

735017
by *LS* NANA, Date

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS 21st ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 35

CLASSIFICATION

CANCELLED

February 1945

BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE

13 Jul 46

SUBJECT: Report After Action Against
TO : The Adjutant General
Washington 25, D. C.

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 219th Field Artillery Battalion covering the period 1-31 January 1945.

1 January 1945

Heavy harassing and interdiction fires were contd during the night. Reports of a proposed enemy counterattack were recd from PW's. The Div Comdr ordered the Arty to fire at the highest possible rate.

At 0130 Btry C of the 253d FA Bn moved into position to support the 6th Cav Gp and was asgd the mission of reinforcing the 219th FA Bn. At 1000 it was registered and tied in.

There was considerable bombing and strafing by our planes on our front to the north. Bn fired 1760 rds of am.

2 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires were contd during the night. The new electro-magnetic fuse was used to some extent.

At 0830 a smoke mission was fired to mark a target for an air strike which was made on the villages of Villers la Bonne Eau and Lutremange.

At 1900 harassing and interdiction fires were begun, using some electro-magnetic fuses.

At 2230 a fwd obsr reported enemy night movement in the vicinity of Harlange. The Bn fired road runners in the vicinity of the town.

Bn fired 1454 rds of am.

3 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires were contd with great intensity during the night. All roads and approaches to the front of the 137th Inf were covered every six minutes by a btry volley. Several TOT's were fired on logical assembly points. Several TOT's were fired during the day on towns and assembly areas discovered by aerial and ground obsrs.

The Bn contd harassing fires all day when not occupied with observed missions; road runners in particular were used. Orders were recd from Div Arty to the effect that fires would be intensified from 2200 to 0100 because of the possibility of an enemy counter attack.

The Bn fired 1952 rds of am.

24 1940

4 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires were increased considerably during the night, for the enemy was still expected to counterattack.

Both ground and aerial obsrs picked up numerous targets. Tanks and infantry and small scale attacks at various points along our lines kept the batteries and reinforcing units busy all day.

The enemy was reported to be coming in close to our troops to avoid heavy arty fire in the rear areas. Our Inf therefore used mortars to cover the close-in area. Harassing

RESTRICTED

3 5 6140 master

995-FA(219)-0.3

735017
 15 JAN 1945

RESTRICTED

(Report After Action Against Enemy - contd)

and interdiction fires were intensified during the early part of the evening.
 Bn fired 3233 rds of am.

5 January 1945

Heavy harassing and interdiction fires were contd during the night.

It has been found necessary to take each gun out of action frequently for maintenance due to continuous heavy firing.

Several TOT's were fired on enemy strong points and harassing and interdiction fires were contd during the day. Small scale enemy thrusts were made. All were repulsed by arty fire.

Targets north and east of our position were attacked by friendly aircraft.

Bn fired 3365 rds of am.

6 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires were continued at the rate of 5 rds per hr until 0400 when they were increased to 10 rds per hr and maintained until 0800 at which time they were cancelled.

The 0600 am report showed a total expenditure for the previous 24-hr period of 2029 rds, an approximate one-third reduction from the previous 24-hr period.

Numerous friendly planes were overhead with particular activity noted around 1100. No identified enemy planes were observed, although one unidentified plane was seen over the area at 1900.

Several road runners were fired for the 137th Inf, and 2 TOT's were fired for Div Arty. Harassing and interdiction fires were resumed at 2200 at the rate of 10 rds per hr.

7 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires terminated at 0800.

At 0445 a report was received that an enemy patrol had infiltrated behind our front lines. Additional guards were posted, but no enemy activity occurred in the Bn area.

The Bn fired 6 volleys on the town of Villers at 0545 when enemy activity had been observed there.

A total of 2987 rds of am were fired by the Bn during the 24-hr period prior to 0600.

A TOT was fired on Villers la Bonne Eau at 0715.

Friendly planes were overhead during the clear periods of the day. No enemy air activity was reported.

Firing during the day consisted of several harassing missions for the 137th Inf, one TOT on the town of Tarchamps, one counter-battery TOT, and the resumption of harassing and interdiction fires at 1900.

The 737th FA Bn ceased to reinforce our fires at 1900.

8 January 1945

The harassing and interdiction fires were terminated at 0600.

The 0600 am report showed an expenditure by the Bn of 1899 rds for the previous 24 hrs.

One unidentified plane was reported over the area at 0630, but no hostile action was noted.

The 514th FA Bn and the 127th FA Bn are reinforcing the fires of this Bn.

Very little enemy activity has been observed and the Bn has fired very little.

The harassing and interdiction fires were resumed at 2100.

9 January 1945

The 137th Inf Cannon Co was detached at 0400.

