

*Unclassified per Ltr, Hq 83d Div, 4 Aug 45, mce
4 Aug 45, mce
7 Aug 45*

HEADQUARTERS, 808TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 83, U.S. Army

2 May 1945



SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy, Reports After/After Action Report.

THRU : Command Channels.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D.C.

1. Report, subject as shown above, required by par 10(e), AR 345-106, is submitted herewith.

For the Commanding Officer:

RICHARD E. FLETCHER,
1st Lt., CE,
Adjutant.

Incl: 2

1-Action Against Enemy Report
After/After Action Report.
2-Unit Journal.

319.1/401

1st Ind.

WPC/rwf

HEADQUARTERS 83D INFANTRY DIVISION, APO 83, U. S. Army.

TO: Commanding General, X/X Corps, APO 270, U. S. Army., 16 May 1945

Forwarded.

For the Commanding General:

N. P. COWDEN,
Major, AGD,
Adjutant General.

~~SECRET~~

Unclassified per Ltr, Hq 83d Abn Div, 4 Aug 45.

~~SECRET~~

✓ Raker,
my ass
7 Aug 45



CONTENTS

- I OPERATION
- II TROOP LIST
- III ROSTER OF COMMANDERS AND STAFF
- IV AWARDS AND DECORATIONS
- V LOSSES IN ACTION
- VI APPENDICES

Unit Journal *

* Under Separate Cover

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~



I

- - -
O P E R A T I O N
- - -

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
OPERATION



During the month of April 1945 the 306th Engineer Battalion was busier than at any other time since arriving on the Continent. The Companies supported the Infantry Regiments throughout and performed many tasks among them being road block removal, mine sweeping, ferry operation, assault river crossings, bridge construction, mine laying and removal, and bridge security guard.

For the first six days of the month until the Division reached the Weser river the Engineer Battalion assisted the Division by clearing roads to the east and preparing bridges on the southern flank for demolition. A class 40 three open timber bridge was constructed at NEUHAUS in order to shorten the main supply route. (B6750)

On 6 April 1945 one Infantry Regiment reached the Weser river in the vicinity of BODENWERDER (C2277) where the enemy had destroyed all existing bridges. So that no momentum would be lost, an element of this Regiment crossed the Weser river over the 2nd Armored Division bridge in the vicinity of GROENDE (C1681) and then swung back into the Division area. The Engineers constructed and operated two ferries one at KAMNAD (C2277) and the other at NEHLIN, to support this unit. The ferries were of the trail type and the existing enemy trolley cable equipment was used. The operation was very successful.

On 8 April 1945 the other Regiment reached the Weser river in the vicinity of POLLE (C1568) after breaking bitter enemy resistance. At 0900 hours the Engineers supported the assault crossing and later constructed a motor-driven Infantry support ferry. The crossing was made with two companies abreast, resistance was light. An M2 Broadway bridge was started by the 246th Engineer Battalion at the ferry site near POLLE at 1030 hours and was finished at 2030 hours after experiencing some difficulty with the swift current.

The Division then continued moving eastward. The crossing of the Leine river presented no problem as the Division had advanced so rapidly that the enemy was unable to establish an effective rearguard action. All bridges were left intact and were suitable for Division loads.

Two Regiments then raced on towards the Elbe river while the third attacked the enemy in the HARE mountains and protected the southern flank so that the forward supply lines would not be cut.

One Regiment reached the Elbe river on 12 April 1945 after eliminating the enemy's stiff resistance in the vicinity of BARBY (D8562). A double track railroad bridge, the only bridge in the Division area was demolished by the enemy on the afternoon of 11 April 1945.

On the afternoon of 12 April 1945, two Regiments made assault crossings in the vicinity of BARBY. Each Regiment used 34 boats crossing two companies abreast. No difficulties were experienced during the initial phases of the crossing but after the Infantry pushed on, enemy self propelled guns started shelling the crossing site. Immediately after the first companies crossed the Engineers constructed one five boat Broadway raft and three Infantry support rafts. The operation of these ferries, especially the Broadway ferry was of prime importance for they enabled the Infantry commanders to be supplied during the entire operation until the Broadway bridge was completed. Over two hundred heavy vehicles including medium tanks and TD's were ferried across on the Broadway ferries. This contributed immeasurably to the success in repelling several serious counterattacks. Soon after the TD's arrived on the enemy shore the self propelled guns were silenced and at no other time was there any artillery fire on the crossing site.

