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HEADQUARTERS 137TH INFANTRY
APO 35 U S ARMY

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to: CG 35th Inf Div

Initials *R. L. C.*

Date *27 May 1945*
1 May 1945

SUBJECT: Report After Action Against Enemy

TO : The Adjutant General
Washington 25, D.C.

1. In compliance with the provisions of Par 10 C3, AR 345-105, submitted below is report after action against enemy for the 137th Infantry covering the period 1-30 April 1945.

1 April 1945

The 137th Infantry continued its eastward advance between the Autobahn superhighway and the Rhein Herne Canal in the Ruhr Industrial Area on April 1 and toward the end of the day, swung south into a defensive position along the northern bank of the canal.

The regiment had British flame throwing tanks attached April 1 from the 1st and 2nd platoons, B Squad, 1st Fife and Forfan Yeomanry.

The 2nd Bn moved into the left sector of the regiment's defensive zone along the canal. The 3rd Bn swung into the right sector and its zone was bounded on the north by the Autobahn and on the south by the canal. Its sector ran from Hochlarmark, west to the road running through Kol Ewald from Herten to Wanne-Eickel. The 1st Bn occupied the central sector and received scattered enemy artillery fire at 2320. The Autobahn and the canal were the north and south boundaries while Hochlarmark was the western boundary, and the road running south from General Blumenthal through Emscherlof was the right. The 2nd Bn defended the ground from Rollinghausen south to the canal. Sonntagshof was the extreme left boundary. The 320th Infantry was on the right and the 134th on the left.

2-5 April 1945

April 2 to 5 the 35th Division continued its aggressive defense along the Rhein Herne Canal, sending contact patrols along the canal and reconnaissance patrols south of the canal.

137th Infantry patrols which crossed the canal, located enemy positions on the outskirts of Herne and along the southern bank of the canal. A majority of the enemy captured by the 137th claimed that the enemy force south of the canal desired to surrender to the Americans, since they realized the Ruhr was surrounded.

April 4 the 35th Division continued its defense along the canal with the 137th on the left, 134th in the center, and the 320th on the right. The 137th had the 2nd Bn on the left and the 1st Bn on the right, within its zone, while the 3rd Bn was in reserve.

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6-8 April 1945

From April 6 to 8, the 137th Infantry with Co A, 89th Cml Bn attached, continued to occupy and defend positions along the north bank of the Rhein Herne Canal.

The 75th Division Recon Troop was on the left of the 137th on April 6 and the 2nd Bn, 134th Inf, was on the right. The 320th was relieved by elements of the 79th Division and the 1st Bn, 134th, and at 2400 was attached for the operations to the 75th Division.

At 1500, April 7, the left boundary of the 137th Infantry was moved east, approximately 1,000 meters. The 79th Division had jumped across the canal at 0300 while the 137th Infantry assisted by a fire demonstration. The 1st and 2nd Bns of the 137th remained on the line and the 3rd Bn in reserve in General Blumenthal. The boundary between the 1st and 2nd Bns was the road running from Recklinghausen to the canal.

The 137th prepared to attack in the early morning of April 9, crossing the canal and advancing south.

9 April 1945

The 137th Infantry crossed the Rhein Herne Canal under heavy enemy fire on the morning of April 9, secured a bridghead north of Herne, broke the crust of the enemy defense south of the canal and advanced against scattered resistance to the railroad tracks running through Herne and Wanne-Eickel.

The 2nd Bn had 20 men on the island in the canal at 0215, but they were forced by heavy enemy fire to withdraw back across at 0435. With the 1st Bn attacking in the right zone, Co B had one platoon across and a bridghead secured by 0450. By 0600 the entire company was across under heavy enemy fire. Co A crossed at 0800 without opposition, and was followed by Co C. The 1st Bn then advanced to the Wanne-Eickel rail sidings. The 2nd Bn crossed the canal in the 1st Bn zone and advanced to Herne's important rail marshalling yard. The 3rd Bn began moving at 1400, crossed the canal, and moved to a position on the right of the 1st Bn. The attack ceased for the day at 1930.

10 April 1945

The 137th Infantry captured Herne, its rail marshalling yard, a portion of Wanne-Eickel and its rail sidings, along with 18 suburban towns on April 10 after attacking from the railroad tracks in the morning.

