Operation Saidor
Jan. - Mar. 1944

HEADQUARTERS
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO #32

FNK/frm

26 Feb 44

Subject: Historical Report of Operations, 121st FA Bn, Michaelmas Task Force.

To : Commanding General, U. S. Forces, APO #321.

1. The following is a narrative record of events of the 121st FA Bn, 75-mm pack howitzer, 3/4 ton 4 x 4 drawn, during the Dexterity Operation of the Michaelmas Task Force from January 2, 1944 to February 10, 1944:

January 2: The Battalion Commander and party consisting of the S-3, S-4, Communications Officer, Survey Section, Liaison Section, Master Sergeant, Communications Sergeant, and the Battery Agents landed from LST's on Red Beach and White Beach at 0810L, without event. The Provisional 4.2" Chemical Mortar Battery, was landed simultaneously without materiel and immediately reported to the Shore Party Commander for their assigned duty of unloading LST bulk loads. Our Shore Fire Control Party landed by small boats from APD's, but were not used as such during the operation. The Battalion Commander immediately established liaison with 19lst FA Group Headquarters and established a CP along track to the airstrip. At 1500L, the CP was moved to 55.16-79.50 (Gumbi-P, photomap, scale 1/20000) and the Party, Mortar Battery, and the Shore Fire Control Party established a bivouac in the woods surrounding.

January 3: During the night several rounds of small arms ammunition were fired in our area at imaginary enemy movement and enemy bombs fell on the airstrip area near our bivouac but no casualties were sustained from either cause. At 0930L, the balance of the battalion disembarked, having lost one man killed and three wounded when LST's drew fire from Michaelmas Batteries at 0500L. The Firing Batteries were put in position along the South edge of bivouac area and were prepared to fire either East or West along the coast or South into the mountains. Our mission being one of general support of the entire perimeter against land or sea attack. Forward observers were sent to the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 126th Infantry on our East and West respectively. "A" Battery registered on a base point to the Southwest of our perimeter at 1830L. Telephone communication established throughout the Battalion and Group Headquarters.

January 4: "C" Battery displaced to 54.2-79.5 (Gumbi-P, photomap, scale 1/20000) in order to cover the beaches to the East of SAIDOR airstrip. Batteries continued digging in and improving communications.

January 5: Battalion and Battery Commanders made an all-day reconnaissance of the area West of the MANKINA River in our amphibious tractor. Infantry patrols operating in area beyond our maximum range prohibited further registration.

January 6: Battalion Commander reconnoitered for positions in the FANNGER area and established command liaison with the Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 126th Infantry. Our mission has now been given as direct support of the 2d Battalion, 126th Infantry, holding the East flank of the perimeter.

January 7: "A" and "B" Batteries displaced at 1145L to positions along the fringe of trees at 57.39-79.55 (GUMBI-P photomap) to support OPLR of 2d Bn. Battalion S-3 and "C" Battery Commander reconnoitered for forward positions in the DARWUN area. Battalion CP established at 57.8-77.3 at 1500L. Joint Bn OP at 53.3-64.7 for 120th FA Bn and 121st FA Bn, occupied by our Bn observer. Liaison plane began routine intelligence flights for Michaelmas Headquaters along the coast from SEL to SINGON.

January 8: Battery Forward observers occupied forward OP's at 63.1-74.0 (NON-P photomap scale 1/20,000) and registered "B" Battery on base point at 64.38-72.78. "C" Battery displaced to new position at 61.05-76.25 to support forward outpost line 2d Bn. Our liaison plane crashed on take-off at 1613L, no one injured, plane complete loss.

January 9: Base point registrations completed and each battery registered on individual check points from the coast line to 2500 yds inland. "A" Btry established forward OP at 63.6-75.0 for close support of OPLR. "C" Btry forward observer proceeded by barge to SEL for close support of forward outpost.

January 10: "C" Btry fired 146 rds HE neutralization and harassing missions on known enemy locations along the coast between SEL and SEUER from 1400L to 1700L. "A" Btry registered on normal barrage location in front of OPLR at 64.3-74.5. "B" Btry established OP at 63.85-75.18 for close support of OPLR. Wire communications established to all OP's at 1625L.

January 11: "C" Btry fired 23 rds HE harassing throughout the night. At 1245L "C" Btry fired a successful preparation of 27 rds against enemy automatic weapons permitting our patrol to advance. 3d Section, C Btry, was moved by barge to SEL at 1520L and, at 1615L fired 29 rds direct fire successfully clearing an enemy strongpoint at a pass SE of SEL. At least 2 of the enemy were killed by our fire. Able Btry re-adjusted on trails near normal barrage.

January 12: "C" Btry fired 95 rds HE harassing throughout the night and day from SEURE to YAGOMI. Bn continuing improvement of positions hampered by rainy weather.

January 13: 29 rds fired by "C" Btry in night harassing fires from SEURE to YAGOMI.

January 14: Bn fired proving rds on BP and two check points to test fire chart. Results showed a maximum range error of 50 yds and a maximum deflection error of 40 yds on massed Bn fire.

January 15: Entire day spent in improving bivouac. No firing. Heavy rains made roads impassable.

January 16: Btry "A", 129th FA Bn arrived at 0900L by LST and attached to this Battalion.

January 17: Btry "A", 129th FA occupied "C" Btry's position E of DARMUN and placed one howitzer forward at NCM to permit harassing fire as far as YAGCMI. "C" Btry displaced to position adjoining "A" and "B" Btry's. Btry "A", 129th FA Bn registered on Bn BP and "C" Btry laid by survey. Our liaison pilot sighted 6 opened parachutes behind our lines at SEL.

January 18: Harassing missions, (34 rds), were fired furing night on YAGCMI by forward gun of Btry "A", 129th FA Bn. Forward gun of "A" Btry, 129th FA Bn registered on SEUER. "C" Btry gun at SEL fired 19 rds harassing fire on YAGCMI at 1500L.

January 19: "C" Btry established OP's with Co "G", 2d Bn, 126th Inf, on right flank of MLR. OP's located at 61.15-74.76 and 61.34-74.48. "C" Btry forward gun at SEL returned by barge to Btry positions.

January 20: Ln Sect #2 formed and reported to CO, 1st Bn, 126th Inf. "A" Btry, 129th FA Bn registered on check point SE of SEL.

January 21: Road work and communications repair continuing because of heavy rains. OP's have completed bunkers for observers. Double, alternate wire lines completed to all forward positions, OP's, Fwd Observers.

January 22: Air strip in Lunai flat East of Btry positions completed for our plane and pick-up station established. Plane landed and took off successfully at 1100L. Facilities of repaired SAIDOR strip have been used until this date.

January 23: Ln O #2 registered "C" Btry on villages of NOGAPAU and BATEN in the defensive sector of the 1st Bn, 126th Inf, using Ln plane for observation. Bn continuing to repair roads and air strip.

January 24: Area improvement.

January 25: Bn attached to 2d Bn, 126th Inf for rations, administration and operations.

January 26: "A" Btry began displacement by barge to SEL, but barge broke down and returned to FANNGER for the night. Forward gun of "A" Btry, 129th FA Bn removed from NCM area and returned to battery position.

January 27: Two sections of "A" Btry displaced by barge to SEL, in [illegible] and completed registration on YAGCMI at 1300L. Fires were started in the huts of the village.

January 28: "A" Btry howitzers at SEL fired harassing missions on YAGCMI and OLD YAGCMI, known Jap bivouac areas. At 0650L, our Ln pilot accompanied by an Infantry Observer, who had just returned from patrol in the target area, fired our SEL howitzers on MG emplacements and bivouac areas East of the YAUT River with excellent results. Rds were observed to fall within 10 yds of target. Btry "A" CO moved with Inf patrol to an intelligence OP, established approximately 1500 yds West of YAUT River.

January 29: "A" Btry howitzers at SEL continued harassing missions.

January 30: Battery "A" howitzers at SEL limited to harassing missions, no observed targets having appeared.

January 31: Battery "A" howitzers at SEL registered on trails East of YAUT River.

February 1: Area improvement only; no firing.

February 2: No change.

February 3: Bn fired check concentrations to test fire chart. Observation from OP's and Ln plane.

February 4: Fired defensive Bn concentrations in connection with 2d Bn, 126th Inf test of defenses. "A" Btry forward howitzers at SEL fired harassing missions East of YAUT River from 1715L to 1825L.

February 5: Batteries adjusted on new BP to transfer to new firing chart. One of our radio operators left with Infantry patrol to the South carrying a radio to establish contact with our Ln plane daily. Reconnaissance flights for Michaelmas Hq discontinued this date.

February 6: Btry "A" howitzers at SEL fired on enemy movement East of YAUT River. Contact made with patrol by our plane.

February 7: "A" Btry, 129th FA Bn, plus one platoon of "E" Co, 2d Bn, 126th Inf, moved by 4 LCM's and 3 LCV's, to YAGOMI, arriving at 1230L. The Bn S-3 accompanied the battery; the Bn Comdr and BC remaining at MUR to observe firing by plane. The mission was to fire heavy concentrations in the GABUTAMON area and return by barge to MUR at 1700L. In landing one LCV was sunk, two broached, and one LCM broached making an evacuation impossible. 38 rds of 105mm ammunition were lost in the LCV that sank. Radio contact with either the Bn Comdr's plane or the BC's plane could not be made due to dampness of the ground sets (SCR-609), and adjustment was begun at 1300L by using wing signals and drop messages. GABUTAMON was obscured by low cloud formations, so adjustment and subsequent fires were made on KOSIT, another assembly point of the Japs along their escape route. All observations were by the BC; the Bn Comdr's plane having crashed or was shot down in the mountains Southwest of GABUTAMON about 1400L (note- no trace of the plane or of the pilot or Bn Comdr have been found to this date, though aerial and ground patrols have searched continuously). During the day, 449 rds were fired on the KOSIT area, all observed by the BC from our plane. During the night the Infantry platoon provided a perimeter defense, and the battery fired 49 rds harassing the KOSIT area at one to two hour intervals.

February 8: All available planes searched GABUTAMON area for missing plane. LCM's dispatched to YAGOMI floated the broached barges, but could not load battery because of high surf conditions. 60 reclaimed rds from sunk LCV were fired on KOSIT with unknown results.

February 9: Movement of "A" Btry, 129th FA Bn, from YAGOMI to MUR completed by barge at 1430L. Our plane continued search for missing plane.

February 10: Forward howitzers of "A" Btry, 121st FA Bn preparing for displacement to battery position at Fannger. Forward observers report Australians have made contact with our forces at Sel. Dexterity Operation completed this date.

2. Summary of observations and conclusions are contained in letter, Subject: "Observations Based on Experience in Combat", Hq 121st FA Bn., dated 25 January 1944, attached to this report.

FRANCIS N. KNOPE
Major 121st FA Bn.,
Commanding.

38 Incls: Unit Journals.

Battalion Executive - S1

At the time the Battalion was alerted for the move, the Executive was put in possession of the plan LST to that left on D+1 and on which the battalion loaded with personal other units. The Battalion Commander and party left on D day. As no permit no field officer was left the battalion at the time of loading and only one officer was present till battalion put loving on beach head S3 at the time. It was difficult to coordinate the loading of the battalion under such circumstances.

During the interval from D+1 to D+4 (3 January to 7th January) the personnel section was not with the Battalion The Personnel Sgt came with the Captain on D+1 and was able to handle all clerical and administrative matters that came up during that period. The Sergeant with paper and supplies, Consolidated Morning Report forms, Casualty Report Form A, together with a portable typewriter accompanied the unit. The Personnel Section arrived on D+4, 7 January and set up at once at the C.P. The section brought their tables, desks, chairs, Typewriters, and a 30 day supply of paper, forms, stencils, and stationery supplies. Five pyramidal tents were brought for shelter.

The equipment and supplies have been sufficient, but a resupply will be necessary at the end of 30 days. ~~The typewriters need~~ The moisture and rain necessitate daily cleaning and oiling of typewriters. All

installed at Mur and at Sea, and these were [illegible] maintaining contact when wire went out. The SCR-284 served us well, but the SCR-193 would have given us greater range and more ability to cut through static and interference.

[illegible] proved well trained and efficient.

books of office supplies must be off the ground to permit the circulation of air, and six days of sunshine, the tops stored in open. Otherwise the paper becomes damp and soggy and pencils sweat, clips and staples rust, and the binding of all books and pamphlets fails to pieces.

The Personnel Section operation is necessary in the Combat Zone. Letters in Service records, reports of casualties, forwarding of records of men evacuated, preparation of final statements of those killed in action, are all necessary Clerical work.

During this operation the equipment brought was not in excess of requirements, such [illegible] will any resupply be necessary for 30 days.

Work Details

From time to time, the battalion has been called on for LST unloading work details and dump details. A total of eight details have been called out, three of which were four successive days. The details have been of two officers and seventy enlisted men. Considering the difficulty of maintaining communications, [illegible] with lines constantly being broken by the Engineers and vehicles along the road, all wire personnel were working to keep communications in. Radios had to be maintained and serviced. Drivers and mechanics were working constantly on vehicles. Forward

installed at Mur and at [illegible] The SCR-284 served us well, but

Observation parties were on duty at all times. Battery and battalion survey parties were working all during daylight hours. The battalion had to remain operational, manning guns, phones and radios, security patrols, and all C.P.'s twenty four hours a day. Supplies and ammunition had to be brought in and distributed. Areas had to be cleared and cleared and graveled in order to make movement at all possible and further the health of the command. As a result, any time used for work details was taken away from important and necessary activity.

From observations of men working in this climate, it is estimated that a young man can perform physical work up to two thirds of what would be expected. After an attack of Dengue or similar illness, his efficiency is reduced by one half. Fatigue follows any exertion, and recovery from fatigue is much slower in temperatures and the humidity found here. Short periods of work with frequent rest periods, during daylight hours, reduces fatigue to a minimum.

Personal cleanliness is paramount. The constant moisture of the skin is a fertile field for fungus growth. Perspiration in clothing produces a sour and offensive odor and rots clothing quickly. Clothes full of putrefaction and mold irritates the skin and produces rashes. Daily bathing, and clean clothes at least every third day is necessary. Time should always be allowed all personnel to bathe and wash clothes, by a system of rotation of duty and details

installed at Hur and at Sea, and those were [illegible]. The SCR-284 served us well, but [illegible] The ability to cut

Metro messages for the first four days of operation, from Jan 3 to 6 incl could not be used, for only three were issued and were from 4 to 24 hours in delivery. Beginning on the 7th, two metro messages per day were issued, one in the morning and one in the evenings, however these also took from 2 to 24 hours in delivery. Much of this delay was caused by the communication channels being out, including vehicle runner, and in some cases by transmission through slower channels than available. One message only had 3 lines, while our computations require line 4. Judging from the changes of these metro messages it is apparent that if we were called upon for unobserved fires, metro readings should be taken more frequently, both day and night.

