

S E C R E T

OPERATION

During the first seven days of the month, the Division held the bridgehead over the ELBE RIVER near BARBY, GERMANY. Contact with the Sixth Guards Division of the Russian Army was made, and enemy activity practically ceased prior to the cessation of hostilities.

On 7 May the Division relinquished control of the ELBE RIVER area to the Russian Forces, and moved west, taking control of an area of approximately 1,500 square miles in the vicinity of BRAUNSCHEWIG, GERMANY.

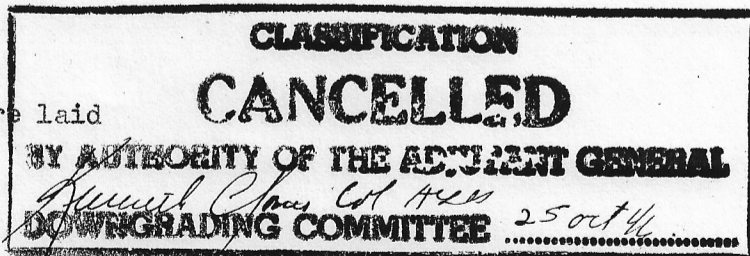
When hostilities officially ceased on 8 May, the Division started military government operation in the new area.

During the first part of the period, the 308th Engineer Battalion was in support of the regiments in addition to supervising the guarding of the ELBE RIVER bridges, movement of river barges, and removal of road obstacles. On 10 May the battalion started a three day program of equipment maintenance and rehabilitation. Following this, a program of training, instruction, and recreation was established. In addition to regular training, classes were conducted in bulldozer operation, motor mechanics, welding, surveying and photography.

The engineer work performed by the battalion during the period included a survey of the public utilities in the Division area, building a 2 way class 40 steel stringer bridge, repair of approximately 40 miles of road between BAD HARZBURG and NORDHAUSEN, conversion of a Displaced Persons camp to a Prisoner of War cage, at IMMENDORF and Engineer work at the staging area near WAGGUM, under direction of Ninth US Army. Three water purification units were in operation during the period.

Since the battalion went into action at CARENTAN, FRANCE on 4 July 1944 until the cessation of hostilities on 8 May 1945 at which time the Division held the only bridgehead over the ELBE RIVER, the battalion has performed many and varied tasks; some of the highlights are as follows:

- 3,000 miles of road reconnoitered
- 150 miles of road swept for mines and posted
- 135 miles of road repaired
- 17 miles of new roads constructed
- 250 road blocks of various types removed. These included concrete, steel rail and log obstacles and abatis.
- 45 road craters filled
- 90 wrecked tanks and vehicles removed from roads
- 5,000 yards of debris removed from city streets
- 55 bridges built. This includes 11 treadway, 2 Bailey, 19 Timber and 23 foot-bridges.
- 3 Bridges destroyed by demolition
- 14 ferries operated
- 4 assault river crossings made
- 15,000 AT and AP mines removed
- 28,500 AT mines laid
- 3,000 yards of triple concertina wire laid
- 400 dead animals buried
- 7,500 signs painted
- 1,050,000 sheets of maps distributed
- 4,500,000 gallons of water purified
- 13 Prisoner of War cages built
- 85 artillery emplacements dug
- 16 splinter-proof shelters and OP's constructed



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OPERATION (Continued)

In addition to the above, the battalion operated shower points for the Division during rest periods, checked bivouac areas for mines, and buildings for booby traps, conducted schools for the Infantry in map reading, mines and demolitions, operation of flame throwers, and assisted the Infantry in training for assault on fortified positions. Periodic minefield and road reconnaissance information was distributed to all units of the Division. The Intelligence Section made several aerial reconnaissances to supplement map data for river and terrain studies.

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