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HEADQUARTERS, 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

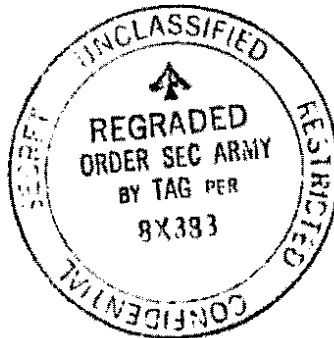
APO 36, U. S. ARMY

OPERATION "AVALANCHE"

9 - 21 SEPTEMBER 1943

ANNEX #14

111th ENGINEER BATTALION



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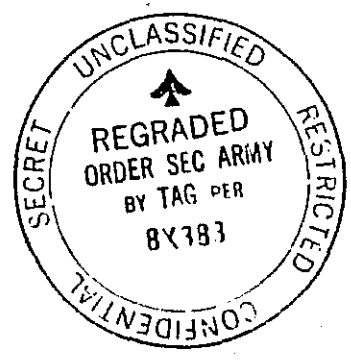
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27 September 1943

BATTLE FOR THE BEACHHEAD AT PAESTUM, ITALY

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

by

Thaddus J. Sossions, Captain, CE



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BATTLE FOR THE BEACHHEAD AT PAESTUM, ITALY

11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

For the invasion of the Italian mainland, each of the lettered companies of the 11th Engineer Combat Battalion were attached to one of the three combat teams of the 36th Infantry Division. Company "A" was attached to the 141st Infantry Combat Team, Company "B" was attached to the 142nd Infantry Combat Team and Company "C" was attached to the 143rd Infantry Combat Team. In some instances the companies were further divided by the attachment of a platoon or smaller unit to one of the Infantry battalions within the combat team. The reason for the disposition of troops in this manner is obvious, in that the clearing of enemy minefields, the removal of obstacles and the reduction of fortifications on a hostile beach is of primary importance and essential to successful landing operations.

3 SEPTEMBER 1943:

The 11th Engineer Combat Battalion, as attached to the various combat teams, boarded ships in the Oran, Algeria harbor. From Company "A," eleven men with two Half-Tracks and two .37 mm. Anti-Tank Guns were loaded on an L.S.T.; six men with one 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton Dump Truck, one 1-ton Cargo Trailer and one Bulldozer were loaded on the SS ARCTURAS; thirty-eight men and one officer were loaded on the USS JEFFERSON; thirty-five men and one officer were loaded on the USS O'HARA; forty men and two officers with two 1/4-ton Trucks were loaded on the USS CARROLL; thirty-one men with two 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton Cargo Trucks, six 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton Dump Trucks, one 1-ton Cargo Trailer, one Air Compressor, one 4-ton Prime Mover, one 3/4-ton Reconnaissance Car, one Motorcycle, one Half-Track and one 37 mm. Anti-Tank Gun were loaded on the USS WINFIELD SCOTT and twenty-seven men and one officer were loaded on the SS CRANTES. From Company "B", the First Platoon was loaded on the USS LYONS; the Second Platoon was loaded on the USS DICKMAN, the Third Platoon was loaded on the USS BARNETT and the Headquarters Platoon was loaded on the Netherlands ship MARNIX. From Company "C", the First Platoon was loaded on the USS CHASE; the Second Platoon was loaded on the USS STANTON, the Third Platoon was loaded on the USS FUNSTON and the Headquarters Platoon were loaded on the USS STANTON. Battalion Headquarters under the command of Major Oran C. Stovall; Headquarters and Service Company under the command of 1st Lt. Ira J. Kail and the Medical Detachment under the command of Captain Edward R. Parker were loaded on the Netherlands ship MARNIX. The Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Paul W. Dillingham, sailed on the USS CARROLL with the 141st Infantry. Company "A" embarked under the command of 1st Lt. Warren W. [redacted] mainland; Company "B" under command of Captain Orvil W. Crisman and Company "C" under command of Captain Ernest L. Petree.

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4 SEPTEMBER 1943:

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An uneventful day in the Oran Harbor with personnel and equipment continuing to be loaded on convoy.

5 SEPTEMBER 1943:

The convoy moved from the docks and quay of the Oran Harbor to the outer harbor at 1700 hours, laying at anchor until 2100 hours when it sailed into the Mediterranean Sea.

6 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Quiet, except for an occasional air raid alert. After darkness, the practice rush of the boat teams to their proper stations was to become more or less routine as the voyage progressed.

7 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Unusual, except for being joined by a large number of ships at 1700 hours, which had been laying at anchor along the African coast.

8 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Peaceful, except for the maddened rush to the starboard side to catch a glimpse at the rugged Sicilian coastline and to further disrupt the noontime mess line. As a surprise, and unfortunately serving to minimize the task ahead, came the news of Italy's capitulation at 1830 hours. The convoy sailed into the Gulf of Salerno before midnight and in the distance could be seen the flash of tracer bullets and heard the rumbling of guns.

9 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Twenty-four men from each of the Second and Third Platoons of Company "A" under the command of 1st Lt. William Dold, Jr. and 1st Lt. James N. Mueller, respectively, landed on yellow beach near the village of Paestum, Italy. The first platoon under command of 2nd Lt. Herbert L. Spearman landed on Blue beach with the assault elements. Their chief mission was to gap barbed wire installations on the beach to enable the Infantry to advance. Six men from each platoon landed

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in the second wave with Mine Detectors to remove mines preparatory to building roads across the beaches. Inasmuch as no enemy mines were found on these two beaches, these six men proceeded over the beach to assist in the removal of obstacles. One of the six men, Private Jess W. Hudnall, became separated from the group and was later found lying dead between two bayoneted German soldiers, who undoubtedly died before his blood-covered bayonet. Approximately one squad from each platoon landed in the fifth wave and aided in unloading cargo ships, being subjected the entire day to constant enemy shell fire. Later in the morning, Lt. Spearman, under the covering rifle fire of Private Steve Boroczky, advanced beyond the Infantry to a location on the southern outskirts of Paestum where three enemy railway guns were stationed, prepared charges and demolished the breeches of the three guns to prevent their use by the enemy since a strong counterattack at that time was evident. Meanwhile, Lt. Mueller with four men removed enemy explosives from a small bridge approximately four hundred yards from the 141st Infantry Combat Team Command Post south of Paestum. Technician Grade 5 Henry E. Cordes and Private David L. Quisenberry landed at 0900 hours with a bulldozer and worked until 2200 hours under constant enemy shell fire and aerial bombing constructing six roads from the beach over the adjacent sand dunes.

The First Platoon, less the third squad, of Company "B" under the command of 1st Lt. Robert M. Morton debarked from the USS LYONS at 0001 hours and loaded into an LCP and an LCA. During debarkation Sergeant George M. McLaino fell and sustained a broken limb. Enroute to Red Beach the course of the landing crafts was interfered by floating mines and upon arrival at the beach under enemy gunfire it was discovered the landing had been made one and one-half miles above Red Beach. The two squads advanced over the sand dunes and established a platoon dump. A reconnaissance party was then dispatched to ascertain their location. At 0830 hours the platoon advanced to the North toward the Sele River, having been periodically pinned to the ground by friendly fire from the shore engineer troops until recognition was established. Shortly afterwards a German soldier was captured at an Italian farmhouse and an Italian, through an interpreter, offered to guide the platoon by a short route to the Sele River. At 0900 hours the platoon departed, taking the civilian with them, and were lead to an Italian shore installation of pillboxes where one German soldier was killed by Corporal George P. Pongressi, a second wounded and a total of eleven prisoners were taken and evacuated to Number 2 Prisoner of War Stockade on Red Beach under charge of Corporal Louis A. Mitschke. The platoon then advanced to the Sele River. Contact was made with Company "B", 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry at 1145 hours whereupon it was decided to wipe out enemy strong points north of the Sele River. The platoon was called upon to put out a right flank guard at 1300 hours, and shortly afterwards two German Mark VI tanks advanced toward them and stopped about one hundred yards away, opening fire which forced the platoon to withdraw down an aqueduct to a wooded area nearby. Again they were pinned to the ground by a barrage of fire, meanwhile friendly 105 mm. Howitzers opened fire upon the tanks. Near 1500 hours Staff Sergeant Leonard P. Hooker, platoon leader, with a greater part of the platoon and Lt. Morton with the remainder and twenty Infantrymen, departed in different directions to make their way back to the platoon dump. Lt. Morton and his party were flattened by enemy gun and tank fire and three of the Infantrymen were wounded. Upon reaching the dump with three of his platoon and one Infantryman, Lt. Morton left to find Captain Crisman, company commander, and upon finding him was ordered to dig in at the dump for the night. Upon his return to the dump practically his entire platoon had arrived.

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The Second Platoon of Company "B", less the third squad, under the command of 2nd Lt. Omar E. Fortier, debarked from the transport USS DICKENS at 0111 hours from a position in the Mediterranean Sea approximately twelve miles from the beach. The platoon, attached to the Second Battalion of the 142nd Infantry Combat Team, maneuvered in landing crafts one mile off Green Beach for two hours. Approaching the beach with enemy machine gun bullets rattling against the ramps of the crafts, and two nearby crafts being directly hit by enemy shells, the men waded ashore amid tracers from cross machine gun fire flashing past their legs and bodies. Rushing forward to the first sand dunes they immediately dug in and due to continued enemy fire for two hours were pinned to the ground thereby preventing succeeding waves from landing on schedule. A craft of Infantrymen succeeded in landing after naval fire silenced a German gun position and immediately the Infantrymen wiped out the machine gun nests. This action on the part of the Infantrymen permitted the platoon to assemble without any casualties sustained--only the unharmed piercing of Lt. Fortier's pants leg by a bullet. At 0600 hours the Second Squad under Sergeant John A. Bettis proceeded to accomplish their mission on the beach by gapping barbed wire entanglements, removal of mines from the gap and to clear other obstacles. Sergeant Raymond W. Johnson with five men advanced to the railroad north of Paestum to sever the rails and cut communication lines. Upon their arrival it was found that naval gunfire had already performed the work. Sergeant Alden W. Williams' squad landed on the beach at daybreak and encountered heavy overhead fire. The platoon was reorganized at 1100 hours at a predetermined point then proceeded to Paestum where it was dug in under sniper fire and remained the rest of the day and that night.

The Third Platoon of Company "B", less the third squad, under command of 2nd Lt. Miles E. Hill, as an attachment to the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Combat Team, debarked from the USS BARNETT at 0001 hours. The craft in which Lt. Hill and the second squad was riding stuck in the sand about twenty-five yards from the shore and while trying to extricate it enemy machine guns opened up, fiercely peppering the crafts. The first squad and Staff Sergeant Altus D. Griffin beached successfully under enemy machine gun fire until it was shortly silenced by the machine gunner on the landing craft. Enemy fire was again resumed which pinned the squad down for ten minutes although unhindered their crawling to the sand dunes. Barbed wire installations were gapped and mines searched under constant fire. At 0500 hours the platoon was assembled and advanced toward the coastal road, being fired upon by four German machine guns and several riflemen. Sergeant Pete H. Armstrong advanced his squad under the fire and searched the road shoulders for mines. At 1000 hours it was reported that sixty enemy tanks were approaching. Thirteen tanks did arrive at 1100 hours and stopped less than fifty yards away on both sides of a drainage ditch in which the platoon had taken refuge. Having no heavier arms than .30 caliber M-1 Rifle, Lt. Hill ordered fire withheld to secure their position. The tanks fired upon beach installations and personnel and equipment being landed until American dive bombers strafed and bombed them, accounting for one, naval fire accounting for two and American artillery accounting for another two. Hearing cries from someone as if in great pain between 1100 and 1200 hours, Lt. Hill gave orders for everyone to remain quiet to avoid giving away the position of the sixty men. Being informed that one of the men had been wounded, medical aid men rendered all possible assistance to Private Truman A. Rice whose legs and thighs were rent by shrapnel. Despite his intense pain and agony, fully realizing his painful cries would jeopardize

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the safety of his platoon, he remained quiet until his death between 1300 and 1400 hours. The remaining eight tanks shortly withdrew and as the platoon began to assemble five more tanks arrived and stopped. Two were immediately knocked out and the remaining three withdrew. Meanwhile Private First Class Arthur Truman was trapped by tanks before he could reach his platoon. Crawling, he spotted a tank on one side of a bush, whereupon he hurriedly swung around to the other side of the bush to find himself in the company of two Mark VI tanks. Eventually one tank was knocked out and as the lid of the turret raised Private Truman accounted for the German who was about to leave and he slumped back into the hull. Private Joseph Abbott, who had previously been separated from the platoon was lightly wounded in the neck and later evacuated to the hospital ship. The platoon moved North along the coastal road at 1630 hours and contacted Captain Crisman about 1730 hours and were ordered to dig in for the night near the 142nd Infantry Command Post.


The Headquarters Platoon of Company "B" under command of 2nd Lt. George A. Altschul debarked from the Netherlands ship MARNIX at 1630 hours and landed at 1900 hours under the protective naval fire. Unable to contact the company, they dug in for the night in the vicinity of the beach.

The three platoons of Company "C" were prepared to land on Green Beach and perform demolition work on beach obstacles. The First Platoon, under the command of 2nd Lt. Lee E. Beahler, attached to the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Combat Team landed on Red Beach and supported the Infantry in their regimental assembly area. The first engineer mission was to locate a position and establish a water point which was put in operation approximately one mile south of Prostun.

The Second Platoon of Company "C" under the command of 1st Lt. Thomas B. Gauthier, Jr. landed on Red Beach during an enemy tank attack and set up an anti-tank defense using a 37 mm. Anti-Tank Gun and Rocket Launchers. Sergeant Loyd L. Patterson in command of a Half-Track assisted the Infantry in neutralizing an enemy machine gun nest which was harassing friendly artillery west of Highway No. 18.

The Third Platoon under command of 1st Lt. Donald A. Curry landed with the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry Combat Team north of Red Beach. Staff Sergeant Eugene V. McDonald with one squad and a 37 mm. Anti-Tank Gun moved to the dewaterproofing area where it was later reported by a reconnaissance party that enemy tanks were approaching the beach area from the East. Immediately a bridge in the line of their approach was mined and the Anti-Tank Gun and Rocket Launchers set up to furnish protection for the road block. Fifteen anti-tank mines were placed in the road fifteen yards in front of the bridge. The 37 mm. Anti-Tank Gun was put into action against the approaching tanks at a distance of eight hundred to one thousand yards but without effect as it could be plainly determined that the projectiles were not piercing the armor. Sergeant Rolon B. Carter left the bridge area to notify the officer in charge of the 751st Tank Group, and he directed friendly tanks to the area. After the tank attack the platoon moved to the regimental assembly area.

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Company Headquarters Platoon under the command of Staff Sergeant Hollis Eppes landed with the Second Platoon Half-Track and assisted in clearing snipers from houses in the vicinity of Paestum.

Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment landed at 1900 hours on Red Beach and moved one-half mile from the beach toward Paestum to bivouac for the night.

10 SEPTEMBER 1943:

At 0900 hours Company "A" was reorganized four kilometers south of Paestum under the command of Lt. Ausland. Lt. Mueller with the Third Platoon was sent on a mission to reconstruct a single stringer bridge three kilometers North of Agropoli which had been demolished by the enemy on the previous day. Upon completion of this bridge Lt. Spearman and one squad from the First Platoon mined the approaches to the bridge in accordance with 141st Infantry Combat Team orders.

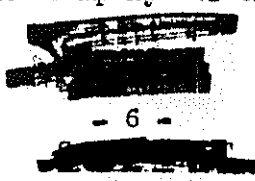
Company "B" was assembled at Vannulo in the vicinity of the 142nd Infantry Combat Team where rations and explosives were drawn for future operations. During the noon hour three German planes strafed the area which hurried everyone to their foxholes and resulted only in one pot of coffee being overturned. At 2000 hours the company moved to bivouac two miles Northeast of Paestum and the third platoon was later dispatched to reconnoiter the road between the company command post and Rocca d'Aspide in search of mines.

The Second and Third Platoons of Company "C" furnished security for the command post of the 143rd Infantry Combat Team, employing 37 mm. Anti-Tank Guns and machine guns rifle protection. The first squad of the First Platoon established a water point in the vicinity of Division Headquarters at Paestum. Second and third squads of the First Platoon remained in company reserve.

The Battalion Command Post, Headquarters and Service Company and Medical Detachment moved from the area occupied the previous night to an area one mile South of Paestum, arriving at 0600. During the day several enemy bombing and strafing attacks were experienced but without ill effect.

11 SEPTEMBER 1943:

The three platoon commanders of Company "A" reconnoitered the roads branching from coastal road Number 18 south of Agropoli and roads south and east of Trentinara. Meanwhile the company was employed procuring engineer supplies and equipment.



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A reconnaissance of the frontline road between the Company "B" bivouac and Altavilla was conducted by Lt. Morton and the First Platoon of that company during which enemy 8.8 gunfire was very active. Technician Grade 5 Albert T. Phelps sustained light shrapnel wounds in the left forearm.

The Third Platoon of Company "B" moved into the front line city of Albanella and removed debris of two buildings which had been blown across a street as a result of German demolitions. Two German booby traps were found with charges placed but without fuse. The entire company later moved to an area four and one-half miles West of Rocca d'Aspido.

The First and Second Platoons of Company "C" furnished security for the 143rd Infantry Combat Team Command Post. Lt. Beahler and three men conducted a reconnaissance on highway No. 18 to Rocca d'Aspido for enemy anti-tank mines during which sixteen mines were removed, five of which had not been armed. These mines were removed eight hundred yards northwest of Rocca d'Aspido.

The Third Platoon of Company "C" remained in support of the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Infantry and during the period laid a hasty minefield consisting of seven hundred and sixty mines across the highway two and one-half miles Southeast of Capaccio.

During the day the Battalion Command Post continued to direct road and water reconnaissance and the procurement of engineer supplies. The command post, Headquarters and Service Company and Medical Detachment established in new bivouac area three miles East of Paestum at 2030 hours.

12 SEPTEMBER 1943:

2nd Lt. Charles E. Pfister and three men from the Headquarters Platoon of Company "A" established and put a water point for the 141st Infantry Combat team into operation. Corporal Don S. Shoemaker and two men conducted a reconnaissance with the 36th Reconnaissance Troops and located three areas for road blocks which Lt. Mueller and the Third Platoon prepared the following day. At about 1400 hours Lt. Dold and the Second Platoon prepared three road blocks five kilometers East of Trentinara and upon completion one squad remained to protect the obstacles. During the afternoon Lt. Spearman entered the town of Prodifumo and returned to the 141st Infantry Command Post with the Chief of Police from whom valuable information was acquired.

Lt. Morton and the First Platoon of Company "B" moved into the frontline area Southwest of Altavilla and removed a road block, meanwhile Lt. Fortier and the Second Platoon reconnoitered a road in front of the enemy's advance line in the vicinity of Rocca d'Aspido. On this reconnaissance it was learned that one hundred and fifty feet of road on a mountain slope had been blown by the enemy which made passage impossible. The Third Platoon remained to guard an unexploded five hundred pound bomb in a civilian's backyard one mile East of the command post.

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The First Platoon of Company "C" searched the area around a blown bridge approximately three miles Southwest of Altavilla for enemy mines where five Tellermine No. 2 were found. A bypass was constructed at this point for one way traffic.

The Second Platoon swept the road from Highway No. 18 approximately two and one-half miles Southwest of Altavilla for mines and removed seven Tellermine.

The road approximately two miles South of Albanella then North to approximately three miles Northwest of Albanella was swept for mines by the Third Platoon of Company "C" which resulted in their finding none.

Considerable reconnaissance and the formulation of defensive plans were conducted during the day by staff members under the direction of the Battalion Command Post. Headquarters and Service Company continued in the procurement of engineer supplies and equipment.

13 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Company "A" employed the day in the procurement of supplies and conditioning of equipment.

Late in the afternoon Lt. Morton and the First Platoon of Company "B" removed an enemy road block Northwest of Albanella and while so engaged Private First Class Robert N. Jones received light wounds in the abdominal region and legs from a booby trap while cutting a tree. The Platoon shortly withdrew to the company because of darkness and the company rejoined the battalion two and one-half miles East of Paostum at 2000 hours.

Company "C" command post moved in the vicinity of the Battalion Command Post at 0400 hours. The First and Third Platoons of Company "C" furnished protection for the 131st and 132nd Field Artillery Battalions, forming a defense line about three quarters of a mile long midway between Albanella and Altavilla. The artillery positions were receiving heavy counter-battery fire and enemy patrols were attempting to reach their positions.

The Second Platoon of Company "C" continued maintenance and improvement of bypass on road approximately two miles north of Albanella under constant enemy artillery shelling. The fire became so heavy at 1300 hours the platoon anti-tank gunners were forced to leave their gun position and the 37 mm. gun was not recovered. The company returned to the vicinity of the Battalion Command Post at 2300 hours.

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Toward midnight information was received that an enemy tank in operating condition had wedged itself in a narrow road near Altavilla. Technician Grade 4 Herschel K. Bridges, Technician Grade 5 Malcolm E. Cox, Corporal James E. Foster and Private Mack C. Murphy, all from Headquarters and Service Company, with demolition equipment, were sent to destroy the tank if its position was not too dangerous. Advancing beyond our own frontlines and under heavy fire they accomplished the mission.

14 SEPTEMBER 1943:

The Third Platoon of Company "A" under Lt. Mueller demolished three bridges on Highway No. 18 in the vicinity of Casalvelino and Prosojo across the Alvonto River. A minefield was placed about two miles North of Ogliaastro on the road leading to that town, a road crater also being blown in that vicinity. The bridge at Rutino station was destroyed and a squad remained to protect the obstacle.

Lt. Dold and one squad from the Second Platoon of Company "A" placed a road block East of Trentinara and left the squad to guard the block.

The First Platoon under Lt. Spearman mined a bridge on the coastal road just Southwest of Castellabate and blew a road crater on the coastal road West of Ortodonnio and also destroyed a bridge four kilometers South of Agropoli. One squad remained behind to cover the crater.

Company "B" employed the day in procuring supplies and equipment and conditioning of equipment preparatory to the next mission.

Company "C" accomplished the mission of mining all possible tank approaches on the Calore River from junction La Casa Creek-Calore River to junction Calore-Sole Rivers. The First Platoon reconnoitered and mined the fords in the sector from the junction of the Calore-Sole Rivers to the Northeast about one mile. The Third Platoon reconnoitered and mined the area from the Northeast extremity of the First Platoon sector to the junction of La Casa Creek-Calore River. A defensive position was then organized to defend the blocks established and the company occupied the positions with the 179th Infantry on the left flank and the Anti-Tank Company of the 143rd Infantry on the right flank. The First and Third Platoons remained on the line with the Second Platoon in reserve to cover enemy breakthrough and the withdrawal of the First and Third Platoons if necessary. Reinforcements were received from the 142nd Infantry Combat Team at 2100 hours and it was during the withdrawal of the company from the line that Sergeant Clyde W. Couch was fatally wounded by shrapnel. The company moved to the vicinity of the Battalion Command Post two and one-half miles Northeast of Pacstum.

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15 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Company "A" was relieved of all road blocks on the Division right flank by airborne. After reconnaissance for possible minefield locations by Lt. Mueller, Lt. Dold and Lt. Spearman, the three platoons moved under cover of darkness to a position two kilometers South of Barizzo and proceeded to lay a minefield in that locality under continuous enemy artillery and machine gun fire. This mission was completed at 0400 hours the following morning and the platoons returned to Headquarters Platoon bivouac three miles Northeast of Capaccio. Meanwhile, earlier in the day at 1500 hours Lt. Mueller contacted patrols of the British Eighth Army in the vicinity of Louroona.

Company "B" remained in battalion reserve during the day.

Company "C" was assigned the mission of laying a minefield at the junction of La Casa Creek-Calore River and the First Platoon of the company placed a three hundred and twenty yard concertina wire obstacle to the front of the position occupied by Company "C", 141st Infantry. Friendly Infantry patrols across La Casa Creek were forced by enemy action to withdraw at 0100 hours 16 September and detained the work for a time. The Third Platoon brought material up into position for the completion of the task.

16 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Company "A" remained in reserve during the day and prepared for the next mission that might be assigned them.

Company "B" moved from bivouac at 2000 hours to Valle de l'Luca Creek where a 6500-mine minefield was laid and a double row of concertina wire placed around it.

The Third Platoon of Company "C" installed 720 yards of concertina wire to the front of the Infantry frontline units from the junction of La Casa Creek-Calore River, East to join wire which was placed by the First Platoon of the company on 15 September. The mission was completed 0400 hours 17 September. The First and Second Platoons remained with the company during the day.

Due to enemy pressure on the 141st and 143 Infantry Regiments it was necessary that these units procure intrenching equipment. Technical Sergeant Jay D. Williams delivered this equipment about midnight under heavy enemy action.

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17 SEPTEMBER 1943:

The three operating platoons of Company "A" under the direction of the company commander, Lt. Ausland, moved to the vicinity of Albanella on the mission of removing road blocks and anti-tank mines two kilometers West of that town. In this vicinity it was noted that the blocks had been heavily booby trapped by the enemy. Other small roads leading in a Northeastly direction toward Altavilla were cleared. It was during these operations that Corporal Michael R. Safchinsky suffered a broken arm.

Lt. Fortior in command of the Second Platoon of Company "B" constructed a small bridge three miles Southwest of Albanella and later removed an enemy road block approximately three miles West of the town. During the day Company "B" was instructed to prepare to move into a combat position with the 142nd Infantry Combat Team.

Company "C" was given the mission of removing the minefield which had been previously laid by the company in the vicinity of LaCasa Creek-Calore River junction. The First, Second and Third Platoons removed equal portions of the minefield in this sector which consisted of 2000 mines. The First Platoon discovered friendly mines buried along La Casa Creek of which no record had been previously made.

18 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Company "A" remained in battalion reserve during the day.

Company "B" moved into a combat position three miles Northwest of Albanella along La Casa Creek. The First and Second Platoons went into a defensive position with the Third Platoon held in reserve. Lt. Hill and three men made a road reconnaissance to Albanella along which several sections were improved with the use of a bulldozer.

The First Platoon of Company "C" prepared and maintained fords across LaCasa Creek and the Calore River in the proximity of their junction and also swept the main roads for mines from the crossings to as far North as the village of Persano. The Third Platoon swept the roads for mines from points about three miles Southeast of Altavilla to the town.

19 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Company "A" was given a mission to assist in the burial of the dead soldiers and civilians at the town of Altavilla which had been badly hit by artillery. With the use of a bulldozer, together with intronching equipment the company was engaged at this work the entire day.

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Company "B" joined Task Force No. 2 in the vicinity of Altavilla. The First and Second Platoons were moved to the front lines to search for minefields and booby traps, few of which were found due to the enemy's quick retreat. The Third Platoon was held in reserve until sent to Altavilla to clear booby traps in order that the Third Battalion of the combat team might establish its command post in that area. The Third Platoon was later assigned the task of assisting in the burial of the dead at Altavilla.

The First Platoon of Company "C" was engaged in the removal of wrecked enemy tanks and trucks from the roads Northwest of Altavilla and the maintenance of bypasses and filling of craters in that vicinity. The Second Platoon swept roads along the Calore River for mines and the Third Platoon swept the roads running North and Northeast from Altavilla for mines.

20 SEPTEMBER 1943:

Company "A" continued in burial of the dead and the clearance of unexploded shells in Altavilla. Debris was cleared from the roads in the town to permit traffic circulation.

Company "B" was withdrawn from the defensive position in which it had been placed the previous day and returned to the battalion.

The First and Second Platoons of Company "C" constructed two foot bridges over the Calore River in the vicinity of Porsano while the Third Platoon swept the road between the Calore River and Highway No. 19, which road joins Altavilla with that highway. A ford was also constructed across the Calore River on this route by the same platoon.

21 SEPTEMBER 1943:

The day was spent with relatively little activity. Company "B" continued to assist in burial of the dead at Altavilla and the entire battalion was moved to bivouac approximately three miles south of Altavilla during the afternoon.



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5 December 1943
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OPERATIONS IN ITALY, NOVEMBER, 1943

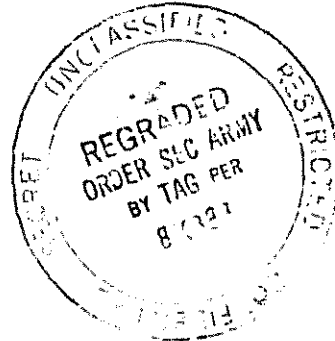
11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

by

Thaddeus J. Sessions

Thaddeus J. Sessions
Captain, 11th Engineer Combat Battalion

- I - Map 1:100,000, Vallo Della Lucania, Sheet 209 - appended to original only.
- II - Map 1:100,000, Campagna, Sheet 198, - appended to original only.
- III - S-1 Journal, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion, period 3 September 1943 to 21 September 1943, inclusive. - appended to original only.
- IV - Summary of Casualties - appended to all copies



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A squad from the First Platoon of Company "B" improved a foot trail up the mountain west of the jeep trail in the vicinity of MIGNANO to facilitate carrying supplies to the top, while a squad from the Second Platoon searched the road joining the jeep trail and CASPOLI for mines. A squad from the Third Platoon improved the foot trail used for carrying supplies to the top of a mountain in the vicinity of CASPOLI.

Company "C" continued work on the supply road for the 142nd Infantry three miles south of MIGNANO. The road was completed at 2300 hours.

During the afternoon, while driving a 1/4-ton truck on reconnaissance one-quarter mile south of MIGNANO, Private First Class Clifford H. Mitchell, Headquarters and Service Company, received a shrapnel wound in the right index finger when the road in that area was subjected to enemy artillery.

19 NOVEMBER 1943:

One squad from Company "A" began repairing a mile section of supply road one-half mile north of MIGNANO at 0800 hours. In addition to the usual road repairs necessary, a minefield required gapping and the entire work was completed by 1700 hours. The turn-around at the command post of the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry was improved by the use of corduroy material and two squads hauled culvert pipe and railroad cross ties for road improvement two miles southeast of MIGNANO while a fourth squad with entrenching tools and explosives assisted the 143rd Infantry in improving their defensive positions.

The three operating platoons of Company "B" left bivouac at 1000 hours to haul railroad cross ties from LATEVERNALE to a by-pass being constructed three miles southeast of MIGNANO. At 1500 hours these platoons were forced by heavy enemy artillery fire at the by-pass to suspend their work until after darkness. At 1600 hours the company bulldozer was dispatched to assist the 178th Field Artillery in moving their field pieces and at 2300 hours a squad from the Second Platoon began maintenance of the jeep trail one-half mile south of MIGNANO and continued on that work throughout the night.

The Third Platoon of Company "C" began repairs on supply trail for the 142nd Infantry three miles south of MIGNANO at 0745 hours. The First Platoon started work at 2200 hours on a by-pass four miles southeast of MIGNANO and continued until 0300 hours the following morning.

~~SECRET~~

20 NOVEMBER 1943:

Thirty-nine German Tollermines of all types were removed by a squad from Company "A" working on a one mile stretch of road beginning about one-half mile north of MIGNANO. The First Platoon of the same company filled a large shell hole one-half mile north of PICCILLI on Highway No. 6 and also hauled rock and culvert pipe and drained the road just north of the shell hole.

The First Platoon and Second Platoon, less one squad from the latter, of Company "B" began maintenance of road from the by-pass on Highway No. 6 three miles southeast of MIGNANO to LECAVE. A squad from the Third Platoon was given the mission of maintaining the jeep trail one mile south of MIGNANO. By 1200 hours the jeep trail became in such bad condition due to heavy traffic and enemy mortar fire that assistance was given the squad by the First and Second Platoons, who cut and hauled corduroy material for the road.

The First Platoon of Company "C" hauled gravel from 1230 hours to 2130 hours for the railroad overpass being repaired four miles south of MIGNANO. The road was opened for traffic at 2115 hours. The Second Platoon maintained a section of road three miles west of TORO and repaired a by-pass in that locality, working on this mission from 0745 hours to about 1630 hours. At 1730 hours this platoon was sent to assist the First and Third Platoons in hauling gravel for the overpass four miles south of MIGNANO. Meanwhile, the Third Platoon had been gravelling railroad overpass four miles south of MIGNANO and at 1500 hours that vicinity had been under enemy artillery fire which forced the suspension of work for a short time.

21 NOVEMBER 1943:

The First Platoon of Company "A" improved culvert three miles southeast of MIGNANO and filled two bomb craters on road running southwest of culvert. The Third Platoon hauled rock and improved roads leading into the Infantry bivouac two and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO.

The three operating platoons of Company "B" continued maintenance of jeep trail one mile south of MIGNANO. During the morning these platoons were subjected to enemy artillery fire which hindered the work for a short while.

The first and second squads from the First Platoon of Company "C" left bivouac about 1230 hours to construct a cable suspension bridge for the 142nd Infantry. The second squad returned about 1700 hours while the first squad remained on the site to complete the work, but was hindered due to Infantry operations in that area and returned to bivouac at 2100 hours. The remainder of the company stayed in bivouac during the day.

[REDACTED]

22 NOVEMBER 1943:

The First Platoon of Company "A" improved roads leading into Battery "C", 131st Field Artillery Battalion, three miles southeast of MIGNANO, where one truck was damaged slightly by shellfire. The Second Platoon worked on a by-pass three miles east of MIGNANO and began checking road leading to LECAVE for mines and booby-traps. Four German wooden box mines were found in this area. It was during this search for booby-traps on the road leading to LECAVE that Technician Grade V Stanley S. Dardginski was killed by an explosion from a booby-trap placed in a dugout beside the road. Both the First and Second platoons were strafed and shelled by the enemy during the course of their operations. The Third Platoon improved defensive positions for the 141st Infantry one and one-half miles west of MIGNANO.

At 0800 hours one squad from the Third Platoon of Company "B" continued maintenance of the jeep trail one mile south of MIGNANO. At 2100 hours the three operating platoons less one squad from the Third Platoon started construction of a Bailey Bridge three-fourths mile southwest of MIGNANO and continued on this work throughout the night. A Class 9, ninety foot span bridge was completed at 0800 hours the following day.

The 142nd Infantry supply road two and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO was repaired by the first squad of the First Platoon of Company "C" which required their working from 1330 hours to 1600 hours. Meanwhile, the Second and Third Platoons worked from 1330 hours to 1800 hours repairing supply road from the 133rd Field Artillery and the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment.

23 NOVEMBER 1943:

The First Platoon of Company "A" continued work on road leading into Battery "C", 131st Field Artillery Battalion, three miles southwest of MIGNANO, while the Second Platoon maintained by-pass three miles southeast of MIGNANO and searched the area for mines.

The Third Platoon of Company "B" retained its assignment of improving and maintaining jeep trail one mile south of MIGNANO and a squad was dispatched, which worked until 1200 hours when it was recalled to the company for rest prior to the construction of a Bailey Bridge which was to be accomplished that night. A squad from the First Platoon swept the road for mines from CONCA to the bridge site on the road to LECAVE. No mines were found. At 2011 hours the company left bivouac to construct a Bailey Bridge four hundred yards east of CONCA.

The Second and Third Platoons from Company "C" began maintenance of supply road for the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry and 133rd Field Artillery Battalion three miles southeast of VENAFRO.

[REDACTED]

24 NOVEMBER 1943:

The Third Platoon of Company "A" laid a culvert pipe on road three and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO preparatory to making a fill. A squad from the First Platoon improved the roads leading into the 131st Field Artillery Battalion three miles southwest of MIGNANO where two loads of rock were placed and various places drained. One squad swept the road starting at culvert three and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO down to LECAVE and nineteen American M1A1 mines were found buried along the road.

Company B, having begun construction of a Bailey Bridge four hundred yards east of CONCA the previous evening completed a Class 35, sixty foot span bridge at 1000 hours. One casualty resulted during the work when Private Edward J. Brungardt sustained shrapnel wounds and a broken leg during an enemy artillery barrage. After completion of the bridge, the First Platoon swept the road to the north for enemy mines until the platoon contacted a mine-sweeping detail from Company "A". No mines were found. A squad from the Third Platoon built a culvert one mile north of the Bailey Bridge on the road to LECAVE.

The First Platoon, less the second squad, the Second and Third Platoons of Company "C" began gravelling supply road for the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry and 133rd Field Artillery at 0745 hours. This road stretched from a point three miles southeast of VENAFRO at the intersection of supply road and Highway No. 85 to the battalion supply dump. The Second Squad of the First Platoon, with mine detectors and a bulldozer, swept the roads in the town of CATALLI for anti-tank mines and also cleared debris. This work was begun at 0745 hours and completed at 2130 hours. In the meantime, all truckdrivers hauled gravel to an overpass three miles south of MIGNANO where the first squad of the Second Platoon assisted by a bulldozer spread it.

25 NOVEMBER 1943:

The entire of Company "A" began making a fill at culvert three and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO at 0500 hours. To complete this mission it was necessary to haul logs for cribbage and rock in addition to earth was used for the fill.

Company "B" was engaged the entire day improving and maintaining road from LECAVE north to Highway No. 6.

All three platoons of Company "C" left the bivouac at 1630 hours to maintain the road joining LECAVE with Highway No. 6 and to assist two battalions of armored artillery in movement over this road. Inasmuch as orders were changed for the movement of this unit, the platoons returned to bivouac at 2400 hours. The section of road which the First Platoon maintained was subjected to enemy artillery and three shells were dropped during the course of the work but without damage.

~~SECRET~~

26 NOVEMBER 1943:

At 0800 hours a squad from Company "A" began repairing guard rail on bridge one-half mile west of PRESENZANO and completed the work at 1500 hours. The remainder of the company hauled railroad cross ties and gravel to the side of a culvert being built three and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO.

From 0800 to 2200 hours the three operating platoons of Company "B" worked on a by-pass one and one-half miles north of LECAVE. After 2200 hours a detail from Company Headquarters remained behind to guide convoys over the by-pass which was opened for $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck traffic.

Company "C" was not assigned a particular mission during the day and the time was employed to good advantage in cleaning and caring for equipment which had suffered greatly the past several days on account of heavy rains.

In the early afternoon an advanced water point located about five miles northeast of MIGNANO was shelled by the enemy and a canvas water tank badly damaged by shrapnel. None of the operating personnel at that location were injured. Inasmuch as it was reasonable to believe the enemy had observation in this vicinity, the installation was moved.

27 NOVEMBER 1943:

The First Platoon of Company "A" worked from 0730 to 1630 hours maintaining road from a culvert three and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO to the junction of that road and Highway No. 6. Meanwhile, during the day a detail together with a bulldozer improved a small road leading into the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment one mile southeast of PRESENZANO and performed demolition work for a protective shelter being constructed for the 141st Infantry command post.

Company "B" remained in bivouac during the day and the personnel were afforded an opportunity to care for equipment.

Company "C" employed its three working platoons from 0530 to 2030 hours on the improvement of a by-pass two miles northeast of LECAVE. The First Platoon cut and laid corduroy material while the Second Platoon hauled rock and gravel to the site, which was spread by the Third Platoon as it was unloaded. Late in the afternoon the enemy laid down an artillery barrage in the vicinity but at a safe distance for the working party.

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28 NOVEMBER 1943:

A demolition squad from Company "A" completed demolition of a protective shelter being constructed by the 141st Infantry for its command post which had been started the previous day. Three loads of gravel were hauled by the Second Platoon to improve turn-around for the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry two miles north of MIGNANO, and also a bomb crater was filled in the vicinity of the turn-around. The rest of Company "A" hauled fourteen loads of gravel for the improvement of culvert three and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO and the road for a distance of four hundred yards on both sides of the culvert.

A detail from Company "B" was sent to tighten two Bailey Bridges, one about three quarters of a mile southwest of MIGNANO and the other in the vicinity of CONCA, which had been constructed earlier. Meanwhile, twelve dump trucks assisted Companies "A" and "C" on work being performed by them.

All three platoons of Company "C" were given the mission of maintaining and improving the road from intersection at Highway No. 6 to CONCA. The platoons remained on this work until 1700 hours, having begun at 0830 hours. During the time these platoons were on this job, enemy artillery airbursts were noticed in the vicinity but none were near enough to cause damage.

29 NOVEMBER 1943:

The first squad of the Third Platoon of Company "A" worked from 0800 hours to 1730 hours building a crib on the north side of a fill across railroad track three miles southeast of MIGNANO, while the other two squads of the platoon hauled gravel and stone for road repairs between culvert to LECAVE. The Second Platoon tightened Bailey Bridges near CONCA and one mile south of MIGNANO, and repaired road between LECAVE and culvert three and one-half miles south of MIGNANO. The Third Platoon spent the day hauling gravel for the maintenance of road in the vicinity of culvert three and one-half miles south of MIGNANO.

Company "B" less its Headquarters Platoon, prepared to move and join the 142nd Infantry Combat Team to support them in future operations. At 1630 hours the three operating platoons moved to a temporary bivouac one and one-half miles south of MIGNANO and arrived at 2045 hours.

The Second Platoon of Company "C" maintained road two miles southeast of MIGNANO. The work was begun at 0830 hours and on leaving the site at 2100 hours the platoon ran into an enemy artillery barrage. Upon examination later, the tire of one truck was struck by a piece of shrapnel but no personnel injured. The second squad of the First Platoon of Company C left bivouac with four mine detectors and reported to the 3rd Ranger Battalion. They were given the mission of sweeping supply road to forward supply dumps on a road west from VENAERO to a mile south of CIPPAGUA. The First and Third Platoons remained in bivouac during the day.

~~SECRET~~

30 NOVEMBER 1943:

The Second and Third Platoons hauled gravel and maintained road from a fill three miles southeast of MIGNANO to LECAVE. The First Platoon improved roads in the company area which had become in bad condition due to heavy rains.

The three platoons of Company "B", having moved up with the 142nd Infantry the previous day, dug in and prepared themselves while awaiting orders for operations.

The First Platoon, less the second squad, from Company "C" repaired entrances to 36th Reconnaissance Troop bivouac from 0745 to 1300 hours, while the Third Platoon worked from 2000 hours to 2315 hours repairing road immediately south of MIGNANO, which consisted of hauling and spreading ten loads of gravel. The second squad from the First Platoon, which had been attached the previous afternoon to support the 3rd Ranger Battalion, remained with that unit until 2000 hours. No enemy mines were found by this squad the previous evening and it was indicated the road from CIPPAGUA to S. PIETRO was under intense artillery fire the previous night. During attachment to the 3rd Ranger Battalion this squad participated in a five mile speed march during which enemy patrols were encountered and repulsed. The Third Platoon of Company "C" remained in the company during the day.

In addition to normal engineer functions of water supply, map supply, etc., the battalion performed many small tasks for the division. It can be easily seen that the major part of operations was devoted to keeping the lines of communication open. This task was a difficult one due to the continuous rain and necessitated hard work day and night on the part of the men. Many of these times they were under enemy fire and the fact that casualties were low was in a great measure due to their training and discipline. For the whole of this period the battalion was efficiently supported by the 2nd Battalion of the 19th Engineer (C) Regiment. In the bivouac area on the side of a mountain, the organization was fairly well protected from enemy shell fire, although occasionally a few would whistle over and the rush for the "ditch" would begin. However, several eight inch guns nearby were the chief cause of insomnia rather than the enemy's action. The fact that the command was in a position to feed "B" rations to the men during this period was of highest importance from a morale standpoint. It might be added that the 25th of November was not only a day appropriately designated for celebrating Thanksgiving but as well marked the end of the third year of Federal Service for this Battalion, and the cooks performed with excellence in the preparation of the unexpected turkey.



HEADQUARTERS 11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36, U S ARMY

RECEIVED

9 January 1944

AG 314.7

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army.

1. Herewith "Operations in Italy, December, 1943 -- 11th Engineer Combat Battalion" in sextuple.

2. The following observations were made during operations covered by the above-mentioned report;

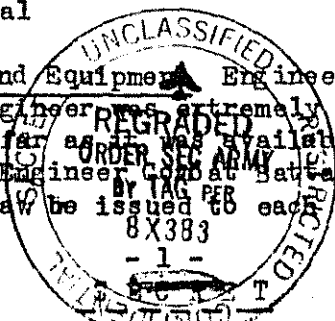
a. Operations The same conditions existed that had characterized the operations in November. The heavy rains made the task of maintaining routes of communication an arduous one. At times work on pack trails was not feasible as these were changed often due to enemy fire. Work in the forward areas was carried on at night but in spite of this enemy shellfire was occasionally concentrated on bridge sites during construction. It was noted that in some cases when Engineers were called for that the task had not been coordinated by the unit concerned. There is a necessity for strict traffic control.

b. Mines and Booby-traps A platoon from the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company (Prov.) was attached to the battalion during the clearing of minefields in the vicinity of S. PIETRO. The work performed by this unit was excellent. No new type mines were discovered. Quite a number of the W-type firing devices were found on anti-personnel mines. The Germans used various methods in constructing booby-traps, usually using the stick grenade with the delay fuse removed as a detonator. No mixed fields of anti-personnel mines were found. The fields that were located were either all of the instantaneous type or of the bounding type. It was noted that enemy anti-personnel mines were of inferior quality to those previously encountered.

c. Water supply Water points were kept well forward during operations.

d. Map supply Normal

e. Engineer Supply and Equipment Engineer supply was excellent. It may be noted that the Corps Engineer was extremely cooperative in the furnishing of Engineer equipment insofar as it was available. The D-7 Dozer again proved to be necessary in the Engineer Combat Battalion. It is recommended that a gasoline driven chain saw be issued to each lettered company platoon.



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110

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OPERATIONS IN ITALY, DECEMBER, 1943

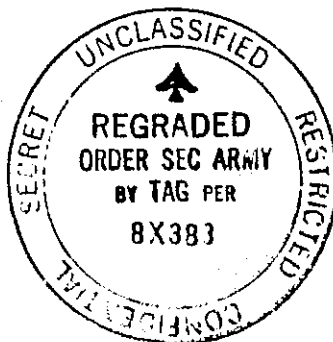
11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

by

Thaddeus J. Sessions

Thaddeus J. Sessions
Captain, 11th Engineer Combat Battalion

(ORIGINAL COPY)



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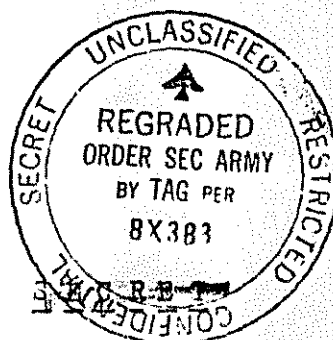
~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

It is also recommended that the number of anti-tank mines maintained by each lettered company be reduced to two hundred.

Oran C. Stovall

ORAN C. STOVALL
Major, 11th Engineer Combat Bn.
Commanding

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UNCLASSIFIED

OPERATIONS IN ITALY, DECEMBER, 1943

11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

Rain and mud which had characterized the type of engineer work required the latter half of November was as well to be the keynote to operations of the 11th Engineer Combat Battalion during the succeeding month. The 11th Engineer Combat Battalion had previously moved to a bivouac one-half miles southwest of PRESENZANO in November and, with the exception of the three operating platoons of Company E, all the units remained in that area at the beginning of December. The contingent of Company B had moved on 29 November to support the 142nd Infantry and bivouacked one and one-half miles south of MIGNANO.

1 DECEMBER 1943:

The almost irreparable condition of roads, especially those serving as supply routes over which ammunition and other heavy supplies were to be transported, remained the constant problem for engineer troops. It was such a road that served the 155th Field Artillery Battalion four miles southeast of MIGNANO that the First Platoon from Company A attempted to maintain during the day. As was the case on many well-beaten roads now, the simple procedure of keeping the drainage ditches along the edges open and shoveling earth into the worst holes no longer sufficed. Gravel had to be hauled and spread in an attempt to stabilize the seemingly bottomless pits. The work of the First Platoon in no way rendered insignificant the efforts of the Second and Third Platoons of Company A which were confronted with the same difficulties in the 131st Field Artillery Battalion sector three and one-half miles southeast of MIGNANO. These two platoons used rock instead of gravel as a stabilizing material.

With an alert for movement or any other activity usually follows the suspense in waiting for the hour of execution. After an eight hour alert the Second and Third Platoons of Company B left their bivouac one and one-half miles south of MIGNANO at 1630 hours to join the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, respectively, of the 142nd Infantry. On each man's shoulders was carried twenty pounds of explosives and one Shaped Charge M-1, commonly known as a "Bechivo." With this equipment they followed the Infantry on the attack of MT. DEFENSA, MT. REMETLANEA and MT. MAGGIORE foothills, ready at any moment to drop their loads and blast machine gun and mortar elements to support the attacking force. Although prepared and readily available throughout the day for the full execution of their mission, these platoons were not called upon to expend their loads.



S E C R E T

1 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

To obtain corduroy poles in the immediate vicinity of the roads being repaired would in the main be impossible, even if the time element made it practical for their being cut on the site. For this reason a supply of poles in the battalion supply dump had to be maintained and from that point this material could be rushed to the project at the propitious moment and in the quantities required. In an attempt to maintain a twenty to thirty truckload level on hand in the dump, at frequent intervals it was necessary to send out a detail or in some instances an entire company to replenish the supply. This material was ordinarily cut along the VOLTURNO RIVER and during the afternoon this task fell to the three operating platoons of Company C, who netted a fifteen truckload return.

2 DECEMBER 1943:

While two bulldozers stood available on the roads in the 131st and 155th Field Artillery Battalions areas to pull trucks through the many bad spots the First Platoon of Company A was hauling stone and gravel which were spread along the roads in the Battery "C", 131st Field Artillery Battalion area three and one-half miles south of MIGNANO. A total of thirty-five loads were hauled into this location as well as fourteen hauled later during the day to the 155th Field Artillery Battalion area.

Around 0800 hours the First Platoon of Company B was alerted for operations with the 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry in their attack against MT. MAGGIORE. The platoon prepared to carry the same demolition equipment and supplies as the Second and Third Platoons had taken the previous day inasmuch as the mission of the First Platoon was the same as that of the other two platoons. Twenty pounds of explosives and one "Beehive" made up the load for each man.

For Company C, it was another day for cutting corduroy poles. The three operating platoons left bivouac in the morning and after cutting thirty-five truckloads of saplings, which at the same time were being hauled to the supply dump, they returned about 1600 hours. This, however, was not to be a days work for the second squad of the Second Platoon which was on the road again at 1700 hours to repair bad spots in the supply road one hundred yards south of MIGNANO. After hauling six loads of gravel and spreading it along this section of the road, which was then 2030 hours, the squad returned to the company.

3 DECEMBER 1943:

To construct a culvert near Division Headquarters was for the First Platoon of Company A a simple task compared to any other road maintenance usually necessitated by the incessant rain. After its completion came the removal of four German Tellermine in an area four miles south of PRESENZANO which the 155th Field Artillery Battalion planned to use for a two-way road. Three of these mines were baby-trapped with trip wires.

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S E C R E T

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3 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

In order that the present supply of corduroy poles might be further augmented, the Second and Third Platoons of Company A employed themselves during the day cutting and hauling poles from an area one-half mile southwest of VARRANO. Nevertheless, field pieces must have ammunition to be of use and it was a three man detail and the bulldozer from Company A that helped the 131st Field Artillery get its ammunition through the mud up to the gun positions.