The mosaics issued were adequate for reconnaissance but were not used as a firing chart because of divergence of direction and distance within different overlapping strips, and because it did not include the area where we were called upon for fire, i.e. the area east of SEhe. It is felt that with a number of check points and by restitution from large scale verticals (which we did not receive covering the MLR and OPLR until Jan 18) that the mosaic could have been used as an accurate fire chart. One thing we learned is that all aiming circles and compasses should be redeclinated to fit the photomap as early as possible since some excessive errors in direction were made in measuring from the photo and firing with a battery laid by aiming circle which was last declinated in Londonough.

The SCR-284 served us well, but

A vertical survey from the photo map should be the first survey operation and can be accomplished rapidly through ground or aerial means utilizing existing elevations.

An observed fire chart has proved successful even with one battery 3900 yds forward of the other two, by immediate steps for vertical control which was accomplished by ~~criticizing~~ computing critical points throughout the target area along ridge lines, tree lines, valleys, and villages. By this method our VCO board was built up with 10 yd contour lines and has given us massed fires from the observed fire chart within 50 yards in range and deflection for the forward battery and no error for the batteries close together.

It can be anticipated that in a limited operation where the high ground is for the most part outside our perimeter, roads are impassible, and distances are at maximum range that it may take weeks to make and close a six or seven mile traverse when hundreds of stations must be set up. Triangulation methods on the east flank are near impossible and the traverse has included swimming streams, breaking through jungle, hours of fruitless reconnaissance, and loss of visibility during heavy rains. The use of the SCR-536 has proven of great assistance for short distances. At present our survey section is traversing in the target area because of the lack of long enough short bases. The use of flares might be an answer, but much accuracy would be lost.

F.D.C. equipment has been adequate. The need for a qualified non-commissioned officer as an assistant to the S-2 to process and post messages to the situation map, arrange maps, and assist in handling reports has been apparent. The present TO does not

installed at our and at SOI, and those were [illegible]
maintaining contact when wire went out. The SCR-284 served us well, but the SCR-193 would have given us greater range and more ability to cut

SUPPLY OFFICER
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
A.P.O. #32

3 March 1944

SUBJECT: Supply Difficulties and Situation.

TO : Commanding General, 32d Division Artillery.
(Thru CO, 121st FA Battalion)

1. Quartermaster - Clothing and Equipage:

a. Some small size shoes not available.

b. Shoes and Leggings Laces not available.

c. Herringbone Twill much substitution of sizes, however getting by at present.

d. Sox only size twelve (12) available, pretty rugged for small feet size 5 - 9 etc.

2. Quartermaster - Organization:

a. Scrub Brushes and Soap, GI and face inadequate if soldiers are to wash clothes and keep equipment clean. Supply now barely meets mess requirement.

b. Razor Blades inadequate - should be two (2) per week. Tooth brushes should be doubled at least - 3 per 200 rations per week inadequate. Brushless shave cream undesirable - much being wasted. hand soap issue increased soldiers would much prefer that to brushless.

use c. Steel Wool unavailable - Pots and Kettles require for proper ing.

requisi d. Mantles and Generators for gas lanterns not available.

e. Conversion Kits for M-37 Field Range must be issued if white e procured. Stoves clog, meals cannot be served on time, cooks ng but waste all day trying to make ranges work due to clogging Carrier break parts. Red gasoline for lanterns and stoves must be eliminated operate. This is paramount!

f. S
and generators o

2. Quartermaster - Organizational (cont'd.):

f. Mimeo ink not available.

g. Wire brushes not available.

h. Axe, Shovels and Hammer handles unavailable. Many tools discarded and salvaged due to this fact.

3. Engineer:

a. All expendibles not available. Tacks, all types paper, protractors, pencils, slide rules etc.

b. One Hundred (100) foot steel tapes not available since Camp Cable - This is serious!

c. No tool handles available.

4. Ordnance:

a. Cleaning and Preserving insufficient for issue requirements, but we are getting along.

b. M-37 Range parts unavailable.

c. Carbine slings and watches not available in quanity for immediate replacement.

5. Motors:

a. Parts for TD-9 "Cats" requisitioned but not received.

b. Alligators deadlined due to parts - impractical, for land use - excellent motor but balance junk.

c. Small tools, wrenches, replacement for Echelon sets requisitioned but no results.

d. Front Axle shaft on 1/4 ton 4 x 4 giving trouble and hard to get.

e. Propeller shafts, ring and pinions gears on 3/4 ton Weapon Carrier break excessively and hard to get.

f. Salt water and mud ruining so many clutches, starters, brakes and generators our Maintenance Section cannot cope with.

6. Medical:

a. Medical Kit replacement poor - no complete kits available.

7. Signal:

a. Excellent cooperation from supply sources and Battalion Communication Officer states nothing but few minor shortages now exist in this Battalion.

8. All items enumerated hereon have been requisitioned on branch supply sources, copies of requisitions being on file in this office. Supply representatives of higher Echelons are familiar with conditions and are trying to correct. The trouble seems to rest on Base Section below our location, inasmuch as our sources assure us they have extract requisitions covering our requirements. Individual Equipment and Clothing replacement is enormous due to carelessness, combat requirements and weather. This must be supervised by all Officers. Suggest a day be set aside for care of all property. I used this system at Goodenough and Saidor with excellent results.

9. Generally speaking supply has been satisfactory with exception of items hereon. Due to weather, roads and conditions some allowances for delays non-availability, and shipping bottom shortages must be considered.

Riley D. Robinson

RILEY D. ROBINSON
Capt., 121st F. A. Bn.,
Supply Officer.

HEADQUARTERS MTH/JLL/mal
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
A.P.O. #32

3 March 1944

FIELD ORDER)
:
NUMBER 1)

Maps: Provisional Map, New Guinea, 1:63360, Finschhafen Bay Sheet.
Sketch Map, Yalau Plantation, 1:11000.

1. a. See intelligence annex to FO #1, Hq Yalau Task Force, 1 March 44.

b. The Yalau Task Force will, by amphibious operations seize and hold a beach-head at Yalau. The 2nd Bn, 126 Inf, with Provisional 4.2" Mortar Platoon and "B" Btry, 120th FA Bn attached, will seize a beach-head 500 yds in depth extending from Gowar River to Manglau River, on D day, and will patrol the area south to Dumun and east to Ganglau. The 3rd Bn, 126 Inf, will land on D plus 1, extend the east flank to Yaganon River, and patrol the east flank to the Bang River. For boundaries between battalions see operations overlay to FO #1, Hq Yalau Task Force, 1 March 44.

2. The 121st FA Bn, less provisional mortar platoon, is attached to the 126th Inf as of 0700L, D minus 1, and on landing will be prepared to mass their fires on the coastal tracks west of Gowar River in the sector of the 2nd Bn, 126 Inf, and to give continuous support, on call, to the 3rd Bn, 126th Inf to the east.

3. a. 4.2" Mortar Platoon: will continue in direct support of 2nd Bn, 126 Inf, and will be prepared to support the action of the 3rd Bn, 126 Inf.

b. "B" Btry, 120th FA Bn will continue in general support of both battalions.
(1) Positions--see overlay to Arty Annex, FO #1, Hq Yalau Task Force, 1 March 44.
(2) Firing Chart, observed; photomap if available. Transfer to unobserved chart upon completion of survey.
(3) Reference points, check points, and concentrations will be given on debarkation.
(4) Registration: Only as ordered by this Hq.
a. Restrictions:
1a. No firing beyond the Yaganon River during the operation.
2a. All fires will be controlled by this Hq.
(5) Survey will continue under plan initiated on D day.
(6) All positions will be dug in and pieces staggered to permit firing east, south, or west. Ammunition pits will contain sufficient dunnage to insure proper circulation of air around all rounds. Tree cutting will not exceed that necessary to provide a field of fire.
(7) Ammunition will be separated by weight and lot number, and any changes during a mission will be reported to FDC. All duds or low order burst will be reported as to lot number, kind of fuze and location.
(8) Ln Officer #1 will continualiaison at 2nd Bn, 126 Inf. Ln Officer #2 will report to C.O., 3rd Bn, 126 Inf immediately on disembarking, on D plus one.

(9) Air Observation will be provided by organic aircraft operating from airstrip at Yamai. Flights off shore, within the flanks of the beach-head will be made on call, and radio contact made with FDC for assignment of reconnaissance or observed fire missions if desired. Pilot-observer will be provided with available maps and M-1 template.

(10) Plan of local security will be submitted to Bn S-2.
(11) M-1 template: Square A99.

4. See Administrative Annex.

5. a. Communications:
(1) Continue installations begun on D day.
(2) Hq maintain contact wth rear echelon through SCR 193
(3) Radio silence during water movement.

b. CPs:
(1) "B" Btry, 121st FA Bn maintain CP at Dumun.
(2) "A" and "C" Btrys, one FO each to assault companies, 2nd and 3rd Bns, 126 Inf.
(3) FO, "B" Btry, as directed later.

c. CPs:
(1) Bn CP as shown on overlay to FO #1, Yamai Task Force, 1 March 44.
(2) Btrys submit overlay of installations to FDC.

By order of Major KNOPE:

MAC T. HARDWICK,
Major, 121st FA Bn.,
Adjutant.

JAMES L. LAIN,
Major, 121st FA Bn.,
S-3.

HEADQUARTERS
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO #32

FNK/MTH/JLL/hpc

3 March 1944

Administrative Annex
to Field Order #1.

1. SUPPLY:
   a. Rations:
      1. Each individual will carry one "K" ration.
   b. Ammunition:
      1. Small arms, three U/F with troops.
      2. 4.2" mortar platoon, one U/F with platoon.
      3. 75mm Pack Howitzer, 745 rounds per battery.
   c. Water:
      1. All available water cans (filled) will be taken with units.
      2. Each individual will embark with a full canteen.
      3. Batterys supply and chlorinite water in beachhead.

2. RESUPPLY AND EVACUATION: see Administrative Order #1, FO #1, Yalau Task Force.

3. VEHICLES:
   a. During movement, all vehicle lights will be disconnected.
   b. All vehicles will have full gas tanks and carry one five-gallon can of gasoline on the vehicle.

4. PERSONNEL: see Administrative Order #1, FO #1, Yalau Task Force.

5. MISCELLANEOUS:
   a. Equipment: Each individual will carry a minimum of the following in the jungle pack:

Headnet	Hammock
Undershirt	Poncho
Drawers	"K" ration
Blouse, HBT	Handkerchief
Trousers, HBT	Cleaning patches
Socks, (2 pair)	Can of cleaning oil.
Jungle boots	Flotation Mladders (2)
Medical kit complete	Toilet articles
Mess gear complete	Carton of cigarettes
Blanket	

By order of Major KNOPE:

MAC T. HARDWICK,
Maj, 121st FA Bn,
Adjutant.

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

JAMES L. LAIN,
Maj, 121st FA Bn,
Battalion S-3

F16

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES
121ST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION AIR OBSERVATION SECTION

I do hereby certify that the following summary of the activities of the 121st Field Artillery Battalion Air Observation Section is taken from the Log of Daily Flights and other official records of this section and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On 2 January 1944, the 121st Field Artillery Battalion landed at Saidor, New Guinea, with its Air Observation Section, consisting of 2 L4 type planes and pilot personnel of 2 Officers and 2 Staff Sergeants. Immediately after landing and until 11 January 1944, a temporary strip, hurriedly constructed, was the only one available for use. On 7 January 1944, one plane crashed on take off because of roughness of the strip, without injury to the pilot or observer. The condition of the strip also caused destruction of a landing gear on a take-off, without injury to either pilot or observer. The transport air strip had been completed sufficiently on 11 January 1944 to be used by our plane, and was used until 5 February 1944, when the battalion air strip at Faugger Beach was completed and ready for use.

As soon as the planes were assembled after landing, this battalion was assigned two patrol missions daily, one being along the coast, northwest to the mouth of the Mot River, and the other, southeast to the Yaut River. These patrol flights took the plane over Jap held territory and within range of rifle and machine gun fire. The purpose of the flights was to observe movement of enemy barges and personnel, and to report enemy activities of any kind whatsoever that was observed.

On 5 February 1944, the battalion was relieved of the coastal patrol flight and assigned the mission of contacting an Infantry Patrol by radio daily. This patrol was located on an observation post in enemy held territory observing enemy movement in by-passing this sector. In order to get communication, it was necessary for the plane to fly over enemy territory.

Our Battalion Forward Observers have repeatedly reported firing on the plane, by the enemywith rifles, while on these daily missions. On one occasion, one of our Forward Observers called in to warn the pilot to stay away from an area that he had been flying over because a P40 had received .50 cal machine gun fire the afternoon before while strafing the trails.

Besides regular patrol flights, our plane has been used to drop food and medical supplies to Forward OP's, conduct of artillery fire, investigation of fires behind enemy lines, and dropping propaganda leaflets over Jap lines. All of which brought the plane within rifle range of the enemy.

On 7 February 1944, a plane belonging to the 120th Field Artillery Battalion, piloted by 2d Lieutenant Francis J. Piotrowski, an officer pilot assigned to the 121st Field Artillery Battalion, with Major Earl R. Kindig, 121st Field Artillery Battalion Commander, acting as Observer and conducting artillery fire, was listed as Missing in Action. No trace of the plane or its occupants have been found. There is a possibility it was brought down by enemy fire.

The L4 type plane has no armor and is vulnerable to .30 caliber fire at altitudes up to 1500 feet and .50 caliber fire up to 6000 feet. The nature of the missions necessitated operations at an average altitude of 1000 feet above terrain. This time of year being the rainy season at this location, ceilings compelled low altitudes in addition to the missions assigned.

The battalion air strip has been bombed, the area immediately adjacent to it receiving 8 hits but no damage resulted to the plane or equipment.

From the time of landing at Saidor to 19 February 1944, the plane has flown a total of 210 hours or an average of over 4 hours daily. Frequently our plane has been the only L4 plane in the air, other units being forced to ground their planes for motor trouble or minor accidents. Missions have been flown over territory impossible of effecting a forced landing.

EDWARD J. MATUSKO,
2d Lt, 121st FA Bn., AOS

[illegible]

HEADQUARTERS
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
A.P.O. [illegible]

18 February 1944

Subject: Report of Signal Communication in Saidor Operation.

To : Artillery Officer, Sixth Army.

