

SECRET

Auth: CG 35th Inf Div

Initials: *RGC*

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS 161ST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
APO 35 US ARMY

*18 Mar 1945*

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy, Report After.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D.C. (thru channels)

1. In compliance with the provisions of Par 10 C3, AR 345-105, submitted below is report after action against the enemy for the 161st Field Artillery Battalion covering the period 1-28 February 1945.

1 February 1945

The battalion pulled the guns out of position at 0700. The battalion moved from Boxhorn, Luxembourg at 0930 arrived in Neufchateau Belgium at 1650, traveled 97 miles. The quartering parties had made arrangements previous to the arrival of the battalion for quarters for the men, kitchen areas, motor parks, and battalion supply areas. The entire battalion had sleeping quarters in civilian homes. The situation was non-tactical. The snow in this area has melted. Weather: Partly cloudy, very windy. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

2 February 1945

Under a non-tactical set-up the emphasis of personnel of the battalion was on vehicle maintenance, checking sectional equipment, and personal clothing. The Battalion Commander presented Bronze Star awards to S/Sgt Shields, Tec 4 Johnson, and Cpl Stapleton, per General Order 7, Headquarters 35th Infantry Division, 17 January 1945 at a "C" Battery formation in Neufchateau, Belgium. Weather: Cloudy, occasional showers, windy. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

3 February 1945

Continuation of 2 February. The staff officers and battery officers making preparations for the move forward. Colonel Schuster held a battery commanders meeting at 2100 and issued the orders for the move. Captain Lee returned from 35th Division Artillery with overlay of route. Colonel Schuster drew Louis James' name for furlough to the states; six men were eligible. Weather: Cloudy. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Grand Total: 101,873.

4 February 1945

The advance parties left Neufchateau at 0700. The battalion left at 0810 and arrived in new position Waldenrath, Germany (83.5-69.8). Mission: General support and reinforcing fires of 216th FA Bn. Lt. Geoffrion reported to 216th as In O; we also sent 3 forward observers.

-1-

SECRET

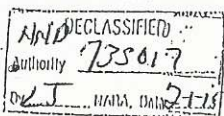
*Incl 11*

*Feb 45*

*335-FH(61) - 0.3*

*6141 master*



S E C R E T

Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-28 Feb 45 (cont'd)

The battalion was registered by high burst. Sgt Ambrose became a 2nd Lt. (AUS) at Waldenrath, Germany. Colonel Schuster administered the oath. Weather: Cloudy with rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 30 rounds.

5 February 1945

The battalion still in general support and reinforcing fires of 216th FA Bn. Colonel Dwyre, Division Artillery Executive Officer, and Captain Bernsen, Division Artillery Assistant S-3, visited this FDC at 1430. Major Funk, Battalion Executive Officer, visited battery at 1900. Oral message from Division Artillery S-3: 1. Remove shoulder patches immediately. 2. All vehicle markings will be painted over or scratched off, including battery number. 3. No unit identification or code name will be used on wire tags, CP signs, etc. 4. Radio silence will be maintained until notified differently. Ammunition allotment, 100 rounds for the next 5 days. Major Funk, Executive Officer discussed basic loads of ammunition with battery commanders. Weather: Cloudy and rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

6 February 1945

This unit's status remains the same, general support reinforcing 216th FA Bn. The 448th AAA reports possible jet-propelled plane activity over this area. Major Funk visited personnel section this afternoon. Weather: Cloudy, occasional rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 12 rounds.

7 February 1945

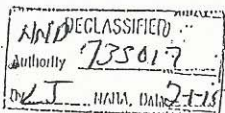
Colonel Reed, Commanding Officer of 216th FA Bn visited this FDC at 0930. Message from Commanding General, reference to Air OP and forward observers being alert for enemy defensive positions and activity in and out of towns. The 134th Infantry relieved 1 regiment of 102nd Division and 1 battalion of 320th Infantry regiment at 2345. Colonel Schuster left at 0930, going to Division Artillery and the 134th Infantry. Returned at 1730. At 2400 our mission changed from one of reinforcing the fires of the 216th to direct support of the 134th Infantry Regiment. The 127th FA Bn was given the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 161st. Forward observers were sent to 134th Infantry to man OPs. Weather: Cloudy, rain in afternoon. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

8 February 1945

Colonel Schuster left for 134th CP. He took with him Lieutenant Boose and after getting the plan of the 134th he was going to make a reconnaissance for positions nearer their front lines. A defensive fire plan in support of the 1st Bn 134th Infantry was completed at 1000. Lieutenant Geoffrion relieved Captain Hunt as Ln O with 3rd Bn of 134th Infantry. Captain Hunt attending a school for better coordination between Ground Forces and High Performance Air Craft, at Maastricht.

