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APO 35 US ARMY

Auth: CG 35th Inf Div

Initials *Hee*Date *16 Apr 45*
1 April 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 1-31 March 1945.

1 March 1945

The 134th Inf Regt reorganizing in preparation for move to the Rhine. Maj Funk administered the oath to commission S/Sgt Wayne W. Whiteman, 2nd Lt at Orsbeck, Germany. Two German soldiers were captured in the area, taken to 134th Inf PWE. Task force Byrnes passed through our infantry. This battalion fired very few missions after the task force got out in front. At 2130 the quartering party left to reconnoiter area in vicinity of Kaldenkirchen (Maj Funk in charge) and arrived in Kaldenkirchen at 2400. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 221 rounds. 2 PW. Weather: Cloudy.

2 March 1945

Maj Funk gave Maj Moore an area for the 127th FA BN. While Maj Moore was on reconnaissance, he and his driver were captured by a 100-man enemy patrol. Maj Moore escaped when the patrol was apprehended and pinned down by machine gun fire. Reconnaissance was completed at 0130. The battalion left Orsbeck at 0400, arrived at Kaldenkirchen at 0800. Task force Byrnes continued to attack, meeting very little resistance. Sgt Harold W. Carter appointed 2nd Lt. Maj Funk administered the oath. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Cloudy.

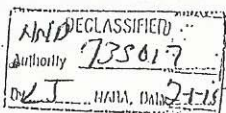
3 March 1945

Reconnaissance parties left Kaldenkirchen at 0700 going to Straelen. Civilians were moved from the house where the battalion CP was to be located. The battalion moved at 0830 and arrived in Straelen at 1000. 17 PWs were picked up in battery areas. Battery A was detached from battalion to support 1st battalion 134th Inf near Geldern. While detached they captured 24 PWs. A British In O, Capt Glenn, reported to our CP. the air OP reported armored column coming from north and that it is definitely British armor. Contact between 1st battalion 134th Inf and 1st Canadian Army was made at 1500. S/Sgt Glenn R Fisk appointed 2nd Lt. Maj Funk administered the oath. The battalion closed station at 1630 and displaced at 1730 to Isenhof. The civilians were moved from the house where the battalion CP was to be located. The battalion fired very few missions from 1800 to 2400. The battalion went in General Support at 1000 hours. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0. Grand total: 106,057. 41 PWs. Weather: Cloudy, rain.

BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
W. Markton Col. RA
DOWNGRADING SECRET 23 July 1945

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Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-31 Mar 45 (cont'd.)

4 March 1945

The 134th Inf is moving fast with very little resistance. Btry C captured 4 PWs in their area this morning. Reconnaissance parties left at 1030. The battalion closed station at 1130 and moved at 1200 hours to Oermten, Germany. Btry A was released from direct support of 1st Battalion 134th Inf and joined the battalion at 1400 hours. Btry A did no firing while with 1st Battalion. The battalion was registered by high burst. Orders from Commanding General on civilian control were put out to batteries. Col Thompson, CO 127th FA Bn, visited the CP. The battalion is still in general support of Task Force Byrnes. Service Battery's ammunition train took 19 PWs. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition Expended: 600 rounds. Weather: Cloudy, rain.

5. March 1945

We received orders from Task Force Byrnes about moving. The Air OP picked up 500 enemy troops and 25 vehicles in the open. This battalion fired Battalion 12 volleys. Ten battalions of artillery participated in this mission. The Air OP reported this battalion was well massed and that the enemy infantry was evidently disorganized with evidence of many casualties. All fire missions cleared through supported units. Col Schuster went to 35th Div Arty and 134th Inf CP at 1320 hours and returned at 1435 hours. Verbal orders from 35th Div Arty S-2: Personnel may mention in correspondence that they are in the 9th Army and have been in the 7th Army. Lt Foe and Lt Johnson received Air Medal (OLC). No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 602. Weather: Partly cloudy.

6 March 1945

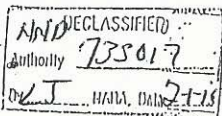
Reconnaissance parties left at 0700 hours. The battalion closed station at 0730 and displaced at 0800, arrived at new position at Lintfort, Germany at 0830 and registered battalion by Air OP. Btry A picked up 5 PWs in their area. Btry B picked up a soldier in civilian clothes. He said he had been home on furlough and decided to quit, so he burned his uniform and put on civilian clothes, but kept his identification tags and pay book. Col Schuster left for 35th Div Arty at 1605 hours. No Fire Line from 219th FA Bn. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 310. Weather: Cloudy. 6 PWs

7 March 1945

The XVI Corps Ex O visited this FDC at 0945 hours. The battalion still in general support and fired missions assigned by supported units. The 320th and 137th Inf Regts are on the front and are meeting stiff resistance of self-propelled guns and automatic weapons. Several bridges were observed across the Rhine River. 1 Casualty (NBC) no reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 1177. Weather: Cloudy, rain.