~~SECRET~~



Later in the afternoon an M2 treadway bridge was constructed by the supporting 295th Engineer Battalion at the existing ferry site immediately southeast of BANY. It was completed without difficulties except for some indirect artillery on the morning of 15 April 1945.

During the next two days the enemy made several counterattacks but failed to penetrate the bridgehead.

In order to make the bridgehead more secure it was decided to construct an additional treadway bridge over the Elbe at the ferry site 4 kilometers south of BANY. However to accomplish this it was necessary to make an assault crossing of the Saale river and drive the enemy from the pocket between these two rivers. On the afternoon of 15 April 1945 the Company C, this organization supported an assault crossing of the 320th Infantry Regiment of the 85th Infantry Division. Only 17 boats were used as one battalion crossed on a partially destroyed railroad bridge. Although the enemy was well entrenched on the opposite shore the assault crossing was made without a shot being fired. An Infantry support raft was operated until the treadway bridge was completed the next afternoon. The bridge was started at midnight 15-16 April 1945 and its construction progressed satisfactorily until in the early morning, when an enemy patrol infiltrated through our lines and fired on the bridge and personnel with machine gun and small arms. Considerable damage was done to pontons and equipment but the bridge was completed at 1630 hours.

Shortly after the attack the Engineers constructed a five boat treadway ferry to transport 4 light tanks across the river. This ferry was later used in the bridge.

The next morning at day break the 2nd bridge over the Elbe was started and was completed at 1730 hours without difficulties by the 234th Engineer Battalion.

The enemy became very sensitive to our new bridge and made several attempts to destroy both bridges. First the artillery became more pronounced. Then for two nights concentrated enemy artillery became more pronounced. Then for two nights concentrated aerial bombardment attacks were made. Our anti-aircraft prevented their hitting the bridges, but the bombs dropped caused several casualties in the general area of the bridges. Soon the enemy launched numerous floating mines upstream which floated downstream but never seriously threatened the bridges because of the anti-mine boom which had been installed about 600 yards upstream. In addition to the anti-mine boom, Engineer riflemen were stationed upstream and on the bridges to shoot at any mines which were sighted. In spite of all the precautions, one mine came within fifteen feet of the bridge before it was finally destroyed by rifle fire. The concussion from this mine was quite severe and caused one casualty but no serious damage to the bridge. A day or two later the enemy sent two crews of swimming saboteurs downstream. One of the reported crews was never located. The other crew consisting of two EM and one Officer were all finally captured. They experienced great difficulty with the mine boom and were forced to give up their mine after working an hour and a half trying to free it from the boom. No more attempts to destroy the bridges were made.

Shortly after the bridges were completed a portion of each of the Engineer companies assisted the Infantry in laying and recording minefields along the MLR of the bridgehead. Nearly 14,000 mines were laid, in addition, many anti personnel and trip flare devices were installed.

During the last few days of the month the Engineers started to recover the minefields and open roads to the east in order to make contact with the Russians.

The Engineers worked two days in the town of ZHISST (D9983) with three DY dozers to clear the rubble from the main routes to the east. In one section of the town the streets were completely blocked with debris 10 feet high. Streets were successfully cleared for two way traffic.

On the last day of the month one platoon supported the Calvary Squadron to clear roads out to the extreme front near the Russian advanced elements in this sector.

~~SECRET~~



During the month the following tasks were completed.

185 Road blocks were removed
127 Enemy mines removed
3900 Friendly mines removed
14000 Mines laid
5 Road blocks installed
9 Ferries operated
4 Assault river crossings made
20 Miles of road swept
2 Miles of road repaired
43 Vehicles removed from roads
5000 Yards of debris removed from streets
1 Treadway fixed bridge installed
1 Class 40 timber bridge constructed
3 Bridges destroyed
9 Bridges prepared for demolition
25 Dead animals buried
3 Enemy barges destroyed
830 Signs painted and posted
66,400 Maps distributed
3 Waterpoints operated (280,000 Gallons) operated in 22 locations.
500 Miles of road reconnaissance