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-28 Feb 45 (cont'd)

At 1730 Lieutenant Waters reported as Ln 0 from 127th FA Bn. Weather: Cloudy, rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 27 rounds.

9 February 1945

The 219th FA Bn and 127th FA Bn reinforcing our fires. A forward observer from each of these battalions reported to 1st Battalion of 134th Infantry. At 1300 Colonel Schuster left CP going to 134th Infantry CP to get changes on the attack. The 219th FA Bn, 127th FA Bn, 134th Cannon Company, and 161st FA Bn, were registered by ground observation at 1800. Colonel Schuster returned to CP with delay on planned attack by verbal orders. A defensive fire plan from 35th Division Artillery delivered by an officer. Verbal order by telephone allotted this battalion two officers and eight enlisted men to go to Paris on 72 hour pass, 2100. Weather: Cloudy, rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 25 rounds.

10 February 1945

At 0930 35th Division Artillery S-2 requested that forward observers report on the Roer River status. Verbal orders by telephone. The 161st FA Bn S-2 requested the artillery forward observers to report any great change in the water level and make negative reports every two hours if there is no change. The forward observers could not gauge the Roer River but could make reports on smaller rivers in vicinity. At 1650 Colonel Belden, 35th Division Artillery S-3, reported the attack had been delayed. The 134th Infantry also made the same report. Weather: Cloudy forenoon, clear afternoon. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 25 rounds. Grand Total: 101,967.

11 February 1945

The Battalion's direct support infantry is still in a defensive position awaiting favorable conditions for an attack. This battalion FDC made improvements and changes on defensive fire plan and plan for the attack. Preparations were made for a displacement tomorrow. Previous reconnaissance had been made for positions for the batteries near 134th Infantry CP. At 2100 a Battery Commander's meeting was held; plans for displacement were made and necessary orders issued. Weather: Cloudy, clear. No casualties, three reinforcements received. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

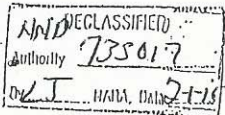
12 February 1945

The advance party left Waldenrath at 0730. The batteries had received close station march order at 0700; the battalion pulled out at 0800, going to new position in the vicinity of Randerath, Germany (90.7-70.1). The battalion arrived at 0900. This area received four rounds of heavy artillery (approximately 280mm); This artillery has two distinct blasts. One round wounded two men seriously and completely demolished a C & R car. Colonel Schuster left this CP at 1600 and returned at 1645.

-3-

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-28 Feb 45 (cont'd)

The guard was increased around the CP and FDC. The guard reports many buzz bombs over the area; one fell short in enemy territory. Tec 4 Hutchins and Cpl Tilly worked on shell-reps in this area. Weather: Cloudy and rain. Two casualties, no reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

13 February 1945

The FDC planned defensive fires. The battalion was registered by high burst. At 1030 Major Jones, Battalion S-3 attended meeting with 35th Division Artillery S-3 and 216th FA Bn S-3 for coordination of fires. The enemy fired large caliber artillery (approximately 240mm) into our area. Two men in Battery "B" were killed. Captain Hunt, Artillery Ln 0 with 3rd Bn of 134th Infantry was in this FDC with officers of the 3rd Bn of 134th Infantry. Lieutenant Gee, Assistant S-3, explained the functions of the FDC and also the artillery plan in the attack. Sgt Ratliff and Cpl Neyhart obtained shell-reps from rounds that landed in their area. Weather: Clear forenoon, cloudy afternoon. Two Casualties, 1 officer reinforcement. Ammunition expended: 33 rounds.

14 February 1945

The battalion and supported infantry are still in defensive position. The FDC personnel are improving defensive fires and plan of attack fires. Major Funk, Executive Officer, visited batteries' positions and 219th FA Bn; he left this area at 1300, and returned at 1700. Weather: Clear. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 28 rounds.

15 February 1945

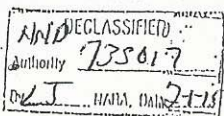
The 134th Infantry is still in a defensive position. The direct support battalion (161st FA Bn) fired on only one target through the day. At 1330 Major Funk, Executive Officer, visited battery positions. Verbal orders from 35th Division Artillery S-3; 30 rounds of the 67 round allotment may be posit fuze. Colonel Schuster presented two men in Battery "B" certificates for meritorious service. Weather: Cloudy and ground haze. No casualties, one reinforcement. Ammunition expended: 6 rounds.

16 February 1945

At 0900 Colonel Schuster left battalion area to visit 134th Infantry CP and 35th Division Artillery CP. The 134th Infantry Combat Team is still in a defensive position. At 1128 one round of 240mm artillery fell in this area with 20 rounds of 150mm. At 1200 Major Dawson, S-3 of 127th FA Bn, visited this area. At 1700 Colonel Schuster returned to CP from 35th Division Artillery. At 2330, verbal order from S-3, 35th Division Artillery, as follows: Ammunition allotment of 167 rounds for the period 0600 17 Feb to 0600 22 Feb. Weather: Clear. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 4 rounds.