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8 March 1945

The infantry has made small gains along division front. G-2 reports bridges in at Waldern. Col Schuster left at 1100 hours going on reconnaissance and returned at 1145 hours. Then the Col. went to 35th Div Arty. Heavy artillery landed in battalion area. One man was killed and one injured in Btry C. The infantry made small gains this afternoon. The Col. presented the Bronze Star Ribbon to Pvt Carman Powell at Lintfort, Germany. 2 Casualties and no reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 506 rounds. Weather: Cloudy, rain.

9 March 1945

The battalion fired in preparation fires for division attack at 0700 hours and closed station at 0730. The battalion moved to new position at 0800, arriving co-ord 17.8-28.8 at 0835. Battalion was registered by Air OP. Btry A and Btry B reported friendly artillery falling in their area; origin of the short rounds was never definitely determined. The enemy had barrage balloons over the Rhine in front of our area. Btry A and Btry B reported enemy artillery falling in their area; no damage. The 134th Inf will relieve the 320th Inf at 2400 and attack at 10 0630 with the 1st and 2nd Battalions. The 216th FA Bn, 275th FA Bn, and Co C of 89th Chemical Bn attached to our unit for supporting fires. Three forward observers were sent to 1st Battalion and 2 forward observers were sent to 3rd Battalion of 134th Inf. Ln Os from 216th FA Bn, 275th FA Bn, and Co C, 89th Chemical Bn reported to our CP. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition Expended: 358 rounds. Weather: Partly cloudy.

10 March 1945

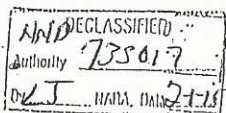
The 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 134th Inf relieved the 320th Inf at 2400. They attacked at 0630. Many prisoners were taken--as many as 50 at one time. The morale of the prisoners was very low. PWs reported that their supporting artillery has only 40 rounds left.* The 134th Inf advanced to objective, meeting no resistance at all. They reported that they had only 3 casualties. Verbal orders to batteries: No personnel will ride in automobiles, on bicycles, or motorcycles. No civilian radios will be carried nor household goods. *This statement was proven false later when great quantities of artillery ammunition was found near gun positions. No Casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 1492. Grand total: 111,102. Weather: Cloudy, showers.

11 March 1945

The infantry has reached objectives; our artillery is firing on call. The 275th FA Bn was detached. The quartering parties left CP at 1430 and arrived at Genholt at 1730. The new area is to be the 35th Div assembling area. Enemy fighter planes over the battalion area; the planes strafed in some area, but not ours. No Casualties or Reinforcements. Ammunition Expended: 203. Weather Cloudy.

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Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy Report After, 1-31 Mar 45 (cont'd)
12 March 1945

The quartering party at Genholt found houses for the personnel and policed the new position before arrival of the battalion. The battalion left the front at 1710 and arrived in Genholt at 1845. No Casualties or Reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 84. Weather: cloudy.
13 March 1945

The personnel of the battalion spent the day washing clothes and cleaning equipment. Lt Brayton, Special Service Officer, made arrangements for a movie for the battalion. Our mission was care and cleaning of equipment, rest, and recreation for the men and officers of the battalion. Inspections were arranged to determine the extent of the maintenance on the 16th and 19th of March. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0. Weather: Partly cloudy.

14 Mar 1945

The battalion is in a rest area and spent time washing clothes and maintenance of equipment. Passes were authorized to Brussels. The Col went to Div Arty and 134th Inf at 1330 and returned at 1515; he called the battery commanders together at 1545. The Col. left on pass for Paris at 2330. Capt Lee was presented the Bronze Star Ribbon for heroic action. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Clear.

15 March 1945

The men of the battalion continued maintenance on vehicles and care of personal equipment. A movie was shown in the battalion area. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Cloudy to clear.

16 March 1945

This unit is still in reserve area. Batteries conducted their own inspections today. Three batteries inspected clothing and personal equipment similar to regular Saturday morning inspections in the States and two inspected materiel and motors. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Clear.

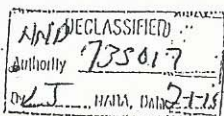
17 March 1945

This unit still in reserve area. Fourteen men went to Div Arty to see Lily Pons. One member of this unit was tried by Special Court. Battalion Ex O left for reconnaissance of new position areas where the battalion will go into position at a later date. Batteries also made reconnaissance. Survey and wire communications to be complete by tomorrow night. No Casualties and reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Clear. Grand total for ammunition expended: 111,389.

18 March 1945

The wire communications were completed in the new position. Sur-

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18 March 1945 (cont'd)

vey section surveyed positions for calibration of the guns of this battalion. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Partly cloudy.