The Third Platoon and two squads from the Second Platoon of Company B returned to the Company assembly area at 1430 hours after being relieved from support of the 142nd Infantry. During their operations with the Infantry no direct enemy opposition was experienced. Only six gun emplacements were blown after these men had carried such a large amount of explosives inasmuch as abandoned German positions were utilized to avoid revealing their positions to the enemy.

With the exception of the third squad of the Third Platoon which assisted Battery C, 155th Field Artillery move its guns into new positions five hundred south of MIGNANO, Company C remained in bivouac during the day.

4 DECEMBER 1943:

Back to the "wood pile" so to speak was the assignment for the Second and Third Platoons of Company A. Five truck loads of corduroy poles were cut and hauled from an area one-half mile southwest of VARRANO to the battalion supply dump.

At the Company B command post information was received at 0200 hours that the First Platoon had been relieved of its original mission of supporting the 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry in preparing emplacements for machine guns and mortars. This platoon had instead been given the job of carrying intrenching tools forward for the leading Infantry Battalion. Additional engineer troops were then requested by the Infantry to perform the demolition work which would have been done by the First Platoon. The Third Platoon and two squads of the Second Platoon were given the task.

Breakfast was fed the men at 0500 hours. Each man prepared to carry twenty pounds of explosives or one "Beehive." Proceeding half way up Mt DEFENSA along the only available trail leading to the 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry, these men were caught in an enemy artillery and mortar barrage. In a vain effort to find protection Sergeant John A Bottis, squad leader of the second squad, Second Platoon, was instantly killed when an artillery shell exploded nearby. At the same time Sergeant Willie R Smith was seriously wounded in the left arm, legs and abdomen by shell fragments. The First Platoon and two squads from the Second Platoon returned to the Company at 1630 hours.

The activities of Company C were confined primarily to road reconnaissance during the day. Parties reconnoitered the road from VENFRO to as near S.PIETRO as was possible. The supply road for the 155th Field Artillery Battalion was a subject of particular attention in order that the normal flow of supplies might not suffer interference.

~~SECRET~~

4 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

It had rained exceedingly hard throughout the day. Roads that had previously been a deep bed of mud were now transformed into a stream of slush. Even the military roads in Italy had poor drainage facilities. Ditches alongside were usually small and inadequate. To further add to the difficulty of drainage, trees planted between the ditches and roadbed on either side made impossible the use of machinery for cleaning or improving the drainage. Shovels and other hand tools were the only answer to such a situation and even then the mass of telephone lines laying along the roads were in danger of being broken and therefore result in disrupting communications. That was the condition of the road from Division Headquarters to Highway #6. Every available man in the battalion took up a shovel late in the evening in an attempt to remedy the problem.

5 DECEMBER 1943:

It could not be said the road from VENAFRO to S.PIETRO created greater difficulties to communications than any other secondary through mountainous terrain in Italy but its importance as an axis of communications for advanced elements in that sector made its constant maintenance as far forward as possible mandatory. The enemy still occupied S.PIETRO, and from its vantage points this route could be, and reportedly was, a target for artillery. Along this road some two miles southwest of VENAFRO the First Platoon of Company A, together with a squad from the Second Platoon attempted to repair its bombpitted condition. In two instances pipe culverts were placed in the craters before filling in with rock and earth thereby enhancing drainage and at the same time rendering it passable. The remaining squad of the Second Platoon constructed a turn-around in this locality inasmuch as turning a vehicle around on the existent road was highly impractical, if not impossible. The entire course of their work was a matter of enduring enemy artillery fire but it was not until 2200 hours, after work had been suspended until the next day, that shells fell near enough to cause damage. To preclude the necessity of travelling several miles the next day, these platoons had prepared to spend the night. Six shells fell in their proximity, seriously wounding Private Charles George and Private Milray King, both of whom were immediately evacuated. It was then deemed necessary to remove the remainder of the men to their original bivouac near PIESENZANO.

Without respite the rains continued daily. Maintenance of supply trails along the mountain sides presented complexities equal, if not surmounting, those of ordinary routes. The First Platoon of Company P begun work at 0930 hours on the trail along the foothills from Mt DEFENSA to Mt MAGGIORE. This trail had been in use for some time and had now become vulnerable to enemy artillery fire, making the selection of a new trail desirable. To accomplish this task the Second and Third Platoon of Company B began at 1730 hours. The area was subjected to enemy artillery fire, through which the platoons continued their work. During a barrage at 2300 hours 1st Lt Miles E. Hill was bruised on the leg and Technician Grade 5 Eugene Keegan bruised in the back and sustained light wounds in the hands caused by shells exploding nearby. Sergeant John W. Marquart was also slightly wounded.

~~SECRET~~

5 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

Although Company C had not had previous training in construction of the Bailey Bridge, their assignment for the day called for the construction of two. The three operating platoons left bivouac at 0900 hours for the construction site some three miles southwest of VENAFRO on the road to S.PIETRO. Arrangements had been previously made for the delivery of the bridges to the sites by a corps unit. The First Platoon was assigned the construction of one bridge and some six hundred yards distance from the first bridge, the second bridge was to be built by the Third Platoon. The Second Platoon preceded those platoons to sweep the area for mines as well as to direct trucks with materials to the proper locations and furnish security for both projects. The work of the First Platoon progressed well and 2400 hours only the approaches remained to be completed. The success of the Third Platoon had been the opposite. From the beginning the enemy had been accurate enough to place shells between the abutments and therefore construction had been slow. During a barrage Private Andy J Bockusez was slightly wounded in the left shoulder by shell fragments. After darkness, the Third Platoon resumed its work but at 2300 hours was forced to withdraw again and the bridge was not completed. Private Walter J. Wosik was slightly wounded during the last barrage by shell fragments.

6 DECEMBER 1943:

The turn-around on the VENAFRO-S.PIETRO road which the First Platoon of Company A started the previous day was ninety percent completed at the end of today. The work was resumed. The area was shelled by enemy artillery during the course of this work and in several instances at close range. All the possible measures for protection were taken by the platoon during this action and it escaped injury or damage.

Private Charles George, Company A, who was seriously wounded the day before expired in a field hospital at 0330. Although wounded in several places, head injuries sustained no doubt contributed greatly to his failure to recover.

To repair ~~and~~ ~~ordinary~~ trail, which might be called an Italian country road, well beaten by supply trains and ambulances from CASP.LI north to the foothills of Mt DEFENSA, was the task of the day for the First Platoon of Company B. An unstable earth formation soaked by heavy rain could best be, and was, maintained by the use of corduroy poles to prevent vehicles from sinking deep into seemingly bottomless pools of muck. It was not a job to be accomplished in a day.

The day offered an opportunity for the personnel of Company C to clean their equipment. It was a matter of clothes washing, cleaning ordnance and taking advantage of the portable shower constructed nearby.

[REDACTED]

7 DECEMBER 1943:

The bulldozer had now become an implement just as vitally important in moving vehicles from rain-soaked areas as it was in moving large quantities of earth in road construction. By the use of this machinery it was possible for the Second Platoon of Company A to move trucks of the 131st Field Artillery from its bivouac. Meanwhile the Third Platoon of Company A engaged itself in cutting and hauling corduroy poles from a location one-half mile southeast of VAIRANO to the battalion supply dump.

Work on the supply road from CASPOLI to the north which was taken up by the Second Platoon of Company B had progressed satisfactorily. The First Platoon had begun the work the previous day and it was not until 1430 hours that the Second Platoon was forced by enemy artillery fire to withdraw from this corduroying job. Despite heavy fire no casualties were suffered.

While Company C remained in bivouac during the day it was only the bulldozer operator from the company that was given a mission during the day. Assistance was given the 155th Field Artillery in moving its guns into new firing positions by the use of a bulldozer.

8 DECEMBER 1943:

A squad from the Third Platoon of Company A left bivouac at 0800 hours for the purpose of searching the road from VENAFRO as far as possible toward S.PIETRO for mines. Upon arriving at VENAFRO enemy mortar fire detained the squad until 1000 hours. Finally proceeding, the mine sweeping was begun about four miles from VENAFRO and progressed one and one-half miles until the squad was forced back by small arms fire. Terrain encountered in recent operations made the use of the Bailey Bridge desirable where smaller bridges could not be rapidly constructed. Very little previous training in the construction of this bridge had been given and the First and Second Platoons of Company A took full advantage to build practice bridges from equipment in the battalion supply dump.

The supply road from CASPOLI to the Mt DEFENSE foothills was still not fully repaired although the First and Second Platoons of Company B had each spent a day laying corduroy poles. The Third Platoon of Company B took up where the Second Platoon had stopped the previous day and brought the task to completion.

The entire of Company C had remained in bivouac until 1300 hours. At that time the First squad from the First Platoon moved out to maintain a by-pass two and one-half miles southwest of VENAFRO on the S.PIETRO road.

During the past several days little change occurred in the geographical station of units of the Division and water points installed earlier had been moved. As a better point for distribution the portable purification unit one mile southwest of CONCA was moved during the day by operating personnel from Headquarters and Service Company and established one and one-half mile south of CASPOLI.

~~SECRET~~

9 DECEMBER 1943:

The First and Second Platoons of Company A were afforded another day of training on the construction of the Bailey Bridge which was again carried on at the battalion supply dump.

The Third Platoon of Company A had remained in the vicinity of VENAFRO during the previous night. It stood by awaiting call for engineer work required on the road to S.PIETRO. Although this platoon was not called upon, every attempt made at leaving VENAFRO by truck along the S.PIETRO road readily drew enemy artillery fire. Despite the inactivity of this platoon, liaison was maintained throughout the day with the 143rd Infantry.

The First Platoon of Company B accompanied the 1st Battalion 142nd Infantry which moved out at 0830 hours. This platoon's mission embraced establishing an explosive dump as well as rendering assistance in the use of explosives necessary to prepare machine gun and mortar emplacements for the Infantry. After carrying two thousand pounds of explosives over rugged terrain, it was not used as it was feared its detonation might reveal their positions to the enemy. Upon the relief of this platoon each man had to shoulder the same load of explosives he had carried up the hill and carry it back down the same trail.

In addition to the first squad of the First Platoon of Company C returning to continue maintenance on a by-pass two and one-half miles southwest of VENAFRO, which had been their task the previous day, the second squad also accompanied it when leaving at 0745 hours. After working until 1700 hours this by-pass was considered in a state of repair at least for the time being.

It was 1000 hours before the Third Platoon of Company C was at the bridge site three miles southwest of VENAFRO and the necessary equipment for construction of a Bailey Bridge was on hand. The platoon began construction while a squad from the Second Platoon furnished security. Having spent the greater part of the day in bivouac, it was 1900 hours when the first squad of the Second Platoon from Company C was given its mission. The task was to repair a road two hundred yards north of MIGNANO and the work progressed into the night.

10 DECEMBER 1943:

The First Platoon of Company A relieved the Third Platoon at VENAFRO. The mission for the platoon at that location remained the same although no engineer work was required on the road to S.PIETRO. After returning to the battalion bivouac, the Third Platoon joined the Second Platoon in practice construction of a Bailey Bridge in the battalion dump.

Persistent rains remained the problem in the maintenance of roads and supply trails. The trail leading around the northern tip of Mt DEFENSA to Mt MGGIORE had been the path for a battalion of Infantry when they carried supplies to the 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry. The days work of the Second Platoon of Company B enabled this foot path to then be used as a trail for pack mules.

~~TOP SECRET~~

10 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

The accumulated stock of corduroy poles in the battalion dump was to become of use. Through the use of these poles, the Third Platoon of Company B improved a road leading from MIGNANO to a medical collecting station in that vicinity.

The work of the first squad of the Second Platoon from Company C had been progressing along the road just two hundred yards north of MIGNANO until 0100 hours. Then the enemy laid down a barrage of artillery and mortar fire and the squad was forced to suspend its work, returning to the company. The Third Platoon had accomplished its mission. The Bailey Bridge three miles southwest of VENAFRO on the road to S.PIETRO had been completed and opened for traffic at 0930 hours. Another bridge was yet required at CEPPAGNA, but this was an assignment for the Second Platoon. Its work began at 1600 hours and without incident was completed at 0100 hours the next morning.

11 DECEMBER 1943:

To add to the stock of poles for use in corduroying roads, the First and Second Platoon of Company A began cutting this material from an area one-half mile southwest of VAIRANO and hauling it to the battalion supply dump. The Third Platoon relieved the First Platoon at VENAFRO and at 0900 hours twelve enemy planes came over this area and dropped several bombs in the vicinity of three Bailey Bridges on the road to S.PIETRO. None of the bridges was hit, however, it was estimated by personnel present at the time that anti-aircraft fire struck three of the planes. After this raid two squads from the Third Platoon filled a small bomb crater one mile west of VENAFRO and improved the road drainage from VENAFRO to the First Bailey Bridge. The remaining squad from the Third Platoon swept the right side of the road in the vicinity of the 143rd Infantry command post for mines. None was found. The road from the 143rd Infantry command post to a Bailey Bridge one and one-half miles from S.PIETRO was reconnoitered during the day and all bridges were found to be in good condition and capable of withstanding tank traffic.

Upon obtaining information that the body of Sergeant John A. Bettis, killed on 4 December, had not been removed, the second squad of the Second Platoon of Company B, of which he was leader, went to the vicinity of MIGNANO to search for the body. The body was found and carried to a Graves Registration Officer for burial.

The three operating platoons of Company B were relieved from their assignment with the 142nd Infantry and at 1130 hours began to move back to the battalion bivouac near PRESENZANO.

Each of the three platoons of Company C sent out working parties at 0800 hours to cover excessive materials at various bridge sites and haul them back to the dump. Enemy dive bombers attacked gun and tank positions and bivouac areas in the vicinity of bridge sites near VENAFRO at 1000 hours and during this raid Private First Class Edward McDonald was slightly wounded in the left leg by a bomb fragment. This was the first incident where Company C had been directly affected by aerial bombing.

~~SECRET~~

12 DECEMBER 1943:

It was anticipated that a unit from the 753rd Tank Battalion should occupy a position on the side of a hill one and one-half miles east of S.PIETRO but beforehand a certain amount of work in the area was necessary. A squad from Company A began the work after darkness. Enemy small arms and artillery fire in this area made the work most difficult, not to mention the rain which was falling.

The Second Platoon of Company A with an additional squad from the First Platoon, worked on the road between VENAFRO and S.PIETRO during the day. This work included improving the drainage and hauling gravel for the approaches to three Bailey Bridges on the route. Further work was required in CEPPAGNA where the streets were widened, or rather the debris was removed to give a wider route through the existing narrow route in that village. For this type work a bulldozer well answered the problem, saving greatly the manpower that would have been necessary had the work been performed by hand. A proposed mine park three quarters of a mile northeast of checked for mines during the day but none was found.

An opportunity was given Company B for its personnel to clean equipment and organization property.

Company C employed the Second and Third Platoons cutting and hauling corduroy poles. This material was procured in the vicinity of VAIRANO. During the day twenty loads were hauled to the battalion supply dump.

13 DECEMBER 1943:

It was again the First Platoon of Company A that should stand by at VENAFRO to perform any engineer mission required in that vicinity. There was relatively more activity for engineers in this sector than there had been previously with the platoon hauling gravel for the worst spots along the road between VENAFRO and S.PIETRO. The three Bailey Bridges on this road also required tightening and details from the platoon performed this work. All in the meantime a squad was searching an area six miles east of VENAFRO for mines prior to the 3rd Battalion command post of the 143rd Infantry was to be established. One "S" mine was uncovered.

The Third Platoon of Company A moved in the vicinity of CEPPAGNA to build a culvert three hundred yards north of the village. This work was completed during the day and with the use of two bulldozers a fill was made over the culvert.

Company B was afforded another day of rest but in addition camp cleaning, inventorying and salvaging of clothing and equipment as well. Ordnance was inspected during the afternoon.

With increasing use of the roads in the VENAFRO vicinity came the difficulty of maintenance. To avoid sending working parties to this area daily, the three operating platoons of Company C moved to the site. In addition to these platoons, the kitchen and a detachment from the company motor section went along. A bivouac was established at 1600 hours in an area one-quarter mile west of VENAFRO.

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14 DECEMBER 1943:

The morning presented an opportunity for Company A to clean and care for its equipment. The three operating platoons left bivouac after dinner to cut corduroy poles at an area approximately one-half mile southwest of VALRANO. Eight truckloads were cut during the afternoon and hauled to the battalion supply dump. In addition to the work done by these three platoons, the bulldozer was used to assist the 36th Quartermaster Company improve its area four and one-half miles south of MIGNANO.

For the First Platoon of Company B it was another day of training on the construction of the Bailey Bridge, which was conducted at the battalion supply dump. In addition to this platoon, the non-commissioned officers from the two remaining platoons attended the training while the men of these latter two platoons completed cleaning and maintenance of personal and organizational property.

It was not a day of great activity for Company C. The First Platoon was employed the entire day on construction of a road by-pass two hundred yards northwest of CEPPANEL. In lack of a specific assignment, it might be concluded the remainder of the company took things easy or accustomed themselves to their new surroundings of mud.

15 DECEMBER 1943:

In anticipation of the worst, Company A was given notice in the morning that Company C might possibly need assistance in the maintenance of the road between VENAFRO and S.PIETRO. Were it necessary, Company A would move to that vicinity. The day spent itself without the assignment materializing and the general employment throughout was washing clothes or attending to other miscellaneous items. Whatever activities might have been in progress were interrupted momentarily when enemy planes suddenly appeared over-head and bullets from the planes' machine guns began to strike in the area. The air raid did not result in any casualties but the kitchen fly was perforated by a few stray shots.

Although no great number of enemy minefields or booby-traps had been encountered so far, it was still well to take the precaution to look for them. The 142nd Infantry was preparing to make an attack on Mt. LUGO and the first squad of the First Platoon from Company B joined the Infantry should it be necessary to remove or gap minefields on the approaches. Prior to the attack a mine field was removed by this squad from an area about a mile northwest of MIGNANO.

Training on the construction of the Bailey Bridge seemed to always be a worthwhile assignment when actual operations did not require the commitment of a unit. The Third Platoon of Company B was thus engaged during the day at the battalion supply dump.

~~SECRET~~

15 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

An uneventful day for Company C. Aside from a detail of six men which worked throughout the day assisting an anti-aircraft unit clear a field of fire at a battery located one mile west of VENAFRO, the company remained in the vicinity of its bivouac. Private Robert A. Hughes was slightly injured while working with this detail when struck by a falling tree.

16 DECEMBER 1943:

Company A had been alerted the previous day to assist Company C should the roads in the VENAFRO area become too great a problem for the latter. Liaison was maintained between the two companies throughout the day although the former was not required to move.

The task of the first squad of the First Platoon from Company B, which had joined the 142nd Infantry the previous day, was not to be fruitless. The six mine detectors carried along was not dead weight. During the progress of the attack on Mt LUNGO twenty-four "S" Mines and twelve booby-traps were found. The charges used on booby-traps were of wide variation, ranging from hand grenades to Tellermines.

The operations of the Second Platoon, Company B, would be commonly be termed a "dry run." It was this platoon whose turn it would be to practice on the construction of the Bailey Bridge.

Company C's activities during the day had been relatively little. In the main, it has more a matter of standing by to repair the roads around VENAFRO should their condition render them impassable. Enemy artillery action on the road to S.PIETRO still made work along that forward road impractical.

17 DECEMBER 1943:

Company A still remained on the alert to move on short notice should it be required to assist Company C at VENAFRO. The day passed without that requirement materializing and in the meantime the First Platoon hauled two loads of gravel to improve the bivouac. In the afternoon the company bulldozer improved a road for the 78th Field Artillery which was located near PRESENZANO.

It was an axe-swinging task for the three platoons of Company B. Poles to be used as corduroy material were cut and hauled to the dump during the entire day. The east side of Highway No. 85 from LE TAVERNOLE to R. FRATELIE appeared most bountiful and it was there that the axes made their deepest impression.

Every advance was into territory which the enemy had held for a long period of time, which permitted enemy land mines and booby-traps to be laid. The Third Platoon of Company C removed nineteen Tellermines No. 2 during the day while sweeping the road between VENAFRO and S.PIETRO. After darkness and until midnight the first squad of the Second Platoon from Company C assisted an ordnance recovery unit in removing the wreckage of trucks strewn along the road before S.PIETRO.

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18 DECEMBER 1943:

With exception of a small detachment remaining behind, Company A moved by truck from bivouac one-half mile west of PRESENZANO to an area two miles west of VENAFRO.

Upon completion of its mission with the 142nd Infantry, the First squad of the First Platoon, Company B returned to the Company at 1600 hours. All mines and booby-traps encountered by the Infantry in its attack on Mt LUNGO had been removed.

The village of S.PIETRO had been under siege for many days and as might be the ordinary outcome, the roads immediately leading to it were in an ill state of repair. The First Platoon of Company C began repairs at 0800 hours and continued until 2100 hours. A culvert about five hundred yards to the southwest was repaired and an armored roadway bridge built three hundred yards nearer to the village, but by no means should the task of filling numerous shell holes along the road be minimized.

For the Second and Third Platoons of Company C it was a job of sweeping the roads and ditches around S.PIETRO in search of enemy mines.

19 DECEMBER 1943:

The rear detachment of Company A joined the company two miles west of VENAFRO in the morning. The Third Platoon of Company A swept the road from S.PIETRO west to intersection with Highway No. 6 but the search was without results.

One squad from Company A reconnoitered the road from S.PIETRO to its intersection with Highway No. 6. This road was confined to one-way traffic due to small bomb craters, several damaged vehicles and trees which partially blocked the road. The reconnaissance along Highway No. 6 to the north was suspended, when enemy planes strafed the road. The truck in which the group was riding was slightly damaged but the personnel escaped injury. Another reconnaissance was conducted from CEPPAGNA to within one-half mile of S.PIETRO and several places along this route were noted to require revetments for which a load of railroad cross ties was hauled.

It was another day of training on the Bailey Bridge for the Third Platoon of Company B. The remainder of the company stayed in bivouac without a specific assignment during the day.

While the First Platoon of Company C cleared debris in S.PIETRO along the main road, the Second Platoon swept the jeep trail from a point six hundred yards west of S.PIETRO for a distance of four hundred yards in the same direction. No mines were found on this search although the efforts of a detail from the Third Platoon bore more fruit when five Teller mines No. 2 were found two miles southwest of S.PIETRO.

Shortly before noon the First and Second Platoons of Company C were attacked by enemy aircraft, which strafed and bombed the area. The planes came in from the sun and were upon the company so suddenly that the troops had little opportunity to seek shelter. 2nd Lt James W Evans and Private First Class Felix Guss were killed and 2nd Lt Kenneth W Hand, Technician Grade 5 Joseph W Jaeger, Technician Grade 5 Chester Dackner, Privates First Class Charles A Anderson, Glenn C Rabb, Leroy O Gloor, Richard G Nims and Privates Anicot Fournier and Willie H Cope were wounded. All the wounded were evacuated except Lt Hand, Pvt 1 cl Nims and Private Fournier.

~~SECRET~~

21 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

The roads in the vicinity north of VENAFRO had been under reconnaissance the past several days and repairs and improvements had been made as requirements developed. Company C experienced little activity and for the most part the personnel remained in the vicinity of bivouac. As the result of a reconnaissance conducted by Company C during the day a mine-field was located one thousand yards off the road between VENAFRO and S.PIETRO two miles west of VENAFRO.

An officer and thirty five men were attached to Company C during the day for future operations. This personnel was from the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company and it was anticipated they should be used in removal of minefields encountered.

22 DECEMBER 1943:

To facilitate loading gravel and preclude the necessity of loading trucks by hand shovel from ground level, the First Platoon of Company A erected a loading ramp near VENAFRO. By the use of this ramp, gravel could be pushed upon the ramp by a bulldozer then thrown into the dump trucks. During this construction a detail from the platoon continued to haul railroad crossties from VENAFRO to the company area.

The Third Platoon of Company A worked on roads in the 131st Field Artillery area. This entailed use of a bulldozer to fill holes in the areas of Batteries A, B and C a quarter mile east of S.PIETRO. After using the bulldozer the worse places in the roads were gravelled. In addition, the platoon hauled two loads of corduroy poles from the battalion supply dump. This material had been accumulating and its use was anticipated in repairing roads around S.PIETRO.

For the Second Platoon of Company A the task was repair of the 141st Infantry supply road. This mission required that six loads of gravel be hauled and spread along the road two miles west of VENAFRO.

The mule pack trail from CENAGRA north to Hill 1205 was reconnoitered by a squad from the Third Platoon. After the preliminary survey, this squad began work to improve the trail.

Company B was confined simply to bulldozer work during the day. The 132nd Field Artillery was moving from an area one and one-half miles south of MIGNANO to two miles east of S.PIETRO. One R-4 bulldozer remained at the old area and assisted in pulling guns from their positions while two R-4 bulldozers were available to place the howitzers in their new firing positions.

The First Platoon of Company C remained in the company bivouac during the day. In such an event the normal outcome would be washing clothes, cleaning ordnance and the performance of other miscellaneous chores.

At 0745 hours the Second and Third Platoons left the camp and returned at 1700 hours. During their absence the Second Platoon maintained the Bailey Bridge west of VENAFRO which required tightening and maintenance of the approaches in addition to reconnoitering the jeep trail from S.PIETRO to the north about one thousand yards. The Third Platoon searched the Division Artillery area three miles southeast of S.PIETRO but no mines were discovered.

[REDACTED]

20 DECEMBER 1943:

The Second Platoon of Company A took advantage of the reconnaissance conducted the previous day. During the day the road two miles east of S.PIETRO were repaired. In addition to filling craters two locations in the road required revetments and back filling. The reconnaissance from the intersection of the road from S.PIETRO and Highway No. 6 was resumed during the day and progressed for two miles to the north. Three culverts along this road were found to still be in good condition and required no further work. Further reconnaissance along this road was hindered due to enemy action.

The First Platoon of Company A confined its activities to hauling damaged railroad cross ties from VENAFRO to the company supply dump. This material had become of use particularly in revetting roads.

Company B spent an ordinary day in bivouac. It was a day used largely in clearing and straightening up the company area and at the same time personnel washing their clothing and putting the portable shower nearby to full use. Late in the afternoon a reconnaissance party was dispatched to make a survey of the roads in the 132nd Field Artillery area prior to its moving.

Activities for Company C were slight throughout the day. With the exception of the first squad of the Third Platoon the company remained in its bivouac a quarter of a mile west of VENAFRO. The above-mentioned squad left at 0330 hours in the morning and did not complete its mission of sweeping approximately a mile of pack trail to Hill 1205 from S.PIETRO until 1700. Throughout this search no mines were found along this route.

21 DECEMBER 1943:

The First Platoon of Company A continued its task of hauling damaged railroad crossties from VENAFRO to the company supply dump. With the first squad from the Second Platoon it was a job with shovels. This squad cleaned and improved the drainage ditches along the road two miles east of S.PIETRO. The Third Platoon assisted Battery C, 131st Field Artillery in improving the battery roads. Gravel was hauled and spread in this area about a quarter mile east of S.PIETRO.

As a result of reconnaissance conducted the previous day in the area the 132nd Field Artillery proposed to move into, a squad of the Second Platoon, Company B, with the use of mine detectors checked the area two miles east of S.PIETRO. No mines were reported found in this area.

The remainder of Company B was employed throughout the day on road maintenance. This assignment embraced the road running west from Highway No. 85 at a point four miles south of VENAFRO to the lateral road two miles west of VENAFRO. Nothing unusual was experienced in the maintenance of this road but it was simply a matter of improving drainage and filling craters.

~~SECRET~~

22 DECEMBER 1943: (Cont'd)

The Platoon from the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company (Prov) performed its first mission. This consisted of clearing mines along German fortifications one and one-half miles southeast of S.PIETRO. During this operation twenty "S" mines and fifteen Tellermine No. 2 were removed. The latter were booby-trapped by placing the mines up-side-down and setting them on a stick grenade with trip wires leading from the grenades. One improvised box mine, using German egg grenades and detonated with a stick grenade with trip wire attached was removed.

23 DECEMBER 1943:

The repair of road from VENAFRO west for a distance of one and one-half miles was the assignment given the First Platoon of Company A for the day. Drainage along this road was improved and gravel was spread along the lower portions. Upon completion of this work the platoon hauled two loads of gravel for improving the roads within the company area. Gravel was hauled from VENAFRO and use was made of the loading ramp which had been constructed there and a bulldozer.

The Second Platoon of Company A continued to improve the supply road for the 141st Infantry. Nine loads of gravel were hauled and spread along the road two miles west of VENAFRO. Further improvement was made to a culvert one and one-half mile south of CEPPAGNA. This was accomplished by hauling two loads of gravel and two loads of rock for making a fill.

Two squads of the Third Platoon continued to improve the mule pack trail from CEPPAGNA north to Hill 1205. The remaining squad from the Third Platoon constructed corduroy mats in the company area in order that these might be available when required for road repairs.

Company B remained in bivouac throughout the day without being given a mission.

Company C's activities were restricted to road maintenance during the day. The First Platoon constructed a parking area at CEPPAGNA and improved the drainage at a by-pass two hundred yards east of that village. The Second Platoon maintained the roads in VENAFRO which required improving the drainage system and hauling and spreading gravel. The Third Platoon spent the day by maintaining the road from a Bailey Bridge two miles west of VENAFRO to the village of CEPPAGNA.

The platoon attached to Company C from the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company (Prov) continued its search for mines. Along German fortifications in the VENAFRO and S.PIETRO vicinities sixty nine "S" mines and ten Tellermine No. 2 were located during the day. Of this number eight "S" Mines were equipped with push type firing devices and six were booby-trapped with trip wires attached to pull type firing devices. Ten Tellermine were connected in groups of two with trip wires using pull type firing devices.

~~SECRET~~

24 DECEMBER 1943:

Drainage and improvement of the road from VENAFRO to the west for a distance of one and one-half miles was continued by the First Platoon of Company A. In addition to this, a detail from the platoon improved supply roads for the 155th Field Artillery one mile east of S.PIETRO by hauling and spreading gravel.

The Second Platoon of Company A continued to work on roads for the 141st Infantry. During the course of the day thirteen loads of gravel were hauled along the road two miles west of VENAFRO. The platoon also began the construction of revetment on the road one and one-half miles south of CEPPAGNA where the rains had caused a portion of the roadbed to cave in.

One squad of the Third Platoon checked the area one mile east of the 141st Infantry command post. Eight German "S" mines were found during the search as well as five American bounding mines. The maintenance of a mule pack trail leading north from CEPPAGNA was resumed by the other two squads of this platoon.

The entire day was employed by Company B in the maintenance of a road intersecting Highway No. 85 four miles south of VENAFRO which lead to the west for two miles where it joined a lateral road two miles west of VENAFRO. This maintenance simply entailed improvement of drainage and making fills in the worst portions to enable traffic to continue.

At the end of the day the First Platoon of Company C had about seventy-five percent of its mission completed. A culvert three hundred yards north of CEPPAGNA was built and the platoon begun graveling a by-pass at the same location. The Second Platoon maintained three Bailey Bridges west of VENAFRO and also repaired a trestle bridge at S.PIETRO. The by-pass to a water point two miles west of VENAFRO was also improved by spreading gravel. The activities of the Third Platoon were confined to the VENAFRO area where the road leading west from VENAFRO for five hundred yards was drained.

The attached platoon from the 3617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company (Prov) continued removal of mines and booby-traps along the German proposed winter line extending from the VENAFRO - S.PIETRO road to Hill 1205. Forty "S" Mines and Fifteen Tellermines No. 2 were removed from this area. Twenty-seven "S" Mines were removed from an area twelve hundred yards northwest of CEPPAGNA. Of this number, twenty-five mines were rigged with trip wires connected to pull type firing devices and two were equipped with push type firing devices. During these operations two men were seriously wounded by "S" mines which exploded.

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25 DECEMBER 1943:

The revetment on the VENAFRO - CEPPAGNA road, one and one-half miles south of the latter, was completed by the Second Platoon of Company A. The remainder of the company remained in bivouac with a large percentage attending Christmas church services.

Company B was enabled to spend a Christmas day in its bivouac. No specific details were assigned the company and the day passed as a rest period.

Company C's activities during the day were not extensive. The First Platoon painted white stripes on three Bailey Bridges between VENAFRO and S.PIETRO to improve the visibility at night. The Second Platoon hauled gravel and spread it in a parking lot at CEPPAGNA while the Third Platoon continued its work on a turn-around at a water point five hundred yards from VENAFRO. Additional gravel was hauled and spread on this road. None of the units were so busily employed that sufficient time could not be taken to enjoy a Christmas dinner of trucky.

26 DECEMBER 1943:

The Second Platoon of Company A had completed a revetment near CEPPAGNA the previous day and a squad from this platoon returned again to construct another in the same locality. A squad from the Third Platoon of Company A resumed the maintenance of the mule pack trail from CEPPAGNA to the north while still another squad from the same platoon hauled four loads of gravel for improvement of the 155th Field Artillery Battalion road one-half mile east of S.PIETRO.

In the Early morning Technician Grade IV Kenneth E Wagner and Technician Grade V Walter B Scott of Company A were accidentally injured. A reconnaissance car which had been parked on a terrace the previous night rolled over the tent in which those two persons were sleeping. Both men were run over and sustained internal injuries.

Company B returned to continue the maintenance and improvement of the road which had been started the 24th of December. No unusual incidents were experienced during the day on this task.

The increased traffic between VENAFRO and S.PIETRO had beaten the road which required more maintenance than had been the case in the past. The First Platoon of Company C was engaged in hauling gravel for the most part which was used to repair the approaches to the three Bailey Bridges along this route as well as the bypass at CEPPAGNA. The Second Platoon repaired this road four miles east of S.PIETRO where a culvert required filling. The Third Platoon resumed its mission of building a turn around and improving the entrance to a water point at VENAFRO.

The operations of the attached platoon from the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company (Prov) were not as fruitful as they had been on previous days. Only one "S" mine was found.

~~SECRET~~

27 DECEMBER 1943:

Although Company A's task of road maintenance around VENAFRO had not been great in the past, each day diminished the work required. The Second Platoon built hand rails on two culverts one mile south of CEPPAGNA while the Third Platoon hauled nine loads of gravel which were spread along the road leading into the 18 Field Artillery area two miles west of VENAFRO.

Company B continued maintenance of the road in the VENAFRO vicinity that was in progress the previous day. Company C continued maintenance of the VENAFRO - S.PIETRO road with the First Platoon repairing the approaches to the three Bailey Bridges two miles west of VENAFRO. This platoon also maintained the road from these bridges to CEPPAGNA. The Second Platoon constructed culvert at S.PIETRO and upon its completion began back filling a cut at that location. Meanwhile the Third Platoon maintained the road from CEPPAGNA for a mile and a quarter to the south.

The platoon attached to Company C from the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company (Prov) prepared to rejoin its parent unit and the day was spent in bivouac.

28 DECEMBER 1943:

Company A was given notice to be prepared to move to a new area. The day was spent making preparations.

Technician Grade V Walter B Scott, Company A, who had been accidentally injured on 26 December when overrun by a reconnaissance car, died in the 11th Field Hospital.

The First Platoon of Company B was alerted for a possible move to join the 142nd Infantry to assist that unit in future operations. This platoon remained in bivouac throughout the day and at the end of the day its movement had not materialized. Meanwhile the Third Platoon resumed the maintenance of the road in the VENAFRO area which had been the company's mission the previous day.

Company C left its bivouac one quarter of a mile west of VENAFRO at 1100 hours and moved to a rest area three miles northwest of ALIFE. The company closed in new bivouac at 1400 hours after travelling thirty-nine miles by motor convoy. The attached platoon from the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearance Company (Prov) had left at 1000 hours to rejoin its parent organization. Upon arrival at the new bivouac the remainder of the day was spent preparing camp.

29 DECEMBER 1943:

Company A moved from its bivouac two miles west of VENAFRO to an area three miles northwest of ALIFE. A distance of forty-three miles was travelled by motor convoy and the company closed in rest bivouac.

The First Platoon of Company B had been alerted the previous day to join the 142nd Infantry in anticipation of future operations. This platoon moved from the company at 1300 hours while the remainder of the company was preparing to move to a rest area in the vicinity of ALIFE.

For Company C it was a day for washing clothes, cleaning equipment and in general straightening up the damages that had been suffered the past few weeks.

30 DECEMBER 1943:

Companies A and C had previously moved to the rest area three miles northwest of ALITE. Preparations had been made to move the Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company, Medical Detachment and Company B, with the exception of the First Platoon of the latter, from one-half mile southwest of PRESENZANO to the same rest area.

At 0700 hours Company B left its bivouac and after travelling thirty miles arrived at the new area at 0930 hours. The remainder of the day was spent preparing company camp.

Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company, and the Medical Detachment did not move until 1530 hours. It was 1800 hours and dark before they arrived at the new area. The kitchen had prepared for the company by several hours and had hot food awaiting its arrival. No attempt was made to establish camp and the trucks parked for the night and the men slept where their bedding fell from the trucks. As is the usual procedure, the entire battalion supply dump was not moved. Several days are ordinarily required to shuttle the various equipment carried in the dump. This procedure was somewhat facilitated on this occasion with the unit relieving the Battalion taking over the Bailey Bridge equipment, Somerfeld's matting and corduroy poles which amounted to about fifty truckloads.

A portable shower unit had been sent to the new area the previous day and therefore its construction was under way. This permitted its earlier use than would have been the case had this equipment been moved along with the company.

31 DECEMBER 1943:

It was a day for improving the bivouac on the part of all the companies except Headquarters and Service Company. The latter's assigned area was not vacated by a unit occupying it until 1530 hours. In the meantime the rain which had always been customary in a November began to fall. Fortunately for the moment, tents had been pitched in the area which precluded that phase of making camp. The rain and wind increased in intensity during the night and the next morning was to find the tents of little benefit on the ground.

HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 - U S ARMY

10 February 1944

AG 314.7

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 38th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army.

1. Herewith "Operations in Italy, January, 1944 -- 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" in septuple.

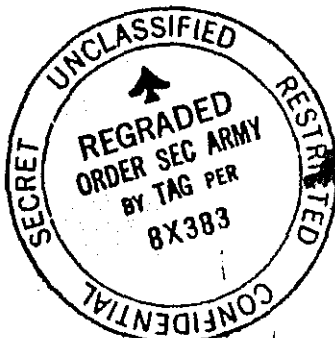
2. The following observations were made during operations covered by the above-mentioned reports:

a. Operations Operations of the battalion continued to be of the same type as the previous ones. The trails in the Division sector were in very poor condition and the companies were kept busy hauling corduroy and gravel to maintain traffic circulation. In preparation for the attack of the RAPIDO RIVER line many lanes of approach were swept for mines and marked. These lanes had to be checked continually, however, as German patrols would come across the river and lay additional mines. In the unsuccessful attempt of the RAPIDO RIVER crossing the assault waves were crossed in reconnaissance and assault boats by the 19th Engineer Regiment. Several footbridges were put in but these were later blown out by observed artillery and mortar fire. Due to heavy fire the assault troops were pinned down and were unable to clear the bridge site of small arms fire, therefore it was impossible to construct a Bailey bridge. After herding a flock of sheep along the RAPIDO RIVER in an attempt to detect anti-personnel mines a further experiment was conducted with this animal in an area prepared with trip wires. It was found that sheep would strike the trip wires and detonate the mines but the full reaction of this animal to an explosion is not known.

b. Water supply, map supply and Engineer supply continued to be normal through the January operations.

Craw C. Stovall

CRAW C. STOVALL
Major, 111th Engr C Bn
Commanding



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Master

OPERATIONS IN ITALY, 1944

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

With exception of the First Platoon of Company "B", the entire battalion had moved to a rest area approximately three miles northwest of ALIFE, ITALY the latter part of December 1943. The First Platoon of Company "B" had remained with the 142nd Infantry in support of their operations in the S.VITTORE area and did not return to the company until 6 January 1944. During these six days this platoon was bivouacked about one-half mile south of VENAFRO, ITALY and in the immediate vicinity of S. VITTORE, remaining in each location about three days. Little activity was experienced during the course of this period and it was largely a matter of remaining on the alert to perform any engineer missions required to enhance the operations of the Infantry.

Although the battalion could not be generally considered on a combat status from the first through the fifteenth of January, a few observations of morale consequence occurring during this rest period might be noted. Neither the town of ALIFE, some three miles from bivouac, nor the town of PIEDMONTE, about ten miles from bivouac, presented anything of unusual interest to the average soldier but the Division Special Service Officer had made arrangements for motion pictures in both. The daily quotas allotted the battalion for attendance were sufficient to lend every individual the opportunity of attending about once every two days. In addition, screen celebrities presented at least three stage performances at those towns which added to the diversion. Full advantage was taken of those activities by the entire command.

Five days rest periods at the NAPLES rest center although the typhus epidemic in that city cut short those activities. After the first group of twenty-two men returned the rest center was closed at that location. It was observed that centers of this type provide an excellent means for mental rehabilitation for personnel who have become strained and tense in the course of combat.

Three portable shower units were erected in the Division area by personnel from Headquarters & Service Company. Not only was full advantage taken of those facilities by members of the battalion but the Division as a whole. The only limiting feature of those shower units was the deteriorated condition, which reduced the maximum daily capacity obtainable from new equipment. These thirty-two showerhead units have been in almost continuous use for the past ten

months and replacement parts such as shower heads, temperature controls, diesel oil heaters and pressure gauges have not been available and it was only through incessant repair and maintenance that their present operation could be sustained. A great amount of difficulty was experienced with the shower head valves, which, when once broken, cannot be repaired, thereby cutting down the capacity of the installation.

It might be mentioned that the Quartermaster bath house at PIEDMONTE was also made available to the battalion for use but its purpose as a sanitary measure restricted its use to one time. A humorous note could be detected in observing personnel returning from this "delouser" as they stood about comparing their successes in exchanging old clothes for new ones or their old shoes for combat boots; the latter seeming to be the aim of everyone going through this shower. Of course, the disgruntled ones were among the crowd as well, complaining about the tight trousers or the faded field jacket they had gained in the exchange.

12 January, 1944:

This period of relaxation was to be short lived by Company "A". The 141st Infantry was making preparation to move back in the line and Company "A" was scheduled to accompany this unit. The company loaded its trucks with the varied equipment that an engineer company must carry and at 1200 hours moved. After travelling about thirty miles the company bivouacked near the railroad about two miles south of MIGNANO.

13 January, 1944:

MT. PORCHIO had only recently fallen to our forces and little engineer reconnaissance in this vicinity had been made. Highway No. 6 passes along the north side of this hill with a railroad along its south slope. Each of these roads are connected with roads which circumscribe the hill. An extensive road reconnaissance was made of the roads connecting Highway No. 6 and extending along the southeast side of MT. PORCHIO by Company "A". In addition to reconnoitering roads in this region, a mule trail around MT. PORCHIO'S southern slopes was found to be in bad repair.

The First Platoon of Company "A" devoted the day in improving the roads along the south side of MT. PORCHIO which ran between the hill and the railroad. The Second Platoon had completed about seventy-five percent of the work required on secondary roads branching to the west from Highway No. 6 about one-half mile east.

of MT. PORCHIO when it was forced to withdraw due to heavy enemy mortar fire. This work included spreading six loads of gravel along the worst places in the road and laying wire mesh. Forty-five American MIA1 mines were removed about one thousand yards northwest of MT. PORCHIO by a detail from the company.

14 January, 1944:

The First Platoon of Company A returned to the west side of MT. PORCHIO to continue the repair of roads in that vicinity. As the work progressed it was noted that quite a number of trees had been felled across some of the roads by the enemy as an obstacle. None was booby-trapped and during the course of the work were all removed to permit traffic circulation. Numerous low areas in the roads were filled and the drainage improved before this platoon moved on to the north side of MT. PORCHIO to make a search for enemy land mines. During this search, no mines were detected. While the search for mines was being made it was noted that the road required repairs before it could be opened for traffic.

On the previous day, the Second Platoon had been forced by enemy mortar fire to withdraw from the roads joining Highway No. 6 about half a mile from MT. PORCHIO before the work was completed. The mission was resumed and completed without incident which included spreading three more loads of gravel as well as constructing about one hundred and fifty feet of corduroy road.

Inasmuch as engineer reconnaissance is vital and often little is known about the forward areas except what might be interpreted from aerial photographs it was deemed advisable to send two men on night patrols with the Infantry for the purpose of observing roads, bridges and possible minefields. For this mission Company A assigned Sergeants Colegrove and White. The patrol began at MT. PORCHIO and extended to the north along the railroad to within three-quarters of a mile south of MT. TROCCHIO. During the course of this patrol, four German patrols were encountered and small arms fire was exchanged. On one such occasion, Sergeant White's Carbine accounted for one of the Germans, while a second German was killed by an Infantryman with a .45 caliber submachine gun and still two more were wounded by hand grenades. It was observed by the patrol that all bridges along the railroad had been demolished, although no anti-personnel mines were noticed.

15 January, 1944:

Further reconnaissance to the north along the railroad from MT. PORCHIO was enabled. Various parties from Company A advanced as far as the SANTA LUCIA vicinity. At several locations along the railroad there appeared evidence of mines

but none was removed. However, the road extending to the west from the railroad in the SANTA LUCIA area we searched for mines as far as the 3rd Battalion 141st Infantry command post by the First Platoon of Company but no mines were found. Repairs were made to this road at the same time and upon completion "jeep" traffic could be accommodated. The Second Platoon of Company A improved the road leading to the regimental command post of the 141st Infantry on the south side of MT. PORCHIO where six loads of gravel were used after a bulldozer had filled in the sunken areas. On part of this road wire matting had been laid previously but had become loose, so a job of re-staking it was performed along with the other repairs. The activities of the Third Platoon extended from SPINA on the road adjacent to the railroad as far north as SANTA LUCIA. Fills were made in the road at numerous locations and also a check for mines made although none was found.

The remainder of the Battalion was notified to be in a state of preparedness to move the following day. This comprised Company B, Company C, part of Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment. It was contemplated that the Battalion Supply dump and the motor pool should remain in the ALIFE area for a day or two after the rest of the battalion had moved. Ordinarily fifty trucks are required to move the dump which consists of explosives, bridge timber bridging equipment and various other items required by combat engineers. At the time, the motor pool was exerting every effort to recondition the battalion vehicles and parts such as brake shoes which had not been previously available, were now obtainable and therefore several trucks were deadlined and the motor pool could not be moved until those trucks were repaired.

16 JANUARY, 1944:

The morning began with the usual rush and clamor incident to any move. The trucks which had not been completely loaded the day before were finished and as the extra amount of miscellaneous items which have been accumulated and through reluctance to discard must be crowded upon the vehicles. Approval had been granted to retain the heavy tontage which had been used in the rest bivouac so those were struck and carried along on the basis of one pyramidal tent for every eight men. Companies B and C began to move forward by infiltration at 0830 hours while the detachment from Headquarters and Service Company, consisting of the S-1, S-2 and S-3 sections, moved about 1030 hours. Company "C" went into bivouac to the east of Highway No. 6 about two miles south of MIGNANO in the vicinity of Company A's bivouac, while the other two companies and the Medical Detachment, which moved in the afternoon, bivouacked to the west of Highway No. 6, three miles south of MIGNANO.

Company "A" continued maintenance of roads in the vicinity of MT. PORCHIO with the First Platoon using a bulldozer to widen the road to the command post of the 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry in the S. LUCIA vicinity west of the railroad. After the bulldozer had been employed to the fullest advantage in widening and filling holes along the road gravel was hauled and spread along the route. The Second Platoon's activities were confined to hauling six loads of gravel for the improvement of a road leading to the regimental command post of the 141st Infantry on the south side of MT. PORCHIO while the Third Platoon made a search for mines from SPINA to the north for about three quarters of a mile then to the west for as far as S. LUCIA. No mines were found along this route and the road was opened for traffic by 0500 hours.

Four men from Company A accompanied two night patrols from the 141st Infantry for the purpose of obtaining engineer information along the RAPIDO RIVER as well as to assist the patrol across the river. Prior to the patrol leaving, two points had been selected on the river as crossing sites; one at CACCIOLI and the second point about two thousand yards south of S. ANGELO. Reconnaissance boats were taken to effect the crossings but the first patrol was unable to cross at CACCIOLI. Before it reached the river, it was subjected to fire from enemy machine guns emplaced on the far bank of the river. All approaches to the river along this area were found to be heavily mined. The crossing near S. ANGELO was successful and the patrol advanced some eight hundred yards into the enemy's territory and on its withdrawal was followed across the river by an enemy patrol. Three reconnaissance boats were lost and the fight which ensued between these patrols resulted in two Germans being killed and an undetermined number wounded. The river at this location was found to be about forty feet wide with no natural cover along its vertical banks.

17 JANUARY, 1944:

Engineer reconnaissance continued to be made in the area between MT. PORCHIO and MT. TROCCHIO. The roads in the vicinity of FAIO were found by Company "A" to be in need of repair and evidence of mines was noted at numerous places while another party from the same company failed to find any mines in the vicinity of S. LUCIA when all small roads around that town were searched. A survey of positions for the 155th Field Artillery was conducted to determine the engineer work that would be required to place its batteries into a firing position.

Company B's activities were confined to road maintenance in the vicinity of S. VITTORE. The Second Platoon repaired the S. VITTORE-STAZ'N di ROCCA

d'EVANDRO road from its intersection with Highway No. 6 at TAVERNA to STAZ'N di ROCCA d'EVANDRO. The road from STAZ'N di ROCCA d'EVANDRO parallel to the railroad as far as the southern tip of MT. PORCHIO was improved by the Third Platoon of Company B. A culvert was repaired on this quarter mile section of road but full repairs had not been made to the road when the platoon was forced by enemy artillery fire to withdraw.

It was anticipated that in the forthcoming operations it would be necessary to assault the enemy's fortified positions along the RAPIDO RIVER. In preparation for those operations a detail from Company C instructed personnel of the 143rd Infantry in the mechanical operation of foreign mines and booby traps as well as the use of improvised charges which might be desirable to use against pillboxes and other steel and concrete emplacements.

Infantry patrols, to which Company A attached eight men, effected crossing on the RAPIDO RIVER at three places during the night. Crossings were made one and one half miles southwest of FAIO and one-quarter mile south of S. ANGELO without enemy resistance, but the party crossing one and one-half miles north-east of S. ANGELO were subjected to enemy mortar fire. During the course of this action Private Frank Calabroso was lightly wounded by shrapnel. The information developed from those patrols indicated the road from FAIO to the RAPIDO RIVER to be a one-way, hard surfaced road in good repair. A mine field was located at a road junction about one mile south of FAIO as well as anti-personnel mines three hundred and fifty yards in length and one hundred and fifty yards in depth about a quarter of a mile south of S. ANGELO.

18th JANUARY, 1944:

Reconnaissance conducted by Company A in the vicinity of S. ANGELO revealed "S" Mines on both sides of a road junction just northeast of the town. The roads on either side of the railroad along the southern slope of MT. TROCCHIO were reconnoitered and it was found that the road paralleling the railroad on the south was in a fair state of repair as far north as CACCIOLI while trees had been felled and bomb craters dotted the road between the railroad and MT. TROCCHIO. A squad from Company A was given the mission of repairing this latter road and the trees were removed and the bomb craters were either filled or by-passed. A road was built over the railroad to join these two roads. Throughout the work no mines were found. of Company A improved the various roads between the southern slope of MT. TROCCHIO and S. ANGELO and north to the vicinity of CACCIOLI and at the same time the roads were swept for mines.