-4-  
S E C R E T





S E C R E T

Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-28 Feb 45 (cont'd)

17 February 1945

At 1030 Major Jones, Battalion S-3, visited 35th Division Artillery CP, and returned at 1600 to battalion area. Major Funk visited the battery area and went to 134th Infantry Hq. Weather: Cloudy, foggy. No casualties, one EM reinforcement. Ammunition expended: 59 rounds. Grand total: 102,137.

18 February 1945

At 0215 Battery "B", 161 FA Bn, reported that 100 rounds of 105mm and 150mm artillery fell in and near their gun positions-approximate azimuth 900 mils. Six or eight rounds of their ammunition was damaged. At 0225 Battery "C", 161 FA Bn, reported that 100 rounds of 105mm and 150 mm fell in and near their position-approximate azimuth 700 mils. No damage was reported. At 0800 shell fragments revealed that a great percentage of the artillery in this area in the early hours was 120mm. At 0900 Major Funk visited the battery areas and then went to 134th Infantry CP. The shell-rep teams from the batteries obtained shell-reps and shell fragments. Hq shell-rep team, Tec 4 Hutchins and Cpl Tilley, obtained several reps and fragments in this area. After dark 134th Infantry OPs reported gun flashes which aided in locating enemy gun positions. Weather: Cloudy and rain. One casualty, no reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 40 rounds.

19 February 1945

The 134th Infantry is still in defensive positions. The 161st FA Bn FDC continued improving defensive fire plan and made changes on Attack plan. At 1000 Colonel Schuster left this area to to to 134th Infantry; he returned at 1200. Weather: Clear. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

20 February 1945

There is no activity in either the 134th Infantry or 161st FA Bn. The battalion OPs were manned throughout the day and night but had nothing to report. Weather: Cloudy, rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds.

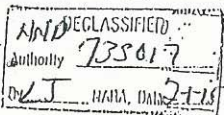
21 February 1945

At 1345 the air OP reported that they had no activity to report, except that they could observe a foot bridge at 9415-7415. At 1435 Lieutenant Budd reported to this FDC as Ln O from 629th FABn. At 1545 the registering of the battalion by air OP was begun. Completed at 1700.

-5-

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-28 Feb 45 (cont'd)

The only activity reported by the 134th Infantry was friendly patrols going out. Weather: Clear. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 115 rounds.

22 February 1945

The 134th Infantry reported very little activity; patrols were sent out but met automatic weapons fire, so they returned. At 1330 the Ln O from 219th FA Bn reported. The enemy shot flares up along the Roer River, evidently marking the river for the planes that came over at this time (2005). Weather: Cloudy, rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 348 rounds.

23 February 1945

The Battalion OPs were active in the early morning hours. Reports were made on gun flashes and flash-bang seconds; these reports aided higher echelons in verifying and locating enemy gun positions. At 0440 the 35th Division Artillery S-2 reported that two battalions of the 84th Division were across the Roer River and also that all units of the 320th Infantry Regiment of the 35th Infantry Division had reached their objective. At 0530 the No Fire Line was received from the 320th Infantry Regiment. 0915 the Air OP reported active enemy batteries. The patrols sent out by the 134th Infantry reached their objectives and are going to remain on them. These large patrols (50 men) were sent out in an effort to divert the enemy from other sectors of the front. At 1600 Colonel Schuster left for the 134th Infantry CP and returned at 1635. Flares were again shot up along the Roer River for enemy planes but there was no bombing in this sector. Weather: Partly cloudy. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 536 rounds.

24 February 1945

At 1000 Colonel Schuster left for the 134th Infantry CP. The enemy smoked the town of Hilfarth at 1030. At 1830 oral message from 35th Division Artillery S-3: No Fire Line for 84th Division Artillery, our right boundary at 74 grid line, east to 97 grid line, south to 73 grid line then east. At 1930 oral message from 35th Division Artillery S-3: Do not fire in 84th Division sector. At 2230 three parachutes were in the air in the vicinity of Randerath; all units were notified but there were no reports of capture. Weather: Partly cloudy. Two casualties, no reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 793 rounds. Grand Total: 103,941.

