

SECRET

Auth: CG 35th Inf Div

Initials *R. J. C.*

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS 127TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION Date *12 June 1945*
APO #35 US ARMY

CLASSIFICATION

SUBJECT: Report After Action Against Enemy

CANCELLEDTO : The Adjutant General, U S Army, Washington ²⁵ *Adjutant General*

1. In compliance with the provisions of Par 10-23, AFM 7-21.1, submitted below is report after action against the enemy for the 127th Field Artillery Battalion covering the period 1-31 May 1945.

May 1-3, 1945

127th Field Artillery Battalion remained under control of XIII Corps Artillery in positions near the Elbe river at Cobbel, Germany until 0820 3 May 1945 at which time it was withdrawn to take up occupation and governing duties in the Hannover area.

May 4-7, 1945

This battalion arrived in Gifhorn, Germany on May 3rd at approximately 1300 hours.

A military government had been established by a command of the 5th armored Division. This battalion relieved the 5th armored at 0900 hours on May 4th.

The following towns and villages are included in the area in which military government has been established: Gifhorn, Pollhofen, Spechtshorn, Bunkenburg, Varnsen, Hohnhorst, Metzingen, Grebshorn, Zahrenholz and Wilsche.

All Burgermeisters in all towns had previously been screened by the C.I.C. and found satisfactory. All confessed having once been members of the Nazi party as well as having no faith in its doctrines. Most of the Burgermeisters held office prior to the Nazi rise to power.

When this battalion took over the military government in Gifhorn Mr Wilhelm Thomas was occupying the office of Chief of Police. Questioning and others sources of information revealed he is honest and a man who can be trusted. He has been a good deal of trouble with the Nazi party and has been among those who were persecuted. This information was secured through a Jewish interpreter who has managed to survive the Nazi regime. Mr. Thomas has cooperated with the military authorities in a very satisfactory manner and it is recommended that he be retained in office.

The present Burgermeister of Gifhorn is Mr. Kratz. It is recommended that he be retained in office. There is nothing in his history to indicate he has been in sympathy with the Nazi party.

On May 6th 1945 authority was granted for 130 persons to return to their homes in Hannover. They were refugees who left Hannover when American bombings endangered their lives. The transportation was furnished by the Germans but an American armed guard accompanied the convoy.

On May 6th 1945 authority was granted for 20 displaced persons to return to their homes in Celle. The convoy was accompanied by an armed guard.

On May 5th 1945 the Bank of Gifhorn was ordered to submit a financial statement to this headquarters. This statement will not be ready until May 8th 1945. It will be necessary to open this bank as soon as possible. All government funds should be frozen except those funds necessary for the operation of the local government. All funds which are believed to belong to the Nazi party should be frozen.

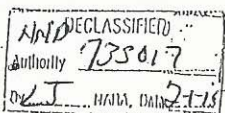
- 1 -

SECRET #9

6142 master

335-FH(127)0.3

May 45



SECRET

Ltr Hq 127 FA Bn, Subj: Report After Action Against Enemy dated 1 June 1945
contd--(May 4-7, 1945)

In this battalion area much trouble has been caused by displaced Poles and Russians. The farmers complain that they are looting their homes and killing the pigs and cattle. Additional patrols have been added in all effort to stop this destruction of meat which is already short in this district.

An effort should be made as soon as possible to get all displaced Poles, Russians and French back to their homes.

The German population in this area have been found docile and cooperative and seem glad the Nazi party is no longer in power.

There is yet no acute shortage of food in this area. All schools in this district have been closed.

Churches have been granted authority to hold services. There is a sizable newspaper in Gifhorn but is thought to be unwise to grant permission for it to resume publication at this time. This paper formerly had a wide circulation in this district. It is believed that this paper should be published as soon as authority can be secured from higher headquarters. The German people have no source of news except the radio.

Permission was granted on May 5th 1945 for the children in this area to play games of recreation on the school playgrounds.

On May 5th 1945 authority was granted to the Gifhorner Presstorfigesellschaft, Neudorf-Platendorf, to reopen their factory. This factory produces peat and employs approximately 500 men.

On May 5th 1945 the firm W. Limberg & Co., Gifhorn, was authorized to resume operations of its business which is the manufacture of glass.