The entire of Company B was engaged in improving and minesweeping the roads in the area between MT. PORCHIO and MT. TROCCHIO, bounded on the north by Highway No. 6 and by the railroad on the south. The Third Platoon also completed spreading rock and repairing a culvert on the road immediately south of MT. PORCHIO which it had been forced to leave the previous day because of enemy fire. No mines were found on any of the roads covered during the day.

Mine removal parties from Company C swept the net of roads in the vicinity of COLLODIO and FAIO. One party removed twenty German Tellermines #2 and three German and Italian box mines in the vicinity of COLLODIO. None of the Tellermines had been armed although the box mines had. An area in which the 143rd Infantry contemplated establishing its command post was searched for mines but none was detected. A German tank which had been disabled was found to be blocking a road just south of COLLODIO.

Twelve men from Company A accompanied three patrols from the 141st Infantry during the night. One of those patrols effected a crossing of the RAPIDO RIVER about one mile south of S. ANGELO. The approach to the river at this point had been mined by the enemy for a depth of about two hundred yards. The river was about forty foot wide at this location and had a current of approximately four miles an hour. The enemy was active throughout the night and the patrol was continuously subjected to mortar fire. Neither of the other two patrols was able to cross the river. They advanced as far as CACCIOLI and ran into a minefield covered by enemy fire.

19 JANUARY, 1944:

Plans were being formulated for crossing the RAPIDO RIVER at two points, one to the north and one to the south of S. ANGELO. Two battalions from the 19th Engineer Regiment, less one company from each, and Companies A and B of the 16th Armored Engineer Battalion had been assigned to the Division to assist the Infantry in making the actual crossing and the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion's mission was primarily to clear the selected avenues of approach to the river of mines and improve the roads as far forward prior to the operation. The coordination of engineer operations and supply of stream crossing equipment was also the function of the Battalion. After a bridgehead could be established and secured it would be the mission of the Battalion to construct and maintain the bridge approaches and maintain the roads on the far bank of the river. If operations were successful it was contemplated that a Class 40 Bailey bridge might be constructed at each point of crossing. Company A was assigned to support the 141st Infantry and Company C to support the 143rd Infantry with Company B in Battalion reserve.

During the day Company A continued maintenance of the roads along the southern slope of MT. TROCCHIO in the vicinity of S. LUCIA and also the roads extending toward the RAPIDO RIVER as far as enemy action would permit. Company C repaired and improved the roads to the south of the sector covered by Company A, from the COLLOCIO locality to the west toward the RAPIDO RIVER. Neither company removed any mines during their days operations. One squad from Company B remained on the maintenance of roads between MT. PORCHIO and MT. TROCCHIO, which work consisted largely of filling shell craters.

As a matter of supplying stream crossing equipment, one hundred Assault Boats M2 and a like number of six-man pneumatic reconnaissance boats were procured. These quantities were in addition to the nineteen Assault Boats and thirteen Reconnaissance Boats normally carried as a basic allowance for the Battalion. An attempt was made to obtain footbridge equipment but none was available, although fifty sections of cat-walk were obtained, which could be used in conjunction with assault boats to construct floating footbridges. All the equipment intended for use in river crossing operations was hauled to two dumps near MT. TROCCHIO thereby shortening the distance required to haul it when the need arose. Details from the various companies further augmented the supply of materials by cutting poles to be used in corduroying the roads immediately approaching the river which could not be repaired in advance of the crossings. A portion of these poles were tied into mats twelve feet in length to expedite their being laid as well as increase the stability.

20 JANUARY, 1944:

The lettered companies continued maintenance and minesweeping of roads and areas between MT. TROCCHIO and MT. PORCHIO and the RAPIDO RIVER which were to be used during the night for the river crossing. The barren terrain along the river, under the surveillance of German observations concealed by more favorable terrain on the opposite side of the river, restricted daylight operations. Details from each of the companies also cut and tied poles into mats which were left in the forward dumps.

The "H" hour was set at 2000 hours and the artillery began its preparatory fires at 1930 hours which continued for an hour in an endeavor to neutralize enemy strong points near the west bank of the river. The 141st Infantry and 143rd Infantry were scheduled to cross the river at 2000 hours, crossing respectively the north and south of S. ANGELO, with the 2nd Bn. of the 19th Engineer Regiment effecting the crossing of the 141st Infantry and the 1st Bn. of the 19th Engineer

Regiment crossing the 143rd Infantry. Company A, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion was placed in support of the 141st Infantry and Company C, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion in support of the 143rd Infantry. The primary mission of those two companies was to remove mines along the river and repair the roads approaching it and after a bridgehead had been secured to clear the far bank of the river of mines and improve the supply roads behind the Infantry as it advanced.

By midnight a bridgehead had not been secured. Only a few footbridges had been built across the river by lashing Bailey bridge catwalk to assault boats and those were under constant threat of enemy artillery fire. No bridges for vehicular traffic and the enemy stubbornly opposed every attempt to establish a bridgehead by intense and accurate fire from all types of Infantry weapons. Only one injury was sustained during the nights operations. Private Raymond A. Viros, motorcyclist from Company A was slightly injured when the motorcycle which he was riding collided in the darkness near S. ANGELO with another vehicle.

21 JANUARY, 1944:

Attempts to establish bridgeheads across the RAPIDO RIVER the previous night failed. The few footbridges that had been built were knocked out by enemy artillery fire and the advance elements which had crossed the river earlier were returning. A large number of the assault boats used in building foot bridges were lost as well as pneumatic reconnaissance boats used by the assault elements.

While the Infantry was reorganizing for another attack later in the day, Companies A and C continued road maintenance in the vicinity of the crossing sites. Immediate efforts were made to replenish the stream crossing equipment which had been lost and which would be required on the next attempt at crossing. The three operating platoons of Company A were moved to an assembly area near S. LUCIA with working details gravelling a road near S. CESARIO. Company B, still in reserve, continued to cut corduroy poles and repair and gravel a road parallel to the rail-road south of MT. PORCHIL. The First and Second Platoons of Company C began sweeping the abutments and approaches for a bridge across the river but they were unable to complete the work due to enemy artillery and small arms fire. A mine detector party from these platoons encountered heavy enemy mortar and small arms fire. No mines were found during any of these operations. Several enemy artillery shells fell along the supply road in the 143rd Infantry sector which was being repaired by the Third Platoon of Company C although the action was not heavy enough to preclude continuation of the work.

A second assault of the river defenses began at 1600 hours. The enemy's artillery action was lighter than the previous night although heavy machine gun, small arms and mortar fire was encountered on the approaches to the river. Assault elements crossed the river but a bridgehead was not secured.

22 JANUARY, 1944:

A second attempt to establish a bridgehead on the RAPIDO RIVER failed. Companies A and C, which had been in support of these operations, continued to improve the various roads as far forward to the river as possible. This improvement consisted almost entirely in hauling and spreading gravel. The Second Platoon of Company swept foot paths leading to the bridge site, and, although no mines were found, it underwent a considerable amount of fire from German Nebelwecker guns. Company B continued to improve a lateral road south of MT. PORCHIO during the day.

23 JANUARY, 1944:

The activity which had reached considerable height the past three days incident to preparations and two attempts to establish a bridgehead on the RAPIDO RIVER near S. ANGELO had now slackened. Road and bridge repairs, which had always been a primary engineer function during operations in ITALY, continued to warrant constant attention. The secondary roads and trails over which heavy vehicles were required to travel soon became dented with holes unless every effort was exerted toward their maintenance. Usually gravel greatly remedied this problem but on numerous occasions mats made by tying poles together had to be laid. Most of the better roads which normally served as supply routes, had been registered in at junction points and intersections by the enemy's artillery as it had withdrawn and were therefore subject to repeated shelling and an extra amount of repairs obtained above which might have been necessitated through normal use of the roads.

The road net at points near S. ANGELO and MT. TROCCHIO and MT. PORCHIO were given priority. Companies A and C were employed in this area while Company B continued to repair the various roads between MT. TROCCHIO and MT. PORCHIO. At one point near LA PIETA, Company A used three truckloads of corduroy mats to improve the road as well as extensive work with a bulldozer being required. None of the work performed during the day brought the troops within the direct effect of enemy action.

24 JANUARY 1944:

Two platoons from Company A remained on an alert status to support any operations that might be further attempted by the 141st Infantry to effect a crossing of the RAPIDO RIVER. The remaining platoon of that company was engaged throughout the day in hauling gravel for the maintenance of two roads near SPINA, one road for a distance of about one mile to the southwest and a like distance on another road to the northwest.

Company B maintained and gravelled a distance of about one mile along a road from S. CESARIO to the west.

Each of the platoons of Company C worked in close conjunction with the three battalions of the 143rd Infantry. The First Platoon maintained roads and checked the 1st Bn., 143rd Infantry area for anti-personnel mines but none was located. Two men from this platoon accompanied an Infantry patrol and mined reconnaissance boats used to cross the river. The Second and Third Platoons were similarly employed in the 2nd and 3rd Bn. areas of the 143rd Infantry. None of the mine sweeping parties found anti-personnel mines at any of the locations covered.

25 JANUARY 1944:

Activities remained relatively light for the entire battalion. Company A still awaited stream crossing operations which might be attempted by the 141st Infantry and at the same time assisted the 155th Field Artillery Battalion near S. LUCIA by using a bulldozer to emplace its guns.

Companies B and C repaired and maintained the net of roads in the vicinity of COLLODIO, FAIO and SPINA. A considerable amount of gravel was hauled and spread over these roads which comprised the greater amount of the work.

26 JANUARY 1944:

Little change occurred in road repair and maintenance. During the day Company B bore the brunt of these repairs in the vicinity of S. VITTORE. Attached to this company for the work were six trucks from Company A as well as a squad and two bulldozers from Company C. A detail of nine men from Company A assisted the 141st Infantry by supervising the placing of concertinas in front of gun positions along the river. The actual work at making these installations was performed by the Infantry with a detail of three men to each Infantry battalion supervising the work.

An innovation in the clearance of anti-personnel mines was being considered. Mine detector parties had been unable to work to any advantage along the near bank of the RAPIDO RIVER due to enemy small arms fire from across the stream. The merit of herding sheep through this area in an attempt to detonate anti-personnel mines and booby-traps was considered and two hundred and thirty sheep were procured for the purpose as well as two Italian herders. The task of following through on this experiment was given to Company A, which constructed a pen in the vicinity of MT. TROCCHIO where the sheep were to be kept until used.

Late in the afternoon Company B was alerted to move near S. ELIA to support the operations of the 142nd Infantry which had moved over into the 34th Infantry Division sector to assist in by-passing CASSINO on the east. After contact was made with the 142nd Infantry it was deemed inadvisable for the company to move until a daylight reconnaissance could be made of the area.

27 JANUARY 1944:

Early in the morning the two hundred and thirty sheep, which were left near MT. TROCCHIO over the night, were loaded into trucks and hauled as near the RAPIDO RIVER, as the situation would permit. First Lts. James N. Mueller and William Dold, Jr., S/Sgt. Edwin B. Haynes, Sgt. James D. White and T-5 Frank S. Conversano of Company A had borrowed native clothes and wore them for this detail. These individuals, together with the two Italian herders, began to herd the sheep along the river bank near S. ANGELO and worked their way to the north for about a mile. Inasmuch as the enemy held the ground on the opposite side of the river, every precaution had to be taken by those herding the sheep to prevent the enemy from becoming suspicious. The enemy's positions could be seen across the river as the sheep were driven along. When the junction of the RAPIDO RIVER and ASCENSIONE CREEK had been reached the herd was turned back to the south and had preceded about half way back the distance travelled when they were fired upon and were forced to withdraw. No anti-personnel mines were indicated in the area the sheep had walked through.

Although no anti-personnel mines were ignited by the sheep as they were herded along the river, it was known that a large number of anti-tank mines existed along the river. The First Platoon of Company A began to string a single strand of wire along the main road parallel to the river from a point about three quarters of a mile north of S. ANGELO to the north as far as Highway No. 6. This wire would serve to indicate the beginning of the mined area. The final result of this work was no more than an attempt since the enemy possessed the advantage

of observation in this area and it was only a short time until a concentration of small arms and mortar fire was laid down.

A squad from the Third Platoon of Company A attempted to minesweep an approach to the river about a mile north of S. ANGELO. Beginning at the main road parallel to the river the squad had progressed satisfactorily for about two hundred yards but then an anti-personnel mine was exploded which seriously wounded Pvt. 1cl Harry Rutzisky in the left leg. While Private Rutzisky being given first aid, another mine was exploded, killing Private Rutzisky instantly. Sergeant Raymond O. Nichols was seriously wounded on the left side of the face. Private John Rogers was seriously wounded in the face, left arm and left leg. Private Albert Lubin received bruises on the right leg and suffered from concussion; Private Okey L. Edge was lightly wounded in the face and left hand, and Corporal John Tokus was wounded in the right hand and right heel when the second mine exploded. Nine other men of this squad suffered from concussions and shock and when they began to remove the wounded, the enemy opened up with machine guns.

Company C continued to repair the various supply roads for the three battalions in the 143rd Infantry area. This work included gravelling and widening the roads and trails. Company B had been alerted the previous day for movement to join the 142nd Infantry near S. ELIA. Reconnaissance for an area into which the company would move began in the early morning but by darkness the party had not returned. The move was postponed until the following day.

28 JANUARY 1944:

Reconnaissance and minesweeping were Company A's principal missions during the day. A road branching from the main road parallel to the river one and a quarter miles north of S. ANGELO was checked for mines from the junction to the river approaches. The road was found to be in fair condition. Further minesweeping was done in the vicinity of CACCIOLI and as far north as the ASCENSIONE CREEK where a bridge had been blown.

About 0600 hours Company B moved to join the 142nd Infantry near S. ELIA. The company travelled approximately thirty eight miles by truck but due to the mountainous terrain the entire movement could not be made by vehicle and the remainder had to be made on foot. Upon arriving, a squad was dispatched to support the Infantry in their operations.

Mine detector parties from Company C swept trails for the various 143rd Infantry battalions from their respective bivouac areas to the RAPIDO RIVER. No mines were reported as being found during these operations. The remainder of the Company C repaired and gravelled roads in areas approximately three miles south and southeast of S. ANGELO.

29 JANUARY 1944:

Two squads from Company A began at as many points to clear mines from proposed foot trails to the RAPIDO RIVER. One squad began its work about a mile north of S. ANGELO and the other squad started near the junction of ASCENSIONE CREEK and the RAPIDO RIVER. No sooner had those squads begun this work than the enemy opened up with machine guns from the far side of the river. With the fire persisting the missions could not be completed and the details withdrew. A third squad from the company constructed wire defense positions from the north-east tip of MT. TROCCHIO to ASCENSIONE CREEK.

One squad of Company B remained in support of the 1st Bn., 142nd Infantry. Relatively no work was performed by this squad and it was mainly a matter of awaiting any engineer work that might develop. The Second Platoon of Company B repaired a road leading to the command post of the 142nd Infantry while the remainder of the company awaited developments.

The repair and improvement of roads in the 143rd Infantry sector continued to be Company C's assignment. A large amount of rock and gravel were hauled and spread in the worst places in the roads and a D-7 Bulldozer was used to spread it as well as widen the road at several locations. A shovel was procured for loading the gravel which greatly facilitated and expedited the work.

30 JANUARY 1944:

Improvement of the various roads and trails continued to be the tasks of Companies A and C. In addition to four truckloads of gravel being placed along a road to the south from MT. TROCCHIO, Company A constructed a by-pass around a small culvert in the Battery "B", 155th Field Artillery area which was bivouacked near S. LUCIA. After the by-pass was completed, fourteen loads of gravel was hauled and spread by a bulldozer along this road. Further repairs were made to the 141st Infantry supply road one mile northwest of S. LUCIA which included laying about seventy-five feet of corduroy poles, filling two bomb craters and removing several trees which had fallen across the road. Company C's road maintenance was confined to the area three miles south and southeast of S. ANGELO. At some locations gravel was used to improve the beaten condition of the roads.

With the exception of a squad of Company B which had been previously attached to the 1st Bn., 142nd Infantry, the remainder of the company moved forward after darkness and went into bivouac at the base of MT. BELEVEDERE. Shortly afterwards, the company command post was subjected to an hour and fifteen minutes artillery barrage. Several of the men were caught in the barrage but only two casualties were sustained. Private Raymond M. Fezell was wounded by shrapnel which penetrated his left leg below the knee and Private First Class John R. Owenby sustained minor wounds in the back of the right thigh. Fortunately, the shell fragment which struck Private Owenby had lost most of its momentum when it hit him and resulted only in a minor laceration.

31 JANUARY 1944:

Approximately five hundred and fifty yards of concertina wire was placed by Company A. Two hundred yards were placed along ASCENSIONE CREEK to the front of the 6th Infantry, one hundred and fifty yards to the front of the 141st Infantry in the vicinity of COLLEGRANCE and two hundred yards in the vicinity of LA PIETA. Fourteen loads of gravel were placed on a by-pass in the Battery A, 155th Field Artillery area near S. LUCIA. Heavy artillery fire was experienced by a detail which cleared an area for mines about a mile east of S. ANGELO. Despite the artillery fire, no casualties were sustained.

The first squad of the First Platoon from Company B remained with the 1st Bn., 142nd Infantry to perform any engineer work required although its activities were negligible throughout the day. The Second Platoon of Company B was engaged in improving foot trails up the east side of MT. BELVEDERE which largely consisted of hand shovel work. The enemy laid two artillery barrages over the area during the day, each lasting two hours. During those barrages, S/Sgt. Altus D. Griffin received a slight shrapnel wound in the stomach and Private First Class Frank S. Plechsmid's left thigh was penetrated by a shell fragment although the wound was not serious.

The First and Third Platoons of Company C each cleared a foot path of mines in the vicinity of S. ANGELO. The First Platoon cleared a path twelve feet in width and five hundred yards long while the Third Platoon cleared a path of the same width but five hundred yards in length. No mines were found on these locations but when the Third Platoon had completed its assignment and moved to about seven hundred yards northeast of S. ANGELO, two Tellermines #2 and one box mine were removed although the mission had not been completed at the end of the day. In addition to the mine clearance performed by Company C, the roads in the area three miles to the south and southeast of S. ANGELO continued to require maintenance and this was likewise performed by the company. Gravel continued to be placed on these roads to fill the deep ruts and even at the best in many locations the roads could be used only by "jeeps".

~~SECRET~~

HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36, U S ARMY

5 March 1944

AG 314.7

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army.

1. Herewith "Operations in Italy, February, 1944 - 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" in septuple.

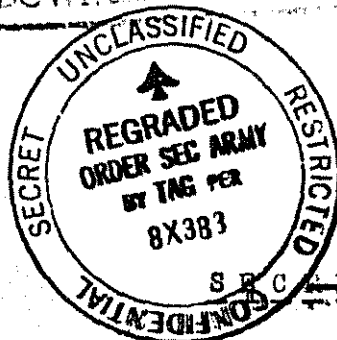
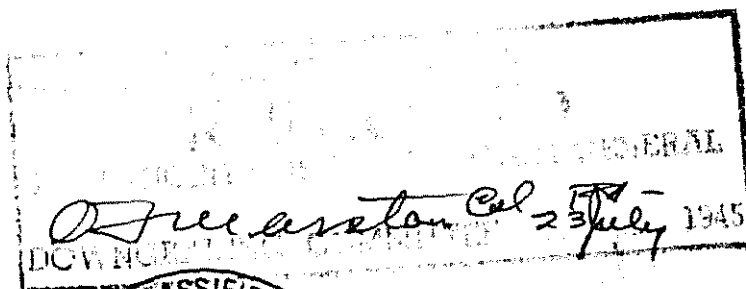
2. The following observations were made during operations covered by the above-mentioned report.

a. Operations Little change in operations over any previous period was noted. With almost continuous rains obtaining, the major problem was in keeping supply routes in a state of repair required to permit necessary traffic. Although the Division front gradually diminished to the point that only one supply road and one mountain pack trail were in use, a large quantity of gravel and corduroy material was expended in maintenance. Italian troops ranging from two hundred to three hundred in number were attached to the battalion during the month. It was then found that employment of these troops in the rear areas would be of more value in close proximity of the front lines.

b. Water supply, map supply and Engineer supply continued to be normal through the February operations.

Oran C Stovall

ORAN C STOVALL
Major, 111th Engineer C Bn
Commanding



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OPERATIONS IN ITALY, FEBRUARY 1944

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

1 FEBRUARY 1944

The month began with relatively little activity. Companies A and C remained bivouacked about two miles south of MIGNANO while Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment were stationed about three miles south of MIGNANO. Company B had previously joined the 142nd Infantry in support of its operations East of CASSINO.

With exception of the First Platoon of Company A, the company remained in bivouac anticipating and preparing for some future operation. The First Platoon was given a mine clearing mission. Mines were cleared from two trails joining the main road parallel to the RAPIDO RIVER east of S. ANGELO in a northerly direction toward the river. When the mine clearing parties were within 200 yards of the river an enemy patrol was encountered which forced the groups to withdraw.

Thus far the engineer functions of Company B had been negligible. In the main, this company had been concerned with following the Infantry forward as it inched its way along. Just before dawn the company advanced up MT. BELVEDERE to a point near the top and immediately dug in. Little time had lapsed after the men of the company had completed their foxholes when at 0900 hours the enemy laid a heavy concentration of artillery fire over the area. One shell exploded in the area occupied by the First Platoon and lightly wounded five men. Sgt. George M. Maclain sustained a shrapnel wound near the ankle of the left foot. Private Charles T. Hinson was hit in the leg by a shell fragment, while Private Attilio W. Affuso was badly bruised and cut by rocks set in motion as a result of the explosion. Private William H. Rohde suffered perforated ear drums as a result of the concussion. During another artillery barrage during the day, Sergeant Louis A. Mitschke and Private Clifford D. Martin were bruised and cut by rocks set in motion by exploding shells but they were immediately hospitalized and later returned to the company near detachment area.

Company C's activities were confined to road repairs and mine sweeping in the vicinity of S. ANGELO. The First Platoon filled shell holes and spread gravel along a road three miles southeast of S. ANGELO. A mine clearing party from the Second Platoon completed clearing a lane of mines from a point about three hundred yards east of S. ANGELO west to the RAPIDO RIVER. This lane was approximately twelve feet in width. Another mine clearing party from the Third Platoon placed signs and tracing tape around a minefield seven hundred yards southeast of S. ANGELO. Ten Tellermines #3 were removed from this minefield of which six were booby trapped.

2 FEBRUARY 1944

The First Platoon of Company A returned after darkness to complete clearing mines from two trails extending from the main road paralleling the river to the RAPIDO RIVER. This mine sweeping mission was begun yesterday but was interrupted by enemy patrols. Another mine sweeping party from the platoon removed twenty eight Tellermines and two "S" mines on the north side of a road junction about five hundred yards southeast of S. ANGELO. While this latter party was attempting to cross the road fifty yards west of the junction they were subjected to small arms and machine gun fire. During this action, 2nd Lt. Glendon D. Bowers was slightly wounded, receiving a slight wound from machine gun fire in the left buttock. The Second Platoon's minesweeping party removed twelve German Tellermines and nine box mines from an area north of the road paralleling the RAPIDO RIVER one-half mile southeast of S. ANGELO. A part of those Tellermines did not have fuses, but most of them were buried beneath the box mines.

The first squad of the First Platoon in Company B, which had been with the 142nd Infantry, rejoined the company. The entire company advanced a half mile towards TERELIE. Outside of this short advance the company's operations were negligible. With the exception of one squad of the Second Platoon which removed several Tellermines #2 and #4 two miles east of TERELIE, the company dug itself in to afford as much protection against artillery action as possible.

It was another day of road repairing and mine sweeping for Company C. The First Platoon worked throughout the day hauling and spreading gravel on the road bed three miles southeast of S. ANGELO. A minesweeping detail from the Second Platoon was sent to check an assembly area five hundred yards east of S. ANGELO for mines but none was found. The remainder of the Second Platoon remained in bivouac during the day. A total of twenty-four mines were found by parties from the Third Platoon while clearing a path to the Infantry positions about 700 yards west of S. ANGELO. This total included Tellermines Numbers 2,3, and 4 as well as box mines. On some of the mines a "W" adapter was used and two Tellermines No. 3 were booby-trapped with "Zuzz" ignitors screwed into the bottom, making the mines both anti-personnel and vehicle in nature. In one case, a Tellermine #3 and one "S" mine were hooked together with a trip wire using a pull type ignitor.

3 FEBRUARY 1944

Occasionally there comes a lull in operations when little is to be done. Generally such was the case during the day with Company A remaining in bivouac in anticipation of future operations. Although Company B was still attached to the 142nd Infantry in its operations east of CASSINO, little more than digging in after advancing another half mile towards TERELIE was accomplished.

The terrain in which Company B was operating precluded the use of more than a few engineer hand tools and explosives but not even this equipment was required to support the Infantry. Although Company C's engineer functions was not much more than that of the other two line companies, a road was gravelled one and one-half miles east of S. ANGELO by the Second Platoon while the First Platoon hauled the gravel to the site. In addition, a crew of three men was furnished the 3rd Battalion 141st Infantry to serve as guides for Infantry passing through a gap in a minefield.

It might be well to mention that provisions had been made for a quota of personnel from the Battalion to attend the Fifth Army Rest Camp at CASERTA for a four day stay. Twenty-one men from the Battalion were permitted to enjoy this privilege beginning today and that number was amicably prorated to the various units.

4 FEBRUARY 1944

Various road and bridge reconnaissances were conducted by Company A, which particularly included reconnoitering a road from its junction with Highway No. 6 to MT. TROCCHIO. At the same time reconnaissance parties were on the lookout for a new bivouac area in the vicinity of CERVARO. Later in the day three loads of gravel were hauled and spread along the road earlier reconnoitered.

Almost without a moments respite the enemy continued its artillery barrage over Company B's area through the twenty-four hour period. The company was not assigned a mission during this period but it could be well said that its employment was steady improving its foxholes only to leave them later in the evening when it advanced about two miles in face of the barrage. Upon arrival at MT. CASELLONE (Hill 771), about one half mile southwest of CAIRO, the same job of providing shelters was to be renewed. Despite the fierce action of the enemy only four casualties were sustained. Technician Grade 5 Joseph H. Pohl received a small cut on the back of the neck from shell fragments. Private Charles E. Teramano suffered wounds in the legs from shell fragments and flying stones set in motion by the exploding shells.

The Battalion Command Post together with the operating of the S-1, S-2 and S-3 Sections and a kitchen began moving in the morning to a new area about one and one-half miles West of S. PIETRO. The usual rain accompanying every move was not missing but a larger part of the tentage had been set up and the command post put in order before it began. At the same time a fifteen man mine clearing detail from Company C was searching an adjacent area prior to the company's arrival.

5 FEBRUARY 1944

Besides a few miscellaneous missions which did not engage the entire company, Company A still stood by. A bulldozer was used to improve a parking lot for Division Headquarters at CERVARO while a second bulldozer assisted the 155th Field Artillery Battalion by pulling a gun into position for Battery "B" one-half mile southeast of S. LUCIA. A detail hauled one load of gravel for each of four gun emplacements of this Battery. Four men were sent to search a house for booby-traps prior to the 141st Infantry occupying it for a command post. No booby-traps were found but seven German box mines were removed.

Quite in contrast with yesterday, Company B experienced little enemy artillery fire. A few stray shells fell nearby during the night but the company was sufficiently dug in to evade injury.

By 1515 hours the company headquarters and the First Platoon of Company C had arrived in a new bivouac about one and one-half miles West of S. PIETRO. Shortly before sunset enemy planes approached the area which brought forth a barrage from the anti-aircraft units nearby. A few of the shells from those guns failed to explode in the air and fell in the company area, exploded and lightly wounded three men. Private First Class Clyfton N. Jones and Private John J. Malauskas and Roy E. Staton were lightly wounded by the fragments.

With only the Battalion Supply Section remaining in the area three miles south of MIGNANO, the remainder of Headquarters and Service Company as well as the Medical Detachment moved to the area occupied by the Battalion Headquarters.

6 FEBRUARY 1944

Headquarters and Service Company, Company C and the Medical Detachment had no more than unloaded their trucks at the new bivouac one and one-half miles west of S. PIETRO when another move was to be made. The Second and Third Platoons had just joined the remainder of Company C in time to move again. After travelling eight miles by truck these companies occupied an area about four miles East of CASSINO overlooking the river and the town. Late in the evening Company A moved to a new area about one mile southeast of CERVARO, arriving at about 2000 hours.

Although Company B still remained in support of the 142nd Infantry it was only a matter of remaining in foxholes or otherwise seeking protection against occasional artillery fire. From its vantage point on MT. CASELLONE was witnessed an air raid on CAIRO by eight enemy planes.

7 FEBRUARY 1944

Although Company "A" moved yesterday to a new area, a certain amount of equipment and supplies still remained in its old area. A larger part of this consisted of corduroy poles which was hauled up to the forward engineer dump during the day.

For Company "B" the frontline conditions remained somewhat the same. Grim diversion during the day was afforded by the spectacle of a double strafing and bombing attack by the enemy on CAIRO. Adding much to the morale were the clean socks which were carried up to those troops as well as a few "B" rations to supplement the "C" and "K" rations.

While a mine clearing party from Company "C" was searching an area near S. VITTORE for mines, four "S" mines and several German Tellermines with pull ignitors were removed. At the same time this company conducted road reconnaissance from the RAPIDO RIVER, three-quarters of a mile north of M. VILLA to CAIRO.

The area into which the various companies had moved into yesterday was under the direct observation of MONTECASSINO which the enemy reportedly used as an observation post. The olive groves in which the bivouac had been made afforded cover but there was utter lack of concealment. Aside from the few details employed during the day, the greater part of the work consisted of digging in.

8 FEBRUARY 1944

Relative inactivity which was to mark the succeeding days began. Although several missions were accomplished, there was none of any great significance. The change of the Division boundaries was to gradually see it squeezed entirely out of the operations by units on either flank. This procedure likewise narrowed down the amount of engineer work required by the battalion. A detail from Company "A" hauled three loads of corduroy poles from S. LUCIA to the company bivouac. Another detail was engaged in improving a road from Highway No. 6 to the command post of the 141st Infantry at LE PASTINELIE, which work consisted primarily of filling and draining the roadbed by use of picks and shovels. Still another detail mineswept a road from the RAPIDO RIVER at a point just north of M. VILLA to one-quarter of a mile southeast of CAIRO. Even in the early morning the company felt the effects of enemy artillery action which was to recur frequently. Although the enemy's main effort was directed at CERVARO, quite often shells missed their mark and came in close proximity of the company area. A truck was slightly damaged at 0100 hours when two shells landed in the company motor pool.

The rear detachment of Company "B" had remained in an area three miles south of MIGNANO throughout the moves the remainder of the company as well as the battalion had made. Today this detachment was moved forward to the battalion area and immediately begun preparing the bivouac for the company should it be withdrawn from support of the 142nd Infantry.

Late in the afternoon the First and Second Platoons were released and after walking from MT. CASELLONE to CAIRO they entrucked and were brought to the company. After arrival in the area a shell from an adjacent anti-aircraft gun fell in the area and upon detonating lightly wounded Private Thomas A. Cooney.

With the exception of unloading five truckloads for bridge timber which had been hauled from the battalion supply dump further to the rear, Company C's employment was negligible, although every opportunity is taken by each to improve his foxhole or other shelter. Most of the work in the area immediately surrounding CASSINO of necessity had to be performed after darkness. During the night the First Platoon placed corduroy poles and built two small bridges along a road one and one-half miles north of CASSINO. During this work Tec. 5 Melvin J. Bunkers was seriously wounded when he stepped on a Schu-mine, and Corporal D. B. Mainerd was lightly wounded from the detonation. The enemy fired upon the area with artillery during the evening and Private Winston Y. Roberts was lightly injured when he fell off a ledge while seeking a protected place.

9 FEBRUARY 1944

At the end of the day a landing strip for the Division Artillery observation planes had been completed at a point in a valley one miles west of S. VITTORE by the Company A bulldozer. Extensive repairs were found necessary by the Second Platoon when it began maintenance of a road from the RAPIDO RIVER, three-quarters of a mile north of M. VILLA, to one-quarter mile southeast of CAIRO. A number of bomb craters pitted the road as well as trees which had been felled along to block passage. Fortunately a stone wall paralleled the road which provided part of the fill necessary to level the worst places.

Only the Third Platoon of Company B remained detached, still remaining with the 142nd Infantry. The other two platoons, having spent nearly two weeks with the Infantry at the front were now given a chance to care for their equipment as well as take advantage of the Quartermaster bath house.

Company C began the maintenance of roads about one and one-half miles North of CASSINO. Dikes on a canal in this area had broken thus flooding the road. After these had been repaired before the road could be used corduroy poles had to be laid as well as having to construct two culverts.

10 FEBRUARY 1944

A cold wind accompanied by rain added to the discomfort experienced from enemy artillery shells flying overhead and landing in the locality. The Company A bulldozer completed the landing strip for the Division Artillery observation planes. The First and Second Platoons continued to improve the road between M. VILLA and CAIRO which was begun yesterday.

During the course of this work a barbed wire entanglement across the road at a point one-half mile southeast of CAIRO was removed and the area swept for mines but none was found. The Third Platoon's mission comprised the improvement of a road from S. VITTORE to CERVARO along the south side of MT. LA CHALARA which was no more than pick and shovel work required to fill the holes and improve the drainage. During the day the First Platoon was alerted to assist the 141st Infantry.

Another day was given Company B, except a squad from the Second Platoon, to rest and maintain its equipment. A footbridge over the RAPIDO RIVER, two miles southwest of S. ELIA, was constructed by this squad and upon completion of the bridge pack mules could be crossed to carry supplies forward to the troops at the front.

The Second Platoon of Company C continued improvement on a section of road one and one-half miles north of CASSINO. For this task twenty-five trucks were loaded with gravel and hauled to the site. The Third Platoon of Company C failed to detect enemy mines when it made a search of the 143rd Infantry regimental supply dump area one mile north of CASSINO.

11 FEBRUARY 1944

For the most part, the companies continued working on details unfinished from yesterday. The Third Platoon of Company A provided continued improvement on the road from the RAPIDO RIVER, one mile north of M. VILLA, to one-quarter of a mile southeast of CAIRO. Two squads of the First Platoon improved a drainage ditch crossing the road on the west side of the RAPIDO RIVER, a mile north of M. VILLA. A pack mule train extending from the 141st Infantry command post at CAIRO south for a distance of one and a half miles was serviced by two squads from the First Platoon. Upon completion of the latter work the trail was in sufficient state of repair to accommodate "jeep" traffic.

Two reconnaissance parties from Company B were sent out in search of cor- duroy material in the area north and south of CASSINO. Each party returned with approximately eight truckloads. A detail returned to the foot bridges which was constructed yesterday two miles southwest of S. ELIA and constructed hand rails. Meanwhile, the Third Platoon remained in support of the 142nd In- fantry southwest of CAIRO.

The road one and one-half miles north of CASSINO continued to be maintained by the First and Third Platoons of Company C. This work consisted of making further fills, using rocks of a fence parallel to the road, and improving the drainage ditches along the road.

While companies A and C awaited to fulfill their missions after darkness, the First and Second Platoons of Company B spent the daylight hours cutting corduroy material which was stored at the battalion dump. Still with the 142nd Infantry, the Third Platoon maintained a "jeep" trail from CAIRO to MT. CASELLONE. The work of the latter platoon consisted largely of making fills along the trail and improving the drainage. Tec. 5 Larry (nmi) Westbrook, a motor messenger for this platoon, was lightly wounded by flying stones when an enemy artillery shell struck an abandoned house in CAIRO in which he had been staying.

After darkness Companies A and C moved out to perform their assignments. The First Platoon of Company B began and completed the construction of a Class 30 Bailey bridge fifty feet in length across the RAPIDO RIVER one mile north of M. VILLA. At the same time the Second Platoon cleared trees at the approaches of the bridge and spread gravel. The entire Second Platoon was not used for this task inasmuch as one squad was dispatched to maintain a supply trail for the 141st Infantry south of CAIRO. The road one and one-half miles north of CASSINO continued to present a maintenance problem to Company C. Earlier, the dikos of a canal which had been broken were repaired to divert the flow of water down the road bed but with intervening rain a stream of mire obtained.

13 FEBRUARY 1944

The Second Platoon of Company A continued to improve the mule supply trail one and one-half miles south of CAIRO as well as repairing a culvert across a drainage ditch paralleling the RAPIDO RIVER one mile north of M. VILLA. Later in the day a mine sweeping party checked an area one-quarter of a mile east of CAIRO and at the same time determined the suitability of gravel at that location for use on roads. The Third Platoon spread gravel along the road from S. VITTORE to CERVARO in addition to pick and shovel work on the road.

A pack mule trail leading to the 142nd Infantry on MT. CASSELONE presented maintenance requirements which were performed by a squad from the Second Platoon of Company B. The remainder of the Second Platoon together with the First Platoon spent the day augmenting the supply of corduroy poles. The Third Platoon still remained with the 142nd Infantry, and along with some ninety Infantry replacements carried rations and ammunition to the forward elements of that unit. During their difficult, dangerous climb up the mountain, an enemy artillery barrage trapped them. Private First Class Joseph (nmi) Romany was wounded when a piece of shell fragment severely lacerated his left heel.

Aside from the D-7 Bulldozer from Company C which constructed a road to the bivouac area and gun positions of Battery B, 133rd Field Artillery, the remainder of the company remained in bivouac throughout the day.

14 FEBRUARY 1944

Without any unusual occurrences during the day, the main task remained to be maintenance and improvement of various roads and trails. A detail from Company A completed marking a road from one mile north of M. VILLA, to a short distance southeast of CAIRO. Seven truckloads of gravel were hauled by the Third Platoon for the roadway around the south side of MT. LACHIARA, while the First Platoon continued to repair a road between M. VILLA and CAIRO.

With exception of the Third Platoon from Company B attached to the 142nd Infantry, the company employed the day cutting corduroy poles and tying them into mats although the company bulldozer did assist in the constructing of a road for the 132nd Field Artillery. Although the Third Platoon's operations were of little significance during the day, late in the evening after the men had a somewhat settled for the night on the forward slope of MT. CASELLONE, a few enemy artillery shells were fired at random into the area. One shell hit directly in the slit trench occupied by Private Willis B. Bell and he met instant death.

In Company C only the Third Platoon left the bivouac during the course of the day. This platoon reconnoitered and made minor repairs to a road one and one-half miles north of CASSINO, including repairs to a culvert and filling in a few shell holes.

15 FEBRUARY 1944

The spectacular event of the month occurred during the day. From almost any point in the bivouac occupied by the battalion could be seen the ancient Monastery of MONTECASSINO overlooking the town of CASSINO. Much bitter fighting had been centered around this point which was being used as an observation post by the enemy. At 0940 hours the first wave of bombers came over the Monastery and dropped its bombs only to be followed by four more waves in the day. Immediately after each wave of planes had bombed the area artillery aerial bursts covered the area to hinder the enemy attempting escape.

Activities of the companies were confined to road maintenance and reconnaissance. Company A conducted a reconnaissance of the dam located one mile southwest of S. ELIA on the south side of the RAPIDO RIVER. The First Platoon Company A maintained the mule trail used by the 141st Infantry about one and one-half miles south of CAIRO. Signs were placed along the road from a point three-quarters of a mile north of M. VILLA to a junction one-quarter of a mile southeast of CAIRO. The sides of this road were also taped and drainage improved. Meanwhile the Third Platoon continued its work on a road to the south of MT. LA CHIARA by hauling rock to be used as fill, besides the necessary details necessitated in the company area, Companies B and C remained in bivouac throughout the day.

16 FEBRUARY 1944

Little change in operations was seen during the day. In the most part it was a matter of keeping check on roads that had recently been repaired to see that their condition was sufficient to maintain the traffic. In addition, more corduroy poles were cut and hauled to the supply dump. -

It was anticipated that the battalion would be relieved within the next few days, therefore reconnaissance was made in the ALIFE area for new bivouac. Late in the day Company A was instructed to move to the rest area the next day.

17 THROUGH 26 FEBRUARY 1944

It has been mentioned before that gradual relief of the Division from the line proportionately diminished the amount of engineer work. The Division sector dwindled to about one and one-half miles between the 17th and 26th of the month and only one road and one supply trail remained to be maintained.

Even with Company A being relieved and moving to an area about two miles south of AILANO the repairs on the road and supply trail to the front not sufficient to nearly require the full time employment of Company C and Company B, whose Third Platoon remained attached to the 142nd Infantry until the 20th. The task of up keeping these routes was alternately accomplished by those two companies. Although there was daily anticipation of those remaining troops being relieved, a supply of road building materials such as corduroy poles was steadily obtained to compensate for the comparatively small daily expenditures.

Late in the afternoon of the 22nd while the Second Platoon of Company B was returning to bivouac after having been employed during the day repairing a quarter mile section of the supply road at a point about one and half miles east of CAIRO two casualties were sustained. 2nd Lt. Omar E. Fortier, the Platoon Commander, and Private First Class Vernon B. Bright was wounded when the enemy laid down an artillery barrage along the road. Lt. Fortier was seriously wounded in the arms, chest and face, while Private Bright suffered a light wound in the middle finger of the right hand from a shell fragment. Slightly earlier in the afternoon, Tech. 5 Melvin E. Hamby of Headquarters and Service Company was lightly wounded by shell fragments as he drove a gasoline truck along a road in the vicinity of CERVARO.

Only Company C, the Medical Detachment and a small detachment from Headquarters and Service Company, consisting of the company headquarters and the S-3 Section, remained in the CASSINO area after the 24th. Company B and what remained of Headquarters and Service Company began their move in the morning to the AILANO area and closed in bivouac shortly after noon. The 26th of February found Company C withdrawn and bivouacked with the battalion in an area about two miles south of AILANO where a period of training was to replace actual combat.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 U S ARMY

22 June 44

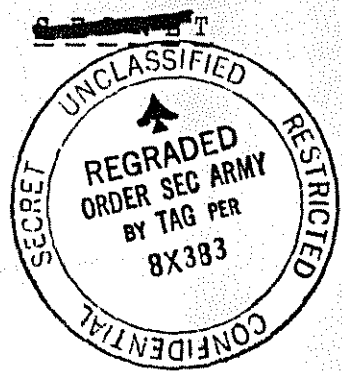
AG 314.7

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army.

1. Herewith "Operations in Italy, May, 1944 -- 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" in sextuple.
2. Operations during the period covered were not extensive. The enemy's quick retreat greatly deprived him of the opportunity of laying minefields of density or to demolish any large number of bridges. Engineer work consisted almost entirely of road repair which amounted to filling shell craters. Needless to mention, although, roads were always swept for mines in precaution.
3. Water supply, map supply and engineer supply remained normal.

Oran C Stovall
ORAN C STOVALL
Lt Colonel, 111th Engr Bn
Commanding



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At this time the Engineers began the hazardous task of removing enemy land mines. While working in the CISTERNA-VELLETRI section of the APPIAN WAY, the Third Platoon of Company "C" was confronted with and removed, nine No. 4 Teller mines two and one-half miles southeast of VELLETRI. During the 27th Dec 5. Welton W. Bladen, 39098860, Smith River, California, of Company "C" was lightly injured, when the bulldozer he was operating struck a mine.

Company "B" with the 143rd Infantry Regiment proceeded to move forward in an attempt to take the highlands to the east and north of VELLETRI. This maneuver was hampered by intense enemy barbed wire entanglements which the members of Company "B" removed. At the same time Company "C" accompanied the 143rd Infantry Regiment in a frontal assault along highway #7 on the last strong-point before Rome. Since highway #7, the APPIAN WAY, was the main supply line to the front, and being under constant observation, German Artillery kept the surrounding area literally peppered with shells. It was Company "C" who filled the shell holes in the road. Company "C", also, removed forty Tellermines No. 4 and fifteen Teller mines No. 2 on a road seven miles North east of CISTERNA.

May 28, 1944 was, more or less, a day of rest for the 111th Engineers. Since the battle for VELLETRI was momentarily stalemated, the engineers had only to check areas for mines. All three companies drew their assignments, but neither found any mines.

Companies "A" and "B" moved northward on the 29th of May, 1944. Company "A" kept constant liaison with their combat team during the entire day. One squad of Company "A" cleared a road of mines and kept the vital traffic moving. As soon as Company "B" was settled in their new area, the second Platoon was called upon to lay a defensive road block northwest of VELLETRI.

The mission was, perhaps, the most successful of the early stages of the campaign. It accounted for 1 Tiger tank, 1 Armored Scout Car, 1 truck, 3 motorcycles, and 1 bicycle the same day. Enemy machine-gun fire drove the first Platoon of Company "C" as they were sweeping for mines 2 miles south of VELLETRI. Company "C" had misfortune all through the day, for the Second Platoon was also driven away from their road repair mission when enemy artillery fire drove them to cover. The Third Platoon, however, did complete their mission. They were attached to task force, "C", and with the D-4 angle-dozer repaired a vital supply route $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles southwest of VELLETRI, ITALY.

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May 30, 1944 saw the first casualties inflicted on the battalion in the present campaign. Sergeant William J Jones, 16062631, Flint, Michigan and Private Julio Devincintis, 33273330, New Castel, Pa., of Company "A" received light wounds. The wounds were light enough, however, that the men were not kept for duty. It was a clear night. A detail was to go into no mans land to repair a blown bridge. Within 25 yds of the span, the enemy opened up with small arms fire. Though a desperate attempt was made, the mission was not completed. After being driven away from a mine sweeping mission by small arms fire, the First Platoon of Company "C" retaliated by constructing a large approach to a water point 4 miles south of VELLETRI. Company "C"'s Third Platoon, after completing their mine clearing mission, attempted to push still further forward, but were soon stopped when all hell broke loose. Small arms and mortar fire forced the engineers to seek safety.

The close of the month saw the battalion in its fullest glory. The battle for VELLETRI was increasing in intensity. We were stopped, said the enemy. Enemy fire kept our sole supply line in constant danger. Fox holes were in need of supplies. The newly organized reconnaissance section with the aid of the S-3 Section saw possibilities of an alternate life line. Company "B" with one Platoon from Company "A" set to work with men and bulldozer and cut their way through the treacherous terrain. The job was hazardous, indeed, since enemy snipers kept picking away at the struggling engineers. In a short time supplies were pouring through the new route. As was expected, the enemy was taken aback and - VELLETRI, the last German strongpoint before Rome, fell. Dirty, sweating, unshaven engineers smiled; because they knew their job was not in vain.

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OPERATIONS IN ITALY, MAY 1944

11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

May 21, 1944 was another day to be remembered by the members of the 11th Engineer Combat Battalion. At 1900 hours that day, the battalion embarked from Naples, Italy, for the Anzio-Nettuno Beachhead. New experiences were in store for the "Bridgers" as they stepped off the L.S.T. at Anzio at 0700 hours that morning of the 22 of May 1944. The advance party selected a bivouac site in heavily wooded area just three miles East of Nettuno. With utmost camouflage precaution, the battalion remained on the alert awaiting combat assignments.

May 23 saw the reforming of combat teams. Companies "A" and "B" were attached to Infantry Regiments 141st and 142nd respectively. These battle seasoned combat teams waited in readiness to push through the 3rd Infantry Division past CISTERNA and on the CORI with Company "C" of the battalion and the 143rd Infantry Regiment in reserve. All were awaiting the dreaded "H" hour -- it never came. Instead the Blue and White of the 3rd Division pushed past their objective. The momentum of their drive on CISTERNA carried them through CORI and into the highlands behind the Italian Villa.

All during 24 May 1944, 24 hour liaisons were maintained between the Engineer companies and their respective Infantry Regiments. Each Company, "A", "B" and "C", were in constant readiness to move in support of the Infantry should the "Doughboys" be suddenly committed into combat. During this time the bulldozers were in constant operation digging gun emplacements for our famed Artillery units.

Under cover of welcomed darkness, the entire battalion moved to a new area two miles east of CISTERNA. It was at this time, May 25, 1944, that Company "C" became attached to the 143rd Infantry Regiment to form a third Divisional combat team.

May 26, 1944 the 143rd Infantry Regiment with Company "C" moved to an area five miles north east of CISTERNA, ITALY. The sight they witnessed there was chastly. Enemy dead cluttered up the entire country-side given off a stench which only the combat soldiers can bear. From this point on we knew that victory was inevitable since the fleeing Germans were forced to leave behind their equipment along with their dead and wounded.

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11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #31, U S ARMY

15 Jul 44

AT N14.7

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 30th Infantry Division, APO #31, U S Army

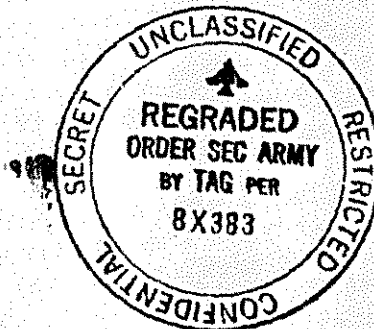
1. Herewith "Operations in Italy, June, 1944 - 11th Engineer Combat Battalion" in serial 14.

2. The operations covered by the attached report greatly differed from any previously experienced by this battalion. Whereas in the past a larger part of road maintenance and repair had to be performed by hand due to extreme weather conditions or the immediate proximity of the enemy, the greater part of such work after the fall of Cassino could be and was done by heavy equipment, even through mountainous terrain. Moving at such a rapid rate would have desirable the use of even a larger number of bulldozers with the transportation for their movement than those at present allotted the battalion. Mines were not extensively used by the enemy and in several instances charges placed on bridges were not ignited. Inasmuch as operations of this nature are more the employment of equipment than of personnel bridging material should be kept close behind the advancing troops rather than in front lines. Necessary maps could not always be secured as quickly as was desirable.

For approval in the absence of the Battalion Commander:

Orvil W. Christie

ORVIL W. CHRISTIE
Capt., 11th Engr C Bn
Sgt. O.



APR 8 1944

360
May 1944

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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

AUGUST 1944

Prior to the invasion of Southern France the three lettered companies of the battalion were attached to the three infantry combat teams of the 36th Infantry Division for the operation. Company "A" was attached to the 141st Infantry Regiment, Company "B" to the 142nd Infantry Regiment and Company "C" to the 143rd Infantry Regiment. In addition to the equipment normally carried by an engineer company, each was furnished a complete water point with operating personnel from Headquarters and Service Company of the battalion as well as three medical aid men from the Medical Detachment. On 12 August 1944, Companies "A" and "C" sailed from the outer NAPLES, ITALY harbor with their respective combat teams, while Company "B" sailed with the 142nd Infantry Regiment on 13 August 1944, with Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment sailing on the same date but loading on a different boat. Each company left a portion of its personnel and equipment to follow on later convoys. The bulk of the follow-up equipment consisted of prime movers and trailers for the bulldozers and portable shower equipment along with the battalion Personnel Section. This equipment was landed on D + 20.

The following is a brief summary of the assignments which were given to each of the companies for immediate execution subsequent to the invasion of Southern France;

Company "A"; To clear, mark and repair roads and bridges in the regimental combat team Zone of Action for one-way traffic. Establish road blocks at three points in the vicinity immediately northwest of GRASSE, FRANCE. Establish and place into operation a water point on the BIANCON RIVER approximately ten miles north of AGAY, FRANCE. To be prepared to combat forest fires.

