

Falk

INTERROGATION REPORT
134TH INFANTRY REGT.
IPW TEAM #60

26 Feb. 1945

2 PW From 2nd Company, 343 Regiment, 183 VG Division.

1st Battalion of this regiment has occupied area vicinity HILFARTH since before 29 January 1945. They have kept only 25 soldiers in the town itself, however. Last night some of the men withdrew in the direction of HUECKELHOVEN leaving 15 men with 3 machine guns at the following coordinates: 937734, 939725, and 938724. There were also 6 riflemen at approximately 937722.

PW states that the 3rd Company of his regiment is defending HUECKELHOVEN, and the 1st Company is in position along the east bank of the ROER River. Other units of the regiment are at KAPHOF (923729) and WEDAUI (957704).

Engineers have been active in HILFARTH. Anti-personnel mines (S-mines) are laid from 937722 to 934721 before this land was inundated. Two days ago, 50 Shoe Mines laid in 3 rows, in staggered pattern, were placed between points 937717 to 934716. Anti-tank mines (Riegel mines) are laid at following points: 6 at 936719, and 3 at 936724. There are two bridges, one at 939727 which is the site of a previously destroyed stone bridge over which a wooden foot bridge has recently been built. There is a second wood foot bridge at 941727. The first bridge is prepared for demolition but not yet blown up; it is not known whether the second bridge is so prepared or not.

GOLFRATH is the Division collecting point for replacements and possibly the Division CP. Four days ago the regimental CP was in HUECKELHOVEN at 945739 in the first house on the east side of the road entering the town from the north.

PWs have seen no German armor, SS units, or Parachute units in this vicinity.

PW came to this unit as replacements on 29 January from Czechoslovakia. The trip from there to Cologne by rail took 13 days because of air attack and rail damage.

PW were alerted for our attack this morning but had been so alerted for the past several days and were partially surprised.

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66 PW from 1st, 2nd, 3d, and 14th Co 343 Inf Regt, 183 VG Div.
1st and 2nd Co of 219 Eng Bn, 183 VG Div.

Organization, Strength and Disposition:

3d Co, 343 Regt consisted of two platoons with total strength of 40 men. One platoon was in line vic DOVERACH (935733). The platoon had a front of 1500 yds to defend. To their left were the 1st and 2nd Cos with the mission of defending the German bridgehead over the ROER at HILFARTH. To the right of the 3d Co were units of the 330 Inf Regt, 183 Div.

Approx strength of 2nd Co, vic HILFARTH, was 80 men.

14th Co was almost completely distributed among rifle companies of regiment as two man bazooka teams: they have no AT guns.

The 219 Eng Bn is organic to the division and consists of two companies, strength unknown. The men from the battalion are never all together but are sent out in small forces of 10-12 men for specific missions.

Locations:

CP of 183 VG Div given as MATZERATH
CP of 1st Bn, 343 Inf Regt in cellar of RR station in HUECKELHOFEN.
Trains of 14th Co at MATZERATH.
Hq Co of 343 Inf Regt in GERDERHAN (phon)
219 Field Replacement Bn and 260 March Bn in ELLINGHOVEN.
Trains of unknown unit in SCHWANENBERG (NW of ERKELENZ).
CP of 219 Eng Bn in HOVEN (968777).
CP of 14th Co, 343 Regt in DOVEREN (958733)
Regtl Surgeon of 343 Regt in KLEIN GLADBACH (940765)
Regtl Coll Sta (med) in HUECKELHOFEN.
Div Clearing Sta (med), 183 Div, in RHEINDAHLEN (SW of MUENCHEN GLADBACH).

Personalities:

CO, 1st Bn, 343 Regt	-	Capt Weissgeber
CO, 14th Co, "	-	Lt Heindl
CO, 2nd Co 219 Eng Bn	-	Lt Linke
CO, 1st Co " " "	-	Lt Goch

Artillery:

There are one or two batteries of 88mm AA guns used as field arty at HOVEN (968777).

AA batteries at GERDERHAN (phon) shot down two med bombers on 22 Feb.

One battery est 150mm how at 949754 just below crest on reverse slope of hill: also one AA battery 88mm. Both believed motorized.

-2-
INTERROGATION REPORT
(Cont)

Mines and Anti-Tank Obstacles:

There is barbed wire across the HILFARTH - KAPHOF road at about 928727. There are "stick" mines in the wire and three rows of rail mines in front of it; these are dug in shallow holes. Half-way between this point and the first house of HILFARTH are unburied rail mines in the fields extending for about 20 yds on each side of the road between two dugouts.

Shoe mines are planted around House #3 (see town plan) of HILFARTH. KAPHOF has many anti-personnel mines. The ~~west/side~~ fields on the west side of the HILFARTH - KAPHOF road are heavily mined with AT and AP mines.

Mines had been laid on the east approach of the Roer bridge at HILFARTH but were lifted by Germans because of danger to own troops.

4 PW had mission of guarding CR 939736 with two bazookas. There were no mines here.

PW say that all mines were laid ahead of MLR (W of ROER R.)

CWS: Gas masks are tested monthly in gas chamber. PW says that this has always been done in this unit.

Miscellaneous:

One PW saw groups of soldiers from SS Div Totenkopf in COLOGNE about two weeks ago.

All men are well informed on Russian progress and know that the Russians have crossed the ODER R.

Many have read propaganda leaflets of ours: none had surrender passes.

PW saw no armor, parachute troops, assault guns, or significant activity between here and COLOGNE, except that one saw five tanks travelling in an easterly direction which he believed were going to the Russian front.

PW know of no "Maquis movement" organized in Germany, but one expressed the opinion that this was the original intention of the Volkssturm.

PW know of no civilian concentration areas for evacuees in this sector. Many places have been evacuated completely; some have a few civilians left. PW say that the attitude of the civilians is that they want us to come and get the war over with.

There are a few SS officers in Hqs of the 343 Regt. Their purpose there is unknown. One PW said that whenever his CO inspected his company in the line two SS officers always accompanied him.

The 14th Co received 20 replacements from Czechoslovakia 29 Jan. They received anti-tank training after coming here. This consisted of firing one round with a bazooka.

A recently issued order forbids the use of engineers as infantry. PW interpret this to mean that engineers are difficult to replace. It was previously common practice to use them as infantry.