

735017  
By CO SARA Date 6-14-04

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

4 November 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 October 1944 to 31 October 1944 inclusive. (Section I - Summary of daily operations and action).

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

1. NARRATIVE OF EVENTS:

a. The battalion occupied defensive positions at FAULX 1-8 October 1944, continuing direct support of 317th Inf. Howitzers and all battery installations were dug in and permanent OPs established. CP and FDC located in a shellproof vault under a dwelling. Reinforcing Artillery during this period consisted of one battalion of 105 MM Howitzers, (512th FA Bn) and two platoons of 808th TD.

b. On 2 Oct 1944 and 3 Oct 1944 the battalion supported the action of 2nd Battalion, 317th Inf in its attempt to extend the OPLR to include the town of SIVRY. This support consisted of softening-up fires on SIVRY and MT TOULON prior to the attack and screening observation on MT TOULON and MT ST JEAN after daylight, also close in fires as called for by the Forward Observer with the Assault Company. Radio and Wire Communications were maintained with the Forward Observer during the first day and night of this operation.

c. Prior to daylight on 3 Oct 1944 the enemy counterattacked our positions at SIVRY and were successful in retaking the town. The counterattack was preceded by a heavy Artillery and mortar preparation which took out our wire and radio Communications. Certain Barrages and defensive concentrations were called for over the Infantry 300 series radio. The normal and emergency barrages were fired repeatedly in an attempt to break up the attack. Observation from ground OPs above the town was poor during this operation due to weather conditions.

d. On 7 Oct 1944 the battalion coordinated the fires of reinforcing units in the preparation fire prior to the attack of 317th on MT ST JEAN, MOIVRON and JEANDELINOURT and continued close support during the capture of these objectives. During this period 1-8 Oct 1944, 140 Missions were fired as follows: 23 on Infantry, 5 High Burst Registration, 15 Harassing, 20 Preparations, 12 TOTs, 2 Observation Posts, 2 Command Posts, 1 Counter Battery, 22 Interdiction, 3 Smoke, 4 Machine Gun, 4 Barrage, 10 Mortars, 2 Propaganda, 1 Tank; 8 Base Point Registration, 6 Check Point.

e. At 1830 hrs, 8 Oct 1944, the Battalion displaced to positions in the vicinity of BRATTE. Mission direct support of the 317th Infantry advancing on LETRICOURT and CHENICOURT. Continued on this mission until CT was relieved in this sector beginning 12 Oct 1944. 28 Missions fired during the period as follows: 6 Infantry, 6 Harassing, 6 Interdiction, 2 Machine Guns, 1 Tank, 4 Mortars, 3 Base Point Registrations.

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f. At 1545 hrs, 12 Oct 1944, the Battalion displaced to defensive positions vicinity of LOISY, with mission of Direct Support of 317th Infantry. The Battalion was well dug-in and dispersed and complete plans of defensive fires made and coordinated with reinforcing units. At 1900 hrs 28 Oct 1944 moved to positions in the FORET DE FACQ to west of PORT SUR SEILLE. Mission unchanged. Battalion remained in the location and on same mission through 31 Oct 1944. 56 Missions fired as follows: 12 Infantry, 14 High Burst Adjustment, 11 Interdiction, 1 Observation Posts, 2 Counter Battery, 2 Machine Gun, 7 BP Registrations, 1 Vehicles, 1 Propaganda, 3 Mortars, 2 CI.

g. During the period 12-31 October 1944, very little firing was done by the battalion. There was limited enemy activity in the sector and the allowance of ammunition was considerably decreased. The firing of the battalion was limited to targets of opportunity and necessary registrations to insure accurate fires in event of an emergency or enemy attack. During this period reinforcing units consisted of 512 FA Bn, 775 FA Bn, 1 Platoon 808 TD Bn, Co A, 702 Tank Bn, Cannon Co, 317th Inf and 411 AA Bn. Interdiction and harassing fires during the period were assigned to the TD platoon, Tank company and Cannon Company. Targets of opportunity were fired on using any reinforcing unit as situation and nature of target warranted.