Company "B"; To clear, mark and repair roads and bridges in the regimental combat team Zone of Action for one-way traffic. Establish road blocks in the vicinity of five miles east of DRAGUINAN, FRANCE, in addition to the use of hasty minefields and preparation of bridges for demolition in the combat team area. To be prepared to combat forest fires.

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Company "C": To clear mines, mark and repair roads and bridges in the regimental combat team Zone of Action. To improve roads initially for one-way traffic, later improving for two-way traffic. Establish road blocks in the vicinity of six miles northeast of FREJUS, FRANCE and operate a water point in the vicinity of FREJUS, FRANCE.

The 1st Bn., 344th Engineer Regiment (GS), together with a platoon of the 378th Engineer Bridge Company and a section of the 6617th Engineer Mine Clearing Company were attached to the division under the control of the Division Engineer. The former unit accompanied the battalion for several days after the invasion whereas the latter was divided into two groups which accompanied the two leading infantry regiments making the first landings. The 1st Bn., 344th Engineer Regiment (GS) was assigned the task of maintaining Highway No. 98 to the East and West of Green Beach to the extent of the division boundary. This task was to include sweeping both sides of the road for mines for a width of twenty feet. As a secondary mission, Highway No. 7 to the northeast and northwest of FREJUS, FRANCE was to be improved for Class 40 traffic.

The landings of the lettered companies were made without incident. Company Headquarters and the 2nd and 3rd Platoons of Company "A" landed on Green Beach near DRAMONT, FRANCE at 1200 hours on 15 August, 1944. These two platoons remained with the 141st Infantry Regiment, prepared to give engineer support to the advance, being joined at 2000 hours by the landing of the 1st Platoon of the company. A D-7 Bulldozer from Company "A" assisted the shore engineers in the construction of a road from the beach to the main coastal highway at DRAMONT. This same bulldozer later constructed a landing strip one mile northwest of AGAY, FRANCE for use by artillery observation planes. Two Tellermine #4 were removed by Company "A" while clearing a lane from the main beach road one mile north of AGAY, FRANCE to a point on the AGAY, RIVER. Reconnaissance by parties of Company "A" revealed two effective locations for road blocks ten miles north of AGAY along Route No. 1, however no immediate preparations for blocks were made.

The 1st Platoon of Company "B" landed on Green Beach at 1515 hours on 15 August 1944 with the remainder of the company being landed within the following two hours period. The three line platoons of the company accompanied the various battalion combat teams of the 142nd Infantry Regiment and at the end of the day had reached a point half way between AGAY and CAMP GALLIENE, FRANCE. Disembarkation of Company "C" was completed by 2000 hours. With the exception of the 2nd Platoon which accompanied the 143rd Infantry Regiment along Highway No. 98, the company moved by foot to an area one and one-half miles northwest of BOULOURIS, FRANCE on 15 August 1944. Contact was maintained throughout the day with the 143rd Infantry Regiment.

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A portion of Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment of the battalion landed on Green Beach at 1800 hours on 15 August. These units moved inland a few hundred yards and prepared to bivouac for the night, awaiting the arrival of the company's transportation and equipment which had been loaded on another ship and did not arrive until the afternoon of the following day. Light enemy air activity against the beaches and ships anchored in the bay was experienced in the late evening. A bomb from an enemy plane struck an L.S.T. off shore at about 2100 hours, setting it afire. The ship drifted inland and beached near the company's bivouac. A group of volunteers from Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment began the rescue of men aboard the landing craft who by that time were jumping into the water-- some wounded, burned and others in wild hysteria. The ship was loaded with artillery ammunition which caused occasional violent explosions, raining steel fragments over the entire area. This rescue work was carried out by the group from 2115 hours to 2400 hours without stopping. It is estimated seventy five men were saved from drowning while another fifteen were removed from the water and treated for burns, wounds and shock.

Six casualties were sustained by the battalion during the first day of operations, however only one of that number was hospitalized. From Company "A", 1st Lt. Murray M. Mattleman, O-1105021, home address; 928 W. Duncanon Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. was lightly wounded in the right hip by a shell fragment; Private Erwin D. Knuth, 36218183, home address; Milwaukee, Wisco., was lightly wounded in the left arm by a barbed wire entanglement; Private First Class Charles A. Simpson, 36147354, home address; 5443 N. Saginaw Rd, Flint, Mich., was lightly wounded in both hands by shell fragments, while Private David C. Wray, 34038460, home address; Box 189, Bessemer City, N. C., was lightly wounded by a shell fragment in the right hand. From Company "A" Private First Class Stephen J. Sinohak, 35276660, home address; 2152 Waterbury Road, Lakewood, Ohio was injured by breaking his right instep during an enemy air raid. Tec 5 James C. Cave, 38038257, home address; Rt. #7, Box 972, Tyler, Texas, from Headquarters and Service Company, was lightly wounded on the head by a stone set in motion by an explosion.

The 141st Infantry Regiment, to which Company "A" was attached, was initially given the mission of protecting the right flank of the Division. Inasmuch as there were no friendly troops to the right of that unit, a considerable number of road blocks were necessitated. A total of twenty-eight road blocks were prepared in the vicinity of AGAY by Company "A" on 16 and 17 August. Three men were left to guard each block by the company until 21 August 1944 when the protection of the right flank was assigned to parachute troops.

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With minor exceptions, operations during the remainder of August developed into a rapidly moving offensive, marked by a comparatively small amount of engineer work. After the fall of ST. RAPHAEL, the 2nd Platoon of Company "C" spent a few hours in the morning of 15 August clearing debris from the port town, until such time as relief from this work was effected by the 540th Engineer Regiment. Each of the companies continued to follow the Infantry regiments, prepared to give engineer support. On 16 August, while in FREJUS, the 3rd Platoon of Company "B" destroyed one enemy 40mm and four 20mm anti-aircraft guns and a large quantity of enemy ammunition for these guns during an enemy counterattack on the town.

S/Sgt Aubrey T. Jeter, 20817962, home address: Rt. 1, Greenville, Texas and Private Richard W. Conrad, 13115524, home address: 7951 Cedarbrook St., Philadelphia, Pa., both from Company "C", were seriously wounded in the morning of 16 August by enemy machine gun fire while checking an enemy road block on Highway No. 98 about one and one-half miles west of BOULOURIS, FRANCE. Private Conrad later died of wounds on 17 August while aboard ship enroute to ITALY.

Until 24 August, the advance had been generally from FREJUS to the north through DRAGUINAN, DIGNE, SISTERON AND ASPRES, then west to CREST. At various points, minor road improvements and mine sweeping were occasioned. However, only two Tellermine No. 4 were reported to have been removed by any of the companies of the battalion between the period 15 August to 24 August and these were found on 15 August near AGAY by Company "A".

The enemy had demolished a suspension bridge across the DURANCE RIVER south of SISTERON. Company "C" arrived at this location on the 20th of August and began preparations for a by-pass over a railroad bridge in the vicinity. Aided by French Indo-Chinese troops and civilians, approximately six hundred feet of single track railroad were removed from the bridge and approaches. Company "C" continued maintenance of this bridge through 21 August, leaving a platoon at the site to continue the work until 24 August when relief was effected by the Corps Engineer.

With the exception of Company "B" and one platoon from Company "C", which moved as far north as GAP, on the way to GRENOBLE, on 22 August the battalion moved westward from ASPRES toward the RHONE VALLEY in the vicinity of CREST. Company "B" later moved to PUY ST. MARTIN, near CREST, on 25 August after having previously prepared bridges for demolition southwest of BUIS LES BARCAINS and executed three road blocks in the vicinity of ROSANS and two blocks near NYONS.

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The platoon from Company "C" which had accompanied the Infantry to the GRENOBLE vicinity returned to the company on the afternoon of 25 August.

On the afternoon of 23 August, Headquarters and Service Company, the Medical Detachment, Company "A" and company headquarters and one platoon of Company "C" moved from near CREST into an assembly area about one mile East of MARSANNE. It was planned that one platoon from Company "A" would proceed to a point above MARSANNE on the RHONE RIVER and with the help of some fifty French partisans destroy a bridge across the river, thereby depriving the enemy the use of the bridge in his withdrawal. However, after reconnaissance it was determined that the enemy held this territory in too great a strength, and the mission could not be accomplished on the night of 24 August. During the afternoon of 24 August, reconnaissance for a defensive position on the ROUBION RIVER in the vicinity of BONLIEU, FRANCE was conducted and after darkness a composite company consisting of Company "A", less one platoon, and one platoon from Company "C" with a provisional platoon from Headquarters and Service Company, under the command of Captain Warren W. Ausland, home address: Grants Pass, Ore., organized a defensive position on a three thousand, five hundred yard front. This position was organized with the 1st and 2nd Platoons of Company "A" on the right flank west of the village of BONLIEU and adjoining the 141st Infantry Regiment, with the platoon from Company "C" to the left and defending the village. The provisional platoon from Headquarters and Service Company were remain in reserve. Positions were organized with a series of squad strong points consisting of one machine gun, bazookas and riflemen along a line averaging four hundred yards from the river. Communications consisted of telephones to each platoon, runners and radio contact with the battalion command post. Positions could not be organized in depth due to the lack of troops and the low hill mass south of the river which obstructed good observation ahead. The position was established by midnight of 24 August and patrols were sent out to contact friendly troops on the flanks. Contact was made and the remainder of the night passed without incident.

At 1000 hours on the morning of 25 August, ten Germans were reported on a small hill quite some distance forward of our positions. No contact was made at the time, but throughout the day some direct fire weapons and air bursts were concentrated on the area of the 1st Platoon of Company "A". The fire later drifted to the 2nd Platoon of the company and onto the town. At 1600 hours Germans were reported to have entered BONLIEU by infiltrating our positions and flanking the town.

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This force of approximately one battalion of enemy infantrymen were supported by four Mark VI and one Mark IV tanks. Fierce small arms fire followed. The majority of the enemy were equipped with machine pistols and due to their superiority in numbers our forces were compelled to withdraw approximately three hundred yards behind the town and assume another line of defense. The platoon of Company "C" gave way initially which made an organized withdrawal to a second line most difficult. This second line was held for approximately forty-five minutes before it was again necessary to drop back another three hundred yards. The engagement continued until about 1900 hours and relief was later effected by a battalion of infantry.

As a result of the engagement of BONLIEU, FRANCE, six men were killed, three men wounded and two officers and twenty-four enlisted men reported missing in action. The following is a tabulation of the casualties.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>SERIAL NUMBER</u>	<u>HOME ADDRESS</u>	<u>COMPANY</u>
KILLED IN ACTION:			
Tec 5 GEORGE B BUTT	33548129	Forge Rd, Fullerton, Md.	H&S
Pvt 1c1 CHARLES P KEMENY	16062665	708 W. Jefferson, Detroit, Michigan	Co A
Pvt 1c1 VOLNEY B SIMPSON, JR	37077060	RR #3, Eden, Missouri	Co A
Pvt 1c1 EPHRAIM F WATSON	34016297	Rt #1, Greenville, N. C.	Co A
Pvt JOSEPH A. CALVARI	12088509	35-25 100th Street, Corona, L. I., N. Y.	Co A
Pvt LOUIS F. RULLO	32235537	90 Wallace St., Newark, N. J.	Co A
WOUNDED IN ACTION:			
Cpl TERRY M RIMES	14045424	Rt 1, Blakely, Ga	Co A
Tec 5 MALCOLM E. COX	33201415	RFD #1, Annapolis, Md.	H&S
Pvt 1 c1 FRANK S SZCZESNY	36321336	1525 N. Bosworth Ave, Chicago, Ill.	Co A
MISSING IN ACTION:			
1st Lt MURRAY M. MATTLEMAN	0-1105021	928 W. Doncanon Ave, Philadelphia, Pa.	Co A
2nd Lt ROBERT P. JONES	0-1116163	793 Spruce Ave, Sharon, Pa.	Co A

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>SERIAL NUMBER</u>	<u>HOME ADDRESS</u>	<u>COMPANY</u>
MISSING IN ACTION: (Cont'd)			
S/Sgt JOHN J. BEATTY	38035764	5431 Willis St., Dallas, Texas.	H&S
Sgt WILLIAM J. JONES	16062831	770 Bunly Ave, Flint, Mich.	Co A
Cpl ROCCO RICH	33118914	Boyers, Pa	Co A
Tec 5 REX H. BADDER	16062858	616 E. Sheridan St, Midland, Mich.	Co A
Tec 5 JOHN DODD	33325129	341 E. Godfrey Ave, Philadelphia, Pa.	Co A
Tec 5 LEON LEURA	39269169	RFD Box 525, Monrovia, Calif.	Co A
Tec 5 PHILIP MAIOR	16062583	2125 W. Maple Ave, Flint, Mich.	H&S
Tec 5 NORVAL E. SPARKS	39256082	Box 85, Fellows, Calif.	H&S
Pvt 1c1 ROSARIO A. CYR	11063494	22 Middle St., Ashton, R. I.	H&S
Pvt 1c1 JAMES J. NICHOLS	34302935	Rt #1, Box 108, Spray, N. C.	Co A
Pvt 1c1 OTIS WATSON	35409629	RFD 1, Byesville, Ohio.	Co A
Pvt 1c1 JOHN A YANIS	12067349	30 N. College St., Schenectady, New York.	Co A
Pvt GENE ENGLELOW	38039709	5215 Denton Drive, Dallas, Texas.	Co A
Pvt GRADY L. FORDHAM	34686704	Fender, Georgia	Co A
Pvt MICHAEL J. GALLAGHER, SR.	1015433	1433 Tamarind Ave, Los Angeles, Calif.	Co A
Pvt CLOVIS C. HELM	35872778	3420 Avanton Ave, Cincinnati, Ohio.	Co A
Pvt SAMUEL P. MIDDLETON	33483006	510 Buttonwood St., Norristown, Pa.	Co A
Pvt JOHN D. PIERCE	34366505	Rt #1, Bruceton, Tenn.	Co A
Pvt CHESTER I. RUKAS	33053720	163 Grant Ave, Vandergrift, Pa.	Co A
Pvt FRED J. SHEPHERD	33247614	Emrich, Pa.	Co A
Pvt TALMADGE P. WALKER	14124656	Blythewood, S. C.	Co A
Pvt DAVID C. WRAY	34038460	Box 169, Bessemer City, N. C.	Co A
Pvt GEORGE CACHORA	39163482	Ft Yuma Reservation, Ft Yuma, Calif.	H&S
Pvt ARTHUR M. HENDERSON	35416460	Chaumpey, Ohio.	Co A

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Colonel DAVID A. NEWCOMER, O-12240, a War Department observer from the Chief of Engineers Office accompanied Company "A" upon its being placed in the defense of BONLIEU, and was later reported to be missing in action. Prior to his being missing, Colonel Newcomer was seriously wounded.

After being relieved at 2100 hours on 25 August 1944 by a battalion of Infantry, the two platoons of Company "A", one platoon from Company "C" and the element from Headquarters and Service Company moved to an area about two miles Northeast of PUY ST. MARTIN, FRANCE where the entire battalion was assembled.

On the night of 26 August the battalion was again alerted and placed in Division reserve to be used in a counterattack in case of an enemy breakthrough. Nine light tanks from the 753rd Tank Battalion were attached to the battalion for this purpose. The three companies together with the battalion command post moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of MARSANNE during that night. After remaining in reserve, without commitment, for two days, the battalion was relieved on the afternoon of 28 August. Companies "A" and "C" returned to the PUY ST. MARTIN area, while Company "B" accompanied the 142nd Infantry Regiment, then advancing northward. In the meantime, on 26 August a detail from Company "C" prepared three bridges at CREST for demolition, with Company "A" preparing several road blocks in the vicinity of MARSANNE, PUY ST. MARTIN and ROYAC, FRANCE on 29 August. However, enemy pressure greatly diminished in this locality and by 31 August, movement to the north had proceeded as far as BOURG de PEAGE, FRANCE, with minor road repairs and by-passes being constructed along the route by Companies "A" and "C". During the time Company "B" remained with the 142nd Infantry Regiment, two two-way fords were constructed across the DROME RIVER at LIVRON and on the ALLEX-GRANE road. A tank-doxer from Company "B" cleared a large number of burned enemy vehicles and equipment from the LORJOL-MONTELIMAR road on 30 August.

During this fifteen day period of August, an estimated sixty-one enemy prisoners of war were taken by the battalion, with Company "A" capturing forty-nine and Company "B" capturing twelve.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36, U. S. ARMY

20 October 1944

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U. S. Army.

1. Herewith, "Operations in Frame, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of September 1944, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above report;

a. Operations; With the exception of effecting one river crossing and the increasing number of enemy road blocks encountered, engineer operations were no more than would normally be expected.

X Considerable delay was experienced in construction of the initial armored treadway bridge across the Moselle River. This might be attributed to several causes. In the first place, materials had not been properly segregated prior to deliver at the bridgehead and shortages in essential parts to the bridge existed and the lack of training in the construction of that type bridge by Army engineer troops to which the mission was assigned was evidenced. A definite need for a Corps policy of responsibility between Corps Engineers and Division Engineers was determined during these operations.

The tankdozer was used to a decided advantage in the removal of enemy road blocks of all types, particularly abatis blocks, which were ordinarily covered by small arms and mortar fire. These tasks were usually performed by the tankdozer proceeding to the road block with hatches "buttoned up" and using the blade to push the abatis from the road. In a few instances, however, where blocks were found in defiles abatis had to be pulled out by securing a cable from the tank to the trees. The successive forward and backward movement of the tank usually brought enemy fire upon the position. A truck equipped with a winch could not be used as it was too vulnerable. In this respect, a Tank T-2 (Retriever) would appear much more practical.

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Based upon results of previous operations, the attachment of an engineer company to an infantry combat team does not possess the degree of flexibility of operation as obtained from a company supporting a combat team under Division Engineer control. The Infantry unit is often reluctant to commit an engineer company to a mission within its sector when its execution will not particularly benefit the regiment but serves to generally enhance the operations of the Division as a whole. X

b. Mines and booby-traps; A decided increase in the number of mines and booby-traps employed by the enemy during the last few days of operations in September was noted over previous operations in France. The sharp contrast over earlier operations no doubt was caused by the slowing down of our offensive which gave the enemy time to employ these devices. Practically every road block encountered from LUXEUIL les BAINS to the MOSELLE RIVER was both mined and booby-trapped. The German R-M-43 Mine and Bangalore Torpedo were encountered for the first time. The latter is very similar to the American torpedo except for the nose which is made of wood rather than metal.

c. Water Supply; The abundance of perennial streams of potable water obviated any difficulty in procurement. It was not necessary at any time to establish "dry points" and water points serving the infantry regiments were kept well forward.

d. Map Supply; Road and 1:100,000 scale maps were used almost entirely during September. Larger scale maps were not available. Aerial photograph coverage of 1:28,000 scale was procured for plans in crossing the Moselle River, however the scale was not suitable for detailed study.

e. Engineer Supply and Equipment; The procurement of prefabricated bridging materials through the Corps Engineer was generally unsatisfactory. However, liaison somewhat improved toward the last of the month, which should obviate the difficulty earlier experienced. Local sources afforded a reasonable quantity of timber, but the lack of uniformity in dimensions served to hinder its rapid use especially in construction of larger bridges.

Oran C. Stovall
ORAN C. STOVALL
Lt Colonel, 111th Engineer C Bn
Commanding



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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

SEPTEMBER 1944

Operations for the month of September 1944 might be divided into three distinct parts, 1) Approach to the Moselle River, 2) Crossing of the Moselle River, and 3) The Fossard Forest. Although the various types of engineer missions performed during these three periods were recurrent, each phase had a particular significance in itself.

At the beginning of the month the different companies of the battalion were generally disposed in the vicinity of BOURG de PEAGE, FRANCE. The three lettered companies had been in close support of the Infantry Combat Teams of the Division during operations in August and were to likewise remain so engaged throughout September.

APPROACH TO THE MOSELLE RIVER

The advance to the North generally followed along a route from BOURG de PEAGE through LUZINAY, LOUEANS, ARBOIS, BESCANCON, VESOUL, LUKEUIL les BAINS, PLOMBIERES to REIREMONT. Progress the first fifteen days was characterized by rapid movement despite rainy weather which began early in the month and increased in intensity as the month passed. However, the systematic demolition of bridges, presence of road blocks and enemy mines evidenced early in the month were to keynote the engineer operations for September. Forward engineer reconnaissance was continuously maintained by the Battalion Reconnaissance Section, which followed each of the leading Infantry Regiments, and thereby engineer requirements could be anticipated in advance of the actual need.

1-10 SEPTEMBER:

During the period from first to tenth of September, maintenance of roads, particularly in construction and maintenance of by-passes, presented the major problem. Some seven by-passes were constructed. Of this number, Company A built five, one at a point one-half mile South of HAUTERIVES on 1 September; one at JONS on 3 September which entailed placing timber decking across a dam to provide suitable crossing for vehicles; two across the SEILLE RIVER at LOUEANS and the fifth at VINCELLES on 5 September. Company C constructed two two-way by-passes in the vicinity of HAUTERIVES on 1 September.

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For the most part, this type of work was performed by the use of bulldozers and a minimum amount of personnel assisting with hand tools.

Three Brockaway trucks with a total of one hundred and thirty-five feet of armored treadway bridge were attached to Company C. On 1st September this company erected a thirty-foot treadway bridge in the vicinity of VALENCIN. Although two of these bridge train trucks were wrecked on 4 September by their Negro drivers, which deprived the use of a greater part of the material, two more bridges were built of the remaining equipment; a thirty foot bridge was installed on 4 September at a location one-quarter of a mile South of ST. JULIEN with the last fifteen feet being placed near SENS on 5 September. By 10 September an additional quantity of this material had been secured and Company A installed a thirty foot treadway bridge across a stream near EMAGNY.

It had been anticipated that a part of the division would move through LYONS. Inasmuch as the enemy had methodically destroyed most of the bridges across the RHONE RIVER within the limits of the city, on 3 September Company C was sent to LYONS to prepare a railroad bridge across that river for the use of wheeled and tracklaying vehicles. Two holes had been blown in the bridge, with the remainder of the bridge being prepared for use by removing the rails and possibly placing a timber decking. However, with a change in plans, Company C was relieved of this mission on 4 September and proceeded to TRIVIERE.

The presence of enemy land mines, although relatively few and scattered, were noticed during the first ten days of September. Likewise, hasty enemy road blocks, some of which were booby-trapped, were encountered. Two Tellermines No. 3 were removed from a road near VALENCIN on 1st September by Company C, while six were found at a road block near ST. BONNET de MURE on 2 September by the same company. Company A removed three Tellermines No. 2 at BEAUREPAIRE on 2 September. Roads were continuously swept for mines.

Enemy road blocks varied in design. The larger part were formed by felled trees, however in a few instances anti-tank ditches and earth piles were encountered. On 2 September Company C removed an obstacle on Highway No. 6 near ST. BONNET de MURE, another near ST PRIEST and a third one mile Northwest of MI PLANE on Highway No. 6. The first road block had been both mined and booby-trapped. Two obstacles formed by piles of earth near SENS were removed by Company C on 5 September as well as four abatis and log road blocks in the same vicinity. Later on 10 September Company C cleared a road block four miles North of OISELAY.

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Until 7 September, Company B had followed the 142nd Infantry to render support to its advance, and that company's operations had not been marked by any specific engineer missions. On that date, however, the task of constructing a one hundred and forty foot, Class 40, double bent trestle bridge across the DOUBS RIVER near BYANS was assigned to the company. This task might be considered the major single engineer operation performed by the battalion during the entire month. Timber of varying dimensions was obtained which hindered rapid construction, but after twenty-two hours of continuous work the bridge was opened for traffic. Two wooden fixed bridges of much lesser size were also constructed during this period. Company A erected a wooden stringer bridge on Highway No. 396 near VINCELLES on 5 September with Company C building another on 10 September over the L'OGNON RIVER near CUSSEY. Meanwhile, numerous repairs and strengthening of bridges along the route of advance were accomplished.

11-20 SEPTEMBER:

With the distance to the MOSELLE RIVER, a natural defense barrier for the enemy, shortening each day, the progress of our advance decreased in momentum. After Company B completed construction of the timber bridge at BYANS, it was returned to the direct support of the 142nd Infantry Combat Team, thereby leaving a larger part of the engineer work to be performed by Company A and Company C.

X Numerous enemy road blocks were encountered. These were of various types and varying in size. Some were prepared by felled trees across the road with blocks of TNT equipped with ZZ-35 igniters tied to the branches. At the same time holes were often dug in the road before the block and then refilled to make it appear mines had been buried but in many cases no mines were found. Stick grenades with a trip wire attached were planted in the debris to prevent movement by personnel across the block. Another road block consisted of abatis with six Tellermines. Four of these mines were placed in the road with the remaining two placed one to each shoulder of the road and being booby-trapped by the use of ZZ-35 igniters inserted in the bottom of the mine. Abatis had been booby-trapped at a point about ten or fifteen yards from each end of the block by the use of one length of German bangalore torpedo equipped with ZZ-35 igniters. These torpedoes were fastened to one tree with the igniter cord tied to another. In still another instance log cribbing had been constructed across the road to form the block. However, the most common obstacle was effected by felled trees, ranging to as great a depth as four hundred yards and covered by enemy mortar and small arms fire. X

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On 18 September Company A removed eleven road blocks, all of which had been mined and booby-trapped. One was removed at LES GRANTES, one at FOUGERELLES, one at a location one and one-half miles West of FOUGERELLES and the remaining eight in the vicinity of CARBENAY. Company C cleared a road block two miles North of PUSSEY and also one about one-half mile North of CHARMDILLE on 13 September. The latter company also removed another road block two and one-half miles South of BREUREY les FAVERNEY on 14 September and two abatis blocks near FAVERNEY on 15 September.

Placing road blocks in many instances was equally important as removing enemy obstacles in other cases. While Company A was directly supporting the 141st Infantry on 13 September, a road block consisting of two machine guns at a road junction six hundred yards West of FLAGY was established and maintained until the following day. A considerable amount of enemy artillery action was experienced at that time by Company A. However, Company B bore the brunt insofar as construction and manning of road blocks was concerned. On 16 September the three platoons of Company B moved to the vicinity of ESBOZ-EREST where they relieved the Infantry of manning a road block, and at the same time repaired a bridge at RIGNONVELLE as well as removed a friendly minefield at FAUBOURG de CITERS. On 17 September this company again constructed and manned two road blocks; one near FREIDECONCHE and the other near BRAUCHEETTE, being relieved the following day. Again on 20 September Company B placed and manned two road blocks; one near COURUPT and another about two miles East of BELLEFONTAINE. These were manned until 21 September.

Aside from mines removed from road blocks, relatively few were cleared. Likewise, no fields were laid by our troops although preparations were made on 15 September by Company B to place a field in the vicinity of BROTTTE. A change in the situation, however, precluded the necessity. On 14 September Company C prepared a bridge near PORT sur SAONE for demolition, however the bridge was not blown.

Three bridges of various types were constructed during the period. On 16 September Company C erected a forty-five foot, Class 40, armored treadway bridge with a trestle support near BREUCHES, later the same day building a twenty-eight foot wooden trestle bent bridge spanning a stream one-half mile Southwest of ST MARIE en CAUX. The following day Company A erected a thirty foot armored treadway bridge near the same village.

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A considerable number of burned and wrecked enemy vehicles littered the roads between BESCACON and REMIREMONT which in themselves formed a road block of minor character. Bulldozers were employed almost entirely in pushing these vehicles from the roads. Company A removed several of such vehicles along the BUFFY-ETUZ and PELOUSY-POUILLEY route on 11 September and again on 12 September when thirty-five vehicles were removed from the roads on the GRANDVELLE-ANDELARRE route. On 19 September an enemy vehicle, booby-trapped with three mortar shells to which one stick of blasting gelatin and a ZZ-42 igniter had been attached, was discovered and removed by Company C at CONFLANS sur LANTERNE.

CROSSING OF THE MOSELLE RIVER

21-25 SEPTEMBER:

The crossing of the MOSELLE RIVER was effected by the 3rd Battalion, 36th Engineer Regiment operating under the control of the Division Engineer. However, one bridge was constructed by the battalion during the course of the stream crossing operations. As early as 18 September, equipment for crossing this river was being procured and brought into assembly areas. Initially, this consisted of armored treadway and infantry support bridging materials to be erected as soon as foot troops had secured a bridgehead as well as assault boats for use in the first crossings and later in the construction of an infantry support bridge.

On 21 September only a relatively small sector of the river line was held by our troops and the most suitable location for the initial bridge site was some two miles South of ELOYES. REMIREMONT, a village situated on the near side of the river and the converging point of four highways, was not to be taken until the night of 22-23 September. Even then, the bridge at REMIREMONT was demolished and a Bailey bridge could not be erected until small arms fire could be cleared. During the night of 21-22 September a squad from Company A's first platoon, accompanying the infantry assault elements, reconnoitered a site on the MOSELLE RIVER about two miles South of ELOYES where two guide ropes were strung across the river for use by the infantry in crossing. Afterwards, this squad evacuated wounded from the far shore across the river in rubber reconnaissance boats.

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Construction of one hundred and twenty feet of infantry support bridge at a location approximately two miles South of ELOYES was begun by two platoons of Company A on the night of 21-22 September and completed the following morning. At the same time the 3rd Battalion, 36th Engineer Regiment were working on an armored treadway bridge about one hundred yards to the south of the bridge constructed by Company A. Due to the lack of training as well as shortages in essential parts for the latter bridge, it was not completed until the night of 22-23 September. Current rains added greatly to the difficulty in transporting bridging equipment to the site as well as maintaining the roads which had been hastily built leading to the river. On 21 September one platoon from Company C began hauling stone and dumping it in the worse places along the roads. The magnitude of this task so increased that by 23 September the entire company was used to load, haul and spread gravel along the river bank road and the approaches to the two bridges. After the bridgehead had been secured at REMIREMONT, a company of the 3rd Battalion, 36th Engineer Regiment erected a double-double Bailey bridge, one hundred and thirty feet in length which was completed in the morning of 24 September. On 25 September a heavy ponton bridge was completed at JARMENIL by Corps engineer troops thereby making the continued use of the two initial bridges unnecessary.

Even after the first bridge had been built across the MOSELLE RIVER on the night of 21-22 September, a few scattered enemy road blocks still remained on the near side of the river in the vicinity of REMIREMONT. On 21 September Company B removed four abatis road blocks in the vicinity of LE GIRMONT, and another one mile East of REMIREMONT. A third block was removed by the company at a location two and one-half miles Southwest of REMIREMONT. On 22 September Company B started the removal of an abatis road block about two miles Southwest of REMIREMONT, and had succeeded in clearing all but seven trees when an enemy patrol filtered through and opened fire with machine pistols. As a result of this action Private 1 of Paul F. Lupia, 32702369, entered service from; 71-32 Fresh Pond Road, Redgewood, New York was wounded in the right shoulder and Private 1 of Alex Kuntz, 35277152, entered service from; 4915 E. 111th Str, Cleveland, Ohio received a bullet wound in his right ear. At another location on Highway 54 West of REMIREMONT on 23 September a truck from Company B ran over an enemy mine which resulted in wounds and injuries to S/Sgt Lee B. Lassiter, 20817797, entered service from; Sunset, Texas, Corporal Dee Winn, 20817847, entered service from; Route 2, Bowie, Texas, Private 1 of Arthur L. Rose, Jr, 36173723, entered service from; Deer Lake Farm, Clarkston, Mich, Tec 5 Carl S. McCluggage, 34366767, entered service from; Route #4, Lawrenohburg, Tenn.

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and Private Domenic A. Calderone, 13080759, entered service from; 121 East Spring Avenue, Ardore, Penn, all from Company B. T/Sgt Thomas B. Nichols, 20817863, Headquarters and Service Company, entered service from; Box 243, Bowie, Texas was lightly injured on 22 September during an enemy air raid near LUXEUIL les BAINS.

FOSSARD FOREST

24-30 SEPTEMBER:

By the end of September little more than a bridgehead had been established on the MOSELLE RIVER extending from REMIREMONT North to the vicinity of JARMENIL. Road maintenance, removal as well as establishing roads blocks and minesweeping were the principal functions of the companies of the battalion.

During 24 September Company A continued to have gravel for the improvement of approaches to armored treadway trestle bridge and infantry support bridge two miles South of ELOYES. Two platoons from Company C also were committed to the same mission, with a bulldozer from the latter used to improve approaches to heavy ponton bridge at JARMENIL. Company B, in support of the 142nd Infantry, was more concerned with local improvements to roads along the route of advance toward TENDON. Throughout the remainder of the month a portion of Company C constantly maintained roads in the vicinity of JARMENIL and DOCELLES.

Numerous road blocks were encountered. Company A removed one block between NABORD and REMIREMONT on 24 September before going into reserve with the 141st Infantry, was more concerned with local improvements to roads along the route of advance toward TENDON in which position the company remained until 28 September. On 24 September Company B established and maintained a road block two miles Northwest of ELOYES and continued to man this obstacle until 28 September. A few fallen trees along the road one mile Southeast of TENDON were removed by Company B on 28 September and on 29 September two unsuccessful attempts were made to clear a road block one and one-half miles Southwest of TENDON, only to be followed by three more unsuccessful attempts the following day. During the period covered Company C cleared two road blocks; one two miles Northeast of DOCELLES on 27 September and the second near CHARMOIS DEVANT BRUYERES on 29 September. The latter was removed with a tankdozer under small arms and self propelled artillery fire. The logs could not be pushed from the road, necessitating the use of a cable fastened to the tank with the loose end around the logs forming the block.

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A decided increase in the use of mines by the enemy was noted. The "R-M-43" mine, which had never before been encountered by the battalion was found. Also "S-Mines" were detected. Thirteen R-M-43 mines were removed near JARMENIL by Company C on 24 September, with thirty four being found on 26 September near DOCELLES, sixteen near the same village on 27 September and seventeen near CHARMOIS DEVANT BRUYERES on 29 September. Fifty-five "S" mines were removed by Company C near DOCELLES on 27 September. A description of the "R-M-43" mine, commonly known as the "Ramp" mine is given in Annex No. 3, attached.

On 30 September the various units of the battalion were located as follows; Battalion command post at BLOYES, Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment at REMIREMONT, Company A at CHENILLENIL, Company B at one-half mile West of TENDON and Company C at CHARMOIS DEVANT BRUYERES.

GENERAL

Sixteen German soldiers were taken prisoner and one killed by units of the battalion during September. Of this number, Company A captured five, Company C captured eight and killed one and Headquarters and Service Company captured three. Three of the enemy captured by Company C were wearing civilian clothes in the vicinity of the company bivouac near CLANS on 11 September.

Four portable and one mobile water purification units were operated almost constantly during September. One portable purification unit with operating personnel from Headquarters and Service Company was attached to the lettered companies supporting the various infantry combat teams. This procedure worked very satisfactorily inasmuch as water point installations could be made at points most accessible to the combat teams with undue delay. The remaining portable and mobile purification units were installed in the rear areas, however the mobile unit could be quickly switched and placed into operation as necessity dictated. Technical supervision in the operation of all these purification units was furnished by Headquarters and Service Company. An estimated nine hundred thousand gallons of water were purified and dispensed by these five units during September.

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Three portable shower units were operated during the last six days of the month by operating personnel from Headquarters and Service Company. Each of these units were installed at various locations most accessible to the combat teams being served. Inasmuch as replacement parts for this equipment is not obtainable, difficulty was constantly experienced in maintenance.

Included in the list of Missing in Action in the August 1944, "Operations in France" was Tec 5 NORVAL E. SPARKS, 39256082, Home address; Box 85, Fellows, California. The grave of Tec 5 Sparks was located near MONTE LIMAR, FRANCE the early part of September thus necessitating a change in status to Killed in Action.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36, U. S. ARMY

13 November 1944

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U. S. Army.

1. Herewith, "Operations in France, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of October 1944, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above report:

a. Operations: During the month of October no operational problems were encountered which could not be overcome without difficulty and no unusual problems the handling of which required new methods except possibly the use of cut lumber and poles for the repair of roads. This consisted of placing lumber or poles crosswise along the road as a base then spreading several inches of gravel over this material as a cushion. Traffic direction and control along the roads in the forward areas was adequate during the month.

Small working parties such as mine clearing groups were not always given proper infantry security while performing these missions. As a result, sufficient results were sometimes not expeditiously attained.

b. Mines and booby-traps: Heretofore, only a distance of four feet along the sides of the roadways were cleared for mines. Due to the increased number of anti-personnel mines, and the necessity for cleared trails for passage of infantry troops in the forward areas, mines are now cleared from fifteen feet on both sides of roads.

c. Water supply: Water has been ample, with no difficulty in placing five purification units serving the units of the division.

d. Map supply: Map supply improved considerably during the month, making available sufficient quantities of 1/50,000 scale in color and 1/25,000

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e. Engineer Supply and Equipment: Continued improvement in engineer supply was evidenced during the month with respect to materiel. The proximity of Army Class II and IV depots materially aided in decreasing requisition-receipt time for the using units. Increased demand, plus continued shortage, caused certain critical items such as sandbags, fortification materials, hand tools and tracing tape to remain available only in limited quantities. Non-available items included compasses, sign making materials (paints and turnplate), lithographic paper and other allied topographic and cellulose products. Lumber and other construction material continued to be obtained by local purchase.

Oran C. Stovall

ORAN C. STOVALL
Lt Colonel, 11th Engr C Bn
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

OCTOBER 1944

An almost stable situation existed during October 1944. Only slight gains were made over the ground held at the end of September. As a result, operations of the battalion were restricted to a relatively small area where maintenance of roads and removal of road blocks and scattered minefields presented the greatest problem.

1 - 5 OCTOBER:

With the exception of a platoon, which remained with the 141st Infantry Regiment at all times, Company A maintained its command post at CHENIMENIL, FRANCE (V-157497) the first five days of the month and directed its operations from that location. On 1 October the company removed two minefields at LA NEUVEVILLE (V-202521), from which twenty six R-M-43 mines were removed from one field and twelve of the same type mine from the other field. Demolition charges were also removed from a bridge over the VOLOGNE RIVER Southeast of LE PANGES (V-210531). Numerous wire and pull type igniters had been used by the enemy on the stringers, hand rails and roadbed of the bridge. At the same time, Company A completed gravelling the worse places along the road between CHENIMENIL and DOCELLES (V-157497 V-168503), and removed a road block between LA LEUVEVILLE and LE PANGES (V-202521), which consisted of felled trees and farm implements. The activities of Company A were shifted more to the East on 2 October when an enemy road block formed by abatis was cleared from a point five hundred yards Northwest of HOUX (V-222496). Other elements of the company maintained a road from TENDON (V-215474) to Southeast for a distance of one and one-half miles. This latter work consisted primarily of filling deep tank tracks out in the road. S/Sgt Edwin B. Arnold, 38026360, home address, Victoria, Texas was lightly wounded by a shell fragment while making a reconnaissance of this road prior to commencing the work. Again on 4 October personnel from Company A returned to the vicinity of TENDON (V-215474) when the road to the Southeast to within five hundred yards of LES CHARRIERES (V-215474 - V-223465) was maintained with the use of a bulldozer. Meanwhile, other elements of the company repaired a road from DOCELLES to LA BOULAY (V-186509), building a small culvert at the latter town, and filled deep tracks with rock and corduroy poles on the road between LE PANGES to MATANRUPT (V-209531 - V-230515).

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Three enemy road blocks between HOUX and HERPELMONT (V-237506 to V-229498) were removed by a platoon from Company A on 5 October. Each of these blocks was subjected to enemy artillery fire during the course of the work. On the same day another platoon from that company protected a road block at a point about two thousand yards Southwest of HERPELMONT (V-252519).

At 0800 hours, 1 October, Company B, less the second platoon, was attached to the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and moved from the vicinity of TENDON (V-214473) to LE ROULIER (V-168523) where a task force was being formed. The remaining platoon placed an abatis road block about one mile North of DEYCIMONT (V-192550) and remained to cover it through 5 October. After the company arrived at the LE ROULIER area, a minefield was laid across a road one mile Northeast of LE PANGES (V-215538) and a protection party left to cover it. Five attempts to remove an enemy abatis road block one and one-half miles Southeast of TENDON (V-223457) had proved unsuccessful the last few days of September. A platoon of Company B was dispatched on 1 October to make a sixth attempt, but the obstacle was still covered by enemy self-propelled guns which opened fire, lightly wounding Tec 5 Benjamin H. Fennell, 3803936, home address; Decatur, Texas and Private Richard H. Hawley, 35099070, home address; Indianapolis, Ind. A greater degree of success in removing this road block was attained on 2 October, although it was not completely cleared. A platoon, supported by two medium tanks, one of which was equipped with a dozer blade, were used as a team with the tank giving protection to the tankdozer and personnel. The work progressed satisfactorily until the road was cleared within range of an enemy self-propelled gun which fired one disabling round into the bogey wheels of the tank. The tankdozer continued to clear away the abatis to within twenty yards of the end of the first section of the block. Darkness came, which made it impossible to see enemy land mines which had been placed under the trees, and the tankdozer was disabled by a mine explosion. Another tankdozer was obtained to continue the work throughout the remainder of the night. As the second tankdozer approached to within three hundred yards of the obstacle it was hit by an enemy shell from a self-propelled gun which damaged the bogey wheel and rendered the tank useless. Again on 5 October two hundred and fifty yards of this obstacle were removed which brought the cleared portion as far forward as the infantry outpost.

In the afternoon of 1 October Company C moved from the vicinity of CHARMOIS DEVANT BRUYERES (V-150520) to CHENIMENIL (V-160497) where it remained until 5 October at which time the company moved to FAUCOMPIERRE (V-209495). In the meantime a supply road for the infantry was maintained in the vicinity of CHARMOIS DEVANT BRUYERES (V-149540 - V-193557).

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With the company's moving, its work was performed in the vicinity of HOUX (V-226495) and LAVELINE DU HOUX (V-233489). The missions were primarily of a minor character, involving road maintenance, minesweeping and removal of debris from various roads. Two road blocks might be classed as unusual, but then only because of their size. One road block at LAVELINE DU HOUX (V-235488) equipped with two booby-trapped grenades was cleared on 2 October. The second obstacle was removed on 5 October near LAVELINE DU HOUX (V-238468). The latter road block was formed by abatis, two hundred yards in depth and equipped with three booby-trapped hand grenades.

6 - 11 OCTOBER;

Late in the afternoon of 5 October Company A was committed as infantry to the defense of a mountain sector between the 141st Infantry and the 143rd Infantry regiments at a point one mile Southwest of JUSSARUPT. The 2nd platoon of the company was already in support of the infantry and guarding a road block on the HOUX-HERPELMONT road three quarters of a mile Southwest of HERPELMONT (V-252519). The first, second and about one-half of the headquarters platoon of Company A moved by truck on 5 October to HOUX (V-226495), where the personnel detrucked and walked to the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry command post. Upon arriving, the third platoon was dispatched to reinforce the 2nd platoon of the company then covering the road block. The 1st platoon of the company was ordered to support the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry and at 0700 hours, 6 October moved through the infantry and dug in (V-241522). The remainder of the company assembled in the vicinity of the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry command post (V-251510) and was guided to positions at the top of the mountain on the right flank of that battalion. This last position was held for three days and two nights under continuous enemy artillery and small arms fire. On 7 October the 1st platoon sent out a patrol for a distance of one thousand yards to its front in the direction of HERPELMONT, and at 1600 hours the entire platoon moved forward and occupied position at dark. Meanwhile, at 1800 hours on 7 October, the infantry launched an attack down the North side of the mountain in the direction of HERPELMONT and two squads of the 2nd platoon were moved up to hold the infantry's former positions. Later, at 1000 hours the following day the area was subjected to intense artillery fire from both the enemy and our forces. Elements of the infantry passed through the 1st Platoon's positions at 0600 hours 8 October for an attack but due to fierce enemy resistance they were forced to withdraw to the positions held by the platoon. However, at 1400 hours a patrol was sent

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from the platoon which moved forward toward HERPELMONT and after not encountering the enemy the platoon moved into a position West of HERPELMONT (V-257526), which was later subjected to enemy self-propelled artillery fire throughout the night. During 8 October the company command post and the portion of the headquarters platoon moved to the right and took up new positions (V-258515), thereby shortening the gap between the company and the 143rd Infantry. Meanwhile, forty-eight "S" Mines were removed from a trail on the company's right (V-258515) by the third platoon. The 1st platoon was withdrawn on 9 October from its position and reinforced the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry Anti-Tank platoon on the west side of the mountain (V-248529) where the platoon moved into houses and established an outpost. At 2400 hours the platoon's position was subjected to a heavy enemy artillery concentration during which Private Anthony C. Amari, 31353532, home address, Boston, Mass, was severely wounded. The next day the platoon moved back to the vicinity of the 2nd Battalion, 141st Infantry command post and one squad was given the mission of neutralizing an enemy minefield (V-237534), which resulted in clearing fourteen "S" Mines. After the performance of this mission the platoon was relieved and returned to the company's rear area at CHENIMENIL (V-157495). The headquarters platoon moved over the mountain on 10 October and joined with the 143rd Infantry on its left (V-259510), which then made a solid line on the west side of the mountain. During 11 October the infantry extended its lines which relieved the 2nd platoon and one squad of the 3rd platoon of Company A, the remaining two squads of the 3rd platoon held their positions until a booby-trapped flare field was laid in the gap between the 141st and the 143rd Infantry Regiments (V-257510) by a squad from the company's 1st platoon. The remainder of the company was relieved on 11 October and returned to CHENIMENIL (V-157495). On the following day, a squad returned to an area about one-half mile West of JUSSARUPT (V-265518) and placed a field of trip flares between two infantry companies. At the same time another squad from the company removed ten "S" Mines and felled trees from a road at S. de LARET (V-236534) and ten R-M-43 Mines at a road junction three-fourths of a mile Southwest of FIMENIL (V-234538). During the latter, when the enemy subjected the area to artillery fire, Private Paul L. Tuck, 34333284, home address, Pratt City, Ala., was lightly wounded in the left hip by a shell fragment.

The 1st platoon of Company B was relieved from the road block it had established one mile North of DEYCIMONT (V-192550) on 1 October and moved to the vicinity of FAYS (V-313554) on 6 October where two minefields were placed on roads leading into the town. This platoon remained to cover these two road blocks throughout this period. On the night of 10 October an enemy patrol filtered within close distance of the position but the platoon's machine guns forced its withdrawal. Likewise, the 3rd Platoon continued to man the road block it had established one-half mile Northeast of LEPANGES on 1 October throughout the period 6 to 11 October.

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Meanwhile, the 2nd platoon of Company B remained attached to the 142nd Infantry until 9 October at which time it reverted to direct support of the infantry. On 11 October the final attempt to remove the enemy road block one and one-half miles Southeast of TENDON (V-223457) was made. The last of the abatis along this road was removed, however two casualties were sustained. 1st Lt George Altschul, O-1104422, home address; New York, N. Y. was seriously wounded and Private Samuel B. Howard, Jr., 31245909, home address; Pautucket, R. I. was lightly wounded by shell fragments from enemy artillery fire. A small minefield consisting of R-M-43 mines was located about one half mile Southwest of LAVAL (V-225553) on 12 October by a reconnaissance party from Company B, while other elements of the company mineswept an area one-half mile Southeast of DOCELLES (V-171494) and repaired roads in the vicinity of CHERRIERES (V-226463), the latter of which entailed spreading twenty loads of gravel.

Throughout the period Company C continued to maintain supply routes and lateral roads in the vicinity of HOUX (V-226495), LAVELINE de HOUX (V-234489), LE PANGES (V-209531), MATANRUPT (V-230515), HERPELMONT (V-260626), DOCELLES (V-170505), LE BOULAY (V-195510) and LA NEUVEVILLE (V-202521). Most of the work consisted of hauling gravel and rock for suffoing roads as well as clearing scattered trees and debris from the roads. Seventy-two truckloads of gravel and rock were used for maintenance. Nevertheless, minefields at various locations were removed. On 6 October, forty-two R-M-43 mines were removed one mile West of LE ROULIER (V-164527), while five mines of the same type were cleared on 8 October one mile Southwest of HERPELMONT (V-253522). Thirty-five "S" Mines were removed from a road one mile West of PLATICOTE (V-254508) on 11 October. Preparations were made on 12 October for the construction of a bridge one mile South of HOUX (V-224491), by removing debris from the stream bed.

13 - 20 OCTOBER;

Operations Instructions were issued on 13 October to coordinate the activities of the companies in support of an advance by the division in the direction of FAYS (V-213555) and BRUYERES (V-245470), anticipated to occur on 15 October. These instructions also generally embraced the missions required of the 232nd Engineer Combat Company (Separate) and one company of the 3rd Battalion, 36th Engineer Combat Regiment which were attached to support the division.

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The six days immediately preceding the fall of BROUYERES were employed in road maintenance and mine clearing with the lettered companies of the battalion working as far forward as possible.

Numerous trails and buildings in the vicinity of FIMENIL (V-237537) one and one-half miles Southwest of JUSSARUPT (V-264515) and near HOUSSEUTTE (V-251512) were checked by Company A on 13 October. This extensive combing failed to reveal mines in those localities. However, during the succeeding seven days seven R-M-43 mines and twenty-five "S" Mines were cleared. These R-M-43 mines were found scattered at various points along the roads in the general vicinity of HERPELMONT (V-260526). One had been prepared as an anti-personnel mine, with shear wires out. Aside from one minefield consisting of twenty-two "S" Mines, located along a road about five hundred yards South-east of FEMINEL (V-228534), which was removed on 14 October, the remaining mines were scattered.

The maintenance of roads within the sector supported by Company A caused little concern through as late as 20 October. Nevertheless, light precipitation during the period necessitated a certain amount of repairs. Gravel was hauled and spread along the road around the North side of a mountain one-half mile South of HERPELMONT (V-256522) and a culvert built on the same road on 14 October. The road between LE PANGES (V-211530) to PREY (V-219536) was repaired by gravelling the same day. Between LA BOULAY and LA NEUVEVILLE the road was continually maintained from 18 October through 20 October, which required constructing a revetment at one point and a culvert at another. A total of fifty truckloads of gravel, most of which was taken from a pit near LA POLVIE (V-213489) was used for these repairs.

During 13 October the 1st platoon and 3rd platoons of Company B continued to maintain road blocks at FAYS (V-213554) and one half mile Northeast of LE PANGES (V-215538) respectively. Corporal Joseph Friday, 33247476, home address; Tyler, Pa., was lightly wounded in the left forefinger by a shell fragment while with the 3rd platoon. The 1st platoon was relieved from attachment to the 636th Tank destroyer Battalion on 14 October, likewise being relieved from maintenance of the road block at LE PANGES until 15 October. In the meantime, however, the 3rd platoon cleared seven R-M-43 mines from the road about one-half mile Southwest of LAVAL (V-225553) on 14 October.

A minor amount of road repairs was performed by Company B during the period. On 18 October a stretch of road two hundred yards in length in the vicinity of VOIE de la BORDE (V-192580) was corduroyed.