On May 5th 1945 the oil-lease Deutsche Erdolgesellschaft, Produktionsstätte Westerholz, was authorized to resume operation in the production of oil.

On May 5th 1945 the Triangel in Triangel was authorized to resume operation in the production of building materials.

On May 5th 1945 the Generatorkraft A.G., Produktionsstätte Neudorf-Platendorf, was authorized to resume operation in the production of wood gas.

On May 5th 1945 the Gifhorner Konservenfabrik in Gifhorn was authorized to resume its business which is producing canned goods.

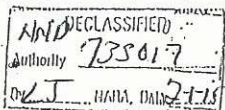
On May 5th 1945 the firm Karges Hammer in Gifhorn was granted authority to resume operation. This firm produces tools for the canning factory.

It is believed that the operation of these factories will provide employment for approximately 3000 men.

May 6-31, 1945

On May 7-8, the battalion was relieved in the Gifhorn area by the 40 F.A. Gp. and the 411 F.A. Gp. B, C, and Service batteries completely relieved on May 7 by the 411 F.A. Gp., moved that afternoon to an area around Gronau, Germany. Hq. and A Batteries, relieved on May 7th and 8th area by the 40th F.A. Gp., moved on the afternoon of the 8th to the Gronau area. Bn. Hq, Hq. Battery and Service Battery moved into the town of Gronau. A Battery moved into buildings at a salt mine just west of Diekholzen. B Battery set up in Bad Salzdetfurth, and C Battery moved into Burgstemmen. Battalion completed relief of the elements of the 60th Engineer Battalion and the 320th Infantry in the area assigned by Division, 9 May 1945. This relief included taking over the guard on three military hospitals and a sugar factory in Gronau, and alcohol distillery in Mählerten, a salt mine west of Diekholzen, designated as a SHAEF target, five hospitals in Bad Salzdetfurth and a hospital at Henneckenrode. Patrolling of all roads three times a day was started as soon as area was taken over.

SECRET



SECRET

Ltr Hq 127th FA Bn, Subj: Report After Action Against Enemy dated 1 Jun 1945
contd--(May 8-31, 1945)

The Battalion was assigned the mission of occupying and governing the new area, which extended from Gronau approximately sixteen miles to the East and included the following towns: Gronau, Diekholzen, Sibbesse, Westfeld, Petze, Segeste, Almstedt, Breinum, Henneckenrode, Werder, Nette, Upstedt, Bodenburg, Soder, Hackenstedt, Wesseln, Ostrum, Detfurth, Bad Salzdorf, Wehrstedt, Burgstemmen, Mahlerden, Betheln, Eddinghausen, Barfelde, Ritzum, Mienstedt, Honze, Mollensen, Haus Escharde and Holle. In addition the battalion was responsible for the security of the area, the collection into camps of all displaced persons and liberated allied prisoners of war, and the supervision of the operation of any camps in the battalion area.

The Battalion area was divided into four battery areas, with Hq. Battery responsible for the security of Gronau, and each firing battery responsible for security and government of areas extending generally east from the towns the batteries occupied. Captain Hildreth handled the military government administration of Gronau.

Detailed reports were written on each town in the battalion area following the outline from Division G-5. A financial statement was taken from the bank at Gronau, which was the only bank operating in the area, and all accounts of Nazi leaders and the Nazi Party were closed. All schools were closed and all Nazi literature was destroyed. A count was made of all displaced persons and all liberated Allied PW's., and reports on the number present in the area were turned in daily to Division Artillery. These persons were being fed by Corps Displaced Persons teams, but frequent checks were made to see that they were receiving enough food and that sanitary conditions were satisfactory in the camps.

On May 10, all German military patients in hospital No. 2 in Gronau were moved to the other three hospitals to make a hospital available for Civilians. All hospitals were screened by CIC, and passes were then issued to all doctors and nurses allowing them to circulate around the town.

On May 11, an inventory was started on the contents of the salt mine west of Diekholzen. This inventory took three days, and the mine was found to contain enormous quantities of ammunition and powder.

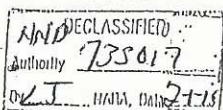
On May 15, permits were issued to various concerns in Gronau to allow them to start operations. These concerns included the American owned Westinghouse plant and the Sugar factory.

