

Authority 7 35017
 By CO NARA Date 6-14-04

HEADQUARTERS 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
 A.P.O. #80 U. S. Army

1 October 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 September 1944 to 30 September 1944 inclusive. (Section I - Summary of daily operations and action).

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

1. NARRATIVE:

a. Moved to vicinity of COURCELLES-EN-BARRE in support of 317th Inf on 1 Sep 1944, continued in support at crossing of MEUSE RIVER, no artillery action.

b. The direct support mission was continued from positions at APREMONT, 2 Sep 1944. 7 missions fired: 1 Registration, 6 Infantry and Automatic Weapons.

c. 5 Sep 1944, moved by motor in direct support of 317th Inf to positions, vicinity of MAMEY. Mission to force crossing of MOSELLE RIVER. Remained in position at MAMEY until 11 Sep 1944. 140 missions fired, as follows: 17 Check Point Registrations, 5 BP Registrations, 34 Machine Guns, 3 Counterbattery, 4 Observation posts, 44 Interdiction, 8 Mortars, 25 Infantry.

d. Moved to firing positions on night of 11 Sep 1944 to vicinity of GRIS COURT to support crossing of MOSELLE RIVER by 317th Inf. Participated in artillery preparations in support of crossing and continued close support mission from that location until Infantry Battalions had secured objectives East of River. 14 missions fired as follows: 1 Base Point Registration, 2 Tanks, 1 Preparation, 4 Automatic Weapons, 6 Infantry.

e. Continued direct support, 317th Inf crossed MOSELLE RIVER under enemy fire on afternoon 12 Sep 1944 and occupied positions vicinity of BEZAUMONT at 1830 hrs. Remained in this position and on same mission through 20 Sep 1944. Battalion fired on enemy counter attacks against STE GENEVIEVE, (two); BEZAUMONT, FALAISE HILL, (two); VILLE AUVAL and LANDREMENT; under enemy artillery fire 12-16 Sep 1944. 143 missions fired as follows: 11 Interdiction, 1 TOT, 3 Base Point Registration, 79 Infantry, 9 Counterbattery, 6 Check Point Registrations, 7 Mortars, 5 Observation Posts, 3 Machine Guns, 3 Vehicles, 4 Tanks, 12 Normal Barrages.

f. Moved by motor to positions vicinity AUTREVILLE, 21 Sep 1944. Continued mission of direct support of 317th Inf. Remained in this position until 1715, 25 Sep 1944. 61 missions fired as follows: 5 Base Point Registrations, 9 Interdiction, 5 Check Point Registration, 10 Machine Guns, 11 Infantry, 2 Mortar, 10 Propaganda, 2 Smoke, 7 Vehicles.

g. Moved by motor to position vicinity of FAULX, 25 Sep 1944 and continued direct support mission of 317th Inf. Remained in this position through end of September. Prepared defensive positions and prepared plans for defense of 317th Inf Sector. 70 missions fired as follows: 4 Base Point Registrations, 5 Mortars, 3 Counterbattery, 1 Train, 2 Observation Posts, 5 Machine Guns, 7 Preparation 2 TOT, 2 Harassing, 2 Propaganda, 28 Infantry, 9 Check Points. Ammunition expenditure for month of September 1944: 11,514 rounds.

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2. SUMMARY - Survey.

a. In general Maps furnished were excellent. The distribution of Maps however, was poor. Very satisfactory Vertical Control obtained from the Maps. On fast moving situations excellent results could be obtained by inspection and short traverse of howitzer positions plus registration of one piece on a basepoint that could be identified both on ground and on map.

b. FDC - The need for additional trained FDC personnel is evident. Two crews are not sufficient for continuous 24 hour operations. Well trained and experienced telephone operators are essential to the smooth operation of FDC. S-2 and S-3 sections must be separated, but within fifty to seventy-five yards of each other for close cooperation and exchange of information. Surplus personnel and visitors must be kept away from FDC to avoid confusion and unnecessary distractions. Some provisions should be made for facilities and tentage for liaison officers and personnel from reinforcing Battalions. There can be no set number of rounds to be used in fire for effect. This will depend on experience of observer, ammunition available and aspects of the tactical situation. However, on dispersed infantry, Battalions should fire for effect with one volley and expect to make several shifts prior to completion of mission. This again is especially true with inexperienced observers. More use should be made of NCO's as forward observers. Time fire is very effective and should be used whenever possible.

c. AIR OP - The use of the Air OP has proven to be indispensable. It has been especially useful for registrations in fast moving situations and where terrestrial observation is lacking.

