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Authority 735017  
Date 11/11/01, Date 2-11-18

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS 216TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
APO 35 7 PM N Y N Y

4 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, C#3, AR 345-105 submitted below is report after action against the enemy for the 216th Field Artillery Battalion covering the period 1-28 February 1945.

1 February 1945

The 216th Field Artillery Battalion was in rendezvous at St Martin-Vermont, Holland, awaiting orders to move to positions northeast of Geilenkirchen, Germany. The Division was to relieve a British unit in this sector.

2-3 February 1945

The Division is now a part of XVI Corps of the 9th United States Army. According to initial orders the 320th Infantry was to take over the British line in the right portion of the Division Sector. This line was approximately three to four thousand yards short of the Roer River. This area is low ground subject to flooding, as well as offering no defilade from high slag piles on the opposite bank of the river.

4-7 February 1945

Reconnaissance elements moved to the vicinity of Tripsrath, Germany followed closely by the Battalion. Tactical positions were occupied at 1500. The village had been badly damaged from recent actions in that vicinity. Enemy mines were in evidence at many places. Their locations were easily disclosed due to the fact that the snow had melted. Teller mines were encountered on the shoulders of one lane used for ingress and egress to the main road several hundred yards distant. Booby traps and S Mines were found particularly on paths leading into coal sheds in the rear of buildings.

8-22 February 1945

It Col Reed received an order from Marshal Montgomery, 21st Army Group Commander to the officers and men of the Battalion. This order stated the last round would soon start and would be continued without time limit. The Ninth

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United States Army attack was to start 9 February 1945 which was subsequently called off due to the flooding of the Roer by enemy demolitions of dams further upstream. The attack did not start until 0245 23 February 1945.

The 216th Field Artillery Battalion from the time it occupied positions until the date for the attack on 9 February 1945 was taken up by re-installing all wire Communications with forward elements; putting as much wire overhead as possible; with a maximum of lateral tie-ins. Past actions have proven this to be the best method of maintaining vital lines during the few hours prior and subsequent to the attack. Approximately 35 miles of wire was installed.

During the period of time between the postponing of the attack and the 23rd of February, a training program was setup to include close order drill, field sanitation, military courtesy, and a very liberal pass schedule. Officers and Enlisted men were allowed to visit Sittard, Maastricht, Liege, and Brussels. Picture shows were held in the Battalion area, in an old Beer and Dance Hall. A Red Cross clubmobile visited the Battalion once during the period. Regular details for shower baths were sent daily to Heerlen, Holland. The shower baths were located in a State Coal Mine capable of accomodating 1000 men. Mail service was above normal during the period. All echelons of maintenance were closely supervised. Every precaution was taken to insure all materiel to be in first class condition.

23-28 February 1945

The attack was launched at 0245 23 Feb. The Division's mission was to seize the near bank of the Roer and to dig-in and hold. This attack was successful and shortly after daylight on 23 February 1945 all battalions of the 320th Infantry reported either on their objective or approaching it without too much resistance. Prior patrolling and information obtained from civilians and Prisoners of War furnished front line commanders with full information as to what was in front of their units. The targets were well covered by artillery fire in the 30 minute preparation. This battalion displaced to completely prepared positions in the vicinity of Holhaven, Germany. Continuous support was given during this period by displacing by battery, and also coordinating the fires of other reinforcing battalions

A task force under the command of Col B A Byrne was organized. This force would cross the Roer River at Kauit or Hilfarth depending upon road conditions as well as progress of constructing a bridge at Kauit. The bridge at Hilfarth had been captured intact by well planned heavy interdiction fires around it by the 35th Division Artillery.

Col Byrne issued his order for the front elements consisting of a tank

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battalion with the 3rd Battalion 320 Infantry riding thereon to pass the initial point at 1300 28 February 1945. The IP was located at Hilfarth bridge.

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

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

Awards received by members of 216 F A Bn are as follows:

	DSC	Silver Stars	Soldier's Medal	Bronze Star	Air Medal
	Reg Olc	Reg Olc	Reg Olc	Reg Olc	Reg Olc
Officers	0 0	2 0	0 0	2 0	0 4
Enlisted Men	0 0	0 0	1 0	7 0	0 0

The number of Purple Heart Awards are: None

Kenneth H Reed
KENNETH H REED
Lt Col, FA
Commanding