1. Signal Communication for this battalion during the operations at Saidor were conducted with the following results:

a. SCR-608 radios accompanied the Bn CO and Comm O in the
original landing on D day. These immediately established contact with
121st Group Headquarters, and maintained it until wire was laid.
b. A temporary bivouac was established near the Air Strip on
D plus 1 day when the battalion as a whole arrived. Wire communication
was immediately established with all batteries. The firing batteries
were in position to fire and FDC was in operation.
c. When new positions were selected at Yaungair a complete wire
net was installed. The OP lines were laid by the letter batteries,
and liaison lines with 1st and 2d Bns, 126 Inf, laid by Bn Hq. Hq laid
lines to all batteries including metallic lines to both switchboards
and gun positions (simplex lines were not relied upon for Fire Control,
FDC to guns). Group Headquarters laid wire to Bn switchboard and it was
simplexed for Fire Control and TG-5 operation.
d. SCR-608 operation had to be abandoned at an early stage in
our operations as the sets became unserviceable. Signal Detachment
could not repair the sets, and could only promise replacement at some
future date. These sets were quite old, had been frequently repaired,
and simply gave out after about ten days of continuous intensive operation.
While serviceable, SCR-608 sets were used to maintain contact with OP's
and reconnaissance parties.
e. SCR-610 sets were installed at all OP's OP's and FDO. Also at
Inf Bn CP's. The SCR-609 was used in L-4 planes for contact with the
SCR-610's on the ground. These sets were not reliable. Most of them were
turned in. Replacements have been promised. Others continued to fail and
had to be repaired very frequently. Two or three miles was the best range
overland in the jungle. Better results were obtained over water or in the
air, but, the sets were not reliable. In climbing steep hills to OP's
they were heavy and cumbersome to carry.
f. Two SCR-300 sets were supplied to the Bn before the landing,
and were proven of great value and dependability. They had as good range
as the SCR-609 on ground and better range in the air, and were much more
reliable. They were so compact and light that they were easily carried
and convenient to mount in the L-4 planes.
g. The Bn was equipped with three SCR-284 sets, and these proved
of great value. Group Hq was far removed from our area, and wire communica-
tion with them frequently failed, so that a large bulk of messages and
reports were transmitted over the air, in code, using CW. Our operators
proved well trained in CW transmission and in radio procedure in general.
Even when wire was in with Group Hq the bulk of the messages were
transmitted by TG-5. At the height of our operations SCR-284 sets were
installed at [illegible] and at Sel, and these were of great assistance in
maintaining contact when wire went out. The SCR-284 served us well, but
the SCR-193 would have given us greater range and more ability to cut
through static and interference.
h. Message Center personnel proved well trained and efficient.
The converter, M-209, was used constantly for encoding and decoding both
at the Bn Message Center, and at the advance radio station at Sel.

i. Brevity codes for fire control were prepared and distributed daily, but seldom used due to the failure of the SCR-600 series radios, causing reliance on wire for fire control. These codes were used in air-ground communication more than in straight ground communication.

j. Wire laying was difficult. Most of it was done by hand carrying the RL-26A. The ¼ ton wire laying vehicle bogged down continually. Difficulty in crossing rivers and denseness of jungle served to canalize wire lines on certain routes. However, an effort was made to seperate them as much as possible. Engineer road construction gave no consideration to wire lines - whole fleets of bull-dozers frequently raising havoc with wire while widening and improving roads.

k. Runners and messangers seldom used ¼ ton vehicles. Much of the time they walked. Other times they rode along with 6x6 trucks or with tractors moving in their direction. Agents were maintained first with Group Hq and then with 2d Bn, 126 Infantry, after we came into a direct support status.

l. The L-4 planes proved of tremendous value in maintaining communications. A strip was prepared in the Bn area at an early date and the planes were used constantly by both Infantry and Artillery for messenger service between TF Hq our Hq, and 1st and 2d Bn Hq, 126 Inf. A strip was prepared at Mur, and of course, the main strip at Saidor was available to our planes. The use of these planes was in addition to their normal use for reconnaissance and conduct of fire. Without them, prompt delivery of many reports and written messages could not have been accomplished.

m. Signal supplies were frequently unavailable when badly needed. This was true particularly of W-110 wire. Lack of wire and long distances prevented our laying lines to CP's - normal Artillery procedure. As an alternative, a forward switchboard at Dog Battery, our forward battery, gave us some help when an CP line went out.

n. W-110 wire was used everywhere. W-130 wire was most unreliable and was replaced as soon as possible with W-110. EE-8 phones were generally satisfactory, but the sound power sets were not used extensively, and seemed to be easily affected by dampness. Remote control units were used with good results.

2. Experience in this operation has shown a great need for new radios when any unit goes into combat. This Bn suffered from having radios which had been in constant use for training over a long period of time. Replacement was not available despite continual efforts.

3. Experience has also shown the need for track-laying vehicles exclusively in jungle operations during the rainy season. The heavy rains made wheeled vehicles practically unusable. Some track-laying vehicles similar to the Bren Gun Carrier would serve admirably. It would go thru mud and underbrush without suffering damage, would carry a good load of wire, and would be easy to operate, since these carriers are driven in the same manner as an automobile. They would give some protection to wire crews if ambushed. It is felt that two such carriers per firing battery and possibly three for Bn Hq would meet all requirements.

4. Pistols would be more suitable weapons for wire linemen to carry as they must habitually climb trees, wearing climbers and belts, wire over their shoulders, tools in their hands and carbine slung on back. If surprised while in a tree a linemen could draw a pistol much more readily than he could unsling a carbine. It is suggested, therefor, that all linemen be equipped with automatic pistols.

R. J. GOODRICH
Capt., 121st FA Bn.,
Comm. Officer.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO #32

JLL/fmm

Subject: Report of Artillery Firing from YAGOMI.

To : Commanding Officer, 191st FA Group.

1. The following is a narrative of the amphibious operation of "D" Btry to YAGOMI and return:

At 0800L, 7 Feb, 12 Infantrymen from SIL plus 1 officer and 3 enlisted men from "A" Btry, 121st FA Bn reconnoitered the YAGOMI area to 1500 yds E of YAUT River. The members of Btry "A" returned to SIL leaving the Infantrymen at YAGOMI to protect the landing of one platoon of E Co. The platoon consisting of 2 officers and 53 enlisted men arrived in 2 LCV's at 0940L, but one LCV broached on landing and the other did not attempt a landing until other barges arrived at 1230L. A 300 yd perimeter of 9 stationary posts including two machine guns was immediately established.

"A" Battery, 129th FA Bn, attached to the 121st FA Bn as "D" Btry, consisting of four 105 mm howitzers and prime movers, five 1-ton trailers carrying 750 rds HE and 50 rds WP, and 2 officers and 63 enlisted men left MUR at 1130L, 7 Feb, by LCM's and 3 LCV's.

The battery reached YAGOMI at 1230L and unloaded completely except for one 1-ton trailer loaded with 154 rds of ammunition which was in an LCV that submerged near the beach. Two LCM's and one LCV broached during the landing operation and were left on the beach. The trailer and 116 rds of ammunition were salvaged. The battery occupied a position about 50 yds from the beach and was ready to fire by 1300L.

All radio sets were checked at 0900L, 7 Feb, and operated perfectly, but the SCR-609 radios did not operate satisfactorily after the landing at YAGOMI. The signal plan was to have two SCR-609 radios on the ground and one SCR-609 in each plane, providing a four station net in case either a set on the ground or in the air failed to operate. Our ground sets could occasionally hear the plane very faintly but could not pick up any sendings. The plane could hear our transmission satisfactorily. Since the radios were not waterproofed it may be that the sets were effected by moisture during the unloading. The observer used wing signals initially, but because of the large deflection sensings, drop messages proved more expedient. Both wing signals and drop messages proved successful.

All rounds were visible from the plane, but adjustment took a full hour and a total of 59 rounds because of communication difficulties and the large error in initial data. The error in deflection and range was caused by the data being computed for GABUTAMON, which was obscured by clouds, while the actual fire for effect was on KOSIT which is around 2400 yds E and 3500 yds N of GABUTAMON. The observer underestimated distances throughout the adjustment, however many of the rds fired during adjustment must have had effect since they were in the target area.

By 1400L, 180 rds had been fired in KOSIT and the areas 400 yds W and 600 yds E. From 1400L until 1500L, 360 rds were fired. All rds were obser-

ved and sensed by the observer as being effective. There can hardly be any doubt that if the enemy occupied the KOSIT area in the strength reported by natives our fire was successful and surely caused many casualties.

Our Ln plane observing from the W of GABUT/MOH crashed or was shot down about 1400L. No trace of the plane or the two officers in it have been found. The lost plane never established radio contact with the observer's plane, although its' purpose was ancillary surveillance and an alternate channel of communication.

At 0700L, 1 officer and 19 enlisted men from Co "B" at SHL arrived with rations. This group remained and took over part of the perimeter.

During the first night, the Inf pulled in its' perimeter to 1000 yds of the battery position and the battery fired 49 rds of HE from 1930L, 7 Feb to 0700L, 8 Feb, harassing the enemy at intervals from one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half hour periods. Each piece was laid on a seperate concentration and covered the 1000 yd area around KOSIT.

With the assistance of our tractors the two LCM's and one LCV which were broached were floated by 1400L, 8 Feb, and left for their base. Our plane checked in to observe at 1300L and radio communication was perfect. The plane observed our concentration and reported "effective". Low clouds obscured visibility at 1345L and the plane returned.

Radio communication with Able Btry's OP and GP sets at SHL was perfect throughout the day.

Reclaimed rds were found to have good cases, primers and projectiles but the powder increments were wet. Since our fires were with Charge 5, the wet increments were replaced by two Charge 7 and one Charge 6 bags taken from good rds, which gave approximately the same weight as Charge 5. It was hoped that the plane could adjust these rds on GABUT/MOH, but clouds obscured visibility, 60 reclaimed rds were fired on KOSIT from 1815L to 1845L using data for Charge 5. This firing was for harassing effect only.

On 9 Feb, 3 LCM's arrived at YAGOMI at 1000L and were loaded by 1030L. These LCM's continued to shuttle between YAGOMI and MUR and completed moving "D" Btry by 1430L.

2. a. Summary of ammunition expenditure:

Rounds taken with Btry		746 M48
		4 M54
		50 M57
Total		800
Sunk in LCM	154	
Reclaimed & fired	60	
& returned to dump		56
Not reclaimed		38
Fired on T1 (400 yds W of KOSIT)		141
" " T2 (KOSIT)		354
" " T3 (300 yds E of KOSIT)		142
" " T4 (600 yds E of KOSIT)		69
Total		800

b. All of the 56 rds of M48 which were reclaimed and returned to btry dump have two Charge 7 and one Charge 6 powder increments in the case, and could be fired on targets <u>not</u> over our own troops.

(Ltr: Sub – "Report of Arty Firing from YAGOMI", Hq, 121st FABn, 10 Feb 44 cont'd)

3. Conclusions:

a. The operation was successful and the mission was accomplished.

b. No boats would have been broached had heavy tow cable been available (statement of Lt, Amphibious Engineers).

c. Establishment of communications was delayed by dampness through spray.

d. The 105 mm shell is visible in jungle terrain using aerial observation.

For the Commanding Officer:

JAMES L. LAIN,
Major, 121st FA Bn.,
S-3.

HEADQUARTERS
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO #32, U.S.A.S.O.S

10 Feb 43

Subject: Report of Investigation of Performance of SCR-609

To: C.O., 121 FA Bn.

1. Submitted herewith are affidavits taken from persons who were directly connected with the use of SCR-609s of this Bn in connection with artillery firing by A Btry, 129 FA Bn, at Yagomi, New Guinea, 7 Feb 43.

2. The undersigned, having been assigned to make this investigation, offers the following conclusions:

a. That the sets were in serviceable condition prior to being put in use, and the fact that trouble did develop was not unexpected, since in previous experience with these sets being used for this purpose, poor results have been the rule more often than good results.

b. That the installation of the sets in the planes was done in the most satisfactory manner possible.

c. That the dampening of the sets by exposure to the water enroute to Yagomi might have been diminished by use of some sort of protective cover such as an old shelter half or similar material. However, the prescribed method of waterproofing radios by means of adhesive tape with candle wax rubbed on it has been proved unsatisfactory by previous experience. The fact that the radios were readily put in working order after the dampening indicates that no irreparable damage was done by the water.

d. That very little time was allowed to prepare for communication in this operation, the first instructions having been given to the Communications Officer only on the evening before the operation was to take place.

R. J. GOODRICH,
Capt., 121 FA Bn,
Comm. O.

Incl: Affidavits from Capt. Olson
Capt. Kinzer
S/Sgt. Edwards
T/IV Schaefer
T/IV Fabian
Corp. Wenzel
T/V Lulk
Capt. Goodrich

AFFIDAVIT

I, Captain R. J. Godrich, O-525330, Communications Officer of the 121 FA Bn, certify the following in regard to the use of SCR-609 sets in the conduct of artillery firing at Yagomi, New Guinea, 7 Feb 43, by A Battery, 129 FA Bn:

That, on Sunday evening, 6 Feb 43, I was called in by the Bn C.O., Major Kindig, and asked to see what could be done to get two or three extra SCR-300 sets for use in air-ground communication for firing scheduled the next day;

That I was unable to secure any SCR-300 sets from either the Signal Detachment or the 120 FA Bn and hence it was decided to use SCR-609 sets;

That Major Kindig directed me to install the SCR-609 sets in the cub planes as soon as they were available Monday morning, which we did, the planes being available at about 0900L and 1030L respectively;

That I suggested to Major Kindig that we send our Bn. sets along with the Gun battery since they were already tuned, and he agreed;

That I further suggested that we send our own operators, including our radio technician as trouble shooter in case of any difficulty, and he again agreed;

That all sets to be used were checked early Monday morning and found to be in working order, and T/IV Fabian, the electrician, and Corp. Mueller, radio corporal, set out at 0800L for A Btry, 129 FA Bn, to accompany them to Yagomi;

That the sets mounted in the planes were checked by radio personnel on trial flights after installation, and found to be working in satisfactory manner;

That a set of wing signals were prepared and turned over by radio personnel to both T/IV Fabian, before he left, and to the operators of each of the planes;

That there was every reason to expect the radio communication to function satisfactorily, and the wing signals were arranged as an alternate means of communication;

That the SCR-609 radios are not designed for use in cub planes, and mounting them is a make-shift proposition, and none-too-satisfactory;

That it is understood that the sets with the guns did get wet enroute which may have affected their operation;

That the sets with the guns were not waterproofed;

That waterproofing radio sets is considered by many radio experts to be unsatisfactory, and was, during our amphibious training considered a failure when actually attempted and that since then it has not been generally practiced in this battalion;

That it is doubtful if waterproofing of the sets used in this operation would have adquately protected them under the circumstances.

R. J. GODRICH,
Capt., 121 FA Bn.,
Comm. O.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date.

JAMES L. LAIN,
Major, 121 FA Bn.,
Adjutant.