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A small wooden culvert was also built on the same road. Numerous roads in the vicinity of HOUX and LAVELINE DU HOUX (V-234489 to V-250487, from V-228462 to V-232460) were gravelled and corduroyed at various locations on 19 October and shell craters were filled in the road between CHARMOIS (V-150528) to AYDOILLES (V-136578) to FONTENAY (V-150580) to MEMENIL (V-165585).

On the afternoon of 19 October the 1st platoon of Company B was attached to a task force with the mission of clearing mines along the road in front of an armored column. This platoon moved to the vicinity of BRUYERES (V-2457) on 20 October and at 0700 hours that day it was divided into minesweeping details to work along the road from BRUYERES to BELMONT (V-280588). A minefield of German R-M-43 mines was located one-half mile East of BRUYERES (V-257570). A party under Sergeant George M. MacLaine, 20817317, home address; Houston, Texas was left to clear the field while the remainder of the platoon proceeded toward BELMONT. The latter portion of the platoon was forced to turn back by enemy machine gun fire and as it approached the minefield being cleared a mine was detonated which in turn exploded several other mines. The bodies of Sergeant MacLaine and Private James E. Dyer, 34360586, home address; LaFayette, Texas were completely disintegrated by the explosion. Private James P. Maher, 32204474, home address, Elizabethtown, Pa., and Pvt 1 cl Thomas A. Cooney, 33247378, home address; Lilly, Pa., was seriously wounded and died enroute to the hospital. Pvt 1 cl Milton Fonberg, 36551321, home address; Detroit, Mich., Pvt 1 cl Leonard Halpern, 32701803, home address; Ozone Park, Queens, New York; Pvt 1 cl Martin Numberg, 32705503, home address; Brooklyn, N. Y., Private Oliver R. Bowland, 6934785, home address; McDonald, Kan., and Private Gerald A. Bullis, 32035464, home address; Lewiston, New York were all lightly wounded.

A considerable amount of minesweeping was carried out by Company C during the period, however a relatively small number of mines were removed. On 13 October the roads leading into HERPELIMONT (V-260527) were swept from a road junction at V-233518 to V-234522, then Northeast to a road junction at V-235524, thence to the Northwest to V-236534 and from V-238532 Southeast to V-248525 then Northwest to V-246528, and from V-243527 Southeast to V-248525. No mines were found on any of these roads. A less extensive area was covered on 15 October near FAYS and LAVAL (V-211552 to V-222550, and from V-211552 to V-225570 then to V-216560) with no greater results than the previous day. A mine detector party working in the vicinity of LAVAL on 15 October was fired upon by enemy 50 mm cannon and small arms. On the five days succeeding 15 October minesweeping was extended forward to the East side of BRUYERES which included all the intermediate localities between the town of LAVAL and BRUYERES.

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Private Joseph H. Carazza, 33346416, home address: Wilkes Barre, Pa., was lightly wounded in the right thigh by a shell fragment on 16 October. Sixteen R-M-43 mines were found about one-half mile West of BRUYERES (V-234570) on 17 October, while five of the same type mine were removed from a road just North of CHAMP LE DUC (V-246558) on 19 October. Pvt 1st Michael J. Thomas, 35276875, home address: Cleveland, Ohio was lightly wounded in the right hand by a shell fragment on 20 October.

Company C was moved from near FAUCOMPIERRE (V-209495) to the vicinity of DEYCIMONT (V-192528) on 14 October. After conducting a reconnaissance along a road to the Northwest of DEYCIMONT to be used as a supply route for the infantry, two miles of the road were repaired by the company which required fourteen truckloads of gravel (V-189545 Southwest to V-188541, South to V-186535, then Southeast to V-192528). On 15 and 16 October continual road maintenance was conducted between DEYCIMONT (V-194527), LEPANGES (V-209355) and LAVAL (V-229555). After initial repairs, a road patrol was kept on these roads to fill fresh shell craters. Forty-five feet of armored treadway bridge was installed about one-quarter of a mile Northeast of PREY (V-218541) on 19 October.

Altogether seven enemy road blocks, formed by abatis, miscellaneous farm implements and debris were removed by Company C. Three of these blocks were cleared on 17 October near CHAMP LE DUC (V-247553, V-248554 and V-246553). Two of these had been booby-trapped by using hand grenades. Three hand grenades, all booby-trapped, were also found on each of two road blocks near the same town which were cleared on 18 October and two blocks cleared on 19 October. An enemy abatis road block, one hundred yards in depth, was removed one-quarter of a mile South of BRUYERES (V-247562) but neither booby-traps nor land mines were used in conjunction with the block.

On 17 October T/Sgt Eugene V. McDonald, 20817918, home address: Wolfe City Texas, a member of the Reconnaissance Section of Headquarters & Service Company was lightly wounded near BELMONT by enemy mortar fire.

21 - 25 OCTOBER;

On 22 October the battalion command post was moved from CHENIMENIL (V-1584) to BRUYERES (V-247570). During the same day Company A also moved from CHENIMENIL to BRUYERES (V-241567) and Company C moved from DEYCIMONT (V-194528) to LAVAL (V-234554).

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A part of Company A continued to repair the road from HOUX to HERPELONT (V-238510 to V-255523) and from DOCELLES to LAVAL (V-170508 to V-228555) on 21 and 22 October. Afterwards, most of this type work was conducted between BRUYERES and BELMONT. Trees and debris were removed from a road from BRUYERES to the North for about one and one-half miles on 23 October. A bulldozer was used on 24 and 25 October in repairing a road from about one mile East of BELMONT (V-290590) to near BIFFONTAINE (V-308589). Three road blocks were removed on the same day near BELMONT (V-290584, V-289587 and V-291593) during which time twenty-five German prisoners were taken. Still another road block was cleared on 25 October at point one mile North of DEVANT (V-324595) and during this work Private Fritz C. Johanson, 42046518, home address, New York, N. Y. was lightly wounded by small arms fire. Extensive mine detection was carried out by Company A, although in most cases the fields were marked and taped off unless their presence would interfere with traffic circulation. Roads one and one-half mile East of BRUYERES (V-263565 to V-264560) were swept without revealing the presence of mines on 23 October while on 24 October a road one mile North of BIFFONTAINE (V-308588 to V-318585) was checked and taped off. During the latter work, four men were lightly wounded. Corporal Millard K. Garman, 33444331, home address, Falls Church, Va., was wounded in the head by a shell fragment; Teo S David K. Johnston, 16033761, home address, Olivet, Mich., received a shell fragment wound on the left side of the face; Private 1cl Lester L. Shaw, 35627473, home address, Springfield, Ohio, sustained a fragment wound in the forehead, and Private Albert B. Chambliss, 18120723, home address, McKinney, Texas suffered from concussion caused by point blank enemy tank fire.

On 22 October Company B's 2nd platoon, accompanying a task force, arrived at BELMONT (V-280589) at 0700 hours without having found any mines. Those of the enemy who still remained in the town came out and surrendered, with the platoon taking seven prisoners. All six roads leading into BELMONT were mineswept for a distance of six hundred yards past the outskirts of the town, but no mines were found. At 1130 hours on 22 October, Company B, less the 2nd platoon, was committed to the line as infantry and was instructed to move into a position in the vicinity of BONNE-FONTAINE (V-2444) after darkness. The relief of the 2nd Bn., 30th Infantry Regiment was effected by the company at 2130 hours. Little activity occurred during the first night, with only a few rounds of mortar fire falling in the vicinity of the company. The 2nd platoon of the company was relieved from attachment to the task force on 23 October and reverted to company control, being placed in the company's reserve.

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During the afternoon of 24 October a German patrol of about thirty men was seen working its way through the woods toward the company's right front. Artillery and mortar fire was brought to bear on the patrol, which dispersed it and forced its withdrawal. At 2200 hours of 24 October the company was relieved and returned to bivouac at LE ROULIER (V-168523) but remained attached to the 42nd Infantry Regiment until 25 October when it reverted to battalion control.

Company C continued to perform extensive minesweeping missions. On 21 October a road from a point one-mile Northwest of CHAMP LE DUC (V-253558) to one and one-half miles Southeast of the village (V-258552) produced four enemy R-M-43 mines. No mines were found on the following day between BELMONT (V-27958) to DOMFAING (V-271599), or from one-quarter of a mile West of VERVEZELLE (V-271585) to one mile South of the village (V-264573), but six R-M-43 mines and one "S" mine were found one and one-quarter of a mile Southeast of CHAMP LE DUC (V-257553) and two R-M-43 mines and three "S" mines in the outskirts of BRUYERES

On 22 October Company C moved from the vicinity of DEYCIMONT (V-192528) to LAVAL (V-234554), but the latter location was not occupied but two days. Enemy artillery concentration became heavy on LAVAL and on 24 October the company was relieved, at which time it moved to FAYS (V-211511). Meanwhile, and as late as 25 October, a considerable amount of road maintenance was performed. One hundred and fifty-five loads of gravel and rock were hauled and spread over roads which were progressively repaired from the vicinities of CHAMP LE DUC to BRUYERES and to BELMONT.

On 25 October a detail from Headquarters and Service Company began construction of a portable shower unit near BELMONT. Two storage tents had been erected for this purpose when the enemy subjected the area to artillery air bursts. The tentage was completely ruined and Sergeant Thomas R. Baker, 20818182, home address, Victoria, Texas, a member of that company, was seriously wounded by shell fragments in the head and limbs.

26 - 31 OCTOBER;

The last six days of the month were largely employed to maintain roads in the vicinity of BELMONT. Poles were cut and used as corduroy and also heavy lumber was procured from local sources, from which plank roads were constructed. Several inches of gravel were then spread over the poles or timbers which were used as a base. Inasmuch as considerable work was involved thereby, detailed mention of all the roads covered is not being made but merely a general coverage of the missions.

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On 26 October Company A began repairs to a road from one mile East of BELMONT (V-292592) to one mile North of BIFFONTAINE (V-307589) where gravel was hauled and spread. One platoon of the company moved to within one-half mile Northwest of DEVANT (V-216584) awaiting the infantry to advance prior to beginning road repairs. The area was subjected to enemy artillery and as a result 1st Lt Thomas P. Corwin, O-1110431, home address; Boonville, N. Y. was lightly wounded in the left shoulder by a shell fragment and Tec 5 Frank Santacroce, 32682153, home address; Sag Harbor, N. Y. suffered a light wound in the left hip from a shell fragment. Corduroy material was laid and gravel spread along a road one and one-half miles Southeast of BELMONT (V-299584) to within a mile North of BIFFONTAINE (V-309586) on 27 October. On 28 October a road from one mile Southeast of BRUYERES (V-263565) along a wooded sector to one mile South of BELMONT (V-285579) was maintained and the work was continued through 29 October. Pvt 1 cl Clinton F. Hall, 34465194, home address; Raeford, N. C. was lightly wounded in the left hip by an "S" Mine explosion on 29 October. Two corduroy and plank roads were constructed on 31 October. One of these began one and one-half miles North of DAVANT at V-315600 and extended to V-328601. The other was built approximately one-half mile Northwest of DEVANT at V-309586 and extended to V-321585. After poles and lumber were laid on these roads, gravel and earth were spread over.

During the remainder of the month Company B performed the maintenance of roads in the vicinities of LAVELINE (V-233499) and HERPELMONT (V-260524). In addition, one hundred and thirty-nine "S" mines were cleared and several fields marked and taped off in those vicinities. A reconnaissance party was dispatched on 30 October to locate an "S" Mine field South of LAVAL (V-228552) and upon arrival at the field Corporal Arthur Truman, 35443467, home address; Beckley, W. Va., stepped on one of the mines which exploded, killing him instantly. Private 1st Harry U. Oesterlen, 33135347, home address; Philadelphia, Pa., was seriously wounded and died of wounds later in the day, while 1st Lt Robert A. Findlay, O1112686, home address; Patterson, N. J. and Private Joseph R. Ulugos, 33067909, home address; Bath, Pa., were lightly wounded. Three "S" mines were removed from this field and all had been booby-trapped with trip wires.

Although Companies A and B performed a large amount of road work during the last six days of the month, the road work done by Company C far exceeded either of those two companies. The roads maintained were in the vicinity of BELMONT and a total of six hundred and fifty yards of corduroy and plank roads were constructed by the company alone.

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Gravel and rock spread over corduroy roads and various other roads entailed approximately two hundred and eighty nine truckloads during the last six days of the month. Also, four culverts were constructed on 28 October near BELMONT and three more on 29 October in the same locality. Comparatively little difficulty was encountered in obtaining rock and gravel for this work. A gravel pit was opened on 28 October about one and one-half miles Southeast of BELMONT (V-297587) where a power shovel was placed into operation.

Even though the major portion of Company C was engaged in road maintenance, several minesweeping parties were dispatched. The road from one and one-half miles East of CHAMP LE DUC (V-260551) Southeast to the railroad one-half miles Southwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-269545) and North to one mile Northwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-267548), then West to one and one-half miles East of CHAMP LE DUC (V-260551) was mineswept on 27 October, however no mines were reported. Like results were obtained on 31 October when a detail mineswept from two and one-quarter miles East of BELMONT (V-303588) Northwest to within two and three-quarters miles South of LES ROUGES EUAX.

Altogether throughout the month of October, two hundred and forty-two feet of road was improved by placing heavy planking on the road. One thousand, seven hundred and eleven feet of road was improved by the use of corduroy poles, while another six hundred feet of roadway was improved by a combination use of planking and corduroy poles, or a combined total of two thousand, five hundred and fifty-three feet. A total of one hundred and twenty miles of roads were swept for mines and generally maintained during the month.

Aside from several former assigned members of the organization who had been attached since reorganization of the battalion in May 1944 and awaiting personnel vacancies for reassignment thereto, only one replacement was received during the month and was assigned to replace an individual rotated to the United States. Inasmuch as the replacement was a former member of the Medical Department and had never received Engineer or Infantry training--neither had he fired the prescribed course for the rifle--he could not be utilized and had to be returned to the replacement depot.

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On 12 October 1944 the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion was cited in General Orders No. 384, Headquarters 36th Infantry Division, dated 12 October 1944 for its participation in the Italian campaign. The citation read as follows:

"The 111th Engineer Combat Battalion, for exceptional performance from 26 May to 26 June 1944 in the monumental 29-day push from the Anzio beachhead area through Rome to the hills overlooking Pisa. Exposing themselves to heavy enemy artillery and small arms fire, the officers and men of the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion worked skillfully and indefatigably filling shell craters and removing mines from the important supply routes leading to the infantry troops attacking Velletri. After facilitating the downfall of the savagely defended enemy stronghold, the engineer battalion advanced with the infantry units toward Rome, swept through the Eternal City and, clearing away mines and constructing and repairing roads and bridges, continued up Highway #1 to the north of Rome. Although the rapidity of the advance demanded an exact coordination of movement and a speedy execution of assigned missions, the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion functioned smoothly and efficiently, successfully accomplishing its important tasks, until the battalion was relieved, after a 240 mile advance, in the high ground commanding the approaches to Pisa."

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36, U. S. ARMY

18 December 44

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U. S. Army.

1. Herewith, "Operations in France, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of November 1944, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above report:

a. Operations: Snow caused some delay in opening roads for traffic in one regimental combat team sector. This added to the problem of removing mines which had been planted prior to the snowfall as well as those planted in the snow. The snow also added to the difficulty of checking abatis road blocks for mines prior to the employment of a tank dozer in removing such obstacles.

As a result of experiments with the mine detector, however, it was found that the Mine Detector SCR-625 would detect mines under twelve inches of snow, but the German Schu mine could not be successfully detected with the device.

Traffic control and direction along the roads in the Division forward areas was adequate during the month.

b. Mines and Booby-traps: A marked increase in the use of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines by the enemy was noted. Aerial bombs and explosive with time clock firing devices were found buried in main roads and buildings likely to be used by troops. Booby-traps were used extensively in abatis road blocks and in houses.

c. Water Supply: Water has been ample, with no difficulty in placing five purification units serving the Division.

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d. Map Supply: Map Supply was satisfactory. Sufficient quantities of 1/50,000 scale in color and 1/25,000 scale of monotone print were available. A limited number of relief maps 1/50,000 scale in color were received during the month.

e. Engineer Supply and Equipment: There was no appreciable change in the general status of engineer supply during the month of November. Shortages in certain categories however have not been relieved, with the result that continued consumption of these items has precipitated a critical shortage. Included in this group are axes, D-handled shovels, mine probes, engineer pocket knives, lensatic compasses, and lithographic map paper. Other topographic supplies and acetali products are being received, although the supply does not yet entirely satisfy the demand. Scotch tape is particularly short. Other shortages not yet critical include such items as discharge hose and electric lamps and simple fixtures. The Division Engineer Supply has assumed the responsibility of supplying oxygen and acetylene in bulk to Division Ordnance for subsequent issue to division units. To date the supply of these gases has been entirely adequate to meet this increased demand. The previously reported shortage of sign-making materials has been largely erased by the receipt of both paint and ready-made signs.



ORAN C. STOVALL
Lt Colonel, 111th Engineer C Bn
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

NOVEMBER 1944

1 NOVEMBER:

The third platoon together with a squad from each of the first and second platoons of Company A repaired and maintained a road in the vicinity of one mile North of BIFFONTAINE (V-312586 to V-319586). This task required placing three hundred and thirty-one pieces of heavy timber planking across the road as a base and also cutting and placing poles as corduroy, over which was spread thirty truckloads of gravel. Meanwhile another squad from the second platoon of the company hauled and spread nine truckloads of gravel over a plank road previously built one-half miles Northeast of BIFFONTAINE (V-315600).

Later in the day the first platoon of Company A removed six "S" mines and four R-M-43 mines at various points approximately one mile Southeast of DEVANT LE FEYS (V-338579 to V-339583, V-339583 and V-338579) while in support of the 141st Infantry Regiment. A squad of the second Platoon cleared ten "S" Mines while minesweeping in the same general vicinity.

By mid-afternoon the first platoon of Company B had completed repairs to a rifle range for the 142nd Infantry Regiment in the vicinity of TENDON (V-214473). This mission required complete repair of targets and making a fill with gravel on the firing line. Meanwhile a squad from the third platoon of the company began construction of an observation post shelter on the front lines of the 143rd Infantry Regiment. By 1600 hours the shelter was completed and fire was being directed from the post.

The second platoon of Company B returned to the support of the 142nd Infantry with the mission of maintaining a supply road about one mile Southeast of LAVELINE DU HOUX (V-250484 to V251485 to V-250486). During the previous night the road, already soaked by the rain, had been churned into a sea of mud. With the use of corduroy material, sixty percent of the road was repaired by nightfall.

A minesweeping detail from the third platoon of Company C checked a road from LA ROTENE (V-273547) to Southeast of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-276545) then Northeast to a point one-quarter of a mile Northeast of the latter town (V-278548). No mines were encountered.

~~SECRET~~

2 NOVEMBER:

One squad of the first platoon of Company A removed an abatis road block one mile Northwest of VANEMONT (V-350574). Two R-M-43 Mines were found and removed from the approaches to the obstacle. The remainder of the company's work consisted of road maintenance. The third platoon and one squad of the first platoon hauled and spread twenty four loads of gravel over a road one-half mile North of DEVANT LE FEYS (V-312585 to V-325587). Four hundred and ten pieces of timber planking had been laid along the road prior to graveling. At the same time a squad from the second platoon hauled and spread eighteen truck-loads of gravel over a corduroyed road one mile Southeast of ERIVAL (V-316600). Meanwhile another two squads drained and filled holes along a road near ERIVAL (V-301620 to V-319601) and also constructed a fourteen foot culvert on the same road.

During the morning the company commander of Company B was called upon to attend a conference at the 142nd Infantry command post. The company was placed in support of the infantry for an attack scheduled to begin at 0800 hours, 5 December.

Upon returning to complete repairs to supply road one-half mile Southeast of LAVELINE DURBOUX which was begun the previous day, the second platoon of Company B discovered that seventy-five percent of the repairs made had been destroyed by tank traffic during the night. It was then necessary to corduroy and gravel the road from V-250484 to V-251485 to V-250486. The task was begun, however not completed during the day.

A greater part of the three platoons of Company C were engaged in the repair of roads from one and one-half miles East of CHAMP LE DUC (V-260551) Southeast of the railroad one-half miles Southwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-269545) and North to one mile Northwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-267548) then West to one and one-half miles East of CHAMP LE DUC (V-260551). Twenty-five loads of gravel were spread and one-hundred yards of the road repaired by corduroying. However, the third platoon dispatched a minesweeping party to clear mines in the vicinity of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES. A total of five R-M-43 Mines and nine wooden box mines were removed. Two minefields were found, one of which consisted of three rows of box mines laid at the railroad spur in LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-274545) while the other was formed by two rows of R-M-43 mines planted in a garden in the town.

~~SECRET~~

2 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

These fields were marked. A civilian in LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES claimed to have already removed three hundred mines of different types in the vicinity, and he also reported an enemy road block one-half mile South of the town, (V-277534).

3 NOVEMBER:

A squad of the first platoon of Company A checked a road one mile Northwest of VANEMONT (V-349576 to V-344575) for mines, however none was found. Two squads of the second platoon of the company were employed in the removal of an extensive enemy minefield one and one-half miles East of EAUX (V-345627). Meanwhile two squads of the first platoon with a squad from the second platoon repaired and maintained a road one-half mile North of DEVANT LE FEYS (V-312587) to V-324588). This mission entailed laying poles as corduroy and covering with forty-seven truckloads of gravel.

The second platoon of Company B completed repairs to roads one-half mile Southeast of LAVELINE DU HOUX (V-250484 to V-239489) which were begun on 1 November. At the same time the third platoon of the company drained and filled craters along a road near FREY (V-217542 to V-243512), however the work was not completed during the day.

The first platoon of Company C returned to complete repairs to roads from one and one-half miles East of CHAMP LE DUC (V-260551) Southeast to the railroad one-half mile Southwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-269545) and North to one mile Northwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-267548) then West to one and one-half miles East of CHAMP LE DUC (V-260551). Twenty-five truckloads of gravel were used and twenty-five yards of planking were laid at one point.

Two minesweeping parties were sent out from Company C during the day. No mines were found by one detail working three-fourths of a mile East of BIFFONTAINE (V-319575). The other party removed five R-M-43 Mines from a road one-half mile Northeast of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-263546).

4 NOVEMBER:

The third platoon of Company A hauled and spread eleven loads of gravel along a road one-half mile Southwest of HERPELMONT (V-251519 to V-254525) while a squad from the first platoon and one squad of the second platoon repaired a stretch of road near LA CROSSETTE (V-325587 to V-333586) by placing planks over approximately one hundred yards of the road then covering the timber with fifteen truckloads of gravel.

S E C R E T

4 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

Two "S" Mines were removed by a squad of the first platoon of Company A while minesweeping a trail one mile South of MARMOMOSSE (V-334594 to V-336605). A minefield two miles East of Les ROUGES EAUX (V-338628) was marked and taped off by a squad of the first platoon. Still another trail one and one-half mile East of les ROUGES EAUX (V-333618 to V-334629) was searched for mines but none was detected. During the latter, Private Anthony Cardillo, 31215890, home address: Monterey, Mass., was lightly wounded by a shell fragment from enemy artillery action.

At 0900 the third platoon of Company B moved from le BOULIER (V-168523) to a wooded area about one mile Northeast of DOMFAING (V-280617), arriving at 1200 hours, in preparation for support of an attack by the Infantry. One squad of the company mineswept a trail one mile Southeast of les ROUGES EAUX (V-323626 to V-332618) while the third platoon mineswept several roads and trails about a mile East of the same town (V-327622 to V-342620 and from V-331617 to V-339608). No mines or booby traps were found by either group.

Company C's activities were confined to the vicinity of BIFFONTAINE. A road two miles Northeast of the town (V-328587 to V-338579) was repaired with fifteen loads of gravel. Two minesweeping parties from Company C operated throughout the day in the same locality. Roads were swept from V-309586 to V-311583, from V-317587 to V-313577 to V-326587 to V-336586 to V-326583, and from V-332575 to V-326577 to V-323582 to V-319575.. No mines were found.

5 NOVEMBER:

The third platoon of Company A hauled and spread four truckloads of gravel along a road one mile Southwest of HERPELMONT (V-240531 to V-256525) after first draining water from the road. Meanwhile, the first and second platoons of the company repaired approximately fifty yards of road near DEVANT LE FEYS (V-325587 to V-329586) by using timber planks as a base and covering it with fifteen truckloads of gravel.

At 0730 hours the third platoon of Company B assembled at a point about one mile Southeast of les ROUGES EAUX (V-331617) to be in a position to immediately perform any work that might arise. A part of the platoon prepared to mine-sweep roads in the vicinity at 1000 hours moved to V-334614. At this point Private First Class John R. Sparks, 35038527, home address: Louisville, Ky., accidentally tripped an "S" Mine and sustained light wounds.

S E C R E T

5 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

The first platoon of Company B moved to approximately one mile North of les ROUGES EAUX and dispatched a detail to maintain roads in the vicinity (V-316628 to V-331617). This road was drained, shell holes filled and a revetment built along the ditches. After darkness a detail from the platoon began minesweeping a road about two miles Southeast of les ROUGES EAUX (V-337614 to V-340608). A minefield consisting of R-M-43 Mines was found and four of these mines removed but while removing the fifth the group was fired upon by enemy machine guns which forced it to withdraw.

Two hundred and sixty-four yards of plank road were constructed by the third platoon of Company C at a point about three miles Northeast of DOMFAING (V-328587 to V-338579). Numerous roads were swept for mines by the second platoon in the vicinity of BIFFONTAINE (V-323584 to V-327581 to V-329577) but no mines were found.

6 NOVEMBER:

The third platoon of Company A constructed one hundred and thirty yards of plank road, using fifteen truckloads of gravel, at a point one-half mile North-east of DEVANT LE FEYS, (V-330590). At the same time the first platoon of the company repaired ninety yards in the same manner near CROSSETTE (V-332586) using six loads of gravel. The second platoon drained, revetted and maintained a road from MAILLENFAING to LANGEFOSSE (V-357588).

Eleven "S" Mines and six R-M-43 mines were cleared one and one-half miles West of XAMFAING (V-340620) by a squad of the second platoon of Company A. A friendly minefield consisting of thirty-four M1A1 mines were removed by the third platoon of the company which also detected one R-M-43 Mine and several booby-traps on the road between LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-270545) and REHAUPEL, (V-253475).

Early in the morning a squad from Company B began removal of fallen trees from a supply trail about two miles East of les ROUGES EAUX (V-343613). One minesweeping detail cleared forty-three R-M-43 mines from various roads about two miles West of TAINTRUX (V-341607).

9

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

6 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

Company C continued maintenance of roads two miles East of BIFFONTAINE (V-32 8587 to V-338579). A minesweeping detail removed two booby-traps consisting of trip wires attached to two hand grenades while clearing a road three fourths of a mile Southwest of JUSSARUPT (V-275513). Four E-M-43 Mines were also removed one-half mile Southeast of the town. The third platoon of Company C remained in reserve during the day although one minesweeping party was sent out to clear the road from one half mile South of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-272538) to three-fourths of a mile South of the town. At 1400 hours six men of the first platoon working at BIFFONTAINE were wounded by an "S" Mine explosion.

Private Joseph L. Wine, 33331032, home address: Philadelphia, Pa., stepped on the mine and was seriously wounded while Corporal Gilmer Ellis, 20817682, home address: Port Arthur, Texas, Corporal Clyfton H. Jones, 36173955, home address: Wilmington, N. C., Tec 3 Bryson L. Hayden, 38037507, home address: Tyler, Texas, Private First Class Andrew S. Cromarty, 39196981, Home address: Grand Coulee, Wash., Private First Class Eugene E. McDonald, 36173910, home address Coldwater Branch, Mich., and Private Lind W. Salmela, 37549951, home address: Menanga, Minn., were all lightly wounded. Tec 5 Marvin E. Braune, 20817628, home address: Gonzales, Texas, a member of the Battalion Medical Detachment attached to Company C as an aid man was also lightly wounded.

7 NOVEMBER:

One squad of the first platoon of Company A removed two small road blocks at a point about four hundred yards Southwest of MARMOMOSSE (V-540597) during the day while the remainder of that platoon along with the second and third platoons of the company constructed three hundred and fifteen yards of plank road between DES HUTTES (V-340590) to TRAPIN des SAULES (V-350570).

Company B was concerned primarily with mine removal during the day. One squad of the third platoon mineswept in the vicinity of DES HUTTES (V-341603 to V-344593) but found no mines, however fallen trees were removed from the road. Roads about one mile Northwest of LANGEFOSSE (V-348602 to V-359591) were swept by the first platoon and a minefield consisting of box mines was located, however it could not be removed because of enemy small arms fire. This same platoon also swept roads in the same vicinity (V-353597 to V-354590) but failed to find any mines.

10

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

7 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

One hundred yards of plank road at about two and one-half miles Northeast of DOMFAING (V-328587) was constructed by the second platoon of Company C, entailing the use of fifteen loads of gravel. Drainage of the road was improved by opening the ditches with a bulldozer. One minesweeping party was dispatched during the day which swept fifteen feet on each side of the road two and one-half miles Northeast of BIFFONTAINE (V-338579), but no mines were found.

8 NOVEMBER:

All of Company A was employed during the day in the construction of three hundred yards of plank road at about one-half mile Northwest of VANEMONT (V-364560). Five truckloads of gravel were used on the road.

The first platoon of Company B removed nineteen wooden box mines while clearing an area about one-fourth mile Northwest of LANGEFOSSE (V-359591). The same platoon later mineswept Northeast of the same town (V-367590 to V-361592 to V-365586). Fifteen R-M-43 Mines were removed during the course of this work. The third platoon of the company mineswept roads about one mile Northwest of LANGEFOSSE (V-351895 to V-357581 and V-343595 to V-346584). Fifteen R-M-43 Mines were also removed by this platoon.

The first platoon of Company C removed an abatis road block, formed by fallen trees cleverly matted together at a point three miles North of LA HOUSSIERE (V-346584) by the use of a D-4 bulldozer. Roads in the same area (V-346584 to V-344590) were also checked for mines but none was found. Meanwhile the third platoon of the company continued to maintain a supply road from two and one-half miles Northeast of DOMFAING (V-328587) to a point three miles East of the town (V-338579). Fifty yards of plank road were constructed on this route with five truckloads of gravel being spread.

9 NOVEMBER:

The three platoons of Company A were employed throughout the day in the maintenance of a road from DES HUTTES (V-340590) to three-fourths of a mile Northwest of VANEMONT. Thirty yards of plank road were constructed and treadway was placed on planking previously laid. Drainage of the road was also improved.

11

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

9 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

Company B was employed entirely on minesweeping missions during the day. The first platoon mineswept lateral roads in the vicinity of les ROUGES EAUX (V-347600 to V-349602; from V-351595 to V-352597 and from V-353588 to V-355590), finding no mines. The third platoon removed fifteen R-M-43 Mines at a point about one mile Southwest of LANGEFOSSE (V-345580). Private James Silcock, Jr., 33414508, home address: Carnegie, Pa., was lightly wounded when he stepped on an S-Mine while removing an R-M-43 mine.

The Company B command post was moved during the day from one and one-half miles West of MAILLENFAING (V-280617) to about two miles West of TAINTRUX (V-343607).

A detail from the first platoon of Company C performed the mission of ferrying supplies and equipment across la VOLOGNE RIVER near JUSSARUPT (V-272521) for use by the infantry. While at this location a reconnaissance was made for a footbridge site in the vicinity. Meanwhile the second platoon of the company continued to maintain a road two and one-half miles Northeast of DOMFAING (V328587) where loose planks were nailed and thirty truckloads of gravel were hauled and spread. The third platoon performed minesweeping missions along the "S" curve of the road one quarter of a mile West of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-264546) to the blown bridge in the town. No mines were detected and "clear" signs were placed.

10 NOVEMBER:

The first platoon of Company A maintained a road from LES CHERRIERES (V-220460) to one-half mile Northwest of CAILLOUX (V-237433). The road was widened and drained and low-hanging branches cut from trees along the road. One squad from the second platoon of Company A stacked enemy mines which had been removed in piles alongside of the road in the vicinity of DHAMPDRAY (V-270489).

The first platoon of Company B maintained roads about three miles South-east of les ROUGES EAUX (V-342607 to V-353593) by graveling and draining. An area about one-half mile still further to the East was mineswept, but without revealing the presence of mines. The third platoon of the company was also given a mission of road maintenance slightly to the north of that performed by the first platoon (V-341608). Nine wooden box mines were removed by a detail from the third platoon working in the vicinity of la HOUSSIERE (V-357572 to V-365565).

12

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

10 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

In the early evening a squad was dispatched to clear a road of mines in the vicinity of one-half mile West of la HOUSSIERE (V-337567 to V-342562). During the work a minefield was discovered. Inasmuch as a greater part of the mines had been booby-trapped, the field was taped off and the squad returned to the company awaiting daylight to remove the remainder of the mines.

As a result of a reconnaissance conducted for a footbridge site over the la VOLOGNE RIVER near JUSSARUPT (V-272521) by the first platoon of Company C the previous day, this platoon returned to the site and by felling two trees across the stream over which a walk was built, enabled the passage of infantry troops. The third platoon of the company was again returned to maintain the road two and one-half miles Northeast of BILFONTAINE (V-328587). Thirteen loads of gravel were hauled and spread over the road as well as the drainage being improved.

11 NOVEMBER:

The second platoon of Company A maintained a road from one-half mile South of MENEMONT (V-254488) to CHAMPDRAY (V-270489) by draining, placing two short stretches of corduroy and filling shell craters with gravel. Like wise the third platoon of the company was engaged in road repairs from LE CREUX (V-230452) to GAILLOUX (V-237533) and from LA HUTTES (V-220446) to a point one-half mile West of FAING la BICHE (V-238532). These roads were drained, widened and shell craters filled.

The first platoon of Company B maintained the road from les ROUGES EAUX (V-318603) to LANGEFOSSE (V-322599). In addition the same platoon mineswept roads about one mile Southwest of TAINTRUX (V-358592 to V-367593), however no mines were found. The third platoon of the company maintained roads in the vicinity of MARMOSSE (V-339508) by making fills and draining. A squad from the third platoon returned to the vicinity one-half mile West of la HOUSSIERE (V-337567) to remove a booby-trapped minefield which it was unable to clear the previous night. Fourteen R-M-43 mines were removed from the field. After removal of the minefield had been completed an attempt was made to sweep a trail around the foot of the mountain but the party was observed by the enemy's forward observers who directed a concentration of mortar and artillery fire. Another minesweeping party from the company removed eight wooden box mines placed at random intervals along the road (V-364578 to V-364563) about one mile North of VANEMONT.

13

S E C R E T

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S E C R E T

11 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

A greater part of Company C maintained the supply road two and one-half miles Northeast of BIFFONTAINE (V-328587) throughout the day. Twenty-five truckloads of gravel were hauled and spread along the road. A road from one-half mile East of BIFFONTAINE to la HOUSIERE (V-344557) was mineswept but no mines were found.

12 NOVEMBER:

The first and third platoons of Company A constructed one hundred and fifty five yards of plank road on the route between PREY (V-220537) and HERPELMONT (V-260528). Fourteen truckloads of gravel were used.

The first platoon of Company B continued to maintain the road from les ROUGES EAUX (V-218603) to LANGEFOSSE (V-322599) during the day. The second platoon of the company mineswept all of the main roads in the vicinity of VANEMONT (V-367563 to V-344557 to V-344554 and from V-344557 to V-344558). No mines were removed. The third platoon maintained a road in the vicinity of MARMOMOSSE (V-339607 to V-338579) by filling in and draining. In the afternoon this platoon moved to the vicinity of La HOUSIERE (V-340550).

An abatis road block at PLATICOTE (V-266050) which consisted of approximately three hundred trees with an average diameter of ten inches was removed by the first platoon of Company C. This obstacle was five hundred yards in length and had been booby-trapped at twelve different points. Another road block was removed about one-quarter of a mile North of la HOUSIERE (V-343561) by the second platoon and consisted of five R-M-43 Mines.

13 NOVEMBER:

One hundred and ten yards of plank road was constructed and covered with twenty-one loads of gravel on the route between PREY (V-220537) to HERPELMONT (V-260528) by the first platoon of Company A. The second platoon of the company mineswept the road from LE MEULES to CHAMPDRAY (V-270489) and a trail in a southerly direction from that vicinity for a distance of five hundred yards. Seven "S" Mines and ten R-M-43 Mines were removed. Later the same platoon mineswept the road from REHAUPAL (V-253472) to within one-half mile East of VARINFETE (V-270468), finding nineteen American M1A1 mines near REHAUPAL which were taped off until daylight.

14

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

13 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

A squad from Company B mineswept a foot trail through the FORET DOMAINALE DE CHAMP from V-353588 to a point connecting with the road leading to LA HOUSIERE (V-343561). Four R-M-43 mines were removed (V-353583) and four Tellermines (V-351579). Mean while the third platoon mineswept an area around a group of houses about one and one-half miles Northeast of LA HOUSIERE (V-337573) for an infantry regimental command post which it was in readiness to support during an attack on the high ground at LA HOUSIERE.

Most of Company C's operations during the day was minesweeping. Roads from three-fourths of a mile Northwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-260511) to AUMONTZEY (V-287526) to one-fourth of a mile Northwest of the latter town (V-290528) were swept but no mines were found. The roads from one-quarter mile Northwest of AUMONTZEY (V-286524) to one-quarter mile East of the town (V-290525) bore no greater results. The road from one-quarter mile East of BIFFONTAINE (V-381873) to a like distance North of LA HOUSIERE (V-343561) produced six R-M-43 Mines.

14 NOVEMBER:

The second platoon of Company A mineswept the main road from REHAUPAL (V-253472) to the Southeast and all lateral roads in that vicinity. Six "S" Mines and seven booby-trapped German hand grenades were found. Rubble was removed from the main road one mile Southeast of REHAUPAL. Ten R-M43 Mines, one of which was booby-trapped, were removed on the road near LE VIVE HAYE (V-274468) and another ten of the same type were removed four hundred yards Southeast of REHAUPAL (V-253472). A road block consisting of five large trees was also removed by this platoon at REHAUPAL. The third platoon of Company A mineswept the road from DELENGESTAT (V-249449) to one mile Northwest of Le THOLY (V-262431) and from LA BONNE to CHAMBLAY (V-260450). A road block consisting of five trees and five R-M-43 mines was also removed one mile Northwest of Le tholy by this platoon.

At 0200 hours a message was recieved by Company B that the attack on the high ground to the Southwest of LA HOUSIERE (V-340540) had begun. Immediately the first platoon of the company moved with the mission of minesweeping the road from BIFFONTAINE (V-310571 to V-313562 to V-519563 to V-319562 to V-316560 and from V-313562) along the base of MT LECOUCRS to a point at V-307553. The second platoon of the company moved an advance group of men to LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-376545) and established a command post.

15

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

14 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

A considerable amount of minesweeping had to be carried out for a vehicle park at the latter location. Approximately one hundred and fifty R-M-43 Mines were removed. During the day the third platoon mineswept roads from V-297543 to IOUX (V-310530) and all the main roads in the town; from V-312539 to NEUME (V-320530) and all the main roads in that town. Six R-M-43 mines were removed from IVOUX and thirty-three mines of the same type from the road between IVOUX (V-310530) and NEUME (V-320530). At 1600 hours the Company B command post was moved to LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-270540).

Company C's activities consisted of minesweeping and the removal of road blocks during the day. The road from La CHAPELLE (V-293548) to IVOUX (V-312539) and from LA CHAPELLE (V-293548) to IVOUX (V-309539) but no mines were found on either road. An abatis road block consisting of trees blown across the road by artillery fire was removed one-half mile Northwest of IVOUX (V-303547), while another obstacle of the same type, booby-trapped by an undetermined number of "S" Mines was removed one and one-half mile Southeast of IVOUX (V-320523). An enemy anti-tank mine road block consisting of seven R-M-43 Mines was removed one-half mile Northwest of GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-290506) while another road block of similar type of removed from a road three-fourths of a mile East of AUMNONTZEY (V-301522) which consisted of nine R-M-43 mines.

15 NOVEMBER:

The first platoon of Company A mineswept a road from REHAUPAL (V-253472) to the North for a distance of one half mile, removing two "S" mines. One squad of this platoon cleared rubble and filled in shell craters along a road from HOUX (V-227595) to REHAUPAL (V-253472). A trail from CHAMPBLAY (V-260450) to the North for a distance of one-half mile was mineswept by the third platoon but no mines were found. One squad of the third platoon mineswept the main road from one mile Northwest of LA THOLY (V-262431) to within one-half mile East of the town, without finding any mines. A road block at VARINETTE (V-270468) was removed by the Second platoon. Two R-M-43 mines had been placed at the beginning of the obstacle with three "S" mines on a trail parallel with the road.

The first platoon of Company B mineswept roads from NEUME (V-328533) to THIRIVILLE (V-339534) and from V-328553 to V-345530 in the same vicinity without finding mines. The second platoon of the company also swept a road for mines in the same vicinity (V-339534 to V-348551) with the same results.

16

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

15 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

Three vehicles from Company B were damaged by artillery fire in NEUME (V-320530) during the day--two 1/4 ton trucks and one 2½ ton truck. Corporal Wilbur J. Gasper, 36173683, home address: Belding, Mich., and Tec 5 Raymond J. Lauchlen, 36173554, home address: Camden, Mich., were riding in the 2½-ton truck and both sustained light wounds from shell fragments.

Company C located a minefield astride the main road from LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-270540) and GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-300500) which was not removed but marked off with tracing tape. Another field consisting of eight R-M-43 mines was located on the road leading into GRANGES (V-317495) but was not removed at the request of the Infantry. A space of twenty yards around each house on the main road through LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-270540) was checked for mines and marked. The company mineswept shoulders of the road from AUMONTZEY (V-284523) to a blown bridge three-fourths of a mile West of the town (V-273526), removing nine "S" mines. The shoulders of the road from AUMONTZEY (V-286524) to GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-296499) were also mineswept but no mines found. However four "S" mines were removed from the shoulder of the road one-quarter of a mile North of AUMONTZEY (V-286527). A path around a road block one and one-half miles Southeast of IVOUX (V-320523) was mineswept and five "S" mines removed.

16 NOVEMBER:

Company A, less its motor pool and supply, moved during the day from BRUYERES (V-244566) to FAUCOMPIERRE (V-208498). During the day the first platoon of the company mineswept a road from MON PLAISIR (V-288483) to within one-half of a mile North of PINEFAING (V-288448) and also from FAING MUSQUET to three hundred yards North of RECHAUCOURT (V-280443). Nine R-M-43 mines were removed on the former. A squad from the second platoon of the company checked all buildings in LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-270540) for booby-traps, however none was found. Ten R-M-43 mines, four of which were booby-trapped, were removed by the third platoon while minesweeping a road from RECHAUCOURT V-280443 to the South for a distance of five hundred yards.

The first platoon of Company B mineswept roads from IVOUX to the South-east (V-315519 to V-313510). The same platoon also maintained the road from IVOUX for a short distance to the Southwest (V-315350) to V-318523). The second platoon mineswept roads in an area about two miles West of CORCIEUX (V-339533 to V-340529 to V-340527 to V-342543). No mines were found by either of these platoons. Four R-M-43 mines, of which two more were booby-trapped with ZZ-33 firing igniters, were removed by the third platoon of the company while minesweeping about two miles Southwest of CORCIEUX (V-334525 to V-327516 to V-334513 to V-334525).

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S E C R E T

S E C R E T

16 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

A road at PLATICOTE (V-267505) was opened for two way traffic by the first platoon of Company C during the day. An enemy road block had previously been removed from this location on 12 November.

17 NOVEMBER:

The remainder of Company A, consisting of its motor pool and supply section, moved from BRUYERES (V-244566) to FAUCOMPIERRE (V-209495). A squad of the first platoon mineswept a road from GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-300500) South for a distance of one-half mile without finding mines. Another squad mineswept from SOUS LES GOUCHES (V-273526) to four hundred yards South of ROSTERE (V-283540) and also the road from HERPELMONT (V-260527) to five hundred yards Southwest of LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-270540) but found no mines. A road block consisting of one hundred and fifty trees, three R-M-43 mines and two "S" mines near RECHAUCOURT (V-280440) was cleared by the third platoon. Due to an "S" Mine explosion Private John Lusick, 32182636, home address Newark, N. J. was seriously wounded and Corporal Floyd Duren, 34366697, home address: Waynesboro, Tenn., was lightly wounded while accompanying a squad minesweeping the road from four hundred yards West of LIEZEY (V-310442) Northwest for a distance of two miles. Four R-M-43 mines and four booby-trapped German hand grenades were removed by the squad.

The second platoon of Company B mineswept roads in the area one mile Southeast of IVOUX (V-320523 to V-328516). Four wooden box mines were removed as well as debris from the road (V-328516) caused by a building being blown into the road. Tec 5 James R. Ramsey, 38039366, home address: Mesquite, Texas, carrying this detail to work in a 3/4-ton weapons carrier, was lightly wounded when the vehicle struck a mine. The third platoon of the company mineswept roads about two miles Southwest of CORCIEUX (V-337521 to V-343251 to V-345515) without finding any mines.

During the day Company C moved from FAYS (V-211553) to an area three-fourths of a mile Southeast of MORMOMOSSE (V-348602).

The battalion command post was moved from BRUYERES (V-247570) to LAVAL (V-234555) at 1630 hours.

S E C R E T

18 NOVEMBER:

The first platoon of Company A mineswept the road from GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-300500) to BERCHIGRANGES (V-290470) and removed eighteen R-M-43 mines and six Schu Mines. The third platoon again mineswept the road from one-fourth mile West of BERCHIGRANGES (V-290470) to SAUCEFAING (V-303447) and removed one R-M-43 Mines. One squad from the same platoon mineswept a road from RECHAUCOURT (V-280443) to AU PRECHAMP (V-282434) but found no mines. A squad from the second platoon mineswept the road from LIEZEY (V-310442) East for a distance of one mile and failed to find any mines. During the day a 2½-ton truck from Company A ran over a mine which badly damaged the truck and lightly wounded Corporal John Borovsky, 36163096, home address: Garden City, Mich., Tec 5 Robert J. Hinson, 20818074, home address: Port Arthur, Texas was lightly injured from concussion. Tec 5 David K. Johnson, 16033761, home address: Olivet, Mich., was seriously wounded by stepping on a Schu mine about one-half mile North of PINEFAING (V-288488).

The first platoon of Company B mineswept various roads in the vicinity of two miles Southwest of CORCIEUX (V-338517 to V-342517; V-345515 to V-347509 to V-351511 to V-346517; V-341511 to V-354507 and from V-353510 to V-359521 to V-359517). A total of twenty-one R-M-43 mines were removed. The second platoon mineswept roads slightly to the West of the first platoon (V-333513 to V-337507 to V-347509) removing a total of six R-M-43 mines. Meanwhile the third platoon removed sixteen R-M-43 mines and twelve Schu mines from a road in CORCIEUX (V-364529).

A minesweeping detail from Company C removed five R-M-43 mines and three Schu mines along the road from a point one-quarter of a mile East of VANEMONT (V-372558) to LA COTE (V-374556). Three R-M-43 mines and sixteen Schu mines were also removed from a road one mile Northeast of VANEMONT (V-378565).

19 NOVEMBER:

During the day Company A moved from FAUCOMPIERRE (V-208497) to GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-300500). The first platoon of the company mineswept the road from a point one-half mile Southeast of LES LEVLIN to two miles Northwest of KICHMORE (V-368438). Eight "S" Mines and four Schu Mines were removed as well as eighty trees in the road. The same platoon also removed a road block consisting of one hundred trees, eight booby-trapped grenades and three Schu mines at B. de LAMPOIRIERE (V-302478)

S E C R E T

19 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

The second platoon mineswept a road from LIEZNY (V-310442) to LES BASSOTTE (V-340438) but found no mines. A road block of forty trees, four R-M-43 mines, four Schu mines, two "S" mines and six booby-trapped hand grenades was removed one-fourth of a mile Northwest of LIEZNY (V-310442) by the third platoon of Company "A".

Extensive minesweeping of roads was carried out by Company B during the day. Twenty-two miles of roads were cleared. From these roads a total of one hundred and twenty-six mines of various types were removed--seventy-nine R-M-43 mines and forty-seven Schu mines. Seventeen of the R-M-43 mines were booby-trapped, however only eight of the booby-traps ignited, which might indicate that inexperienced enemy troops planted the mines. The schu mines were placed under lumps of turf along the edge of the roads, making it necessary to check every pile of turf. The first platoon of the company covered various roads about one-quarter mile South of COURCIEUX and other roads near VANEMONT (V-364529 to V-347552; V-363557 to V-366530). The second platoon mineswept roads generally between BARBEY-SEROUX and CORCIEUX (V-320499 to V-333494 to V-320491 to V-325483; V-333496 to V-346480 to V-348481; V-333496 to V-352502 to V-351512 and from V-352502 to V-352495). The third platoon of the company mineswept roads generally to the Southeast of CORCIEUX (V-353510 to V-354507 to V-357606 to V-362514 to V-358518 to V-362528; V-358518 to V-366519; V-362514 to V-366519 to V-3655270 V-364520 to V-365527; V-365527 to V-377520 to V-379520; V-377520 to V-376514; V-377517 to V-389511; V-379520 to V-391521 to V-396503; V-367527 to V-374530 to V-373527; V-374530 to V-378533 and from V-369529 to V-387523.)

The command post of Company B was moved during the day from LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-275543) to about one mile West of CORCIEUX (V-352550).

Minesweeping details from Company C cleared the road from LA BOUREE (V-383593) to SARUPT (V-398579), removing twenty-five Schu mines, five R-M-43 mines, one "S" mine and an abatis road block. A road from SARUPT (V-398577) to one-fourth mile North of LES GOUTTES (V-391558) was mineswept but no mines were found. Five R-M-43 mines, one of which was booby-trapped with a thirty second delay fuse, and an abatis road block were removed from the road between LA BOUREE (V-383593) to VANEMONT (V-363580). No mines were found from three-fourths of a mile Northeast of VANEMONT (V-378565) to three-fourths of a mile east of LA COTE.

Company C sustained two casualties during the day from an "S" mine explosion. S/Sgt D. B. (IO) Mainord, 20817970, home address: Point, Texas was seriously wounded in the right leg and Sergeant Joe D. Warren, 20817996, home address: Celeste, Texas was seriously wounded in the chest, head, groin and legs

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S E C R E T

S E C R E T

19 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

The battalion command post was moved during the afternoon from LAVAL (V-234555) to LAVELINE DEVANT BRUYERES (V-270540).

20 NOVEMBER:

The remainder of Company A, consisting of the company supply and motor pool, moved from FAUCOMPIERRE (V-209496) to GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-300500). The first platoon mineswept road from KARKOFF (V-3544454) to within one-half mile Northeast of GERARDMER (V-380430), and began removing road block three-fourths of a mile Northeast of GERARDMER (V-380430) which was half finished at the end of the day. Seven two-hundred-pound time bombs, set for eleven days, were found buried beneath the road bed on KARKOFF (V-3544454) and were removed. The second platoon filled shell craters along the road from GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-300500) to KARKOFF (V-3544454), but no mines were found. The third platoon of Company A mineswept a road from one mile Northwest of GORRENEE (V-385432) to AUX TREKONS (V-391487). The same platoon removed a road block consisting of twenty-five trees at MARTIMORE (V-382453) and two road blocks consisting of eleven trees each one-half mile North of GORRENEE (V-385432).