On May 16, Heinrich Brunotte was removed from the office of Burgomaster of Gronau because of information of his activity in the Nazi Party obtained by CIC. Herr Aug Allewelt was installed as Burgomaster after being screened by CIC.

Throughout the battalion's stay in the Gronau area, considerable trouble was caused by Russians and Poles who looted farms, killed live stock, and robbed German civilians. Patrols were increased with little improvement, and finally "C" Battery stationed a gun section in the three towns in their area where the most trouble had occurred. All displaced persons and Allied PW's were searched for firearms, knives, and bicycles and the lootings decreased in number.

On May 17, the battalion was relieved from responsibility in the Gronau area by elements of the 84th Division Artillery. All records and reports on the area were turned over to the relieving units. At noon, the Battalion moved to a new area in Kreis Ludinghausen. Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, and Service Battery moved into Selm, "A" Battery into Nordkirchen, "B" Battery into Bork, and "C" Battery into Ascheberg. Battalion relieved elements of the 379th Infantry, 95th Infantry Division in assigned area, which included the following towns: Davensberg, Ascheberg, Nordkirchen, Sudkirchen, Kapelle, Selm, Bork, Nordlunen, Kappenberg, and Wethmar. Guards were placed on eight displaced persons camps, three Allied PW camps, a castle in Nordkirchen designated as a SHAEF target,

SECRET



SECRET

Ltr Hq 127th FA Bn, Subj: Report After Action Against Enemy dated 1 Jun 1945
contd--(May 8-31, 1945)

and an ammunition dump south of Bork. Road patrols were started immediately to cover all roads three times a day.

The mission assigned the battalion was occupation, security, and police of the area, and care, control, and feeding of all displaced persons and Allied PW's in the area. The Military Government of the area was under the control of the permanent Military Government officer at Ludinghausen.

The Battalion area was divided into four battery areas, with Service Battery having no responsibility for any area. Feeding of approximately eight hundred displaced persons and approximately five hundred liberated allied PW's was started immediately after arrival in the area. Burgomasters were assisted in obtaining food for approximately seventeen hundred displaced persons, and water was hauled four times a day to all camps not having their own water supply.

Inspections by battery and battalion officers were made of each camp several times a day, and unsanitary conditions were corrected as far as possible. Several camps were found to be overcrowded, and where possible, readjustments were made.

On May 22, all persons were moved from camp No 52 in Bork to camps No 94 and 95 because camp No 52 was in a very unsatisfactory condition. On the same day, a request was made of the MGO in Ludinghausen for clothing, shoes, blankets, soap, and lime for use by DP's and PW's, but none was obtained. A few shoes and beds were obtained through local burgomasters, but most of the persons in the camps were not properly clothed.

A jail was set up in Selm for detaining offenders awaiting trial, and approximately fifteen persons were held there and then tried in Ludinghausen.

On May 23, an ammunition dump containing several hundred thousand rounds of 88mm and 210mm ammunition was found in the woods at A875413. Road blocks were established around it and a guard placed on it by "B" Battery.

As in all previous areas, considerable looting was done by Russians and Poles. All camps were searched for arms, knives, and bicycles but very few were found. The trouble around Ascheberg was largely eliminated by "C" Battery when foot patrols were sent out at night to patrol around the towns at intervals all night. Several times shots were exchanged with bands of Russians, but no casualties resulted and practically no looting occurred.

There were no battle casualties for month of May 1945.

Awards received by members of 127th FA Bn during May 1945 are as follows:

AWARDS	DSC (OLC)		SILVER STAR (OLC)		SOLDIERS MEDAL (OLC)		BRONZE STAR (OLC)	
	OFF	EM	OFF	EM	OFF	EM	OFF	EM
OFF	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
EM	0	0	0	0	3	0	5	0
AWARDS	AIR MEDAL (OLC)		PURPLE HEART (OLC)					
	OFF	EM	OFF	EM				
OFF	1	5	0	0				
EM	0	0	4	0				

Robert L. Thompson Jr.
ROBERT L. THOMPSON JR.
Lt Col, 127th FA Bn
Commanding

Incls - 1
Unit Journal & Allied papers.

SECRET