10 Feb 43.

AFFIDAVIT

I, S/Sgt. James R. Edwards, 18130385, Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn, Air Observation pilot of Cub pland belonging to this battalion, hereby certify the following as to my participation in the artillery firing from Yagomi, New Guinea, Monday, 7 Feb 43:

That I had flown my plane on a mission with Lt. Sweet, S-2 of 2d Bn, 126 Inf, at0900L Monday morning, endeavoring to contact, with an SCR-300 set, mounted in my plane, a patrol from 2d Bn which was up in the mountains;

That, on returning from that mission, the mechanic and radio technician together had removed the SCR-300 and installed an SCR-609, which worked well in communication with the ground on a trial run after it had been installed;

That, at about 1300L I took off with Capt. Olson as passenger, to observe the firing;

That, prior to taking off, I had handed the sheet with wing signals on it to Capt. Olson;

That, when in the air, Capt. Olson became air-sick and vomited;

That, when Capt. Olson could not hear the ground set on his radio he struck the microphone against the seat and pounded on the set to try and make it work better;

That, when radio did not work, and we wanted to use wing signals, Capt. Olson found he did not have the sheet of paper with wing signals on it with him;

That I then dropped a message at the Gun Position with an improvised set of wing signals, and we used these and other dropped messages to continue the conduct of fire;

That we returned to 121 FA strip at about 1530L, re-gassed and tested our radio and found it to work well with the set on the ground near the strip;

That when again near the Gun Position at Yagomi we were still unable to establish satisfactory communication with the ground by radio;

That the difficulty seemed to be with our transmitter or the ground sets' receivers, since we could hear the ground set, but they apparently did not hear us.

James R Edwards

JAMES R. EDWARDS,
S/Sgt., Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date.

JAMES L. LAIN,
Major, 121 FA Bn,
Adjutant.

10 Feb 43

AFFIDAVIT

I, T/IV Walter F. Schaefer, 36208091, Acting Radio Sergeant of Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn, hereby certify the following in regard to the use of Radio Sets SCR-609 of this organization in connection with the air-ground communication in artillery firing at Yagomi, New Guinea, Monday, 7 February 43:

That instructions for the use of the radios were received from Capt. Goodrich, Communications Officer, 121 FA Bn, on the evening of Sunday, 6 Feb 43;

That sets were placed in readiness and plans made for their installation in planes the following morning;

That T/IV Lee E. Fabian, 20653067, my Radio Electrician, and Corp. Clement J. Mueller, 36207831, were designated to report to A Battery, 129 FA Bn, and accompany the guns of that battery to Yagomi for the firing, which they did;

That the sets to be used were all tested on the ground before T/IV Fabian left at about 0800L;

That the sets to be installed in the two planes were installed as soon as the planes were available, and the planes made trial runs and communication with the ground was working well;

That pre-arranged wing signals were given to both T/IV Fabian and the operators of both planes for use in continuing the conduct of fire in the event that radio communication failed;

That the apparent failure of radio communication might have been due to any of the following causes, all of which have given trouble with these sets in the past;

1. Accurate tuning is impossible due to lack of availability of tubes for Voltometer, ME-13-C, the instrument used in tuning these sets. Since the Signal Detachment could not furnish these tubes, and since no serviceable Voltometer is available on this beach-head, the tuning of these sets must be done by ear, a none-too-satisfactory means.
2. These sets easily get out of alignment subsequent to being tuned.
3. Power cords connecting these sets with batteries are so constructed that they are easily broken.
4. These are FM sets, and any intervening land mass will cut out communication. Normal conditions usually give good communication over from two to ten miles.
5. These radios are not built for installation in cub planes, and an improvised method of installation must be used, including placing of set and batteries in different parts of the plane for proper distribution of weight. The use of these sets is only resorted to because of lack of other radios for this purpose.
6. Our sets have been in use for almost two years, have been frequently repaired and cannot be assumed to be entirely reliable. However, we have never been able to get them repaired, and these were in the best condition of any of the sets in the battalion.

That two sets were sent with T/IV Fabian to work at the Gun Position, so that a spare would be available should one set prove to be unserviceable.

Walter F. Schaefer

WALTER F. SCHAEFER,
T/IV, Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn.

Sworn to and subscribed to this date before me.

James L. Lain

JAMES L. LAIN,

AFFIDAVIT

I, T/IV Lee E. Fabian, ASN 20653067, Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn, assigned as Radio Electrician in Radio Section, certify to the following in regard to artillery firing by A Battery, 129 FA Bn, at Yagomi, New Guinea, Monday, 7 Feb 43:

That I was assigned by Capt. Goodrich, Communications Officer of 121 FA Bn, to go along with A Battery 129 FA Bn to handle the SCR-609 sets that were to be used for radio communication with the plane;

That I accompanied the battery on the trip to and landing at Yagomi;

That the sets got wet en route, and, not having been water-proofed, had to be thoroughly gone over before being operated; (It could not be assumed, however, that waterproofing would have kept the sets completely dry under the circumstances)

That, during the firing communication with the plane was not satisfactory, although we did hear the plane radio faintly and distorted and the plane operator, Capt. Olson, later informed us that he heard us well;

That at no time did we hear Major Kindig on the air;

That drop messages were utilized by the plane to continue the conduct of the fire;

That, after the firing, radio contact was established with Sel OP, and with Capt. Bourn at the forward OP, and continued satisfactorily until we returned from Yagomi;

That we took a spare set along as a hedge against trouble, and that this was fortunate as one set proved to be unserviceable on arrival;

That Corp. Mueller, from Hq Btry Radio Section, accompanied me and assisted in operation of thesets;

That it is not surprising that the SCR-609 sets should not work well in the planes, as they are only an improvised arrangement for this purpose.

Lee E Fabian
LEE E. FABIAN,
T/IV Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date.

James L. Lain
JAMES L. LAIN,
Major, 121 FA Bn.,
Adjutant.

10 Feb 43.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Corp. Gordon R. Wemmel, 20638895, Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn, make the following certificate concerning my connection with the use and operation of SCR-609 sets by this battalion in connection with the firing at Lagumi, New Guinea, Monday, 7 Feb 43:

That I was acting in the capacity of radio operator and technician;

That, on instructions from T/IV Schaefer, Acting Radio Sergeant of this battery, I assisted in the installation of a set in each of the 121 FA and 120 FA cub planes which were used;

That each set, after installation, was tested by me on a trial run in the air, and communication with the ground was good;

That, when the two planes took off, at about 1300L, Monday, 7 Feb 43, to observe the firing, the one plane piloted by 2d Lt. Pietrowski with Major Kindig as passenger, and the other piloted by S/Sgt. Edwards, with Capt Olson as passenger, there was every reason to believe, from actual testing, that the radios were in good working order;

That, when, during the same afternoon, at about 1530L, S/Sgt. Edwards' plane returned to the 121 FA strip to re-gas, reporting that the radio did not work, it was tested with the radio on the ground at the strip, and worked satisfactorily then.

Gordon R. Wemmel
GORDON R. WEMMEL,
Corp., Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date.

James L. Lain
JAMES L. LAIN,
Major, 121 FA Bn.,
Adjutant.

10 Feb 43.

AFFIDAVIT

I, T/V Frederick P. Luik, 32194855, Air Mechanic, Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn, hereby certify that:

On 7 Feb 43 I assisted in the installation of SCR-609 sets in the cub planes of the 120 and 121 FA Bns, to be used that afternoon in observing artillery firing by A Battery, 129 FA Bn, from Yagomi, New Guinea;

That, after installation, the planes were given trial runs in the air and radio communication with the ground worked well, Corporal Wenzel of the Radio Section operating the sets on the trial runs;

That, when the planes took off at about 1300L for the firing there was every reason to believe that they would have satisfactory communication by radio.

Frederick P. Luik
FREDERICK P. LUIK,
T/V, Hq Btry, 121 FA Bn.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date.

James L. Lain
JAMES L. LAIN,
Major, 121 FA Bn,
Adjutant.

10 Feb 43.

RCB/fms

H E A D Q U A R T E R S
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO #32

11 February 1944

Subject: Ammunition Distribution, SAIDOR Landing.

To : Shore Party Commander.

The following is Am distribution in Bn vehicles - loaded at GOODENOUGH ISLAND, landed at SAIDOR - remaining of Bn Am was bulk loaded in LST:

S&A	3- 2½ T, GMC	291 rds	- 873		
			873	873	
A	4- 3/4 T, W/C	40 rds	- 160		
B	4- 3/4 T, W/C	20 "	- 80		
C	4- 3/4 T, W/C	20 "	- 80		
			320	320	
S&A	1- 1 T Tr ea	87 rds	- 87	87	
A	4- ¼ T Tr ea	60 "	- 240		
B	4- ¼ T Tr "	60 "	- 240		
C	4- ¼ T Tr "	60 "	- 240		
Mortar Pltn	4- ¼ T Tr "	60 "	- 240		
			960	960	
				2240.	

For the Commanding Officer:

RICHARD C. BURDICK,
Capt., 121st FA Bn.,
Ass't S-3.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] January 1944.

Subject: Deficiencies in L4 Liaison Plane.

To: Artillery Officer, Sixth Army Headquarters
Thru: Commanding General, Mississippi Task Force

1. Certain deficiencies in the L4 Liaison Plane have become apparent during the month this unit has been in combat, and it is believed that the Artillery should experiment with some other type plane which will better meet artillery needs.

2. Trouble in the L4 is the inability to get into and out of short emergency fields. We have found that there are very few small grass fields not surrounded by high trees, thus requiring a smooth, flat strip about 1200 - 1500 feet in length. Even with a strip this long, during the early morning hours it is very difficult to take off, since the air seems to be "thin", and the L4 has insufficient power to lift the plane out of the field. It may be added that a great amount of time and energy must be expended in order to construct a suitable landing field. The undercarriage is so fragile that rough field landing is an impossibility. We have destroyed two sets of landing gear in attempting landings on strips even after the bulldozer had scraped the field. We have also lost one plane, crashed, because of a power stall resulting from the pilot's inability to get out of a field. All three accidents happened to different pilots, all graduates of the Field Artillery Liaison Pilot School, two of them having eight or more years experience flying Cub type planes commercially.

3. It has been difficult to find observers and pilots light enough to prevent overloading the plane. Two persons of average weight (150-165) and a SCR610 or 300 series radio overloads the plane. Landings with this load are not especially difficult, but takeoffs are.

4. From the foregoing, it would seem that the L4 has the following inherent deficiencies:
   (a) Fragile undercarriage.
   (b) Engine of insufficient horsepower to carry expected loads in this climate.
   (c) Insufficient "lift" characteristics.
   (d) Limited cruising range.
   (e) Poor communication facilities.
   (f) General fragility, especially for type of work intended.

5. The type airplane needed is described as follows:
   (a) Slightly heavier, faster, and able to carry approximately 100-150 pounds more weight than the L4. Since a long, flat, good surfaced strip must be constructed for the L4, no additional disadvantages would accrue with a heavier ship.

(b) Increased horsepower and "lift" characteristic (flaps, variable pitch prop, etc), enabling plane to enter and leave relatively short fields.
(c) Equipped with a light, simple, efficient radio, situated well forward in plane and adaptable for easy installation and maintenance.
(d) Engine simple in design and construction, and easy to maintenance.
(e) Sturdy undercarriage.

6. It is not known which of the planes now being made would prove adequate. S/Sgt Boothe, one of our pilots, has had about eight years experience with light planes, and has flown the L3, L4, and L5. He believes that the L5 might prove superior to the L4 for artillery purposes.

7. It is suggested that one (1) type L5 plane be issued to this battalion for trial purposes. This battalion is short one plane at the present time.

EARL R. KINDIG
Major, 121st FA Bn.,
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
A.P.O. #32

ERK/we

25 January 1944

Subject: Observations Based on Experience in Combat.

To : CG, Michaelmas Task Force
Thru: G-3, Michaelmas Task Force.

In compliance with verbal request, G-3, Michaelmas Task Force, for comments, based on our experience in this or other operations, on all types of equipment, supply, Tables of Organization, and allied subjects, the following is submitted.

1. The Jungle Pack and Equipment.

(1) The Jungle Pack is considered to be an improvement over the old infantry pack. It is easier to carry, and is much more convenient. It has been found that men have not been acquainted with all the different ways of making up the pack.

(2) The complete pack is considered to be of too much weight and size if the soldier is expected to land on the beach and fight, and therefore, two packs should be made up, one to be carried and one to come in later on organizational vehicles or as bulk load. In the pack to be carried should be at least two days rations, preferably of component parts of the K and D ration. There is usually little time to stop and heat the "C" ration, and in addition, two days rations of "C" is very heavy.

(3) In the carried pack should be at least two extra pairs of light wool socks, the jungle medical kit, head net and gloves, one change of underwear, poncho, toilet articles, cleaning and preserving equipment, including oil, and cigarettes and flotation bladders.

(4) The other pack, carried in the waterproof bag, can contain all the rest of the jungle equipment.

(5) The Jungle Boot has been very successful. The men prefer them to shoes and leggings in almost every case. They wear longer, are easier to clean and dry, do not chafe the legs as leggings do, and might replace the G-I shoe and leggings entirely, especially in this type of climate. In this connection, it is believed that more jungle sox should be issued. It is imperative that sox be changed daily in this theater in order to prevent fungus growth and other infection.

(6) Machetes should be issued on the basis of one per individual.

(7) The soft helmet liner, which is being issued at the present time, is far inferior to the composition type, and should be discountinued.

(8) The carbine should be replaced by the pistol for all personnel in the wire section. Great difficulty has been encountered in climbing trees and otherwise servicing wire with the rifle on the back.

(9) The two-piece HBT suit is excellent, except that the pants' pockets should be placed to the front of the leg and about three inches lower. It is now next to impossible to get into the pockets in a hurry. The cloth is a little too heavy for this climate.

(10) The 4-man Coleman stove should be issued on the basis of 1 per 8 men in all artillery units. The artillery battalion and separate batteries are broken down into small sections, such as survey section, wire section, liaison section, forward observer parties, defensive outposts and others. This necessitates being away from the organizational kitchen a great amount of the time, and the Coleman burner is excellent for the preparation of a hot meal for small groups.

(11) In summation, the Jungle Equipment is good. The cloth and netting parts are a little too fragile, and zippers are not heavy enough. The hammock should have a pocket for a jungle knife, insect repellant, flashlight, the existing pocket being too small. A percentage of the hammock should be 10" longer to accomodate tall men.

2. Supply.

(1) Initial supply of organizational equipment and individual equipment was fair, however, some substitutional items are unsatisfactory. This is caused inpart by unfamiliarity is higher supply echelons with nomenclature, which fact has been repeatedly evident. The freezing of certain stocks of equipment in order to build up a backlog, while troops going into combat are in desperate need of these items, is an all too evident fault in our supply echelons. In some cases, we have been told that helmet liners, canteens, and other items are "frozen", and only by begging, wheedling, and browbeating have those items been made available. This was especially true in the Brisbane area. In order to get <u>one</u> spare sight (M3 on M1 Mount) for the 75mm Pack Howitzer, a fragile item at best, the Battalion Commander had to go to the Base Ordnance shops and take the sight off a damaged howitzer, and refuse to give it up. The Ordnance Officer then laughed and tallied it out

(2) Supply of hand soap and other toilet articles has been poor. This condition is now becoming critical.

(3) Replacement and spare parts items are not available, especially for automotive equipment.