The three battalions attacked at 0700 and with practically no opposition, the 3rd Bn was on its objective at 0930, the 2nd on its by 1136 and the 1st on its objective by 1625. The final objective for the day was the railroad track running through Gerthe to Hiltrop Dorf.

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Herne, with a population of 66,000, was struck from the north by the 1st Bn. Little resistance was encountered as the Bn moved through the city and its outskirts of Altenhofen, Vode, Bergen, Hiltrop Wanne, Hiltrop Dorf and the Constantine Estate. The 2nd Bn on the left swept through Behringhausen, Borsinghausen, Mittelfeld and Sodingherholz to reach the objective. On the right, the 3rd Bn advanced through Rootbruch, Dorneburg, Horst and Aschenbuch.

11 April 1945

The 137th Infantry attacked to the south April 11, over-running over six miles of Industrial Germany, while taking such towns as Gruner Baurne, Harpen, Laerfeld, Laer and Querenburg. Attached units were Co D (- one plat), 784th Tk Bn, with one platoon, Co A attached and Co A, 89th Cml Bn. The 2nd Bn attacked in the left sector and the 1st Bn in the right.

The 2nd Bn jumped-off at 0605 and the 1st Bn moved out at 0630, meeting initial resistance of machine gun fire. The 2nd Bn was on its objective, 800 yards north of the Ruhr River, by 1110. The 1st Bn reached its objective at 1340. The Regimental CP which had been in Herne, moved to Laerfeld at 1330. The 3rd Bn in regimental reserve, moved to Kirchharpen at 0810 and later in the day to Laerfeld.

The 137th Infantry continued to hold its position along the north bank of the Ruhr River, awaiting relief by the 79th Division within 48 hours.

12 April 1945

The 137th Infantry continued to hold and defend its position along the Ruhr River on April 12 awaiting relief by the 79th Division. Upon being relieved, the regiment was to assemble and form a combat team.

13 April 1945

The 137th Infantry was relieved in its position along the Ruhr River on April 13 by the 289th Infantry, 79th Division, and then assembled in the vicinity of Laerfeld. At 0800 the 137th Infantry Combat Team began its motor movement from the Ruhr to join forces with that part of the Ninth Army driving eastward toward the Elbe River.

The motorized column had its IP in Herne at 0850 and in this order, 3rd Bn, 2nd Bn, 1st Bn, Special Units, and 219th FA Bn, started east on its 220 mile move to the Elbe River. The Combat Team arrived in an assembly area in the vicinity of Everingen at 2100. The Regimental CP opened in Everingen at 2140.

14 April 1945

On April 14, the 137th Infantry CT moved by motor from its rear assembly area in Everingen, approximately 25 miles northeast to the Elbe River, six miles south of Stendal.

The CT departed at 1530 and closed into an area in the vicinity of Luder-

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itz by 2150. The Regimental CP opened in Luderitz at 2145. The 1st Bn moved into Stegell at 2100, the 2nd Bn into Bellingen, and the 3rd Bn into Buchholz. The 219th FA Bn moved into Gr. Schwarzlosen.

Armored spearheads to the east had bypassed numerous enemy pockets in the large woods within the 137th's new area, and the regiment discovered it had entered a wierd and fluid situation.

15 April 1945

April 15 the 137th Infantry flushed the enemy from the woods throughout its sector and patrolled by both foot and motor to the Elbe River. 476 enemy PWs had passed through the 137th PW cage at the conclusion of the day, but it was believed enemy forces were still scattered about the sector.

16 April 1945

April 16 the 137th Infantry consolidated its positions along the west bank of the Elbe River after having initially sent patrols to the river bank.

The 3rd Bn occupied the left sector, from the railroad tracks running through Stendal south to, and including Tangermunde. The 1st Bn, less Co's A and B who were in rear areas doing guard duty, was in the center with its CP in Bolsdorf. The 2nd Bn on the right had a sector extending south to an inland town, Grieburg.

The 137th was in the 35th Division's left sector and the 134th in the right. The 102nd Division was on the 137th's left flank.

There was much activity observed on the enemy-held east bank of the river during the day and patrols were sent across the Elbe during the night of April 16-17 to determine strength, disposition, and identification of enemy and conditions along the east bank, opposite the 137th's front.

At 1600 the Regimental CP moved from Luderitz to the fashionable Baron Freyburg estate, three kilometers southeast of Bolsdorf.

