

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS 161ST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 35 US ARMY

1 January 1945

OPD
Eto - 1
Dec

Unit: Jockey
Period from 2359, 30 November 44
to 0001 January 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy, Reports After/After Action Reports.

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

1. In compliance with the provisions of paragraph 10, change 3, 9 March 1943, to AR 345-105, 18 November, above subj. The following report is submitted.

On 1st December the battalion was in position at Hilsprich, France, in general support of 6th Armored Division reinforcing the fires of 696th Armored Artillery Battalion. Enemy shell fire was received in the area beginning about 0400 until approximately 0700. There were about 125 rounds enemy artillery caliber ranging from 88mm to 150mm. The battalion suffered two casualties both of which were minor and returned to duty. Three trucks were hit by enemy fire, one of which was repaired by the unit and the other two being evacuated.

On 2nd December enemy shell fire was again received in the area from the hours of 0700 to 0730 approximately 20 rounds of 88mm caliber. Battalion remained in same position with the same mission as above. Firing mostly interdiction and harassing fires. At 1300 reconnaissance parties left to reconnoiter for new position in the vicinity of St Jean Rohrbach. At 1500 the battalion closed CP at Hilsprich and moved to St Jean Rohrbach closing in St Jean Rohrbach at 1600. The 219th and 127th Field Artillery Battalions were given the mission of reinforcing fires of this unit. Both units fired interdiction and harassing fires during the night.

On 3rd December the battalion remained in position continuing interdiction and harassing fires, formulated plans to support the attack of 134th Infantry the following day. This unit and the 219th and 127th Field Artillery Battalions supporting continued interdiction and harassing fires throughout the night. Service Battery moved from Hilsprich to Hellimer to get on better roads in order to supply this unit more efficiently.

On 4th December the battalion in position at St Jean Rohrbach, France, supported the attack of 134th Infantry at 0400 with 219th Field Artillery Battalion and 127th Field Artillery Battalion reinforcing the fires of this organization. Little resistance was encountered by the infantry. Artillery fires were placed on points where the enemy was observed to be active ahead of our infantry. Harassing and interdiction fires continued throughout the day and night. Plans were made for the battalion to displace on the morning of December 5th.

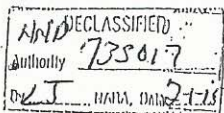
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On 5th December reconnaissance parties went forward at 0700 with the remainder of the battalion moving at 0800. Battalion closed into new area Puttelange, France, at 0825. At 1025 Battery "C" fired the first rounds of 105mm of this Division Artillery into Germany, the range 12,200 yards, time of flight 51 seconds. This was fired on railroad yards near the town of Hanweiler. The four rounds fired into Germany were 58,673, 58,674, 58,675 and 58,676. Reconnaissance parties departed at 1300 and remainder of the battalion moving at 1415. Battalion closed into new area Woustviller, France, at 1400. Battalion set up plans for defensive harassing and interdiction fires which were fired throughout the night.

On 6th December battalion remained in position in Woustviller, France, firing harassing and interdiction fires also on targets of opportunity with plans being made with 134th Infantry to support them in carrying out their plans on the 7th of December.

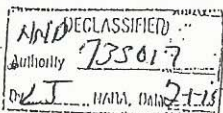
On December 7th harassing and interdiction fires were continued by this unit until 0600 with some fires being continued after this hour. At 0730 reconnaissance parties moved forward to reconnoiter for new positions at Neufgrange, France. The battalion closed at the old area at 0835 and opened operations in the new area at 0900. In this position plans were made to support the attack of the 134th Infantry in crossing the Sarre River south of Sarreguemines on the 8th of December. Each firing battery set up OPs near the front lines (this was in addition to normal Liaison and Forward Observation Posts from which they could observe well into German occupied areas). During the day Captain Hart, Commander of "C" Battery, observing from his OP spotted a German mortar platoon coming into the open near a point where he had adjusted a previous concentration. He notified the Fire Direction Center of this and asked that the guns be laid and ready to fire on this concentration. Captain Hart waited until the enemy reached the proper area and gave the command to fire. On this mission approximately 40 to 50 Germans were killed, as observed by Captain Hart. Throughout the afternoon the observers continued to spot enemy activity and fired on same.

On December 8th the battalion being in position at Neufgrange continued to fire harassing and interdiction fires with the supporting and reinforcing units assisting. (These units were 219th, 127th, and 752nd Field Artillery Battalions) At 0500 the 134th Infantry with the support of the above artillery crossed the Sarre River. During the early morning supporting fires and concentration were fired on call from Liaison Officers and Forward Observers with the infantry units. This was in addition to harassing and interdiction fires well ahead of our troops. Four (4) enemy artillery batteries were fired upon by our Fire Direction Center using one of the supporting and reinforcing battalions.

