimental Command Post after the order was issued and prepared the regiment for movement. The command parties instituted reconnaissance to relieve elements of the 102d Infantry Division and the 35th Division Reconnaissance Troop in the vicinity of RANDEATH, GERMANY. Later in the afternoon the 3d Battalion moved by motor to assembly at RANDEATH, and the 1st Battalion then passed through to take up positions at HORST and HIMMERICH, relieving the units mentioned above. The 84th Infantry Division, operating under secrecy orders and known as "Control Peter", were on the right. This regiment was on the right flank of the XVI Corps, and the boundary between the XVI and XIII Corps coincided with the regimental boundary between the 333d and 134th Infantry Regiments. Our movement into the area was made under strict secrecy orders and included the removal of unit designations from vehicles, divisional insignia from uniforms and news release blackout. Signal deception was attempted by maintenance of the radio nets of the 406th Infantry, including the continued transmission by their operators. Artillery measures included the continued firing by the British 692d Field Artillery Battalion (25-pounders), and the strict adherence to only the missions fired in the immediate past. For this move the Executive Officer and the entire S-3 section constituted an advance command group and staff, directing the relief and assuming in the commander's name the responsibility for the sector at 2130 hours. (This arrangement was dictated by the necessity for the Regimental Commander's presence elsewhere for a portion of the time. The use of the entire S-3 section is questioned, in that this threw an additional load on the other staff sections that, had any unlooked-for situation arisen, might have been excessive. How-

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even, with a well coordinated staff, occasionally practices such as this may be indulged in.)

8 February 1945

The 2d Battalion closed in at NIRM, with the CANNON and ANTI-TANK Companies in the same vicinity. The regimental trains were in GEILENKIRCHEN. The 1st Battalion actively patrolled in the vicinity of the WURM RIVER, with special attention to the enemy strong point at HILFARTH, on the west bank of the ROER RIVER. At a command meeting at the division command post the order and plan was issued for Operation 'GRENADE', the plan of 12th Army Group for the crossing of the ROER RIVER. Regimental participation in this plan included the seizure of the west bank of the river and the clearing of all enemy in our zone. The regimental order was issued and reconnaissance was initiated by all concerned. D-day was to be 10 February 1945, with H-hour to be announced.

9 February 1945

Reconnaissance was continued for Operation 'GRENADE', with extensive use being made of artillery liaison planes. Reconnaissance of this type has many times proved of extreme value and is highly thought of by all commanders of this unit. The 202d Engineer (Combat) Battalion was assigned in direct support of the regiment for the operation, with the mission of all engineer work west of the river, the assault crossing, and bridging of the ROER. The combat team engineers were to be reserved for any work east of the river after crossing. During the day the WURM RIVER and tributary creeks, between our positions and the ROER RIVER, rose to such an extent that the operation was threatened. The rise was due to the release of water at the dams on the upper ROER and was sufficient that by late in the day word was received that D-day was postponed for twenty-four hours. The regiment received a letter of commendation from the Commanding General, 6th Armored Division, for service with that organization during the period 18-31 January 1945.

10 February 1945

While reconnaissance continued, so did the rise of the waters, with the result that Operation 'GRENADE' was postponed for another twenty-four hours.

11 February 1945

With the flood only two-hundred yards from the forward positions, the Army Commander personally announced to the assembled commanders at the division command post the indefinite postponement of the operation. During the day the regimental command post

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and vicinity received several rounds of a new type enemy shell. Estimated by the artillery officers as comparable to the 280mm in size, this shell had a dual action, in that fragmentation was obtained by either air-burst or super-sensitive point detonation, with a secondary explosion similar to delay-action fuze. A letter of commendation, originated by the Commanding General, Third United States Army and bearing the indorsement of the Commanding General, 35th Infantry Division, received 10 February 1945 was passed on to the officers and men of the regiment by the Regimental Commander.

12 February 1945

The 1st Battalion continued to hold defensive positions and all units engaged in a training program in the available area. The division program outlined training to include assault of fortified areas, assault river crossings, and tank-infantry actions.

13 February 1945

The 1st Battalion continued to hold defensive positions, with one company in HIMMERICH and one company in HORST. All units continued to conduct training.

14 February 1945

Continued to hold defensive position and to conduct small unit training. The Regimental Commander received and passed on to the officers and men of the organization the commendation of the Army Commander for participation in the relief of BASTOGNE.

15 February 1945

There was no change in the tactical situation.

16 February 1945

No change in the tactical situation; all units continued training.