A Co F patrol crossed the river by boats at 2230, encountered no enemy, but did hear them digging-in. With no losses the patrol returned to the west bank at 0125, April 17. The Co C patrol departed at 1930, crossed in two rubber boats and began a reconnaissance of the east bank. The patrol observed an enemy machine gun outpost, but encountered no action. The patrol returned safely at 0115.

17 April 1945

The 137th Infantry remained in its defensive position along the west bank of the Elbe River on April 17. During hours of daylight patrols were sent to the river and during darkness, reconnaissance was conducted along the east bank.

The 1st Bn and 2nd Bn remained in position throughout the day. The 3rd Bn was relieved of its sector at 1800 by the 1st Bn, 406th Inf, 102nd Div, as the 102nd sector was moved south to include Tangermunde. As per 35th Division order, the 3rd

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Bn, 137th, relieved a Bn of the 134th Infantry, and at 2245 occupied the newly created right sector of the regiment's zone. The 137th CP remained at the Freyburg estate.

The Co E OP was pushed back approximately at 0130 by an enemy force of 50 troops, but mortar fire checked the enemy thrust. The 2nd and 3rd Bns were under shelling during the early morning.

The 320th Infantry was attached to the 83rd Div.

18-20 April 1945

From April 18 to 20, the 137th Infantry Regiment continued the defense of its sector along the west bank of the Elbe River.

Co 's A and B remained in the rear area, over 50 miles west of the Elbe, doing guard duty. On April 18 Co B discovered a sugar plant in Konigsutter, with no less than 20,000,000 pounds of white sugar in storage. The plant supplied all the people between the Rhine and Elbe Rivers. North of Lehre, Co B captured 47 enemy, five vehicles and liberated two American PWs. A mine shaft was also discovered with stores of weapons, ammunition, radio equipment, aerial cameras, and chemical testing apparatus. Three men were sent to Lelm to collect the weapons taken up by the Burgermeister, and returned with the weapons along with 262 Hungarians who had surrendered to them.

April 19 643 German PWs were taken by the 137th. Two crashed enemy aircraft were discovered by the 2nd Bn.

Interest on April 20 was focused on CT Clauswitz, an enemy force of 20 SP guns, 30 half tracks, and American vehicles, along with 800 troops, who had cut south between the British and the Ninth Army. After it had penetrated 15 miles of ground behind the Ninth Army troops along the Elbe, it was stopped by the 5th Armored Div.

Firing a machine gun from the west bank of the Elbe, Co M knocked-out two enemy trucks along the east bank. Two enemy planes strafed the 3rd Bn CP town of Cappel at 1920.

21 April 1945

The 137th Infantry remained in position along the west bank of the Elbe River April 21 patrolling actively along the river bank. In compliance with the 35th Division Order to hold regimental sectors with two battalions, the 1st Bn went into 137th reserve while the 2nd Bn took the left sector of the regiment and the 3rd Bn the right.

The 3rd Bn had relieved all of the 2nd Bn in the new 3rd Bn zone by 2225, April 20. The 2nd Bn relieved the 1st Bn at 1200, April 21. The 1st Bn, less Co's A and B, moved to Briest. The 2nd Bn established its CP in Buch. Co F remained in Jerchel and Schelldorf. Co E occupied positions in Buch and Co G was scattered throughout Buch, Bolsdorf and Grobleben. The 3rd Bn CP remained with Co

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M's in Cobbel while Co K was in Grieburg, Co L in Bittkau, and Co I in Ringfurth.

At 1705 four enemy aircraft were observed by Co F, taking-off from an undisclosed airstrip on the east side of the river, directly across from Co F's positions.

22-23 April 1945

Co A was relieved at 1700, April 22 and rejoined the 1st Bn in its area at 1900. Co B was not relieved of its duties in the rear area until the 22 and then closed into the 1st Bn area at 1210.

The 137th continued the defense along the west bank of the Elbe River within its zone. The 3rd Bn received 100 rounds of enemy artillery within thirty minutes during the morning.

24-25 April 1945

Russian units spearheading toward the Elbe River were believed to be nearing the positions of the 35th Division on April 24. The Ninth Army Air Reconnaissance reported a large number of unidentified vehicles in several groups moving in a northwestern direction toward the Elbe.