(4) Ration supply, replacement HB Twills, and ammunition has been very good. More small sizes shoes and HBT are needed. This has been true ever since arriving in SWPA. Signal supply has been poor. The presently issued radio sets require replacement parts and batteries, and these have not been available in sufficient quantity. Batteries issued have been inferior in quality to the standards required for combat operations. They should be wrapped in airtight, water-proof containers.

3. The 75mm Pack Howitzer, converted to high speed tow.

(1) This weapon has been found to be good for special missions where a light, small, easily manouvered weapon is required. It is accurate, but has a number of mechanical faults. These are listed as follows:

a. No wrench for disassembling wheel bearing.

b. Howitzers manufactured in 1942 have loose sight brackets due to poor machining and the fact that there is only one retaining unit.

c. All sight shanks are .001" undersize.

d. The traversing handwheel being made of brass, it "stretches" thereby stripping the studs that retain the traversing nut. By drilling and tapping it 5/16" through the full length of the handwheel, it has given satisfactory service.

e. The axle sleeve bearing is loosened from the axle sleeve, due to the shock of firing; this can be corrected by drilling a hole between the nut and the sleeve and driving in a soft pin.

f. The wheel grease seal is not satisfactory for a towed howitzer.

g. The rope lanyard is not strong enough for constant use. We have devised new ones of wire rope.

h. The trail handspike is not satisfactory. The teat bends too easily and the angle of projection is so low as to make the digging of an additional trench necessary, thereby slowing the initial delivery of fire.

i. The micrometer knob on the quadrant has a tendency to slip with only the slightest jarring. It is suggested that the knob be constructed with a rachet or lock.

(2) A chest for cleaning and preserving materials, preferably waterproof, would be a welcome addition to the T/E. A set of tools for the artillery mechanics is virtually a necessity in the jungle. One rammer staff instead of two would be sufficient.

(3) Ammunition has been stable, very few rounds having been found unserviceable.

(4) The 75mm Pack Howitzer should be used for the purpose for which designed, such as mountain warfare. It's shell will not penetrate and knock out heavy Japanese bunkers, and is of insufficient size and weight to do much more than harrass. The delay fuze has been found best for jungle growth. Time shell does not penetrate jungle growth with killing effect.

(5) It is my personal conviction, based on two campaigns, that it is not an adequate weapon for divisional artillery use, and in no way can be considered a general support weapon. The Buna and Saidor operations have shown that a heavier weapon, to include the M-1, 155mm Howitzer, could have been used, moved, emplaced with relative ease. The advantages of far greater range and weight of shell would have been enormous. We have been frequently called on to reach targets 12,000 - 14,000 yards in front of the OPLR, which we have been unable to do.

4. Signal Equipment.

(1) Wire signal equipment is excellent. The EES phone has been found to be very reliable, however it must be remembered that all equipment in the jungle must be serviced every day. W-110 wire has proven adequate, and it is necessary to use this wire on all but very short lines, laid <u>off</u> the roads and <u>elevated</u>. W-130 may be used on short lines where traffic is non-existent.

(2) Almost all wire must be laid by hand, due to the inability of vehicles to move in jungle mud and undergrowth. It is thought that the old breast reel might be used to good advantage. More climbing equipment should be issued each unit.

(3) The SCR 600 series radios have been disappointing. They are much too fragile for jungle operations and are severely limited as to range in this operation. The alinement of the 610 radio has given us considerable trouble, and tubes and batteries burn out too frequently. The SCR 300 series radio, of which we have two, has been found to be superior to the 609-610 series. It is easier to maintenance and has reached distances of 18 miles when used in

an air-ground net. The SCR 610 radio has never operated for us in a like manner, and has frequently blanked out at three miles.

(4) The ultimate conclusion is that wire is still the best and most reliable means of communication in this theater.

5. Vehicles.

(1) The 1/4 Ton 4x4 has been found to be inadequate as a prime mover for the 75mm Pack Howitzer. It is an excellent vehicle for reconnaisance in dry weather, but has far too little clearance in the jungle mud. It is thought that at least a 20" wheel should be adapted to the 1/4 Ton 4x4 in order to get it through the roads found here.

(2) The 3/4 Ton 4x4 w/winch is superior to the 1/4 Ton 4x4 as a prime mover, but is not wholly adequate, due to lack of pulling power (due to only 4 speeds forward transmission).

(3) The 2½ Ton 6x6 is an excellent vehicle, but it too has been found to be insufficient to cope with Saidor mud.

(4) The TD9 M1 tractor, w/winch, and the D-4 tractor w/blade, have proven to be of inestimable help to us. Almost all our ammunition and rations have had to be hauled with borrowed tractors, since we have only one. The tractor has pulled two trailers, each loaded with approximately 1 ton of supplies, where an empty 1/4 Ton, 2½ Ton, and 3/4 Ton have mired down.

(5) It is recommended that a light tractor, such as the D-2, be issued as a prime mover for the 75mm Pack Howitzer, and that in addition, one D-4 w/blade be issued to each of the firing batteries in the battalion. It is further recommended that the 1½ Ton 6x6 be issued as personnel and cargo carriers, with 1 Ton 2 wheeled trailers for each.

(6) A kit of spare parts for the ignition system would reduce the number of deadlined vehicles.

(7) A 250 gallon water tank should be furnished each battery, thus eliminating the grave problem of keeping a sufficient number of 5 gallon water cans on hand.

6. Airplane equipment.

(1) There exists a definite feeling that the L-4 type liaison plane is inadequate in some respects.

(2) Advantages of the plane are as follows:

a. Ship is light in weight and thus able to get into and out of short fields.

b. Very little maintenance necessary.

c. Slow landing and dragging speeds.

d. Ability to operate satisfactorily with motor fuel.

(3) Disadvantages:

a. Limited cruising range.

b. Fragile

c. Communications facilities bad.

d. Lacks H.P. for climbing in this area.

e. Crew weight too limited.

f. Undercarriage not sturdy enough except for the best of fields.

(4) The type airplane needed is described as follows:

a. Slightly heavier and faster, in view of the fact that a landing strip must be prepared anyway for the L-4.

b. Increased speed and H.P. for patrol work.

c. Equipped with variable pitch propellor.

d. Able to get into and out of relatively short fields, but with greater climbing characteristics once off the ground.

e. Equipped with a light, simple, efficient radio, situated well forward in the plane, and adaptable for easy installation and maintenance.

f. Engine simple in design and construction, and easy to maintenance.

g. Sturdy undercarriage.

7. Tables of Organization.

(1) At present, this battalion is using the 155mm Howitzer T/O 6-35 having never been granted authority to change to the 75mm

Pack Howitzer T/O 6-175 SWPA 19 August 1943. The 155mm T/O is superior in some respects, in that it allows a separate Service Battery, separate from Headquarters Battery. This Battalion has operated under both plans, and definitely prefers the separate Service Battery. It has been found to be more efficient, and better able to cope with the difficult supply problems of the jungle.

(2) There should be an increase of signalmen in all batteries except Service Battery. At least 9 more men are needed in each wire section to properly maintenance the Battalion and Battery wire lines.

(3) The 75mm Pack Howitzer T/O allows two liaison sections, while the 155mm Howitzer T/O does not. We have found two necessary, even when we had the 155mm Howitzer.

(4) There exists a definite need for more grades and ratings for drivers. The quality of the driver in the Army is relatively poor, compared with the commercial truck driver. Very little incentive exists for the army driver, except his love of his work. The driver is responsible for handling thousands of dollars worth of equipment, and should have a grade commensurate with his responsibility.

(5) There should be a T/O rating of Techn 4th Grade for the recorder of the firing battery.

(6) Battery computers should be part of the battalion headquarters battery, and should have a rating of at least Techn 5th Grade, preferably a Techn 4th Grade.

(7) The Battery Motor Sergeant should be at least a Staff Sergeant or preferably a Technical Sergeant.

(8) It is believed that there should be at least five officers in each firing battery, where, in jungle operations, two are needed as forward observers.

(9) The Battery Supply Sergeant should have one private, assistant.

(10) At least two additional mechanics should be authorized for each battery.

(11) All specialists, such as cooks, mechanics, radio operators, etc., should be graduates of technical schools and experts in their line. Officers, such as supply, communications, and survey, should be graduates of specialists schools. The Field Artillery School at Fort Sill has been incapable of handling the tremendous increase of Field Artillery officers, to the detriment of the Service.

8. Use of Photos, Mosaics, Observed Fire Charts.

(1) The observed fire chart was used initially, both in our present and previous position. Only a location and direction stake, determined from a shot on the sun and admittedly inaccurate, were furnished initially. Survey started at once, and was just being completed when we were ordered to direct support of the 2d Battalion, 126th Infantry. Survey was again started in the new position, while the Battalion registered on a Battalion Base Point and numerous check points. It took almost two weeks of constant work, over impassable roads and through jungle to complete a surveyed chart with sufficient detail to transfer to that chart as our firing chart. Survey work is going on constantly and we are now building up a Battle Map, from O.P. sketches, panoramics, single verticals and obliques.

(2) The supply of good obliques and verticals has been entirely inadequate. The best set we have is just half the set and does not cover any portion of the target area. The Infantry was given the other half. A later set of verticals (taken in Sept. 43) proved very helpful in restitution and forward observer work. We have never received any obliques. Repeated requests for photos have been made.

(3) The photo mosaic furnished us came in two sheets, the Gumbi and Nom sheets. The Gumbi and Nom sheets had to be joined, The Gumbi sheet covering the position area and the Nom sheet covering the Target Area. Our first registrations were computed from the mosaics and errors of 120-210 mils in deflection were obtained. Registrations on check points confirmed the fact that the Nom sheet was out of orientation with the Gumbi sheet, and it was decided not to use the mosaic as a firing chart. It is quite useful to the O.P.'s and forward observers in computing base deflection shifts. Now that we have a survey chart, with numerous check points registered, and have air photos covering the target, our problems of firing charts are solved. The Battle Map should be completed shortly, including contours to 10 feet. The V.C.O. assisted in the work of taking site readings to build up vertical control.

9. Metro Messages:

(1) Metro messages have at times been inaccurate and insufficient, and due to communications problems between the battalion and Group Headquarters, have been slow in arriving. Metro corrections show an enormous variation, from -12 yards per M in K, to -72 yards per M K correction. Deflection corrections have averaged about 15, showing very little deviation. Metro messages in this particular location should come at 1000L, 1400L, 1800L and 2300L.

10. Observation and Forward Observers.

(1) The Forward Observer in or in front of the Infantry front lines is the best means of obtaining observation of the enemy in the jungle. Hill O.P.'s are necessary, and available, for general surveillance of the entire target area, but the Forward Observer is the only one who is on the spot and can conduct fire on close-in targets. Rockets or flares can be used to good advantage in some instances in enabling the Forward Observer to be located. This method must be coordinated with the Infantry, Air Corps, and Naval Forces, and usually is not worth the effort entailed. At the present time we have 8 Forward Observers on the line.

(2) Each Forward Observer should have at least four men to help him maintain his lines, operate his radio, and help him protect his position from enemy fire. Each party should have one 4-man Coleman stove and K or J rations of sufficient quantity to last three days. Forward Observers parties should be relieved every third day, if possible.

11. Sanitation and Health.

(1) The importance of education of enlisted men and administrative enforcement of preventive medicine applying to military life has been conclusively demonstrated by the general good health of the command. Diseases such as diarrhea, upper respiratory diseases and "jungle" diseases have been much below the problem stage. No cases of malaria have been reported, which shows that methods we are using for malaria control are effective. The men are now taking five (5) atabrine tablets, twice per week under the supervision of an officer and by roster. They are required to wear shirts and leggings at all times, and educated in the use of the insect repellant. Results speak for themselves.

(2) The battalion is using flyproof box latrines, which are scrubbed daily with hot soap and water. Garbage is disposed of in the battalion garbage pit,which is covered and flyproof. Seepage pits are used in all batteries for the disposal of waste water. Slit trenches and foxholes are bailed out whenever there is water present. All streams in the area which are stagnant are sprayed weekly by the Battalion Malaria Unit.

(3) One man was killed and five wounded aboard LST's by our shore defenses. Two men were wounded by gunshot, one during the first night and one accidentally by failing to inspect the chamber before cleaning. Otherwise, no serious injuries have occurred in this section.

12. Infantry - Artillery Cooperation.

(1) There has been a definite increase in a feeling of mutual understanding and helpfulness in both arms since the Buna Campaign. A stupid feeling that either arm is capable of winning battles alone has decreased considerably, especially in the lower ranks. The cooperation achieved here has been very gratifying, especially up to and including the battalions.

(2) There still exists, I believe, a feeling of unconcern among higher commanders regarding Infantry - Artillery cooperation, especially in cases where the two have not been too dependent on each other. In all the other theaters, and in some instances, in the SWPA, higher commanders have realized, and have used, the Artillery - Infantry team to win battles. Great masses of artillery fire have been used on the enemy in situations where any lack of such firepower would have caused thousands of infantry casualties.

(3) Too often the Commander fails to realize that artillery represents his greatest mass of reserve firepower, capable of manouvering that great mass at a moments notice while his infantry firepower is relatively tied to the immediate vicinity of the ground troops. Sooner or later such a commander must be faced with the situation in which, if he fails to utilize properly his massed artillery, he will sustain greater casualties than necessary or lose the battle entirely, either of which is an unpardonable sin.

(4) Such a situation exists, I believe, because of lack of sufficient training of higher and lower commanders in the problems and capabilities of both arms, and a tendency to fail to work both into an efficient fighting team. This is apparent to those artillery units which had never even fired over the heads of supported infantry troops prior to entering combat. Such a situation is hardly explainable in view of the fact that those units now in combat have been in training in this theater for almost <u>two years</u>.

(5) It will be well for all ranks to remember that the great victories of this war: The Desert Campaign starting at El Alamein; The Battle for Stalingrad; The Tunisian Campaign; The German advance through the Low Countries and into France; and many others were achieved only through the intelligent use of great masses of Artillery Fire, preceding, and making possible, the advance of the Infantry troops.

EARL R. KINDIG,
Maj, 121st FA Bn,
Commanding.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO #32

EHK/fms

23 January 1944

Subject: Operations this Battalion from 2 Jan 1944 to 22 Jan 1944.

To : G-3, Michaelmas Task Force.

Jan 2. LST s beached on Red Beach and White Beach at 0810L. Bn Comdrs' party and the Mortar Btry unloaded without event; the Bn Comdr immediately established liaison with Group Hq and established a CP along the track to the airstrip. The Mortar Battery reported to the Shore Party Comdr and assisted in unloading LST's and establishing dumps. At 1500L, the CP was moved to 55.16-79.50 and the Party and Mortar Btry established a bivouac in the woods surrounding.

