

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

Authority 735017
By CO NARA Date 6-14-04

4 January 1945

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

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

1. NARRATIVE OF EVENTS:

a. At the opening of the period the Battalion occupied positions in the vicinity of SENGBUSH with the mission of general support. There were no changes in position and little activity by the enemy or by us until the 4th of December. On that date the 318th Infantry attacked to clear the town of PFARREBERS VILLER and to capture the high ground to the north and east of town. The Battalion supported the attack which was successfully carried through at 1400 hours. On 5 December 1944 the firing batteries displaced to positions south of BENINGEN. There was no change in the location of the CP which remained on the outskirts of SENGBUSH. The 6th of December 1944, the last day spent in this sector, passed with no change and little enemy activity.

b. On the 7th of December the Battalion marched to the town of CHICOURT. The purpose, to prepare a demonstration of Pozit fuzes for the XII Corps. Also participating in the event, under our control, were Battery "C" of the 974th Field Artillery Battalion (155 mm Howitzer), 1 section of the 741 Field Artillery Battalion (8 " Howitzer) and one section of the 267th Field Artillery Battalion (240 Howitzer). On the 8th of December FDC and the CP were set up at FONTENOY. All batteries were registered and several rounds of Pozit were fired. The results were very successful. The next day, 9 December 1944, the demonstration was performed for the XII Corps.

c. On the 10 of December the Battalion moved to bivouac at ST. AVOLD with the mission of rehabilitating personnel and equipment and to accomplish some training. Cannon Company of the 317th Infantry Regiment was attached to the Battalion for administration and operations. On the 11th of December the CP moved from ST. AVOLD to EBERSWEILER. The rest of the Battalion remained in ST AVOLD. During this period, from the 11 December 1944 to 17 December 1944, much needed maintenance was performed on all vehicles, personnel were rehabilitated and gunnery schools and other types of instruction were carried out.

d. On 18 December 1944 the Battalion moved to an assembly area at VITTERSBOURG. We left EBERSWEILER at 0700 hours and arrived at the new area at 1100 hours. Reconnaissance was made for position areas and plans made to move into them the next morning. The night

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On 18 - 19 December 1944 the Battalion was alerted to move to the north, to the area of the German counter attack. The Battalion marched at 1140 hours, 19 December 1944 and arrived at ERNSTER, LUXEMBOURG 0400 hours, 20 December 1944. The distance marched was 125 miles. On the morning of the 20th December 1944 the Battalion moved into position in DS of the 317th Infantry Regiment. Main battle positions in the rear of the 4th Infantry Division were occupied with the mission of repulsing the German counter offensive. There was no action and no firing was done. The morning of 21 December 1944 the Battalion was alerted to move to occupy positions for attack in general support of the division. At 1430 hours the Battalion moved to the vicinity of KEISPELT and occupied firing positions. No firing was done from these positions.

e. On the morning of 22 December 1944 the Division attacked to the north. 313th Field Artillery Battalion in general support and reenforcing the fires of the 905th Field Artillery Battalion. At 1145 hours displaced to new positions south of BISSEN. Fired on targets of opportunity and registered. The firing batteries again displaced at 1600 hours to the north of BISSEN. On the 23rd of December the 317th Infantry was committed and the Battalion went into DS. The Battalion displaced at 1720 hours to the vicinity of OBERFEULEN, 512th Field Artillery Battalion reenforcing our fires. On the night of 23 - 24 December 1944 the 752nd Field Artillery Battalion (155 Howitzer) also joined the Battalion to reenforce our fires.

f. The morning of 25 December 1944 the 317th Infantry Regiment attacked. A 30 minute preparation was fired. The objectives were not taken and heavy resistance was encountered. The morning of the 26th of December 1944 the 317 Infantry Regiment again attacked. Preparation was again fired. The attack was not successful. The infantry readjusted their lines and went into active defense. The 752nd Field Artillery Battalion relieved from reenforcing our fires.

g. For the remainder of the month the Division remained in defensive positions. The pieces were all dug in and shelters provided for all personnel. Targets of opportunity were fired upon. Harrassing and interdiction fires were increased and a plan of defensive fires coordinated with the infantry.

[REDACTED]

(After Action Report, continued)

2. SUMMARY

a. Missions Fired.