The first platoon of Company B mineswept all the main roads in GERREPAL (V-395504) and other roads in the vicinity of the town (V-395504 to V-415493 to V-413485 and from V-415493 to V-416514). Six Schu mines were found. The second platoon mineswept an area previously used as a German rifle range about one mile Southeast of La HOUSSE (V-360550) while the third platoon of the company mineswept a section of road about one-half mile South of GERREPAL (V-394503 to V-391491).

Thirty-five B-M-43 mines and thirty-eight Schu mines were removed during the day's operation by Company C. The road from NOIR RUPT (V-379539) to one-fourth of a mile South of DEVELINE (V-408520); from one and three-fourths miles Southwest of ANOULD (V-390530) to SINGOUTTE (V-407538); from the outskirts of ANOULD (V-408540) to ANOULD (V-414543), and from ST LEONARD (V-414577 to LA SOUCHE (V-414555) were mineswept. Nine truckloads of gravel were spread over the road in the vicinity of SARUPT (V-388538) as well as the road being improved by ditching.

Tec 5 Kenneth F. Brodbeck, 36173964, home address: Ottawa Lake, Mich., from Company C was killed while removing an R-M-43 mine in the vicinity of ANOULD, while Private First Class Stephen J. Sinchak, 35276660, home address: Lakewood, Ohio was lightly wounded by the same explosion. 1st Lt Kenneth W. Hand, 01112195, home address: Louisville, Ky., was seriously wounded by the loss of the left leg when he stepped on a Schu mine near LA SOUCHE (V-414555).

S E C R E T

21 NOVEMBER:

The first platoon of Company A mineswept a trail from LAUX FOURNEAUX (V-416498) to SOUX LA SAPPE (V-418516) without finding mines. A road block near SOUX LA SAPPE (V-418516) was located and from which one Schu mine and a booby-trapped hand grenade were removed. The second platoon mineswept a trail from LAUX FOURNEAUX (V-416498) to the East for a distance of one mile. Large trees which had blown across the roads between HERPELMONT (V-260527) to HOUX; from HOUX (V-228495) to REHAUPAL and from REHAUPAL (V-253472) to JUSSARUPT (V-272517) were removed.

Relatively little activity was experienced by Company B during the day. Only one minesweeping mission was performed, which was for the installation of a medical clearing company at a location about one-half mile Northeast of VIENVILLE (V-345530). No mines were found. Two men from each platoon served as instructors to the infantry in neutralization of enemy mines and booby-traps. A bulldozer from the company cleared debris from the roads in the vicinity of CORCIEUX (V-360520).

During the morning Company C moved from an area three-fourths of a mile Southeast of MARMOSSSE to an area at LA PITE HOUSIERE (V-340553). Seventeen R-M-43 mines and seven Schu mines were removed during the day's operations which consisted mainly of minesweeping roads from LA SOUCHE (V-414554) to one-fourth of a mile Northeast of LA SOUCHE (V-414562) then to LA SOUCHE (V-419553) and also from the outskirts of LA SOUCHE (V-419553) to LA SOUCHE (V-419555). Three casualties were suffered by the company during the day as a result of enemy mortar fire in the vicinity of ANOULD (V-415540). Private First Class Anthony Vesce, 32694995, home address: Bronx, N. Y., Private Frank W. Pearce, 20817981, home address: Sulphur Springs, Texas and Private Robert J. Sleator, 32724498, home address: Ossining, N. Y., were all lightly wounded.

22 NOVEMBER:

Company A moved during the day from GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE (V-300500) to GERBEPAL (V-395504). The third platoon mineswept a road from ANOULD (V-417541) to CLEFOY (V-435530), removing eleven R-M-43 mines. During this mission Tec 4 Walter L. Baker, 36173840, home address: Newaygo, Mich., was seriously wounded by the loss of a leg when he stepped on a Schu mine about one-half mile Southeast of ANOULD (V-432537). Private First Class Lawrence M. Turner, 16062639, home address: Howell, Mich., was lightly wounded at the same time. The second platoon of the company mineswept a trail from one-half mile East of LAUX FOURNEAUX (V-416498) to one-fourth mile Northwest of LES EVAUX (V-430505), but found no mines.

22

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

22 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

Company B was attached to the 142nd Infantry Regiment for an attack, with the first platoon accompanying the 1st Battalion of the regiment. Meanwhile the third platoon constructed a bridge North of GORGIEUX (V-364553) in the vicinity of an artillery observation plane landing field.

During the day the first squad of the first platoon of Company C captured six enemy soldiers. After taking these prisoners the squad was fired upon by both the enemy and friendly troops. A bridge one-fourth of a mile Northwest of ANOULD (V-422547) was repaired by placing a treadway over the original bridge. Minesweeping details cleared a trail from a point one-fourth of a mile North east of ST LEONARD (V-417577, South to one-fourth mile South of the town (V417570) and also from LA SOUCHE (V-419554, East and North to one-fourth mile Northeast of LA XOUCHE (V-425563). In addition, roads were swept from one-fourth mile East of LA SOUCHE (V-425557) East and Northeast to ROUGIFAIR (V-431559) and from LA SOUCHE (V-419554) to MEZEVILLE (V-443650).

At 1630 hours the battalion command post was moved from LAVELINE DEVANT BEUYERES to ST JACQUES (V-336521).

23 NOVEMBER:

Four B-M-43 mines and four Schu mines were removed by the second platoon of Company A from trails and roads in the vicinity of LA SOUCHE (V-414555). The same platoon mineswept the road from LA SOUCHE (V-414555) to NOUGIFAING (V-438560) and from VENCHERES (V-430556) to BENIFOSSE (V-440570). A barricade of large trees across the road one mile Southwest of ANOULD (V-432537) was later removed by the second platoon. Private George W. Smith, 31392054, home address: Petersham, Mass., was seriously wounded by the loss of the right foot as a result of a Schu mine explosion. The first platoon of the company mineswept a trail from DEVELINE (V-418530) through LES BOAS (V-404531) and back to DEVELINE, removing ten Schu mines. A trail was also mineswept one-fourth of a mile South of ANOULD but no mines were found. One Schu mine was removed by this platoon one and one-half mile East of ANOULD.

During the day Company B moved from one and one-fourth mile West of GORGIEUX (V-351350) to the vicinity of MANDRAY (V-450570). The company remained attached to the 142nd Infantry Regiment throughout the day in support of the infantry's attack. A bridge train consisting of two BROCKAWAY trucks and one platoon of Company B, 48th Engineer Battalion was attached to the company. This bridge train made preparations to construct a treadway bridge across a tank ditch in the vicinity of V-459577 but upon arrival enemy 20 mm Machine Gun fire was encountered and forced withdrawal. As the trucks were turning around to withdraw to MANDRAY one struck a mine which set it afire, completely destroying the vehicle

S E C R E T

23 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

Company C maintained the road from LA BOURRE (V-383593) to SARUPT (V-398578) which required digging new drainage ditches and improving part of the old drainage system. Twelve truckloads of gravel were hauled and spread over the road. Minesweeping details covered the road from SARUPT (V-398578) to ST. LEONARD (V-415576) but failed to find any mines. The shoulders of the latter road were also probed for Schu mines, but none was found.

24 NOVEMBER:

The first platoon of Company A cleared rubble from along the main road near ANOULD (V-414541). Two Schu mines and one bomb were removed. The second platoon filled an anti-tank ditch on the road near LA BOURRE (V-383593). Two R-M-43 mines were cleared by a detail of the company minesweeping the road from SECHES to FRAIZE (V-455543).

The first platoon of company B accompanied the infantry on its advance and mineswept roads in the vicinity of BAN de LAVELINE (V-503609 to V-502617 to V-519619 to V-550616 and from V-503609 to V-519619). No mines were found. A squad of the second platoon, aided by a tankdozer constructed a bypass across a tank ditch near la CROUX AUX MINES (V-490579 to V-500594). Meanwhile the third platoon mineswept roads in the same area but no mines were found. At 1900 hours the Company B command post moved to BAN DE LAVELINE (V-500600).

During the morning Company C's command post was moved to MANDRAY (V-450580). A timber trestle bridge, twelve feet in length, was constructed by the company at MANDRAY (V-459577). Another bridge of the same type but fifteen feet in length was constructed one and one half miles Northeast of the town.

25 NOVEMBER:

The battalion command post was moved during the morning from ST JACQUES to RAVES (V-491628).

The first and second platoons of Company A stood by prepared to give support to the infantry. Meanwhile the third platoon built a thirty foot bridge at CLEFOY (V-438529) and repaired an arch bridge one mile South of the town. The kitchen and motor pool of Company A moved from GRANGES SUR VOLOGNE to GEREPAL (V-395504) during the day.

S E C R E T

25 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

At 0800 hours the second platoon of Company B moved to GERMAINCOUTTE (V-510610). The second and third platoons of the company moved from BAN DE LEVELINE to WISEMBACH (V-530620). With the aid of a tankdozer the first platoon removed a road block near BAN DE LAVELINE (V-503609). The third platoon likewise removed a road block about two miles Southeast of WISEMBACH (V-552607). Four enemy soldiers were taken prisoner by the third platoon during the afternoon.

One hundred and twenty R-M-43 mines and four Schu mines were removed during the day's operations by Company C. Various roads from ST LEONARD (V-417577) to La VELLE GOUTTE (V-425576); from ST LEONARD to LE CHIPAL (V-486550); from CONTERMOULIN (V-427581) to MANDRAY (V-451778) and from SAULEY (V-426581) to ST MARGURITE (V-437635) were mineswept. The road from MANDRAY (V-461577) to one mile Northeast of the town was repaired by filling shell craters.

26 - 30 NOVEMBER:

The activities of the various companies of the battalion was much less detailed the last five days of the month.

Company A moved from GERPAL (V-395504) to MANDRAY (V-451579) on 26 November and remained at that location the rest of the month. During the period various roads in the vicinity of MANDRAY were mineswept and repaired. Altogether five tellermines, eight Schu mines, four box mines and nine R-M-43 mines were removed.

On 26 November Company B moved from GERMAINCOUTTE to STE MARIE AUX MINES (V591609) where it remained throughout the remainder of the month. Aside from mine sweeping roads in the vicinity of the town and the proximity of STE CROIX (V-623627) little activity was experienced. For the most part, the company remained prepared to support the infantry. Four casualties were sustained by the company on 30 November. 1st Lt Jack L. Scott, O-527176, home address: Oklahoma City, Okla., S/Sgt Leonard P. Hooker, 38050669, home address: Houston, Texas, Pvt First Class Michael J. Baritelli, 32209609, home address: New York, N. Y., and Private Calvin B. Comstock, 36173784, home address: North Adams, Mich., were all lightly wounded by enemy mortar fire while removing a road block near HAUT KOENIGSBOURG CHAU (V-708650) and were hospitalized. T₂c 5 Jamie W. Holmes, 31273288, home address: Bridgeport, Conn., a member of Battalion Medical Detachment attached to Company B and Private Andrew Stefanick, 33758186, home address: Colver, Pa., were also lightly wounded but not hospitalized.

S E C R E T

26 - 30 NOVEMBER: (Cont'd)

Company C moved from MANDRAY into STE MARIE AUX MINES (V-591609) on 26 November. A comparatively small amount of minesweeping was performed by the company the last five days of the month. A total of eight R-M-43 mines were found. A greater part of the companies activities was confined to the removal of road blocks and construction of bridges. A total of six road blocks were removed, two near AUBRYGOTTE (V-545615) on 26 November and four abatis obstacles one and one-half miles Southeast of FERTRUPT (V-618592) on the following day. Two bridges were built. A treadway bridge, thirty-six feet in length, was constructed one-fourth mile Southeast of ECHERY (V-570590) on 27 November only to be dismantled the following day after a timber trestle bridge was constructed in the meantime at the same location.

Two casualties were suffered by Company C during the last five days of November. Sgt Luther J. Matlock, 38037290, home address: Ravenna, Texas was lightly wounded by a Schu mine on 27 November while Private Clarence Smith, Jr, 36162267, home address: Willis, Mich., was lightly wounded the same date by a shell fragment.

On 27 November the battalion command post was moved from RAVES to STE MARIE AUX MINES (V-590600) where it remained the last four days of November.

A total of fifty-seven replacements were received by the battalion during the month. Of that number, three were former members of the battalion. As a whole, replacements did not meet the desired standard. In some cases, replacements were former members of units whose strength had been reduced as a result of reorganization.

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A part of Company A was employed in building new approaches to a bridge one mile South of SAULCY (V-429591) as well as repairing the bridge. Meanwhile, a platoon from the same company repaired and maintained a mountain trail near LES BAGNELLES (V-543547), using a bulldozer to widen it.

A total of eleven road blocks were removed by the various companies during the course of the day. While a platoon of Company B was making preparations to remove one of these blocks on the road between LA VANCELLE and HURST (V-705645) to enable armor that had previously by-passed the obstacle to return to LIEPVRE (V-6563) without crossing wet fields, a nearby house was noted with suspicion. A four man patrol was dispatched and upon its entering the house German voices were heard in the basement. After threatening to throw hand grenades into the basement, fifteen enemy soldiers came out and surrendered. Numerous machine guns and machine pistols were found in the basement. A large amount of abatis was also removed by Company B along the road between THANVILLE to SCHERWILLER (V-723670, V-727664, V-730662 and V-733660) and from the road one-half mile East of KINTZHEIM (V-740618). Company C removed nine abatis road blocks and one post obstacle road block. All of the abatis obstacles were cleared in the vicinities of RIBEAUVILLE (V-6258) and AUBURE (V-6357) while the post obstacle was found one fourth of a mile North of CHATENOIS (V-747644). Six of the abatis road blocks were of minor character while two were one hundred yards in length and another fifty yards long.

2 DECEMBER:

Company A moved from MANDRAY (V-451579) to VERPELLIERE (V-499592) and after arrival a minesweeping party was sent out to clear a one mile section of road in the vicinity of LE ROSSBERG (V-514531) and another like distance in the vicinity of GAZONS (V-511537). No mines were found on either of these roads. One platoon of Company B mineswept a road from SCHATLAGER AUBRE (V-717611) to ORSCHWILLER (V-739603), removing three E-M-43 mines as well as abatis and road blocks formed by felled trees and log cribs. Another platoon of Company B, in direct support of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment, checked roads in the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-7962) for mines but none was detected. An undetermined number of enemy Tellermines, wooden box mines and Schu mines were removed by Company C during the course of minesweeping operations along a road two miles North of AUBURE (V-625587) to a point one mile North of the same village.

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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

DECEMBER 1944

1-1044

At the beginning of December 1944 the Battalion Command Post, Headquarters and Service Company, Medical Detachment and Company C were stationed in STE MARIE AUX MINES (V-5960), while Company A was located at MANDRAY (V-451579) and Company B at LIEPVRE (V-664636). A greater part of the engineer missions performed by the battalion occurred the first week of December. During that period minesweeping presented the greatest problem, however numerous road blocks were removed. Road maintenance and repair, although some of this work was done, failed to be of major consequence as during the two previous months.

1 DECEMBER:

Numerous roads were mineswept by the three lettered companies during the day. Various roads from a point one mile South of ECHERY to LES BAGNELLES (V-538549) and from BON REPOS (V-467549) to TRAIZE (V-455543) were cleared of mines by Company A. Six R-M-43 mines were removed from the latter road but none was found on the former. A road from HEIGT KOENIGSBOURG CHATEAU (V-709613) to KINTZHEIM (V-745619) was mineswept by Company B, however no mines were detected. As the squad from Company B, which performed this mission, moved by truck into KINTZHEIM enemy artillery shells fell near the truck, instantly killing Private Ernest Vanier, 32575225, home address: Cohoes, N. Y. and lightly wounding Corporal Joseph Friday, 33247476, home address: Tyler, Pa., Private 1cl Edwin W. Neumann, 36173630, home address: Caloma, Mich. and Privates Thomas Frost, 33900466, home address: Baltimore, Md. and Kenneth L. Engelhardt, 37471523, home address: Hastings, Neb. Company C removed five R-M-43 mines at a location about three and one-half miles Northeast of RIEHAUVILLE (V-623587) and another nine R-M-43 mines, fifty Scha mines and three wooden box mines when clearing the road from BOIS L ABBESSE to CHATEOIS (V-752842) and from one and one-half miles Northeast of AUBURE (V-623578) to a point one mile Northeast of AUBURE (V-634569). While the detail was working one and one-half miles Northeast of AUBURE the enemy laid artillery fire upon the area and Tec 5 Leroy O. Gloor, 20817632, home address: Gonzales, Texas, an aid man attached from the battalion Medical Detachment, was lightly wounded in the leg by a shell fragment.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 - U. S. ARMY

L-1041

11 January 1945

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U. S. Army

1. Herewith, "Operations in France, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of December 1944, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above report:

a. Operations: All problems that were encountered during the month of December were overcome with engineer equipment on hand. Ice began to form in mountain passes, making driving hazardous at night. Sand and clinders were used to overcome this. Companies "A" and "B" were used as Infantry in a defensive position. Company "A" was in the line twenty-four hours and received an attack estimated to be two companies of enemy infantry supported by tanks. The company's left flank lost some ground and sustained casualties. Company "B" was in the line forty-eight hours, held its position but sustained some casualties due to artillery fire. Company "C" maintained road blocks against enemy infiltration.

b. Mines and booby-traps: The pressure applied by our troops prevented the enemy from laying many mines and booby-traps. A new mine was encountered—the Topf mine. This mine is entirely constructed of plastic and glass. The Mine Detector SCR 625 failed to be of assistance in locating these buried Topf mines. Roads had to be probed to find them. A new mine detector designed to locate non-metallic mines was secured. Due to the sensitivity of this detector, it did not prove satisfactory.

c. Water supply: Water supply was ample. Five water points were operated, furnishing water to the Division units.

d. Map supply: Supply of maps was satisfactory. Resupply of 1/25,000 was unsatisfactory. Due to unit's working with the French, 1/20,000 scale maps were issued instead of 1/25,000, however this presented no great problem and did not hamper operations.

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e. Engineer supply and equipment: The distance to the depots serving the Division became a complicating factor for engineer supply during the month of December. The existing shortage of engineer pocket knives, discharge hose, electric lamps and simple fixtures has not yet been relieved, with the result that the supply of these items has become critically short. Motor-generator sets, particularly of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ KW size, are also critically short. The previously reported critical shortage of lensatic compasses, mine probes, lithographic paper and axes was considerably reduced by the receipt of a quantity of these items. However, the axes received were captured German materiel and of an inferior type. Topographic supplies and acetate products continue to be received, though the supply still does not satisfy the demand. Scotch tape is particularly short. The supply of oxygen, acetylene and hydrogen has continued to be satisfactory for Division requirements.



ERNEST L. PETREE

Major., 11th Engineer Combat Bn.
Commanding

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The only road maintenance and repair performed during the day was conducted by Company C. Roads between CHATENOIS (V-751633) and SELESTAT (V-779662) and various roads in the vicinity of AUBURE (V-611579) and RIBEAUVILLE (V-646564) were opened for traffic. For the most part, this required removing road blocks and scattered abatis. Six abatis road blocks were removed along the road from two miles North of AUBURE (V-625586) to one and three-fourths miles North of the same town, one of these blocks being one hundred and fifty yards in length and a second one two hundred and fifty yards long. A post obstacle road block was also removed one-half mile South of CHATENOIS (V-751626) while an abatis obstacle three and one-half miles Northwest of RIBEAUVILLE was completely removed and another obstacle of the same type three miles Northeast of the same town (V-646564) was partially removed. During the removal of the latter road block Private John Waroblak, 13069175, home address: Pittsburgh, Pa. was seriously wounded in the abdomen by a shell fragment from enemy artillery action.

3 DECEMBER:

During the day Company A mineswept roads from ECHERY (V-575593) to the vicinity of REBERG (V-566557); from LES BAGNELLES (V-539549) to FAURUPT (V-551538) and from a small stream one and one-half miles North of AUBURE (V-614569) to the village. Twenty-five Schu mines, six wooden box mines and two R-M-43 mines were found along the last road, however none was located on the first two. A road block consisting of fifteen trees was also removed on the LES BAGNELLES--FAURUPT road. One platoon from Company B searched a road in the vicinity of ST HIPPOLYTE (V-717603) for mines but none was found. All three platoons of Company C were engaged at various times throughout the day in minesweeping of roads. A road from three-fourths of a mile North of AUBURE (V-612669) to AUBURE (V-615663) was checked as well as a road from CHATENOIS (V-752642) to three-fourths of a mile Northwest of SELESTAT (V-770633) and from one and one-half miles Northwest of RIBEAUVILLE (V-664565) to three-fourths miles Northwest of the same town. Twenty-two "S" mines were removed from the second road mentioned above but the other two roads were found to be free of mines.

Road maintenance continued to be of minor importance, with the possible exception of one road block which was removed by Company C at a location three miles Northwest of RIBEAUVILLE (V-664456). This block consisted of felled trees matted together for a distance of approximately two miles. Three enemy anti-tank ditches constructed across a road in the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-786619) were filled by Company B.

The entire of Company A moved from VERELLIERE (V-499592) to STE MARIE AUX MINES (V-589609) during the day.

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4 DECEMBER:

Only three roads were mineswept during the day--one of these by Company A from AUBURE (V-616554) to the South for a distance of one-half mile and another from the same town to the Southeast (V-619548) for a like distance, while the third road from three and one-half miles Southwest of RIBEAUVILLE (V-651548) to one-half mile Northwest of RIQUEWIHR (V-667527) was cleared by Company C. None of these roads was found to be mined.

One platoon of Company B constructed a plank road across a railroad yard in the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-781620) and during the course of this work located an "S" minefield in the vicinity and taped it off with tracing tape. Meanwhile, a platoon from Company A repaired a culvert on the main road one-half mile North of AUBURE (V-614569).

Shortly after Company B's moving from LIEPVRE (V-664836) to CHATENOIS (V-749633) at 1300 hours, a platoon was dispatched from the company to remove a road block in the vicinity of TRANNENKIRCH (V-6759). Due to stubborn resistance the road block was not cleared of the enemy and the platoon returned to the company without accomplishing the mission.

5 DECEMBER:

A part of Company A returned to the AUBURE vicinity to perform minesweeping missions during the day. Three wooden box mines were removed from a side street in AUBURE and five R-M-43 mines were removed from a road block one-half mile North of the town (V-616562). None of the other roads searched--from one mile South of AUBURE (V-609534) to BELMONT (V-593535) and from one mile South of AUBURE (V-609534) to one and one-half miles Northwest of RIQUEWIHR (V-646537)--were mined. All streets and houses in AUBURE (V-616554) were searched for booby-traps. Nine enemy, plastic Topf mines were removed from the road near TRANNENKIRCH (V-752580) by Company B, however no other mines were found by the company on minesweeping missions on the road from KINTZHEIM (V-746616) to ORSCHWILLER (V-740611) and from ORSCHWILLER (V-740611) to ST HIPPOLYTE (V-726593). Nineteen enemy Topf mines were removed by Company C during minesweeping operations on a road from RIBEAUVILLE (V-700548) to one mile West of GUEMAR (V-728543). From the other roads searched for mines--from HUNAWIHR (V-683534) to one-half mile South of RIBEAUVILLE (V-694557); from RIBEAUVILLE to BERTHEIM (V-719563); from RIQUEWIHR (V-679519) to one-half mile Northeast of RIQUEWIHR (V-686521); from two miles Southwest of RIBEAUVILLE (V-651548) to one mile Northwest of HUNAWIHR (V-664539) and from RIBEAUVILLE (V-698548) to three-fourths of a mile Northwest of OSTHEIM (V-719523)--none was detected.

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During the morning a platoon of Company B returned to the vicinity of THANNENKIRCH and removed four road blocks between that town and BERGHEIM (V-719563). At the same time a detail from Company C removed a road block at GUEMAR (V-745543) while still another detail removed a post obstacle road block one mile Northwest of HUNAWIHR (V-662540). Worse spots along a road in the vicinity of KINTZHEIM (V-749622), which had been badly beaten by tank traffic, were filled and widened by Company B.

Private Edward W. Ludwig, 33301159, home address: Donora, Pa. of Company C was lightly wounded in the left leg by sniper fire during above-mentioned minesweeping operations one mile West of GUEMAR (V-728543).

6 DECEMBER:

Aside from one minesweeping mission performed by Company C, no others were carried out by the battalion. However, no mines were found by this company while searching a road from GUEMAR (V-752543) to the eastern outskirts of the town (V-752543). Nevertheless, a number of mines were found on an enemy road block removed by Company C.

An enemy anti-tank ditch constructed across the main road one mile South of AUBURN (V-611537) was filled by Company A. Meanwhile, one platoon from Company B was used in the construction of an improvised footbridge across the ILL RIVER (V-793619) in the vicinity of SELESTAT for the passage of Infantry troops. Another platoon of the same company ferried two infantry platoons across the ILL RIVER (V-791617) in the early morning by the use of rubber reconnaissance boats.

X Two post obstacle road blocks were removed in the outskirts of OSTHEIM (V-721511) by Company C. Although this type of obstacle had not been encountered to any great degree previously, on this occasion explosives were used in their removal. One hundred and fifty pounds of TNT were used, the entire charge being placed in the front center of the obstacle with the resulting explosion clearing the entire crossed logs. Sixteen Topf mines were found and removed between the two blocks. In two cases wooden box mines were found buried beneath these Topf mines.

During the process of Company C's removing the two obstacles, four casualties were sustained. X Two men were killed: Private Earnest W. Wickham, 34366502, home address: Palmyra, Tenn. and Private Ralph R. Thompson, 33532679,

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home address: Salem, Va. Private 1cl Michael J. Thomas, 35276875, home address: Cleveland, Ohio and Private John R. Sudatz, 33401554, home address: Pittsburgh, Pa. were lightly wounded by a booby-trap set off in one of the road blocks. Private Wickham was mistakenly shot and instantly killed by Infantry security while he was checking the road in the vicinity of the road blocks for mines, while Private Thompson was wounded from the booby-trap explosion and died at the aid station.

At 1500 hours the battalion command post was moved from STE MARIE AUX MINES to RIBEAUVILLE (V-695850). Company C had already moved to the same location the previous day. Heretofore, it had been the practice to establish the battalion net command radio station relatively close to the battalion command post. However, due to the terrain surrounding RIBEAUVILLE, the station was placed approximately one mile from the command post with telephone connections between them.

7 DECEMBER:

At 0700 hours Captain Thomas B. Gantier, Jr., O-461111, home address: Charleston, S. C., the battalion intelligence officer, departed from the command post to reconnoiter a possible bridge site across a small stream one-half mile North of CHATENOIS (V-750648). The reconnaissance was made by vehicle to within a distance of one hundred yards from the stream, the latter portion being made on foot. Captain Gantier proceeded cautiously and had reached the edge of the stream when he stepped on an "S" mine which seriously wounded him in the head, back and legs and rendered him unconscious. Immediate evacuation was effected by the vehicle driver and radio operator, however his wounds were fatal and he died at 1825 hours, 9 December 1944 at the 51st Evacuation Hospital.

A relatively small degree of minesweeping was conducted by the companies of the battalion during the day. A platoon of Company B mineswept a road from the vicinity of ST. HIPPOLYTE (V-754579) to GUEMAR (V-747544), from which six enemy Topf mines and seven B-M-43 mines were removed. Seven Topf mines were removed from a house in the western outskirts of OSTHEIM (V-720511) by a party from Company C.

A road block consisting of log cribs was removed by Company B on a road in the vicinity of ST. HIPPOLYTE (V-756584). The remainder of a road block in the western outskirts of RIBEAUVILLE (V-648553) was removed by Company C during the day which permitted two-way traffic around RIBEAUVILLE.

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8 DECEMBER:

A platoon from Company B returned to the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-796623) and began and completed the removal of an "S" minefield which had been located and taped off by the company on 4 December. Fifty "S" mines were removed, of which number three were booby-trapped. Paths were also cleared through another "S" minefield near SELESTAT (V-795619) to enable litter bearers to remove the body of an officer who had been killed by the explosion of one of the mines. In clearing this path three mines were removed and the remainder of the minefield was marked and taped off. Details from Company C mineswept roads from the northwestern outskirts of GUEMAR (V-746545) to within one-fourth of a mile northwest of the village. Twenty-three Topf mines were removed from this route and destroyed. Twenty Schu mines were also found in a building in GUEMAR (V-746544) by the same group. These Schu mines had been placed on the stairs, behind doors and some were found in straw beside the bodies of four dead German soldiers.

The remainder of a road block in the northwestern outskirts of RIBEAUVILLE (V-746545) was removed by Company C. Meanwhile, two platoons of the same company remained on the alert throughout the day, prepared to support action that might be taken by the 143rd Infantry Regiment.

With the exception of the company motor pool, Company A moved from STE MARIE AUX MINES (V-689609) to ST. HIPPOLYTE (V-726594) during the day and the company was not engaged in any operations.

9 DECEMBER:

Altogether, sixty-five enemy mines of various types were removed by the companies of the battalion during the day. Six Topf mines were removed from the road between BERGHEIM (V-722561) to ST. DE RIBEAUVILLE (V-730544) by Company A, while another ten mines of the same type were found along the road from GUEMAR (V-746543) to OSTHEIM (V-727513) and six more were cleared from a road block one-half mile South of ST. HIPPOLYTE (V-725563). The road from RIBEAUVILLE (V-687556) to within one-fourth of a mile Southwest of BORSCHWIHR (V-723571) was also mineswept by Company A but no mines were located. Four minefields in the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-796624, V-796624, V-796625 and V-796626) were cleared by Company B. Forty-three "S" mines were removed from the four fields. A fifth minefield was located in the same area (V-796622) but was marked and taped off and not cleared. Corporal Wilbur J. Gasper, 36173683, home address: Belding, Mich. was lightly wounded by a pellet from a booby-trapped "S" mine during the removal of the aforementioned minefields. Still another group from Company B

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mineswept the road and shoulders of the road from ST. HIPPOLYTE (V-726593) to RORSCHWIHR (V-723576) as well as from RORSCHWIHR (V-723576) to BERGHEIM (V-719563) but no mines were found. The same results were obtained by a platoon from Company C which mineswept a road from the western outskirts of HEBLEHEIM (V-691510) to MITTELWIHR (V-691501), rendering the road usable for one-way traffic. Two derelict, enemy vehicles were, however, removed from the latter road.

The road from HUNAWIHR (V-682534) to RIQUEWIHR (V-673521) was drained and improved by filling the deep ruts with rock by the three platoons of Company A. Similar road maintenance was performed by a platoon of Company B in the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-749623).

10 DECEMBER:

Ten Topf mines and eighteen Schu mines were removed by a platoon of Company A while minesweeping a road one mile South of RIQUEWIHR (V-666503). A platoon from Company B marked an enemy "S" minefield in the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-796626) while still another platoon of the company mineswept a road South of BERGHEIM (V-722561) to STATION DE RIBEAUVILLE (V-730543) but failed to detect any mines. Nevertheless, three Topf mines were later found while searching the shoulders of a road in the vicinity of RODEEM (V-723585 to V-716584). This latter road had been previously mineswept by another organization.

Still only a small amount of road maintenance was required. The three line platoons of Company A opened a trail along the edge of a woods from ST. HIPPOLYTE (V-724594) to REICHENBERG (V-704574) for use by the Infantry. Later, two platoons of the company hauled gravel and repaired a road from HUNAWIHR (V-682534) to RIQUEWIHR (V-673521).

Company C was not engaged in actual operations during the day, however one platoon from the company dismantled a portable shower unit in STE MARIE AUX MINES, moved and erected it in RIBEAUVILLE.

11-12 DECEMBER:

Although several roads were checked for mines during the period, none was found. On 11 December Company B mineswept a road in the vicinity of SELESTAT (V-797623). The following day the same company mineswept an area in the vicinity of CHATENOIS, while at the same time Company C mineswept a road from a point one and one-half miles Southwest of RIBEAUVILLE (V-651549) to one mile Northwest of RIQUEWIHR (V-646538).

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Also, a comparatively small amount of road repair and maintenance was occasioned. On 11 December a platoon of Company A cut tree branches overhanging along a trail one mile South of RIQUEWIHR (V-664504) as well as hauling five truckloads of gravel which was spread along the main road from RIQUEWIHR (V-673521) to HUNAWIHR (V-682534). Meanwhile, Company B removed an enemy road block in the vicinity of SEIESTAT (V-795623) which consisted of log cribbing filled with earth. This road block was removed by demolition and a tank-doxer and was considered by that company to be the most efficiently built obstacle of its type so far encountered during the company's combat operations.

At 2000 hours on 12 December Company B was alerted to be used as Infantry troops. Immediately each platoon of the company made the necessary preparations for such employment but the company was not committed during the day. However, during the afternoon of 12 December the enemy's capabilities of retaking RIBEAUVILLE became much greater and as early as 1400 hours all the personnel of the battalion command post were alerted to be ready to defend the position. At 2300 hours the three line platoons of Company A were moved from ST. HIPPOLYTE to RIBEAUVILLE as a division reserve and likewise Company C was placed on the same status. Nothing developed during the night and by morning the position of the town appeared more secure.

13-16 DECEMBER:

In the early evening of 13 December, Companies A and B were committed as Infantry in the defense of a position on the North side of Hill #393, one mile South of RIQUEWIHR (V-674498), Company B being placed on the right flank of Company A. During the process of ascending the hill to effect the relief of an Infantry company, three men from Company B and an attached medical aid man were lightly wounded during an enemy artillery barrage. Private 1cl Victor R. Honey, 36173802, home address: Jasper, Mich. and Private Fred F. Kolsbarger, 39194728, home address: Biquiam, Wash. were lightly wounded by fragments and hospitalized while Private Bruno G. Pistoni, 31292071, home address: Providence, R. I. was lightly wounded but not hospitalized. Private 1cl Clarence E. Hunter, 36040549, home address: Sterling, Ill., attached to Company B from the battalion Medical Detachment, was lightly wounded and hospitalized.

Although Company C was given the mission of establishing three outposts in the vicinity of RIBEAUVILLE (V-709546, V-706538 and V-694537) and patrolling the edge of the woods immediately to the North of RIBEAUVILLE in the afternoon of 13 December, earlier in the day this company laid two anti-tank mine road blocks consisting of fifteen mines at one point and thirteen at the other at locations one mile Northwest of RIQUEWIHR (V-645525) and one-fourth mile Northwest of the same village (V-645526). Four Tellermine and two Schu mines were removed by the company at a point one and one-half miles Northwest of RIBEAUVILLE (V-659558).

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X At 0100 hours, 14 December an enemy force attacked the position held by Company A one mile South of RIQUEWIHE (V-674498). A part of the company's position was overrun but the attack was stopped and held until dawn, at which time a larger enemy force attacked, breaking through the company's position and encircling the first platoon. The remaining two platoons withdrew approximately three hundred yards and formed another defense line (V-671500). At 1200 hours two companies of Infantry passed through Company A and restored the company's original position. During this action Corporal Clarence W. Aldrich, 17067183, home address: Montbelle, Iowa; Tec 5 George E. Taylor, 20818219, home address: Victoria, Texas and Privates 1cl Eugene Whitlock, 34367081, home address: Lucy, Tenn. and David A. Watson, 37013642, home address: Wichita, Kansas were lightly wounded. Eight enemy soldiers were taken prisoner during the engagement. At 2000 hours Company A was relieved by an Infantry company. Although contact with the first platoon of Company A was lost during the early part of the attack, it later developed that a large portion of this platoon was either killed or missing, X as indicated below:

<u>N A M E</u>	<u>SERIAL NUMBER</u>	<u>HOME ADDRESS</u>
KILLED IN ACTION:		
Sgt Arthur E. Hertel	16062591	Detroit, Mich.
Tec 5 Ernest C. Boddys	39163524	Beloit, Kansas
Tec 5 David Lalicata	32683840	Corona, N. Y.
Pvt 1cl Francis C. Berchem	37566150	St Paul, Minn.
Pvt 1cl His Nielsen	37197752	Harlan, Iowa
Pvt Floyd H. Lewis	31427339	Sandwich, Mass.
MISSING IN ACTION:		
2d Lt John M. Semonds, Jr.	0-1116183	Charlotte, N. C.
S/Sgt Arthur W. Bunch	20818166	Goliad, Texas
Sgt Donald D. Barnett	38052406	Texas City, Texas
Cpl John Benedette	32238852	Falisdos Park, N. J.
Cpl Don S. Shoemaker	37073944	North Platt, Neb.
Tec 5 Robert W. McFarland	11055229	Roxbury, Mass.
Pvt 1cl James E. Gordon	33239454	New Cumberland, Pa.
Pvt 1cl Clinton F. Hall	34465194	Rasford, N. C.
Pvt 1cl Leo M. Kraus	32592048	South Amboy, N. J.
Pvt 1cl Virgil A. Leishman	35597542	Salineville, Ohio
Pvt 1cl Franklin M. Philpott, Sr	35659304	Huntington, W. Va.
Pvt 1cl Lawrence E. Rieve	20818094	Hackbury, La.
Pvt 1cl Daniel J. Ryan	32298287	Astoria, LI, NY.

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X Throughout 15 December Company B remained alert in expectation of an enemy attack upon its position. Very little artillery exchange was noted. In the afternoon another mortar section from the Infantry was brought up to support the company, however a small counterattack at 1700 hours was repulsed without difficulty. At 2200 hours Company B received a message that its relief would be effected before dawn the following morning, which was accomplished. The relief began at 0645 hours, 16 December and was completed by 0715 hours. X During the relief Tec 5 Elmore Scaffidel, 38376839, home address: New Orleans, La. was lightly wounded in the hand by a shell fragment. The company returned to its original bivouac at LIEPVHE.

17 - 18 DECEMBER:

Eight Topf mines and four Schu mines were removed by a platoon of Company A on 18 December while minesweeping a road from one mile North of KINTZHEIM (V-667504) into the town. On the same day Company C removed twenty-five Topf mines from a road in the vicinity of MITTELEWIER (V-690501 to V-690500). Seven American anti-tank mines were also removed in this same area.

In addition to the minesweeping details performed by Company C during 18 December, the company continued to maintain outposts in the vicinity of RIBEAUVILLE until late in the afternoon when the company was relieved of those duties. Meanwhile, one road was repaired and maintained from CHATENOIS (V-751634) to ST. HIPPOLYTE (V-729592) by Company B. This maintenance required removal of scattered abatis and filling numerous holes. Shell holes were filled and the road drained from RIQUEWIER (V-674518) to KINTZHEIM (V-662488) by a platoon of Company A on 18 December.

Beginning at 0500 hours, 18 December the enemy directed heavy artillery upon the village of RIBEAUVILLE—170 and 210 millimeter caliber. This action continued until 0800 hours at about five minute intervals. At 0800 hours a 210 millimeter shell struck in the area occupied by Company C, demolishing the side of a building in which part of the company was billeted as well as completely destroying one 1/4-ton trailer and badly damaging a second trailer that was parked nearby. Four resultant casualties were sustained by the company. Sergeant James A. Glenn, 20817953, home address: Yantis, Texas and Tec 4 Albert Coker, 20817938, home address: Emory, Texas were lightly wounded by falling masonry, while Privates 1cl Philip DiCarlo, 31147912, home address: West Worick, R. I. was seriously wounded by a fragment penetrating the right buttock and lodging in the abdomen, causing his death on 20 December, and Earl E. Watson, 39084813, home address: Monmouth, Oregon suffered serious head wounds resulting in his death on 31 December.

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19 DECEMBER:

Previous reconnaissance was made for a bivouac area for Company A in the outskirts of STRASBOURG (V-004955) on 18 December, and during 19 December the company moved. Meanwhile, a platoon of Company B maintained and repaired a road from KIETZHEIM (V-666500) to RIQUEWIHR (V-662487), along which road one hundred yards were repaired by laying timber planking (V-662487). Two men from Company B were lightly wounded during this work: Private Domenic A. Calderone, 13080759, home address: Ardmore, Pa. and Private Oral L. Shelton, 35155671, home address: Montgomery, Ind. Six Topf mines were removed from a road block, consisting of old wagons loaded with logs and other debris, in MITLEWIHR (V-691501) by one platoon of Company C while another platoon laid ten American anti-tank mines to form a road block at MITLEWIHR (V-692500).

20 - 26 DECEMBER:

The remainder of the battalion moved to the vicinity of STRASBOURG during the period. On 20 December the battalion command post was moved from RIEBAUVILLE to KOENIGSHOFFEN (V-987972), a suburb of STRASBOURG. On the same day Company B maintained a road from KIETZHEIM (V-666500) to RIQUEWIHR (V-662487), while Company C set four trip flares for the Infantry in the MITLEWIHR (V-692501) sector as well as removing a log crib road block in SIGALSHIM (V-678487). Private Doy W. Marks, 35595220, home address: Akron, Ohio, a member of Headquarters and Service Company operating a water point, was lightly wounded in the foot by a shell fragment on 20 December.

On 21 December Company C moved from RIEBAUVILLE to KOENIGSHOFFEN (V-687972) to be followed the next day by Company B's moving from LIEPVRE to the same vicinity. After the entire battalion had moved to the STRASBOURG vicinity, very little engineer work was required. On 22 December nineteen trip-wire flares were placed by Company A along a road parallelling the RHINE RIVER one mile East of STOCKFELD (V-046923 to V-045915), while another forty-eight trip flares were placed by the same company on a road near FT. HOCH (V-026887 to V-018875). Sixty-five more trip-wire flares were placed by Company A along the main road parallelling the RHINE RIVER one mile East of STOCKFELD (V-004908 to V-047935) and fifty-four additional ones at a point one-fourth mile North of FT. HOCH (V-026887 to V-045899 on 23 December. On 24 December thirty-five trip-wire flares were placed by Company A on the main road parallelling the RHINE RIVER one mile East of NEUNOF (V-047934). A platoon of Company C rigged and set out two hundred booby-trapped hand grenades as well as twenty-four trip-wire flares in front of two Infantry company's positions on 23 December and the following day placed seventy-six booby-trapped hand grenades and ten trip-wire flares in addition to stringing one hundred and fifty yards of concertina wire.

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Orders for the entire battalion's movement from the STRASBOURG area to an area South of SARRSBOURG were received on 25 December. On 26 December the battalion moved, with the battalion command post, Headquarters and Service Company, Medical Detachment and Company A moving into the village of ESSE (Q-492108) and Companies B and C moving into BUEL (Q-521141). The remainder of the month was used in training.

Seventy-eight enlisted reinforcements were received during December as well as twenty-two battle and non-battle casualties returned to the unit. The standard of training of the reinforcements received was generally good however the period of training during the latter part of December was not sufficient especially for Company A which sustained heavy casualties during the month.

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HEADQUARTERS, 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO # 36 - U S ARMY

L-104

16 February 1945

Subject: History of Organization.

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army.

1. Herewith "Operations in France, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of January 1945, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above report:

a. Operations: Engineer assignments executed during January were defensive in nature. All activities were hampered by continual snow, frozen ground, and a shortage of fortification materials. Camouflage of vehicles was effected by painting them with a lime-salt whitewash, tho' white cloth, had it been available, would have been more suitable. The tactical situation demanded excavations in open terrain by use of the D-7 dozer after camouflet demolition had been effected. Weather conditions were such that the E-4 and tank-dozer were inadequate. However, the latter was able to operate effectively in wooded areas. The mission of clearing ever-drifting snow from the Division road net was placed under the supervision of one officer. All E-4 dozers and one snow plow were placed at his disposal. When surface ice demanded further attention, dump trucks and salt or sand spreading details were furnished on call.

b. Mines and Booby-traps: No enemy mines were encountered.

c. Water Supply: The Division water points supplied a total of 925,508 gallons of water during the month. There was no problem in siting the points as there was an abundance of clear streams in the Division area. One portable unit was attached to each combat team, the remaining portable unit and the mobile unit were used to supply the special troops and to supplement areas of excessive demand. The supply of water purification chemicals, and the maintenance of the equipment continues to be satisfactory.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: The change to defensive operations during the month of January brought an unprecedented heavy demand for the use of fortification materials of all types, such as barbed wire rolls, barbed wire concertina, pickets, demolition material, anti-tank, mines, sandbags, poles, lumber, and roofing paper. The limited supply of these items was on a ration basis, and towards the end of the month a shortage became exceedingly critical. However, with the completion of the

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projected fortified belts, the demand dropped, and it was possible to accumulate a small reserve of most of these items. American anti-tank mines were unobtainable, and it has been necessary to substitute the British Mark V mines, which the troops do not consider as safe to handle, and are therefore, less desirable. Army engineer supply has taken over the supply of all types of fire extinguishers and refilling chemicals. Because of limited supply, these chemicals are issued only to Army Fire Stations, and it is necessary to take Division extinguishers to a fire station for refilling, necessitating an excessive amount of handling and transportation. The only limiting factor of otherwise satisfactory engineer equipment maintenance was the lack of availability of spare parts.



ERNEST L. PETREE

Major, 111th Engineer Combat Bn
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

JANUARY 1945

L-1042

Much in contrast to the operations of the battalion during previous months of combat, in January 1945 the preparation of defensive positions highlighted the activities, rather than extensive minesweeping, as in the past. Heavy snows during the month made it necessary to keep the roads clear by the use of bulldozers and snow plows, as well as spreading gravel and sand over them.

1 - 5 JANUARY:

On 26 December 1944 the battalion was relieved from combat for a period of training. This training period, nevertheless, was short-lived and on the evening of 1 January, Company A was alerted and moved from HESSE (Q492108) to MACKWILLER (Q589365). On the night of 3 January the remainder of the battalion with the exception of the service sections of Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment moved. Company B moved from BUHL (Q521138) to two and one-half miles Southwest of MONTERONN (Q556417). Company C moved from BUHL (Q521141) to RAHLING (Q619437), while the battalion command post was moved from HESSE (Q492108) to RATZWILLER (Q637396).

On 2 January Company A again moved from MACKWILLER (Q589365) to MONTERONN (Q683441). During the same day four abatis road blocks were taken under control of the company and guarded. These obstacles were located along the road from MONTERONN to ST LOUIS to GOETZENBRUCK (Q705434, Q733437, Q724427 and Q731439). Two bridges in the same vicinity (Q721451 and Q743438) were prepared for demolition. All of these obstacles were manned by Company A until 5 January at which time the company was relieved of this mission by Company B. On 3 January a hasty minefield consisting of one hundred and twelve M-1 A-1 mines was laid in the vicinity of LEMBERG (Q748461). One squad of the company hauled and spread three truckloads of gravel along icy street corners in TIEFFENBACK (Q647341) and MONTERONN (Q683441).

The battalion command post moved from RATZWILLER (Q683441) to MONTERONN (Q683441) on the morning of 5 January, while Company A moved from the latter town to RATZWILLER. With the three lettered companies now situated, work on defensive positions was soon to begin.

Aside from one platoon of Company A which remained in readiness to remove a road block one-half mile North of LEMBERG (Q747458), four truckloads of gravel were hauled and spread on the icy streets in ST LOUIS (Q721432). Meanwhile a platoon of Company B performed a like mission along the main supply route between MONTERONN (Q686437) to WADERHOF (Q623402). With the increasing

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snow and the accompanying freezing weather, the problem of reducing the icy surface along the various roads became greater. On 5 January reconnaissance was conducted by both Companies B and C for sand or salt pits. Both were found by Company C, with a sand pit being located at KASRASTEL and a salt pit at SALTZERONN.

During 5 January Company B relieved Company A of its mission of guarding road blocks. After the relief was effected, Company B placed protective wire in front of a block near LEMBERG (Q748460). Due to the nearness of the enemy to this obstacle, concertina wire was prepared to the rear of the block and carried forward uncoiled. This method required more time but was considered safer than performing the entire work of stretching the wire forward of the block.

6 - 9 JANUARY

Plans were made for a main line of resistance to extend generally from one-half mile North of DIEMERINGEN (Q597386) Eastward to Q610402 to one mile South of BUTTEN (Q620407) to Q603407 to Q640405 to Q670392 Southeast to VOLKSHERG (Q680388).

Between the 6th and 9th of January, seventeen minefields were laid by various companies. Two minefields consisting of one hundred mines each were laid by Company B on 6 January, one being located on the ST LOUIS - LEMBERG road (Q734440) and the other near ST LOUIS (Q723430). Again the following day the same company laid two more fields, however, larger than those of the previous day. Both of these were executed about five hundred yards North of ST LOUIS (Q724442), one consisting of one hundred and eight mines and the other two hundred and sixteen mines. Nine minefields, varying in size, were laid on 8 January. The largest of these was placed by Company A at a location one-half mile Southeast of ENCHENBERG (Q721453 to Q720458) which required eighteen hundred and seven mines. Four minefields located at various points from two miles Southwest of MONTERONN to one and three-fourths miles NORTHWEST of MONTERONN (Q677418) and one field two miles South of the same village were laid by Company C, while Company B began three minefields of one hundred mines each near LE HELSCHEID (Q697425, Q696424, and Q697423) which were completed the following day. Company A also laid another field on 9 January five miles Southeast of ENCHENBERG (Q721450) which consisted of five hundred and twenty-two mines.

In addition to the road blocks already being manned, on 6 January Company C was assigned the task of guarding nine more. Four of these obstacles were prepared charges on various roads leading to MONTERONN (Q674424, Q677413 and Q676410) with the fifth in the vicinity of MONTERONN (Q676410) being a post obstacle. To complete the nine, a prepared charge road block

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was located near MEISENTHAL (Q697404) with three remaining post obstacles near VOLKSBERG (Q681388) (Q681386) and (Q688437). A change in unit boundaries on 7 January excluded one road block guarded by Company B near (Q696424), but at the same time another block near ENCHELBERG (Q709463) came within the company's sector, thereby sustaining the original total. Meanwhile, a demolition charge was prepared to effect a road crater near ST LOUIS (Q727437). Three additional road blocks were assigned to Company C for guard on 8 January, two of these being post obstacles near VOLKSBERG (Q681388 and Q681387) and the third an abatis obstacle located one-half mile North of the same town (Q683391). On 9 January, Co B was relieved from covering two road blocks near ENCHENBERG (Q694473 and Q677467), however, another block in the same vicinity was placed under the company's control (Q696424), resulting in a decrease of one obstacle. On the same day a bridge prepared for demolition one mile Southeast of MONTEBRONN (Q697424) was placed under control of Co C.

Snow and freezing weather throughout this period necessitated constant attention to supply routes. These missions were performed entirely by Companies A and C. A total of twenty-eight truckloads of sand and gravel was hauled and spread on 6 January. Twenty-two loads of that figure were used by Company A on a road from NEUBAU (Q633406) to MONTEBRONN (Q683441) and from MONTEBRONN to SOUCHT (Q705398). The remaining six truckloads were required by Company C maintaining roads about one and one-half miles West of MONTEBRONN (Q659439). Further maintenance of roads in the same general areas required fifteen truckloads of sand and gravel the following day, while on 8 January, nineteen truckloads of sand, gravel and salt were used. On 9 January ten truckloads of gravel were hauled and spread by Company A along a road from MONTEBRONN (Q693438) to ENCHENBERG (Q710460).

The employment of tactical wire was to develop as the month progressed. Nevertheless, on 6 January, Company A placed four concertinas and two trip flares across the entrance of a railroad tunnel one-half mile East of SOUCHT (Q718395). Likewise, the use of explosives in preparing personnel shelters for the Infantry would increase with continued freezing weather. On 7 January Company C completed several underground shelters near MONTEBRONN, and resumed construction of additional ones the following day.