Jan 3. Several rounds of small arms ammunition were fired in our area at the imaginary enemy during the night and enemy bombs fell on the airstrip area near our bivouac but no casualties were sustained from either cause. The balance of the Bn disembarked at 0930L, having lost one man killed and three wounded through fire from shore batteries on the LST's at 0500L. The Firing Batteries were put in position along the South edge of bivouac area and were prepared to fire either east or west along the coast or south into the mountains. Able Btry registered on a BP to the South-west of our perimeter at 1830L. Telephone communication established throughout the Bn and to Group Hq.

Jan 4. Forward observers reported to 2d and 3d Bns. Bn Comdr and Btry Comdrs on reconnaissance across the Nankina R. during the day. OP established at HELMHOLTZ POINT by A Btry.

Jan 5. Continued reconnaissance across the Nankina R. Bn continuing digging in and bivouac improvement.

Jan 6. Bn Comdr Party on reconnaissance in FANGGER AREA. C Btry displaced to 54.2-79.55, to cover eastern beaches.

Jan 7. A and B Btrys displaced at 1145L to positions along the fringe of trees at 57.39-77.10 to support OPLR of 2d Bn. C Btry Comdr reconnoitered for positions E of DARWIN. Bn assigned mission of direct support of 2d Bn. CP established at 57.8-77.3 at 1500L. Joint Bn OP at 53.3-64.7 for 120 FA Bn and 121 FA Bn occupied by our Bn observer. Lisison plane began routine intelligence flights.

Jan 8. Forward observers occupied forward OP's at 63.1-74.9 and registered B Btry on Bn BP at 64.38-72.78. C Btry displaced to new position at 60.86-76.38 to support forward outpost line of 2d Bn. Ln plane crashed on take-off at 1613L, no one injured, plane complete loss.

Jan 9. Base point registrations completed and each Btry registered on individual check points from the coast line to 2500 yds inland. A Btry established forward OP at 63.6-75.0 for close support of OPLR. C Btry Fwd Observer proceeded by barge to SBL for close support of forward outpost.

(Ltr, Hq 121 FA Bn, Sub: Operations this Bn from 2 Jan44 to 22 Jan 44, cont'd)

Jan 10. C Btry fired 146 rds HE neutralization and harassing missions on known enemy locations along the coast between SEL and SEUER from 1400L to 1700L. A Btry registered on normal barrage location in front of OPLR at 64.3-74.5. B Btry established OP at 63.85-75.18 for close support of OPLR. Wire communication established to all OP's at 1625L.

Jan 11. C Btry fired 23 rds HE harassing throughout the night. At 1245L C Btry fired a successful preparation of 27 rds against enemy automatic weapons permitting our patrol to advance. 3d Sect, C Btry, was moved by barge to SEL at 1620L and, at 1615L, 29 rds direct fire successfully cleared an enemy strong-point at a pass SE of SEL. At least 2 of the enemy were killed by our fire. Able Btry re-adjusted on trails near Normal barrage.

Jan 12. C Btry fired 95 rds HE harassing throughout the night and day from SEURE to YAGOMI. Bn continuing improvement of positions hampered by rainy weather.

Jan 13. 29 rds fired by C Btry in night harassing fires from SEURE to YAGOMI.

Jan 14. Bn fired proving rds on BP and two check points to test fire chart. Results showed a maximum range error of 50 yds and a maximum deflection error of 40 yds on massed Bn fire.

Jan 15. Entire day spent in improving bivouac. No firing. Heavy rains made roads impassable.

Jan 16. Btry A, 129 FA Bn arrived at 0900L by LST and attached to this Bn.

Jan 17. Btry A, 129 FA occupied C Btry's position E of DARWUN and placed one howitzer forward at NOM to permit harassing fire as far as YAGOMI. C Btry displaced to positionsadjoining A and B Btrys. D Btry registered on Bn BP and C Btry laid by survey. Our liaison pilot sighted 6 opened parachutes behind our lines at SEL

Jan 18. Harassing missions, (34 rds), were fired during night on YAGOMI by fwd gun of A, 129 FA Bn. Fwd gun of A Btry, 129 FA Bn registered on SEUER. C Btry gun at SEL fired 19 rds harassing fire on YAGOMI at 1500L.

Jan 19. C Btry established OP's with CO.G, 2d Bn on right flank of MLR. OP's located at 61.15-74.76 and 61.34-74.48. C Btry fwd gun at SEL returned by barge to Btry position.

Jan 20. Ln Sect #2 formed and reported to CO, 1st Bn. A Btry, 129 FA Bn registered on check point SE of SEL.

Jan 21. Road work and communications repair continuing because of heavy rains. OP's have completed bunkers for observers. Double, alternate wire lines completed to all forward positions, OP's, Fwd Observers.

EARL R. KINDIG,
Major, 121st FA Bn.,
Commanding.

Hq Btry
121 FA Bn

Subject: Conclusions on Recent Jungle Operations
To: C.O. 121 FA Bn.

The following conclusions have been reached by the undersigned on recent Jungle Operations of the Battalion:

1. The Hammock is an excellent sleeping arrangement, but the zippers are poorly made, and easily become damaged. The Jungle Pack is excellent, as are all the items it includes. The Jungle shoes are excellent, and should replace leggings and leather shoes completely.

2. No comment on operation of 75 mm. pack howitzer.

3. Rations are excellent, especially the "C", "K" and "J" Rations which are very compact, yet adequate. Clothing is suitable, except that the herring bone twill is non-porous, and very hot, yet difficult to dry. A lighter cloth, like Gabardine of tough fiber might serve better. Jungle Shoes should replace G.I. and leggings. The wool sock is excellent. The helmet and liner work well.

4. Vehicular travel in the Jungle is next to impossible in wet weather with wheeled vehicles. Artillery must be drawn by tracked vehicles of suitable size and power to the piece. Wire laying vehicles should be light tracked vehicles. Personnel can walk, although trailers could easily be rigged to

serve as carriers. Reconnaissance vehicles should be track-laying and, if possible, lightly armored. Something like the Bren Carrier, amphibious, and with light armor and possibly a machine gun for defense in event of attack. Ammunition should be trailer drawn by tractors, as should all types of supplies and rations. Special tank trailers should be supplied for hauling water.

5. Signal equipment, in general, is adequate. The W-110 wire serves most artillery needs well. Some short, temporary lines can be laid with W-130, but it breaks easily. Much wire must be laid by hand, and perhaps the old-type breast reel might again be used. Power reels would be useful, mounted in the tracked wire-laying vehicle. Signalmen should be armed with the pistol, as any longer weapon leaves them at great disadvantage when climbing, and all wire in the Jungle must be overhead. The 600-Series radios are adequate. We have made them work, but we have been unfortunate in having old, patched up sets (2 yrs in steady use), and these have given poor service. The SCR-284 Radio has worked well for Command Net, and the TG-5 and M-209 have functioned well in Message Center operations. The SCR-536 has served our Survey Section well for short distance communication in Survey operations, and the

SCR-300 has proved excellent for Air Ground work.

6. Ammunition has served entirely adequate to our needs.

7. Forward Observation has worked very well in all theaters, and this is true in Jungle as well. High OP's, when available, are used, but the dense growth first into, often obliterates the effect of the fire, and it is hard to tell whether the mission is accomplished. Air Observation offers the same difficulty, unless flying directly over the target, at which position the OB plane is vulnerable to enemy fire.

8. The present T/O is poor. It is felt that there should be fewer channels of command - more direct responsibility. The Firing Batteries should be just that, and should be commanded by ■ Gunnery Experts. Supply, Communication, Motor Maintenance, Survey, Mess and Local Security should be performed by Bn Sections, all part of the Hq, and directly supervised by the Executive Officer. The Bn Gunnery Officer should then take full responsibility for the Firing Batteries and FDC.

9. Infantry-Artillery Cooperation is very poor because these two arms do not train together. You cannot train two parts of a team separately and then put them into a

contest and have them work well together. The essence of teamwork is achieved only from long practice in working together. This long practice in teamwork has been glaringly absent from the training programs of this Division.

10. Air Photos, Mosaics, Photo Maps and charts have proven a tremendous value to Artillery. We have just begun to learn the possibilities of their use. But, they have been a great assistance. They may well supplant all target area survey operations. The observed fire chart is the best means of recording data, and is standard procedure in this and most all other Artillery units.

R. J. Fouracre,
Capt. Hq Btry,
101 FA Bn.
Cmdg.

BATTERY A
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
A.P.O.#32

23 Jan. 1944

CONCLUSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THIS ORGANIZATION AFTER SOME WEEKS UNDER BATTLE CONDITIONS

JUNGLE EQUIPMENT

Under battle conditions the jungle equipment has been found to be quite adequate and very adaptable to all situations encountered. The jungle boot has been found to be very good in that it requires less care and erases leg rashes frequently caused by chafing of leggings.

RATIONS

The balanced diet of "C,D,K and J" rations has been found to be almost ideal. Little or no difficulty has been encountered in supply of rations.

One recommendation is that Baking powder, yeast and other components required in baking be included in the ration issue.

In connection with messes, the M1937 Range, with associated equipment, has met every requirement with signal success.

SIGNAL EQUIPMENT

More difficulty has been found with this equipment than with any other type. All types of batteries have deteriorated more rapidly than noted by normal usage. The most notable deficiency has been the lack of resupply. Jungle warfare being extremely flexible while our present T.O. is not has caused many breakdowns.

To maintain communications at all times it is imperative that all lines be at least in duplicate thus necessitating more wire and associated equipment than is contemplated by our present T.O.

Much difficulty has been experienced in laying and maintaining wire lines with the present vehicle assigned ($\frac{1}{4}$ ton C&R). It is felt that a much heavier vehicle, preferably a tracked vehicle, would enable wire lines to be laid in lanes other than that followed by normal traffic thus reducingcommunication breakdowns and requiring less maintainance.

In connection with wire maintainance it has been noted that two maintainance crews stationed along the wire route at all times has greatly reduced the time lost by breakdowns.

INSTRUMENTS

The instruments issued have been effective in this type of warfare in that few are required under conditions so far encountered. The addition of a Range Finder might be of some value in the case of a battery operating individually. Ordnance repair thus far has been good.

RADIOS

The SCR 609-610 has been found to be adequate most of the time. If all Radios were tuned by a central tuning agency, then sealed and with an improved power cord it is believed this radio would serve at all times. The range of this radio should be raised by increasing the output of the transmitter to 30 watts.

It is also recommended that SCR 608 be provided to firing batteries to serve as net control and to provide radio communications with higher echelons.

VEHICLES

It has been found that vehicles, when used for the purpose for which designed are very suitable. However, due to the temporary T.O. under which this organization is operating, vehicles are definitely not adequate to meet all circumstances.

It is recommended that tha ¼ ton 4x4 C&R be replaced by 3/4 ton 4x4 vehicles. It is further recommended that 1½ ton 6x6 cargo vehicles be provided as Prime Movers.

Supply of spare parts for vehicles on hand have been practically nil thus causing useless deadlining of vehicles at the most inopportune time. If the organization were allowed, at the discretion of the organization commander, to carry a 30 day supply of 1st and 2nd echelon parts, with associated tools, it is believed that road failures can be kept at a minimum.

AMMUNITION

Ammunition has been found to be very serviceable. The only unserviceable ammunition is due to careless handling.

If projectile (75mm) containers were marked on the outside with the lot and weight numbers it would save invaluable time in firing and cut down dispersion to a marked degree since ammunition, in this damp climate, cannot be left uncased.

MATERIEL

Small arms and machine guns have been noted to be very satisfying however it is thought that a tree mount for each .50 cal. machine gun in place of the pedestal mount would better serve.

The 75mm pack howitzer has been found to beavery good weapon--for which it was designed. It has very few mechanical faults, notable among those is the panoramic telescope which is very easy to jar out of adjustment. It is entirely to delicate. However we believe this weapon is wholly inadequate for jungle warfare. It may best be used only as a harassing agent while too frequently a heavier caliber weapon is needed to do what is called for by our supported Infantry. The short range of this weapon, with it's harassing capabilities, makes it an ideal front line Infrantry weapon. It is believed that under no circumstances should this weapon be classed or used as an organic general support weapon.

INFANTRY RELATIONS

Little difficulty has been encountered with Infantry units. At all times relations with the individual infantryman have been of the best but in the matter of policy there seems to be a decided lack of co-operation and enthusiam. It is believed that Infantry-Artillery relations should be a seperate subject of training and that more combined operations be held during specialized training.

In conclusion it is believed that early training be of the severest nature with more emphasis on training of non-commissioned officers in there particular field. There has been a decided lack of supervision and control by non-commissioned officers which could have been easily offset by early training with the extensive use of seperate phsychological schools. It is thought that combat reaction courses should be utilized more throughout all training.

Cedric O Bourn

CEDRIC O. BOURN
Capt. 121st FA BN
Cmdg. Btry A.

BATTERY B
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
A.P.O. 32

TAR/we

23 January 1944

Subject: Conclusions drawn on jungle warfare through observation.

To : Commanding Officer, 121st Field Artillery Battalion.

1. Jungle hammock, equipment and Packs.
a. Complete pack too heavy for initial landing. A light pack consisting of the following items is very satisfactory:

2 days rations	Toilet articles
Medical kit	Cigarettes
Extra socks	Cleaning materials for weapons,
Head net and gloves	of pull through, patches and
Entrenching tools	#340 oil.
Poncho	Flotation bladders.

b. Waterproof clothing bag should be made stronger. On initial landing should have in it the following:

Hammock	Jungle boots
1/2 blanket	Sweater
Mess gear	Comp. change of clothing
Writing material	Additional tobacco

Waterproof bags should be placed in section vehicles.

c. Jungle hammocks are ideal for this type warfare. No suggestions for improvement.

d. Equipment:
(1) More machetes
(2) Carry as many shovels as possible.
(3)

e. A small toilet kit including all articles needed in a confined space as possible is desirable.

2. Operation, stability and effect of 75mm How:

Ideal weapon for landing operations.
Operates very well under adverse conditions.
Howitzer is highly manouverable either by prime mover or by hand in jungles, very easily camouflaged, and simple, speedy and easy to emplace.
Are very accurate if frequent checks of laying are made when in position for more than one day.
Constant visual checks by Executive & chiefs of sections are absolu ly necessary.
To date no combat effects have been observed. Conclusions from service practice show that weapon should have excellent effect against personnel.

2. Operation, stability and effect of 75mm How (contd)

Firing table for high angle fire should be determined and issued as it is possible to dig in and fire elevations up to 1100 mils in ten to twenty minutes, depending on ground.

In general, the 75mm Howitzer is a very good weapon. It should be employed two to three thousand yards behind infantry front lines.

3. Rations, supply, clothing and equipment:

K & J rations are ideal for forward observation parties or any other groups detached from the Battery.
Any group that is detached from the Battery for any period of time should be equipped with a four man cooking unit.
Dehydrated rations are very satisfactory.
The Herringbone Twill have stood up very well. They should be washed frequently.
Jungle boots are good because they dry so much faster than shoes.
As many sand bags as possible are absolutely necessary.