RESTRICTED

735017
Authority
by
Date

RESTRICTED

(Report After Action Against Enemy - contd)

The am report showed an expenditure of only 891 rds during the 24-hr period ending at 0600.

Preparation fires for a limited objective attack by the 137th Inf were begun at 0950.

At 1415 the Bn had exceeded the prescribed daily am almt. A small additional amount was allotted, but firing was very limited.

Harassing and interdiction fires were again resumed at 2200.

10 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires were stopped at 0600 when the am report showed a total Bn expenditure for the preceding 24 hrs of 557 rds.

After the cavalry reported that they were moving fwd against very little opposition, harassing fires were started on roads along which the enemy was believed to be retreating. At 1630 the Bn was adjusted on enemy troops, using liaison plane obsn, with excellent effect reported.

Bn resumed harassing and interdiction fires at 2200 and also fired some road runners during the night.

11 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires terminated as usual at 0600.

An expenditure for 24 hrs up to 0600 was 363 rds. Over-all total for the Bn since landing in France—95,990 rds.

CSMO was given to the batteries for everything but the guns and wire at 1200. At 1315 the Bn pulled out of position and traveled 8.1 miles to the town of Salvacourt. Registration was completed on base point at 1525.

A TOT was fired at 2400.

12 January 1945

Am fired during 24-hr period ending at 0600 totaled 154 rds.

After several hrs of inactivity the 179th FA Bn ceased reinforcing our fires at 1530.

During the lull in operations the Ln O's reported to the CP. Their reports indicated excellent effect of arty fire in all towns of the sector and particularly in Villers and Lutremange. Many enemy dead were observed in these towns and also in the woods upon which arty concentrations had been placed.

The Bn fired no missions during this 24-hr period. Apparently most of the resistance has ceased, and a definite attempt to withdraw is being made by the enemy.

With the cessation of most of the firing the civilians are evincing a desire to contact families and move about on business.

13 January 1945

The Bn, still inactive, was placed under direct control of Div Arty at 0830; combat teams were dissolved and the Bn became reinforcing arty.

A recon party returning to the Bn at 1500 reported large quantities of enemy material damaged by our arty fire.

During the day extensive friendly air activity was observed. No enemy aircraft were reported in the area.

14 January 1945

The Bn fired no missions; it left the old position at 0830 and arrived at Lutremange at 0915, traveling 3 miles. Registration was completed at 1155 on the base point.

Friendly aircraft were again very active during most of the day.

Two platoons of TD's were atchd to the Bn to be used on harassing and interdiction fires during the night.

Two enemy shells landed in the position area at 2200. The only damage was to telephone lines which were repaired in a short time.

735017
by LS N/A/A, Date 1/15/45

RESTRICTED

(Report After Action Against Enemy - contd) 15 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires started the evening before were terminated at 0600. An expenditure for preceding 24 hour period was 205 rds.

At 0630 CSMO was given to the batteries for displacement to the town of Marvie, about 2 miles southeast of Bastogne, and the most northerly point reached by this Bn during this action. At 0730 the Bn started displacement by btry at 15 minute intervals. Displacement was completed at 0930. The batteries were laid and ready to fire by 1030.

During most of the day considerable friendly air activity, both fighter and bomber, was evident over all of the salient. No enemy aircraft reported in the vicinity.

The Bn's firing for this period consisted mainly of harassing and interdiction fires and two TOT's fired from Div Arty.

At 2340 one enemy shell landed a short distance south of the CP, but no damage was done.

16 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires were suspended at 0600. The morning's am report showed a total of 322 rounds expended by the Bn for the preceding 24 hrs.

Fire missions for the Bn during the day consisted of two TOT's which were fired for Div Arty and the resumption of harassing and interdiction fires at 2130. Registration was checked on a check point.

Friendly planes--mostly fighter bombers--were active over the front at various times during the day. No enemy air activity was reported.

17 January 1945

At 0355 a counterattack was reported by Div Arty. The Bn immediately commenced firing prepared defensive fires. Firing contd for a period of approximately 30 minutes. At 0525 a report was recd from Div Arty that the counterattack had been repulsed.

An expenditure for the preceding 24 hr. period was 394 rds.

Firing for the day consisted mainly of a preparations starting at 1038 and terminating with a road runner at 1100 and two TOT's for Div Arty.

18 January 1945

Advance parties left Bn area at 0500--destination unknown.

The am expended during 24 hr period ending at 0600 was 336 rds.

CSMO was given the Bn at 0900 and it left the area at 1000. After a trip of 53 miles the Bn arrived in Metz at 1730.

19 January 1945

The entire day was spent by the Bn in making quarters more livable. Preparations were also made to perform maintenance operations on all ordnance equipment.

