

HEADQUARTERS  
227<sup>TH</sup> FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
A.P.O. 29, U.S. ARMY

Subject: After Action Report For Month of November 1944

TO: The Adjutant General, Washington, D.C.

THRU: Commanding General, 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Artillery,  
A.P.O. 29, U.S. Army

I. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

1 November 1944 found the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion in position at (80243) Koln, Germany, Sheet R-1, Scale 1/100,000, with the missions of general support for the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

At 1200 hours, 3 November 1944, the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion was given the mission of general support of the 103 Infantry Division. The Battalion remained in the position that it had occupied when in general support of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

On 6 November 1944 at 0800 hours the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion was relieved of the mission of general support of the 102 Infantry Division and assumed a non-operational role. Close station march order was given at 0800 hours and at 1120 hours the Battalion closed into a bivouac area at (819552) Koln, Germany, Sheet R-1, Scale 1/100,000.

The Battalion remained in a non-operational role through 7 November 1944. During this period, stress was placed upon the cleaning and care of vehicles and weapons of the Battalion.

On 8 November 1944 the Battalion was again assigned an operational role. Close station march order was given at the bivouac area at 0800 hours and the Battalion closed into its new position at (864568) Koln, Germany, Scale 1/100,000, Sheet R-1 by 1120 hours. The mission of the Battalion again was general support of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

The Battalion remained in these positions until 19 November 1944. On 11 November 1944 at 1420 hours, one of the Forward Observers was killed in action when a shell landed within five (5) yards of him while he was repairing his wire communications. While in this position the Battalion was subjected to an aerial bombardment on 18 November 1944 at 1845 hours. A large number of anti-personnel bombs were dropped in the area, especially around the area of Battalion C.P. Several large bombs estimated to be between 100 and 250 pounds were also dropped in the area. Battery "C" received quite a number of incendiary bombs in their area. One of the incendiary bombs setting fire to their supply area. Fortunately very little damage was sustained, the extent of the damage being one (1) officer wounded, three vehicles damaged, a tarp burned and the C.P. tent ruined. The Battalion C. P. received four (4) direct hits by anti-personnel bombs.

Close station march order was given at 1200 hours, 19 November 1944 and the battalion closed into new positions at (905560) Sheet R-1, Koln, Germany, Scale 1/100,000 at 1515 hours. While in this position Battery "B" received three (3) rounds of artillery fire estimated to be between 150 and 170mm caliber.

At 0715 hours 22 November 1944 close station march order was given. The 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion at 1010 hours closed into its new position at (960573) Sheet R-1, Koln, Germany, Scale 1/100,000.

On 23 November 1944 the Battalion was ordered to reduce it's strength to T/O and was allowed an excess of five (5) men. Those men who were declared excess in the Battalion reported to the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Training Center.

At 1845 hours 23 November 1944 Battery "B" was subjected to a concentration of thirty-two (32) rounds of enemy artillery fire. Again at 2045 hours fourteen (14) more rounds of enemy artillery landed in "B" Battery area. The caliber of these shells was estimated to be between 105mm and 150mm. At 2300 hours Battery "A" received seven (7) rounds of artillery. Again the caliber was estimated to be between 105mm and 150mm. Throughout the night of 23-24 November the Battalion was subjected to enemy artillery fire. During the day of 24 November the Battalion area was again subjected to artillery fire. In all cases the estimated caliber of the artillery fire was between 105mm and 150mm. At 1300 hours 24

November 1944 twelve (12) shells of 105mm landed in the Battery "A"'s area. As a result of this shelling one (1) tractor was damaged and four (4) enlisted men were wounded in action.

During the night 24-25 November 1944 the Battalion was again subjected to intermittent shelling of calibers between 105mm and 150mm. From 0730 hours to 0815 hours, 25 November 1944 the Battalion area was again shelled. Battery "C" received the bulk of this artillery fire, approximately one hundred (100) rounds landing in their area. As a result of this shelling one (1) gun of Battery "C" received a direct hit and was declared out of action. Two (2) Tractors, one (1) Diamond T, two (2) Weapon Carriers, two (2) Jeeps and two (2) M-10 trailers were also damaged. A new howitzer was received to replace the damaged howitzer and all the vehicles that were damaged have been repaired and are in running condition. As a result of this shelling on "C" Battery five (5) of their men had to be evacuated as wounded in action.

During the day of 25 November 1944 the Battalion again intermittently received shelling. At 1550 hours while "B" Battery was receiving intermittent shelling on (1) man was killed in action.

On 26 November 1944 the enemy artillery falling in the Battalion area subsided to quite an extent. From this date through 30 November the Battalion received very little enemy artillery fire.

The Battalion remained in these positions at (960573) Sheet R-1, Koln, Germany, Scale 1/100,000 through 30 November 1944 with the mission of general support of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

## II. FORCES ENGAGED.

During the month of November 1944 the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion came in contact with elements of the 12<sup>th</sup>, 185<sup>rd</sup>, 246<sup>th</sup>, 304<sup>th</sup>, and 340<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions, the 340<sup>th</sup> Volks-Grenadier Division, 3<sup>rd</sup> Panzer Grenadier Division, 116<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division, the 332<sup>nd</sup> and 696<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Regiments, the 330<sup>th</sup>, 352<sup>nd</sup>, 404<sup>th</sup>, and 689<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiments and various other elements of the enemy.