19 March 1945

The firing batteries and calibration parties left rest area for calibration area and returned at 1300 this afternoon. Col. Schuster returned from Paris at 1930. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Partly cloudy.

20 March 1945

The battalion is making preparations to move to Menzelen, Germany. The battalion CO called battery commanders and staff officers meeting prior to the departure of the advance detail which left at 1300. Protestant church services next to battalion CP; very few men attended because of ordnance changing sights on the carbine. The advance detail organized the FDC and quartered the men before the battalion left the reserve area at Genholt, Germany. The battalion left the area at 1900 and they arrived in new area at 2145. FDC set up and was prepared to fire; no missions were fired. We are in supporting fires of 195th FA Bn of the 30th Inf Div. Ammunition expenditure of 93 rounds reported this morning was expended on calibration of guns. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 93 rounds. Weather: clear.

21 March 1945

The battalion registered on two check points by ground OP and the registration was checked by 197th FA Bn Air OP. Four rounds of heavy artillery fell in this area. No one from this unit was injured but four men from a British Unit were injured. The British soldiers were evacuated by our medics. The Commanding General, 30th Div Arty, Gen. Lewis, visited our CP and FDC. The 161st FA Bn is in general support of 30th Div Arty in the attack across the Rhine River. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Clear.

22 March 1945

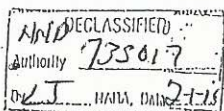
Very little activity was reported today. The smoke screen made visibility almost zero. Btry C Ex O reported a Ln plane over the area with no markings, last seen going east. The AAA unit with us reported the Ln plane as being British. The secret plans for the "Big Push" across the Rhine River were received by the unit from the 197th FA Bn. The battalion OPs were manned throughout the day and night. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 146 rounds. Weather: Clear.

23 March 1945

The battalion is in general support of 30th Div Arty. The day was spent in preparing for the attack. The bombing of the area around

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Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-31 Mar 45 (cont'd)

23 March 1945 (cont'd)

Wesel, Germany could be observed from this area. At 2330 we received a report that the British had two battalions across the Rhine River and that the greatest obstacle was in taking care of PWs. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 0 rounds. Weather: Clear.

24 March 1945

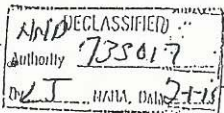
At 0145 the British were reported to have one regiment across the Rhine River and are in the north edge of Wesel. Heavy artillery has been constantly pounding the enemy rear areas; the light artillery began firing the preparation fire at 0100 for the 30th Div jump-off at 0200. This battalion fired approximately 1300 rounds in the hour before the jump-off. The preparation fire was so timed that the infantry hit the Rhine River levee 45 seconds after the last rounds were fired from the guns. The infantry took objective across river, reorganized and announced T hour as 0715 hours; this T hour was postponed and set for 0900 hours. This battalion fired a 45 minute preparation prior to 0900. Approximately 840 rounds were fired, but the 30th Div did not jump off. Another 45 minute preparation fire was planned for the T hour which was 1100 hours. This battalion fired 600 rounds on this preparation but ceased firing because the airborne army was in the air. The airborne army planes were over this area from 1000 to 1300 hours. We observed three C-47 planes crash in flames. At 1330 hours a flight of B-24s with supplies for the bridgehead was over the area flying at altitudes from 200 to 600 feet. On the return one B-24 crashed in flames near our area; four members of the crew in parachutes were observed. Later reports stated that the entire crew jumped from the plane before it crashed. T hour has been set at 1500. We will fire another 45 minute preparation of 840 rounds. The infantry jumped off as planned at 1500 hours. The reports we received stated that the British operation was going very well and that they were taking many PWs. The 30th Div attack is moving and encountering very little resistance. This battalion fired missions on call through the 197th FA Bn. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 3,232. Grand total: 114,860. Weather: Clear.

25 March 1945

The 30th Infantry continues to advance throughout the day. They had advanced so far that they were out of range for this battalion in present positions. The battalion CO was called to a meeting with 134th Inf CO at 1600 and left from there immediately on reconnaissance across the river. This battalion was unable to move forward until 1915. We crossed the Rhine River on a pontoon bridge at 2230 hours. Enemy planes were up while battalion was on the road. One plane attempted to strafe Headquarters Battery column. The M51 AAA weapon in our column fired on the plane as it dived into our column, causing the plane to shift to the

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25 March 1945 (cont'd)

left, thus missing the vehicles and hitting the ground 10 to 12 feet from the column. The plane was firing machine guns and light cannon. The entire battalion was not able to close in by 2400 because trucks had not returned from hauling infantry during the day. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 2325 rounds. Weather: Clear.