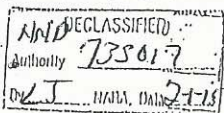
25 February 1945

At 0745 Colonel Schuster went to 134th Infantry CP. At 0900 127th FA Bn was relieved as supporting unit, and Captain Ehn, Ln O, from 754th FA Bn reported. At 0930 Colonel Schuster returned. At 1400 oral message from 35th Division Artillery S-3: The No Fire Line from 95.0-75.5 east to 97.0-75.5 south to 97.0-75.0 then east. At

-6-

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-28 Feb 45 (cont'd)

1800 the 219th FA Bn, 754th FA Bn, and 692nd FA Bn were released; and 127th FA Bn and 257th FA Bn were attached. At 1905 Captain Hallbach reported as Ln 0 and Fwd Obsr from 275th FA Bn. A Fwd Obsr from 127th FA Bn also reported. At 2100 oral message from 35th Division Artillery S-3: Periods for artillery silence for 15 minutes after the following times; 2210, 2400, 0245, 0530. At 2150 Colonel Schuster left for 134th Infantry CP. The 134th Infantry attacked at 2100 for the town of Hilfarth, Germany. The opposition consisted of machine guns, personnel mines, and booby traps. At 2400 "B" Company of 1st Battalion, 134th Infantry, took the first buildings in the town and were organizing to continue the attack. At 0110 "A" and "B" Companies of 1st Battalion had contacted in Hilfarth and are preparing to advance. Weather: Cloudy, rain. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 553 rounds.

26 February 1945

The 1st Bn of 134th Infantry requested us to lift interdiction on bridge across the Roer River, as our troops are getting near the bridge site. Prisoners of War state that the bridge has charge set in the middle of it. Captain Hunt, Ln 0 with 3rd Bn of the 134th Infantry, requested preparation fire from 0710 to 0720 for the Roer River crossing. At 0755 Colonel Schuster left area going to 134th Infantry CP. At 1125 the 219th FA Bn S-2 was given the 134th Infantry forward elements. Colonel Schuster returned to this CP at 1135. Colonel Schuster left area going to 134th Infantry. 3rd Bn of the 134th Infantry front lines: 93.85-73.70 to 94.2-73.8 to 94.45-74.00. The 2nd Bn of the 134th Infantry front lines: 93.3-73.3 to 93.6-73.4 to 93.85-73.70 at 1630 hours. Weather: Cloudy. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 555 rounds.

27 February 1945

The 134th Infantry is meeting very little resistance, and in each town they are getting Prisoners of War. Leading elements of the Infantry at 0750: Coordinants 93.8-74.8. The 219th FA Bn S-2 reports leading elements of 137th Infantry Regiment at 93.2-77.76. Company "C" of the 89th Chemical Bn attached (4.2 Mortars). The 161st FA Bn closed station at Randerath, Germany at 1400 and moved to Huckelhoven, Germany, arriving at 1505 hours. At 1630 Colonel Schuster left this area going forward on reconnaissance. The Colonel returned at 1715 hours. At 2200 hours Major Funk went to 134th Infantry for the orders of 28 February and returned at 2300. Weather: Partly cloudy. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 687 rounds.

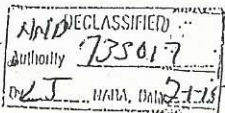
28 February 1945

The 134th Infantry is meeting very little resistance. They are capturing many Prisoners of War from the towns and pill-boxes. The Battalion closed station at 0830 and moved at 0900, arriving at new station at 1015 in town of Orsbeck, Germany. The Battalion was registered by the Air OP. Leading elements of 134th Infantry are reported at 85.9-84.0 at 1345 hours. At 1400 Colonel Schuster left for 134th Infantry CP. The Air OP reports six civilians waving white flag

-7-

S E C R E T





S E C R E T

Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-28 Feb 45 (cont'd)  
to them at coordinants: 86.50-83.85. Weather: Cloudy. No casualties  
or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 656 rounds.

The Battle casualties for the month of February 1945 are as follows:

	OFF	EM
KIA.....	0.....	3
DOW.....	0.....	0
SWA.....	0.....	2
SIA.....	0.....	0
LWA.....	0.....	2
LIA.....	0.....	0
MIA.....	0.....	0
Total.....	0.....	7

Awards received by members of 161st Field Artillery Battalion  
are, as follows:

DSC		Silver Star		Soldier's Medal		Bronze Star		Air Medal	
Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc
Officers								2	
Enlisted									
Men						1			

The number of Purple Heart medals awarded is: 7.

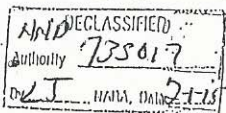
The number of Purple Heart (Oak-Leaf Clusters) is: 1.

The number of prisoners captured is: 0.

*Herman F. Schuster*

HERMAN F. SCHUSTER  
LT Col 161 FA Bn  
Commanding





In order to get more communication out of existing wire lines to our infantry, this battalion has been simplexing lines we lay to infantry battalions. We are able in this way to have a direct line from our FDC direct to our liaison officer in the infantry battalion for fire control and a separate route either for us or the infantry to use for other urgent calls. It has speeded up fire missions since they don't have to wait for two switchboard connections and has allowed other important tactical messages to be sent over the same twisted pair. We had some trouble selling the idea, but soon they were as enthusiastic about it as we were.