On December 9th the battalion remained in position at Neufgrange with the above mentioned units reinforcing the fires of this battalion. Adjusted artillery fire on eight enemy artillery batteries with aerial observation. The 127th Field Artillery and 219th Field Artillery Battalions were released from reinforcing fires of this unit.

On December 10th the battalion was still in position at Neufgrange, France. The 512th Field Artillery Battalion was given the mission of reinforcing fires of this unit. TOTs were fired on counter-attacking tanks and infantry with satisfactory results. Battalion Commander went forward to reconnoiter for new positions. The engineers completed the bridge across the Sarre River.

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On December 11th Battalion Commander and party left on reconnaissance at 1200 for new positions in the vicinity of Sarreginsming. Battalion moved into position at Sarreginsming at 1350. Continued harassing and interdiction fires throughout the night.

On December 12th at 0500 1st Battalion of 134th Infantry jumped off crossing the Blies River into Germany. This river is the boundary between Germany and France) Battery "A" Forward Observers accompanied the 1st Battalion on this jump off. Normal interdiction and harassing fires throughout the day and night plus heavy concentrations placed on enemy infantry assembling for counter-attack at 2325. A friendly plane dropped a 500 pound bomb in our area which landed near "C" Battery, however, no casualties or damage to equipment were caused.

On December 13th the battalion remained in position at Sarreginsming with little change in situation. Harassing and interdiction fires were continued throughout the day and night.

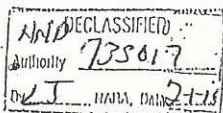
On December 14th Battalion Commander went forward to ascertain information on the situation which took him across the Blies River into Germany.

On December 15th the period was spent in normal support of the 134th Infantry Regiment. Firing on enemy infantry personnel, self-propelled weapons, and other targets of opportunity. Interdiction and harassing fires were fired throughout the night to protect our infantry troops. One German PW stated that our interdiction fires broke up the assembling of a counterattack at 0500. This counter-attack was unknown to both the infantry and artillery except by statement of PW. A concentration was fired in the woods just northeast of Habkirchen which knocked out two 20mm guns, one half-track and killed some enemy foot troops. This concentration was called for by Liaison Officer Number Two)2).

On December 16th at 0815 reconnaissance parties left to reconnoiter for new positions. At 1000 the reconnaissance parties had selected a position, and Battery "A", and also Cannon Company were moved forward with part of Fire Direction Center - setting up a forward Fire Direction Center. The remainder of the Fire Direction Center staying in the rear position supporting the 134th Infantry with two (2) Batteries "B" and "C". At 1325 the forward Fire Direction Center had adjusted Battery "A" and Cannon Company and took over the fires from the rear Fire Direction Center. At 1355 Battery "C" displaced followed by Battery "B" at 1420. The remainder of the battalion closed in the new area Frauenberg at 1525. Throughout the day enemy artillery and mortar fire had been continuous in the vicinity of the new CP location. This fire was directed at the bridge across the Blies River which was approximately sixty (60) yards from our CP location. Normal support fires were fired throughout the day in support of the 134th Infantry. In this new position charge one (1) was used on some targets since we were near to the front lines. At 1640 the Liaison Air Observer located an enemy firing battery which was firing at the time he located it. He immediately started adjusting Battery "B" on this enemy battery. When the enemy battery fired the observer would tell us by radio in a few seconds six shells would burst in the vicinity of the bridge. He completed the adjustment and the 752nd Field Artillery Battalion with its 155 howitzers were brought in on the target. A few minutes later followed by corps artillery battalions which completely silenced the enemy battery. Mortar shells, however, continued to fall in the general vicinity of the road and bridge. In this position the three firing batteries were across the Blies River on German soil. Battery "A" being the first battery of this Division Artillery to fire from German soil.

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On December 17th this battalion remained in position at Frauenberg, and continued to receive enemy artillery and mortar fire. Artillery fire is still believed to be directed at a bridge across the Blies River. Harassing and interdiction fires were continued throughout the period. 75 rounds of propaganda leaflets were fired for 134th Infantry.

On December 18th at 1800, 1st and 3rd Battalions, 134th Infantry were relieved by the 1st Battalion, 137th Infantry. This unit is now reinforcing the fires of 219 Field Artillery Battalion. Battalion continued to receive enemy artillery fire in the area. Wire crews of this headquarters encountered many difficulties due to heavy shelling while in the above mentioned position.

On December 19th the battalion remained in position at Frauenberg with the mission of reinforcing fires of 219th Field Artillery Battalion. The enemy continued to shell the area. We were forced to keep vehicles and personnel under cover all the time except when actually firing a mission. Normal harassing and interdiction fires were continued throughout the night and day.

On December 20th the mission of this battalion remained the same as on the 19th. At 1300 reconnaissance parties went out to reconnoiter for an alternate position since the situation changed from offensive to defensive a move was necessary. The battalion moved by batteries to this position at 1540.