4. Prime mover for 75mm Howitzer:

The 3/4 Ton Weapons Carrier is satisfactory as it will carry all section equipment, rubberized clothing bags and ammunition.
Each prime mover should be equipped with a winch.
All personnel are expected to walk.

5. Signal equipment:

Communications are a constant headache in jungle warfare, as they are constantly be knocked out by bull-dozers, tractors, and other tracked vehicles. Wire should not be strung along the roads and it is essential to put it overhead.

Should have a re-supply immediately available.

Telephones have to be taken down, dried and overhauled daily.

If lines are very long, a maintainance station half way will speed up servicing and repairing of breaks in the line. The group at the station can keep a phone test clipped onto the line and work toward a break in either direction.

Wire is primary means of communication.

610 Radios are not entirely dependable in jungle terrain.

If an O.P. is located on high ground, generally the radio at that O.P. can maintain contact with the other radios.

Readability was good from guns to O.P. located on high hill 6000 yards to the front.

5. Signal equipment (contd)

Extra tubes, batteries and spare parts should always be on hand.

The waterproofing of the radio could be improved.

6. Ammunition:

Clover leaf method of packing is very good. Must be kept above ground and suggest sand bagged in.

Have found no dented cases or wet powder charges.

Shells should be kept in waterproofing cases with tape on it until ready to use.

7. Observation.

Observation in this sector is good as there are high hills near front lines.

Most observation will be Forward Observation with massing of battalion fires by Fire Direction Center.

All Observation Posts should be well dug in and camouflaged as they are in the front lines.

8. Organization of Battalion:

There should be five officers per firing battery to facilitate the manning of O.P.'s and reliefs for O.P. personnel. Also to allow the Battery Commander time to check all his installations.

It is wise to have a defense and security platoon in the Battalion for perimiter defense.

9. Artillery and Infantry Cooperation:

To date, co-ordination of artillery with infantry has been highly satisfactory.

All infantry men seem very anxious to have artillery support.

Forward Observers should maintain close contact with supported units at all times.

10. Use of air photos and mosaics:

Air photos we have are perfect but should have at least one complete set in each battery.

10. Use of air photos and mosiacs(contd):

Photo maps are good for location of points, but should be checked for accuracy before using as a firing chart.

The above conclusions are drawn from observation since landing and not merely opinions.

TORANCE A. RUSSELL JR.
Capt., 121st FA Bn.,
Comdg. Btry B.

BATTERY C,
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST
FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Jan. 24, 1943

SUBJECT: Criticisims and recommendations based on present operations.

TO: Commanding Officer, 121 Field Artillery Battalion.

1. The following criticisms and recommendations are a compilation of combined observation of the battery officers and section chiefs.

A. Jungle pack, hammock and equipment.

a. The construction of the pack and the elements thereof are very satisfactory; the carrying of the heavy pack plus equipment is too big a load to carry over anything but a short distance; facilities for the carrying in vehicles of the clothing bag with the heaviest items of the pack should be provided wherever possible.

b. With the exception of the zippers the jungle hammock is by and large very satisfactory; for the extra heavy or extra tall men there should be a 10% issue of extra long and extra strong hammock.

c. The first aid kit is excellent through out.

B. 75 mm Pack Howitzer

a. The general criticism of this weapon is that it hasn't had the use for which it was intended, and that all positions occupied so far including the positions on Goodenough Island could have been occupied by a field piece of the same or higher caliber.

b. The following technical faults of the 75mm pack howitzer have been noted;

(1) No wrench for disassembling wheel bearings.
(One artillery mechanic has a drawing of such a wrench which he has devised)

(2) Howitzers manufactured in 1942 have loose sight brackets due to poor machining and the fact that there is just one nut to retain it.

(3) All sight shanks are .001 inch undersize

(4) On account of the traversing hand wheel being made of brass it stretches thereby stripping the studs that retain the traversing nut. By drilling and tapping it 5/16 inch through the full length of the handwheel it has given satisfactory service.

(5) The axle sleeve bearing is loosened from the axle sleeve due to the shock in firing; this can be corrected by drilling a hole between the nut and the sleeve and driving in a soft pin.

(6) The wheel grease seal is not satisfactory for a towed howitzer.

(7) The rope lanyard is not strong enough for constant use.

(8) The trail handspikeis not satisfactory; the teat bends too easily and the angle of projection is so low as to make the digging of an additional trench often necessary thereby slowing the initial delivery of fire.

(9) The micrometer knob on the quadrant has a tendency to slip with only the slightest jarring; it is suggested that the knob be constructed with a ratchet or lock.

c. A chest for cleaning and preserving materials, preferably waterproof would be a welcome addition; also the providing of a set of tools for the artillery mechanic is virtually a necessity in the jungle; one rammer staff instead of two would be sufficient.

d. In heavily wooded jungle terrain too much of the effect of the 75mm howitzer is spent in the trees.

C. Rations, supplies, clothing

a. Although all men have been getting enough to eat there has been an insufficient variety; more green vegetables, canned meats, and concentrated fruit juices are needed; too much of the "C" ration have been found spoiled in the cans; and the "K" ration, satisfactory in itself, has been spoiled on account of insufficient waterproofing; the "J" ration has been excellent, but the peanuts should all be salted both for palatability and for replacement of Na Cl in the body system. Pork is unsatisfactory meat for hot climates, and should be replaced with more beef, in both the "K" and "J" rations. More dehydrates could be used by small groups detached from the parent units.

b. A good quality waterproof, shockproof watch should be made available either for issue or purchase to all officers and key non-commissioned officers; leggings straps are not strong enough; more machetes of a better quality are needed; an issue of pitch forks and a large issue of rakes is needed for cleaning out underbrush; substitution of grub hoes for railroad picks would be more practical in jungle; more spare parts for field ranges are needed due to rapid deterioration caused by red gasolene; it has been very difficult to keep leather equipment in good condition; the issue of cleaning brushes both for ordnance, maintenance, and kitchen is very insufficient; the plated Australian manufactured mess kit is completely unsatisfactory, it rusts beyond repair and it melts when used for individual cooking.

c. To reduce the constant vigilance of keeping the mens uniforms on and buttoned, a one piece jungle suit with a drop seat would be a satisfactory substitute for the present two piece HBT uniform; its only drawback being its bulk during washing; there are not enough small sizes in the present uniform; and the pockets of the pants are so constructed as to make it difficult to get into them.

d. The carbine, although never tested in actual combat, seems to be the answer to the field artillery for a small arms weapon; it is small and light enough not to handicap the men in their normal duties, yet it has sufficient firepower for close in use. The advantage in the use of the Thompson Machine gun is questionable. The carbine clip ought to have a good rust proof non-corrosive coating, or there should be ample replacement; the oiler is not large enough to be practical, and oiler and thong kit similar to the "03" is suggested. Officers could be given their choice of weapons depending upon their particular jub, and enlisted men of the first four grades can perform their duties better with a pistol without sacrificing much fire power.

I. Prime movers for 75mm howitzers.

a. The 3/4 ton Weapons Carrier has distinct advantages over the 1/4 ton truck 4x4 in muddy terrain both negotiability and for the carrying of personnel and equipment. The 3/4 ton truck Dodge does not have enough driving power, however; this could be obtained by installing a low range; the pintle is not satisfactory, it ought to turn and be constructed with a heavy spring.

b. The disadvantage of the truck 1/4 ton 4x4 in mud is mainly its low chassis; the equipping of all trucks 1/4 ton 4x4 with winches might be the answer.

c. A trial of the 1 ton 6x6 Dodge might provide us with best vehicle of all.

d. The truck 2½ ton G.M.C. and all trailers are very satisfactory.

e. For operation in the jungle a kit of spare parts for the ignition system would reduce the number of deadlined vehicles.

f. Providing each battery with a 250 gallon water tank trailer would eliminate the problem of water supply, and reduce number of five gallon water cans required for a battery.

I. Signal equipment

a. W-130 wire is unsatisfactory except as a means of obtaining rapid communication. The insulation is poor and it is too weak. W-110 wire is good and should be used to replace W-130 as soon as possible depending upon the rapidity of movement of the situation and upon the mobility of wire laying vehicles.

b. Wire laying devices are satisfactory, but the truck 1/4 ton 4x4 as a wire laying vehicle has the same disadvantages as the prime mover. A larger vehicle better able to negotiate muddy terrain and with greater capacity for carrying wire is needed.

c. The SCR 610 radio has proved to be completely unsatisfactory. When new the radio is all right, but apparently it is too difficult for the beating it must take in a vehicle. The radios are contantly getting out of line, and frequently are in need of repairs. Even when operating we can not obtain the great enough range in the jungle except when working from a hill top to a wide clearing. Radio batteries deteriorate rapidly in the jungle and therefore ought to be wrapped in an air tight waterproof container.

F. Ammunition

a. The supply and the quality of 75 Howitzer ammunition has been excellent; few duds have been observed.

b. In observing firing of the 105 mm howitzers too great a dispersion in range was noticed.

G. Observation

a. The forward observer right along with the front line infantryman provides unquestionably the best means of observation for jungle fighting. The maintaining of auxiliary O.Ps. at points of vantage is also excellent. The observation by plane is excellent for filling in the blank spaces between Forward Observer and the O. P., but I don't think it can be depended upon for constant use. The use of flares or metro balloons is recommended for locating the F. O. in thick jungle.

b. It is suggested that on account of the slow movment in the jungle and especially in a defense position that more use be made of bilateral observation to obtain more accurate data for harassing and othe unobserved fires.

H. Infantry artillery cooperation

a. The cooperation from the infantry in the present operation has been excellent. In turn I believe that the artillery has been cooperative.

b. The infantry men realize that there is a definite advantage to the employment of artillery, but in too many cases they do not know its capabilities and limitations. The infantry must be taught that no amount of neutralization will do any good if they are unwilling to get close in behind the artillery barrage and follow it in the instant it is lifted.

I. Photos, mosaics, and fire charts.

a. The mosaics for this operation, despite their limitations, have been very satisfactory. The individual air photos should be more up to date to keep up with changes in terrain and for intelligence information; there also should be more large scale photos available to subordinate units.

J. Suggested changes in the T. O.

a. There should be a place in the T. O. for a recorder for the firing battery with the rating of Technician fourthgrade.

b. The battery computers should be part of the battalion headquarters battery and ought to have a rating of at least technician fourth grade.

c. The battery supply sergeant should be authorized an assistant, private in grade.

d. The battery motor sergeant on account of his tremendous responsibilities, and to give him rank of section chiefs in regard to the care of their vehicles, should be authorized the rating of staff sergeant or preferably technical sergeant.

e. Section chiefs of the firing battery should either be all line sergeants or all staff sergeants. One staff sergeant in the firing battery makes for jealousy and not efficiency.

f. On account of the constant maintainance necesary for vehicles in the jungle an additional auto mechanic or two should be authorized.

g. In specialist jobs such as cooks, mechanics (auto and artillery), and particularly in the case of the radio operators men with thorough specialist training should be made available. Men such as radio repair experts would be invaluable.

h. In jungle operations five officers perfiring battery instead of four should be authorized: Battery Commander, two additional observers, forward or otherwise, with knowledge of survey, and executive officer, and an assistant executive and motor officer.

i. An efficient battery clerk is a valuable asset to the battery and is of necessity, a hard worker. He should be entitiled to the rank of sergeant or T/4

j. Other than the above changes it is my opinion that the T. O's. of both the 155's and 75's are adequate. However the organizations ought to be given the men called for in the T.O. including the basics, who could take up the frequent absences caused by sickness, special duty, detached service, and ordinary details. It is very difficult to operate a battery efficiently with only a skeleton crew available all the time.

William F. Goodman

WILLIAM F. GOODMAN
1st. Lt. 181 F. A. Bn.
Comdg. Btry. C,.

S & A Btry, 121 F.A Bn

Jan 23-43.

Subject: conclusions to present operation & landing at Sandor —

To : Bn C.O. 121 st F.A

1. Jungle Equip.

a) It is considered that due to short life of shoes & leggins in muddy jungle operations, the issue of 2 pr of boots, jungle, one to be ~~taken to~~ worn, & 1 pr carried in the short pack would prove much more satisfactory & eliminate handling & issue of 2 articles for 1. In addition the jungle boot can be scrubbed with brush & hung on a line at nite, thereby drying faster than leather & providing much longer wear before replacement than leather shoes & leggins.

b) Hammock - Has proven highly satisfactory in whole - Zippers on bottom should be heavier or replaced by snaps similar to those on the poncho - at least one more pocket should be included to allow adequate space to keep a flashlight, jungle knife, & mosquitoe repellant. For comfort of real tall men approximently 3% production of a 8 in longer length, would be very desirable.

c) Jungle pack – by far better than pack & haversack – Closer inspection at production lines imperative, as many are issued in original containers from manufacturer & when opened & re-issued by Bn Supply officers we found short zippers, snaps, straps & buckles –

d) Socks – Ea individual should be issued at least 5 pr of medium weight woolen sox – Daily changing of socks is necessary & at times sox when washed do not dry for as long as 4 days. This not only causes foot troubles & blisters but excessive sox replacement, which in this operation have ~~[illegible]~~ not been available – production of more 9-10-10½ socks in lieu of 11-12-13 is certainly desired. This theater of action has been practically swamped with large sizes – The same principle applies to shoes – 5½ - 6 all widths, 6½ all widths & 7 & 7½ have not been available –

e) Machettes – Ea soldier should carry one –

f) Rations – "B" highly satisfactory – "K" – many spoiled due to dampness – "J" well balanced & far more desirable than "D" or "K" – Excellent for small patrols, wire sections & forward observers

g) 4 man Coleman gas stoves – Issue should be on basis of 1 per 8 men in all

Atelly units - present issue of only 23 in this Bn is by far too little & no replacements are available.

4) Clothing -

The soft fiber helmet liner (only available) crushes easily & generally unsatisfactory - Stiff fiber helmet liners excellent +/- 2% helmet liners only use to be the headress worn as in this operation NO other headress should be taken into action thus eliminating petty orders & discipline for wearing Shop caps. Shop caps for mechanics only, are desirable. Wearing of the helmet liner is satisfactory, but inasmuch as it is a component part of helmet steel M-1 & immediate replacements have not been available at ~~all~~ many times for periods of as long as 30 days same soldiers same day is going to get caught with a useless steel helmet in action which is a crime in any man's language -

5) Carbines & weapons -

2) Wire sections should carry pistols rather than carbines - Women cannot scale trees & crawl thru brush, packing a carbine on their back & maintain fast installation of wire - This has been solidly proven in this operation.