	Period 1 - 6 Dec	Period 20 - 31 Dec	TOTAL
Infantry	17	68	85
T.O.T.	13	83	96
Vehicles	1	4	5
Interdiction	15	144	159
Counter Battery	12	16	28
C.P.'s	1	0	1
BP Registration	2	14	16
Smoke	1	9	10
Preparations	18	23	41
Counter Preparations		15	15
Tanks		8	8
Machine Guns		2	2
Mortars		5	5
Harrassing		5	5
OP's		4	4
Ch. PT's		3	3
Rocket Guns		1	1
TOTAL MISSIONS		484	

Average number of rounds per mission 26.8. Of total missions fired, 226 or 47% were fired by the Battalion. Of total missions fired 36 or 7.5% were with time shell. Of the total missions fired, since the night of 25 December 1944 when Pozit fuzes were first used, 37 or 11% were fired with the Pozit fuze. Of the total missions fired 96 or 20% were observed fire missions.

b. SURVEY - During the beginning of the period in the sector around SENG BUSH the 1/25,000 map was excellent. When the Battalion first moved to the LUXEMBOURG sector, the maps were a first edition and the control was not up to the standard. In a few days a later edition which had been corrected was made available.

c. COMMUNICATIONS -

1. During the moving phases radio remained the primary means of communication to FO's and Ln O's. However, once the front stabilized, wire was laid to all observers and was used exclusively except for short periods when the wire was shot out.

2. Two spare SCR 610 radios have been kept at the Battalion radio section. One lined up on A and B Channels. The other on B and C Channels. When an observer was sent out from a reinforcing Battalion he traded his radio for one in the radio section. This saved valuable time, normally spent in tuning observer sets to our channel.

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3. The spare SCR 284 Radio was sent to Service Battery to be used for communication with Service Battery and the air section.

4. During the month, approximately 143 miles of wire was laid. Due to excellent initial laying by wire crew little trouble was experienced with lines going out.

d. AIR OP - A total of 24 missions were fired by the air OP during the period. Missions as follows:

Registration	12
Counter Battery	6
Infantry	5
Smoke	1

Total 24

e. AMMUNITION - Supply of ammunition was adequate. Towards the end of the period there was a noticeable improvement in the number of rounds of one lot number received. Initial use of the Pozit fuze has been restricted to night firing. The reports from PW's has indicated that it has been especially effective on interdiction and harrassing missions. Ammunition was expended during the period as follows:

Shell HE Fuze M48	10,487 Rds.
Shell HE Fuze M54	1,854 Rds.
Shell Smoke WP	62 Rds.
Shell Smoke HC	34 Rds.
Shell HE Fuze Pozit	415 Rds.

Total Expenditure 12,852 Rds.

f. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. During the period six forward observers were kept with the Infantry. Two with each Battalion. Four of these were from our own outfit and two were obtained from the reenforcing Battalions. It has proven almost impossible to maintain more than this number due to the high casualty rate among the forward observer and the observer parties. Forward Observers and parties were rotated every three days. It is believed that this policy greatly increases their efficiency and consequently their value to the Infantry.

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2. The addition of the Cannon Company to the Battalion has worked out very satisfactory, without adding many extra duties to any section of the Battalion. It was hoped that this addition of six howitzers would mean almost a 50% increase in the fire power of the Battalion. However, due to restrictions prohibiting the use of Charge V with the M3 Howitzer it has been impossible to fire them on a great many missions.

Burton E. Beck

BURTON E. BECK,
Captain, FA,
S-3.

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

Authority 7 35017
By [signature] NARA Date 6-14-04

4 January 1945

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

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

1. At the opening of the period the Battalion occupied positions in the vicinity of SENG BUSH with the mission of General Support. At this time the 317th Infantry Regiment was in reserve and the 318th Infantry Regiment had the mission of taking FAR-CHVILLER. Units in contact were elements of German 36th Infantry Division, and 17 SS Reconnaissance Battalion plus attached units. The 17 SS Reconnaissance Battalion had the mission of delaying our advance to the east at all costs. The morale of this unit was very high and they did accomplish their mission by delaying our units until the remnants of the 36th Infantry Division and 17 SS Panzer Group Division could withdraw. Estimated strength of units dug in to oppose our advance in our sector was 3,200 troops and 25 tanks and assault guns. Enemy was fanatical in his resistance and during the period strongly resisted our attempts to advance. Opposition was overcome by coordinated attack and enemy suffered heavy casualties. During this period enemy artillery action was very heavy, concentrated on our front lines, and towns near the front. Enemy also used tanks and assault guns on direct fire weapons on our installations.

2. On 7 December 1944 Battalion marched to CHICOURT for Pozit Fuze demonstration. After demonstration returned to billets vicinity ST. AVOLD in reserve and was out of contact with the enemy.

3. On 18 December 1944 Battalion moved to vicinity of VITTEBSBOURG but before contact was made with the enemy was moved north to vicinity German counter offensive and arrived ERNSTER, LUXEMBOURG 20 December 1944. Occupied reserve battle positions to rear of United States 4th Infantry Division. No contact was made with the enemy.

4. On 22 December 1944 the Division attacked to the north, 313th Field Artillery Battalion in General Support and reenforcing fires of 905th Field Artillery Battalion.

5. On 23 December 1944 317th Infantry Regiment committed and D/S mission assumed. Moved to vicinity OBERFEULEN. Initially we were opposed by the 352 VG Division but the surprise of our attack when we hit them on the flank as they were attacking southwest completely disrupted all plans and forced their withdrawal.