d. COMMUNICATIONS - Wire communications is definitely the primary means of communications. A complete net in operation solves 50% of the problems. A separate forward switching central with each committed Infantry Battalion with lines to FO's has proven to be one solution. Every effort on part of IO and FO's must be made to maintain and keep wire to observers with front line units in both static and moving situations. A more portable radio is needed for the F. O. It is exceptional when the 610 radio can be used while mounted in the $\frac{1}{4}$ ton vehicle. The use of two or more 608 radios is indicated for FDC. More use should be made of the 284 radio in order that the 608 may be shut off periodically. More training and use of pyrotechnics is indicated.

e. COOPERATION WITH INFANTRY - There is a marked disregard on the part of the infantry commander on certain limitations of Field Artillery. There is a definite lack of knowledge on the part of the Infantry Company and Bn. Commander as to the proper and most effective use of the Forward Observer. The location of Infantry and Artillery OP's together in most instances has proven impractical, however constant Command liaison is necessary. The planning of defensive fires and barrages has proven to be difficult for the Infantry Commander - instead these fires must generally be planned by the Artillery and submitted, if time permits, to the infantry, for inclusion in fire plans.

f. REINFORCING ARTILLERY - The cooperation of reinforcing artillery has been superior. The Corps plan of liaison, and communications has proven to be sound and practical. A Light Direct Support Battalion does not have the personnel to efficiently use more than one reinforcing battalion. Any additional supporting units should be handled by Div. Arty. or group who have the personnel and equipment for this particular purpose. This applies to Tanks, Tank Destroyers and AAA in their secondary missions as well as Field Artillery.

(After Action Report, continued)

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g. AAA - A platoon of AAA, consisting of 4-40MM guns and 4-50 Cal Quads has proven satisfactory for AA protections. There has been very little air action however and the adequacy of this AA protection is yet to be proven. The cooperation of this AAA platoon has been superior.

h. AMMUNITION - With a well trained ammunition train and an alert and aggressive Munitions Officer the ammunition supply problem has been negligible. The handling of ammunition by ASP personnel in so far as segregation and issue by lot number has been deplorable. It has been impossible to obtain any large quantity (50 or more rounds) of ammunition of the same lot number.

i. SUMMARY OF AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES TO DATE:

Shell HE Fuze M-54.....	3388 Rounds
Shell HE Fuze M-48.....	10273 Rounds
Shell HE AP.....	4 Rounds
Shell Smoke HC.....	98 Rounds
Shell Smoke WP.....	88 Rounds
Shell, Smoke Red.....	14 Rounds
Total, to date.....	13865 Rounds

j. SUMMARY OF MISSIONS FIRED, 1 Sep to 30 Sep 1944:

Registration on base point and checkpoint	47
Registration by High Burst.....	7
Registration by C. I.....	3
Tanks and armored vehicles.....	6
Vehicles - trucks, vans, etc.....	10
Observation posts.....	11
Infantry.....	150
Machine Guns.....	59
Mortars.....	22
Preparations.....	8
Counter-Battery.....	15
Interdiction.....	66
Barrage.....	12
TOT.....	3
Smoke.....	2
Propaganda.....	12
Total missions fired.....	433

John W. Bowden
JOHN W. BOWDEN,
Major, FA,
S-3

HEADQUARTERS 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
A.P.O. #80 U. S. Army

1 October 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 September 1944 to 30 September 1944 inclusive. (Section II - Intelligence Operations).

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

1. Two or three OP's, depending on the terrain, are occupied. These OP's are surveyed in and plotted with a reference point which all OP's use. These OP's are manned by sufficient battery personnel to rotate observers often. Information is reported by instrument readings and approximate range. In this manner an approximate instrument reading can be given the other OP's which can in turn observe and report accurate readings from which we can get an intersection on the point to be located. In a stable or slow moving phase more information is gained from OP's than from Forward Observers because most movement will be in rear areas and not visible to front line units.

2. Higher headquarters has coordinated OP observation very well and many times an OP in another sector assists in locating targets defiladed from our OP's. Information from higher headquarters is sent by phone if it pertains to our sector and later bulletins covering the entire sector are sent down. These bulletins do assist us in keeping an up to date situation map.

3. The Liaison Officer with the infantry unit is another source of information. Particularly in the disposition of friendly troops and proposed moves and plans of the infantry.

4. CODES: a. There are too many codes that only add to the confusion of the front line observer. A simple code should be devised and then remain in use for a longer period of time. In this way the code would be memorized by everyone and could be used more effectively.

b. The Slidex code has not been mastered by this or other adjacent Hq.

c. The Template is not used by the Forward Observer. To properly use it he must have a map board which is bulky and in most cases draws fire more than any object a man could carry. Because of this the Forward Observers do not carry the cases, but fold their maps and carry them concealed. A code which could be put on the maps should be used. Conditions at night are very unfavorable to the use of the Template.