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~



II

- - -
TROOP LIST
- - -

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~



TROOP LIST - 1 - 30 APRIL

308th Engr Combat Bn:

Company "A" in direct support of 329th Inf

Company "B" in direct support of 330th Inf

Company "C" in direct support of 331st Inf

SUPPORTING UNITS:

295th Engr Combat Bn (1 through 3 April)

246th Engr Combat Bn (4 through 8 April)

235th Engr Combat Bn (9 through 19 April)

1115 Engr Combat Group (20 through 30 April)

Composed of: 226 Engr Combat Bn
234th Engr Combat Bn
235th Engr Combat Bn

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~



I I I

-- -- --
ROSTER
of
COMMANDERS AND STAFF
-- -- --

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

BATTALION COMMANDER	Dodge, Roy T., Lt Col, CE (1 April to 30 April)	021488
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Robbins, Morrison B., Maj (1 April to 30 April)	0328621
S-1 and ADJUTANT	Fletcher, Richard E., 1st Lt. (1 April to 30 April)	01114928
S-2	Boiko, William, Capt (1 April to 30 April)	01101359
S-3	Hannaman, George W., Maj (1 April to 30 April)	0352774
S-4	Vinyard, Bobby B., Capt (1 April to 30 April)	01101701
ASSISTANT DIVISION ENGINEER	Sanders, Vernon K., Capt (1 April to 30 April)	0028476
RECONNAISSANCE OFFICER	Pisarcik, John A., 1st Lt (1 April to 30 April)	01111510
MEDICAL OFFICER	Cooney, Theodore W., Capt (1 April to 30 April)	0418504
DENTAL OFFICER	Glose, August F., Capt (1 April to 30 April)	0218961

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY

COMMANDING OFFICER	Peace, Frank M., Capt (1 April to 30 April)	01101613
--------------------	--	----------

COMPANY "A"

COMMANDING OFFICER	Brand, Andrew W., Capt (1 April to 30 April)	01101345
--------------------	---	----------

COMPANY "B"

COMMANDING OFFICER	Falck, William D., 1st Lt (1 April to 17 April)	025693
	Mise, Jr., Robert C., 1st Lt (17 April to 30 April)	01116243

COMPANY "C"

COMMANDING OFFICER	Swider, Joseph A., Capt (1 April to 30 April)	01101665
--------------------	--	----------

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~



IV

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

A W A R D S

	<u>Silver Star</u>	<u>Bronze Star</u>	<u>Total</u>
Headquarters 308th Engr C. Bn.			0
Headquarters & Service Company			0
Company "A"		6	6
Company "B"			0
Company "C"	1	1	2
Medical Detachment			0
<hr/>			
Total Battalion	1	7	8

NAMES

SILVER STAR

Joseph F. Noce, Pfc, 31197872, Company C, for Gallantry in Action, in connection with military operations against the enemy.

BRONZE STAR

Robert R. Desmond, Pvt, 31242958, Company A, for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against the enemy.

Everett L. White, Pfc, 31178421, Company A, for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy.

Ray J. Vess, Tec 5, 34433625, Company A, for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy.

Monroe H. Marks, Pfc, 18011058, Company A, for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy.

Joseph R. Demarchi, Cpl, 33306166, Company A, for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy.

BRONZE STAR (OAK LEAF-CLUSTER)

Michael J. Liber, Sgt, 35665094, Company A, for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against the enemy.

JOSEPH A. SWIDER, Captain, 01101685, Company C, for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~



V

-- -- --
LOSSES IN ACTION
-- -- --

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

 APRIL BATTLE CASUALTIES

	<u>KIA</u>	<u>VIA</u>	<u>NBC</u>	<u>TRANS- FERRED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>REINF & RTD</u>
Headquarters 308th Infr. C. Bn.	1					
Headquarters and Service Co.			3		3	
Company "A"	1		7		8	11
Company "B"		2	9		11	13
Company "C"		3	1	1	5	6
Medical Detachment						
<hr/>						
TOTAL BATTALION	1	5	20	1	28	30



~~SECRET~~



VI

- - -

APPENDICES

- - -

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~



- - -
UNIT JOURNAL
- - -

(Under Separate Cover)

~~SECRET~~