20 January 1945

Repair and maintenance of all equipment and material recd primary consideration of the Bn during the entire day.

The Bn recd 15 minutes of close order drill and went on an hour road march.

21 January 1945

Repair and maintenance of all equipment and material was contd.

Close order drill and a road march was conducted.

22 January 1945

Maintenance of equipment was contd.

Calisthenics or close order drill and a one-hour road march were conducted.

At 1900 the Bn was alerted for a combat team move. Batteries reloaded heavy and bulky equipment.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

(Report After Action Against Enemy - contd)

23 January 1945

Advance party left Bn area at 0345, joined 137th Inf advance party in Inf area and left Metz at 0400.

CSMO was given to the Bn by CO at 0700 and the Bn moved out of the barracks area at 1200. Bn arrived at new position in Seventh Army Sector at 1515. Batteries B and C were billeted in Haboudange, Hq and Hq Btry in Metzling, and Btry A and Sv Btry in Riche. Distance traveled--40 miles.

24 January 1945

Bn moved out of area at 0700 and after a march of 40 miles arrived at Monthronn, France at 1215.

At 1640 the Bn was registered on a base point by means of a forward obsr.

The Bn is now in the XV Corps. The 137th Combat Team is relieving the 396th Combat Team of the 100th Div.

Harassing and interdiction fires were begun at 2100 to continue during the night.

25 January 1945

At 0600 the am report showed a Bn expenditure for the previous 24-hr period of 79 rds.

Firing batteries were found to be too far to the rear and started displacement by btry at 1420. Btry A registered in new position by 1630. Other batteries then displaced.

Bn's fire mission consisted mainly of registration, harassing and interdiction, and defensive fires.

26 January 1945

Am expended by Bn for the previous 24-hr period was 171 rds.

The extremely rugged terrain in this sector makes high angle fire mandatory on some targets.

Present mission along entire sector is apparently one of straight defense. Positions are being prepared to rear of present front lines; alternate gun positions are being selected to the rear and demolitions of all types are prepared along all the roads leading to the rear.

Bn registered on base point at 1415 and on CP 2 at 1635.

One platoon of TD's from the 635th TD Bn SP is atchd to Bn for harassing and interdiction missions.

27 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires were contd during the entire day.

Am expenditure for the preceding 24 hrs was 195 rds.

28 January 1945

Harassing and interdiction fires contd throughout the day. Pozit fuzes were used during darkness or inclement weather.

Am expended--128 rds.

29 January 1945

The Bn fired 119 rds for the 24-hr period.

At 0640 the fwd obsr reported an attempt by a group of 20 or 30 Germans to penetrate our lines. The batteries fired prepared defensive fires and at 0715 the attempt was reported repulsed.

The Bn was rel'd by an arty bn of the 100th Inf Div and began preparations to move to the Ninth Army Sector.

RESTRICTED

735017
by LS NANA, Date 1-1-45

RESTRICTED

(Report After Action Against Enemy - contd)

30 January 1945

Bn left vicinity of Montbromm at 0815 and arrived at Dieue, France at 1815 after traveling 124 miles.

The Bn experienced some difficulty in maintaining convoy due to the fact that no unit designation was permitted on the vehicles.

31 January 1945

At 0800 the Bn left Dieue, and after traveling approximately 180 miles arrived at Mechelen, Netherlands at 2015.

S U M M A R Y

During the period covered by this report the Battalion served in the Third and Seventh United States Armies.

During this monthly period we assisted in crumbling the "Bulge of Bastogne", inflicting terrific personnel and materiel casualties on the forces of Von Rundstedt who had assured his troops, according to PW reports, that they were going to Paris and that the Allies were doomed for another Dunkirk. Even at St Lo the devastation of the city was no more complete than that inflicted upon the bitterly defended German strongholds of Viller la Bonne Eau and Lutramange.

To the South, in the Seventh Army area near Montbromm in Alsace and southwest of the German fortress of Bitche, the area was heavily blanketed with snow. The hills and small mountains resembled much our own West Virginia Mountain Maneuver Area in which we had trained in March of 1944. That training proved of value.

The Battalion suffered the following casualties during this period:

| | Officers | Enlisted Men | Total |
|---------------------|----------|--------------|-------|
| Killed in Action - | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wounded in Action - | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Injured in Action - | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Missing in Action - | 1 | 1 | 2 |

Seven reinforcements were recd.

No prisoners were captured.

One Silver Star Medal, six Purple Heart Medals, one Purple Heart Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster), and one Air Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster) were awarded to officers and men of the Battalion.

Claude N Shaver
CLAUDE N SHAVER
Lt Col, FA
Commanding

RESTRICTED