## 2. SUMMARY:

a. SURVEY - During period of this report, due to the defensive nature of the action, there was considerable increase in survey work. Position areas, observation posts, base and reference points were accurately located and rechecked. Bases were located for quick plotting of enemy activities. Extensive calibration of instruments was carried on during period.

b. FDC - Special arrangements are necessary to maintain contact and liaison with armored units operating in the zone of our infantry. This is equally true if the infantry is following in force to take over objectives or advancing as an Infantry-Tank Team. It is essential that a direct support Artillery Battalion know at all times, location of all advance units operating in the zone of the reinforced infantry and those on adjacent sectors. There should never be doubt as to location of adjacent units in the front lines. Recapulation of Missions fired is as follows:

Registration on Base Point.....	18
Registration on Check Point.....	6
Registration by High Burst.....	19
Registration by Center of Impact.....	2
Infantry.....	41
Machine Guns.....	6
Mortars.....	17
Vehicles.....	1
Tanks.....	2
Observation Post.....	3
Command Post.....	2
Counter-Battery.....	3
TOT.....	12
Preparations.....	20
Barrages.....	4
Harassing.....	21
Interdiction.....	39

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Propaganda.....	3
Smoke.....	<u>3</u>
Total Missions.....	224

Average number of rounds per mission, 20.54 rounds. Of Total Missions fired, 36, or 16%, were Battalion concentrations.

c. AIR OP - The weather during the entire period was bad, visibility very poor, limiting the activity of the Air OP. The Air OP was, however, used to good advantage, weather and visibility permitting, for sector patrol and special missions.

d. COMMUNICATIONS - Due to limited movements and defensive nature of mission during majority of the period, no considerable difficulty was encountered in maintaining wire. Long lateral lines installed to adjacent units resulted in use of unusually large amounts of wire. Radio Communications continued good, although the need for an improved portable type radio for forward observers is indicated.

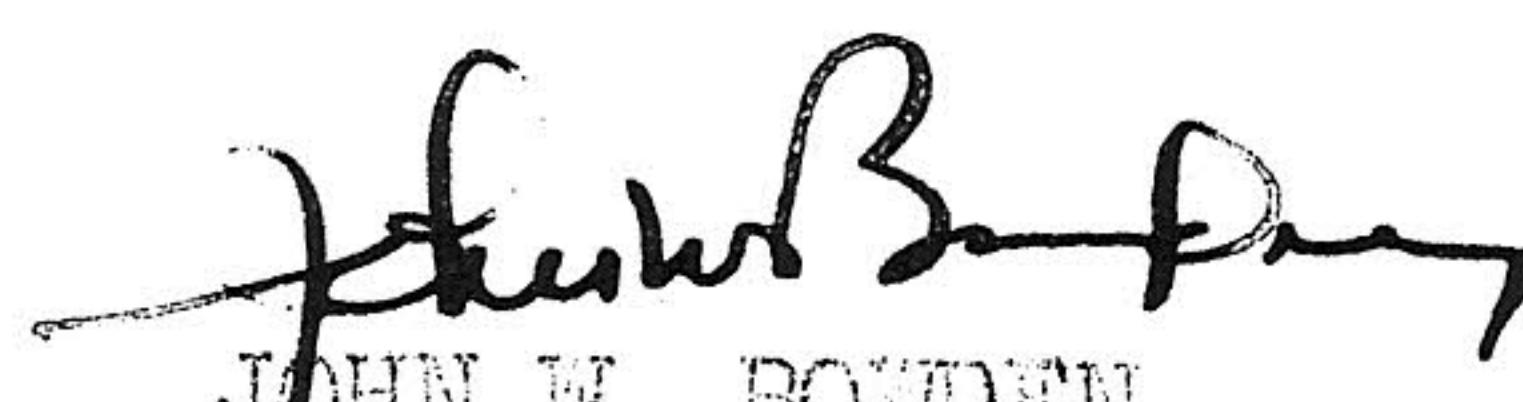
e. INFANTRY COOPERATION - The replacement of the 105 MM, M-3 Howitzer used by the cannon company with the 4.2 chemical mortar should be given consideration.

f. REINFORCING ARTILLERY - The assistance and cooperation of reinforcing units of Artillery continues to be excellent.

g. TRAINING - During the period 13-31 October, considerable training of personnel of battalion was conducted. Special emphasis being placed on gunnery and technique of fire support. Classes for infantry officers in conduct of fire using FO Methods were conducted in each Infantry Battalion by the Artillery Liaison Officer. Stress was placed on the preparation and improvement of permanent field fortifications. Maintenance and care of equipment and vehicles was reemphasized.