The no fire line for the 137th Infantry was the Elbe River and all units within the regiment were reminded of this. At 2305, Co E observed two green flares, at the time, believed to be a signal from the Russians. Two officers of the 2nd Bn crossed the Elbe during the night in an attempt to contact the Russians. After firing flares on the east bank and moving 800 yards inland without success, they returned to the west bank of the river.

The 2nd Bn heard motor movement in Jerichow at 0520 and called for artillery to fire on the town.

Throughout April 25, the 2nd Bn observed heavy motor movement north out of Jerichow. There was much activity throughout the day all along the eastern shore of the Elbe opposite 137th Infantry positions.

26 April 1945

At 0100, April 26, The 2nd Bn Commander, two members of his staff, a Co G officer and mess sergeant, set out on a mission which if at all possible, was to contact the Russians. When they reached the western bank of the river they began firing green flares in an effort to attract the Russians. One of the flares lit-up a barge floating off the eastern bank, on which enemy soldiers were loading ammunition. Two members of the patrol fired on the enemy, and the fire was returned by the enemy, forcing the 2nd Bn patrol to make a strategic withdrawal. Co K also had a patrol out during the night which crossed the river. The men couldn't contact the Russians but killed two enemy officers and knocked-out an armored car before returning.

The German civilians on the east side of the river were very aware of the

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fact that the Russians were approaching them. 60 civilians came across the Elbe in the 3rd Bn sector. Co F brought two enemy medical corp officers across to the 2nd Bn, who wished to surrender their field hospital of 356 patients and 25 nurses if it could be evacuated across the river to the west side. Lt Col George O'Connell, 2nd Bn Commander, on approval by Col William Murray, 137th Infantry Commander, made a deal with the two officers, that only if they rounded up all the American PWs in their area and brought them down to the river bank, would they be allowed to bring the hospital across the river.

They brought 15 American and 33 other Allied PWs to the river to meet a 2nd Bn patrol. 14 enemy soldiers also surrendered at that time, and were used to man oars on the boats which ferried the hospital personnel across the river. The hospital was moved to Tangermunde.

The 137th Infantry was relieved of its positions along the river bank at 1855 by elements of the 102nd Division. The Regiment then made preparations for a motor movement to the Hannover area where it was to occupy and administer military government in its own particular area.

27 April 1945

The 137th Infantry completed a 120 mile motor movement from the Elbe River to the vicinity of Munder, south of Hannover on April 27. The Regiment was to occupy and govern the area within its zone.

The IP was Tangerhutte and time 0800 as the regiment moved out with the 1st Bn, 3rd Bn, 2nd Bn, and Special Units in that order. The motorized column passed through Gardelegen, Gifhorn, Dahrenhorst and Hannover, then turned south and continued on into its sector of occupation.

The 137th CP was located in Munder, Anti-Tank Co in Holtensen, Carmon Co in Fischbeck, and Service Co in Eimbekhem. The 2nd Bn moved into Hameln, the town involved in the tale of the "Pied Piper". The 1st Bn established its CP in Rinteln with Co's A and D. Co B moved into Todenmann and Co C took over Steinbergen. The 3rd Bn assembled in Obernkirchen. Hameln and Rinteln are both located on the bank of the Weser River. The 35th Division Headquarters was established in Hannover. The 137th Infantry closed into its new area by 1600, April 27.

The entire 35th Division was in the Hannover governing and occupying sector.

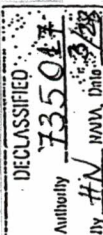
28-30 April 1945

From April 28 to 30, the 137th Infantry continued to occupy and govern its sector.

The 35th Division artillery remained attached to XIII Corps artillery, along with the 448th AAA AW Bn. The 784th Tk Bn was occupying and governing its assigned area while the 654th TD Bn remained with Division artillery.

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Awards received by members of the 137th Infantry for the month of April 1945, are as follows:

	Silver Star		Bronze Star	
	Reg	OLC	Reg	OLC
Officers	5	1	5	3
Enlisted Men	12	1	21	2

The number of purple hearts awarded is: 68

The battle casualties for the month of April are as follows:

	OFF	EM
KIA.....	1	4
DOW.....	0	1
SWA.....	0	10
SIA.....	0	0
LWA.....	2	30
LIA.....	0	3
MIA.....	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
TOTAL.....	3	49

Incls:

Journal and supporting papers

not rec'd yet

W S Murray

W. S. MURRAY
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

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