5. COMMUNICATIONS: a. simplex or direct lines should connect the S-2 section with OP's. In this way information could be obtained without interfering with fire mission.

b. Forward Observer and OP personnel need training in distinguishing between pure S-2 information and S-3 information and then send it to the right place. Not enough significance is attached to pure S-2 information by personnel in forward areas.

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(After Action Report - Intelligence, continued)

6. S-2 PERSONNEL: Under existing T/O there is no personnel allotted to the Bn. S-2 for maintaining the S-2 section. Personnel with other duties have to do double duty as S-2 assistants. I believe personnel should be included in the T/O for this job so they could be trained in the work.

7. CONTACT WITH OTHER UNITS: D/S Bns should have at least one 300 Series radio to maintain radio contact with Infantry Bn S-2's and the Infantry I/R Platoon. In this manner information could be passed on to higher headquarters much faster through the Artillery communication system.

John W. Bussey
JOHN W. BUSSEY
Captain, FA
S-2

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SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 September 1944 to 30 September 1944 inclusive. (Section III - Logistics, supply procedure, problems).

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

1. Class I Supply: a. From 1 September 1944 to 10 September 1944 "C", "K" and 10-in-1 were available. 10-in-1 proved most satisfactory because of varied menus and ease of distribution.
b. From September 10th to September 30th "B" rations were issued. Substitute menus are unsatisfactory. Larger quantities of condiments and staple items should be issued.
c. 10% of the daily rations should be "C", "K" or 10-in-1 rations for Forward Observers and Liaison parties.
d. Administrative Overlays arrive too late or are never received. Military Police and Traffic Control points have been a great help in locating Supply Points.

2. Class II Supply: Class II has been unsatisfactory. The latter part of September situation had improved.

3. Class III Supply: Class III is generally satisfactory. Depots are located too far from Battalion areas. Division dump is more satisfactory.

(NOTE: Recommend a 3/4 ton W.C. for Battalion Supply in Artillery Units.)

4. Motor Supply: a. The 2½ Ton S.W.B. wrecker is too light and thereby inefficient for light maintenance field work.

b. Certain tool sets contained in the 2nd Echelon set meant for shopwork are not necessary for field work.

- (1) Gear puller sets.
- (2) Hydraulic tire spreader.
- (3) Anvil.
- (4) Oil pans.

c. Basic load of certain high mortality parts for this theater is not enough.

- (1) Flexible brake hose lines.
- (2) Gaskets of all kinds.
- (3) Contact point sets.

d. Seventy percent of tires are damaged by cuts from improper disposal of "C" and "K" ration cans.

e. Thirty percent of the parts replacement delay on tubes with damaged valve stems could be avoided by having valve stems of the removable type.

f. Tire vulcanizing repair outfits should be located in vicinity of combat operating divisions.

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HEADQUARTERS 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTAL
APO #80 U. S. Army

Authority 735017
By CO NARA Date 6-14-04

1 October 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 September 1944 to 30 September 1944 inclusive (Section IV - Personnel and Allied Administration).

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

1. Strength: The Battalion entered the period with the following strength:

	<u>T/O Authorization</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Over or Short</u>
Officers	34	34	
Warrant Officers	2	2	
Enlisted Men	473	470	-3

2. Casualties and Replacements to date:

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Officers</u>
Killed in action	6	1
Died of Wounds		1 (Bn S-2)
Wounded in Action	31 (RTD 6)	6
Disease or injury (non-battle)	15 (RTD 8)	1 (RTD 1)
Totals	52	9
Replacements received	38	12

Note: Usually a sufficient number of enlisted replacements have been secured, although for the most part they have had no training in the T/O position vacancy created by losses.

3. Payment of Battalion: It was found feasible to appoint only one officer, preferably the Personnel Officer, as Agent Officer to pay the men and officers of the entire battalion. This eliminated the necessity of pulling several officers from the forward units where most needed.

4. Awards to date:

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Officers</u>
Air Medal	1	1
Certificate of Merit	1	
Purple Heart	22	6

M. R. Callaway
M. R. CALLAWAY, C
WOJG, USA,
Personnel Officer.

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(After Action Report, Section III, continued).

g. Puncture proof tubes should be put on critical vehicles such as:

- (1) Messenger vehicles.
- (2) Command and Staff vehicles.

5. Glass V Supply: a. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining allocations and supply was again very limited for a period of about two weeks after the Moselle River crossing.

b. The most outstanding difficulty at present is that the system in use at A.S.P. 29 makes it impossible to obtain any sizeable amount of any lot number.

A. L. Servilio
A. L. SERVILIO
Captain, FA
S-4

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