h. AMMUNITION - The problem of many different lots of ammunition remains unchanged. Every opportunity is taken however, to eliminate small lots by using them on harassing and interdiction Missions. A recapulation of Ammunition expended during the month is as follows:

Shell HE M-48.....	3659 Rounds
Shell HE M-54.....	782 Rounds
Shell, Smoke, HC.....	<u>160</u> Rounds
Total Expenditure.....	4601 Rounds

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

[Redacted]

N.Y.I. Authority 735017  
By CO SARA Date 6.14.04

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

5 November 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 October 1944 to 31 October 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	471	-2

2. Casualties and Replacements for the period:

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Officers</u>
Killed in action	2	
Wounded in action	4	1
Missing in action	1	1
Disease or injury (non-battle)	15	1
Totals	22	3
Replacements received	12	1

3. Awards for the period:

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Officers</u>
Bronze Star	3	0
Purple Heart	7	2

4. Payment of Battalion: All Officers and enlisted men of the battalion were paid on 31 October 1944.

5. Mail: Letters and packages from home, the Number 1 morale factor, have not been coming to the troops as they should. Somewhere along the channels mail is being held up. In some instances, several days and even weeks elapse without a mail delivery.

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

[Redacted]

Authority 735017  
By CO DARA Date 6-14-44

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

3 November 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report, 1 September 1944 to 30 September 1944

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

1. Concurrence in above sections as prepared by Staff Officers is made.

2. The following additional general comments are offered:

a. Reconnaissance as generally taught at the FA School cannot always be used. Parties were normally reduced, with reconnaissance continued by echelon. The  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton "jeep" is the most practical vehicle for reconnaissance. Good position areas were plentiful with the exception of first area on crossing Moselle River.

b. Displacements were of the orthodox one-and-then two-battery echelon type or when possible the fires were taken over by a reinforcing battalion. This was accomplished by sending a radio car to CP of that battalion and turning over wire circuits. Range and communications are the dominating and controlling factors in displacement.

c. COMMUNICATIONS

(1) Radio worked exceptionally well, at times relay stations were needed and used. Base sets were habitually the 608 Series.

(2) Wire was at times precarious. Speed in laying must be sacrificed to insure positive wire communication. The issue of  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton wire vehicles to Hq Btry in quantity is indicated.

(3) Messenger Communications were usually excellent after positions were stabilized.

(4) Fyrotechnic Communication was definitely not exploited on the part of infantry or artillery.

(5) Relay by Air OP was frequently used to advantage.

d. Firing Batteries. Their functioning was the least worry of the commander. Sufficient personnel seemed to always be available and response was excellent.

e. OBSERVATION

(1) Reliance was placed on Forward Observers and Air OP's. The maintenance of communications and personnel in FO parties was the most difficult problem encountered.

(2) Semi-permanent OP's were used, normally, two per battalion with one additional per reinforcing battalion.

f. MAINTENANCE

(1) The motor maintenance was continued by rotating service battery vehicles into the Hq and lettered batteries thereby freeing vehicles to the Bn Section for a minimum of 24 hours. Movement of the Bn Section was delayed until absolutely essential.

(2) The maintenance of Ordnance materiel was handicapped by lack of C & P Materiel. (Later remedied toward end of period).

g. RATIONS

(1) All types were used and proved adequate. The preparation of 10-in-1 type while moving rapidly was cumbersome.

(2) The use of the B Rations with kitchens near position areas has proved to be the most satisfactory.

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By CO SARA Date 6-14-04

h. SUPPLY CLASS II, III, IV, V:

Adequate and timely with few exceptions.

i. LOCAL SECURITY

(1) Very difficult for the Hq Btry since all personnel were usually otherwise engaged. Guards were furnished by sections, four to six posts (stationary) being used for each battery.

(2) The destruction of one enemy tank by direct fire of a 105 mm Howitzer was made during this period.

j. GUNNERY

(1) Normally, none other than the usually accepted methods were used. When deviated from, time was excessive.

(2) In fire for effect the use of more ammunition is indicated. In my opinion six volleys for effect should be the rule, after a 100 yard bracket is obtained.