26 March 1945

The bridge for traffic going west across the Rhine river is located at 21.2-33.3. The battalion closed station at 1055 and moved at 1115, arriving in new position at 37.0-32.0 at 1135 hours. The infantry met only slight resistance today. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 228 rounds. Weather: Clear.

27 March 1945

The battalion FDC moved into the same building with the 3rd battalion of 134th Infantry. Capt Nicholson was injured when his vehicle ran into a bomb crater enroute to battalion CP. Lt Ambrose was injured by enemy artillery fire. 2 casualties--1 Non-battle and no reinforcements. Weather: Partly cloudy.

28 March 1945

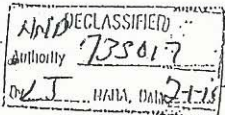
The 2nd and 3rd Battalions of 134th Inf began the attack. The 137th Inf was committed on the right advance, to the east. The 3rd battalion 134th Inf took 39 PWs and reported light resistance. The battalion arrived at the town of Peters, Germany 42.7-30.8 at 1350 hours and began registration by Air OP at 1405 hours. The battalion fired on self-propelled guns; fire was directed by air OP. The enemy fired heavy concentration of mortars on the 1st Battalion front lines. Machine gun firing could be observed from this CP. The infantry reported that the increased activity was not a counter-attack, that the enemy was firing from fixed positions and were making no attempt to advance. The FDC was moved into the basement because several rounds of artillery landed in the area. Maj Funk went to 134th Infantry CP as In O. One gun in Btry B fired a muzzle burst, injuring two men. 2 Casualties and no reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 1464 rounds. Weather: Partly cloudy.

29 March 1945

The infantry made good progress in their night attack; they reached objective at 0200 hours. They reported they had taken 39 PWs. One PW reported that the enemy had pulled out of Gladbeck, Germany. The infantry is sending out patrols to the town at 1230 hours. All missions were fired by ground observers because planes were grounded. Col. Schuster presented Bronze Star Ribbons to 7 enlisted men in Btry B. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 2194 rounds. Weather: Cloudy, rain.

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Hq 161 FA Bn, Action Against Enemy, Report After, 1-31 Mar 45 (cont'd)

30 March 1945

The infantry is meeting slight resistance due to small arms fire. PW reports town of Buer defended by 40 men. The infantry captured a self propelled gun and crew in their advance. The battalion closed station at 0800 and moved at 0930, arriving at new position of Gladbeck at 1020, and registering by Air OP. Col. Cunningham, G-5, visited this CP. Col. Russey of 349th FA Bn visited the CP. Col. Boatsman and Maj. Carroll of the 134th Infantry were in FDC today. Col. Schuster present Lt. Nation with the Bronze Star Ribbon. No casualties or reinforcements. Ammunition expended: 1932 rounds. Weather: Clear.

31 March 1945

In the early morning hours 10 rounds of artillery fell in battalion CP area. Three men were injured, two seriously, one slightly. The infantry is making good progress. The Col. left on reconnaissance at 1055 hours; the battery commanders left at 1130. The battalion moved at 1250 and arrived in new position at Westerholt at 1330. The battalion registered by Air OP. 2 Casualties, no reinforcements. Weather: Partly cloudy. Ammunition Expended: 2586. Grand total: 126,813.

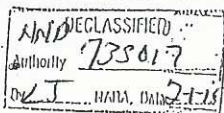
The Battle casualties for the month of March 1945 are as follows:

	<u>Off</u>	<u>EM</u>
KIA.....	0	1
DOW.....	0	0
SWA.....	0	3
SIA.....	0	0
LWA.....	0	15
LIA.....	0	0
MIA.....	0	0
Total.....	0	19

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							13	1		


The number of Purple Heart Medals awarded is: 12.
 The number of Purple Heart (Oak Leaf Clusters) is: 0.
 The number of prisoners captured is: 72.

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During this period, the 161st Field Artillery Battalion in direct support of the 134th Infantry, participated in the mopping up of the last defensive pockets between the Ruhr River and the Rhine River. The 134th Infantry drove to the Rhine just opposite Wesel, reducing pillboxes and other fortifications placed there to defend the city.

On 24th of March 1945, we reinforced fires of the 30th Division Artillery, supported them in their rapid crossing of the Rhine; and on the night of 25th of March, crossed the river with the 134th Infantry and drove east for six (6) days to clear the city of Gladbeck, and then continued on east.

The morale of the troops was excellent. During the drive after crossing the Rhine, we fired, never less than 1500 rounds during the night, in addition to observed and unobserved fire during the day. The gun crews were working hard day and night and also the ammunition sections were making long, difficult hauls day and night. When asked if the work was too hard, or if they worked too long hours, the reply was, "Hell no"! We came over here to shoot, you can't shoot too much for us"


HERMAN F SCHUSTER
Lt Col, FA
Commanding

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