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Enemy was so severely cut up he was forced to withdraw to vicinity of DICKIRCK for reorganization. The German 79 VG Division was committed on the south flank of the German salient to oppose our advance and cover withdrawal of remnants of the 352 VG Division.

6. One attack was made against 79 Division which was unsuccessful and the division passed over to the defensive position it occupied until the end of the period.

7. For the latter part of the period the Division experienced a new type of enemy, one who came out in the open and attacked rather than defended. The change cost him many prisoners, many killed and a great deal of materiel.

8. The German troops employed in the counter offensive were the pick of the German troops. Their morale was high initially because they really thought they would spend Christmas Day in Paris. After the offensive was stopped and more units came in to resist the advance there was a definite change in the attitude of the PW's taken. Even though they were pretty cocky at first during the later part of the period quite a few deserted to turn themselves in.

9. During the period the Division took 1,480 prisoners of war and destroyed 35 tanks plus a large number of trucks, horse drawn materiel and supply trains and a number of artillery pieces.

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

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

4 January 1945

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

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

1. Class I Supply: Very satisfactory. The issue of condiments is still below par. A larger variety of fruit juices should be issued.

2. Class II Supply: Substitute sizes are unsatisfactory. Critical items that exist are: Raincoats, Field Jackets, Handkerchiefs, H.B.T. clothing and Pins, tent. Brushes, scrubbing, have reached a critical stage, no issue has been made for over a month.

Tools and accessories are not being issued in large enough amounts. Accessories for Howitzers are very poor, i.e., no lights, aiming posts have been issued to this organization since it reached France. Other items badly needed are Cover, muzzle, M-4; Cover, muzzle, end; and Sighting equipment.

3. Class III: Satisfactory.

4. Ammunition: Supply of ammunition has been fair. Some trouble has been had in finding the location of available ammunition ASP's and Rhds. were, in several cases, out of certain types. Availability of loading crews at ASP is poor.

5. Motor Supply: The supply of "hot" patches is critical. It has been necessary to cut several small patches from a large one. The stock of valve cover gaskets is insufficient. Tire shortages of all sizes still exists. It is recommended that an extra set of brake shoes be carried as an item of stock for all vehicles.

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

[REDACTED]

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By CO NARA Date 6-14-04

4 January 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report for period 1 December 1944 to 31 December 1944 inclusive. (Section IV - Personnel and Allied Administration).

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

TABLE NUMBER 1.

BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT BY TYPE OF CASUALTY

(Figures taken from Morning Report up to
(Source of Information)
and including 31 December 1944 for the period
1 December 1944 to 31 December 1944 inclusive.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>DOW</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>LIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RTD's</u>
1 Dec		1				1	1
2 Dec	1		2			3	
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
4 Dec							1
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
6 Dec							1
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
9 Dec							2
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
14 Dec							4
15 Dec				1		1	1
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
19 Dec							1
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
23 Dec			1			1	
24 Dec	1					1	
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
27 Dec							4
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
29 Dec							1
***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	2	1	3	1		7	16

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(After Action Report, continued)

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CANNON COMPANY, 317TH INFANTRY (Atchd)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>DOW</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>LIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RTD's</u>
1 Dec ***	***	***	***	***	***	***	1 ***
6 Dec ***	***	***	***	***	***	***	1 ***
9 Dec ***	***	***	***	***	***	***	1 ***
25 Dec ***	***	***	1 ***	***	***	1 ***	***
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TOTAL			1			1	3

TABLE NUMBER 2.

PRISONERS OF WAR CAPTURED

<u>DATE</u>	<u>PW's</u>
***	***
26 Dec	1
27 Dec	2
***	***

TOTAL	3

TABLE NUMBER 3.

REPLACEMENTS RECEIVED
(Including Hospital Returnees)
317th Cannon Company included in figures

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NO.</u>
1 Dec	2
2 Dec	1
***	***
4 Dec	3
***	***
6 Dec	2
***	***
9 Dec	3
***	***
14 Dec	4
15 Dec	2
***	***
19 Dec	1
***	***
21 Dec	3
***	***
27 Dec	4
***	***

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(After Action Report, continued)

TABLE NUMBER 3. (Continued)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NO.</u>
29 Dec	1
30 Dec	2
***	***
	—
TOTAL	27

TABLE NUMBER 4.

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Decorations awarded from 1 Dec 44 to 31 Dec 44 incl.
(317th Cannon Company included in figures)

NO.

- 1 Silver Star Medal (Posthumously)
- 5 Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously)
- 45 Bronze Star Medal
- 1 Air Medal
- 2 Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal
- 17 Purple Heart Award
- 1 (1st) Oak Leaf Cluster to Purple Heart

2. Payment of Battalion: All officers and enlisted men of the battalion and Cannon Company, 317th Infantry were paid on 31 December 1944.

3. Replacements: Requisitions for replacements have not been filled. The accepted explanation is that replacements are not available at Replacement Depots which supply this division.

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