17 February 1945

The most severe artillery barrage received since the days of St. Lo fell on the towns of RANDEKATH, NURM and GEILENKIRCHEN, an estimated three hundred rounds falling on RANDEKATH in less than thirty minutes. Training continued, including practical work on the MAAS RIVER in assault river crossings. The infantry and engineer units that are to work together on the actual crossing were trained together. In an eight to ten mile per hour flood-swollen current the infantry was made well aware of the amount of work involved in handling an assault boat.

18 February 1945

Under cover of darkness the 3d Battalion relieved the 1st

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Battalion on the forward positions, the relief being completed by 2120. Other units continued training. The ANTI-TANK Company initiated an intense training program for rocket-launcher (bazooka) teams. The gun squads were formed into teams of seven men each; two launchers, two loaders, two ammunition bearers, and a section leader. The remaining three men in the gun squad were left with the prime-mover and the 57mm gun and included the driver, the gunner and one man. The purpose of these teams was to give some anti-tank protection to the attacking echelons when the guns could not be brought into position and to give more fire-power to city fighting. In the attack of HILFARTH, their first test, the teams performed in a commendable manner and the Battalion Commander was well-satisfied with the organization. They had been given extensive firing practice, over twelve hundred rounds being fired by the company in three days training. Results were marked; ~~the first day~~ ^{PM} ~~few men could hit the side of a wall at fifty yards, but~~ by the end of the third day almost all of the men were putting round after round through a window at ranges up to two-hundred yards. It was also found that the weapon was very effective against personnel at a range of approximately five hundred yards, dropping white phosphorus into small areas, (the particular target was a straw stack, which was reduced to ashes by the end of the practice). As for the employment of the unit, the usual attachment of a platoon to an attacking battalion was conformed to. The platoon leader was still the anti-tank advisor to the commander and scouted for possible gun positions. When possible the guns were brought forward to consolidate the position. This entire experiment was determined upon after the present towed 57mm had proven itself far from the answer to the infantry regiment's need in anti-tank protection. It is felt that a still better answer would be a self-propelled gun of high velocity and low silhouette, tracked to provide access to any position regardless of terrain condition.

19 February 1945

No change in the tactical situation; all units continued training.

20 February 1945

No change in the tactical dispositions, though the plan and order for the resumption of Operation 'GRENADE' were received, and preparation and reconnaissance intensified.

21 February 1945

The 1st Battalion relieved the 3d Battalion and was once again in position to initiate the attack to the ROER RIVER. Strong combat patrols were pushed to the river in the north of the regimental sector and to the town of HILFARTH. The north patrol, from "B" Company, secured the farm at K923729 and were reinforced with a section of heavy machine guns and sufficient infantry to constitute a full platoon. The south patrol, from "A" Company, drew heavy small arms and

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artillery fire and were forced to withdraw under cover of counter-artillery fire. The 1153d Engineer Group started construction of a treadway bridge over a flooded creek just in front of the positions and completed approximately 30% during the night.

22 February 1945

Under a change in orders, which gave the regiment a "delayed-buck" attack, the units continued to hold the present defensive position and to patrol actively in the direction of the river and the town. The treadway bridge to the immediate front was completed during darkness.

23 February 1945

All units continued plans and preparations for the attack of HILFARTH and the crossing of the ROER RIVER.

24 February 1945

No operational changes. The Regimental Commander was ordered to the 104th Infantry Division as Assistant Division Commander, but before reaching his new assignment was recalled to the 35th Division in the same capacity. The Regimental Executive Officer assumed command of the 134th Infantry Regiment.

25 February 1945

The 1st Battalion attacked HILFARTH at 2000 hours with "B" Company launching an attack from the farm in the vicinity of K923729 and "A" Company attacking from the south of the town. "A" Company secured the first row of houses in the vicinity of RJ K935719 in the face of heavy enemy automatic weapons and small arms fire. "B" Company encountered an enemy mine field in the vicinity of K928728, suffering heavy casualties from the mines and from the mortar and machine gun fire drawn on the troops when the anti-personnel mines were detonated. "C" Company was committed on the left of "A" and both continued the attack against the town, while "B" reorganized and seized the buildings in the vicinity of K932724. "C" Company pushed rapidly through the town and seized the stone-arch bridge over the ROER. Demolitions were stripped from the bridge and thus a crossing of the river was taken practically intact. The only damage was that caused by our own interdiction artillery and was rapidly repaired by engineers. When seized the bridge was passable to foot troops and by 1700 the tanks and tank-destroyers attached to the 3d Battalion were east of the ROER, with those of the 2d Battalion crossing by 2000 hours. Meanwhile Companies "A" and "B" cleared HILFARTH of remaining enemy positions. The 3d Battalion, with approximately one platoon of "L" Company crossing the ROER RIVER in assault boats at K934724, covered the construction of a foot bridge at that location. The remainder of "L" and all of "K" Companies crossed on the foot bridge and moved northeast to secure the buildings and bridgehead vicinity of K939728. Heavy automatic weapons fire was received from the area known to be in the immediate