## III. LOSSES IN ACTION.

During the month of November 1944 the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion had one (1) officer and one (1) enlisted man killed in action and five (5) enlisted men seriously wounded in action, two (2) officers and one (1) enlisted man slightly wounded in action.

A resume of the losses of the Battalion since entering combat to the end of November 1944 is as follows:

	KIA	DOW	SWA	LWA	LIA	MIA
Officers	4	0	2	2	0	0
Enlisted Men	2	1	10	4	1	0

## IV. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS.

During the month of November 1944 the following awards were made to members of the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion:

Oak Leaf Cluster to the Bronze Star Medal	1
Purple Hearts	7
Air Medal	1

## IV. COMMANDING OFFICERS.

The Commanding Officers for the month of November 1944 were as follows:

Battalion Commander	Lt. Col. Neal W. Harper
Headquarters Battery	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert M. Godber
Battery "A"	Capt. George F. Weidl
Battery "B"	Capt. Charles G. Ward
Battery "C"	Capt. Eugene D. Jones
Medical Detachment	Capt. Harold L. Bacon
The Battalion Commander's Staff consisted of:	
Executive Officer	Major Norman D. Aboosh
S-3	Major Frederick B. Johnson
Ass't S-3	Capt. John C. Vallor
S-2	Capt. Cecil L. Harvey

Ass't S-2  
Liason Officer

1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. David D. Honick  
Capt. Bruce Bliven, Jr.

V. MISCELLANEOUS.

The 227<sup>th</sup> Artillery Battalion completed a total of two and thirteen (213) missions and expended a total of 3729 rounds of ammunition for the month of November 1944. A breakdown is as follows:

TYPES OF MISSIONS	NUMBER
Registration	10
Counter Battery	49
Personnel	36
Vehicles	10
Mortars	2
Preparations	31
Harrassing and Interdiction	49
Other types	26
TOTAL	213

During the month of November 1944 one movie was shown to members of the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion.

On 22 November 1944 Staff Sergeant Suter – Headquarters Batter, Staff Sergeant Bartoo –“A” Battery, and Staff Sergeant DeMoss – “C” Battery received battle field appointments as Second Lieutenants. These were the first and only appointments that this Battalion has had of enlisted men to be commissioned officers without first being sent to Officers’ Candidate School.

The Battalion sustained its heaviest casualties that it has received since entering combat during this month of November 1944.

The combat efficiency of the 227<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion has been excellent throughout the month of November.

Morale during this period has been excellent. 29 LET’S GO.

(signed-Neal W. Harper)  
NEAL W. HARPER  
Lt. Colonel, F.A.  
Commanding

BATTLE LESSONS LEARNED AND CONCLUSIONS

I. Communications

1. During the past operations we were subjected to increased artillery fire causing interruptions in wire communications between the fire direction center and the firing batteries. This interruption was largely eliminated by adopting the standard operating procedure of laying double lines from the fire direction center to the firing batteries using routes at least 100 yards apart.

2. It has been standard operating procedure for this battalion (medium) to lay trunk lines to the direct support battalions. During the past operation this practice has paid dividends, for in many cases Division Artillery was able to reach the direct support battalions through our switchboard. Also observers from the direct support battalions can adjust the medium Battalion without tying up two trunk lines to Division Artillery.

3. It has been found the German artillery place heavy interdiction fire on roads which very often knocks out wire communications. This was eliminated to a great extent by laying wire by hand across country, keeping some distance away from roads.

4. We have found it highly advantageous to lay more wire than allowed by T/E thus causing the ¾ ton wire trucks to be overloaded. It is concluded that 1 ½ ton, 6 x 6, Weapon Carriers in lieu of the ¾ ton, 4 x 4 wire trucks could be advantageous.

## II. Gunnery

1. We have adopted the standard operating procedure of using, the word "Love" for left and "Roger" for right. These words have a distinct difference in sound and are used to prevent the gun crews from misunderstanding the direction of shifts.

2. In order to aid the computers and speed up firing of M-102 ammunition in the M-1 Howitzers we have constructed charge sticks for the graphical firing tables for this type of ammunition.

3. We have found it necessary, when operating, where the battery positions are on one map and the target area are on others to check register on each map. This has resulted in more accurate shooting on transfers, Time on Targets, etc.

## III. Miscellaneous

In several cases flares have landed in the battalion area and have been quickly put out by extinguishers, which were kept at the gun sections, before any damage was caused. These extinguishers were taken off the prime movers that were not in use. The remaining extinguishers in the battalion were located so as to be readily accessible to all vehicles.

(signed-Neal W. Harper)  
NEAL W. HARPER  
Lt. Colonel, F.A.  
Commanding