On the afternoon of 10 January Company C moved from RAHLING (Q619437) to an area two miles Southwest of MONTEBRONN (Q657417) where it bivouaced in a wooded area.

10 - 14 JANUARY:

Between 10 to 14 January none of the companies laid any minefields. However, Company A prepared to close a gap in a minefield previously laid one mile Southeast of ENCHENBERG (Q721450) on 10 January. This work required digging holes for burying thirty-eight mines necessary to close the

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gap. The following day Company C placed seven anti-tank mines and one anti-personnel mine to form a road block in LEMBERG (Q743446).

Continuous effort was made to improve the main line of resistance. Six hundred yards of five-strand, double apron fence was erected one-half mile Southwest of BUTTEN (Q615404) by Company A on 10 January. At the same time a part of this company drove wooden stakes in an adjacent area for the constructing of another double apron fence. On 13 and 14 January Company A continued to work in preparing the defense line improvements in the vicinities of BUTTEN (Q625405) and LOBENTZEN. Further strengthenings were made by Company C in the sector supported by the company. On 12 January four hundred yards of concertina wire were placed in front of an infantry battalion position three-fourths mile Southeast of LEMBERG (Q745435). Company C made further improvements of defensive positions in the RATZWILLER (Q637396) area on 14 January, which consisted mostly of preliminary preparations for erecting tactical wire.

In addition to the many road blocks and obstacles which had already been prepared and were being guarded on 10 January, Company C erected four abatis obstacles along trails in the vicinity of ST LOUIS (Q723430) and (Q697424). Prior to Company B's moving on 13 January, Company A relieved it of guarding eleven prepared road blocks between ST LOUIS AND LEMBERG (Q704434, Q730439, Q742436, Q749459, Q724429, Q721452, Q707457, Q708463, Q724442, Q727435 and Q746457). Company C was likewise relieved on ten road blocks, five of which were located about one and one-half miles Southwest of MONTERONN (Q697424, Q674423, Q678417, Q677415 and Q677411), one block one mile South of PETERSBACH (Q683304) and four blocks near VOLKSBERG (Q681388, Q682388, Q681387, and Q685390).

As a result of considerable snow and freezing weather, a large amount of demolitions were required in preparing positions in addition to that required in the preparation of obstacles. On 11 January, Company assisted an infantry unit in digging some thirty foxholes near VOLKSBERG (Q674393) by the use of explosives. Similar work was done by the same company on 12 January when explosives were used in preparing emplacements for two anti-tank guns one-half mile South of BUTTEN (Q625405) and one mile North of DIEMERINGEN (Q613390) where an infantry battalion command post was being prepared. The following day Company C assisted in building five personnel shelters, using explosives to loosen the frozen ground. A bridge near LE HELSCHEID (Q696424) was prepared for demolition on 10 January by Company C while during the following day explosive charges were placed on seven trees on the road one mile Southwest of MONTERONN (Q678417) so as to form a road block if executed. A railroad overpass in LEMBERG (Q743449) was also prepared by Company C on the same day for demolition using eight hundred

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pounds of explosives.

The problem of reducing the icy surface on roads still prevailed. Sand and gravel were not always readily available for this maintenance. However, and on 11 January Company C began the development of a pit one mile Southwest of MONTEBRONN (Q676411). Fifteen truckloads of sand were made available that day and this company continued developing the pit through 13 January. Meanwhile, on 12 January part of Company C spread sand along the road from one-quarter mile East of MONTEBRONN (Q700441) to one mile Southeast of the town (Q709433). This road was also stock piled with five truckloads of this material. On 14 January Company A hauled four loads of gravel and stock piled along the road from MONTEBRONN (Q693439) to LEMBERG (Q739447). During the same period a snow plow from Company A was being used to clear the road of snow from ENCHENBERG (Q710460) to LEMBERG (Q739447).

The inadequacy of fortification materials, particularly pickets, made it necessary that wooden pickets be cut from local timber. At various times, a part of all three line companies were engaged in this work. On 11 January Company A cut about one hundred and fifty pickets in an area one-half mile South of BUTTEN (Q625405). Company B performed the same work on 11, 12 and 13 January while part of Company C was so employed on 14 January.

Having been alerted on 13 January to move with the 142d Infantry Combat Team, on 14 January Company B moved from two miles Southwest of MONTEBRONN (Q656417) to HOSTE BAS (Q380520). Company A had already moved from RATZWILLER (Q647396) to MACKWILLER (Q590365) and Company C from two miles Southwest of MONTEBRONN (Q590365) into MONTEBRONN (Q688437) on 10 January. As soon as Company B arrived at HOSTE BAS, it was given the mission of guarding twenty-three road blocks in the general vicinity (Q246517, 281519, 307507, 307517, 337525, 332542, 186482, 380382, 207407, 248458, 349509, 347441, 361463, 386525, 405500, 404513, 505525, 419498, 413527, 423487, 423517, 421526, and 558563). A total distance of seventy-five miles was covered by these blocks.

15 - 18 JANUARY:

There were no changes in the various road blocks guarded by Companies A and C. On 15 January an enemy patrol was sighted very near one of the blocks manned by Company A but mortar fire was brought to bear, killing two and dispersing the rest. Company B renewed the fuses and primer on eight road blocks covered on 17 January.

Road maintenance remained to be confined to the same general routes as previously reported, that is, from ENCHENBERG (Q711461) to LEMBERG (Q739447) and MONTEBRONN to ENCHENBERG. During these four days this

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work fell to Company A. This included hauling twenty-one truckloads of gravel and ninety-seven truckloads of sand for stockpiling the roads.

A relative decline in the preparation of defensive positions occurred. On 17 January twenty-three concertinas and twenty-seven trip flares were installed by Company A along the edge of a woods one-half miles Southeast of LEMBERG (Q475438), while a bridge in PUTTELANGE (Q411503) was prepared for demolition by Company B. Throughout this time Company C was employed in improving switch positions between RATZWILLER and MONTERONN. This entailed cutting wooden pickets for one hundred and fifty yards of barbed wire fence which was constructed. In addition pits for self-propelled weapons were blasted along with fighting holes, nine squad shelters and three twenty-men shelters.

19 - 22 JANUARY:

During this next period, because of reassignment of Division sector, the battalion was in a state of movement, although defensive operations increased. The battalion including the command post, with the exception of Company B, was on the road 19 January. Company A moved from MACKWILLER (Q589365) to RATZWILLER (Q637396) a distance of forty-five miles. Company C left the bivouac at MONTERONN (Q688437) and arrived at OHLUNGEN (Q973236). The command post made the same shift as Company C but travelled the approximate forty miles in early morning hours. Company B had departed from HOSTE BAS (Q380527) on 18 January and arrived at midnight at their new bivouac at HAGUNEAU (R027228).

However, a ten to fifteen mile shift of locations was commenced when battalion command post left OHLUNGEN (Q973236) and moved slowly through heavy snows to BILWISHEIM (Q943123) on the evening of 20 January. Company C arrived at the same location in BILWISHEIM the next day, 21 January. Company B made an administrative move by platoons to BRUMATH (Q973153) on 20 January, while Company A's bivouac remained unchanged for the time.

Continuing defensive activities of Company A was lightened when their supply located and hauled to the Company area two hundred and fifty German concertinas from DIEMERINGEN (Q600385) on 19 January. The next day seventy of these and two hundred yards of barbed wire were placed in the battalion dump at ST LOUIS (Q718433). Also, one hundred thirty-four rolls of barbed wire were hauled one mile East of ENCHENBERG (Q729467). On the twenty-first of January Company A laid twenty-five rolls of concertinas at a road junction one-half miles Southeast of SARRREINSBURG from Q756408 to Q758407. Continued

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fortification in this area was carried on the next day when a triple four hundred yard concertina fence was laid one-quarter miles South of SARREINSBERG (Q744413 to Q748412).

One platoon of B Company constructed seventeen hundred yards of concertinas between a road junction (R089172) and a wooded area to the Southwest (R080156) on 20 January and the same day Company C made concertinas at their own bivouac.

In spite of the move from MACKWILLER (Q589365) to RATZWILLER (Q637396) Company A continued to man the road blocks previously mentioned, except for eight blocks, relief from which was effected by the 1109th Engineers. One platoon remained behind for handling of the rest of the blocks. On 22 January the platoon was relieved of these blocks in the LEMBERG, ENCHENBERG and ST LOUIS area. Company C on 20 January prepared twelve bridges for demolition and commenced manning same as roadblocks, located as follows: one mile East of WEYERSHEIM (R069121); one-half miles East of WEYERSHEIM (R059123); WEYERSHEIM (R050125); Southern outskirts of WEYERSHEIM (R047123); one-quarter miles Southwest of WEYERSHEIM (R042123); 1 mile West of WEYERSHEIM (R 028124); one-quarter miles South of GUEDERTHEIM (R016128); BRUMATH (Q981140); BRUMATH (R073147); BRUMATH (Q982144); GUEDERTHEIM (R016132); and BRUMATH (Q974147).

Intermittent falling snow necessitated Company using a snow plow from RATZWILLER (Q638399) to MONTERONN (Q710461), from ENCHENBERG (Q710460) to LEMBERG (Q739448), from LEMBERG (Q740444) to MONTERONN (Q720453) and from MONTERONN (Q675434) to SOUCHT (Q705400) on 21 January.

Upon arrival at HAGUENAU, Company B began diggin in tanks and tank destroyers for the 753d and the 636th Tank Battalions. Four tanks were dug in, in the vicinity of R091166, one thousand yards South of JANHOFTEN (R080170). Three more were entrenched in the vicinity of BISCHWILLER (R100180) and four more were placed on the East side of WEYERSHEIM (R054128). Because of frozen ground, demolitions had to be used before the D-7 dozer could effectively operate. On 22 January tank digging continued and Company B dug in three tanks by manual labor Southeast of WEYERSHEIM (R040120) during the day, and at night ten tank destroyers were blasted and shoveled in along the Southern edges of a wooded section three kilometres South of BISCHWILLER (R080180) between R075150 and R084152. "A" Company on 21 January was also aiding other units to bury themselves, and the D-7 dozer made four gun positions opposite a wooded sector for the 214th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion near MONTERONN (Q683438) and

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the following day six more gun positions were readied at the same location.

A speeding of pace in the use of defensive mine fields occurred when B and C Companies both laid mine belts. The former made a belt seven hundred yards long on the East side of WEYERSHEIM (R040120) from R0571131 to R076136 on 21 January, and placed a second on the Eastern side of WEYERSHEIM (R040120) starting at R073139 and extending down to the canal at R064121 and from R055112 to R062112. A single strand of barbed wire fence was layed along the friendly side of both areas. Six hundred mines had been placed in a hasty minefield by Company C at a point one-fourth miles South of BISCHWILLER (R094197) in the early morning of 21 January when an estimated one hundred and fifty British Mark 5 anti-tank mines exploded. The cause of the explosion was not determined but as a result eight men lost their lives and another eight were wounded. The killed enlisted men were: Corporal John R Simons, 38039657, home address: Scotland, Texas; Technician Grade V Chester A Haezner, 37049544, home address: St Louis, Missouri; Privates First Class Albin A Macheese, 33361931, home address: Girardville, Pennsylvania; Roy A Pflieger, 12051283, home address: Easton, Pennsylvania; Frederick V Ebbard, 33299828, home address: Oil City Pennsylvania; Joseph J Bliss, 33331115, home address: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Private Joseph A Ford, 31354185, home address: Roxbury, Mass. Private Isidore Keller, 32993935, home address: Brooklyn, New York, died of wounds on 23 January 1945. Technician Grade V Louie J V'Dovick, 36173935, home address: Grand Haven, Michigan and Pvt Stephen Somal, 32092516, home address: Hastings, New York were seriously wounded, with the remaining being lightly wounded: Sergeant Jack F Cleek, 37013509, home address: Kansas City, Missouri; Sergeant Thomas W Walker, 20817931, home address: Celeste, Texas; Privates First Class John J Giordano, 33331076, home address: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Robert T Hall, 34465229, home address: Henderson, North Carolina; Boguslavis Kayota, 32222140, home address: Brooklyn, New York and Carlton R Cowan, 20817940, home address: Wichita Falls, Texas.

23 - 31 JANUARY:

During this period the only bivouac change within the battalion was that of Company A which moved from RATZWILLER (Q637396) to ECHARTSWILLER (Q719186) on 23 January, and again shifted location the next day, this time to ERUMATH (Q978143). The remainder of the month saw all three of the lettered companies working intensively on defensive operations. At this time the demands for road maintenance were not as exacting, and stock piles of sand and gravel were accumulated along main highways.

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purpose of delaying work. As a result, Private William P. Brady, ASN 32296146, Home Address: Astoria, L.I., N.Y. was wounded by a small shell fragment. Fifteen "S" mines and thirty-eight Tellermines were cleared by Company A on 2 February while minesweeping a trail along the West side of a woods two miles West of HERRLISHEIM (R093139) and the road from WEYERSHEIM (R050125) to BAMBSHEIM (R111107). During the following day Company A removed ten Tellermines while minesweeping the road from WEYERSHEIM (R054126) to within two miles Southwest of HERRLISHEIM (R098137). Company C cleared ten Tellermines on 6 February from a secondary road connecting GAMBSHEIM (R111106) and OFFENDORF (R133128). Late in the afternoon of 6 February a tank dozer accompanied by a mine-sweeping party began the work of clearing debris, wrecked vehicles and an abatis road block on a road one-half mile Northeast of ROHRWILLER (R137182). While this work was in progress a vehicle driven by Pfc Russel T. Young, ASN 36173631 Home Address: Atlanta, Georgia, a member of the company, ran over an enemy anti-tank mine and the explosion resulted in his death and the destruction of the vehicle. Twenty-eight Tellermines were cleared by Company C the following day when working along the ROHRWILLER (R131167) - HERRLISHEIM (R125145) road.

A small number of anti-tank mines were laid by the battalion during the first ten days of February. On 6 February, Company C laid sixteen mines across the main road three-fourths mile Northeast of ROHRWILLER (R138185) and ten mines at a trail junction one mile East of BISCHWILLER (R128185). Another ten mines were also laid at a trail junction three-fourths mile Northeast of ROHRWILLER (R141178). On 9 February and 10 February, Company B laid two hasty minefields, the first of which was laid near OBERHOFFEN (R093206) and the second in the same locality. Several friendly mines which had been previously laid were removed. On 5 February Company A removed sixty-five British M-5 mines from the road shoulders one mile West of KILSTETT (R090088) and twelve American M1A1 mines at OBERHOFFEN (R095109). During 6 February, Company C removed forty-eight anti-personnel mines part of which were located two miles West of HERRLISHEIM (R086148) and the remainder one and three-fourths miles Northwest of WEYERSHEIM (R077147).

A relatively small amount of tactical wire was placed during the period. Company C constructed two thousand, five hundred yards of single strand barbed wire on 5 Feb. This fence enclosed minefields which had been previously laid South of BISCHWILLER. During the following day Company B constructed five hundred yards of concertina wire along a stream near OBERHOFFEN #SUP# KOEER

(R083206 to R085203). On 7 February Company B erected one in front of a mine field near R 091197 to R094191) and the other in front of a minefield one mile Southeast of WEYERSHEIM (R065121 to R067132). Concertina wire was laid across two roads, one at WEITBRUCH (R036171) and the other at GRIES (R050169) by Company A on 8 February.

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These last days of January were marked noticeably by a continuing need to dig or provide entrenchments for other units. On 23 January with use of demolition equipment, and the aid of a tank dozer and the D-7 dozer, Company B continued to dig in tanks, and three were placed two kilometres Southwest of BISCHWILLER (R080180) in the vicinity of R075166. C Company worked six gun pits and two holes for anti-aircraft guns for the 155th Field Artillery the same day. On 24 January, A Company aided the 141st Infantry by working on two Platoon shelters one half-miles Southwest of KURTZENHAUSEN (R037150). Company B worked in the same general area and entrenched six tank destroyers along the Eastern side of a railroad one thousand yards Northeast of KURTZENHAUSEN (R050150). Company C was again aiding the 155th Field Artillery by digging four gun pits and two anti-aircraft emplacements. On 25 January while the platoons hauled lumber for infantry platoon shelter, one-half miles Southwest of KURTZENHAUSEN (R037150), the Company A dozer worked on six dugouts for platoon shelters. The next day one platoon and three D-7 dozers under A Company supervision provided entrenchments for seven anti-tank gun positions in the vicinity of WEITBRUCH as follows: R031180, R033180, R039179, R044075, R045173, R053161, R091173. One squad of the first platoon from Company B blasted and dug in five M-7 tank destroyers at WEYERSHEIM (R043118).

Company A employed the same detail on the 27th of January to provide four anti-tank positions in the vicinity of WEITBRUCH (R033179, R036177, R050161, and R055160). Two more tank destroyer positions one-quarter mile East of WEITBRUCH (R039166) and R042164) and four anti-aircraft-artillery positions one and one-quarter miles East of KURTZENHAUSEN (R0841151 and R085154) were also completed. Company B for the past two days had been digging in searchlights in the vicinity of WEITBRUCH (R030170) completing places for three each day. 28 January was again mainly concerned with digging of emplacements. Four tank destroyer positions and a command post shelter one and one-half miles East of KURTZENHAUSEN (R079154) were credited to Company A. C Company worked in the same area and provided for the placing of two tank destroyers one and one-quarters miles East of KURTZENHAUSEN (R082155) for 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, a command post for the 1st Battalion, 143d Infantry, one and one-quarter miles East of KURTZENHAUSEN (R080155), Company I command Post, 143d Infantry at one-half miles East of WEYERSHEIM (R064184), and three, four man shelters and two anti-tank guns at KURTZENHAUSEN (R072210). Company A completed its digging for January on the 29th when one squad and the D-7 dozer dug three personnel shelters in the vicinity of WEITBRUCH (R037178) and three anti-tank positions in the vicinity of KURTZENHAUSEN (R056158). Company B spent this day in digging in 155th Field Artillery guns in the vicinity of WEITBRUCH (R030170), and completed the mission the next day.

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There was no noticeable slackening of the use of barbed wire for defense purposes during the last week in January. On the 23d, Company B laid one thousand yards of concertina South of a wooded sector two thousand yards East of KURTZENHAUSEN (R050150) between R079149 to R071141. The next day the three line platoon spent the afternoon construction concertina to be used that night when the first platoon layed a fence of same along mine belts South of timbered section three thousand yards South of BISCHWILLER (R080180) from R083150 to R093147 to R073147. On 26 and 27 January, Company A laid eleven hundred yards of double apron fence one-quarter miles North and Northeast of WEITBURCH (R030180 to R036182 to R041179). Three air compressors were employed to cut the necessary pickets. The 27th and 28th of January saw Company C erecting and completing a double row of concertina wire from one-half miles Southeast of WEYERSHEIM (R059151 to three-quarters of a mile Southeast of WEYERSHEIM (R059113). Company B on 29 January strung a single concertina wire from one-half mile East of WEYERSHEIM (R063123) to three-quarters of a mile East of WEYERSHEIM (R064129).

The aforementioned acceleration of defensive actions in the latter part of January was particularly evident when the number of minefield missions is noted. Two platoons from Company C completed laying the hasty minefield one-quarter miles South of BISCHWILLER (R094167) on 23 January. On 24 January two squads from B Company layed one hundred and twenty-five anti-personnel mines on the enemy side of a concertina fence in likely avenues of approach of the enemy between BISCHWILLER (R080180) and a timbered section three thousand yards to the South. The first platoon of Company C laid one hundred and sixty anti-tank mines and twenty anti-personnel mines from one-quarter miles Northeast of BISCHWILLER (R096191) to one-quarter miles North of BISCHWILLER (R093192), while the third platoon laid ten anti-personnel mines one mile South of BISCHWILLER (R088151). On 25 January Company B placed two hundred and forty-one anti-tank mines in a belt two hundred yards North of BISCHWILLER (R080180). At this time they also demolished the remainder of a bridge in the vicinity of BISCHWILLER at R095187. Pfc Earl Green, 39011249, home address: Crescent City, California sustained concussion of his ear drums by standing too close to the charge when it was detonated, and was subsequently hospitalized as lightly injured in action. The same day another bridge was blown by Company C one and one-half miles Northeast of WEYERSHEIM (R073143). The first and third platoons of Company C laid one thousand and twenty anti-tank mines from one and one-half miles Northeast of WEYERSHEIM (R075145) to one mile Northeast of WEYERSHEIM (R073137). On 26 January Company B finished laying mine belts North of BISCHWILLER (R080180), and C Company laid three hundred and eight anti-tank mines from one mile Northeast of WEYERSHEIM (R073135) to one

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mile East of WEYERSHEIM (R072123). For precaution a single strand of barbed wire was hung on the friendly side of the mine field. The third platoon Company C laid twenty-eight anti-tank mines in a gap of a previously laid field one-half mile East of WEYERSHEIM. The final mention of mine work with the the battalion for January ends on another somber tone. Company C sent a mine detector crew in a three-quarter ton weapons carrier to the 131st Field Artillery to sweep for mines. Eleven anti-tank mines and A-1 American mines were removed. The fuses were frozen in the mines and the detector crew loaded them on the truck and brought them back to the Battalion dump in BILWISHEIM. On the way back to the Company area they picked up two men from their company who had been to the showers in MARIENTHAL. After all had arrived at the Battalion Supply Dump in BILWISHEIM an explosion occurred killing all eight of the men instantaneously with direct cause of detonation unknown. The deceased were: Corporals Robert A Loree, 36173672, home address: Otisville, Michigan, and Winfred Teems, 20817930, home address: Dallas, Texas; Privates First Class Alington H. Gilbert, 33321227, Home Address: Westchester, Pennsylvania; W Meese, 35607902, home address: New Philadelphia, Ohio; Richard G. [redacted], 32236760, Avenel, New Jersey; and Robert J Sleator, 32724498, home address: Ossining, New York; and Privates Lawrence D Tye, 37438768, home address: Sperry, Iowa and Lawrence E. Saline, 36282044, home address: [redacted], Wisconsin

Another casualty was added to the battalion's total of killed when it was confirmed that Private First Class Franklin M Philpott, 36659304, home address: Huntington, West Virginia was not missing in action but a casualty of 14 December 1944.

The road blocks which had previously been established and manned by Company C on 20 January were given to Company A to guard on 30 January.

Companies B and C at the end of the month checked rubber boats for serviceability and practised the construction of models of improvised bridges in the Company B area. On 31 January Company B hauled all available bridging material to a forward dump in the vicinity of MARIENTHAL (R0000). The third platoon was attached to the 142d Regimental Combat Group for future operations. In Company C the first platoon was placed on 24 hour alert to move out with their respective 143d Regimental Combat

The battalion received no reenforcements during the month of January and one officer and forty-five enlisted men were returned to unit.

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L-1043

HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 - U S ARMY

10 March 1945

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36, U S Army

1. Herewith "Operations in France, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of February 1945, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above report:

a. Operations: Operations during February involved extensive field fortification construction, mine laying and road repair. A limited offensive necessitated construction of four bailey bridges, one treadway bridge, one timber bridge and attempted construction of two additional treadways by supporting engineers. 111th Engineer C Bn installed assault foot bridges and "jeep" bridges and cleared roads for the assault.

b. Mines and Booby-traps: Only scattered mines along roads were encountered, some having been painted white. Divisional patrols reported finding enemy glass mines and improvised concrete mines however this was not confirmed.

c. Map Supply: The supply of tactical maps was adequate at all times.

d. Water Supply: Siting of the water points presented no difficulties during the month as there was an abundance of clear streams in the division area. One portable unit operated in support of each R.C.T. and the remaining portable unit and the mobile unit were used to supply the special troops and clearing station. The maintenance of the water supply equipment continues to be satisfactory.

e. Engineer Supply and Equipment: The stabilization of the front materially reduced the previous heavy demand for field fortification materials, only a small amount being required for the regrouping and consolidation operations. It was decided to replace all British Mark V anti-tank mines carried in basic load (800 each) with American T6E1 anti-tank mines, but to date it has been possible to obtain only 420 each of the latter type. The resupply of CTC liquid for refilling fire-extinguishers continues to be very critical, none being received this month. Likewise

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in short supply are water purification chemicals such as calcium hypochlorite and chlorine gas. The maintenance of engineer equipment continues to be satisfactory.

Ernest L. Petree

ERNEST L. PETREE
Major, 11th Engr C Bn
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE

11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

FEBRUARY 1945

L-1043

With minor exception, a stable situation existed in the sector supported by the battalion throughout the entire month. Road maintenance within the division sector presented the greatest problem. Unlike the previous month, characterized by snow and freezing weather, early in February the weather became much warmer resulting in a thaw. Even the surfaced roads were of poor foundation, if there was any at all, and they were not capable of withstanding the heavy military traffic during the thawing season. In some cases, where work was begun early enough, rock, and gravel sufficed in repairing bad spots in these roads, but this was an exception and almost invariably timber planking was required as a base, over which a cushion layer of gravel was spread. A large number of the roads were originally built without plan for drainage which was the contributing factor to the difficulty encountered on the flat terrain.

1 - 10 FEBRUARY

During the first ten days of the month a greater part of the road maintenance was performed along the roads linking the towns of BRUMATH (Q986144), WEITERUCH (R030171), MARIENTHAL, (R060200), GRIES (R058170), KURTZENHAUSEN (R052156), WEYERSHEIM (R050130), BIETLENHEIM (R055135) and GEUDERTHEIM (R015138). All of these roads extended across low, flat country easily flooded. After 2 February the snow had almost completely disappeared from the roads. On those two days Company A hauled eight loads of sand which was spread along the road from WEITERUCH (R030171) to GRIES (R057170). In addition an B-4 bulldozer was used by the Company in clearing snow from the road from BRUMATH (Q986144) to WEITERUCH (R030171) and from BRUMATH to WEYERSHEIM (R045131).

One platoon from Company B was employed throughout 4 February in maintaining a short section of road about a mile Southeast of BISCHWILLER (R098193 to R104194), replacing a wooden culvert during the process of the work. The following day Company B cleared debris from the road extending from BISCHWILLER (R090180) to ROHRWILLER (R120170), as well as repairing a road one mile Northwest of BISCHWILLER by planking a hundred yard section.

From 6 February through 10 February maintenance of the road net previously mentioned was a continuous task. Company A was assigned the task of maintaining the roads from WEITERUCH (R035171) to GRIES (R055170); from MARINETHAL (R060200) to BISCHWILLER (R096187); from GEUDERTHEIM (R015138) to BIETLENHEIM (R050130). Company B generally covered the roads from WEITERUCH (R030017) to GRIES (R058170); from KURTZENHAUSEN (R052156) to BISCHWILLER (R096187) and from WEYERSHEIM (R050130)

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to KURTZENHAUSEN (R052156), while Company C's road maintenance was confined to two roads, from WEITBRUCH (R030171) to MARINETHAL (R060200) and from GRIES (R058170) to WEITERUCH (R030171). A total of two thousand, one hundred and ninety-three yards of roads were repaired by the use of timber planking, requiring approximately three hundred truckloads of gravel. Of these totals, Company A laid one thousand, five hundred and sixty-eight yards of planking and hauled and spread two hundred and eighteen truckloads of gravel. Company B repaired one hundred yards of road by planking using about twelve truckloads of gravel while five hundred and twenty-five yards of road were planked and seventy truckloads of gravel hauled and spread over the road by Company C.

Early in the month a battalion of the 40th Engineer Combat Regiment was placed in support of the division for construction of bridges. On 1 February Company B prepared approaches on both shores of the MODER RIVER 3/4 miles SE of BISCHWILLER (R103183) prior to the construction of an armored treadway bridge after darkness. After the bridge was completed by the 40th Engineer Combat Regiment, Company B was assigned its maintenance on 2 February. The approaches to the bridge were then corduroyed but the greatest problem occasioned by the thawing weather which resulted in ice and debris lodging on the bridge.

Altogether seven footbridges were built during the period to support the operations of the various infantry regiments. Two footbridges were constructed by Company B on 1 February in the vicinity of BISHWILLER ((098186 and R102185). However, with the rising water these two bridges were destroyed by ice and floating debris by the following day. A third footbridge was improvised by Company B and placed across the MODER RIVER (R096186) after darkness on 1 February. During 2 February Company A constructed a fifteen foot footbridge across the MODER RIVER two miles Southwest of HERRLISHEIM (R099133) while on the following day a seventy-foot footbridge was built by the same company across a canal at the edge of a woods one mile North of GAUSSEIM (R104122) as well as a timber footbridge being built by Company C over the KESSELERUGEN RIEER. The seventh foot bridge was constructed across the MODER RIVER (R081221) by Company A during the afternoon of 9 February.

Minesweeping missions were carried out by the various companies in the same general vicinities of the roads they respectively maintained. A comparatively small number of enemy mines were encountered, totalling ninety-one Teller mines and fifteen "S" mines. On 1 February, Company B was given the mission of minesweeping a road 1/2 mile SE of BISCHWILLER (R104184 to R098193). After mine detector parties proceeded about three hundred yards on the mission they were forced to withdraw due to enemy small arms and mortar fire. Waiting a few hours, a second attempt was made but failed after which the details were then assigned the task of minesweeping a road 1/2 mile Northeast of BISCHWILLER (R096188 to R098195) where five Teller mines were removed. During the latter mission an enemy artillery barrage was concentrated on the road with the evident

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<u>N A M E</u>	<u>SERIAL NUMBER</u>	<u>HOME ADDRESS</u>
MISSING IN ACTION (Continued)		
Pvt Patrick F. Barry	31329620	Bridgeport, Conn.
Pvt Basil L. Caldwell, Jr.	39144398	Hayward, Cal.
Pvt Crescencio Flores	37522345	Valley Center, Kan.
Pvt Ervin D. Knuth	36218183	Milwaukee, Wisc.
Pvt William H. Llewellyn	33873025	Canton, Ohio
Pvt Harvey O. Moore	34407049	Jacksonville, Fla.
Pvt Robert J. Moore	36172998	Ferndale, Mich.
Pvt John H. Peabody	31400225	Booth Bay Harbor, Me.
Pvt John M. Ruane, Jr	42056474	Armonk, N. Y.
Pvt Wilbur O. Skallion	34367012	Trenton, Tenn.
Pvt Biagio B. Tramontano	32322620	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pvt *Laca G. Dimicelli	32550218	Rechester, N. Y.

*attached aid man from Battalion Medical Detachment

Company B did not suffer a direct enemy attack at the time of that against Company A but at about 1200 hours a heavy enemy artillery concentration was laid upon the company's first platoon area. During this barrage Private Gerald A. Bullis, 32035454, home address: Lewiston, NY, was seriously wounded by a shell fragment and died of wounds the following day. At the same time Private Joseph D. Brown, 38139990, home address: Bogata, Texas was seriously wounded and Sergeant George P. Pengressi, 36173722, home address: Pontiac, Mich. was lightly wounded. The third platoon of Company B, which had been in the company's reserve, was committed to fill the gap between Companies B and A. Four men of Company B which had been placed on an outpost between the two companies were later determined to be missing--Corporal Willard W. Mellin, 37090851, home address: Minneapolis, Minn; Private 1cl Claude F. Weber, 33434551, home address: Corry, Pa. and Privates Oliver I. Bashore, 36173691, home address: Lake Odessa, Mich. and George V. Brown, 34368568, home address: Middlesboro, Tenn.

During 14 and 15 December, Company C continued to maintain the three outposts established in the vicinity of RIBEAUVILLE and an additional outpost was established in ZELLENBERG (V-691523) on 15 December. Nevertheless, during those two days a small amount of minesweeping was performed. A road from one and one-half miles Northwest of RIBEAUVILLE (V-658560) to two miles Northwest of the town (V-654585) was mineswept but no mines were found.

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Sixteen enlisted reinforcements were received by the battalion during February, and as a whole were not satisfactory. A large number of these had been eliminated from other organizations, due to reorganization, and, although, their training might be considered sufficient, most of them have been the subjects of continual disciplinary actions. Nineteen men were returned to the unit after having undergone hospitalization due to wounds or natural causes.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 - U S ARMY

18 April 1945

Subject: History of Organization.

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army.

1. Herewith "Operations in France and Germany, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of March 1945, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: Operations during March covered all phases of engineer work. Repair and maintenance of thawing roads in a static defensive area offered the greatest problem during the first two weeks. In addition a limited amount of field fortification work was done. Offensive action beginning 14 March required all available engineers and equipment. Footbridges built of two six inch spars decked ladder fashion were used in lengths of 35 feet to bridge small streams and known AP minefields. Seigfried Line obstacles and fortifications were breached by explosives. Dragons teeth required 1200 lbs of explosives to breach; the foundation walls of the large teeth requiring the major portion. Casemates and bunkers were reduced by attacking doors with 40 lb shaped charges or M2 chain demolition blocks, one charge per door. The 40 lb shaped charge was not effective against concrete tops and sidewalls of the bunkers tested.

b. Mines and Booby-traps: No new enemy mines or booby traps were encountered. A narrow, dense belt of AT and AP mines parallel to the Moder River and a belt of AT mines in the vicinity of Wissembourg contained all but a few of the mines found.

c. Map Supply: The supply of tactical maps was adequate throughout the period.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: The changeover to offensive operations during March resulted in a heavy demand initially for boats and other stream-crossing equipment. There was some shortage of 6 man rubber reconnaissance boats, but the supply of other items was entirely adequate. As the Seigfried Line was reached, the demand swung to demolition materiel. The supply of these items likewise being good. Acetylene gas was critically short during the month, and the refilling of CTC fire extinguishers continues

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to be limited. However, the battalion was able to complete its basis load of T6E1 anti-tank mines, and a shipment of water purification chemicals was received. The maintenance of engineer equipment continues to be satisfactory.

e. Water Supply: One portable unit operated in support of each RCT and the remaining portable and the mobile unit were used to supply the special troops and clearing station. No difficulty was experienced in siting the points. Maintenance of equipment continues to be satisfactory.

Ernest L. Petree

ERNEST L. PETREE

Lt Col, 111th Engr C Bn
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

MARCH 1945

L-1044

1 - 14 MARCH

The role of the battalion from 1 through 14 March consisted of supporting the division which was in a defensive position at that time. Aside from maintaining supply routes, which task became less of a problem during the comparatively dry weather prevailing, two of the companies were afforded an opportunity for a limited amount of training. From 1 to 8 March Company "A", stationed at WALTENHEIM, FRANCE (Q-921165) pursued a training schedule consisting of organization of the ground for a company in the defense, demolition, laying and recording minefields, mine clearing, construction of fortifications and river crossing. Company C followed a similar program of training in the vicinity of its bivouac at BILWISHEIM, FRANCE (Q-943123) during the period 5 to 13 March. On 11 March Company B, located in BRUMATH, FRANCE (Q-981145) made preparations to undergo a like schedule of training but due to impending operations which developed on 12 March its training was postponed.

On 10 March Company A was assigned the task of placing six hundred and fifty yards of concertina along the North edge of a woods one mile Northwest of KALTENHOUSE, FRANCE (R-062226 to R-067222). This mission was completed the same day and the following day this company began maintenance of roads between WITTERSHEIM, FRANCE (Q-957205) to BATZENDORF, FRANCE (Q-977204), which work was continued through 13 March, requiring a total of one hundred and fifty-nine truckloads of gravel. Having already furnished personnel on 11 March to guard four roadblocks in HAGUENAU, FRANCE (R-035238, R-038240, R-041239 and R-045238), on 13 March the entire of Company A was moved to HAGUENAU, FRANCE (R-025232) and began clearing the streets of enemy mines. During 14 March twenty enemy Schu mines, twelve American T-6 mines and thirty-six American M1A1 mines were removed.

Inasmuch as Companies A and C followed a training schedule for a part of the time during the period, the larger amount of road maintenance was performed by Company B. Roads were maintained by that company in the vicinities of KEFFENDORF, FRANCE (Q-950222), UHLWILLER, FRANCE (Q-955248), BERSTHEIM, FRANCE (Q-955215) and WITTERSHEIM, FRANCE (Q-957205). Most of this work consisted of improving drainage and filling ruts beaten in these various roads by heavy traffic. Altogether, only some forty truck-

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loads of gravel were required. From 1 to 4 March Company C was assigned a certain amount of road repair work. On 1 and 2 March this company constructed about one-hundred and forty yards of plank road in the vicinity of BRUMATH, FRANCE (Q-945147), which required a total of twenty-eight truckloads of gravel. Likewise, on these two days a part of Company C improved drainage on about seven hundred yards of roads about one-half mile Southwest of WINTERHOUSE, FRANCE (Q-967207). On the next two consecutive days Company C was required to repair and maintain a road from BRUMATH, FRANCE (Q-945147) to KRAUTWILLER, FRANCE (Q-960150). This road necessitated the use of about thirty truckloads of gravel as well as placing fifty yards of planking on the road. A second route from WINTERHOUSE, FRANCE (Q-967207) to HERSTHEIM, FRANCE (Q-956215) to HAGUENAU, FRANCE (R-040240) was also maintained at the same time by Company C. Sixty truckloads of gravel were hauled and spread over the latter.

In addition to the road repairs that were effected by Company B, on 5 March one platoon of the company assembled river crossing equipment for use in instructing Infantry units. From 7 through 10 March training teams were furnished to instruct the Infantry in handling assault boats. On 13 March eleven footbridges were built by the company. The following day one platoon carried one of these bridges about four hundred yards and placed it across the MODER RIVER (Q-941274). The last hundred yards of that distance was behind German lines. Still another platoon placed three of these footbridges across the MODER RIVER near the same location as the first bridge.

15 - 20 MARCH

Several days before 15 March plans for clearing the enemy West of the RHINE RIVER were in process. These plans called for one platoon from Company A to be attached to the 141st Infantry Combat Team, which regiment was given the mission of attacking and seizing a line forming a northern perimeter around SURBOURG (R-085345) and extending toward OBERRETSCHDOEF, FRANCE (R-120330) on the East. The consequence of this mission would therefore be to clear the HAGUENAU--SURBOURG road running through the HAGUENAU FOREST. Company A of the battalion had previously moved to HAGUENAU, FRANCE, which was designated the line of departure for the Infantry combat team. With the general attack beginning during the early morning of 15 March, Company A, less one platoon which accompanied the Infantry, continued to clear the streets in HAGUENAU of mines, in the course of which work twenty German Schu mines were removed. Meanwhile, a forty-eight-foot footbridge was placed across the MODER RIVER IN HAGUENAU (R-049238) while an additional hundred and eighty feet of footbridging equipment was being hauled from the rear into HAGUENAU. Minesweeping operations were continued during 16 and 17 March in the vicinity of HAGUENAU, however none was found. On the former date Cpl. Charles T. York, 35267964, home address: Sharpsburg, Ky. was lightly wounded in the right leg and hand by shell fragments. Although no mines were detected

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16 March, demolition charges were removed from three bridges in HAGUENAU, FRANCE (R-035238, R-038240 and R-041239). The following day a platoon of Company A departed with an Infantry task force with the mission of clearing anti-personnel mines from a trail along the West edge of the HAGUENAU FOREST (R-059243 to R-059254 to R-056254), although no mines were reported. The remainder of the company continued to minesweep the streets in the western part of HAGUENAU and along the HAGUENAU--SURBOURG road North for a mile. Six American M1A1 mines were found on the latter. A tankdozer was used in clearing abatis from this road and two wooden culverts were installed; one eighteen feet in length being built one mile North of HAGUENAU (R-048261) and the second a thirty-two foot culvert at a point one and one-half miles North of the town (R-049264). To augment the work done by hand on these two bridges a D-7 bulldozer was employed in improving the approaches.

With the 141st Infantry combat team, in whose support Company A remained, taking its first objective, on 18 March the company moved from HAGUENAU, FRANCE to SURBOURG, FRANCE (R-025232) with a move on the following day to SCHENENBOURG, FRANCE (R-129391), then to RIEDSELTZ, FRANCE (R-159436) on 20 March. During these three days mine clearing and road repairs were the principal function of the company. Nine American M1A1 mines were cleared from a road beginning at the woods line North of HAGUENAU (R-049264 to R-076337) on 18 March as well as the construction of two by-passes and one culvert approximately two miles North of the town (R-058284, 066295 and 067299). During the same day the road from LAUBACH, FRANCE (Q-987317) to the EBERBACH RIVER (Q-993322) was mineswept without revealing mines; a road crater was filled by using a tankdozer at a location near MORSERONN (R-002334); a road block consisting of large trees was removed at DURRENBACH, FRANCE (R-034328); a road from DURRENBACH (R-002324) to WALABOURG, FRANCE (R-038319) was mineswept and an abatis road block was cleared at WALABOURG (R-049318). An explosive charge equipped with a time clock (J-405), which had been placed under a culvert in WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE (R-154485) was removed on 19 March, in addition to removing explosives from trees alongside the road from RIEDSELTZ, FRANCE (R-159436) to WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE (R-154480). Pvt 1cl Raymond A. Goodman, 35734500, home address: New Albany, Ind. was lightly wounded during these operations by shell fragments striking him in the right side of the body and the right arm. On 20 March, while the company stood by in a state of readiness to support the Infantry, an enemy artillery concentration was laid upon RIEDSELTZ, shell fragments from which lightly wounded Cpl. Anthony Cordillo, 31215890, home address: Monterey, Mass. in the left shoulder; Tec 5 Marvin C. Luckett, 7085643, home address: Oxford, Neb. being wounded in the left cheek and Pvt 1cl Leon Jones, 34457549, home address: Aulander, N. C. was wounded in the left eye and arm.

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The 142nd Infantry combat team, in whose support Company B of the battalion was placed, was given the initial mission of attacking on 15 March and seizing an objective line about one mile North of MERTZWILLER, FRANCE (Q-960300). One platoon from Company B was attached to the Infantry for this operation with the remainder of the company given the task of freeing the NEUBOURG--MERTZWILLER--MORSBRONN--GUNSTETT highway of mines and obstacles. During 15 March an enemy road block was cleared about two miles Southwest of MERTZWILLER, FRANCE (Q-947292) as were numerous Schu mines planted along the woods in the vicinity. While removing these mines, which had been buried for a considerable length of time, Sergeant George P. Pengressi, 36173722, home address: Pontiac, Mich. was seriously wounded in the eyes and right arm when a mine exploded; Tec 5 Carl S. McCluggage, 34366767, home address: Lawrenceberg, Tenn. stepped on a Schu mine resulting in the loss of a foot, while Pvt 1cl Kenneth C. Wilt, 33247699, home address: Johnstown, Pa. was lightly wounded as a consequence of the explosion.

In the afternoon of 15 March Company B moved from BEUMATH, FRANCE to PFATTENHOFFEN, FRANCE (Q-910270) where its command post remained until 19 March. During 16 March minesweeping details continued to work along the NIEDERMODERN, FRANCE (Q-920270)--MERTZWILLER, FRANCE (Q-960300) road. By 1600 hours minesweeping was begun along the streets in MERTZWILLER. Earlier in the day a platoon of the company had built a footbridge across a stream in the town and crossed a company of Infantry. The highway from NIEDERMODERN to HAGUENAU was opened for traffic on 17 March which entailed removing debris, filling shell craters and destroying enemy mines along the road by one platoon of Company B. Activities of the company were extended further to the Northeast on 18 and 19 March. One platoon maintained a by-pass on the division main supply route in the vicinity of DRACHENBRONN, FRANCE (R-101438) on 18 March which required the use of logs and local material to stabilize the road. Meanwhile, a Class 10, single span wooden bridge was built near BIRENBACH, FRANCE by another platoon while the third platoon cleared seven abatis road blocks about two miles Northeast of LAMPERTSLOCH, FRANCE (R-077416, R-083428, R-097437, R-09454, R-111458, R-113458 and R-116460). Two of these obstacles were approximately two hundred yards in length. Twenty-eight enemy anti-tank mines were removed from the same area the following day.

Having moved to DRACHENBRONN, FRANCE (R-101438) on 19 March, during the early morning of 20 March Company B again moved, establishing its command post in WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE (R-155485). Tec 5 Troyce W. Reich, 34107571, home address: Aubury, Ala. was lightly wounded in the face on 20 March while driving a vehicle on reconnaissance.

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At the beginning of the operations on 15 March, Company C, in support of the 143rd Infantry combat team was assigned the mission of clearing mines and opening the LA WALCK, FRANCE (Q-908278)--GRIESBACH, FRANCE (Q-960323)--GUNSTETT, FRANCE (R-020350)--SOULTZ, FRANCE (R-110380) highway after the Infantry had taken its objective line which ran generally from GUNSTETT Southeast to WALBOURG, FRANCE (R-040320). Initially, one platoon of Company C was attached to the Infantry regiment with the remainder of the company in support.

On the afternoon of 15 March Company C moved from BILLWISHEIM, FRANCE (Q-943123) to PFAFFENNOFFEN, FRANCE (Q-910273). Earlier in the day, however, minesweeping missions had been carried out by details from the company which consisted of clearing a road from UERBERACH, FRANCE (Q-922278) to BITSCHHOFFEN, FRANCE (Q-919287) and from LA WALCK, FRANCE (Q-909277) to BITSCHHOFFEN, FRANCE. Mines were not detected on either of these roads. Nine R-M-43 mines and nine wooden box mines were found by Company C on the following day, however, while the company maintained a road from LA WALCK (Q-909277) to MIETESHEIM, FRANCE (Q-929311). This road maintenance required filling of numerous shell craters. Pvt 1cl Leo E. Howell, 35601784, home address: Canton, Ohio was lightly wounded by a shell fragment during the work.

Company C moved from PFAFFENNOFFEN, FRANCE (Q-910273) to GRIESBACH, FRANCE (Q-959323) on 17 March and remained at that location until 19 March. During 17 and 18 March numerous roads in the vicinities of GRIESBACH, FRANCE MERTZWILLER, FRANCE (Q-957308), MIETESHEIM, FRANCE (Q-932309), FORSTHEIM, FRANCE (Q-979339), EBERBACH, FRANCE (Q-988343) and GUNSTETT, FRANCE (R-013349) were mineswept and repaired. Approximately five hundred pounds of explosives were removed from trees which had been prepared for demolition by the enemy along a road extending from one-half mile Southwest of GRIESBACH, FRANCE (Q-949320) to one-fourth mile Northwest of FORSTHEIM, FRANCE (Q-979339).

Early in the morning of 19 March Company C moved from GRIESBACH, FRANCE to WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE (R-152487). However, during the day road maintenance and minesweeping was continued by one platoon of the company from EBERBACH, FRANCE (Q-989343) to GUNSTETT, FRANCE. Meanwhile, other minesweeping and road maintenance were carried out one-fourth mile North of LOBSAM, FRANCE (R-078413), one and one-half miles North of DRACHENBRONN, FRANCE (R-101438) and two miles Southwest of INGOLSHEIM, FRANCE (R-132394). No mines were found on any of the roads covered. During 20 March one platoon of Company C cleared debris from the SOULTZ, FRANCE (Q-109380)--WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE (Q-155478) highway while the remainder of the company remained on the alert to support the 143rd Infantry Regiment on impending operations.

S E C R E T

Throughout the operations from 15 through 20 March the battalion command post and Battalion Medical Detachment were kept forward to facilitate contact with the lettered companies. During the afternoon of 15 March the command post was moved from BILWISHEIM, FRANCE (Q-945123) to PFAFFENOFFEN, FRANCE (Q-910270). On 18 March another move was made to SOULTZ, FRANCE (R-105374) with a subsequent change to WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE (R-155485) on 19 March.

21 - 29 MARCH

By 21 March the battalion stood before the SIEGFRIED LINE. In the low, flat land between OBER-OTTERBACH, GERMANY (R-173525) and the BIEN WALT to the East this defense line was heavily concentrated and in great depth. However, West of OBER-OTTERBACH raised a rugged, mountainous terrain without fixed defenses and fortifications compared to the former. It was through these mountains that plans were made to penetrate and outflank the main defenses in the plains. The 142nd Infantry, to which Company of the battalion remained in support, was given the task of crossing these mountains. A mountain trail, capable of one way traffic, existed from SCHWEIGEN, GERMANY (R-160502) generally to the Northwest to BOLLENBORN, GERMANY (R-146555) where it connected with a hard surfaced highway extending to the East through BERGZABERN, GERMANY (R-190560).

On 21 March a platoon from Company B began work on the mountain trail by removing abatis from it at a point about three miles Northwest of SCHWEIGEN, GERMANY (R-145535) as well as four road blocks a few hundred yards further along the road. Meanwhile, from Company C one platoon was attached to a battalion of the 143rd Infantry Regiment which was given the task of passing through the 142nd Infantry in the vicinity of BOLLENBORN, GERMANY (R-146555) and attacking East toward BERGZABERN, GERMANY. Each man in this platoon was equipped with one tetrytol pack to perform any demolitions required.

Although operations through the mountains continued on 22 March, constant pressure was maintained on the main defenses in the OBER-OTTERBACH, GERMANY area. During that day a detail from Company A demolished twelve dragons teeth constructed across the road one-fourth mile North of the village, despite enemy machine gun fire. At the same time a six man detail from Company B assaulted and blew three concrete pillboxes in the same vicinity. Seven German prisoners were taken from each of these pillboxes with only light wounds to one man of the detail—Pvt 1cl Salvatore L. Colletti, 32175787, home address: Brooklyn, N. Y., which occurred while placing a prepared charge against the door to one of these pillboxes. Demolition of these installations was performed by the use of 40-pound "Beehives." The 1st Bn, 143rd Infantry, to which a platoon of Company C was attached, pressed its attack across the mountains from BOLLENBORN, GERMANY (R-147555) toward BERGZABERN, GERMANY while another platoon of Company C was employed in repairing the road from



S E C R E T

one-fourth mile North of SCHEWIGEN, GERMANY (R-163507) to OBER-OTTERBACH, GERMANY (R-166522).

On 23 March the danger from the SIEGFRIED LINE was successfully bypassed. During the afternoon of that date the battalion command post was moved from WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE to BERGZABERN, GERMANY, with the battalion Medical Detachment accompanying. Likewise, Company A moved from RIEDESELZ, FRANCE to BERGZABERN, GERMANY. In the meantime, one platoon of Company A demolished some thirty pillboxes near OBER-OTTERBACH, GERMANY (R-172532) as well as clearing debris from the streets of the town. Three casualties were sustained by this company during 23 March. Cpl. Kenneth R. Weiss, 35527450, home address: Kent, Ohio; Cpl. Charles Rickey, Jr., 16067541, home address: Harvey, Ill. and Pvt 1cl Roy D. Martin, 35759407, home address: Vesuvius, W. Va. were lightly wounded. Similar operations were conducted by Company B. One platoon of that company assisted the Infantry in the assault and capture of thirty pillboxes. From seven to forty prisoners were taken from each strongpoint. The first platoon from Company C continued with the 143rd Infantry, often times under small arms, motor and artillery fire, eastward from BERGZABERN, GERMANY. At about 2100 hours 1st Lt. Frank M. Cathcart, Jr., O-525873, home address: Chicago, Illinois and Sgt. Luther J. Matlock, 38037290, home address: Ravenna, Texas were lightly wounded, Lt. Cathcart being hit by a shell fragment in the right leg and Sgt. Matlock sustaining wounds in both legs and the right foot. The remainder of Company C maintained the road from one and one-half miles Northwest of OBER-OTTERBACH, GERMANY (R-135534) to one and one-half miles West of the town in addition to filling a tank ditch three-fourths miles Southwest of BOLLENBOERN, GERMANY (R-137543) and another tank ditch one mile West of DORRENBACH, GERMANY (R-140542).

