

INTERROGATION REPORT  
134TH INF REGT  
IFW 60

20 Dec 44

#2045

1 PW from Recon Bn (attached to 37th Regt), 17 SS Div.

The Recon Bn consists of about 150 men and is attached in its entirety to the 37th Regt, 2nd Bn. The original officers of the Recon Bn are no longer with it, having been retained as a cadre, possibly to form a new recon unit. The present officers are those of the 37th Regt.

The company (probably 5th Co) was commanded by Lt Hasselmann. It consisted of 50 men. Weapons included two mg '42 and undetermined number of airplane mg '15. The remainder of the 150 men are distributed among the other companies of the 2nd Bn. 60 of these men are in BEBELSHEIM as security, and the location of the others is unknown.

Three infantry cannon are at 581633 100 meters S of the last house on the N end of town on the W side of the road between the road and the creek.

There are two 80mm mortars in front of the fourth house from the S end of town on the E side of road at 569629. The crew stays in cellar of adjacent barn.

The last house at the N end of town on the E side of road is an aid station.

The Bn CP is in 2nd house on W side of road entering town from S.

The bridge over the MANDELBACH in BEBELSHEIM had been prepared for demolition by placing charges at both ends. One charge has been exploded by a direct hit of our artillery. The bridge is still usable by vehicles, however. The other charge is still in position and unexploded.

The Co CP is at 592616 in woods 80 meters behind front line. The company of 50 men is now disposed along the edge of the woods from 589618 to 594620. There are two mg at 594615 at corner of woods. There are three man (rifles only) security outposts at 595620 and 598617, and the edge of the woods between these points is free. There are supposed to be a few men at the LOEHOF FARM at 603614.

There are three assault guns and two tanks mounting each a battery of 4 20mm AA guns at the northern edge of the woods. These are in this position during the daytime and retire to BEBELSHEIM at night.

The Regimental CP had been in BEBELSHEIM until about two days ago. Present location unknown.

About 0600 this morning upon our attack the Germans abandoned their positions and fled with their weapons to beyond BEBELSHEIM in the direction of WITTERSHEIM. The only people left in this town at that time were the gun crews and mortar crews. The armor had also withdrawn, and one of the tank men called to the infantry, "The Americans are attacking. Save yourself if you can." Then one of the two remaining officers chased the retreating men in an amphibian car and drove them forward at pistol point. When they approached their previous positions our troops withdrew. One of the enemy platoon leaders wanted to take his platoon on and seize REINHEIM, but was not permitted this by the CO because of the danger of exposing the platoon's flank, and because of the weakness of the company. The CO expects us to attack tomorrow on his left flank.

During the morning the company had lost contact with its artillery support because of the observers radio having been knocked out. PW claims this led to their being struck by their own artillery. The artillery is supposed to send new observers forward tonight so as to have support against the counter-attack they expect us to launch in the morning.

The bombing and shelling of BEBELSHEIM has knocked down all except three houses. No soldiers have been killed or wounded by it however. Several civilians have. The infantry cannon in the town are well dug in and can only be damaged by a direct hit.

When we withdrew this morning the PW saw three American prisoners and one wounded soldier at his Co CP. They also captured one AT gun, one  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton, one  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton, and one  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton truck.

The Bn trains are at OBERWUERZBACH. Food is brought to BEBELSHEIM just at darkness. Because they could not spare the men no one has been sent back to BEBELSHEIM from the lines to pick up food for 3 or 4 days. There was also a good deal of confusion as to who was to get the food, and it usually went to the men who were in the town.

Troops are not carrying gas masks.

PW knows only of one mine field which is already reported. There are no mines between present position and BEBELSHEIM.

Morale of troops is low. Footwear is poor and there is a high incidence of trench foot.

Until 5 or 6 weeks ago the Recon Bn had 5 companies. 1st Co had motorcycles, 2nd had armored cars, 3d had amphibious cars, 4th was a rifle co, and 5th a heavy weapons co. Almost entire 3d and 4th Co were taken prisoner at FAREBERSVILLER about 10 days ago. There are 13 amphibious trucks left and these are kept with the trains. The present recon bn is made up as one unit composed of men from all the companies.

IPW REPORT # 227

20 December 44  
0900

to: 320th Infantry Regiment  
9-2

Identity: 2nd Co 347 Ron Bn APO 62367 C 1 PW

Pt of capture: 615610 by 3rd Bn

Report: PW was hiding yesterday and last night in quarry together with about 10 to 20 other men. An SS Lt., the former artillery observer, is also in the quarry. Yesterday he tried unsuccessfully to reach his own lines and was heard inquiring about an underground exit to RUBENHEIM.

The quarry has an airshaft a few hundred yards S of edge of woods which is still held by 8 or 10 men who always take cover in it when fired upon. The food shortage in the quarry is becoming critical, especially for the cattle. Farmers were overheard saying that they have to go back to GERBHEIM within 2 days to bring new supplies.

Strength: The entire 2nd Co is almost wiped out and the whole Bn suffered largely to our Artillery.

Location: The Bn CP is in the woods towards BEBELSHEIM

Armor: 2 Assault guns are in vic. BEBELSHEIM.

IPW TEAM 68.