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vicinity of HUCHELHOVEN, but somewhat neutralized with artillery fire. After a short delay, "K" and "L" continued the advance to secure the points mentioned above. Companies "E" and "F" followed the leading companies across the bridge and swung generally northwest and overcame emplaced automatic weapons near K932733. "E" captured three pillboxes along the east bank of the river, taking twelve POW. A reinforced platoon of "E" was pushed forward along the edge of the river to K928736, while the 3d Battalion companies pushing north secured the building in the area centering around K943737. "F" pushed northeast to the railroad tracks, while the 1st Battalion cleared HILFARTH and reorganized constituting the regimental reserve battalion. Construction was initiated on two Class 40 floating treadway bridges and one class 6 infantry support bridge, completed two infantry foot bridges and continued repairs to the stone-arch bridge over the ROER RIVER at HILFARTH. The overall advance for the operation was over three kilometers.

26 February 1945

The action initiated during the night of 25-26 February continued throughout the 26th and is narrated under the one date for continuity.

27 February 1945

The 1st Battalion continued reorganization at HILFARTH as regimental reserve, moving to positions more closely behind the attacking battalions by 1605 hours. The 2d Battalion continued the attack to the northwest in zone from DOVERACK, seizing and clearing of enemy successively MILLICH, RATHEIM, KRICKELBERG, VOGELSAND, GARSBECK, LUCHTENBERG, ORSBECK and PLETSCH, M. Several pillboxes were encountered on the east bank of the ROER RIVER and numerous POW were taken. Casualties were extremely light. The 3d Battalion attacked northwest in zone from HUCKELHOVEN, seizing and clearing of the enemy successively from SIEDLUNG, SCHAUFENBERG, BUSCH GENDORF, WASSENBERG. After reaching SCHAUFENBERG, Company "I" was mounted on the tanks of Company "A", 784th Tank Battalion, and spearheaded the battalion advance to WASSENBERG. At the end of the period the commander was planning combat patrols of approximately platoon strength into BIRGELEN.

28 February 1945

1st Battalion continued to constitute regimental reserve. The 2d Battalion advanced generally north, capturing and clearing of enemy CHEWYLACK, EULENBUSCH, KRAFELD, OPHOVEN, STEINKIRCHEN, and EFFELD, and pushed patrols to the northeast of that position. The battalion was supported by a platoon of medium tanks, but were prevented by road conditions from employing them. The 3d Battalion advanced generally northwest, seizing and clearing of enemy BIRGELEN, ELSUM, ROSENTHAL, the OPHOVEN and EFFELDER WOODS and seizing the crossroads at K868838 and southwest of that point. Light enemy opposition was encountered in BIRGELEN with one pillbox, an enemy mine field and anti-tank ditches being encountered in that vicinity.

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The advance of the battalion was spearheaded by "I" Company mounted on the tanks of Company "A", 784th Tank Battalion..

2. The Battle casualties for the month of February are as follows:

	OFF	EM
KIA.....	1	0
DOW.....	0	1
SWA.....	2	23
SIA.....	0	0
LWA.....	1	52
LIA.....	0	10
MIA.....	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
Total.....	5	89

Awards received by members of the 134th Infantry Regiment are as follows:

DSC	Silver Star	Soldier's Medal	Bronze Star	Air Medal
Reg O/c	Reg O/c	Reg O/c	Reg O/c	Reg O/c
Officers	5		5	
Enlisted Men	3		49	2

The number of Purple Heart Medals awarded is: 90.
 (This number arrived at by total of all battle casualties minus MIA. No accurate accounting of medals awarded to members of the command can be made and yet comply with the due-date of this report as too many headquarters are authorized to make the award. The only other accurate count would be the actual number of medals issued by the Regimental Surgeon.)

322 Prisoners of War were evacuated during the period.

Alford C. Boatsman
 ALFORD C. BOATSMAN
 Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry
 Commanding

- 3 Incls
- Incl 1 - Unit Journal
- Incl 2 - S-2 Periodic Reports
- Incl 3 - S-3 Situation Reports
- Incl 4 - Citations

(All Incls with original only)