Relatively little activity was experienced between 24 to 29 March, at which time the battalion was relieved from combat. On 24 March the battalion command post moved to HERXHEIM, GERMANY (R-350610) and Company A from BERGZABERN, GERMANY to STEINWILLER, GERMANY (R-293580); Company B moved from WISSEMBOURG, FRANCE to RULZHEIM, GERMANY (R-407619), as did Company C. During the following day Company A moved forward to ZEISKAM, GERMANY (R-372706). The remainder of the period through 29 March was employed in reconnaissance as far to the East as the RHINE RIVER. Various towns were searched for enemy supply dumps of different types. At 2400 hours on 29 March the battalion was relieved from combat.

No reinforcements were received during the month although a total of twenty-five men were returned from hospitals.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 - U S ARMY

24 May 1945

Subject: History of Organization.

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army.

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the month of April 1945, in sextuple.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: Operations during April were divided into two phases: occupation of conquered territory and offensive operations against the enemy. Occupational operations consisted chiefly of assembling enemy materiel and assisting military government in the police of towns occupied. The greatest problem during the offensive phase was that created by demolished bridges. However, bypasses were usually effected with little delay.

b. Mines and Booby-traps: No such obstacles were encountered.

c. Map Supply: Complete coverage of occupied area was obtained at the expense of several trips to Army and base section depots. Map supply during offensive operations was unsatisfactory in that frequently insufficient copies of critical sheets were issued initially.

d. Water Supply: One potable unit operated in support of each RCT and the remaining portable and the mobile unit were used to supply the special troops and clearing station. No difficulty was experienced in siting the points. Maintenance of equipment continues to be satisfactory.

e. Engineer Supply and Equipment: The change over to a rest period greatly reduced the demand for engineer supplies so that with the exception of some small items, supplies were adequate during the month. Then, the change to offensive operations at the end of the month created a demand for bridge timber which was supplied with some difficulty due to the insufficient size of timber near at hand. The rest of the period during the month allowed the maintenance of engineer equipment to be very satisfactory.

Ernest L. Petree
ERNEST L. PETREE

Lt Col, 111th Engr C Bn
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN GERMANY
111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

L-1045

APRIL 1945

The entire battalion, having been relieved from combat 29 March 1945, moved from INSHEIM, GERMANY (R300610) on 1 April 1945 to the vicinity of KAISERSLAUTERN, GERMANY. Battalion headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment were established in ERFENBACH, GERMANY (Q980970); Company "A" moved into SIEGELBACH (Q968964); Company "B" moved into RODENBACH (Q945972); and Company "C" moved into WEILERBACH (Q925980).

During the period 2 April through 10 April the various lettered companies of the battalion conducted road and bridge reconnaissance within the battalion area of responsibility. In addition, assistance was rendered the military government in screening civilians from the various towns within the sector. This phase of the work was performed by placing guards around the towns early in the morning of the day selected to screen a town, which prevented the inhabitants from leaving. Then all male civilians were concentrated at a specified location and screened. During this period the towns of SOMMENHOFF, KUHONCHESHOF, ZIEGELBURG, KATZWEILLER, SAMBACH, were screened. Guards which were placed around these towns were furnished by three lettered companies while the actual screening was conducted by members of the Battalion S-2 Section and interpreters. Likewise, during this period check posts were established by each of the companies throughout the area occupied by the battalion, however, with a change in policy on administration of military government on 10 April, these check posts were relieved.

During the period 12 April through 21 April the battalion was assigned the mission of collecting enemy ammunition and materiel scattered throughout the division and hauling it to a collecting point. This work was performed entirely by companies "A" and "C". Two collecting dumps were established, one at LANDSTUHL and a second at FFRDDE-SHEIM (M3815). A total of five hundred and sixty-eight truckloads of this equipment were handled during this time. In addition to the personnel of these two companies which were used in this work, civilian labor varying in number from one hundred and fifty to three hundred per day were employed in loading and unloading of trucks. This civilian personnel was obtained from displaced persons camps comprised of allied nationalities.

From 11 April through 25 April, Company "B" was engaged in a program of training, which included rifle marksmanship, mine warfare, road and bridge maintenance and construction as well as various other engineer subjects. The entire of this training was conducted in the vicinity of RODENBACH, the town occupied by the company. On 23, 24, and 25 April details from this company carried out an engineer training schedule for A and P Pl toons of the 143rd Infantry Regiment. This latter training consisted largely of mine warfare. On 23 April, Company "C" began a period of training which generally was scheduled to cover the same subject as those undertaken by Company "B", but orders for a movement were received 24

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April which required the suspension of the training.

On 25 April Company "A" moved from SIEGELBACH to OBER-STEINBACH (550697) and was followed the next day by Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company, Medical Detachment, Company "B" and Company "C", all moving to DUNSBACH (S564704) preparatory to returning to combat. During 27 April April, Company A and Company "B" were placed in direct support of the 141st Infantry Regiment and 142d Infantry Regiment respectively. With these attachments Company "A" moved the same day to OBER - KNORINGEN (X970849) and Company "B" moved to ASSELFINGEN (X813954). These two companies continued to follow the infantry combat teams on 28 April with very little work being performed. Company "B" began road maintenance which consisted of planking approximately one hundred and fifty yards of road in the vicinity of MUTTERS HOFEN (Y200550) to (Y 260490), having moved into this town (Y066684) earlier in the day. Company "A"'s activities during the day consisted only of making an administrative move to SCHWAB-MUNCHEN (Y243581). Although Company "C" remained in DUNSBACH until 30 April, at which time it moved to UNTER-MEITZGIN (Y285562), on 28 April the battalion command post, Headquarters and Service Company and the Medical Detachment moved into SCHWAB-MUNCHEN (Y240580).

The remainder of April was characterized in the main by mere forward movement of the various companies, with relatively no work performed. Company "B" moved from MUTTERS HOFEN to LAMERDINGEN (Y236478) on 29 April and upon arrival at the latter town was assigned the task of maintaining the infantry regimental main supply route in the vicinity (Y200550 to Y260490). However, this route was in good condition and did not require any work. One platoon of Company "B" was attached to the infantry combat team in preparation for future operations. Company "B" again moved during the evening of 29 April and at 0900 hours 30 April arrived in Echendorf (Y608020).

Later during 30 April the battalion command post and the Medical Detachment moved into WEILHEIM (Y549213), with the supply and maintenance sections of Headquarters and Service Company remaining in SCHWAB-MUNCHEN. At the same time Company "A" moved to SEEHAUPT (Y675198) in support of the 141st Infantry Regiment. Upon Company "A"'s arrival one platoon of the company removed a log crib at a point about three-fourths of a mile southwest of HEINRICH (Y692199).

The Battalion received nine reinforcements and had thirty-seven men return to this unit.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 - U S ARMY

5 June 1945

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S ARMY

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany and Austria, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the period of 1 - 10 May 1945.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: Operations during the period necessitated extensive route reconnaissance in which air observation was utilized advantageously in spotting blown bridges and other obstacles ahead of the troops and indicating probable bypasses wherever existant.

b. Mines and Booby-traps: No enemy mines or booby-traps were encountered.

c. Map Supply: Map supply was fairly good although not abundant. Some confusion resulted from the use of the 1/250,000 air map, because of cartographic errors.

d. Water Supply: Frequent moves by units made the supply of water difficult but sites with sufficient water were easily found and points established. One water unit operated in support of each RCT and a portable unit and mobile unit operated in support of Div. Hq. and Special Troops. Maintenance of equipment continues to be satisfactory.

e. Engineer Supply and Equipment: The fast moves of the Division during the first ten days of May gave little call for engineer supplies and material. Due to that situation there were no critical shortages during the period. Maintenance of engineer equipment during the period was very satisfactory.


ERNEST L. PETRUS
Lt Col, 111th Engr C Bn
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS 11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO #36 - U S ARMY

12 June 1945

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO #36, U S Army

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany and Austria, 11th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the period of 11 - 31 May 1945.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: The battalion occupied a small sector vicinity of Markt Oberdorf, assisting Military Government in policing the area and in evacuating displaced persons. Evacuation of enemy materiel, chiefly arms and munitions, from division sector to army supply points was begun.

b. Mines and Booby-traps: No enemy mines or booby-traps were encountered.

c. Map Supply: Map supply was adequate.

d. Water Supply: During the period 11th - 31st May the mobile water purification unit was turned in leaving the Division with a T/S allowance of four portable units. One unit operated in support of each BCT and the fourth unit in support of Division Artillery. During the period the Division water units were supported by three Corps water points scattered in the area. Maintenance of equipment continues to be very satisfactory.

e. Engineer Supply and Equipment: The period from 11th - 31st May brought many changes in supply. Many items which had been carried in excess of T/S for operational purposes were turned in and requisitions were submitted to bring the Division up to T/S on all equipment. During the period lumber and paint were in great demand and were supplied through local procurement. Maintenance of engineer equipment for the period was very satisfactory.

Ernest L. Petree

ERNEST L. PETREE
Lt Col. 11th Engr C Bn
Commanding

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The last eight days of hostilities occasioned a very small amount of engineer work. Enemy land mines had long failed to be in evidence and the only obstacles conceived to delay our advance were the demolition of bridges and the felling of trees along the various roads at vantage points.

Throughout these ten days the 286th Engineer Combat Battalion was placed in support of the division under the control of the Division Engineer for the purpose of performing the major bridging projects in addition to other road maintenance missions assigned to it. At 1300 hours, 1 May 1945 the 286th Engineer Combat Battalion completed a Bailey bridge at a location one and one-half miles West of BICHL, Germany (Y-728098). Upon the completion of this bridge the 141st Infantry Regiment was enabled to cross the LOISACH River, followed by elements of the 12th Armored Division. During the afternoon of 1 May Company "A" moved from SEEPHAUPT, Germany (Y-670200), across this bridge to KREUTH, Germany (Y-805182). After arrival at KREUTH, details from the company removed four road blocks along the road between ST. HEINRICH, Germany to BEUERBURG, Germany (Y-709202, Y-714203, Y-732208 and Y-738212). These road blocks had been hastily executed, three of them varying from one to three felled trees and the fourth of cord wood. Meanwhile other details removed five hundred pounds of explosives from a bridge across the LOISACH River one-fourth of a mile Southeast of EURASBURG, Germany (Y747236) which had thus been prepared by the enemy for demolition. Another three thousand three hundred and sixty pounds of explosives were removed from a concrete bridge over the LOISACH ISAR Canal near the same location.

For the most part, between 2 and 4 May, the activities of the various units of the battalion consisted of movement. On 2 May Company "A" moved from KREUTH, Germany to PAD TOLZ, Germany (Y-869142) while Company "C" moved from UNTER MEITIGEN, Germany to WEILREIM, Germany (Y-550210). Throughout 2 May Company "B" moved in column with the 142nd Infantry Regiment and made a temporary stop for the night at HECKENDORF, Germany (Y-608020). Further moves were made on 3 May by Companies "B" and "C" and Battalion Headquarters, accompanied by the Medical Detachment. During the afternoon of that date Company "B" moved to PENZBERG, Germany (Y-730120); Company "C" moved into PAD TOLZ, Germany (Y-869142) as did the battalion command post and Medical Detachment.

At about 0800 hours, 2 May the 286th Engineer Combat Battalion was again called upon to build a Bailey bridge over the ISAR River in PAD TOLZ, Germany (Y-863142) necessitating thirty feet of double-single Bailey bridging to span a gap blown in a concrete bridge at that location. By 2200 hours this bridge was completed and opened for traffic. Again on 3 May, this unit was instructed to construct a bridge at GMUND, Germany (Y-998136) where a bridge had been blown,

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resulting in an eighty-two foot gap which required one hundred and ten feet of triple-single Bailey bridging. At 1930 hours on that date this mission was begun and by 0800 hours, 4 May the bridge was completed and opened for traffic.

During 4 May Company "A" moved into EGERN, Germany (Z-025075); Company "B" moved to DEGERNDORF, Germany (Z-275130); Company "C" moved into TEGERNSEE, Germany (Z-015095) while the battalion command post and the Battalion Medical Detachment were established in EGERN, Germany (Z-025075). Between the moves from 2 to 4 May Company "A" repaired two bridges, one at RAIR, Germany (Y-756112) and the second near BICHL, Germany (Y-765095) as well as constructing a temporary Class 20, wooden bridge in PAD TOLZ, Germany (Y-862142). During 3 May Company "A" removed a log crib road block at AMM SEE, Germany (Z000120) by the use of a D-7 bulldozer, as well as a second abatis road block at STEINBACH, Germany (Y-876069) by the use of a tank-dozer. Other minor road and bridge repairs were made along the route of march by the various companies, but none of these were of great consequence.

Probably the most noteworthy mission during the entire first ten days of May was performed by Company "C". At approximately 0200 hours the morning of 5 May, after the company had moved to REISACH, Germany (Z-330006), work was begun to rebuild a wooden bridge at this village which had been partially destroyed by the enemy. This task required the reconstruction of six spans, totaling eighty feet, of timber trestle bridge. Initially, difficulty was experienced in obtaining the necessary timbers for this work. By rotating the three line platoons of the company, the work was carried on to completion without stopping. By 1800 hours, 6 May the bridge was opened for traffic. Although this bridge was urgently needed for traffic, throughout its construction this company maintained a ford across the river and a bulldozer was made available to retrieve stalled vehicles from the stream. Meanwhile, on 5 May, after Company "A" had moved into OBER AUDORF, Germany (Z-332040), one platoon was given the mission of clearing eight enemy abatis road blocks along the East edge of TEGERN SEE between ST. QUINN AND TEGERN SEE (Z-005110 to Z-027078).

During 5 May, both Battalion Headquarters and Company "B" made changes in their bivouac locations. During the morning Company "B" moved to SCHWEND, Austria (E-450905) while Battalion Headquarters was established in KUFSTEIN, Austria (E-335970) in the afternoon.

Late in the afternoon of 7 May orders were received from division headquarters that firing would be ceased and the enemy would not be fired upon unless he provoked hostile acts. Although this first information did not indicate a definite cessation of hostilities, it nevertheless had a decided

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bearing upon the morale of the organization. During the following day Battalion Headquarters moved into KITZBUHEL, Austria (WE-5182); Company "A" moved to ST. JOHANN, Austria (E-534914); Company "B" to MITTERSILL, Austria (WE-585650) and Company C to Rattenburg, Austria (E-135795). Aside from one large warehouse containing enemy equipment which was placed under guard by Company "B" at MITTERSILL, the remainder of the companies employed the rest of this period in inventorying property, care and cleaning of equipment and turning in equipment and supplies which had been obtained on operational loan for combat.

During the last few days of combat signal communications between the command post was difficult. Even with two SCR-193 Radios on loan plus organic SCR-194 radios, a greater part of the time radio communication could not be maintained. This difficulty was attributed entirely to the mountainous terrain characterizing this particular section of the country.

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The collection of enemy military equipment was conducted by Companies A and C. This work was begun on 19 May and continued through the end of the month. The quantity of any one item of material was not large, however the area over which it was scattered was extensive. In general, this equipment consisted of artillery and small arms ammunition, artillery pieces, small arms, Nebelwerfers, powder and vehicles, all of which except for the vehicles was turned in to the Army Supply Point No. 910 in Wittiflingen.

In view of the training program anticipated by the Division on May 17 Company C began the construction of seventy-five rifle targets and one hundred machine gun targets, which were completed 19 May. On 22 May the construction of two hundred and twenty rifle targets and fifty machine gun targets was begun, which were later completed 25 May.

With the end of combat operations, the problem of maintaining a high state of morale could naturally be expected. This was especially true inasmuch as forty percent of the assigned personnel had scores equal or in excess of the eighty-five point tentative critical score required for readjustment. To cope with this problem, emphasis was placed on recreation and organized athletics. Each company was directed to construct at least one diamond for baseball, one for softball and a volley ball court. Intra-company and intra-battalion competition in these games was begun. Elb See, a small lake located near Aitrang, presented excellent opportunities as a recreation center, and a considerable amount of work was done to improve it. A one-hundred foot walk with a platform at the end of it was built into the water, as well as a small house sufficiently large to house ping pong tables which was built near the lake. Inasmuch as the Information and Education program was not yet in full force due to the lack of materials necessary, other forms of diversion had to be used for the full-time employment of the troops. Conducted educational tours to the city of Munich were taken the latter part of the month.

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During the month of May a total of one officer and 72 enlisted men were returned to the United States from the organization under the redeployment policy. The fact that thirty enlisted men of this total left the battalion for return to the United States within a week after the end of the European war had a decided morale bearing on the remainder of the unit.

The battalion had no difficulty in enforcing the non-fraternization policy during the month. No disciplinary action was required during this period. Although it is reasonable to believe that a certain amount of isolated fraternization cases will obtain so long as troops occupy Germany, the success of enforcing the policy within the battalion with the minimum of violations since entering Germany might be attributable to frequent group discussions conducted.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 36 - U S ARMY

14 July 1945

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36,
U S Army

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany", 111th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the period of June 1945.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: The battalion occupied a small sector in the MARKET OBERDORF, GERMANY area working in conjunction with the Military Government. Check posts were maintained and evacuation of enemy material was continued. A change of division sector to the UIM area directed engineer activity towards building of training ranges. A few check posts were also allotted the sector surrounding Altes Lager, the present battalion location.

b. Map Supply: Operational conditions were such that there was no map supply problem.

c. Water Supply: Three shower units were operated for the Infantry Regiments. In addition four eight man units were distributed throughout the division. These were operated by organizations thus benefitted.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: With the defining of the division as a Category I unit all engineer items of T/E equipment were frozen. Such will not be replaceable until the unit is alerted for a water movement. The building of the division's weapons ranges necessitated procurement of large quantities of lumber, pipe, pulleys, target cloth and paint. All necessary equipment was obtained but not without difficulty experienced by the P & G officer.

Henry E. Haltom
HENRY E. HALTOM
Lt Col CE
Commanding

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L-1080

I-MARKT OBERDORF

With the passing of June 1945 the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion experienced its first full month of ETO peacetime activity. To those point heavy individual days seemed interminable in length, but a retrospective view of happenings for that period found that large scale, rapid changes were experienced by this organization. These were characterized by initial adjustment to peacetime soldierly pursuits, experiencing of occupational problems, transferring of men to the United States Reception Centers and a greater than fifty and seventy-five per cent change in personnel of officers and enlisted men, respectively.

Nearly the first half of the month was spent in the MARKET OBERDORF area (WY1613). The Battalion Command Post, Headquarters and Service Company, and Medical Detachment were located in this town. Companies "A" and "C" were situated at UNTER THINGAU, GERMANY (WY072118), while Company "B" was located at AITRANG, GERMANY (WY0917). The primary mission of the Battalion was to aid the Military Government in its activities. To this purpose the same check posts were maintained as reported in the May history of this organization. Few civilian disturbances were recorded, the most flagrant violations consisted of several curfew offenses.

S-2 in coordination with Seventh Army orders aided in making surveys of civilians production, present and potential. Factories and shops were visited, count was made of workers, stocks on hand, and the amount of present output. Housing and billeting facilities were also estimated and determined, not for purely an army occupational standpoint, with a view of future housing accommodation.

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for German civilians during the coming winter. Designated battalion officers completed the surveys.

As directed by Division, moving of all German ordnance and ammunition within the division sector was commenced. Ordnance equipment was stored in a dump at KAUFBOREN, GERMANY (WY1613). The ammunition was hauled from WY927095, WY117060, WY117118, WY322188, and WY281175 to WY165205 by Company "A" during the period of 1 - 7 June 1945. Company "C" assumed this responsibility and continued on same until 12 June 1945. Types of ammunition stored included 88mm, 105 shells, .30 caliber rifle ammunition and prepared charges.

Training schedules were initiated during this period and were followed by the two companies not employed in division assignment. For the most part the training consisted of refresher treatment of engineer subjects during the morning hours. The afternoons were devoted to recreation and Information and Education lectures and programs. Full expansion of the Information and Education program was not yet possible as yet, due to lack of necessary equipment, inability to become completely organized, and the awaiting of assignment of a unit category from Seventh Army.

Intense interest was manifested daily as to when or if a "quota" would be received for the return to the United States of personnel. Morale, when it began to sag, was given a hyperdermic injection by the allotment of one officer and five enlisted men at one instance, and two enlisted men at another, who were flown to the States. The announcement in the "Stars and Stripes" the previous month to the effect that another campaign star would be accorded the division found many

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"sweating it out", as an additional five points would place them over, or up to, the coveted critical score of eighty-five points as tentatively set by the War Department as a basis for eligibility for discharge.

Recreation included the scheduling of inter-battalion hard ball games and the selection of a battalion team to play other organizations within and without the division. Games were played generally every third day. By coordinating the use of the movie building with that of the 141st Infantry Command Post, men of the battalion saw a show every other night. Trucks were also run nightly to the Red Cross in Kaufburen. Tours to Munich, Oberammergau, and Brenner Pass were available. However, due to the fact that the Battalion was nearly one hundred men under strength that guard and other details were heavier than average, many were unable to avail themselves of these opportunities. The Battalion newspaper, "The Bulldozer" continued to make its weekly appearance, and raised its circulation level and demand with each succeeding issue.

Just as the ball diamonds, back stops, and the recreational park at the lake in the Company "B" area were readied for full useage and enjoyment, came word of an impending division movement. The usual reactions were experienced by all, but through it was a tense expectancy as all sensed that full scale deployment would in all probability occur at the next area. This premonition was correct and the ensuing two weeks saw the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion continue as a unit, but chow lines contained very few familiar faces.

II. - CAPT HERBERT A. LOREE

On 11 June 1945, billeting parties surveyed the Bottingen area (WX3381) and

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the selection of the battalion bivouac site was made. This choice was that of a former German Officers' Candidate School, "Altes Lager", situated on the edge of the town. On 13 June 1945 at 0930 hours the battalion convoy began headed by Company "B", followed by Company "C", Battalion Command Post; Headquarters and Service Company, Medical Detachment, and Company "A". The distance traveled was approximately eighty-five miles and the entire move was completed by 1700 hours. For the first time since 6 July 1944 the entire battalion was bivouacked together. The layout of the barracks with trees and paved streets called to mind Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, and the demands of garrison life. The period of transition from combat requirements to those of garrison duty began immediately. The mental and physical changes can not be surmounted in a brief two weeks but the development of non-combatant soldierly attitudes and the acquiring of new living habits is successfully under way.

For the officers and men, the readjustment of daily schedules and the cleaning of the area presented long hours of planning, leadership and hard labor. Living quarters were provided first of all. Beds and bunks were arranged and surplus furniture was stored. As Engineers, necessary plumbing, painting, repairing of floors, doors and general carpentry were taken in stride. One hundred and one German prisoners of war were secured and detailed thru 8-3 to assist on jobs which had first priorities. Through interpreters and the military government arrangements were made to operate the shower building and the theatre. A tailor shop, barber shop, photo laboratory, and laundry facilities were also provided. Each

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company prepared a day room which for space, furniture, and providing of past times equalled the majority found at posts in the States. The section of camp to be used by the battalion was fenced in, alleviating somewhat the heavy guard problem. Dozers were used to clear the parade ground, and to provide base ball and volley ball courts. Such streets as Adolph Hitler Strasse demanded immediate renaming. Accordingly, streets were provided neat lettered signs at intersections with titles calling to mind the past of the division. Such places as Camp Edwards Road, Cassino Avenue, Texas Road and Camp Blanding Road brought to mind various memories to the viewer as he passed the various sign posts.

The main entrance to the post bears the overhead sign of "CAMP HERBERT A. LOREE". Cpl Loree, 36173672, Otisville, Michigan was a well liked, excellent soldier both in and out of combat, who was killed in a mine explosion on 31 January 1945 when a three-quarter ton truck bearing eleven M-1, A-1 mines detonated. Fuses were frozen in the mines making it impossible for removal of same. The vehicle had just returned to the battalion dump in BILWISHEIM, FRANCE (WQ9412) when the tragedy occurred.

As necessitated by occupational duties, the battalion was detailed a number of check posts which were located as follows: WX395760, WX344809, WX350760, WX320810, WX333823, WX343820, WX332809, WX338820, WX341819, WX302830, WX270875, WX320818, WX320808, WX305831, and WX305850. Assignment was made to respective letter companies in proportion to assigned strengths. In addition, a warehouse at WX333823, an ammunition dump at WX343820 and an Electric Motor

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Assembly Plant at SONTHEIM, GERMANY (WX435852) were guarded. Company "C" was detailed to ammunition hauling. The dump was established at WITTLISLINGER, GERMANY (WX9705).

Recreational facilities provided were much the same as those afforded during the first part of the month, i.e. ball games and movies.

A₃ days passed, universal interest was directed upon the announcing of the division classification and the redeployment which would inevitably follow. Many a spirited and heated argument could be overheard during this period as to the future of the unit. At long last on 24 June 1945 came word from Seventh Army that the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion was a category I unit (Occupation).

Two days later a wholesale deployment schedule was announced for this battalion by division. On 28, 29, and 30 June 1945 two hundred and fifty-one enlisted men were transferred to the 263 Engineer Combat Battalion (63rd Division), a category four (IV) unit. This meant the trading of the T Patch for the Flaming Sword insignia, but as an eventual trip home was involved, no serious complaint were raised. During this period one hundred and fifty-seven enlisted men were received from the 100th, 84th, and 63rd divisions. In addition during the month of June eighty-two reinforcements arrived from the Second Reinforcement Depot making a total of two hundred and thirty-nine new faces.

The old members of this battalion, now departed, would ever remember the years spent under the red oak leaf and the white eagle of the Battalion Crest, remember, too, those left behind permanently in spots from Salerno, Italy to Kitzbuehl, Austria, a twenty months' trail. Those new men of this organization

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with memories of their own former units would find that time and the working together as an organization would weld them into a battalion fully as capable and as justly proud of the two World War I streamers and the five more battlecolors as were those who earned them. June while a non-combatant month nevertheless saw the most momentous of changes in the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion as the old order changed yielding place to new.

To those gone on: "A job well done". To those just arrived: "As combat men, yours a strong tradition and fine record to learn, appreciate, understand and to uphold."

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HEADQUARTERS 11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 36 - U S ARMY

4 August 1945

Subject: History of Organization

To : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36,
U S Army

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany, 11th Engineer Combat Battalion" for the period of July 1945.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: The battalion occupied Camp Herbert A. Loree, in the Altes Lager, Germany area, south of the main division area, in the French occupational zone. The main engineer activity was directed towards building of training ranges. These ranges were completed and firing started on 29 July.

b. Map Supply: Operational conditions were such that there was no map supply problem.

c. Water Supply: Four water supply points were maintained for the three Infantry Regiments and the Division Artillery. In addition three shower units were operated for the Infantry Regiments.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: Since the division was defined as a Category I unit, all engineer items of P/E equipment were frozen. Such will not be replaceable until the unit is alerted for a water movement. The building of the division weapons ranges necessitated procurement of large quantities of lumber, pipe, pulleys, target cloth and paint. All necessary equipment was obtained, but not without difficulty experienced by the P & C officer.

Henry H. Halton
HENRY H. HALTON
Lt Col CE
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN GERMANY
111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
JULY 1945

by

WILLIAM C. KNIGHT
2nd Lt CE
Adjutant

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With the passing of July, 1945, the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion experienced its second full month of ETO peacetime activity. This was a period of "sweating it out" for individuals with critical scores in the eighties. And every edition of the Stars and Stripes was eagerly watched for any announcement of lowering the critical score for discharge. Adjustment to peacetime soldierly pursuits were taken in stride and everyone settled down to the garrison life. Reinforcements were very slow in arriving and the battalion was never up to T/O strength during the month of July.

The primary mission of the battalion was the building of the Division's firing ranges at MAGOLSHEIM, Germany (WX375804). This was a full battalion job and was made more difficult by the shortage of man power. However this was alleviated somewhat by the addition of one hundred German prisoners of war which were detailed through S-3 to work on the ranges. A total of six ranges were constructed which included a fifty target known distance range with firing points at one hundred, two hundred, three hundred, and five hundred yards; an eight point 1000 inch machine gun range; a fifteen point pistol range; a combat firing range for machine guns with 60 targets; a 300 target range for infantry small arms combat firing and-woods fighting; and a 60 mm and 81 mm

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mortar range for firing at topographic features. The initial construction of the known distance range was started by Co "B" who dug the pits. All of our bulldozers, plus two D-7's each from the 297th Engrs and 286th Engrs, were used in excavating the pits to a depth of ten feet. In addition three hundred pounds of demolitions were used in blowing rock which the dozers could not move. Upon completion of the excavation, sliding targets were constructed and the pits equipped down to the last detail, including marking discs and "maggies drawers". In constructing the sliding targets, frames and targets, 800 logs 12 inches x 10 feet, 120 10 12 inches x 15 feet, 19 000 board feet of finished lumber, and 47 sq. yds of target cloth were used. While Co "B" was working in the pits Co "C" was constructing the firing line on the known distance range and building the infantry combat firing range. At the same time Co "A" was setting up the 1000 inch machine gun range, the pistol range, and the machine gun field firing course. Latrines and range houses were also built. Work on the ranges had priority on all other jobs, and the ranges were finished as scheduled on July 28th. Firing started on July 29th with the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment the first battalion to use the range facilities.

Since the battalion area was inside the French occupational zone only one check post was detailed to the battalion. Co "B"

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maintained a check post at HUTTON (WX710768). Few civilian disturbances were recorded, the most flagrant violations consisting of several curfew offenses. In addition to this check post, a warehouse of Bn equipment in ULM (WX710768) was guarded by a detail from Co "A".

No training schedules were initiated during this period since all companies were working on the ranges and could not follow a training program. Where possible the afternoons were devoted to recreation and Information and Education classes. Classes in Beginning German and Elementary Photography were started the latter part of the month.

Recreation included the scheduling of intra-battalion soft ball games and the selection of a battalion hard ball team to play other organizations within and without the division. During the first part of the month movies were scheduled every other night in the post theater. But with the arrival of the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry, and combining their shows with ours, the local playhouse offered a bill every night. Trucks were also run nightly to the Red Cross in ULM, and to GEISLINGEN where the non-commissioned officers could enjoy the facilities of the Division headquarters non-commissioned officers club. Sightseeing tours were run once each week in the battalion bus. The trips were of four d duration and included such places as Dachau, Innsbruck, Brenner Pa

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Berchtesgarden, and Salzburg. However, due to the fact that the battalion was nearly one hundred men under strength, and guard and other details were heavier than average, many were unable to avail themselves of these opportunities. The battalion newspaper, "The Bulldozer" continued to make its weekly appearance, and raised its circulation level and demand with each succeeding issue. A few men went on pass to such places as Grenoble, the Riviera, Paris, London, and during the last week of the month, our first pass quota to Switzerland was received.

On 21 July the biggest group of reinforcements for the month arrived. Forty-nine men reported to the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion from the 119th Armored Engineer Battalion, 12th Armored Division. Other men were received from the 63rd, 84th, and 100th Divisions, as well as from the 3rd Reinforcement Depot.

The new members coming into the battalion were mostly combat veterans from other divisions. And they had memories of their own about their former units. Many an argument was heard about which was the best outfit in the ETO. But old rivalries were soon forgotten with the tasks at hand. And time and working together as an organization has welded them together as a battalion fully capable of any task for which they may be called upon.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 36 - U S ARMY

7 Sept 1945

SUBJECT: History of Organization

TO : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36,
U S Army

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion", for the period of August 1945.

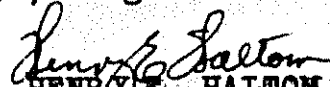
2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: The Battalion occupied Camp Herbert A. Loree, in the Altes Lager, Germany, South of the main Division area, in the French Occupational Zone. The main engineer activity was directed towards building of training ranges for the Infantry Regiments and Division Artillery.

b. Map Supply: Operational conditions were such that there was no map supply problem.

c. Water Supply: Four water supply points were maintained for the Three Infantry Regiments and the Division Artillery. In addition three shower units were operated for the Infantry Regiments.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: Since the Division was defined as a Category I unit, all engineer items of T/E equipment were frozen. Such will not be replaceable until the unit is alerted for a water movement. The building of the weapons ranges for the Infantry Regiments necessitated procurement of large quantities of lumber, pipe, pulleys, target cloth and paint.


HENRY E. HALTON
Lt Col, CE
Commanding

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OPERATIONS IN GERMANY
111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
AUGUST 1945

by

WILLIAM C KNIGHT
2nd Lt CE
Adjutant

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~~R E S T R I C T E D~~

During the month of August, 1945, the 111th Engr C Bn carried out a wide variety of activities as could only be exacted during peacetime. The requests for jobs to be done were as numerous as they were varied. Individuals with high points were anxiously awaiting the word to go home, and those persons with not such high critical scores eagerly watched for any announcement of lowering the critical score for discharge. Numerous reinforcements arrived during the month but almost equal numbers left to be redeployed to the United States.

Company "B" built two firing ranges in the vicinity of Dettingen, Germany (WX 268033). The first range was a fifty position range with firing points at 100, 200 and 300 yards. The second range had twenty firing positions with firing points at 200, 300 and 500 yards. These two ranges were completed on 26 August and firing started on 27 August. Company "B" also constructed a firing range for the Division Hq Staff Officers at Geislingen, Germany (WX 571042). This construction included a six point pistol range and a 12 point carbine range with firing positions at 100 and 200 yards.

On the 14th of August, Company "A" moved from Camp Herbert A Loree to Weiszentein, Germany (WX 645218). This was done to facilitate the building of a fifty point rifle

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range in the vicinity of Bartholena, Germany (WX 584145). This range is being built with firing points at 100, 200, 300 and 500 yards and is being equipped with sliding target frames.

Engineers were called upon numerous times to remove explosives from various sectors of the Division area. On 2 August, men from Company "A" removed and destroyed 14 Teller mines in the vicinity of Ulm, Germany (WX 665818). No other mines or explosives were found in the vicinity at this time. On 10 August at Ulm, Germany (WX 570095), Company "A" picked up and destroyed 6-240 Igniters, 18-2 1/2 kilo stick charges, 12 stick grenades, 6-1/4 kilo charges and several sticks of dynamite. In the vicinity of the GEM dump at Göppingen, Germany (WX 410130) approximately 400 lbs of ammunition and explosives were removed. Some miscellaneous explosives were taken out of the Division Radio Station in Geislingen, Germany (WX 571042), as well as 20 1/2 lb blocks of TNT from the 111th Med Clearing Station in Feurdon, Germany (WX 382135).

During the month of August mine and booby-trap classes were given the 141st and 142nd Infantry Regiments. Dummy Jap mines and firing devices were obtained from the 7th Army Engr Section to aid in this instruction. Practical demonstrations

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in demolitions were also given.

The Battalion maintained only one checkpost during the month and that was located at Hutten, Germany (WX 410768). This post was manned by Company "B" during the first part of the month but they were relieved from this post by the French Occupational Forces on 12 August 1945. Company "C" maintained a captured enemy material dump at Ulm, Germany (WX 660800), keeping records on the incoming captured enemy equipment and guarding the area in which the material was stored. Company "C" also maintained a similar dump in Göppingen, Germany (WX 410150).

The list of engineer jobs for the month runs from A to Z. All types of projects were undertaken, ranging from air strips to baseball bleachers. The air strip was constructed at Heubach, Germany for use of the Division Artillery Liaison planes. Bleachers to seat 5000 people were built for the Division Review celebrating Salerno Day in September. A large sign marking the Division area boundary was constructed and placed at WX 705867. Baseball diamonds were constructed for the 3rd Bn, 141 Inf Regt and Division Hq, as well as a garbage pit for 131 FA Bn, and a concrete tennis court for Division Hq.

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HEADQUARTERS 11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 35 - U S ARMY

1 October 1945

SUBJECT: History of Organization

TO : Commanding General, 35th Infantry Division, APO 36,
U S Army

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany, 11th Engineer Combat Battalion", for the period of September, 1945.

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: During the first half of September, the Battalion occupied Camp Herbert A. Loree, in the Böttingen, Germany area, south of the main Division area, in the French Occupational Zone. On the 13th, 14th and 15th the Battalion moved to Becknang, Germany and took over duties as security troops in that area.

b. Map Supply: Operational conditions were such that there was no map supply problem.

c. Water Supply: Four water supply points were maintained for the three Infantry Regiments and the Division Artillery. In addition three shower units were operated for the Infantry Regiments.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: Since the Division was defined as a Category IV unit, all engineer items of T/E equipment have been collected and stored in preparation for turning in all equipment.

Henry E. Halton
HENRY E. HALTON
Lt Col, JR
Commanding

CLASSIFICATION
CANCELLED
BY ADJUTANT OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
US Army
COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE 1945

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OPERATIONS IN GERMANY
111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
SEPTEMBER 1945

by

WILLIAM C KNIGHT
1st Lt CE
Adjutant

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During the first half of September, 1945, the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion carried out a wide variety of activities as could only be done during peacetime. The requests for jobs were as numerous as they were varied. Individuals with 70 and more points were transferred to units going to the States, and those men with less than 45 points were shipped to Category I units. At long last the Division was declared a Category IV unit, and all men with 60 or more points were to go home with the Division. This necessitated transferring large numbers of low point men to other units, and depleted the Battalion strength to a very low point.

On the 15th of September, the Battalion (minus Co "A") completed its move from Camp Herbert A Loree (WX 330810) to Backnang, Germany (WS 240400). This was done to allow the French the use of Camp Loree and the training ranges (WX268033). Upon arrival in Backnang the Battalion took over duties as security troops from the 93rd Armd FA Battalion, which was transferred for shipment to the United States.

The Battalion did not maintain any checkpoints during the month of September. Co "C" maintained a captured enemy materiel

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dump at Ulm, Germany (WX660800), keeping records of the incoming captured enemy equipment and guarding the area in which the materiel was stored. Co "C" also maintained a similar dump in Göppingen, Germany (WX 410130).

Co "A" completed their work on the rifle range at Weiszenstein, Germany (WX 645218) and moved back with the rest of the Battalion on 27 September. So, for the first time during the month the Battalion was all together. The entire Battalion was quartered in a large factory building, each company having a floor.

The month of September was a period of "Hellos" and "Good-byes". Many, many men were coming and going, so that there was an almost constant stream of new faces. By the end of the month the Battalion strength was down almost to a bare operating minimum, and with all the tools turned in, very little in the way of engineer work could be done. Everyone left in the Battalion was anxiously awaiting the trip home and all activity and preparation was being directed to that end.

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OPERATIONS IN GERMANY
11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
SEPTEMBER 1945
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§Attached to original copy of narrative only.

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 35 - U S ARMY

1 October 1945

SUBJECT: History of Organization

TO : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36,
U S Army

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion", for the period of September, 1945.

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b. Map Supply: Operational conditions were such that there was no map supply problem.

c. Water Supply: Four water supply points were maintained for the three Infantry Regiments and the Division Artillery. In addition three shower units were operated for the Infantry Regiments.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: Since the Division was defined as a Category IV unit, all engineer items of T/E equipment have been collected and stored in preparation for turning in all equipment.

Henry E. Haltom
HENRY E. HALTOM
Lt Col, CE
Commanding

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During the first half of September, 1945, the 11th Engineer Combat Battalion carried out a wide variety of activities as could only be done during peacetime. The requests for jobs were as numerous as they were varied. Individuals with 70 and more points were transferred to units going to the States, and those men with less than 45 points were shipped to Category I units. At long last the Division was declared a Category IV unit, and all men with 60 or more points were to go home with the Division. This necessitated transferring large numbers of low point men to other units, and depleted the Battalion strength to a very low point.

On the 15th of September, the Battalion (minus Co "A") completed its move from Camp Herbert A Loree (WX 330810) to Baacknang, Germany (WS 240400). This was done to allow the French the use of Camp Loree and the training ranges (WX268033). Upon arrival in Baacknang the Battalion took over duties as security troops from the 93rd Armd FA Battalion, which was transferred for shipment to the United States.

The Battalion did not maintain any checkpoints during the month of September. Co "C" maintained a captured enemy materiel

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Co "A" completed their work on the rifle range at Weissenstein, Germany (WX 645218) and moved back with the rest of the Battalion on 27 September. So, for the first time during the month the Battalion was all together. The entire Battalion was quartered in a large factory building, each company having a floor.

The month of September was a period of "Hellos" and "Good-byes". Many, many men were coming and going, so that there was an almost constant stream of new faces. By the end of the month the Battalion strength was down almost to a bare operating minimum, and with all the tools turned in, very little in the way of engineer work could be done. Everyone left in the Battalion was anxiously awaiting the trip home and all activity and preparation was being directed to that end.

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~~R E C E I V E D~~

ANNEX NO. 1

ROSTER OF OFFICERS - 30 SEP 1945

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

<u>RANK</u>	<u>N A M E</u>	<u>A S N</u>	<u>ENTERED SERVICE FROM</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
Lt Col	Henry B Halton	0394529	Crosbyton, Texas	Command
Capt	Paul E Johnson	0379691	New York, New York	Ex Off
Capt	Milton J Bejeck	01104491	Cicero, Illinois	S-2
Capt	Donald A Currj	0409046	Madison, Wisconsin	S-3
Capt	Charles E Gardner	01102733	Springfield, Ill.	S-4
1st Lt	David K Craig	0467337	Edmond, Oklahoma	ADE
1st Lt	Paul A Crouse	01118182	N.St. Paul, Minn.	I & E, Asst 'S-
1st Lt	William C Knight	01061443	Columbia, Missouri	Adjutan

HEADQUARTERS & SERVICE COMPANY

Capt	Walker B Davis	01104601	Memphis, Tenn.
1st Lt	Jack E Wright	01117345	Missoula, Montana
CWO	Stanley D Crouch	W2124456	Normal, Illinois
WOJG	Chris Andriakos	W2124468	Princeton, Indiana

COMPANY "A"

Capt	Robert D Wilson	01103011	Holly, Colorado
1st Lt	Steve J Novak	01016164	Port Clinton, Ohio

COMPANY "B"

Capt	Rufus M Ingle	01014629	Mount Holly, N. C.
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~~R E C E I V E D~~

~~SECRET~~

ANNEX NO. 1 (Continued)

RANK N A M E A S N ENTERED SERVICE FROM REMARKS

COMPANY "C"

Capt Ernest B Dahl 0909192 Burlington, N. C.

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Capt Jose G Sugranes 0466564 Chicago, Illinois

Capt Robert C Peters 01694284 Greenville, Pa.

CHAPLAIN

Capt Lewis M Blackmer 0557633

~~SECRET~~

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ANNEX NO. 2

DECORATIONS AND AWARDS

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

SEPTEMBER 1945

RANK N A M E A S N ENTERED SERVICE FROM DATE DEED AUT

SECOND OAK LEAF CLUSTER IN LIEU OF THIRD BRONZE STAR

COMPANY "B"

Sgt Ross A Elliott 36173711 Pontiac, Michigan 13 Dec 44 60

OAK LEAF CLUSTER IN LIEU OF SECOND BRONZE STAR

COMPANY "B"

1st Sgt Leonard P Hooker 38050669 Houston, Texas 18-21 Sep 44 60

BRONZE STAR

HQ & SV CO

Sgt Raymond A Hood 33321171 Rigley Park, Pa. 9 Sep 43 - 8 May
60

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HEADQUARTERS 111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 36 - U S ARMY

~~RESTRICTED~~

7 September 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report of 111th Engr C Bn for period
1 August 1945 to 31 August 1945

TO : Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36,
U S Army (Attn: AG of S, G-4)

1. Operations for the period were as follows:
 - a. Completed 25 point, 300 yard known distance rifle range for 142nd Inf Regt at DETTINGEN (X 2703).
 - b. Completed 50 point, 500 yard known distance rifle range for 142nd Inf Regt at DETTINGEN (X 2703).
 - c. Continued work on 50 point, 300 yard known distance rifle range for Division use near LAUTERBERG (S 6422).
 - d. Conducted extensive survey of DP camps in Division area to determine materials needed to winterize camps.
 - e. Operated captured enemy material dumps at ULM and GOPPINGEN.
 - f. Maintained all ranges at ALTES LAGER, BOTTINGEN, GERMANY, for use by units of Division.
 - g. Surveyed and laid out review field at GOPPINGEN AIRPORT for use as a Division review field. Constructed reviewing stand, 12' X 36'.
 - h. Built new baseball field with bleacher seats for 4000 people at GOPPINGEN AIRPORT.
 1. Continued work on 15' X 25' billboard type Division sign on Autobahn near ULM.
 - j. Dug garbage pits for Div Arty near GEMUND (S 5224).
 - k. Dug garbage pits for 141st Inf Regt near BLAUBREUREN (X 5281).
 - l. Worked on tennis courts for Div Hq at OESLINGEN.
 - m. Constructed stage for USO show in hanger at GOPPINGEN AIRPORT.
 - n. Received and housed a 250-man German PW Labor Co with 80 Polish guards.
 - o. Conducted reconnaissance of roads and bridges in Division area in connection with weekly reports on condition.
 - p. Installed showers in building at ULM for football teams' use.
 - q. Made reconnaissance of billets for 155 FA Bn in BAD MERGENTHEIM. Made recommendations to CO, 155 FA Bn on materials needed to improve condition of billets there.
 - r. Operated 4 water distribution points for troops of the Division.
 - s. Operated 3 32-head shower units for 141, 142, and 143 Inf Regts.

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After Action Report of 111th Engr C Bn, 7 Sept 45

~~RESTRICTED~~

1. Operations for the period were as follows: (Cont'd)
 - t. Designed, arranged for making of plates and printing of 100,000 copies of a pictorial combat history map of battle actions of the 36th Division in Italy, France, Germany and Austria. Furnished 50,000 envelopes for mailing of these maps to former members of this Division.
2. Engineer Supply was satisfactory. The following critical items were either not available or were available in very limited quantities:
 - a. Carbon tetra chloride for fire extinguishers.
 - b. Acetylene for welding.
 - c. Oxygen for welding.
3. Some difficulty has been experienced in obtaining enough wool clothing to keep the members of this Bn in a Class A uniform.

Henry E. Halton
HENRY E. HALTON
Lt Col, CE
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS 11TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 36 US Army

1 November 1945

SUBJECT: History of Organization

TO: Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, APO 36,
US Army

1. Herewith "Operations in Germany, 11th Engineer Combat Battalion", for the period of October 1945

2. The following observations were noted during operations covered by the above named report:

a. Operations: During the month the battalion was billeted in Backnang, Germany with no operational mission other than administrative processing prior to anticipated shipment to zone of the interior.

b. Map Supply: Operational conditions were such that there was no map supply problem.

c. Water Supply: Four water supply points were maintained for the three infantry regiments and Division Artillery. In addition two shower units were operated for the infantry regiments.

d. Engineer Supply and Equipment: All engineer supplies and equipment with exception of items needed in sub paragraph c above have been turned in.

Henry E. Haltom
HENRY E. HALTOM
Lt Col., CE
Commanding

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The month of October was devoted entirely to administrative processing with constant shifts in personnel necessary to keep abreast with ever changing redeployment adjustments. Early in the month all officers with below 75 points were transferred to lower priority units and the unit was filled to more than allowable overstrength by influx of high point officers.

All enlisted men with ASR scores of 60-64 were shipped out of the division while those with ASR scores of 70-79 left the unit for other units within the division. Shipments were scheduled to arrive to replace this loss in early November.

Operation of a stencil shop and box factory, for division processing, was carried out by the battalion.

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~~R E S T R I C T E D~~

ANNEX NO 1

ROSTER OF OFFICERS - 31 Oct 1945
111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

<u>RANK</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>ENTERED SERVICE FROM</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
Lt Col	Henry E. Haltom	0394529	Crosbyton, Texas	CO
Lt Col	Warren R. Johnson	0367013	Colorado Springs, Colo	
Lt Col	Jack Mallepell	0307319	San Antonio, Texas	
Lt Col	Linnel E. Wallace	0379232	Goldsborough, N. C.	
Major	Robert C. Holmes Jr	01104855	Johnson, Vt.	
Capt	Donald A. Ross	0349161	Spokane, Wash	Chaplain
Capt	Milton J. Bejeck	01104491	Cecero, Ill	S-2
Capt	John H. Butler	01102651	Grenada, Miss	
Capt	Donald A. Curry	0409046	Madison, Wis	S-3
Capt	Paul E. Johnson	0379691	New York, N. Y.	Ex Off
Capt	Charles E. Gardner	01102733	Springfield, Ill	S-4
1st Lt	David K. Craig	0467337	Edmond, Okla	ADE
1st Lt	Robert E. Rapier	01110205	Waco, Texas	I and E
1st Lt	Jack E. Wright	01117345	Missoula, Mont	Adjutant
1st Lt	Dale W. Ankeney	01134348	Lakewood, Ohio	

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY

Capt	Walker B. Davis	01104601	Memphis, Tenn	
1st Lt	Martin C. Nelsen	02010593	St James, N. Y.	
1st Lt	Morris M. Green, Jr	01106177	Ardmore, Pa	Bn Mtr O
CWO	Stanley D. Crouch	W2124456	Normal, Ill	Asst Bn Mtr O
WOJG	Chris Andriakos	W2124468	Evansville, Ind	Bn Pers O

COMPANY A

Capt	Robert D. Wilson	01103011	Holly, Colo	
1st Lt	Donald S. Strohner	01001056	Syracuse, N. Y.	
1st Lt	Frank D. Furlow	01117792	Baton Rouge, La	
1st Lt	George F. Hair	0448447	Worcester, Mass	
1st Lt	Walter E. Hervey	01104841	Verona, N. J.	
1st Lt	Alan H. Johnson	01115233	Grand Forks, N. D.	
1st Lt	Steve J. Novak	01016164	Ft Clinton, Ohio	

COMPANY B

Capt	Rufus M. Ingle	01014629	Mt Holly, N. C	
Capt	Maurice C. Reeves	0376117	Edwardsport, Ind	
Capt	Herman M. Hermelink	0456445	Great Falls, S. C.	
1st Lt	Leslie A. Farfour	01594825	Goldsborough, N.C.	
1st Lt	Theodore Hubbard	01592288	New London, Ohio	
1st Lt	George M. Lang	01100189	Yonkers, N.Y	

ROSTER OF OF ICERS - cont'd 31 Oct 45.

COMPANY "C"

<u>RANK</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>ENTERED SERVICE FROM</u>	<u>REMARK</u>
Capt	Ernest B. Dahl	0909192	Burlington, N. C.	
Capt	Donald H. Hobeck	0925213	Edwardsburg, Mich.	
Capt	Edwin C. Lokken	0441741	Hamlet, N. D.	
1st Lt	Milton C. Bray	01647062	New York, N. Y.	
1st Lt	William V. Cranston	01107370	Yakima, Wash.	
1st Lt	Pehr B. Moller	0921792	Tunbridge, Vt.	

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Capt	George W. Mosley	0445248	Chicago, Ill.
Capt	Jose G. Sugrues	0466564	Chicago, Ill.

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ANNEX NO. 2

DECORATIONS AND AWARDS

111TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

OCTOBER 1945

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UNIT CITATION in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction authorized under the provisions of Circular 333, War Department, 1943.

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