On December 21st at 1245 the reconnaissance parties went under 134th Infantry combat team control to select billets in an assembly area. The mission of the battalion slightly changed reinforcing fires of 219th Field Artillery Battalion and direct support 1st Battalion, 134th Infantry coordinated through 216th Field Artillery Battalion since the 1st Battalion, 134th Infantry was attached to 320th Infantry otherwise normal harassing and interdiction fires were maintained to protect 1st battalion 134th Infantry.

On December 22nd at 1100 the battalion closed station and marched to Hoste-Bas closing in that area at 1230.

On December 23rd battalion moved from Hoste-Bas at 0530 and arrived at Metz at 1130. Information received from Division that first echelon maintenance would be performed on all vehicles immediately. All equipment was given a thorough check.

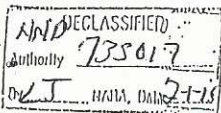
On December 24th the battalion continued to get all equipment in shape. Information received from division that all gas masks would be checked and that all men would carry their gas masks on the person.

December 25th was spent in rest area at Metz. Orders were received that the Division would move by CT on December 26th.

On December 26th 0600 Battery "A" with 1st Battalion, 134th Infantry left as the advanced guard for the division march. The remainder of the battalion moved out of bivouac at Metz and arrived in assembly area at Metzger, Belgium at 1200. Distance traveled sixty-four (64) miles. Information was received from Division Artillery at 1600 that the battalion would move to the vicinity of Gremelange, Belgium for the purpose of reinforcing the fires of June for the attack on the 27th.

On December 27th, at 1620 the battalion moved into new position in Tintange with the mission of direct support of 3rd Battalion, 134th Infantry and reinforcing fires of 219th Field Artillery Battalion.

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On December 28th the battalion remained in position with no change in mission. Normal support reinforcing and interdiction missions were fired throughout the period.

On December 29th at 0925 the battalion moved into new positions in Honville, Belgium. Missions were fired on call. This battalion fired three harrassing and interdiction missions using the Pozit fuse, and heavy normal interdiction was fired with M48 fuse also.

On December 30th the 3rd Chemical Battalion (4.2 mortars) were attached for reinforcing fires of this battalion. Harrassing and interdiction missions were continued. During this period the enemy was very active and observed fire missions were almost continuous.

On December 31st the 127th Field Artillery Battalion (Medium Battalion) attached for reinforcing fires. Missions fired on call.

The morale of the troops excellent and fighting efficiency continues excellent.

This battalion has suffered the following casualties: Two (2) officers slightly wounded in action, and nine (9) enlisted men slightly wounded in action. Four (4) enlisted men killed in action.

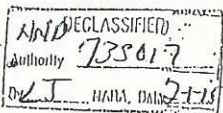
This battalion has awarded the following number of citations: Five (5) Bronze Star Medals and one (1) Silver Star Medal. All decorations for bravery and valiant service during combat.

No decisive exploits were made by this battalion during the month.

Herman F Schuster
 HERMAN F SCHUSTER
 Lt Col, FA
 Commanding

- 3 Incls.
- 1 - Ammunition Report
 - 2 - Unit Journal
 - 3 - S-2 Work Sheet

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SECRET

DAILY AMMUNITION REPORT

Unit: Jockey
 From: Dec 10600
 To : Jan 10600

	Date	Balance Last Report	Received	Expended	Total Expended To Date	Balance on Hand
Dec	010600 - 020600	2820	0	272		2542
	020600 - 030600	2542	600	347		2795
	030600 - 040600	2795	800	460		3135
	040600 - 050600	3135	600	1010		2725
	050600 - 060600	2725	600	617		2708
	060600 - 070600	2708	800	809		2699
	070600 - 080600	2699	756	843		2612
	080600 - 090600	2612	2000	1296		3316
	090600 - 100600	3316	800	1174		2942
	100600 - 110600	2942	1400	885		3457
	110600 - 120600	3457	600	305		3752
	120600 - 130600	3752	527	1542		2737
	130600 - 140600	2737	1000	1021		2716
	140600 - 150600	2716	1200	562		3354
	150600 - 160600	3354	400	495		3259
	160600 - 170600	3259	400	486		3173
	170600 - 180600	3173	400	388		3185
	180600 - 190600	3185	400	648		2937
	190600 - 200600	2937	1010	566		3374
	200600 - 210600	3374	872	876		3364
	210600 - 220600	3364	406	667		2845
	220600 - 230600	2845	300	208		2937
	270600 - 280600	2937	800	393		3344
	280600 - 290600	3344	600	221		3723
	290600 - 300600	3723	316	1084		2955
	300600 - 310600	2955	2012	2226		2741
	310600 - 01 Jan	2741	3200	2895		3046
				22296		

July 10, 1944 - Jan 1, 1945

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