(3) There were occasions when conflicting or incorrect reports of front lines suspended adequate artillery support. The responsibility for observed missions should be placed on the observer, in conjunction with immediate infantry commander, even though the "plot" shows below safe elevation on H.C.O. Chart, or in Sector of adjacent troops.

(4) The use of Metro data increased toward latter part of period and improved the accuracy of fires as witnessed on the ground.

k. SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Use of Artillery when infantry is operating in heavy woods: In my opinion this type of operation calls for a complete saturation of woods by all available artillery and other supporting weapons on areas followed by the infantry assault. Once the foot soldier has entered woods close-in support has proved nearly impossible. The amount of Amm used will necessarily be great before the attack but negligible during the attack. The normal preparation followed by "call missions" is inadequate.

l. The assistance rendered by reinforcing Artillery battalions was indispensable, more than adequate and superior in execution.

m. Combat losses

They must be avoided even though over-caution is necessary. Replacements were not adequately trained. Only one FO, who entered combat at beginning of period, is still with the organization. Six officers have been lost in action as observers.

*F. W. Ellery*  
F. W. ELLERY  
Lt Col, FA  
Commanding.

5 Incls.

- Incl 1 - After Action Report (Section I)
- Incl 2 - After Action Report (Section II)
- Incl 3 - After Action Report (Section III)
- Incl 4 - After Action Report (Section IV)
- Incl 5 - After Action Report (Unit Journal)



NY 735017  
By CO KARA Date 6-14-44

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

5 November 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 October 1944 to 31 October 1944 inclusive. (Section II - Intelligence Operations).

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

1. In the period covered by this report, this battalion supported the Combat Team in both the offensive and defensive roles. In the period October 1 to October 12 this battalion supported the attack of the 317th Infantry in conjunction with other elements of the division to drive the enemy North of the Seille River.

2. For the attack, OPs were established on commanding ground and occupied by battery personnel. In addition, a Command CP was established and occupied by the Battalion Commander for the control of fire of all supporting weapons.

3. OPs were located adjacent to the command CP and manned by Commanders of the Infantry Cannon Company, Tank Destroyers, Anti-Aircraft Artillery, Chemical Mortars, and reinforcing Artillery units. A complete wire net was established and all OPs were tied together. This was a definite aid in the control of fires and materially assisted the advance of the Infantry.

4. As soon as commanding ground was taken by the Infantry, the Battery OPs were moved forward and the wire was extended. Radio was used as an alternate means of communications.

5. From 12 October to 31 October, the battalion supported the Combat Team in defensive positions in the left of the division sector. Positions were organized for defense and three OPs were established to cover the entire sector. Again a complete wire net was established. OPs were located by survey and instruments were laid on a common reference point. OPs were plotted on the chart and targets could be located very accurately by long base methods. All OPs were manned 24 hours a day and furnished a greater part of S-2 information. In addition to the battalion OPs, 5 forward observers OPs were established and plotted on the map. By using all OPs, each portion of the target area could be observed by at least 3 observers.

6. During this period "Shellrep" teams were organized in each battery and the survey section. They have proven to be of great aid and are used at every opportunity to obtain "Shellrep".

  
JOHN W. BUSSEY  
Captain, FA,  
S-2

**SECRET**

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By CO DARA Date 6.14.44

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

5 November 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 October 1944 to 31 October 1944 inclusive. (Section III - Logistics, supply procedure, problems).

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

1. Class I Supply: Rations have been up to par. The 10% increase for Liaison and Forward Observers parties has taken effect. Substitute items are still not satisfactory.

2. Class II Supply: Clothing has been better this month than any previous month, but critical shortages in heavy clothing still exist.

3. Class III Supply:

- a. Division control of gasoline and oil is good.
- b. The use of Diesel Oil in Immersion Type Heaters has proven a failure and in some cases, insanitary.

4. Motor Supply:

- a. Tire replacement still critical, near-by tire unit would be the solution.
- b. Parts, common, replacement should be improved. (i.e.) bolts, nuts and washers.
- c. Difficulty in obtaining parts for 12 volt system. (i.e.) 12 volt ignition coil has been on requisition 7 weeks.
- d. Forward Observer and Liaison vehicles have been recalled after each tactical problem for a spot check by 2nd Echelon shop.

5. Class V Supply:

- a. Ammunition supply adequate, but distance is generally too great to A. S. P.
- b. Still cannot obtain any sizeable amount of one lot number.

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

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