Cachines - While frail, if properly handled, very satisfactory - Immediate replacement for those lost, destroyed or destroyed have not been avail. in this show - Bad -!
M-1 - Very satisfactory & durable -
T.S.M.G. Xcellent - Complete pierce over - a bit heavy but basis of 1 per diver was quite Xcellent -
Vehicles - ¼ T 4x4 for jungle operations should have at least a 20 in. wheel - they will not go thru the deep, sticky mud encountered in this show -
¾ T - Highly satisfactory -
2½ 6x6 - Xcellent & will go far in rough going Much abuse of this vehicle could be saved providing that firing Btys had at least 1-D-9 tractor, & the Hq Bty a bulldozer + TD-9. Service Battery should have at least 3 TD-9's (preferably bulldozer) + 6 1 ton single tire trailers for use in getting supplies & Am. to the Bn - daily trade of transport in many cases in this show -
H.B.T. - Jungle type very satisfactory - have sizes hard to get, especially small, but adequate sizes for substitutions available -
General - Hand soap, shaving cream, tooth paste, brushes Not available - also no

P X for purchase - Must be corrected from both a personal + wealth viewpoint!

Before leaving for staging areas much more equipment essential to combat could have been issued had the personell issuing equip been familiar with nomenclature + identification of gear - Many this fcta + "dumped" officers have responsible jobs in supply sources + have no conception of other supply procedure or requirements - This must be corrected for sure! - Troops cannot live on fcy dt on paper. This statement is made + will be backed by an officer with 11 years experience in supply work, 21 months of which have been overseas - This is imperative!!! Must be brought to attention of Base section comds + theatre comds to eliminate troops entering combat with inferior or substituted equipment.

Administration - With exception of 4.2 mortars all can has been satisfactory (4.2 were not used in this show) - Adequate com. available -

Org of Bn.

Service Battery is far more satisfactory better able to cope with supply needs

and will function faster + better if it is a seperate unit because C. O. understands supply, men + gear - This C.O. should daily keep his Bn C.O. familiar with ~~his~~ supply availibilety + problems - He must work directly under the Bn C. O. pointing out deficiencis + changes, essential for proper equipment, mess + comfort of troops

My ~~co~~ operation -

on supply problems cooperation between city + Infantry has been excellent leaving nothing in question between supply officers of either branch -

Tiley D. Robinson
Capt, 121st F. A. Bn
C.O. Service Bty + Bn S-4

MEDICAL DETACHMENT
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIRST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
APO 32

23 Jan 44
LH/rjr

Subject: Sanitary Report.

To: Commanding Officer, 121st Field Artillery Battalion.

In compliance with verbal order of 23 Jan 44, the following sanitary report is hereby submitted.

1. The importance of education of enlisted men and administrative enforcement of preventive medicine applying to military life has been conclusively demonstrated by the general health of the command during the past year. Diseases such as diarrheas, venereal disease, and respiratory diseases have been much below the "problem" stage and generally below that of other units of the division.

2.a. Incapacity as a result of accidents , however, has been the cause of a relatively high hospital admission rate. Many of these admissions were the result of fractures of limbs incurred in walking or running over rough terrain, and incident to field work. The latter therefore might be considered as being "normal" for the activity involved. On the other hand serious accidents have resulted from causes such as the following: Truck turning over because of weak shoulder of road, excessive speed around curves, men sitting or standing on unathorized parts of vehicles in transit.

b. Burns have caused approximately eight (8) serious injuries during the past year. In nearly every case carelessness with the use of gasoline was the responsible factor.

3. Methods for malaria control have been brought to the attention of Battalion personnel and have been carried out for the greater part. In the past three months one (1) known case of malaria in the Battalion has been treated, which should indicate that we are on the right path. Recognition of health hazards through preventive medicine education, and strict administration of preventive measures by all Noncommissioned Officers is essential.

4. The lack of up-to-date medical literature from higher headquarters in regard to recent advancements in military medicine medicine is regretted. As to the dosage of atabrine - no experimentation has been undertaken. Dosages from higher headquarters must be complied with.

5. Equipment of the Medical Detachment.

a. Transportation consisting of two (2) ¼ ton bantams, and two (2) trailers has been sufficient for the Medical Detachment to date. The ¼ ton with litter rack has been used for ambulance duty, and has proven satisfactory.

6. Adequacy and Acceptability of the Ration.

a. There is no evidence of vitamin deficiency in the diet at present. Loss of weight in certain individuals is attributed to such factors as worry over affairs at home, anxiety incident to the combat zone or proximity to same, and to what amounts to a monotony of life for certain individuals.

b. There is no doubt that the acceptability of the ration as served in this area could be increased by fresh foods

7. Jungle equipment.

a. Methods for waterproofing seams along tops of hammocks would be desirable since in heavy or long continued rains seepage of water through these seams is considerable.

b. Many men are beginning to show the effects of the prolonged wearing of wet shoes and socks. Maceration of the skin of the soles of the feet is common at the present writing. A waterproof boot or shoe and at least three (3) pairs of socks seem a necessity during the tropical "rainy season".

8. Conclusion.

a. The means by which health may be maintained and accidents prevented are well known generally. A continuous strict administrative enforcement of existing regulations is necessary for the maintanence of the health of the command.

LUCIEN HIRSCH
Capt, MC,
Battalion Surgeon.

Report No.: 39

Maps: 2037 MADANG
(photo) GUMBI

S - 3 REPORT

SHEET I

Unit: 121st FA Bn

Location: MICHAELMAS

From: 1700L, 10 Feb (Hour & date)

To: 1700L, 11 Feb (Hour & date)

---

1. OUR FRONT LINE (or most advanced elements--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change.

2. LOCATION OF TROOPS (Situation at close of period, including command posts, troops in movement, etc.,--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

Able forward guns moved from SEL to FANNGER area.

3. INFORMATION OF ADJACENT UNITS AND SUPPORTING OR SUPPORTED TROOPS:

None.

4. WEATHER AND VISIBILITY:

Excellent.

5. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD:

Able forward guns moved by barge from SEL and rejoined Btry at FANNGER area at 1500L. Patrol flightmade by our Ln plane at 1105L and control established with Lt. Mohl's patrol.

6. COMBAT EFFICIENCY:

Excellent.

Signature (S-3)

40

2037 MADANG
GUMBI (photo)

[illegible] FA Bn
MICHAELMAS
1700L, 11 Feb 44
1700L, 12 Feb 44

No change.

No change.

No change.

Excellent.

0900L contact flight with Lt Mohl's patrol unsuccessful. Plane was returned to BEAUMONT for assignment of tactical mission. All OP's of this unit except one have been withdrawn. Baker Btry OP will remain in operation.

Excellent.

41

2037 M'DAFG
(photo)

[illegible]t FA Bn
MICHAELMAS
1700L, 12 Feb 44
1700L, 13 Feb 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Excellent.

0900L - operation flight, contacted Lt Mohl's patrol.

Excellent.

42

2037 MADANG
GUMBI (photo)

Lt FA Bn
MICHAELMAS
1700L, 13 Feb 44
1700L, 14 Feb 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Excellent.

0900L - operations flight with Ln plane, contact made with Lt Mohl's patrol.

Excellent.

43

2037 MADANG
CUMBI (photo)

121st FA Bn
MICHAELMAS
1700L, 14 Feb 44
1700L, 15 Feb 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Excellent.

0700L - operational flight, contacted Lt Moul's patrol.

Excellent.

44

2037 MADANG
GUMBI (photo)

1st FA Bn
MICHAELMAS
1700L, 15 Feb 44
1700L, 16 Feb 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Excellent.

0900L - operational flight, contacted Lt Mold's patrol.

Excellent.

2057 [illegible]DANG
GURMI (photo)

141st FA Bn
MICHAELMAS
1700L, 16 Feb 44
1700L, 17 Feb 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Excellent.

0900L - operational flight, contacted Lt Mohl's patrol.

Excellent.

46

2077 MADANG
(photo) GUNBI

[illegible]1st Fit Bn
MTC HARLMAN
1700L, 17 Feb 44
1700L, 18 Feb 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Excellent.

0900L - operational flight, contact with Lt Mohl's patrol.

Excellent.

Report No.: 47

Maps: 2037 MADANG
photo GUMBI

Unit: 8 FA BN

Location: MICHAELMAS

From: 1200L 18 Feb (hour & date)

To: 1700L 19 Feb (hour & date)

SHEET I

1. OUR FRONT LINE (or most advanced elements--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change

2. LOCATION OF TROOPS (Situation at close of period, including command posts, troops in movement, etc.,--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change

3. INFORMATION OF ADJACENT UNITS AND SUPPORTING OR SUPPORTED TROOPS:

None

4. WEATHER AND VISIBILITY:

Excellent

5. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD:

0900L- Operational flight contacted Lt Mohl's patrol
~~0900~~
1400L- Operational flight contacted Lt Mohl's patrol

6. COMBAT EFFICIENCY:

Excellent

Signature (S-3)

Report No. 47

Maps: 50SL MA D&EG
photo GUNDL

UNIT [illegible] FA BN
Location MICHAELMAS
From: 1700L 19 Feb (hour & date)
To: 1700L 20 Feb 44 (hour & date

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1. OUR FRONT LINE (or most advanced elements--usually shown on attached overlay or map.)

No change.

2. LOCATION OF TROOPS (Situation at close of period including command posts, troops in movement, etc,--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change.

3. INFORMATION OF ADJACENT UNITS AND SUPPORTING OR SUPPORTED TROOPS:

None

4. WEATHER AND VISIBILTY:

Excellent

5. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD:

0900L- Operational flight contacted Lt Kohl's patrol.

1000L- Battalion Commander and Battery Commanders left by horse for Reconnaissance of Western Front.

6. COMBAT EFFICIENCY:

Excellent

Signature (S-3)

Report No 48
Maps 2451 MADANG
hoto GUMBI

UNIT 1/1 FA Bn
Location MICHAELMAS
From: 1700L 20 Feb
To: 1700L 21 Feb

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1. OUR FRONT LINES (or most advanced element — usually shown on attached overlay or map)

No Change

2. Location of tropps (Situation at close of period including command posts, troops in movement, etc,— usually shown on attached overlay or maps)

No Change

3. INFORMATION OF ADJACENT UNITS AND SUPPORTING AND SUPPORTED TROOPS

None

4. WEATHER AND VISIBILITY

Excellent

5. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD

~~0900~~
0900L Operational flight contacted Lt. Mohl's patrol

6. COMBAT EFFICIENCY

Excellent

Signature S-3

[illegible]05U MA DANG
(photo CUMBI

No change

No change

None

Excellent

0900L - operational flight, contacted Lt Mohl's patrol.

Excellent

Report No. 51
Map 2051 MADANG
photo COVER

UNIT [illegible] FA BN
Location MICHAELMAS
From: 1700L, 22 Feb 44
To: 1700L, 23 Feb 44

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1. OUR FRONT LINES (or most advanced element--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change

2. LOCATION OF TROOPS (Situation at close of period including command posts, troops in movement, etc,--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change

3. INFORMATION OF ADJACENT UNITS AND SUPPORTING AND SUPPORTED TROOPS

None

4. WEATHER AND VISIBILITY

Excellent

5. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD

0900L Operational flight contacted Lt. Mohl's patrol

COMBAT EFFICIENCY

Excellent

Signature S-3

Report No. 52
Maps 205I HICANG
photo GIHOI

UNIT 121 FA BN
Location HICANG
From: 1700L, 23 Feb 44
To: 1700L, 24 Feb 44

1. OUR FRONT LINES (or most advanced element--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change

2. LOCATION OF TROOPS (Situation at close of period including command posts, troops in movement, etc,--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change

3. INFORMATION OF ADJACENT UNITS AND SUPPORTING AND SUPPORTED TROOPS.

None

4. WEATHER AND VISIBILITY

Excellent

5. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD

0900 L Operational flight contacted Lt. Mohl's patrol

6. COMBAT EFFICIENCY

Excellent

Signature S-3

Report No: 53

Maps: 2037 MARANG

GUMBI - photo

S-3 REPORT

SHEET I

Unit 121st FA Bn

Location MICHELIAS

From: 1700L, 24 Feb 44 (hour & da

To: 1700L, 25 Feb 44 (hour & da

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1. OUR FRONT LINE (or most advanced elements--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change.

2. LOCATION OF TROOPS (Situation at close of period, including command posts, troops in movement, etc.,--usually shown on attached overlay or map).

No change.

3. INFORMATION OF ADJACENT UNITS AND SUPPORTING OR SUPPORTED TROOPS:

None.

4. WEATHER AND VISIBILITY:

Excellent.

5. OUR OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD:

0900L - operational flight, contact made with Lt. Mohl's patrol.

Bn in preperation for move to YAMAI.

6. COMBAT EFFICIENCY:

Excellent.

Signature (S-3)

53

0386 BILIAU

121st FA Bn
YAMAI
2000L, 28 Feb 44
2000L, 29 Feb 44

No change.

See overlay.

None.

Excellent.

1000L - Operational flight, contact Mabit patrol.

Entire Bn engaged in improvement of bivouac area.

"C" Btry reported fire in kunai grass at 1400L, destroying the following:

1 gun tarp
18 pyramidal tents
2 miles W-130 wire with drums.
1 hand set, cord & cover for EE8 telephone.
1 radio antenna AN29.

Excellent.

S4

0386 MILLER

121st FA Bn
TAMAU
2000L, 29 Feb 44

2000L, 1 Mar 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Good.

1000L - reconnaissance flight by Ln plane.

Entire Bn engaged in improvement of bivouac and maintenance of equipment.

Excellent.

55

0386 BILIAU

121st FA Bn
YAMAI
2000L, 1 Mar 44
2000L, 2 Mar 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Good

Capt Bourn made rcn flight in Australian Whirraway from 0830L to 0910L searching for our Ln plane missing since Feb 7th, but found no trace.

Excellent.

56

0386 BILIAU

121st FA Bn
YAMAI
2000L, 2 Mar 44

2000L, 3 Mar 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Fair

Mortar Btry test fired 4.2 mortars this AM.

Excellent.

Test firing	for training purposes.	33 HE 4 WP

57

0386 BILIAU

121st FA Bn
YAMAI
2000L, 3 Mar 44

2000L, 4 Mar 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Excellent.

Capt Bourn made reconnaissance flight this AM in A-20 in search of our liaison plane, but found no trace.

Bn engaged in practice loading.

Excellent.

98

0386 [illegible]

121st FA Bn
YAMAI
2000L, 4 Mar 44

2000L, 6 Mar 44

No change.

Mortar Btry assigned to and embarked with YALAU Task Force

None.

Fair.

Mortar Btry plus Communications, Operations & Ln Sections embarked by LCM's at 0200L, 5 Feb 44 as part of YALAU Task Force. Balance of Bn began loading at 1400L, 5 Feb 44, but were ordered to unload and remain in present bivouac.

Our Ln plane, on routine flight to YALAU, made a forced landing on the beach, but was able to take off and returned to YAMAI at 1630L.

Excellent.

59

0386 BILIBa

121st FA Bn
YAMAI
2000L, 6 Mar 44

2000L, 7 Mar 44

No change.

No change.

None.

Poor

Bn started on Training Schedule under Div Arty control.

Excellent.